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SENATE—Thursday, January 16, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

O God, our shield, as we approach the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, we thank You for raising up leaders who appeal to the better angels within us. Use our lawmakers to lead the quest for justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream. As they lead our Nation, guide them around the obstacles that hinder their progress, uniting them for the common good of this great land. Lord, enable them to go from strength to strength as they fulfill Your purposes for their lives in this generation. May they stand for right and leave the consequences to You.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

THE PRESIDING OFFICER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 16, 2014.

To the Senate:

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

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 294, the flood insurance legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 294, S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on this issue alone we have been trying for months to move this vote. On our side we have heard constantly, persistently, and always from Senator LANDRIEU indicating how important this is to her State and to our country. So I would hope we can finally have a pathway forward on this today with a consent agreement.

It is my understanding Senator ISAKSON of Georgia is going to come to the floor soon and we will try to do that. I just want to alert everyone to the fact if that isn't going to work out, we are not going to delay this any more. We will file cloture and move on it when we get back from our next work period.

SCHEDULE

Following my remarks, Mr. President, and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 3547, which is the legislative vehicle for the Omnibus appropriations bill.

The filing deadline for first-degree amendments to the House message is 1 p.m. today. Under the rule, the cloture vote on the motion to concur in the House message to accompany the omnibus will be an hour after we come in tomorrow morning. There have been

requests by both Democrats and Republicans to move the vote forward, and if that is possible—I am happy to cooperate with all Senators, if the majority of the Senators would like to do this early—I will be happy to see if we can get a consent agreement to do that.

We are also working, as I have indicated, on the flood insurance bill and we will continue to work on that.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1931

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 1931 is due for a second reading, I am told.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1931) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

Mr. President, on this side of the aisle, we have not put to one side and forgotten about unemployment compensation extensions for 1.5 million desperate Americans. I wish to just spend a minute or two on this issue, but we have not forgotten this and I want to direct everyone's attention to an editorial in one of America's leading newspapers of today. Here is what it said.

Republican Senators are pulling out every fake excuse they can think of for filibustering an extension of jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed. . . . The majority leader, Harry Reid, was mean to us and wouldn't let us offer amendments, they say.

We have heard that a lot. I am really a mean person.

Democrats refused to pay for the benefits. It's President Obama's fault because people can't find work because he won't approve the Keystone XL oil pipeline.

The article goes on:

The truth is the Republican Party simply does not believe that job seekers who have been out of work for 6 months or longer deserve government assistance. The most hard-hearted believe cutting benefits will give

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

people an incentive to get back to work. The most cynical are hoping for widespread misery, which they can pin on "Obama's economy" for political gain in the elections this fall. Whatever the reasons, nearly five million unemployed people will go without benefits by the end of 2014, unless the party backs down.

The most appalling demand from Republicans was that benefits be paid for with cuts to other programs.

That is certainly the truth. The article continues:

For example, Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire proposed requiring that parents have a Social Security number to receive the child tax credit—a move that would eliminate an important anti-poverty measure for millions of children who are citizens though their parents are not.

We will have more to say about this. We are not going to leave this issue. This is a cutting-edge issue for the American people. Republicans outside Congress believe this is the right thing to do—the majority of Republicans.

HOUSE-PASSED OMNIBUS

The Senate today will consider the House-passed omnibus spending bill, an important bipartisan agreement that keeps our country on a responsible path while preventing another manufactured crisis—and we have had so many of those.

I cannot say enough about the work of the senior Senator from Maryland Ms. MIKULSKI. We came to the Senate together. She is someone who identifies with the people of Maryland as no one has ever identified with the people of Maryland, but in the process she also identifies with people around America. That is why she is revered in Maryland. She has been to Nevada, and we love her in Nevada also.

I don't know of anyone else who could have done what she did, working with the Republicans in the House. I admire her so very much, and I am very happy to have reached the point where we are today. After 3 years of damaging cuts to vital social programs, this bill finally increases investments in the middle class.

Is it perfect? Of course not. There is so much good to say about this bill. But Senator MIKULSKI, who represents the State where the headquarters of the National Institutes of Health resides, got an extra \$1 billion for them—more than they got last year. It is too bad the Republicans' cost-cutting whacked them \$1½ billion in the year before, but what she did with the NIH is exemplary of what she has done to help America.

So enough about her, but she has done something no one else could do.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

FREE TRADE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, I said there were a number of things the President could announce in

his North Carolina speech that would draw bipartisan support and actually boost the economy. One of the things I was particularly disappointed he didn't push—at least push harder—is trade.

As I said, this is one of the brightest areas of his economic agenda, but if we as a nation don't act quickly and decisively, the world is going to literally pass us right by. We are going to miss opportunities to benefit economically, to open foreign markets to American goods and to America's political and cultural influence.

When we look at the rest of the developed world, from Europe to Canada to Australia, they are practically falling all over themselves to negotiate more and better opportunities, while we basically have sat on our hands, a consequence of the President's inability to persuade his own party—his own party—to expand trade-related jobs.

So we need to catch up, but we can't do that without leadership from the President, the kind of leadership as we have seen in the Senate from the chairman of the Finance Committee, who himself obviously is a Democrat. He has been a tireless advocate for trade and for American agriculture. Yet with his retirement looming on the horizon, I am afraid there might not be many Democrats left in the Senate willing to help lead on this issue. That is why we need the President to be deeply involved. We need him to step up for American workers and increase exports by bringing his own party on board with a trade promotion bill that was introduced just last week.

The authority in that legislation is key to enabling the administration to conclude critical trade negotiations that hold incredible promise for American jobs and economic growth. With our economy in such dire straits these days, opening new opportunities for American goods through trade should be a real no-brainer. It is an issue that used to be fairly bipartisan around here, and it can be again, if the President is willing to lead. Millions of middle-class families and small businesses are counting on him to do just that.

So I look forward to him promoting the benefits of trade and the legislation I mentioned in his State of the Union Address. I hope we will hear about that. When he does so, Republicans will be right there with him to move the trade promotion bill through Congress in a bipartisan fashion.

EPA COAL REGS

Last week the Obama administration published a regulation that would effectively ban coal-fired powerplants from being built in the future.

The head of the EPA, who will be testifying on this regulation today, basically admitted as much herself when she called it "significant economic lift." She knows the technology this regulation requires is prohibitively expensive; that her own agency knows it

is nowhere near—nowhere near—ready for adoption; that even some White House officials do not believe her plan is feasible, and that is the point. The point is to eliminate coal jobs in America.

That is why I wasn't surprised by emails that recently came to light—emails which appeared to show EPA officials colluding with extremist special interests in devising impossible-to-achieve regulations. The emails even referred to previously shuttered powerplants as "defeated," making the intent behind coal-related actions abundantly clear.

Here is the other thing. This new regulation is not even expected to reduce emissions in a meaningful way—not even expected to reduce emissions in a meaningful way. What it will do, however, is trigger a section of the law that would allow the administration to eventually shut down coal-fired plants that exist today.

In other words, it would allow the administration to achieve its true aim of eliminating coal jobs completely. For struggling middle-class families across eastern Kentucky, this is just the latest punch in the gut from Washington, from an administration whose own advisers seem to believe that "a war on coal is exactly what is needed," from one of the President's advisers.

Some call this regulation outrageous. Some say it is extremism at its worst. Here is what I call it. It is absolutely cruel because here is what is lost in this administration's crusade for ideological purity, in its crusade for approval of coastal editorials—human lives are affected, the lives of people I represent, folks who haven't done anything to deserve a war being declared on them.

These are the Kentuckians who just want to work, provide for their families, and deliver the type of low-cost energy that attracts more jobs to Kentucky. And coal is what allows so many of them to do all that. It provides well-paying jobs. And, as Jimmy Rose of Bell County, KY, who has now become a rather famous country singer, puts it in his hit song, "Coal Keeps the Lights On."

I remind my colleagues that coal does more than keep the lights on in Kentucky; it keeps the lights on here too, both figuratively and literally. From the anti-coal blogger tapping out a tweet to the EPA staffer cooking up a meal, millions of Americans rely on coal to power their homes and their offices. In recent years, coal has accounted for about 40 percent of the electricity generated in our country. That compares to just 3.5 percent for sources such as wind and solar. So even if the administration were to achieve its dream of eliminating every last coal job, it is not as though they could just fire up a few windmills to cover the gap. It is going to take a very long

time—decades—for alternative sources to even come close to providing the same level of jobs and energy as coal. In other words, the administration's ideological crusade doesn't even seem to have a logical end game. It is basically just ideology.

Here is the thing. Republicans agree that alternative and renewable energy sources are necessary for fuel diversity, but we believe wind and geothermal and solar should be part of an "all of the above" energy strategy which also includes coal and natural gas and the oil we can get right here in North America, with Americans providing the workforce.

Another key difference is this: Republicans look at Kentucky coal miners and see hard-working men and women, not obstacles to some leftwing fantasy. That is why I, along with 40 Republican cosponsors—including my friend and fellow Kentuckian RAND PAUL—intend to file a resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act to ensure a vote to stop this devastating rule. We believe the EPA regulation in question clearly meets the definition for congressional review under this statute, and I am sending a letter to Comptroller General Dodaro outlining the reasons why that is the case.

If the majority leader were serious about helping Kentuckians, he would stop blocking the Senate from passing my Saving Coal Jobs Act. It is commonsense legislation that would give elected representatives of the people a greater say in how coal is regulated in this country. There is no reason for him to keep it bottled up a moment longer.

Look, Kentucky is facing a real crisis. The Obama administration appears to be sending signals that its latest regulation is actually just the beginning in a new, expanded front in its war on coal. Already the administration's regulations have played a significant role in causing coal jobs in my State to plummet. These are good jobs which pay more than \$1 billion in annual wages to my constituents. For every miner with a job, three more Kentuckians will hold a coal-dependent job as well.

The majority leader and his Democratic caucus now have a choice: Are they going to stand with the coal families under attack in places such as Kentucky and West Virginia and Colorado or are they going to continue to stand with the powerful leftwing special interests who want to see their jobs completely eliminated? That is the choice. It is pretty clear where I stand and where most of my colleagues on this side of the aisle stand.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

SPACE LAUNCH LIABILITY INDEMNIFICATION EXTENSION ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 3547, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany H.R. 3547, an act to extend Government liability, subject to appropriation, for certain third-party claims arising from commercial space launches.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid amendment No. 2655, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2656 (to amendment No. 2655), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 2657, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2658 (to the instructions) amendment No. 2657), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2659 (to amendment No. 2658), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor today as the chairperson of the Appropriations Committee—a committee I am honored to chair—to support the Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2014. This bill passed the House on Wednesday with a stunning and amazing vote of 359 to 67. The purpose of this agreement is to fund the operation of the Federal Government for the remainder of fiscal year 2014.

The vote in the House, which I hope will be paralleled here in the Senate, shows what working together based on civility, listening to each other, being willing to compromise but not capitulate on principle, negotiating on what are the appropriate fiscal levels—this shows we can get the job done.

In today's era of shutdown, slowdown, slamdown politics, where negotiating occurs on cable TV rather than in committee rooms, we worked together. Setting aside partisan differences, working across the aisle and across the dome, we looked to find how we could put together a bill both sides of the aisle and both Houses could agree upon.

This is what the American people deserve: Us doing the business of the country, legislating in due diligence and regular order. They want a government that works as hard as they do, and working under a very stringent deadline, we were able to do this. After 3 years of damaging cuts that have hurt our efforts to help people, this agreement turns the corner.

We recognized that we needed to focus on growth in jobs and lower the unemployment rate but not increase our debt or our deficit. We worked very hard to do that, to increase the kinds

of public investments the American people would approve of—keep America strong, keep our economy strong—and to do the diligent work we need to do.

This bill is something called an omnibus bill which includes all 12 appropriations bills. That means we have 12 subcommittees—defense, health and human services, labor and education, energy, water, financial services—and each one has to do their funding work. Ordinarily, we would bring one bill up at a time, but that was not to be. So where we are is this is a consolidated bill of all 12.

We have been working on this since the President sent his budget to us this spring. We held over 50 hearings, listened, did due diligence, and marked up our bills. We were ready to come to the floor in the fall, but it was not to be. We had to wait for the Budget Committee to do its work to give us a top line so we could get to our bottom line.

On December 18, just before Christmas, Congress gave us that cap on discretionary spending. We knew what we wanted to spend, but, again, we know we have to be a more frugal government. We know we have to be smart not only about spending but about saving, getting rid of dated, duplicative, and dysfunctional programs, and we were able to do just that. On December 18 we were given a cap on discretionary spending of \$1.02 trillion. We met that cap. We worked nonstop over the holidays, resolving differences in both money and in certain policy areas.

What we do today is we come here with an agreement that is bipartisan. I emphasize that. The agreement is bipartisan. It is bicameral; that means both sides of the Capitol. It has also been one of compromise but not, on either side, capitulating on principle.

I am proud to say this agreement meets our national security needs and ensures the readiness of our troops and keeps us safe at home. It also meets the compelling human needs of our middle class and our most vulnerable. At the same time, it also invests in America's future by strengthening our physical infrastructure and also supporting research and development to save lives, spur growth and innovation and everything from lifesaving biosciences to aeronautics. And we want to make sure we are looking not only at jobs today but jobs tomorrow.

Before I give more detail about this agreement, I will highlight one of the reasons I am very proud of something we have done in this bill. Our legislation pending before the Senate restores the full cost-of-living adjustment for our working-age disabled military retirees and survivors of our departed servicemembers. Their COLAS were mistakenly reduced by 1 percent in the recent budget agreement. This agreement fixes that error.

I wish to make this note: It is limited in scope. It fixes the error for disabled

military retirees and departed servicemembers. It is not the comprehensive pension reform necessary. We will await the Presidential commission which will come before the Senate, and we will be able to implement and work on their recommendations in due time.

I encourage my Members that to vote for this bill is to support the fix that helps our most vulnerable patriots. It is limited in scope but an important downpayment to restoring full COLAS for military retirees of working age who are either disabled or are part of the departed servicemembers.

This agreement provides for our national security. It has \$11 billion more than current levels for operation and maintenance, \$1 billion for the National Guard and Reserve so that our units are ready for missions overseas and/or at home. The resources also support the Defense Department's 3 million Active-Duty, Reserve, and civilian employees. This bill, if it passes, eliminates the need for civilian furloughs in 2014, and it also prioritizes readiness.

The agreement funds important areas in other protections of national security—an area I am very keenly interested in. An increasing threat to our people and our economy is cyber security. One need only look at the headlines. From Target to Neiman Marcus, 40 million Americans or more were hit by hackers whom we expect came from a non-NATO member country. There is a growing nexus between organized crime and those who have other predatory intents to the United States. We have \$11 billion in here for cyber security for the Department of Defense, the FBI, Homeland Security, and important research agencies.

This agreement also keeps its promises to veterans in terms of health care, and we pay particular attention to the VA disability backlog. We believe that if you were on the frontlines over there, you shouldn't face a long line here when you have applied for your disability benefits. Working with the relevant authorizing committee, we believe we have been able to come up with it.

This bill also makes important investments in America's human infrastructure and meets compelling human needs in health care, education, and childcare. We have increased our investment in Head Start by \$1 billion, making sure 90,000 more kids across the Nation are part of early childhood education programs that improve their school and reading and math readiness. We have also increased the childcare development grants by \$154 million, meaning 22,000 more lower income families will be able to afford childcare—about 24,000 children in Maryland alone.

In our committee, we believe welfare should not be a way of life but should be a way to a better life. Childcare development grants enable women to move from welfare to work.

Also, for those who are working at a minimum wage where often full-time work means full-time poverty, if you are going to work, childcare should not eat up half of your already modest income. The child care development grant is a tool, along with the child care tax credit, to enable people to be able to work and make sure work is worth it.

We are also very conscious, on both sides of the aisle, of the need of Federal support for special education. We do not want a continued unfunded Federal mandate, where we require certain programs for special needs children but do not meet the Federal responsibility for paying for it. We have money in the bill for this.

Energy assistance and help with food and housing we have been able to do here. But we believe the best social program is a job. There is no doubt about it. To be able to work at a full-time job that supports a person's family and let's them get on the opportunity ladder for the American dream is what we hope to do. We believe, many of us, that with jobs helping build America's infrastructure we meet two needs. We have an aging, decrepit, sometimes even dangerous infrastructure. The money in this bill will go to important programs such as the harbor maintenance trust fund and also TIGER grants to help with transportation, so we can rebuild America's infrastructure and at the same time put Americans to work on rebuilding our infrastructure.

Also, at the same time we believe we need to look at the jobs of tomorrow, where we fund the kind of basic research that only government can do, that leads to new ideas, that will lead to the new thinking in the private sector that will create the new jobs tomorrow. That means, for example, for the National Institutes of Health, we increase it \$1 billion. It means they will be able to do 400 additional studies. It will also deal, not only with our cures for cancer but also the brain initiative will help speed along finding a cure or cognitive stretchout for Alzheimer's. This is good public investment.

When we look at Medicaid funding, a cure for Alzheimer's or cognitive stretchout will not only save families the awful consequences of Alzheimer's—my father died of that—but it will also help our budget. When we look at Medicaid, 80 percent of the beneficiaries on Medicaid are children, but 80 percent of the money goes to long-term care for people who have either Alzheimer's or other neurological impairment diseases such as Lou Gehrig's disease, Parkinson's, and so on. When we can find a breakthrough on Alzheimer's, it will also help lower the cost of Medicaid, and we will be able to put it in other programs.

There is much more to be said about this bill and I will say it later. I see my

vice chairman is on the floor and he will want to speak and there are others who are also present. I will speak during the day, but I want you to know I am proud of this bill. We did the job that was given us. We played the hand that was dealt us, and what we have come up with is a good deal for the American people. We tried to be smart about where we spent the money and we tried to be very smart in how we saved money.

I yield the floor and look forward to continued debate and passage of this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I will join my friend and long-time colleague, the senior Senator from Maryland and chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, who has just spoken, in strongly supporting passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2014. This bill is a product of a bipartisan and very collegial negotiation between both parties in both Houses of Congress. It is in very large part a compromise of what the House and Senate produced in their respective committee processes last summer.

We, of course, have our differences and each of us would like to have many features in this bill different, but that is the nature of a negotiation and ultimately of a compromise, and that is where we are today.

There is much we would like and much we do not like in this bill, but on balance I believe it represents a middle ground upon which we can all comfortably stand. It is certainly far better than the alternative, which would be another confrontation, another government shutdown, and another giant step further away from establishing some sense of regular order.

It is a matter of record that I did not support the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. It is and remains my strong preference that we continue to reduce our discretionary spending levels and, more importantly, our long-term mandatory spending levels. As I have said many times, once the Congress has decided what our spending levels are to be, I believe it is the responsibility of the respective appropriations committees to decide how those funds will be spent. The bill before us does exactly that.

This legislation adheres to the statutory budget caps for defense and non-defense spending set by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. It carries forward a spending level for defense programs that avoids a \$20 billion sequester for 2014. The bill funds total discretionary spending below the 2004 level when adjusted for inflation.

Enacting this funding measure will allow Congress finally to advance its current priorities instead of relying on the spending priorities of the past,

which of course is the unavoidable consequence of a continuing resolution. Seven out of twelve bills in this omnibus have been relying on appropriations priorities dictated by the fiscal year appropriations for 2012. Instead of giving the executive branch virtually unfettered discretion, this bill includes hundreds of limits on how the executive branch can spend taxpayer dollars. It provides continuity for key government functions and avoids the uncertainty of additional continuing resolutions.

Since the President took office, we have enacted 20 continuing resolutions. This bill today provides no new money to implement ObamaCare by holding flat the funding for certain accounts at the Department of Health and Human Services and the Internal Revenue Service. It funds the financial regulators who implement Dodd-Frank at a level that is \$424 million below the President's request.

We will hear many times today that this bill is not the bill any individual Senator would have written, and that is true. It includes concessions that many would not like to make. But it also contains funding or limits on funding for priorities that are important to Members of both sides of the aisle. In my view, this is the prerequisite for a legislative compromise and is what we have achieved with this bill.

I again thank the chair of this committee Senator MIKULSKI and commend her for setting a tone that made this agreement possible. I join with her in strongly urging our colleagues to support this measure, just as the Members of the House did yesterday by a vote of 359 to 67.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleagues, Senator GRAHAM, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator ROBERTS.

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

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I bring to the attention of my colleagues the front page of the Washington Post this morning: "Hill balks at shifting CIA role in drone war."

Congress has moved to block President Obama's plan to shift control of the U.S. drone campaign from the CIA to the Defense Department, inserting a secret provision in the massive government spending bill introduced this week that would preserve the spy agency's role in lethal counterterrorism operations, U.S. officials said.

The measure, included in a classified annex to the \$1.1 trillion federal budget plan, would restrict the use of any funding to transfer unmanned aircraft or the authority to carry out drone strikes from the CIA to the Pentagon. . . .

The Appropriations Committee is supposed to appropriate. The Appropriations Committee has no business

making this decision. How many of my colleagues knew that this provision was in this mammoth appropriations bill? I bet a handful. The job of the Armed Services Committee and the job of the Intelligence Committee is to authorize these things. There was no hearing in the Armed Services Committee, there was no hearing in the Intelligence Committee on this issue. Instead, a major policy decision that has to do with the ability to defend this Nation against the forces of violent Islamic extremism is now being decided in a secret annex of a mammoth appropriations bill.

It is not the first time I say that the appropriators have authorized. The appropriators have gotten into the business of the authorizing committees in a way that is a violation of every procedure and process this Senate is supposed to be pursuing.

I believe Senator LEVIN, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, will be as outraged as I am. I believe the chairperson of the Intelligence Committee will be as angry as I am. This is a fundamental function of government that has to do with national security and it is hidden in a provision, in a secret provision of the mammoth appropriations bill. I say to the distinguished chairperson and ranking member, that is not their business.

Some of us have been speaking out for more than a year about the terrorist attack of September 11, 2012, which took the lives of four American public servants in Benghazi, Libya, including U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens. We have spoken out because of the many questions that still remain unanswered to this day.

We have spoken out and will continue to speak out despite efforts of partisans and proxies of the administration to sweep all of this under the rug. The latest snow job came in December, from the New York Times, that ever-reliable surrogate of the Obama administration, which published a long report challenging some key facts about the Benghazi attack. But as Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan used to say, everyone is entitled to their own opinions but not to their own facts. The facts are stubborn. In reality, what the Times report does is propagate myths. Let's review some of the facts.

The Times claims the following:

Months of investigation . . . centered on interviews with Libyans in Benghazi who had direct knowledge of the attack there and its context, turned up no evidence that Al Qaeda or other international terrorist groups had any role in the assault.

The Times goes on to claim:

Benghazi was not infiltrated by Al-Qaeda. . . .

Here are the facts. Al Qaeda-affiliated groups were present in Benghazi, and they were involved in the attack of September 11, 2012. The New York Times itself reported on October 12:

American officials said [the attack] included participants from Ansar al-Shariah, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and the Muhammad Jamal network, a militant group in Egypt.

All of these groups are affiliated with Al Qaeda. The New York Times claims:

Republican arguments appear to conflate purely local extremist organizations, like Ansar al-Shariah with Al Qaeda's international terrorist network.

Again, here are the facts. In an interview yesterday with CNN, the Senator from California acknowledged correctly that Ansar al-Shariah, which played a major role in the attack, is linked to Al Qaeda. We are drawing on the work of our Intelligence Committee which yesterday released its report on the Benghazi attack and its aftermath.

In that report you will find numerous references by the intelligence community before the attack that make clear the nature of the Al Qaeda threat in Benghazi. The claims that Al Qaeda had not infiltrated Benghazi rests on the same rhetorical sleight-of-hand that holds that while groups may align themselves with Al Qaeda, may seek and receive direction from Al Qaeda, may share similar terrorist goals of Al Qaeda, and may even call themselves part of Al Qaeda, but if they are not sitting along the Pakistan-Afghan border or are not part of so-called core Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda senior leadership, then somehow they are not Al Qaeda.

This is the same bizarre language and logic that may have led then-Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice to claim just days after the attack that "we have decimated Al Qaeda," this despite the fact that Al Qaeda-affiliated groups are proliferating and gaining traction all across the Middle East and North Africa, including in Benghazi.

The fact is that the attack against our diplomatic facility in Benghazi on September 11 was carried out in part by Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorists who had a safe haven in parts of eastern Libya. As the Senate Intelligence Committee report finds, the Intelligence Committee provided ample strategic warning about the negative security trends in Benghazi and the likelihood they would further deteriorate. This was the opposite of an intelligence failure; this was clear as day.

Despite these clear warning signs, the State Department was unprepared. Our diplomatic facility in Benghazi was insecure and had already been attacked multiple times. Our military was not postured and ready to respond to contingencies in a part of Libya where attacks against westerners and western interests had already occurred and where the threat of more attacks was growing.

The false narrative the New York Times is furthering just so happens to align with the Obama administration's account of events, but, again, facts are

stubborn, and the Senate Intelligence Committee report clearly supports the conclusion that the administration knew or should have known of the terrorist threat in Benghazi during the relevant period and should have pre-positioned assets or made other preparations to better protect our people serving there.

The administration and its allies will continue to try to sweep Benghazi under the rug—including the fact that we have still not received testimony and the presence of the individuals who were present and moved to Germany the day following the attack on the Embassy and the deaths of four Americans.

Contrary to the President's repeated claim that the tide of war is receding and contrary to his administration's talking point that Al Qaeda has been decimated, the reality is that Al Qaeda-affiliated groups are emboldened now from central Asia to the Middle East and north Africa, all the way to west African countries such as Nigeria and Mali. Indeed, nothing brings this home more tragically than watching the black flags of Al Qaeda hoisted over the Iraq city of Fallujah. Ninety-five brave soldiers and Americans died in Fallujah, 600 were wounded, and today we see the black flags of Al Qaeda hoisted over the city of Fallujah. The problem is getting worse, and that is in large part due to this administration's disengagement from these regions.

Look at Libya today. It is a country that we and our NATO allies intervened to save from the wrath of an anti-American tyrant, and it is now characterized by chaos, lawlessness, and ungoverned spaces that are exploited by those who seek to do harm to our Nation and our interests. According to the Senate Intelligence Committee's report, 15 Libyans who cooperated with our investigation into the Benghazi attack have been murdered.

The administration can blame the Libyans for these problems, just as they blame the Iraqis for Iraq's problems, but they can't escape their share of the blame for failing to support these people who want and need our help to secure their countries. That is why Chris Stevens was in Benghazi. That is why he risked and ultimately gave his life. He believed it was in our interest to lead events in the world and support our friends and those who wish to be our friends in their effort to build stable, successful societies with effective democratic governments. The greatest way we can honor his sacrifice, and those of his colleagues, is by recommitting ourselves to their mission.

Unless America actively supports those in the broader Middle East who wish to replace despair and extremism with hope and freedom, I fear the tide of war will eventually get us again.

I note that my colleague the Senator from New Hampshire is on the floor, and I would ask her and my colleague from South Carolina, is it not true that in this Intelligence Committee report, which is very encompassing, except for one mention in the minority views, there is no individual who is held responsible? So now we have a situation where bureaucracies are responsible but individuals are not. I find that intriguing.

Also, my friend from South Carolina has been trying to interview witnesses for a number of months, if not years, who were at the scene of the attack and then moved to Germany the following day. Isn't it true that we have never been able to interview those witnesses, which could have cleared up any arguments or any doubt about what the attack was all about?

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank my colleague for the question. I finally got to interview a survivor about a month or so ago with Senators MENENDEZ and CORKER. I have only been able to interview one witness after all of these years and months.

If I could, I wish to thank the Intelligence Committee for doing a lot of hard work, but let's not lose sight that this is not just about the State Department. My focus is going to be comprehensive, and Senator McCAIN has called for a joint select committee, along with myself and Senator AYOTTE, for over a year now. Why? You don't want to stovepipe this. The Intelligence Committee tells us in pretty good detail about the failures of the State Department, but here is my question: In the September 14 White House meeting where the Intelligence Committee prepared talking points for the White House that clearly established that this was a terrorist attack with Al Qaeda people involved—who changed those talking points in that White House meeting?

I have an email—which I hope will be here in a moment—from General Petraeus. Basically, somebody in that meeting or before the meeting is saying to General Petraeus that the White House wants to take references to Al Qaeda out and basically sanitize the talking points. He is upset, but he says: Well, go ahead and do what they want. Nobody admires General Petraeus more than I do, but, quite frankly, somebody needs to revisit that.

Where was the intelligence community for 2 weeks when the President of the United States—not Susan Rice—was telling the entire world: We think this was a protest caused by a video, when the intelligence community knew differently? To my friends in the intelligence community, you need to answer that question. What input did you give? Did anybody pick up a phone and call somebody at the White House? They need to tell the President to quit doing that because it is not accurate.

Another question: On September 15, 16, and 17 of September, all the survivors were interviewed by the FBI in Germany. I have talked to one survivor. I can tell you, in a quick summary, the man was brave and the people on the ground in the State Department deserve medals for going through what they did. But let me tell you this: He said there was no protest. There was not one report from Benghazi about a protest around the Embassy.

The Turkish Ambassador left not too long before the attack. Do you think he would have walked out in the middle of a protest? Do you think the Ambassador would have gone to bed if there was a protest? The people in charge of security never reported a protest because there was not one, and he said there wasn't one. He said: I saw on my screen—and he was in charge of security at the time—16 to 20 heavily armed people running through the gate and carrying a banner in Arabic. At the time, I didn't know what it said. I now know it was the banner of Ansar al-Sharia, the Al Qaeda affiliate.

And to my friends the New York Times, journalism has died at that paper. Do you really believe this wasn't a preplanned terrorist attack with Al Qaeda affiliates in charge? The gentleman said there were four gun trucks around the compound. It was a coordinated military attack, and they were lucky to have survived.

Who started this? Who planned this? The man's name was Qumu, the former Gitmo detainee. I can't say his last name, but I think it is Qumu. The man who started Ansar al-Sharia came from Gitmo. He was a former Gitmo detainee, a Libyan who went back to Libya and started this group. The "60 Minutes" report identified him and a Mr. Khattala as the organizers of this attack. All I can say is that there is no mystery about who planned this. It was an Al Qaeda affiliate in Libya.

On August 16 a cable was sent back from Chris Stevens to Washington at the State Department saying: We can't defend the consulate because 10 training camps of Al Qaeda exist in Benghazi; the Al Qaeda flag is flying.

By the way, the Red Cross had left Benghazi and the British had left Benghazi because of attacks by terrorist groups. This was long before September 11.

Don't tell me we don't know. We do know. It was terrorists. It was a former Gitmo detainee who was bin Laden's bodyguard. What did he have to do—have a card? The guy who was in Gitmo whom we let go was core Al Qaeda. He was bin Laden's bodyguard. They caught him in Pakistan. He fought in Afghanistan.

Now, what we don't know from this report is who in the White House changed the talking points.

You want to know what Chris Christie did? Fine. Absolutely fair

game. We know what he did when he found out what his people did about the traffic jam. He fired them. He got up in front of the whole world and said: I am embarrassed. It is my fault. I am going to fire the people who did this bad thing.

Name one person who has been held accountable for this bad thing called Benghazi. Name one person at the State Department who has been fired for ignoring repeated requests for additional security on the consulate coming from people in Libya.

By the way, the Accountability Review Board—what did I learn in my interview with the survivor? I found out for the first time that villas B and C—the places that were attacked in Benghazi, the State Department consulate—had their lease renewed in July for an entire year for hundreds of thousands of dollars. I didn't know that. It was leased for well over half a million dollars. So you are going to tell me they were going to close the consulate in December? That was the conclusion of the Accountability Review Board. That is not accurate.

I will tell you what I think they were going to do. I think Hillary Clinton was going to go down in December and announce that the permanent facility would be open in Benghazi.

To Hillary Clinton's and Susan Rice's credit, these two women pushed the President to keep Benghazi from being overrun during the war with Qadhafi. They got involved, and to their credit they pushed the President to get involved militarily to prevent the slaughter of everybody in Benghazi.

I have been told that the plan for Benghazi was to have a permanent footprint and for Secretary Clinton to go down there as one of her last acts to say: We are here, and we are here to stay. The problem with that scenario is that the security had deteriorated because we had absolutely no plan to fall on after the fall of Qadhafi.

Mr. MCCAIN. I think a lot of people who are observers really have to view this and the actions on the part of the administration—the statement by now-National Security Adviser Susan Rice on every Sunday talk show was that this was the result of a hateful video, a spontaneous demonstration, and that Al Qaeda has been decimated. We can only view that and some of these actions in the context of the fact that it was a political campaign. There was a Presidential campaign going on, and the rhetoric time after time and rally after rally from the President of the United States and his surrogates was this: Bin Laden is dead. Al Qaeda is on the run. The tide of war is receding.

All of these events that took place at the consulate in Benghazi and the death of Christopher Stevens contradicted that storyline. Still, I cannot understand why 2 weeks later the President of the United States was be-

fore the United Nations and still talking about how this was due to a spontaneous demonstration and hateful video. You can only understand that, in my view, it was in the context of a storyline that was propagated throughout the 2012 Presidential campaign.

Mr. GRAHAM. I think the White House, in my view—this is a reasonable conclusion but not a fair conclusion because we don't know exactly what happened yet. But I can tell you this: Somebody at the White House on September 14 pressured the intelligence community to change the story of Benghazi. And on September 15, why did they pick Susan Rice? She said that Secretary Clinton was tired and had gone through a lot of trauma. I am sure that is true, but I know Secretary Clinton pretty well. I think she is tough.

Let's put it this way: She could not be on TV to talk about what happened at the State Department because she was distraught? I don't buy that. Does anybody believe that about Secretary Clinton? And if it is true, it is something the American people need to consider. I don't believe it is true. I don't believe she was incapable of going on television, as Susan Rice says. I believe they picked a person very loyal to the President who would say whatever needed to be said. What she said was so far away from the truth that it needs to be investigated. What she said was so beneficial to the President's reelection that it needs to be investigated.

She was speaking definitively about Benghazi on September 15 while the FBI was interviewing survivors on the 15th, 16th, and the 17th. Why would any administration go on national television and tell the world what happened in Benghazi while the FBI is still interviewing people who were in the attack? And where did the FBI's interviews go?

I talked to the Deputy Director of the FBI who is now retired. He said not one person interviewed by the FBI in Germany ever said there was a protest; all of them said it was a terrorist attack. So how could the FBI have interviews from every person on the ground in Benghazi who worked for the State Department saying that there was no protest and it was a terrorist attack, and that not get into the system? Did the FBI just sit on these interviews? Who did they give those interviews to? How could Susan Rice tell the American people and the world we know what happened in Benghazi before the interviews were over? She went on television to spin this story. How could the President of the United States, after the interviews were taken, go before the American people time and time again for weeks and tell a story about a protest that never occurred? This may not be a big deal to my colleagues, but it is a hell of a big deal to me.

When Abu Ghraib blew up, Senator MCCAIN and myself said: This is not a

few rotten apples; this is system failure. Before the surge, when Iraq was falling apart, we said: This is not working, no matter what people in the Bush administration are telling us. We know better. We have been there. When Gitmo was a mess, we didn't sweep it under the rug. We worked with Senator LEVIN and Senator FEINSTEIN, two great Americans, to get the definitive truth as best we could about failures at Abu Ghraib, about Gitmo, and we spoke truth to power when it came to Iraq.

Mr. MCCAIN. Regarding Iraq, we called for the resignation of the Secretary of Defense because of the failures in Iraq.

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes, we did.

Now here we are, years later, and the families have no clue as to what happened to their loved ones. Quit blaming the dead guy. This suggestion that Chris Stevens had fault for his own death—Chris Stevens was in Benghazi because that is where he was supposed to be doing what America wanted him to do: Try to hold Libya together. So there is not going to be any blame on the dead guy.

I wish to ask a question of Senator AYOTTE. The Senator from New Hampshire has followed this as well as anybody. Can the Senator describe for us from her point of view the unanswered questions and whether she thinks there is evidence that this was a preplanned terrorist attack versus a protest?

Ms. AYOTTE. I wish to thank my colleagues, the Senator from South Carolina and the Senator from Arizona, who have been relentless in finding the truth about what happened in Benghazi where our ambassador and three brave Americans were murdered.

There are so many questions, but I would start with the accountability question the Senator from South Carolina raised. No one has been held accountable. Who has been held accountable for the failures?

If we look at this intel report, it is very clear the intelligence community, according to this report, provided ample strategic warning that our people in Benghazi were at risk. There were failures, and no one has been held accountable. Why?

As I look at these talking points, the question was raised: Why was the reference to Al Qaeda removed from the talking points? Who did that in the context of a Presidential campaign? But also, take a look at these talking points. There is no reference in these talking points to a video. Look at the actual language of the talking points.

Why is it that the spokesman for the President, on September 13, is out there saying that this is a reaction to this movie? Why is it that Susan Rice, the Ambassador, is on television on multiple shows blaming the video? Not only was it absolutely wrong when she said Al Qaeda was decimated—and it

was misleading, particularly the fact that Al Qaeda had been removed from the talking points, but there is no reference in the talking points to a video. So who in the administration made up the video story?

That is important for the American people to know because it wasn't just Ambassador Susan Rice who relied on the video story. It was our President of the United States who talked about the video and talked about it, frankly, after the Ambassador went on all of the Sunday shows on September 16. In fact, the President said as late as September 18 when asked—basically, he talked about the video and said: You had a video that was released by somebody who lives here, sort of a shadowy character—here is what happened—who had made an extremely offensive comment. So we have the President of the United States, as late as September 18, and then again on September 20—we have the President saying on Univision Network, responding to the possible involvement of Al Qaeda: Is Al Qaeda involved? Here is what we do know: That the natural protest that arose because of the outrage from the video were used by the extremists to see if they could harm U.S. interests.

Where did the video come from? Even what the intelligence community came up with, which was deficient and which was clearly subject to political influence because it removed the reference to Al Qaeda, has no reference to a video. So I think there are a lot of questions that need to be answered.

Here is the most important question: Why has no one been brought to justice? The President, I believe it was on September 12, said: We will find out who did this, and we will bring them to justice. For those families, those victims, no one has been brought to justice. In fact, we have people such as Abu Khattala, who was a former commander of Ansar al-Shariah, who is believed to have been there that night sitting in cafes in Libya giving press interviews, and yet there is much evidence to suggest that he is likely to be involved in this, and many other terrorists, but no one has been brought to justice. So why is that? Why doesn't anyone have the curiosity not only to answer the questions of what happened that night but also to ensure that justice is done?

Mr. GRAHAM. If the Senator will yield, I am trying to find the press statement of the White House official that says the President has consulted with his national security team—I am paraphrasing—about the threats we face throughout the world and that we are ready. This is on September 10. What does this report tell us about September 11? We were so far away from being ready that it is unnerving. So there is a lot to be asked. Why would somebody in the White House issue a statement on 10 September

talking about being ready for any contingency anywhere and basically assuring the American people the President is on top of this when, clearly, he was not?

Mr. MCCAIN. Another question for my colleagues: The attack went on for a period of some nine hours, as I recall. Over that period of time, with the hundreds of airplanes, aircraft that we have and the ships and other military capabilities we have in the area, in the Mediterranean, we were not able to get any real significant help. There are a number of accounts of where a team supposedly landed, were held at the airport, were not allowed to move in, and all of that. All of these are questions that have not been answered.

General Ham told the Senator from South Carolina and me over the phone that he didn't have any assets that were capable of reaching Benghazi. Does he mean we don't have the capability over an 8- or 9-hour period to get some relief to an ongoing attack? Again, what was the hangup that kept people at the airport who finally did get there?

Mr. GRAHAM. If I could follow along with that thought, because it is a very good question, No. 1, if the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff publicly testified they knew it was a terrorist attack from the moment it started and told the White House, how did that get lost? How can they start talking about a protest and video when our own Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in real time tell the White House, but they only spoke to the President once with a prescheduled meeting just when the attack started? The Secretary of Defense—

Mr. MCCAIN. We still don't know what the President did that evening.

Mr. GRAHAM. We know he has answered one question. He said he wanted to be transparent and open and let everybody read the story of Benghazi. We have deployed a small force asking questions, and the answer to one question, finally: Did you call anybody in Libya, Mr. President, that night? No. We have a rescue team held up at the Benghazi Airport for 2½ hours.

Ms. AYOTTE. May I also add to that the President—we heard testimony that obviously the Secretary of Defense and others knew right away this was a terrorist attack. Let's not forget the 16-minute interview where he is asked about that on September 12, and he said it is too early to tell exactly how this came about. When he is asked directly if this is a terrorist attack, he would not identify it as a terrorist attack.

I will also add this. What is so sad about this is no one has been held accountable. The warnings were there. Not only were the warnings there from the August 16 cable that came from the embassy, from Ambassador Stevens,

saying that the consulate could not withstand a coordinated attack, but what has been lost in all of this? When we talk about the New York Times trying to erase Al Qaeda from this, the day before, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the head of Al Qaeda, released a video just before September 11, 2012, just before this terrorist attack—which, by the way, occurred on September 11, of course, which should have given us a pretty direct clue that this was a terrorist attack. But al-Zawahiri issued this video acknowledging and eulogizing the death of Abu Yahya al-Libi in a drone strike and calling for terrorist attacks. Al-Libi was a Libyan who served as the second in command in Al Qaeda under Zawahiri and was a top leader in the Libyan Islamic fighting group.

Think about the evidence that was there before, not only what we didn't do to protect that consulate but the warnings that a terrorist attack was coming.

Mr. GRAHAM. If I may, who was the person who decided to approve a year's lease on this piece of property in July after it had been attacked in June? They blew a hole in the wall that 40 people could go through on June 10. So somebody said: Hey, this is a great site; let's extend the lease for another year, to July 2013. They never reinforced it, never added any appreciable security, and denied all the security requests. This goes on and on.

If we want to know about the bridge, that is great. If we want to know about what Chris Christie knew when and what he should have known, great, go for it. All fair. Does anybody care about what our President did that night? Does anybody really care if the President of the United States, for two weeks, talks about a protest that never happened, while all of the evidence suggests otherwise? Does anybody really care that the consulate was a death trap and nobody in Washington ever responded? Does anybody care that nobody has been brought to justice? Does anybody in this country care that somebody in the White House, on September 14, obviously for political reasons, took the intelligence and turned it upside down? Does anybody care that Susan Rice, who has nothing to do with Benghazi, was the spokesman for the country, telling a story not founded in fact, founded in political advantage? I think Americans do care.

Ms. AYOTTE. Let me ask the Senator from South Carolina this. Does anyone care that the Secretary of State claimed she knew nothing about this August 16 cable? She didn't know about these cables leading up to what had happened in Benghazi, about the warning the Red Cross left and the French left, the hole blown through the consulate, and the August 16 cable. Yet Secretary Panetta was aware of it. Chairman Dempsey was aware of it

when he came before the Armed Services Committee, but the Secretary of State wasn't aware of it.

Mr. GRAHAM. How can the Secretary of Defense know about the security environment in the Benghazi Consulate and the Secretary of State not know? All I can say is it does matter.

Mr. MCCAIN. The fact is no one, no one to this day has been held responsible for the tragic deaths of four brave Americans—no one. The Intelligence Committee report I appreciate. The whole bureaucracy is responsible. Individuals are the ones that run bureaucracies.

I am disappointed that the Intelligence Committee did not have the courage to name the names of the people responsible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, let me first thank Senator SHELBY and Senator MIKULSKI for their very hard work on this Omnibus appropriations bill. That is what I am down here to speak on. The American people sent us to make choices, sometimes very tough choices. They do not expect perfection, but they do expect us to be fair and to get the job done.

Americans are tired of shutdowns and sequestration and stopgap funding. Today we are making decisions we were sent here to make. The annual appropriations process is the right way to do the people's business. Instead of kicking the can and passing the buck, lurching from crisis to crisis, I think we are making some significant progress.

This was my first year on the Appropriations Committee. I especially wanted to thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI for her leadership, her unfailing support, and for doing such an amazing job. She once said, "It is not how long I serve but how well I serve." Senator MIKULSKI has proven once again on both counts she is truly exceptional.

This bill returns some sanity to the budget process in Washington. I am pleased that for the most part it does well by New Mexico. New Mexico plays a unique role in our Nation's national security. This bill provides strong funding levels for the safety and security of our Nation's nuclear deterrent, including the important B61 project at Sandia National Labs. The President's request of \$537 million is fully funded. The highly qualified employees at Sandia will continue their vital mission making sure these weapons are managed safely and securely. This is not something we should shortchange.

This bill also provides equally important funding for Los Alamos National Laboratory in northern New Mexico. The workforce there has been reduced in recent years. This bill will stabilize things for 2014. Both of these labs are critical for nuclear security. But they

are much more than that. They are also engines for the innovation in aerospace, biotech, cyber security, and new energy technology.

New Mexico is proud to host both of these labs. But the Department of Energy also has an obligation to our State and other States on legacy cleanup. The funding levels do not fully meet our request, but they do provide strong increases over 2013 for cleanup at Los Alamos and at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad, NM. These cleanup activities are a serious obligation of the Federal Government and are a source of skilled, well-paid jobs for many New Mexico families.

New Mexico is also home to three Air Force bases and the Army's White Sands Missile Range. This bill contains nearly \$150 million in construction and infrastructure projects, including \$60 million for a TRICARE facility at Holloman Air Force Base. These projects will benefit national security, they will create jobs, and will meet our obligations to the men and women who are serving their country.

The Federal Government also plays a very important role in New Mexico's water infrastructure. We are an arid, Western State. Prudent water management is crucial for our economy. We cannot afford the waste that comes from neglected infrastructure. This bill contains over \$120 million in funding for Federal water assets in our State and includes the Navajo-Gallup pipeline, and the Middle Rio Grande Project.

We have been struggling with intense drought. Rural areas and small towns in particular have been deeply affected. Some small communities are seeing their wells run dry. They need help and they need it now. The \$1.7 billion in USDA rural development water funding is absolutely essential. This historic drought requires that we rethink how we use water throughout the West. We need to be smart about our strategy. We need strategies that work for individual communities. That is why I advocated for greater funding for the WaterSMART grants, helping local governments and water districts improve water efficiency.

The conference report promotes an innovative drought water-sharing arrangement along the Rio Grande, where we are facing difficult tradeoffs between agriculture, the environment, and urban uses.

This bill also helps meet our obligations to our Nation's veterans. The backlog at the VA is unacceptable. Frankly, it is an outrage. No veteran should wait 1 year or more on their claim. This bill funds a 10-part plan to resolve this problem: improving IT infrastructure, better training, and hiring additional personnel. We dedicated \$250 million specifically to carry out the VA's rural health initiative to ensure that veterans in rural and remote

areas are not left behind, utilizing telehealth solutions and mobile clinics, bringing veterans the care they deserve without long drives.

I will keep fighting for veterans in New Mexico, including those in rural areas, making sure they have access to the health care they have earned. Many veterans are understandably upset with the recent change in the COLA for working-age military retirees. I am outraged too. This cut was included in the recent 2-year budget agreement passed in December. I did not support this provision and I am working hard to repeal it. Thankfully, this bill ensures disabled veterans and spousal benefits will not be subject to the cuts. Congress has the rest of 2014 to do the right thing. We need to fix this mistake for good for all veterans.

This year, I have had the privilege to chair the Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government. I am proud of the work we have done to safeguard our financial system, protect consumers and support job creation and to strengthen our Federal courts.

The bill provides \$112 million for the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, fighting terrorist financing, money laundering, narcotics trafficking, and other illicit financial activity.

To protect the public and consumers, the bill fully funds three key agencies. For the CPSC, \$118 million to help protect the public against risk from injury of consumer products; for the FTC, \$298 million to combat consumer fraud, fight identity theft, and promote consumer privacy; for the FCC, \$340 million to maintain robust networks for emergency communications, political debate, social interaction, and business transactions.

To support job creation, the bill provides \$929 million for the Small Business Administration. It also supports the Small Business Development Centers to provide critical guidance to small businesses and emerging entrepreneurs. The bill supports community development in underserved areas, including tribal nations, providing \$226 million for the CDFI Fund.

For the Federal courts, the bill provides a much needed increase, \$6.5 billion in discretionary funding, 5 percent above the fiscal year level of 2013. Budget cuts have forced the courts to downsize and furlough staff. This bill provides the judiciary the staffing and resources it needs for court offices, probation, pretrial services, and in particular Federal defender offices will be adequately staffed.

The bill also calls for significant investments in the government's capital projects. For the first time in 3 years, it provides the General Services Administration a total of \$1.653 billion for construction and repair of Federal buildings and courthouses. I would like

to thank my ranking member Senator JOHANNNS for his effort this year. He was friendly, honest, and straightforward. It has been a real privilege to work with him.

Finally, I must thank our subcommittee staff, Marianne Upton, Diana Hamilton, Emily Sharp. Like all the committee staff, they have spent time over the holidays, on weekends, and uncounted long hours to help complete the final bill.

In closing, I am very happy to be here talking about the good work of the Appropriations Committee and that good work that has been produced in this bill that is before us for New Mexico and for the Nation.

But I must mention one problem that remains. It is a great concern for many of us from the West. Funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program, known as PILT, has expired. These funds compensate counties in New Mexico and throughout the country where the Federal Government owns a good deal of land, land that cannot be taxed, cannot be developed, cannot be used to help pay for services such as roads and schools and public health and public safety.

PILT is a lifeline to my constituents in many rural communities in New Mexico. I joined with my friend Senator ENZI of Wyoming urging that this crucial funding be included in this bill. Unfortunately, it was not. I realize PILT has not been in the appropriations bill for several years. In fact, it is preferable for it to receive mandatory, long-term funding. But we must find a solution and we must find that solution soon. I am calling for PILT to be included in the upcoming farm bill conference report.

It is a commonsense solution to this very real problem. PILT is a long-term funding program. Our rural communities across the West need consistency. They need to be able to plan for long-term projects. Mandatory long-term funding is the only real solution. I hope my colleagues will work with me.

With that, I would urge all of my colleagues to vote yes on the Omnibus appropriations bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, if I might respond to the very generous comments of the Senator from New Mexico about the work of the committee, I would also like to respond to his comments about PILT. The Senator from New Mexico has spoken very eloquently, as have other Senators from the West, about the need for this Payment in Lieu of Taxes.

The Presiding Officer is a newcomer. I am sure he finds that we speak a different language and our constituents say: We use TILT and PILT. They wonder if we are tilting in the right direction. But to use plain English and plain

needs of States that have a large amount of land that is held by the Federal Government, PILT stands for Payment in Lieu of Taxes.

So there is tremendous land owned by the Federal Government in New Mexico; am I correct?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. The Senator is absolutely correct. In some of our counties, 70 percent of the land in the county is Federal Government land. So what happens, as the chair pointed out, is the Federal Government says because that cannot be developed and it cannot be taxed, we are going to pay you in lieu of taxes.

Ms. MIKULSKI. But they have not been paying?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. No. The program which has been in place a very long time has expired. We have run out of money. These counties need to be able to plan for their projects. So that is where we are.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I think this is an issue of fairness and justice. I know the Presiding Officer comes to the Senate as a mayor. I came through the route of starting on the city council. We are local government people. We know how we had to struggle with unfunded mandates. Many of us have large Federal institutions in our State that we love, such as the U.S. Naval Academy in my district.

That does not pay taxes, but, my gosh, we are happy to have them. I think we have to resolve this PILT issue. I would say to the Senator from New Mexico, who has spoken to me frequently about this issue, and to all of the Senators from the West on both sides of the aisle: Let's work on this.

I pledge to you that as we move on fiscal year 2015, if it is appropriate to be in appropriations, we will be doing it. But I will also work with other relevant authorizing committees. We have to crack this problem. It has been languishing far too long. I think it is a justice issue, that if the Federal Government owns land on which it doesn't pay taxes, prohibits it then from being placed in other developmental use that could be taxed, we have to in some way pay our fair share.

Isn't that the Senator's perspective?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. That is exactly my perspective. In these counties, the programs run out. The counties have planned on this money because they have been getting it year after year, and we have to find a way to do this.

I wish to applaud Chairwoman MIKULSKI. They are our people, as the Senator knows—there are Western Senators, Democrats, Republicans, and they have all talked with the chairwoman. We have been talking to the authorizing committees. We have talked to Senator STABENOW in Agriculture in terms of the farm bill. We think there is a way this can be worked out.

I am very encouraged to hear that the chairwoman also believes it can be worked out, is willing to look at this next year in the appropriations process, and work with the authorizers to see this gets done.

Ms. MIKULSKI. As the Senator's colleague and also someone who comes out of local government who knows the challenges local governments face, we have worked on this, again, on a bipartisan basis.

I have spoken to Senator STABENOW and believe she is willing to proceed on how we could do this as well.

I think the Senator for his comments. I think we have a path forward to talk with Senator STABENOW, with others who are involved in the farm bill, and to move forward, and yet move forward on this bill and lay the groundwork for 2015 so we don't have this recurring problem.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I wish to tell the Senator how much all of the Senators on this issue appreciate the chairwoman's hard work. I think we need to stay focused. What happens with these counties is they wish to know early on whether the money is coming and how much. If they don't know, they aren't able to spend it wisely.

Ms. MIKULSKI. If I could respond to the Senator.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Please.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Municipal government is usually in a different fiscal year. Baltimore City Council began January 1, the Federal Government, of course, is October 1, and we are finally getting settled on January 16. We are a little behind the schedule, but we are not behind the eight ball. We are going to work on this.

I thank the Senator for his work, along with Senator JOHANNNS, a former Agriculture Secretary and Governor, I might add, and the way the Senator worked on the Subcommittee on Financial Services.

The Presiding Officer, a Senator from New Jersey, took the seat of the late and beloved Senator Frank Lautenberg, and Senator UDALL took Senator Lautenberg's seat as the chair of the Financial Services Subcommittee. Senator Lautenberg would be very pleased to see this today. Although he would want to be here, the fact that the two Senators are in the Senate is very good.

Senator UDALL essentially had a battlefield promotion. The Senator proceeded with such diligence and had constantly in his mind the mission of the agencies, enormous controversy at IRS, and had to step into some very complicated issues. The Senator's faithfulness to duty, the way he went about it with such diligence and verve, is indeed to be commended. I know Senator Lautenberg would believe that his gavel passed into very competent hands. We thank the Senator. We also

wish to thank Senator JOHANNIS because he helped to carry the momentum.

This is the way the Senate ought to be. Even in a time of great sadness we were able to do our job.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mrs. MURRAY. As the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee leaves, I thank the Senator for her tremendous leadership. I thank the Senator for her leadership in getting this bill to the floor.

I come to the floor today to talk about another topic, and that is the 1.4 million Americans who have lost their unemployment benefits and the over 70,000 people who continue to lose them each week. The Senate has found itself in an all-too-familiar place. Once again, some Republicans are refusing to be able to say yes even to the most reasonable of offers, and it is a problem we have seen in this body too many times.

Over the course of the 16-day shutdown last October, we tried time and time again to find compromises to end that manufactured crisis, return Federal workers to their jobs, and reopen our Federal parks and buildings. But for too long Republicans refused to listen to the American people and embrace compromise. Instead, they were standing firmly in a partisan corner—and it is a pattern of what we saw last year in our efforts to pass a budget.

In March of the past year—as every Senator, I am sure, will remember—we spent a week on the Senate floor in a very open process debating and voting on amendment after amendment until the very wee hours of the morning. On March 23 we finally passed our budget after the House had passed theirs the day earlier. I thought at that time the next step would be to start a conference as quickly as possible. I thought it was a no-brainer.

This is what the American people were expecting, the two sides to get in a room, work out our differences, and avoid another crisis. Every time we tried to start that budget conference—21 times in the Senate—a Senate Republican stood up and said no. They no longer wanted to go to conference, they no longer wanted to follow regular

order, they only wanted to obstruct. That took us to a government shutdown, a debt limit crisis, and a lot of pain for families and communities across the country before we could get them in a room with us in a budget conference and agree to a deal the American people expected.

That has been sort of the Republican playbook in the Senate. They say no for as long as they can, they play politics for as long as they can, they hold out and obstruct as long as they can, until the pressure from angry Americans finally reaches a fever pitch, and then, when it is far too late, hopefully come to their senses.

It is getting to be far too late for every single American who lost their unemployment benefits. In fact, as last week's unemployment report showed, nearly ½ million Americans recently gave up entirely. Those who haven't given up spent every single day desperately working to get on a job. Unemployment benefits make all the difference for them and their families while they scour the want ads, pound the pavement, and send out resume after resume.

In fact, I have heard from many people in my home State of Washington, story after story from men and women. One of those was from a man named Gary who lives in Spokane. Gary wrote to me about his wife Linda and how at "56 years young" with a degree in accounting and an MBA in finance Linda is still unable to find work. After exhausting her unemployment benefits, Gary and Linda are now forced to live off of his Social Security disability insurance. They are now facing monthly medical expenses and rent of over \$1,000 just to stay healthy and keep a roof over their heads. Gary's benefits cover about \$900 of those expenses.

With each passing day this Congress fails to act Gary and Linda find themselves further and further behind. Gary concluded in his note to me in a simple plea, written in all capital letters, that said: "PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE HELP!"

I also recently heard from a woman who was laid off from her job at a plant in Keyport, WA.

She said:

This year, I have applied for over 200 jobs and, in spite of a stellar resume, have only gotten 4 phone interviews.

I have lowered my standards throughout the year and applied for jobs far below my pay grade to no avail . . . my husband and I have had to claim bankruptcy . . . [and] I truly worry about losing my home and displacing my children.

These are real people, as the Presiding Officer well knows.

I have heard from Traci, a former executive assistant with 20 years of experience, in Everett, WA. After taking time off from work because she had to care for her dying mother and a daughter who was suffering from bipolar disorder and drug addiction, Traci found herself without a job.

After her mother passed away, Traci fell ill, and it made it very hard for her to look for work. While Traci was receiving unemployment benefits that were barely enough to cover the care her daughter required, she was just barely making it. She told me that now she cannot afford food and has lost over 50 pounds. She spends every day searching high and low for one break. She said: "I just need time for someone to give me a chance."

A chance. That is all she is asking us for. That is all they are asking, all of these people. They don't want a hand-out, they don't want to be a burden. They need support while they get back on their feet and on the job.

We in the Senate need Republican support to do that. We are ready and willing to move forward. We have worked to find compromise. When Republicans wanted this extension to be paid for, even though it has been extended time and time again without pay-fors under Republican Congresses and Republican Presidents, we said OK, we will try and find that.

That wasn't enough. When Republicans signaled that they didn't want to pay for an extension by closing tax loopholes for the wealthiest Americans, we again looked to find a compromise.

When we put forward savings from policies that have either been agreed to by both sides or have been taken from proposals championed by Republicans, they once again said it wasn't good enough.

When they asked for amendments, we offered amendments. They again said no.

Unfortunately, Republicans have now reverted once again to pure politics aimed not at the vast majority of American people who want to see this extended, but instead squarely at their most conservative audience possible. Nowhere is that more evident than in the pay-fors they have offered—whether it is the minority leader's amendment that predictably seeks to undercut health care reform or the Ayotte amendment, which is a very disturbing signal in that after joining us in passing comprehensive immigration legislation, Republicans are now doing a complete 180 on immigration in an election year. With that amendment, Senate Republicans are indicating that they are actually going to begin targeting U.S. citizens, children who are U.S. citizens, simply because they were born to undocumented workers. I think that is shameful, and I am shocked that we have reached this point.

These policies aren't going anywhere. Republicans know that. In the end, all they amount to is nothing more than delaying tactics while American families' lives are hanging in the balance.

Make no mistake, families across the country are teetering on the brink today. In fact, nowhere is that more

clear than the last heartbreaking story I came to the floor to share with you. I received this yesterday from a woman named Shiela, who for the last 13 years has worked a middle-management job at a national corporation in my State. She started her letter by saying: "I've never written to any government official, but I'm compelled to do so today."

Then she told me how she, her husband, and two children had lived a fairly comfortable life, but all of that changed last year when her employer decided to downsize, and she was one of the many Americans who was laid off.

Her husband, who works in real estate, was struggling in a very weak market, as we all know. Suddenly, Shiela's family of four found themselves relying on just over \$500 a week in unemployment assistance.

Having graduated from college and business school, Sheila—like so many others—found herself in need of these benefits, and she said never in a million years did she think she would be in that spot.

These are her words:

I've worked for so many years, paid my taxes, did the right thing for others . . . and now I need help.

In October, Sheila's family lost their house. They are now renting. They do not know if their daughter will still qualify for the student loans she is currently receiving. Sheila's checking account is now overdrawn. Her car payments are past due. She started getting notices from her utility companies. And as my staff talked with her yesterday, she said she was headed out the door to apply for food stamps.

Because of the Republicans' refusal to work with us, we will once again be going home to constituents such as Sheila to explain why this extension hasn't gotten done. I know I will be pointing out the fact that we have compromised time and time again to try to get something done here; that we have all but begged Republicans from the start to work with us on this effort, but I can't help but wonder how Republicans are going to explain their actions.

While I normally don't come to the floor to give advice to my friends on the other side of the aisle, I would certainly like to suggest they do not stare into the eyes of someone who just had to apply for food stamps for the very first time in their life and explain that they can't act until ObamaCare is destroyed. And I hope they do not tell those who are about to lose their home they can't help them until they find a way to cut childcare credits for U.S. children. And I hope they do not tell Americans who spend their days working hard and applying for jobs that pay a fraction of what they have been making they will only be willing to help them if all of their political demands are met. And I especially hope they do not think making arguments about

procedure or amendments or arcane rules of the Senate that only people here in DC pay attention to is an excuse for walking away from 1.4 million Americans at a time when all they want to see is results.

What I do hope is that the experiences they have coming face-to-face with these families will change their tone when they come back here in a week. I hope the stories, such as the ones I shared here today, will once again be the pressure that Republicans have required over and over to finally act. And I hope that soon they will join us in passing our nonpartisan, commonsense bill and finally delivering some certainty and some security for struggling Americans who deserve it.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. MURRAY. Yes, I will.

Ms. MIKULSKI. First, I thank the Senator for the work she did in the Budget Committee, because that budget she worked so diligently on on a bipartisan basis with PAUL RYAN has enabled us to have the allocation for discretionary spending that has enabled our coming here today to make sure the government will function, that it will work as hard as the taxpayers who pay for it, and that we will have no government shutdown and no crisis environment. So I really want to thank the Senator for that.

The question I have for the Senator is in regard to her role as the chair of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing, Urban Development, and Related Agencies. Has the Senator had a chance to look at what she thinks will be the positive job impact of what she has been able to do? Because the Senator funds transportation for the United States. There are TIGER grants that are so important to Maryland and the Port of Baltimore, and also the issues related to housing. In my own hometown the renovation of housing for the elderly—most of it built in the 1970s and 1980s under Carter and Reagan—needs to be rehabilitated. They need to be reformed so they meet new ADA standards, all of which would put men and women to work where, in my State, the job rate among construction workers is enormously high. So building bridges and building homes would sure go a long way. Has the Senator had a chance to look at any of that?

Mrs. MURRAY. Let me respond to the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. President.

I came to the floor today to talk about the millions of Americans who are in need of extended unemployment benefits, but I would tell my colleague that everyone I have ever talked to on unemployment would much rather have a job. As to the question the Senator has asked me in relation to my role as chair of the subcommittee on transportation and housing and the bill

we are about to pass here in the Senate, it will have an impact on creating jobs and building that infrastructure so people will have that job certainty. It is extremely important.

On the transportation side of my appropriations bill, the TIGER grant program the Senator has described will bring not only jobs to communities but real projects that will help build a foundation for future economic growth.

There is no one who questions that transportation infrastructure brings jobs today, provides economic development for the future, and is absolutely the way people get to work and home in a timely manner, bringing certainty for so many families we know. That is a critical part of my subcommittee.

The other part of my subcommittee, as the Senator mentioned, is housing. Those issues are so important. I think most people forget if you don't have a place to live it is pretty hard to go to work. Providing some of these programs we do, such as section 8, and some of the reforms we have put in here, is absolutely critical for so many Americans to be able to have the stability and to get out and get a job, so that we don't have to be arguing over unemployment extension here but actually how we can make the investments so this country can work and survive.

I hope we can provide those extensions today, as we struggle to get back on our feet, but meanwhile pass this critical bill the Senator has authored so we can provide jobs and economic support, which is what people want.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Senator for her tireless effort.

I want to comment on the work the Senator from Washington State did in her role chairing the subcommittee on transportation and housing. What a bipartisan effort that subcommittee put forth. Senator MURRAY and the Senator from Maine Ms. COLLINS worked on a bipartisan basis on transportation, which is what the committee funds, and on housing.

When I speak of housing, this is housing that is primarily related to meeting compelling human need. It also has the money for Community Development Block Grants.

Going back to the days when I referred to the Senator as "Mr. Mayor," now "Mr. President"—the Presiding Officer—we know—City Council Barb and formerly Mayor Booker—what Community Development Block Grant money means in our local communities. In my State, Community Development Block Grant money is key to local governments solving local problems without a "one size fits all" from Washington.

What I like about the Community Development Block Grant money is that its criteria for funding is it has to deal with blight, it has to deal with unemployment, and it has to meet compelling human need. And whatever

they do, it also usually results in good-paying jobs in construction. But it is not decided by Washington: Thou shalt build such-and-such under such-and-such Washington rules. It is decided in Newark, in Baltimore, in Phoenix.

What is so important about the CDBG money in transportation and housing is money comes locally. There is Federal criteria—again, eliminate blight, deal with unemployment, and it has to meet a documented need—but it is decided locally by mayors and city councils, by county commissioners, or whatever the form of local governance.

So this is what they did. They worked on a bipartisan basis for adequate funding for CDBG to meet compelling need in the area of housing, particularly housing for the elderly—the so-called section 202s, many of which were built a long time ago and now need to be retrofitted and remodeled. Again, this meets need—coming up to the compliance of what we now know in things such as universal design to keep people out of long-term care or assisted living. This is a wonderful way to meet human need and also generate jobs. So they have done a great job.

I wish also to comment on the leadership they provided, and it was across all of the appropriators in this committee. We are not a committee that makes a lot of fuss; we are not usually a bunch of chest-pounders harrumphing about a policy. We were once referred to in a major historical work about our work as the quiet guardians of the purse. We are not quiet while working with each other, but the work is not well known or well noticed because we have done it in a tone of solving problems and keeping the problem the problem, and not making personalities the problem. That has been done by every single subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee in the Senate. I am proud of them. I think transportation and housing has been an exemplary one, but we will hear this today from others who will be coming up to speak about it. We have done a good job, and I hope other Senators will come to the floor to talk about the work of the committee. If they have any questions, if they want to debate or comment, we are open to those discussions.

I do hope we can move the bill along. I know cloture doesn't expire until tomorrow, but, gosh, if we all come and everyone could have their say, I think we could finish it today. It might be late, but I think we could finish, and then go on with other pressing Senate business. So I urge those who wish to speak on the bill to come to the floor.

I know other Senators will be coming, but until then, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the business on the floor, which is the Omnibus appropriations bill. Let me start by thanking Chairwoman MIKULSKI for her leadership. She has put long hours in on this over the Christmas and New Year's break. When most people were home with families and doing things in their home State, on vacation, she never stopped working. Her team, her staff on the Appropriations Committee, never stopped working. The staff, as always, is kind of the unsung hero around here. They did so many great things to put this together, both Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate—everybody had to work together to get this done and I am proud they did.

I am also proud to be one of the appropriations subcommittee chairs who was able to work on this legislation. As you know, I am chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. I have worked with my counterpart Senator BLUNT, the ranking member of the subcommittee, to craft part of this bipartisan bill. Again, Senator BLUNT has been wonderful to work with. We appreciate him and his staff as well.

When people hear agriculture appropriations, they often think about farming. That is understandable. We all understand why. That is certainly a key part of the bill, but that is not all it does. Our bill helps farmers with operating loans, conservation practices, marketing. It funds programs that benefit rural communities such as clean drinking water and rural housing, and it supports nutrition programs that help kids across the country.

It also funds international food assistance such as Food for Peace that allows crops grown here at home to be distributed around the world.

This bill, in addition, touches on the Food and Drug Administration. That is an agency that is vitally important to the United States. Here again, just like agriculture is one of the core strengths of the U.S. economy, pharmaceuticals is another area where America leads the world. It is critically important that we have a highly functioning FDA in order for us to keep that competitive advantage.

This bill overall has a huge impact over the U.S. economy, but my subcommittee's part in this bill also has a very significant bearing over the U.S. economy that will continue this recovery. Getting people back to work, getting people focused on domestic jobs and the fact that we make things here and grow things here is critically important for our future.

For example, look at what it is doing to my home State. If I could, I could go around to each one of these desks in

the Senate and talk about specific things it is doing in everyone's State, but just in my home State, it is providing funding for many of our universities, including the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, to conduct cutting edge agricultural research. It is supporting economic development grants for the Delta Regional Authority, which is in our region of the country, to boost the quality of life in the Delta region. It is providing our kids with a safe and stable food supply by supporting, again in our State, the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center in Little Rock, and it is investing in the technology of tomorrow by funding the National Center for Toxicological Research in Jefferson County, AR.

The NTCR, which is part of the FDA, is also very important and people take it for granted because they don't know what it does, but it is very important. Now they have a new focus on nanotechnology, which they have been doing in the last few years, and that will be a game changer as well. Those are just a few of the challenges.

I could stand here for an hour or so talking about the benefits of the bill and talking about all the provisions and lots of matters that are contained in this bill, but I think overall it is most important to note the agriculture appropriations bill and the omnibus bill overall are an agreement reached because of bipartisanship. We have to look back at what Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN did. I appreciate what they did. They laid the groundwork for us to be here today. It was a bipartisan effort, went through both Houses, bipartisan, big votes, and we saw a huge vote in the House of Representatives yesterday. I hope we will see a large vote in the Senate today or tomorrow or Saturday, whenever we get this done. Certainly I hope it is going to be today. Nonetheless, this is a victory for bipartisanship and the agriculture appropriations part of that is important.

But overall, the fact is that Congress is back in business. We are getting things done. We are getting back to what our chairwoman would call regular order. We are working together and that is the only way we can get things done in Washington. But it is also the only way we can secure our Nation's economic future. I hope we will see a lot more bipartisanship in 2014. I know it is an election year. All the talking heads tell us it is going to be hard to do, but certainly I hope we can get that done and 2014, I hope, is a much more productive year in the Congress than 2013 was.

I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, again I rise to compliment a subcommittee

chairman. The Senator from Arkansas took over this committee for the first time this year, so he is a new chairman, but he was not new to the issues. I thank him for the work he did and the bipartisan tone which he set. Again, he has done an excellent job, working with the Senator from Missouri Mr. BLUNT. What was impressive—when we say agriculture, that is one word, but agriculture in this country is very diverse. Am I right that the Senator handles everything from artichokes to catfish?

Mr. PRYOR. We sure do. We handle, as the Senator says, everything from artichokes to catfish and everything in between. In our bill we take the entire Department of Agriculture, with the exception of forestry—that goes to another subcommittee—and we also do FDA. If you look at—for example, I mentioned, agriculture is one of the core strengths of the U.S. economy. It may not be very exciting. We may take it for granted because in this country we have always had productive agriculture, but if we look at the different advantages it gives us as a nation in lots of different ways, we need to keep that core strength going, just like the pharmaceuticals and the Federal Drug Administration; it is critically important.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I also thank the Senator for what he and the Senator from Missouri did, what Mr. BLUNT did, in terms of food safety. I believe when we did the continuing resolution we were—and also when we were shut down—food safety faced the need for inspectors. We both share, in our States, chicken. Chicken is a \$2 billion industry over on the Eastern Shore. A lot of good people have good jobs because of good chicken. But without those inspectors, our poultry industry would have been halted.

What were the consequences in those days and what has the Senator done in this bill?

Mr. PRYOR. That is exactly right. Had we not had those food inspectors, it literally could have shut down the poultry plants—but also the beef and pork and other types of facilities—overnight. It could have shut them down and been very disruptive.

One of the great things about agriculture in the United States is we have created a lot of efficiencies in the agriculture economy. So when you have something disruptive such as this, these inspectors can't inspect the meat and they just cannot operate, you start to cause all kinds of disruptions, all kinds of inefficiencies.

Then what happens is the price of that chicken fillet at the grocery store goes up. When we go to a restaurant it goes up.

We do not need to jeopardize our food supply, either on food safety grounds or on supply grounds, because we have—if we look at the United States

and what we spend as a per-capita share of our income, we spend less on food than any country in the world. It is in relative terms. We have to use that per capita, because if we have a higher standard of living here, and we do, but it is something we are very fortunate about and because of this legislation and because of what Senator STABENOW is doing with the farm bill—it is all a team effort—we are going to keep that advantage and keep that food and fiber cheap.

Those are all domestic jobs. That is very important. This is growth here, raised here, processed here, and served here. It is great for domestic jobs. It has a huge ripple effect on the U.S. economy. This bill is part of that and I am proud to have a hand in it.

Ms. MIKULSKI. The Senator from Arkansas as well as his ranking member, the Senator from Missouri Mr. BLUNT, has done a great job. Sometimes Congress gets the rap when we grow the deficit, but here in agriculture, the subcommittee grows good jobs and they grow them by making sure we have a solid approach to agriculture itself, where farmers and producers and distributors are able to do their job. And the work of the FDA, through food safety, has not only kept America safe, but it enables those who produce food in our country to have the right inspections so we have the right confidence to go out to the supermarket.

We are very proud of what they do.

I yield the floor.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I would say in conclusion, as I look on the floor and I see Senators from Alabama, from Maryland, from Maine, from Connecticut, agriculture touches each of these States. It touches them differently. Agriculture is truly a matter of national pride. Every State contributes, basically every person benefits from it.

Again, I was honored to be part of this. The chairwoman deserves a lot of credit for working in a bipartisan way and getting it through both Houses.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am pleased to follow my colleague from Arkansas and join him in applauding the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee Senator MIKULSKI for her extraordinary and historic work on this measure which serves so well our values and goals and our traditions in the Senate of bipartisan service, putting America first over partisanship. I join my very distinguished colleague from Arkansas who has highlighted so well the values served by agriculture in America and served well by this appropriations bill and by the measure Chairwoman STABENOW is seeking to forge, again through bipartisan work involving both Houses of this body.

Agriculture serves so many of our basic values in this Nation—environmental and consumer values, patriotism and pride in a way of life. In Connecticut, we know deeply and urgently how threatened are these values and traditions, this way of life and the environmental consumer issues at stake.

I am pleased that we are near a compromise, on the verge and the cusp of an agreement on the farm bill that will serve the interests of farmers in Connecticut and around the country.

The dozens of dairy farmers with relatively small farms around Connecticut have said to me again and again that they need help and certainty. That was the message they gave me as I visited their farms around the State of Connecticut time and again, and now apparently help and certainty are on the way.

I am pleased that the farm bill conferees have reached a compromise on the dairy provisions in the farm bill. We are going to be studying them very closely. They have only just been announced. Apparently, the new deal announced by the farm bill conferees would keep the margin insurance program but remove the Dairy Market Stabilization Program. In place of that Dairy Market Stabilization Program, the deal revives the recently expired Milk Income Loss Contract Program known as the MILC Program. The Milk Income Loss Contract Program is a transitional program while the new margin insurance plan is being set up by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Without going into all of the details, I think this agreement represents progress, and I am going to carefully scrutinize it and seek to improve it from the standpoint of Connecticut's dairy farmers. But there can be no doubt—none whatsoever to anyone in this body, which I think we would all agree—as to the importance of the milk industry, beginning with the dairy farmers. Indeed, reflecting the importance of milk to America is the fact that it is the only beverage, other than water, that is permitted on the floor of the Senate, as far as I know.

I am pleased and proud to have a glass of milk on the floor today. This is a first for me in my young experience as a Senator. I am not sure if it is a correct parliamentary inquiry, but I say to the Presiding Officer: Got milk? I'm willing to share.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. This issue is a very serious one because the lives and livelihoods of our farmers are at stake. There is the open space that may be sacrificed if dairy farms surrender and are forced to abandon this way of life due to the increasingly high costs of feed, fuel, and labor that are pressing them as they also encounter potential price reductions. So they are squeezed. Dairy farmers are squeezed.

In Connecticut we mostly have small family-owned farms like the Fairvue Farms in Woodstock, Hytone Farm in Coventry, Mapleleaf Farm in Hebron, Fort Hill Farms in Thompson, Cushman Farms in Franklin, and Graywall Farms in Lebanon. I have visited a number of them. I know firsthand how hard these farmers work simply to keep their farms going. These six farms make up the Farmer's Cow, a group of Connecticut family-owned farms dedicated to producing some of the very best milk in America.

Their milk is so good, in fact, they opened a milk bar—that is right, a milk bar—in Mansfield called the Farmer's Cow Calfe & Creamery where you can choose from five or six different types and flavors of milk to help wash down their delicious and fresh sandwiches, salads, cheeses, and ice creams.

Visit Connecticut and visit the Farmer's Cow Calfe. These are the farms we need to support and keep going. These are the hard-working men and women we need to support. We can and must support our dairy farmers in Connecticut and around the country.

In fact, in Connecticut we have more than 150 dairy farms on 70,000 acres—18 percent of our State's land—which translates into \$2 billion in economic activity for the State of Connecticut alone. These farmers need help. They need stability and certainty. Unfortunately, some Members in the House of Representatives have delayed the farm bill for far too long, leading dairy producers to wonder whether the Federal Government is a friend or a foe to their businesses.

Even though Connecticut's dairy industry is a significant contributor to the State's agricultural industry and general economy, the industry's strength and survival depend greatly on the support that the Federal Government can and must provide.

In Connecticut, in 1975 there were 817 dairy farms. Today there are 150 dairy farms. I think that experience is probably reflected by every State represented in this body. Every one of my colleagues, perhaps, can attest to the diminishing number of dairy farmers and farmers in general. Connecticut is doing its part and doing its share so that farms in our State are sustained, and the Federal Government ought to do its part as well.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Connecticut ranks 45 out of 50 States in receiving agriculture-related subsidies. Connecticut received \$127 million between 1995 and 2010 compared to the \$22 billion received by Iowa and the \$24 billion that went to Texas. I have nothing against those States. I am not criticizing those amounts, but the amount we received in Connecticut is a fraction—a small fraction—of what is needed to sustain our dairy farmers, and that is why I

will be urging and advocating for dairy farmers in Connecticut under this deal. Their interests are shared nationwide. We need to make sure that the agreement announced yesterday by the farm bill conferees—keeping the margin insurance program, but removing the Dairy Market Stabilization Program and reviving the MILC Program—truly serves milk producers in our Nation, not just the processors but consumers and farmers. We must do right by America's dairy farmers, an often under-represented group in this body, and make sure we do right by our farmers and consumers by giving them the certainty and help they need to continue a way of life and a product that is vital to our health and well-being as a Nation.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Will the Senator from Connecticut yield for a question?

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I am pleased to yield for a question.

Ms. MIKULSKI. First, let me thank my colleague for his generous words about the work of this committee. What is on the Senator's desk? I am drinking water.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I have milk. I offered to share my milk with the Presiding Officer. I know that Maine has its share of farmers. I understand the Presiding Officer is not allowed, under our Senate rules, to respond in substance, but I would be glad to share with the chairman of the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I say to the Senator from Connecticut: I have been in the Senate for 25 years, and I have seen a lot of Senators try to put a lot of different drinks in those glasses, but I have never seen milk on the Senate floor. Is that permissible?

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I am told it is a permissible beverage on the floor. If it is not, I am sure I will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Ms. MIKULSKI. For all of us who just yearn for a calcium-rich diet, it is refreshing to see that. We salute Connecticut and its strong agricultural presence in our economy, and I thank the Senator for bringing a nutritious beverage to the Senate floor that is allowed under the rules. If it is not allowed, I am sure we can have the appropriate committee of jurisdiction allow it.

I think what the Senator is saying is we have a lot of people in our country who work in agriculture, and agriculture is not one field. Agriculture in the United States of America is diverse, and we can't let these small farmers fade away.

I am seeing new, emerging farmers in my State—whether it is for dairy or beef, and so on. With the so-called farm-to-fork movement, this could be the dawn of a new age in agriculture while we preserve that which has been

traditional and fed America during good times and bad. So I thank the Senator for his work and his advocacy, and I look forward to working with him.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I thank the chairwoman for her remarks. I wish to express to her, as I do to all of my colleagues, that agriculture and farming really are a way of life. We need to make sure our family farms and all farms are sustained. We sometimes tend to neglect or take them for granted.

Again, I thank the distinguished Senator from Maryland for the time and attention she has devoted over the many years she has been here to the farms of Maryland and the farms of America. I think it is a cause we share. Whether it is Alabama or Georgia or Maine or any other State represented on the floor here today, we need to make sure we provide the safety net where it is necessary and the support when it is due but also keep in mind that consumers ultimately are the beneficiaries, the men and women and children, having four children myself. Also, having for a time actually worked on a farm, I know this product is central to the American existence and the American way of life.

I thank the chairwoman, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I see the Senator from Arizona is on the floor, and I would inquire of the Senator if at 12:30 he is planning to speak on the War Powers Act.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the chairwoman. I was awaiting the arrival of my colleague from Virginia, who was going to speak first.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I say to the Senator from Arizona, I think this is an important discussion. We will do it any way the Senator from Arizona wishes. If my colleague wishes to proceed, that would be fine with this side of the aisle. Whatever way the Senator from Arizona wishes to proceed on this important topic is fine.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Senator from Maryland. I hope the Presiding Officer will chastise the Senator from Virginia for being tardy. I know he is very capable of that. So I will go ahead and begin, although I had planned on the Senator from Virginia being first. He is the sponsor of the bill which I am cosponsoring. I thank the chairwoman.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. McCAIN and Mr. KAINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 1939 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I wish to talk about the omnibus for a brief time before Senator LEAHY has some remarks to be made.

First of all, I thank the chair and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee and their staffs for their hard work to draft a sensible funding bill that I think meets the needs of the American people, a bill that helps us move past the stalemate and disagreements of the past few years and does what the American people sent us to do; that is, roll up our sleeves, work together, work hard, and govern.

Recently, folks have put politics and partisanship ahead of our constituents and our responsibilities, and the results have not been pretty. But thanks to Chairman MIKULSKI and Ranking Member SHELBY and their counterparts in the House of Representatives, we now have a responsible bipartisan bill we can work with, one that invests in our future to strengthen our economy but that makes tough choices so we can continue to get our fiscal house in order.

Approving this bill helps avoid another round of devastating sequester cuts, avoid a government shutdown, and avoid some of the bitterness that is dragging down economic growth.

In Montana, our seniors, children, women, and civilian members of the military—to name a few—felt the sequester cuts head on. Kids could not go to Head Start. The elderly could not get meals, women faced cuts to reproductive health programs, Defense Department employees were forced to stay home, and our military was dangerously close to being hollowed out.

This bill makes smart choices to continue to reduce our deficit, while investing in core national priorities—those being education, health care, infrastructure, research and development, and defense.

At the same time, it continues our fiscally responsible approach to governing by reducing or eliminating funding for dozens of programs that had been left on autopilot after 2 years of continuing resolutions, and it repeals the recently enacted reduction in the annual cost-of-living adjustments for disabled military retirees and for survivors of military retirees.

This particular change is very important for folks who have been medically retired and for survivors, the folks who are more likely to be on a fixed income, and it was done without any fanfare and without any grandstanding. Senator MIKULSKI and Senator SHELBY figured out how to fix it.

Let's be clear. This is one step in a two-step process. We have more work

to do to address the military pension issue to make sure it works for the men and women of the military who have made great sacrifices on our behalf.

I also thank Chairman REED and Senator MURKOWSKI for putting forward a smart Interior bill. By ending sequestration, we are able to make some real progress in Indian Country and in protecting some of America's most unique landscapes.

The Interior bill increases funding for the Indian Health Service, which is necessary, it increases funding for Indian education and for promoting good stewardship of our public lands.

This Interior bill is critically important to States such as Montana. It will improve the quality of life for folks on our seven reservations. It will create more tourism and recreational opportunities throughout Montana. I am concerned, however, by the absence of one measure. It is a measure approved by the Senate Appropriations and Rules Committees. It is bipartisan. It saves money. It brings more transparency and accountability to a town that needs more of both. More than one-third of the Senate is a cosponsor.

This act is called the Senate Campaign Disclosure Parity Act. Right now, candidates for the Senate do not have to electronically file their campaign finance reports with the Federal Elections Commission. Now they can voluntarily e-file. Maybe the Presiding Officer did. But many of our colleagues do not.

Instead, all a Senate candidate has to do is take a big stack of documents, drop them at the office door of the Secretary of the Senate, and head back to the campaign trail. Then what happens? The Secretary of the Senate then sends the documents to the FEC which spends time and money hiring contractors to put those reports on line where they can be viewed by the public. This costs taxpayers nearly \$500,000 and God knows how many staff hours each year to make this information available. But the biggest cost is to the American people, particularly to our voters, who have the right to know who is funding the campaigns of their elected officials. It is not as if I am proposing a new idea. Candidates for the House of Representatives must electronically file their financial reports. Presidential candidates e-file. Yet the Senate is stuck in the dark ages. In an era of smart phones and cars that drive themselves and combines that harvest fields using GPS, today the Senate is dropping stacks of paper at officials' doorsteps.

I proudly voluntarily e-file my campaign finance reports. I know many of our colleagues do as well. But that is not enough. Ironically, we do not know why my bill to improve transparency and save money did not make it into the funding bill. I am told it was

blocked by the House of Representatives. A few folks over at the House are pointing fingers back over here. That is finger-pointing instead of accountability, politics instead of governance. We can do better.

Here in the Congress, we consistently demand transparency from Federal agencies. That is the right thing to do. But we need to also look in the mirror. We are not doing what we demand of others. But Americans are demanding this funding bill as well. It is a step forward to responsible government. It makes tough choices to getting our fiscal house in order while investing in the future.

This Omnibus is a good bill. It puts our country on more solid footing. It delivers more certainty to small businesses so we can count on them to grow and create jobs. Our constituents sent us here to find common ground. This kind of responsible bill is why we are here. So, once again, I thank the chairwoman and the ranking member for their hard work in bringing this bill to the floor. I look forward to seeing its final passage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I want to address my remarks, first, to the chairman and the ranking member of the Appropriations Committee. I think you have done a lot of hard work. You have done something that even though I am not in the consensus, you have done what the Senate was designed to do, build a consensus around a bill. There is no question this bill will pass today. So my congratulations to you and my sincere thanks for some of the things you put in the bill that we have been working on that are good governance projects. So I want to say that from the start.

I am not going to talk specifically about the bill. I am going to talk in bigger, broader terms of the problems that are facing us as a country. I have in my hands a book that contains \$9 trillion worth of cuts. Hardly anybody in the Senate has read it. They may not agree with 50 or 60 or 70 percent. But there is certainly somewhere in here consensus for us to actually save a whole lot more money than we are doing.

In 2009, a young lady by the name of Madeline showed up outside the Senate. This is what she had draped around her neck. "I am already \$38,375 in debt and I only own a dollhouse."

Since that period of time, we have managed to markedly change that situation for her for the worse, because today, if she were outside, she would have this sign on her neck. It would say \$54,602 and she would only own a dollhouse.

The point I am trying to make is this hole is getting deeper and deeper and deeper. Although I did not vote for the

budget agreement, because I think it could have been done better, it was an agreement and had a consensus as well. My criticism is not that the Members of this body worked a consensus, which is exactly what the Senate is supposed to do, but I think as we have done these things we might have lost sight of the big picture. So I want to share with you for a minute what the big picture looks like, because it is not pretty.

According to generally accepted accounting principles, that is not the way we run the government, by the way. We do not use real accounting principles. We use all the tricks and smoke and mirrors we can. This number is indisputable.

The unfunded liabilities for the Federal Government are \$127 trillion. Think about that. We cannot even imagine how much that is. Our national debt is \$17.33 trillion as of last night. I checked it. There are 14 million households in America. If you take the Federal liability per household, it comes out to \$1.11 million. So \$1.11 million is what the debt plus the liability is for every family in this country. It is growing. I know we cannot solve this problem over 1 year or 2 years. I am so thankful to the Senator who is leading the Appropriations Committee in her position. I have the most wonderful respect for her. She is a listener. She wants to do right.

But what we have to do is change the direction of this. It needs to go the other way. That requires everybody. If you think about it, if the average family per capita income—this is what it was last year in this country, \$53,000—can you imagine how we are going to leverage and afford just the interest cost on \$1.11 million?

If you add 5 percent on a million bucks, that is \$55,000. That is more—just the interest costs are more than the median family income in this country. So there are parts of this bill that are in front of us that I am highly critical of. I do not like the fact that we play a game with CHIMPs, change it to a mandatory program. To me it is not straightforward to the American people. It is not being honest about what we are actually doing.

What we are actually doing is digging the hole deeper. Let me outline some things we could have done that we did not do before we had the budget agreement, before we had this appropriations bill. The GAO over the last 3 years has identified about \$250 billion we could take a large portion away from by eliminating duplication and by putting metrics on programs. Now think about that. That is \$250 billion a year.

I have been out here giving speeches on all of this and everything that is duplicative. But the problem is that the appropriate committees have not met to look at the GAO recommendations.

They have not acted on them. They have not responded to them. The administration, I will give them credit; in their budget the last few years, they have looked at those GAO reports and made recommendations in their budgets for elimination and consolidation. But we have essentially ignored them.

I know how tough it is to build a consensus in the Appropriations Committee that will get you the votes you need to accomplish that. From the parochial concerns to the budget concerns, I understand that. I am glad we have a number now. I am glad we have a bill that has a number. I think the number is too high if we are ever going to do anything about this. But the fact that we do not do anything that will make a difference in the future in terms of driving this number down—just think. Let's say the GAO is 50 percent right. Let's say they are only 50 percent right. What if we consolidated, put metrics on programs and streamlined them as they recommend and we saved \$150 billion a year. That starts going in the right direction. It changes. We start going in the right direction. Now think for a minute. If we have no recessions over the next 20 years and we have great economic growth, 4 percent, we still do not solve this problem. Because the interest costs are greater than the GDP growth associated with our country.

I wanted to give the background of why I come out here all the time and raise the issue of why we are stealing the future from our children. Nobody can deny the fact that we have not done the work. The reasons we have not done the work are multiple. But most of it is we just will not do the work. We do not have the leadership that requires us to do the work.

Think about Madeline. Let's say she gets a great college education and is in the upper quintile in our country in terms of her earnings when she is 25. With normalized interest rates, she is going to fall behind. So I know we are talking out in the future, but one of the things Thomas Jefferson wanted out of the Senate was for us to be long-range thinkers, not to think about the problem right now, think about what the problem is going to be.

In my 9 years here, I have failed in my ability to convince my colleagues that we ought to be worrying about this problem. Because the promise of America was opportunity. The promise of the poor house is no opportunity. What we have set up for the average American family in the future is the poor house.

It does not have to be that way. We can fight among the priorities, but the one thing we should not be fighting about, the one thing that we should know that we can fix is why would there be 679 different renewable energy programs? Can anybody give any possible justification for that? It is just

\$15 billion a year, but if you consolidated them down to 20, you could save \$5 billion a year. That is \$50 billion over 10 years.

Why are there 253 different Department of Justice crime prevention grants? Each of them has an overhead. What we found when we studied this is people get a grant from one, then use the same grant application to go to another grant overhead in DOJ, get the grant from another section, another program, for exactly the same claim. The right hand does not know the left hand. If you consolidated them, one, you would get more money to each individual grant, and, No. 2, you would not have the duplication and fraud and lack of compliance we know these grant programs are loaded with. We have done the work. We have done the oversight.

We have actually studied them—or why are there 209? Think about this—science, technology, engineering, and math incentive programs, education programs, 13 different agencies, \$3.5 billion a year. Why do we allow that to happen? This is the real face of who it is going to affect. Yet we won't do the hard work.

It is not the appropriators' job to do that work; I understand that. But one of the things appropriators could do is say we are not going to fund any of these programs unless we consolidate them and put metrics on them. Finally, if they expected to come out in March—and I am so pleased the chairman wants to run the appropriations bills and to get back to normal—to say to the Judiciary Committee, if you want these justice grants run, consolidate them, put restrictions on them, streamline them, and then we will fund them.

So everybody will know, we are pro-rating 1 year about \$480 billion of money for programs that aren't authorized at all. One of the strengths of the Appropriations Committee could be that we could put some demands on the authorizing committee to clean this up.

I want to state a couple more.

Health care has been in the news. How many of us realize we have 91 different health care training programs spending \$14 billion a year? Some of my colleagues probably know that, but in the committee of jurisdiction they have done nothing about it.

I don't object to spending \$14 billion on health training programs or any of these other things as long as we are doing it wisely, but what I would suggest is for the 91 different programs—which should be probably 4 or 5—the overhead associated with the others is saved for the American public. We could save a significant amount of money for Madeline. Because the real story is our excesses, our lack of work, our lack of consolidation, our lack of streamlining, our lack of elimination

and duplication, our lack of demanding the metrics so that we know the programs we are funding out there are working.

We are not going to pay the price for it, nobody in this room. The people who are going to be paying the price for it are Madeline's generation. How are they going to pay for that? What is going to happen? What is the real cost associated with that? It is not a pretty picture. This is what it is: It is a markedly declining standard of living.

Most people don't know that median family income in real dollars in America today is at the exact same level it was in 1989, and it is going backward. Even with a growing economy, it is going backward. The assets available to a family are declining while the obligations for that family are increasing, and we are responsible for that. It is not something we can't fix, it is something we choose not to fix.

I also would say that I have one large concern in this bill. We increased NIH back to \$1 billion. We are still not where we were 2 years ago, but we started with \$800 million more at the Defense Department, duplicating programs that are already running at the NIH. We are making my list bigger, not smaller. We are going in the wrong direction.

We have great people at the NIH. We have a great leader in Francis Collins. They have markedly improved the management of their grants, their oversight of their grants. Yet we are going to take \$800 million and move it over to another set of overhead—with people not nearly as experienced, not nearly as knowledgeable. We are going to be spending money in the Defense Department to study things we are spending money for for the exact same type of thing at NIH. So we are not going to get great value for this money. What we are going to do is waste it. That \$800 million should have gone to NIH and every other non-military-related medical program over there. That money should have gone to the NIH.

When we talk to the Senators who started this, both TOM HARKIN and our former colleague, now deceased, Ted Stevens, they would admit to us in private that it was a mistake to ever start it this way, because we are wasting a ton of precious dollars that could be used to save somebody's life, but somebody has a reason for that. I don't know what it is, but I will say in this bill we have \$68 billion of appropriations for the Defense Department that have nothing to do with the defense of this country. We don't get all of these savings if we take it out of the Defense Department, but we get \$3 billion or \$4 billion if we take it out of the Defense Department. That \$3 billion or \$4 billion could fund NIH back at a level it should be funded or protect Madeline from further decline in her standard of living.

I have made my point. I understand my perspective is not in the majority, but I will guarantee my perspective is with the majority of Americans, that we ought not to have 679 renewable energy initiatives. I don't think we would find anybody in the country who would disagree with me that they ought to be consolidated. They ought to be run efficiently. They ought to have metrics on them, as well as the other hundreds of sets of duplications.

We are going to get another report next month from the GAO, actually in March. It will be their fourth. They are so discouraged because they do all this hard work, make recommendations, and then we sit on them. We don't act.

If I were to have a challenge to my colleagues, it is first to read the reports over the past 4 years and look at the data that shows where we are really wasting money. Then, please, for Madeline and the sake of her generation, act on it. Don't ignore it.

I know it is not easy work. It is hard work. I have done oversight for 9 years in the Senate. But it can be done, it should be done, and the Madelines of America are worth it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. The remarks by the Senator from Oklahoma are very interesting and telling. I listened to him carefully, and I believe basically he is right on the point. I believe basically that we all agree with the Senator that it is important to reduce the waste and duplication in our government. He points out a lot of it. GAO has done it too.

Our staff has met with the GAO several times on ways to address this problem. We know the problem; we have to act on it, and we have to take it very seriously. GAO, as Senator COBURN said, is coming out with a new report. If we work on this, the government is going to be more efficient. We are going to save money, and we are going to respond to problems in America much better. We are a long way from doing this. I appreciate his remarks this afternoon and I hope a lot of my Senators were looking at that and listening to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNIS. I ask unanimous consent to speak for approximately 12 minutes as in morning business.

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

TPA

Mr. JOHANNIS. I rise today to discuss a bill my colleagues and I introduced to establish trade promotion authority, otherwise referred to as TPA. Senators BAUCUS and HATCH, along with Congressman CAMP in the House, introduced the Congressional Trade Priorities Act only last week. The Senate Finance Committee held a hearing on it today.

This bill would resurrect the partnership between Congress and the administration to promote a robust trade agenda. That partnership, known as TPA, came about as a way to thoughtfully and pragmatically exercise Congress's constitutional authority to regulate foreign commerce. TPA effectively combines this authority with the President's authority to negotiate treaties.

Congress therefore provides the marching orders to the President, and the President, in turn, gets an up-or-down vote on the agreement that is negotiated. Some might ask why would we do this? Why should Congress set rules for itself to consider trade agreements through a very special legislative process? Simply put, negotiating modern trade agreements would be virtually impossible without providing some assurance that agreed-upon provisions, negotiated provisions, won't be picked apart after the negotiators shake hands.

Trade agreements span a multitude of issues affecting international commerce. To reach these agreements there needs to be extensive negotiation by representatives of the countries involved, but Congress is hardly equipped to engage in multilateral negotiations with foreign countries. We know that. We can hardly negotiate with each other these days.

TPA allows Congress to set priorities for trade agreements and engage with the President throughout the process. During floor consideration, amendments cannot be offered because it would undermine our Trade Representative. It would undermine our Trade Representative's hand in negotiation.

Imagine our negotiators signing a deal, shaking hands with our counterparts from other parts of the world, and then bringing the deal to Congress. Then, after 535 people offer a plethora of amendments, they have to go back to the other countries and try to reopen negotiations because everything has been changed. No one would ever negotiate a trade deal with the United States again.

So why is that a bad thing? Should we negotiate trade agreements at all? I would argue, unquestionably, the answer is absolutely yes. White Houses from Reagan to Obama would agree.

Furthermore, the overall benefit of free trade is undisputed by the economists. A free rules-based trading system is much better for America than a system where the government picks winners and losers, and it is better for American jobs when the playing field is a level playing field.

I want to give an example: Colombia. In 2011 Congress passed a trade agreement with Colombia—already one of our most important allies in Latin America. That trade relationship is thriving as a result of that agreement. Consider this: Between 2011 and 2013

U.S. goods exports to Colombia have increased 18 percent. At the same time U.S. goods exports to the rest of the world have decreased by 2 percent. Trade agreements are a great benefit to Americans as well as in corners of the world where they need a strong ally.

Unfortunately, that is a message that doesn't always make it through. Instead, we hear a chorus of scare tactics about job losses, environmental concerns—whatever it is. Critics ignore the proven power of trade to expand job opportunities and to improve the standard of living, not only here but around the world. At the same time the lives of millions of people around the world improve. Almost all economists would agree that countries should move toward more free trade, not less.

One need only examine tariff rates to understand why it is in our best interests to pursue trade agreements. U.S. barriers to trade are already very low by global standards. Our average tariff rate is 3.5 percent. Compare that to our current trade negotiating partners. Vietnam has an average tariff rate of 10 percent. Malaysia's average is 6 percent. Japan and the EU both have average tariff rates of 5.3 percent. Only New Zealand has a lower rate than we do. So trade agreements help to level the playing field by bringing down tariffs imposed on our goods by our competitors. Put simply, trade agreements knock down barriers. They open doors for U.S. producers and manufacturers to get our economic engine going again.

Critics falsely claim we are going to experience a flood of cheap imports as a result of new agreements.

My friends, that simply doesn't make sense when our tariffs are already low. Trade agreements bring down our competitors' high tariffs. They level the playing field.

The benefit to trade is especially clear for agricultural products—huge drivers of the economy in my State. Our average tariff on these imported products is 5 percent. Malaysia's is 11 percent, the European Union's is 14 percent, Vietnam is at 17 percent, and Japan has an agricultural tariff rate of 23 percent. These countries all already have a number of trade agreements in place with other countries. That means we face restrictions while our competitors reap the benefits of the open market. We are on the sidelines while other countries are filling the orders and creating the jobs. Trade Promotion Authority paves the way to lowering these barriers and, in some cases, eliminating them altogether.

Of course, tariffs are not the only barriers our exporters face, and TPA would help us address the others too. Countries also impose nontariff barriers, often claiming some illegitimate basis in science, and they have brought our industries to their knees. Modern

trade agreements address those barriers as well, and we cannot get good trade agreements inked without TPA.

In general, the U.S. abides by true science-based trade standards. This is less common, however, in the rest of the world, to say the least. Trade agreements help bring export markets in line with the same kind of science-based standards that we apply to our imports. So if you are concerned about foreign countries blocking American exports, you should support TPA. Without TPA it becomes much harder to open those markets for American workers.

We should all get behind this TPA bill and get it across the finish line so that new trade agreements can clear the way for more Americans to be hired as export demand increases.

I am pleased President Obama now recognizes the immense benefit that trade provides to our great Nation. Despite being all talk and no action on trade early on, this administration is currently negotiating the two largest trade agreements in history. In my opinion, it is time for the partisan bickering to end. There are clear job-creating benefits to our country, and it is time for the President to make that case to the American people and to his allies in Congress.

In a couple of weeks the President will have an opportunity to do so in the State of the Union address. I hope he follows through. Given the ambition of potential agreements across the Pacific and the Atlantic, the President must lay the groundwork, the vision, for the passage of this legislation. Creating jobs in this Nation is too important to leave at the mercy of election-eering politics. It really is time to act. So my hope is we will pass TPA quickly so we can put Americans back to work.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SESSIONS. My late colleague Senator Byrd liked to say there have been two great Senates in the history of the world: The U.S. Senate and the Roman Senate. He understood the special and crucial role the Senate fulfills in our constitutional Republic. The Senate is where the great issues of our time are supposed to be examined, reviewed, and discussed before the whole Nation, in public. Yet in the last few years we have witnessed the dramatic erosion of Senators' rights and the dismantling of an open process.

We fund the government through massive omnibus bills. This is the bill

before us now—1,583 pages stacked up here before us that no one really has a chance to read or evaluate or analyze. Senators are stripped of their rights to offer amendments. We won't have amendments. Bills are rushed through on the threat of panic, crisis or shut-down. Pass it today or the government shuts down. Secret deals rule the day. Work is done outside the public view, and so millions of Americans are essentially robbed of their ability to participate in the process by examining what their Senators do.

Under the tenure of Majority Leader REID, the Senate is rapidly losing its historic role as that great deliberative body. If this continues, America will have lost something very precious.

One of the tactics by which Majority Leader REID has suppressed Senators' rights and blocked open debate is the technique called "filling the tree." This basically means that when a bill comes to the floor, the leader will use his right of first recognition to fill all the available amendment slots on a bill and then block anyone else from offering an amendment. One man stands in the way of his 99 colleagues.

I say one man, but not really all alone does he stand there. His power exists only as long as his Democratic colleagues support his blocking of amendments.

This prevents the body from working its will. It prevents legislation from being improved by amendment, and it prevents Senators from being accountable to their voters on the great issues of the day. This is, of course, why it is done. It has nothing to do with time. It is done because the majority leader does not want to have his colleagues vote.

Our majority leader has used this tactic—filling the tree—80 times already. To put this in perspective, the six previous majority leaders filled the tree only 49 times combined. Senator REID has filled the tree on 30 more occasions than the six previous leaders combined. In so doing, he denies the citizens of each State their equal representation in the Senate. Majority Leader REID, in his efforts to protect his conference from casting difficult votes in order to shield them from accountability, has essentially closed the amendment process. He has shut down one of the most important functions that Senators exercise to represent the interests of their constituents.

Recently, this tactic manifested itself in a dramatic way. To the surprise and shock of many, the December spending agreement contained a provision to cut the lifetime pension payments of current and future military retirees, including wounded warriors, by as much as \$120,000 over their retirement period. Other Senators and I have had many ideas about how to fix this problem, but we were blocked from offering them by the majority leader. I

tried to offer an amendment to replace the cuts by closing a fraud loophole used by illegal immigrants—cited by the Department of the Treasury—to claim billions of dollars in free tax credits they are not entitled to—billions. It would more than pay for this. But Senator REID and his conference Members, save one—one broke ranks—stood together to block my amendment from a vote.

So I would ask my colleagues: Are you comfortable with this? Do you like having to beg and plead with one person for the right to offer an amendment in the Senate? Do you believe the Senate should operate according to the power of one man?

This omnibus bill, though it restores pensions for our heroic wounded warriors, leaves more than 90 percent of those cuts in place. Shouldn't we be allowed to offer amendments to provide a fair fix for all our warriors and veterans?

But blocking amendments is only one of the many abuses. The other erosion of the Senate has also been front and center in the budgeting process. We are now in our fifth year without adopting a budget resolution. We went over 4 years without the Senate even passing a budget, as required by plain law in the 1974 Budget Act. Instead, taxpayer dollars are being spent through a series of late-minute negotiations and legislative pay caps that are driven through the Senate.

Then we face a massive omnibus bill—this 1,583-page monstrosity—which is rushed to passage without any amendments or meaningful review. The American people have no real ability to know what is in it or to hold us, their elected representatives, accountable. That is, of course, why it is being done.

Today the Senate and the House are considering another omnibus bill, one that will spend more than \$1 trillion, with thousands of items of government spending crammed into this single legislative proposal. The bill will be sped through under the threat of government shutdown, with very little debate and no ability to amend.

If you don't accept what is in the bill and vote for it and pass it, Senator REID says, I will accuse you of blocking the bill and shutting the government down. You don't dare vote no. So it is yet another time when we must pass it to find out what is in it. My staff and I have had less than 48 hours to digest this behemoth, but already we have found provisions that would not survive if considered in the regular order where we have amendments.

How is the process supposed to work? Each year, Congress is supposed to adopt a budget resolution. The law requires it. Then, based on spending levels contained in the budget resolution, individual committees report 12 authorization bills. I serve on the Armed

Services authorization committee. Based on the expertise and experience of Members serving in those committees, they authorize spending. Senator LEVIN is our Armed Services Committee chair. Senator INHOFE is the ranking member. Senator MCCAIN is on the committee. These are people who have given years of their life to understanding the challenges of military matters.

Then the 12 subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee are to produce appropriations bills for their area of the budget, such as defense, homeland security, and agriculture, which are then to be individually considered, debated and amended on the Senate Floor. So they actually appropriate the funds that the authorization committees authorize to be funded. That is the way the process is supposed to work. This gives each Member, when the appropriations bill hits the floor, a chance to review and analyze each part of the budget and offer suggestions for saving money, improving efficiency, and better serving the taxpayers. That is the way it is supposed to work.

But under the tenure of Senator REID the budgeting process has been totally mismanaged. We have ceased consideration of appropriations bills altogether, basically, relying more and more on autopilot continuing resolutions and catch-all behemoth spending packages like this one. In fiscal year 2006, for example, every single appropriations bill was debated, amended, and passed in the Senate. In 2006 every one was passed, considered, and voted on, and that was good. That is better than we had been doing in the previous years. There were failures during the previous years.

But in 2013—here we are, here—the red indicates that no bill was passed in the Senate. In 2013, again in 2014, none were individually passed. All the funding was done as part of this omnibus process.

I want my colleagues to look at this one more time. The green shows that the bill was brought forward to the floor and was passed. The yellow shows it was brought forward out of committee but not passed on the floor. The red shows it was not even brought to the floor, brought out of committee to the floor to be considered. Do you see how the red has continued in the out-years?

What is happening today is contrary to good policy. It is contrary to the whole idea of what a Senate and a Congress ought to be doing. We have to stop it. I know we have had a lot of frustrations lately, but that does not excuse this trend. It has to end.

In my first year as a Senator—I guess the second year I was a Senator, 1998—every bill was passed. Every bill was passed in 2010. But we have gotten away from that completely. We can go back to that. It is not impossible.

Those bills when I first came here were all debated and amended on the floor and went to conference with the House to settle our disagreements, and then a bill was sent to the President for his signature or veto. Over time, however, that has happened less and less frequently, to the point that nowadays we do not debate appropriations bills at all.

Look, Senator MIKULSKI is a great leader in the Senate and one of the people I admire greatly, and so are Senator SHELBY and others. How we got into this process I do not know. But I will just say this: I think it is fair to say that Republicans have clearly advocated for bringing the bills to the floor and having debates on them. I—ranking on the Budget Committee—have clearly advocated we process a budget the way we are supposed to do. But Senator REID has made the decision, backed by his conference, to not bring up these bills. It is a political decision. It is a decision to avoid having to take votes on disputed questions of what should be funded and what should not be funded. That is the problem we are in. So we have crammed all these appropriations into this huge bill under threat of a government shutdown.

A more ominous development, however, is the breakdown of the appropriations process in the Senate and how it is infecting the House of Representatives. It is spreading like the plague over there. In the first year of their majority, the House passed—worked and marked up 6 of the 12 appropriations bills and sent them to the Senate, but the Senate did not consider a single one of them. Last year the House passed eight appropriations bills and sent them over to the Senate. Again the Senate did not act, refused to consider them individually. This year the futility of the efforts of the House began to show as the House passed only four bills. Why should they pass them and send them to the Senate if they are not going to be considered on the floor in a normal, regular order? So they are beginning to erode what they have been doing.

All of us, both parties, have a responsibility to reverse these trends. All of us have a responsibility to return to regular order. It is in the national interest. It is the right thing to do. All of us owe our constituents an open, deliberative process, where the great issues of the day are debated in full and open public view. Each Senator must stand and be counted on these issues, not hide under the table and avoid being held accountable. The democratic process is messy, sometimes contentious, and often difficult. People disagree. But it is precisely this legislative tug-of-war, this back-and-forth which forges a national consensus.

While secret deals may keep the trains running on time in the short run, sometimes they keep the train

running in the wrong direction—a direction different from what the American people would like to see. Sometimes it hides bad spending, bad appropriations, bad legislation that ought to be exposed in the light of day.

Secret deals rushed through without public involvement only deepen our divisions, delay progress, increase distrust, and make it harder to achieve the kinds of real reforms the American people have been thirsting for and demanding.

Having to cast many votes on tough issues really does clarify those issues and what the differences are amongst us. That process, I truly believe, openly conducted, can lay the groundwork for more progress than we have today and reduce contention. It will clarify facts and then lead to the finding of common ground. Only through an open legislative process can we create the kind of dialog, the kind of debate, and ultimately the kind of change necessary to put this country back on the right track.

I am going to continue to work to restore the regular order. I really believe it is important. I respect my colleagues. I am hearing more and more my Democratic colleagues expressing these same concerns, and I think there is some unease at the extent to which this process in the Senate has been undermined.

Maybe we can make progress and return to the great open debate and regular order that has made the Senate the wonder of the legislative world.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, pending before the Senate is something called the consolidated appropriations bill. It is consolidated because it consolidates the work of 12 separate subcommittees. As the chair of the full committee, I also chair a subcommittee called commerce, justice, science. I would like to say that what we did in our bill advanced, really, the protection of the United States in terms of Federal law enforcement, important domestic violence programs, but also we promoted trade and new ideas in science. I would like to share what we did. Before I do, I want to explain—many people do not understand, at this point, the Budget Committee and the Appropriations Committee.

The Budget Committee gives us the macro picture, what should be spent on discretionary spending, mandatory spending—spending for veterans benefits, which I believe ought to be manda-

tory—and also what our tax policy should be. Senator MURRAY of Washington State led that effort. We passed that bill in April. We tried to go to conference, but there was objection to it. Finally, after 3 weeks of shutdown, we were able to get a budget.

This committee was given the job, after the budget was passed, to do the work of the Appropriations Committee. The Appropriations Committee takes the work of the Budget Committee and puts it in the Federal checkbook, line by line.

I would like to elaborate on that, but I know the Senator from New Hampshire has come to the floor—one of our newer members of the committee, but she is not new to good government. She comes to the Senate with an incredible background of serving New Hampshire, particularly in the executive branch as Governor. She brings a sense of what government can do—that Yankee frugality for which New Hampshire is known.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I thank the esteemed chair of the Appropriations Committee for her kind words, and especially for all of the work she has done to get us to this point where we have an appropriations bill before us. I know she has worked very hard with Ranking Member SHELBY, the House Appropriations Committee Chairman HAL ROGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY.

It was Senator MIKULSKI's leadership on this bill that got us to an agreement to fund the government for the rest of 2014, and to do it in a way that will support job creation, economic growth, and our national security. So I thank the chairman.

I am a new member of the Appropriations Committee. I am currently the chair of the Legislative Branch Subcommittee, and so I also want to thank Senator HOEVEN, the ranking member of our subcommittee. It has been a real pleasure to work with him to draft the subcommittee work for the Legislative Branch Subcommittee.

For New Hampshire, this bill includes funding for the continued development for the new KC-46A aerial refueling tanker, of which we are very proud. The first round of those tankers will be based at Pease Air National Guard Base in New Hampshire.

It also makes investments in the new military construction project at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. We are very proud in New Hampshire of both Pease and the shipyard because they play a very important role in our national defense. These strategic investments will create jobs, boost the State's economy, and support our men and women in uniform.

I am also very pleased that this omnibus bill funds the Beyond Yellow Rib-

bon Program. This is a program that connects service men and women and their families with community support, training, and other services. As we look at the men and women coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, the Beyond Yellow Ribbon Program has been a very important program to help reconnect those returning servicemembers to their community. It has also been very important in New Hampshire. The Beyond Yellow Ribbon Program has been critical in States such as New Hampshire with many members of our National Guard and Reserve returning from duty overseas.

The legislation before us also funds the complete activation of the Berlin prison, just as it funds the Bureau of Prisons. In New Hampshire that funding is going to allow us to get to a full complement of about 340 local jobs in northern New Hampshire, which is very critical to the northern part of our State. It is going to provide a \$40 million annual boost to the economy in northern New Hampshire.

I am especially appreciative to the chairwoman of the committee and to all of the members for the effort to help the fishing men and women in New Hampshire who have just been devastated by declining fish populations. The bill authorizes \$75 million in disaster relief for those members of our fishing community, so many of whom have had their whole livelihoods taken away from them. This disaster relief money is going to help them during these difficult times. It will help them to recover and rebuild what I believe is one of the most critical economic sectors still in New England. It is certainly one of the oldest.

I am also pleased that this bill reverses some of the reckless cuts from sequestration and instead makes important investments in the future of this country—in our education, infrastructure, and in science and innovation.

Yet it also makes strategic cuts. For example, one of my favorites in the bill is that it prohibits taxpayer-funded expenditures on oil paintings for public officials. This is an idea that Senator COBURN and I have been working on over the last year, and I think it is exactly the kind of government spending we need to get rid of. It sends a message—a signal. Even though it is not a lot of money, it is symbolic for the public to know we are trying to address anything we can, and this is one piece we can agree on, and hopefully it will lead to others. The bill also requires all Federal agencies to become better stewards of taxpayer dollars because it invests in inspectors general in agencies across the Federal Government. Inspectors general help those agencies better identify waste and cut spending.

While making smart cuts, the bill also invests in priorities, such as science and innovation. It provides

more funding for medical and energy research and development. Very important efforts are under way at the National Institutes of Health. They are finally going to see some relief in this bill.

It supports education, including funding programs such as Head Start, which have been cut under sequestration. Head Start has been cut in New Hampshire. It is particularly important because the more we learn about the importance of how children learn, the more we understand how critical early childhood education—programs such as Head Start—are to their future development.

The bill also makes infrastructure investments, something on which we have been too far behind in this country. It is going to help us as we look at rebuilding our Nation's deficient roads and bridges and creating jobs.

As we all know—and I know the chairwoman would readily admit—this bill is not a perfect bill, but the legislation before us is a product of the kind of bipartisan compromise that we have to have more of in Washington these days.

While I am very pleased that the bill addresses military retirement cuts for some retirees—survivor widows, survivor benefits, and for the disabled—we still need to keep working until those cuts are repealed entirely for all military retirees. It is something that I have introduced legislation on, and I will continue to work on it. I know there is a commitment from so many of us here in the Chamber to address that.

I will also continue to work to provide full funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP, which helps seniors and low-income New Hampshire families pay their heating bills, especially during the cold winter months. This bill makes a small increase in that program, but unfortunately, it is not enough to address the challenges so many families in New Hampshire and in the cold parts of this country are facing as we continue through this very cold winter.

Small businesses in New Hampshire have not forgotten that during the shutdown they faced uncertainty and declining revenues. Federal employees in New Hampshire struggled to make ends meet while being furloughed, and that shutdown—a completely manufactured and unnecessary crisis—cost this economy \$24 billion.

I think—in talking to business people around New Hampshire and around the country—one of the most important things that this bill does is it takes the prospect of another manufactured crisis off the table. It puts in place a responsible plan to grow this economy, create jobs, and it takes away the uncertainty that has so plagued families and businesses across this country.

I had the opportunity this week to meet with the head of the business roundtable. One of the things he pointed out to me is that right now we are seeing the lowest percentage of private investment in our economy that we have seen in a very long time—in decades. It is most important that we in Washington provide the business community some certainty so they will make those investments because that is how we create jobs.

We need to put people back to work, and I think this legislation goes a long way to create that certainty and say to the business community and to those people who are unemployed: We are going to keep working on your behalf. We are going to try to make those investments and make sure we create the jobs to put you back to work, to keep this economy strong and growing, and to keep this country competitive.

In closing, I just want to say to my colleagues that now is the time for us to build on this bipartisan success we have seen and that the chairwoman has been able to accomplish with all of her other negotiators. We have this opportunity to build on that and to further promote job creation and economic growth.

Our country needs us to work together on behalf of small businesses, on behalf of the middle class, and on behalf of families. We need to pass this bill. We need to keep working together and address the challenges this country faces.

I urge all of my colleagues in the Senate to support this bill.

I yield the floor, and again I thank the chairwoman for her efforts.

Ms. MIKULSKI. The Senator from New Hampshire is very generous with her remarks, and I want to respond by saying a few things.

First of all, the way the Senator speaks about New Hampshire is the way I also speak about Maryland. When people think about government spending, they think it just goes out in the ether and doesn't generate anything. As the Senator has said, what is spent by the Federal Government really creates jobs in the private sector.

She spoke about prisons. First of all, we appreciate New Hampshire's willingness to accept a prison. Many States don't want them, shy away from them or are afraid of them. New Hampshire has really met a national need, and we know that the staffing that will be provided by the exceptional, patriotic work ethic of the people of New Hampshire will keep our country safe.

Those same guards and administrative staff will be out in their community spending money on housing, at the local grocery store, maybe needing a wedding planner or whatever. So that is one area.

In terms of New England fisheries—for those of us who are coastal Senators, we know what that means. Fish-

ing and seafood is part of our history, and it is actually part of our State's identity. For us in the Senate, the coastal Senators have kind of an affinity with each other for it.

We thank the Senator from New Hampshire for what she has done.

I also want to comment that the subcommittee on legislative affairs that you chair also—it is not like it funds legislators. It funds things such as the Capitol Police, who are sentry here doing their job.

I thank my colleague for her work, and we are so pleased to have her on the committee.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I thank the chairwoman very much.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, would the Senator yield?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I just want to take this opportunity to thank the two Senators who are present. In America's space program, which was potentially on a downward slope, the two Senators have crafted an appropriation that will keep us with a very robust American space program, including the first "A" in NASA, which is aeronautics. From science to the new big rocket, its capsule Orion, to the commercial, to the unmanned program exploring the heavens, the chairwoman and the ranking member have it right. I wanted to take this opportunity to express my profound thanks. The Senators are continuing the dream that we built on 3 years ago.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Senator from Florida. It is wonderful for both me and Senator SHELBY. Senator NELSON is an astronaut Senator. To hear an astronaut Senator say he thinks we are doing the job right means a lot.

The Senate has been blessed by having three astronaut Senators: Senator Jake Garn, a Republican from Utah, Senator John Glenn of Ohio, and Senator BILL NELSON.

Some of us have been in orbit a long time, but Senator NELSON actually knew what he was doing. So I thank my colleague very much. We are trying to add gravity to this bill.

Mr. NELSON. The Senators are doing it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I want to pick up on what Senator MIKULSKI was talking about. Senator NELSON has not only been an advocate for the space program for NASA—and he is. As most everybody knows, has been up there. I was traveling with him one time, and I believe we were over Asia, and he was showing me from the plane—we couldn't see as well as he could—the rotation. I was very impressed.

He has been a stalwart in the advancement of the space program. We both worked hand in glove with him.

I do believe this is a pretty good appropriation considering where we are. I am hoping we will get back to regular order since Senator MIKULSKI and I have advocated for this. We are hoping maybe later today we can vote this bill out with a vote like the House had yesterday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I am pleased to come to the floor today to follow-up on the very eloquent remarks by the Senator from New Hampshire and the ranking member and chairwoman.

I am here today to offer a few comments about the appropriations bill. But before I do, I thank the chairwoman and the ranking member for really being a great inspiration to all of us. Amidst all of the controversy and dustups and toxic atmosphere and nonpartisanship going on—or lack of cooperation going on—it is wonderful to see the two of them working so closely together on a bill that is so important to the country.

As the great Senator from New Hampshire said: This is a bill for the people, for jobs, and for our economy. It sends very positive signals across a breadth of industries where the Federal Government is stepping up to be a more reliable partner in these public-private partnerships that are represented in the funding of this bill—whether it is building our highways, building our space programs, funding our Department of Defense, sending money to cities and counties that are doing all sorts of innovative and remarkable things with community development block grant funding with a lot of private partners.

Contrary to popular belief and contrary to some things you might hear on the radio and on television these days, the Federal budget does a lot more than fund the government. It does a lot more than funding government employees. It is sending out literally millions of green lights to small business contractors and to large businesses saying, Let's go. The yellow light was blinking a few days ago; the red light has been on for the last couple of years. This bill literally sends out millions of blinking green lights saying: Get to work. Let's go to business. Let's build highways. Let's build levees. Let's build a space program. Let's invest in the middle class.

In addition, I wish to say how proud I am that under the leadership of Senator MIKULSKI, she has managed to do this within budget constraints. This is not a free spending bill; this is a smart spending bill within constraints so we are also mindful of reducing our debt over time, mindful about paying down our bills.

That is what is so remarkable about this and why I am so proud to support it. I hope we can get as strong a vote as

the House did on this bill to show strong bipartisan support, because while it does address our debt and our deficit, it does so in a smart way with investments in what we have agreed to that make a difference to the private sector.

I can tell my colleagues that in Louisiana this is going to have immediate positive effects, and I wish to highlight a few of those now in terms of the Homeland Security bill. I am proud and happy to be the chairwoman of the Homeland Security appropriations bill. I have worked very closely with my colleague Senator CARPER, who is chair of the authorizing committee, and our ranking members, Senator COBURN and Senator COATS, as we authorize stronger parts of Homeland Security and then fund some of these initiatives. I will hit the highlights of just three or four.

One of them is the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard is in our Homeland Security bill. It is a very important component of our government. It is one of the most popular components of our government—popular broadly with business and with people. It is, of course, very popular with the people the Coast Guard has saved from drowning or from wrecks in our open seas, but also for the hundreds of companies and businesses that have contracts with the Coast Guard to provide some real cutting-edge shipbuilding that needs to go on in this country. The Senator from Alabama knows this, the Senators from Mississippi know this, the Senators from Maine, the Senators from Louisiana. We have lost a great deal of shipbuilding in our country to other countries. It is important that we keep as much shipbuilding here through the Homeland Security bill and through the Defense bill here in America—ships that are made in America, ships serving Americans, providing good, solid jobs.

I am proud to support this, along with the tremendous support of Senator COCHRAN, who is a member of my committee, and particularly Senator BEGICH, from Alaska, who fought very hard for a good outcome on the Coast Guard budget, which is above the administration's request and has a modest increase and will be supporting so many important projects for our Coast Guard and the men and women of our Coast Guard. It provides \$10.2 billion overall, which is a significant increase, and we did so within our budget constraints.

Another piece I wish to highlight is our enforcement of Immigration and Customs laws. We are in a big debate about immigration reform and the importance of finding common ground on immigration reform for the benefit of our businesses and our economy here in America that demand clear rules of the road, clear processes for people to become citizens and to pay their taxes, who have come here legally, and for

people who are here without the current legal papers to give them a path to citizenship once taxes are paid, once they get in line behind people who have come here legally. Protecting our borders is an important component of that as well. In our bill we have put the resources necessary behind enforcing those tough immigration standards and requirements.

We are protecting our border, providing resources for the bill, and that is important to many people in this country as well as people in Louisiana, to have an immigration system that makes sense as well as to provide appropriate jobs and labor to come in and help with so many of the jobs we have in Louisiana today.

We also had a focus in our bill—I think the chairwoman will be happy to hear this—about stepping up an additional 2,000 Customs officers at our airports. We have an international airport in New Orleans. We get a lot of international travel. We may be a little city, but we fight way above our weight, as does our State, when it comes to international travel. We are a very sought-after destination and we are very happy about that. But there are other States such as New York and Nevada and Chicago that have international travel. Even the State of the Presiding Officer, North Dakota, which is a smaller State—there is a tremendous amount of business coming into the State of North Dakota, both domestic and international, because of their oil and gas jobs and their energy sector jobs. What a howdy-do it is, arriving at our airport or to work with businesses here, or to partner with businesses here to create jobs, and one has to wait in line in Customs for 5 hours. That is no way to greet business men and women bearing gifts of investment and money for our country.

I have taken a strong leadership position on this with the travel and trade organizations, both in hospitality and in international business. I wish to thank their coalition for fighting hard to make sure this bill reflects the fact that business is global, it is international. Our business people are out and in all the time, building wealth for America and, hopefully, the world, but for America, and business people come here to help create wealth and help our middle class to grow. Having Customs agents who operate, making lines shorter, will certainly help that, while keeping our country safe, but also keeping it open for business. Louisiana is a trading State and we are a big port State. We understand trade, we understand international business, and I am happy to be able to fight hard for those priorities.

I wish to mention two other issues. Many committees are working on cyber security. Homeland Security does not take the lead on cyber overall; the Department of Defense and National Security Agency do. But when it

comes to securing our government and our government private sector partners, Homeland Security does take the lead. We have stepped up some investments in cyber security. As the Senator from Alabama most certainly understands in his leadership role, this is a real threat not only to our government, to the Department of Defense, to our government as a whole, but to many businesses in America—private, large businesses, and medium and small. They are feeling the effects of these saboteurs and attackers. The government has to stay focused and well invested, working with the private sector, to make sure our defenses and our security are up, and our bill recognizes that.

Finally, something close to my heart and close to my home is the funding for disaster relief. I hope no one ever has to go through what we went through along the gulf coast for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. I know everybody has had terrible storms and floods. But there has never been a storm or a disaster such as this, and I pray to the Lord there will never be another one after it. The damage that was done in dollar amounts, the damage that was done across a vast stretch of land, from Alabama to Texas, the devastation it caused in terms of numbers of homes and businesses lost is unparalleled.

Sandy was a terrible superstorm, and because the northeast is more dense than we are down South, they lost more homes technically than we did, because the dollar damage is still far exceeding in the aftermath of Katrina and Rita. But whether it is Sandy in the east or whether it is floods in North Dakota, which they have had their share of, or Colorado or whether it is storms on the gulf coast, we have to be ready with money to send immediately when people need help.

I am going to say this because it has been a matter of argument between some here: When a disaster strikes, I am not going to look for an offset. I am going to look for the Coast Guard and FEMA to show up with the equipment they have to help people who are either drowning, on their roofs, or watching their houses burn to the ground. I am not going to look for an offset. So as long as I am chairman of this bill, we will have money in this bill to use on an emergency basis when emergencies occur, as they do fairly regularly, unfortunately, in the States we represent down in the gulf coast. Because we are right in the middle of that hurricane alley, these storms are getting bigger and more fierce, and we have to be at the ready.

We have helped Maryland. We have money in for Sandy recovery and there is money in here still for the ongoing recovery. It is phasing out now in the gulf coast, but there are still some projects that have ongoing work, even 9 years after Katrina and Rita.

Let me say it has been a pleasure to work with my colleagues. I wish to thank the members of my committee, particularly my ranking member DAN COATS from Indiana, and I really want to thank Senators BEGICH and COCHRAN for their great work with the Coast Guard and helping me negotiate this through the process. Again, I think these are just some of the highlights of our bill. Nothing would have been possible without Senator MIKULSKI and her determination to get the green light on, because people in my town, in my State are tired of yellow and red. They want to work. They want to go to work. They want to build buildings and build roads and get projects underway. We have lots of permits pending that the money in this bill will allow to be released. So I am proud to vote for it. This is all about jobs, economic competitiveness for America, and good jobs for Louisiana. I am sure every Senator, or almost every Senator, will say the same about this bill, because it was well done. It is a job well done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I rise today to again express my great disappointment about a matter of importance to Wyoming and many other public land States that have not been properly addressed by this omnibus bill in the Senate. Instead of producing a legislative solution based on discussions with our colleagues, debate and consideration in committee, and a fair and complete process on the floor, we have a bill before us that was put together by making another deal. Simply put, the Senate fails to do its job when we refuse to allow a fair, free, and open debate about an issue that is of such great concern to the people who will be affected by the decision.

It is no secret; anyone who has seen the Senate in operation as we take up this legislation will know that the back-room deal does not include critical funding that nearly 1,900 counties in 49 States—49 States; that is all but 1—and 3 U.S. territories rely on. One would think this kind of participation would draw an extraordinary amount of interest by us all to make sure this bill was written with the best interests of all the States and all of our constituents in mind. Unfortunately, that doesn't appear to be the case.

So what program is it that draws such interest from 1,900 counties, 3 territories, 49 States—concern from such a widespread portion of our Nation? I am speaking, of course, of payments in lieu of taxes. It is a program that has been in place for decades; it is not an issue that is new to the Senate. That is why I recently led an effort by several of my Senate colleagues urging that appropriators include this critical funding in the Interior appropriations.

If they had done that, we would have already completed the work to produce a well-reasoned, well-thought-out answer to an issue of such importance to the States. Unfortunately, our efforts seem to have fallen on deaf ears, so here I am before my colleagues hoping with all my heart that I can make the Senate understand how crucial this funding is to almost every State in the Union.

This body often overlooks the important role of local government in the lives of our constituents. I know this because before I came to the Senate I served as a mayor, as did another handful of people in this body, and I know there are several others who have been county officials. Communities and counties are responsible for providing fire protection, law enforcement, sanitation, public health, and education, just to name a few. They provide these services largely by raising revenue. One common source is through property taxes. In States where there is little federally owned land, local communities have a large number of private homeowners to help provide these services. However, there are States where the Federal Government decided to retain most if not a majority of its ownership of the land. The problem is that these Federal lands cannot be taxed. Yet local governments must still provide critical fire, law enforcement, and health services in these areas and for the people who work on them. In order to make up this shortfall, Congress created payment in lieu of taxes to compensate local governments to offset the losses caused by having nontaxable Federal lands within their boundaries.

For decades, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program has provided counties and local governments with funding to help meet critical community needs. One of the reasons the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program was instituted was because of the creation of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which placed a major hurdle on the Federal Government from disposing of public lands. In place of the Federal Government's ability to move land from Federal to private ownership Congress decided to reimburse county and local governments with payments that would replace the revenue lost from the property taxes they would have received if those Federal lands had been transferred to private ownership. It seemed the only fair thing to do back then, and it is still only fair to live up to our obligations as a nation to provide the States with the revenue they are losing because of the laws we have enacted.

I have to tell you, we are talking about 1,900 counties in the United States; 49 States. In some of those counties, it is 40 percent to 80 percent of their total revenue. That is a big cut to make—in 1 year. No transition, just boom, gone. How do you adjust to that

if you are those local government people trying to figure out how to balance your budget? After all, I am not aware of anybody who lives at the Federal level. They all live at the local level. So it is the local folks who have to take care of the people.

If we fail to adequately address this issue, we are forcing our communities to make do with less—a lot less—because we are breaking a promise we have made. By doing so, we are forcing them to reduce—or even eliminate—the vital resources upon which their citizens rely.

I wish to emphasize and make it clear that this is not an additional source of revenue. It is not a bonus. County and local governments depend on this revenue when they plan their budgets each year. It is part of the law. They count on it, and without it, their budgets are stretched and strained and they will be bankrupt.

The decision by the Appropriations Committee to not include the vital payment in lieu of taxes funding in the omnibus will place counties across the country in very difficult positions and great financial hardship for them all, especially since there was no transition, there was no warning. It was just done.

We need to stop playing games with the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program and find a way to ensure it is adequately and fairly funded now and for years to come. We could learn a lesson from local governments. I remind you, that is where everyone lives. Many are obligated to have a balanced budget. That forces communities to budget in advance, debate priorities, and stick to considering spending measures through the normal legislative process.

As we look for ways to adequately fund payment in lieu of taxes, we also need to be sure we are not robbing Peter to pay Paul. I was extremely disappointed about the provision in the conference report—now, a conference report comes to us for an up-or-down vote. We do not have any chance to debate them on the floor. We do not have a chance to amend it. But the conference report for the highway reauthorization in 2012 robbed the abandoned mine land trust fund—trust fund—to pay for the payment in lieu of taxes obligation that time. They got paid, though, but we stole from a trust fund to do it. Again, it was a conference report, so there was no opportunity for amendments on it—just like this omnibus. States rely on those funds to clean up high-priority abandoned mines. We should not pit those funds against each other.

Yes, the Federal Government is out of money. We are going to have to prioritize. We are going to have to move some things around. We are going to have to bring down the deficits so eventually we can hopefully bring down the debt. This is not the only

time we have been doing this sort of thing.

Twice now we have robbed the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. Where do they get their money? Any private company—private company, not Federal company—any private company that has a pension fund has to pay a tax into this Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation so that in case they go out of business, the people who were promised a retirement will be compensated. They will get compensated 60 percent of what they were promised—just 60 percent. But we have raised that amount dramatically twice now on private corporations that were providing retirement for their workers.

That is all voluntary. They do not have to provide retirements for their workers. If we keep raising that amount, and it does not go to provide assurance that their employees will get their retirement, why would they keep their retirement going?

People are going to lose retirement in the United States. Nobody is starting defined benefit plans right now because of the extra taxes we are putting on it. Twice now we have raised that price, and we have put it to something other than it was promised for. Here is the real kicker: We said that for the next 8 years we are going to steal that money, so we can spend that amount this year.

I am not sure it is legal. How do we force future Congresses to be sure to pay the money—no, we will have already spent the money—so we are asking them to pay back the money, and we are asking them to steal it out of a trust fund. We have to quit stealing from the trust funds. That is the same thing with the abandoned mine land trust fund. That was stealing for 10 years to pay for 2 years. We cannot keep doing that.

Somehow we have to have the kind of budgeting we are expecting these local governments, these towns and cities and counties to do, where they have to balance their budget. We do not have to balance our budget. We just steal the money. But there is a point at which we cannot steal the money anymore.

What do we do now next time on the Transportation bill, when we have already obligated 8 more years of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to the current highways? We will not have collected that yet. Where do we steal it from next time?

Infrastructure is extremely important. We are going to have to eventually prioritize around here. We are going to have to do the same thing we expect of those towns and counties that we are stealing the payment in lieu of taxes money from in order to keep this business afloat.

The Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program represents a promise we made to counties and local governments all

across the Nation. They are looking to us to see how we will act and to see how we will keep that promise. If we fail to do so, it will have an impact on almost every one of us who will surely hear about the repercussions when we go back home to meet with our constituents. I encourage and urge the Senate in the strongest terms to reconsider the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program and the impact we may be bringing to people across the Nation by failing to include it in this legislation.

These are governments that—they have property taxes on the private property. What happens if the people with the private property do not pay their taxes? The local government gets to put a lien on it and gets to put it on the market. Maybe that is what we ought to do with this Federal land: put a lien on it, put it on the market.

It is a debt the Federal Government said they would pay and they are not paying. It is payment in lieu of property taxes. If the property taxes are not paid, there is a way the local government can make up for it, but there is not if the Federal Government just decides to quit paying, and that is kind of what we did. We said taxes are hard to pay. If everybody in America said taxes are hard to pay and quit paying them, we would be in one heck of a fix. We cannot do that to the towns and counties either.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, before the Senator from Wyoming leaves the floor, I wish to comment about some of the things he said about PILT and assure him that should the ambassadorship go forward for China, should RON WYDEN become the chair of the Finance Committee, I will become the chair of the Energy Committee, and he has my commitment now to help him work on that.

I am very well aware, having served on that committee for 10 years, how important PILT is—payment in lieu of taxes—to some of the States in the West, primarily less populated States. Their tax base is very affected by the fact that the Federal Government owns a great deal of land.

The Senator knows only 2.5 percent of my State is Federal land. Through the Chair, I would like to ask the Senator what percent of his State is Federal land.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, 49 percent of Wyoming is Federal land. We understand the value of having some Federal land. We like the people who come to visit it. But there are a lot of expenses that go with that, and to just jerk the money away—right away.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Yes.

Mr. ENZI. In the committee the Senator is talking about with Senator

WYDEN, what we have always talked about is a transition to do anything. There are a number of ways we could transition this that I do not think would hurt the Federal Government or hurt the local counties, but it requires a lot of flexibility, it requires going through the regular process in committee and then coming to the floor and making some decisions. This is wrong to just steal it one time.

Ms. LANDRIEU. If I could be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I want to commit to work with the Senator. I am very sympathetic and understand his position, and we will be talking to the leadership on both sides to see what we can do. It is very hard for that money to come away at such an abrupt time, and there are some issues that I know are pending before the committee where that could potentially get resolved. So I just wish to offer my help and support at the appropriate time.

(The further remarks of Ms. LANDRIEU are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Texas.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, 4½ years ago the United States went through a terrible recession, what we now know as the great recession. But since that time we have had the slowest economic recovery since the Great Depression, and our labor force participation rate, which is a fancy way of saying the number of people, the percentage of people who are actually in the workforce looking for work, is much lower than it was at the height of the recession. So even though the unemployment rate is coming down little by little, the main reason that is true is because people, many people, are simply giving up looking for work. Last month alone 345,000 people dropped out of the workforce. Even when we look exclusively at workers between the age of 25 and 54, their participation rate is significantly lower than it was when President Obama took office.

Meanwhile, 4 million people who are still in the workforce have now been jobless for more than 6 months. As I mentioned, if the Obama economic recovery had been as strong as the Reagan recovery in the 1980s, we would currently have millions more private sector jobs. So what is the President's big idea for helping the economy getting back on track? Last night, according to published news reports, he was drinking martinis and plotting his 2014 political strategy with his fellow Democratic Party members.

He apparently told the Democrats present—at least reportedly—that he would continue to go it alone if he could not get bipartisan support for his

agenda by issuing more Executive orders. He would do that if Republicans did not cave in and give him every single thing he wants on every issue.

So rather than talking to Republicans in bipartisan discussions about how we can come together on real solutions to the problems that face our economy and people being out of work, the President instead has defaulted in favor of poll-tested ideas and political gimmicks leading into the runup to the 2014 election.

Sipping martinis and plotting politics while millions of Americans are out of work shows how out of touch the President has become, and unfortunately so many of the folks who vote with him on each and every issue that comes before the Senate. But putting last night's party aside for a moment, I would ask my friends across the aisle a few questions about the recent Senate debate about unemployment insurance.

The first question: If extending unemployment insurance benefits for the long-term unemployed is so important, why did the majority leader not schedule a vote last month before those benefits expired on December 28? That is the first question.

Second question: Why would you want to add \$6.4 billion to the national debt, when the national debt is already \$17.3 trillion? Why would you want to do that if you knew the bill had no chance of passing, because Republicans were not going to agree to a bill that adds to the national debt?

You might ask whether it is hard to find \$6.4 billion in an annual spending budget of \$3.8 trillion. I will do the math for you. The \$6.4 billion is roughly .0017 percent of what the Federal Government spends in a given year. It seems to me that would be relatively easy to do.

In fact, Republicans had amendments that would pay for the 3-month extension as well as restore the pension benefits for the military that were cut in the earlier budget deal. But the majority leader refused to allow an open amendment process that would have allowed a vote on either one of those. I would ask the majority leader, rhetorically—he is not here in the Chamber, but I am sure he has people listening—why is it the majority leader refused to allow any progrowth measures to the final bill? Republicans had a number of amendments that would have improved the education and training component of our unemployment compensation system.

If you look at the three major causes of long-term unemployment, one is education. We need to deal with that. The other is family choices, harder for government to have an influence on. But the third is jobs and the job environment.

But the majority leader blocked every single opportunity to address ei-

ther education reforms or job training or to deal with progrowth measures which have actually created more jobs so fewer people would have to be on unemployment and more people would be able to find work, as I know they would prefer to do.

So if the majority leader and our Democratic friends who joined in blocking every Republican idea to either pay for it or to help improve job training or to improve the private sector's ability to create jobs and allow people to go to work, I would like to hear the answer to those.

There is a much better way to fuel job creation, reduce unemployment, and promote upward mobility that does not involve playing politics while millions of Americans are looking for work. For starters, let's pick some of the low-hanging fruit. I bet the Presiding Officer, based on some of the remarks I have seen attributed to her, would agree with this one: The Canadian Government has spent years urging President Obama to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline, which would create thousands of well-paying jobs, middle-class jobs right here in the United States. This administration, this President, actually promised Republicans in a meeting he had with them last year that he would make a decision by the end of last year, 2013. We are still waiting for his decision. All we hear is the sound of crickets when it comes to the Keystone XL Pipeline. But this President and this White House, this administration, could effectively create those jobs with the stroke of a pen approving the Keystone XL Pipeline. It does not get much easier than that.

Indeed, even the President's own former National Security Advisor has said publicly he thinks the President ought to do this, because this is not just an economic issue, this is not just a jobs issue. Every barrel of oil we transport on the Keystone XL Pipeline from a friendly country such as Canada means less oil we have to import from volatile regions of the planet such as the Middle East.

But beyond the pipeline issue, which is the lowest of the low-hanging fruit in terms of creating jobs and getting the economy moving again, the Obama administration should generally stop hindering our domestic energy production. We have had a renaissance in energy in America thanks to innovation in the private sector, primarily the now some six-decades-old practice of fracking, which has gotten a bad rap in some corners, but also horizontal drilling, pioneered by none other than George Mitchell of Texas who recently passed on.

This combination of fracking and horizontal drilling has led to a proliferation of domestic energy supply, natural gas and oil right here at home. Again, every barrel, every MCF of gas

we produce here domestically means less energy we have to import from abroad.

We all know that nationwide the oil and gas industry represents a rare bright spot in the U.S. economy. According to one study, by 2035, unconventional oil and gas resources alone will be supporting 3.5 million jobs and contributing \$475 billion to our economy. Why would not the President and our Democratic friends embrace something like that, that would create so many jobs right here in the United States, instead of playing political games and plotting out the next election?

Yet on top of that, to make matters worse, the administration is proposing a proliferation of new regulations on fracking that occurs on Federal lands. I think my friends who perhaps are not familiar with this process should listen. Fracking has been going on for at least 60 years in Texas under the regulatory authority of the Texas Railroad Commission and local jurisdictions. But if you drill a well and you put the casing in and you cement it properly, there is absolutely zero threat to groundwater or drinking water, because the target of the fracking is deep below the surface. So by using good drilling practices and cementing of the casing, there is virtually zero threat to drinking water and the concerns that many people have expressed but which are not grounded in experience.

Think of it this way: If the Federal Government has made such a hash out of health care after ObamaCare by taking over one-sixth of the economy and our national health care, what I worry about is what they would do if the Federal Government decides to take over regulation of fracking. Because it has been handled appropriately at the State and local level. I am afraid they will make a hash out of that as well.

In addition to the other regulations I am concerned about, the administration has announced new regulations that would impose massive additional costs and deliver very little in the way of economic or environmental gains. More regulations are never a good idea if they put an additional burden on business and produce no tangible benefit to the environment. But they are especially harmful at a time when our economic recovery is so anemic and our economic recovery remains so fragile. We simply need to stop placing additional burden by additional regulations on the vital sectors of our economy that we need in order to grow and prosper and create new jobs, especially when there is no demonstrable environmental benefit.

For that matter, let's eliminate all new regulations that do not pass a simple cost-benefit analysis. One new study shows that the Obama administration has imposed more than \$112 billion worth of net regulatory costs on

the U.S. economy and added an equivalent of 158 million hours of additional paperwork on American businesses.

My colleagues Senator PORTMAN and Senator ROBERTS have each sponsored new legislation that would introduce safeguards against unnecessary job-killing regulations. This brings me to ObamaCare. One of the things that organized labor, which was one of the biggest supporters of ObamaCare, has now come back to the White House and complained about is the fact of the incentives for employers to take what was full-time work, a 40-hour workweek and make it part-time work.

Indeed, that is because the President's health care law defines full-time employment as a 30-hour workweek, so people even working part time have to be provided full benefits that those on full-time work ordinarily would qualify for.

But as a result, as many of these labor leaders told the President a few short months ago, many Americans have had their full-time jobs reduced from full time to part time. This trend will only get worse as the administration decides to enforce the employer mandates.

If the majority leader would allow, we have two bills on our side of the aisle that would address that. Senator COLLINS of Maine and Senator SCOTT of South Carolina have proposed defining full-time employment as a 40-hour workweek that would provide some benefit and some relief to people who have seen their hours cut.

One more example of low-hanging fruit: Republicans and Democrats both agree that education is a critical need to allowing for upward mobility.

With that in mind, we should be doing everything possible to support successful education reform initiatives across the country. Yet the Obama administration has done frequently the opposite. Witness what has happened in Louisiana where the administration is trying to derail Louisiana's school voucher program where parents get to choose where the money goes, not the government.

This is all very easy. Some things would be harder, such as major tax reform, although I would point out that until recently Members of both parties agreed that the goal of tax reform would be to lower marginal rates as we eliminate a lot of the tax expenditures or deductions or subsidies or the like.

We want to adopt those kinds of pro-growth tax reforms, but we are never going to make any real progress as long as our friends across the aisle insist on using this to raise more money for the Federal Government to spend and not reduce marginal rates—in other words, to basically undermine the benefit of pro-growth tax reform only in order to get an additional \$1 trillion or \$2 trillion to spend.

The stalemate on tax reform reflects a broader problem in Washington. De-

spite the long-term unemployment crisis and despite the massive drop of people in the workforce and actually looking for work, the President has still failed to put forth any serious job creation agenda. Sure, he wants the government to take more of your hard-earned tax dollars and spend them, because he thinks the government can do a better job than you can spending your own money, but it hasn't worked. Jobs and the economy remain Americans' top concerns. Yet, unfortunately, the President is already now in full reelection mode, recognizing that in his second term his ability to get things done is going to be highly dependent on the midterm elections in November 2014. Hence, rather than working with Republicans to try to address these problems, there are team meetings at the White House sipping martinis and planning strategy for November 2014.

Americans deserve better. They deserve a comprehensive job creation agenda that includes serious tax reform, serious regulatory reform, and serious health care reform, an agenda that makes it easier for business to hire workers and easier for families to pursue the American dream. We have done our best to propose such an agenda but, unfortunately, we are still waiting for the majority leader and the President to take us up on that offer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. I am going to speak briefly. My Republican colleague across the aisle has noted he would like to speak next.

I want to take a moment and talk about what has been unfolding on Capitol Hill, with the House, Senate, the Republican caucus, and the Democratic caucus working together to produce an appropriations bill, a spending bill, a bill we refer to in Congress as an omnibus, meaning that it covers all 12 sections that are normally allocated within the appropriations or spending bill world.

I am a new member of the Appropriations Committee. This is the first time I can stand on the floor and feel as though I have gone through a process that is something similar to what our colleagues have done in a bipartisan way over many generations. But that bipartisan collaboration has been sorely missing in the time since I first came to the Senate. I am pleased to see in this particular moment it is a ray of hope that perhaps we can restore a rational budgeting and spending bill process to address the issues facing America.

I was delighted that Senator MURRAY led the Senate, working with Congressman RYAN, to produce a budget that went through both Chambers.

I am very pleased that our two leaders in the Senate, the Senator from Maryland and the Senator from Alabama, brought the two sides together

to work with the House to produce this spending bill, because in the absence of a spending bill that has been deliberated on, what we have is a continuing resolution—which means we might continue to keep spending the money as we did in the past, even though the needs of the present have diverged from the needs of the past. That is inherently wasteful to keep doing the same thing we did before when different challenges are presenting themselves to our Nation.

I wanted to note a few of the things that were done in the course of this bill that I think are very relevant to the challenges we face in Oregon.

Let me start with the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. When I went over to visit Oregon's men and women in uniform in Iraq and Afghanistan, they said: When we come home, we hope we will have a job, and we hope our public leaders will work to try to help those jobs be there.

Indeed, when someone comes out of that theatre of war and back into civil society, the structure of a job is very important to your sense of purpose, your sense of rhythm, your financial stability, your role in the family. So we have in Oregon a robust Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program to help bring employers together with our men and women who were in uniform overseas but have now come home. We have so many who serve in the Guard who have gone overseas. They don't come home to work on a military base and still have a daily rhythm, they come home to civilian life.

Restoring and preserving this Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program that was done in this bill is very important to many of our men and women who were in uniform overseas and have come home. It was zeroed out in the President's budget. It was restored in this process. I was delighted to be part of the effort to make sure that happened.

A second item that is very important to Oregon is hazardous fuels reduction in our national forests. Our forests are dryer than they were before. We have more lightning strikes due to the changing weather patterns and, therefore, we have had more acres, thousands of acres, burning.

We need to invest not only on the back end when there is a fire, we need to invest in the front end to thin out the forests that are overgrown, to get rid of the fuels that are on the floor of the forest that increase fire intensity and make it more likely that the fire will go from the ground of the forest to the canopy and be out of control. Those funds were dramatically cut by the administration and largely restored in the appropriations process. We need more in that area. We need to do more on the front end, but it was a big step forward to do what was done in this bill.

A third issue affecting Oregon is small ports. The last fiscal year there was no set-aside for small ports. I have many small ports on the Pacific coast of Oregon, as I know many States have ports on either coast or the gulf coast. These small ports are very important to our economy, and they shouldn't be neglected. The set-aside is very important to make sure they have the chance to repair their barriers, their breakwaters, to dredge out the slips or to dredge the anchorage in general, and so this is very good.

What about the debris that has been floating over from the tsunami in Japan and then cleaned up on the Oregon coast? Yes, this bill says yes, the funds that are available can be used to reimburse the communities that had to do this on their own because we had not yet acted in this Chamber to provide them with resources. That too is addressing an evolving issue.

I want to speak particularly to the investment in education, the extra \$1 billion for Head Start and the extra \$1 billion that will go to support IDEA and title I funding, large formula allocations.

We have 200 school districts in Oregon. Those school districts are often way too small to have a grant writer to compete in some newfangled competition for X, Y, or Z. They need core funds to reduce the number of students in the classroom, to address the challenge of providing education for students with disabilities. This budget helps significantly in that direction.

I wish to say thank you again to the leadership that was displayed, the bipartisan leadership of the Senator from Alabama and the Senator from Maryland. Well done. I am honored to be part of this process of trying to shape our Senate spending plan, our congressional spending plan, to address emerging challenges in America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

BENGHAZI

Mr. ROBERTS. Earlier today Senator GRAHAM and Senator MCCAIN spoke to this issue. I could not speak at that time as I had a conflict, but my remarks are pertinent to the issue they spoke about.

It has been an agonizing 16 months. But this week, through the investigation efforts of the House Armed Services Committee and the Senate Intelligence Committee, we have learned that circumstances surrounding the terrorist attacks on our U.S. consulate in Benghazi and the murder of four Americans, as told by this investigation, simply are not factual.

A year of news reporting and these congressional findings confirms an egregious disconnect between what the administration has alleged and the facts of what happened. As we say in Kansas, simply put: It just doesn't add up.

We now know this tragedy did not have to happen and, most certainly, the hard-to-understand actions and behaviors of those involved have added unneeded hubris, scandal, and conduct difficult to comprehend. This is a mess that still has to be cleaned up. It demands clarity, honesty, and simply owning up to the truth.

I come to the floor to discuss this tragedy not so much as a Republican Senator from Kansas, but always a Marine. I fear our lack of truth and understanding has broken a bond that those who risked their lives for our Nation all share and believe in—the bond that if they come in harm's way, we have their backs, and we will be there for them. This is a speech I wish I never had to make. But I feel compelled to make my plea to this administration yet again—specifically to President Obama—to give the American people and the families whose lives were lost in Benghazi a full accounting. It is long overdue.

A month after the attacks I wrote the President, as a Marine, with the deepest concern regarding his personal handling, and that of his administration, of the Benghazi attacks and the damage it continues to do to that sacred bond our men and women in uniform have of sacrifice for each other. That extends to those who serve our country overseas in a civilian capacity as well.

I am once again asking this President, our Commander in Chief, to actively restore the trust and sincerity once made with that promise never to leave anybody behind. If he and others responsible for this tragedy do not restore this trust, I truly believe the future morale and effectiveness of our military services are at stake.

As I travel through Kansas and speak with my constituents, regardless of their background, they want to know what really happened in Benghazi and why. Why has it taken so long to get the answers?

Many asked me directly, when will the President be forthright with the families of those killed and injured in the attacks? When will the President stop covering up the bad decisions made on September 11, 2012? Most emphatically they say, please, please, do not forget about Benghazi.

However, the response has been a dogged all too familiar tactic of delay, nonresponse, and the hope that somehow tomorrow it will all go away. Well, this is not going away.

I applaud my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee for the recent release of 450 pages documenting these classified hearings held over the past year. I applaud my colleagues on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence for their report released yesterday detailing the events surrounding the attacks. The headlines from this report now read: "Benghazi could have been prevented."

While the results of these investigations have brought more truth to light, they have also brought more questions to mind. As a Marine, I know there is no mission our Marines cannot accomplish or complete. If press reports are accurate, I do not understand why our Marine rapid response unit was delayed by an hour—required to change out of their uniforms into plain civilian clothing—and then, ultimately, simply turned away.

Our commanders have testified it was the State Department that declined the Marines in Benghazi, yet they have been reluctant to point the finger at the State Department. Somebody made this call. Someone gave this order. Facts are stubborn things, and as more relevant facts are now becoming public, the obvious questions increase.

In the Senate Intelligence Committee's report—and I urge every Member to read this report because it is a good report—it is made clear that individuals within the administration have continued to stonewall Congress from the truth. I am not going to go into every detail here on the floor—it is all here in this report—but enough is enough.

Congress has the constitutional duty to ensure the Executive Branch does not abuse its power. That power has been abused. No one who has played a role in this debacle has been held accountable—no one—let alone brought to justice, as promised by the President. In fact, just the opposite. We have released individuals who have returned to start working on the next terrorist attack.

Likewise, this report makes it clear U.S. personnel raised alarms for months before the attacks. Requests for additional security were made by the previous Ambassador as early as February 2012. Yet, the State Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Programs, Charlene Lamb, rejected the request because Libya was a "political game," and the administration did not want to "look bad," according to the Senate Intelligence Committee's report.

The absurdity and egregious behavior of putting politics before security is overwhelming. Lives were at stake. It has been confirmed that our top military leaders, General Ham, General Dempsey, and Secretary Panetta, knew immediately—immediately—this was a terrorist attack and not a protest. And so did the President.

We knew AQIM, AQAP, the Muhammad Jamal Network, and Ansar al-Shariah—founded by Sufian bin Qumu, a former detainee—were all involved. This just raises more questions. Why were there no contingency plans in place? We had actionable intelligence. The British left. The Red Cross left. There certainly were no flags flying in Benghazi by any western nation, and the consulate had already been attacked.

Why didn't we deploy immediately, with the assumption there would be follow-on attacks? Why were those who paid the ultimate sacrifice left to their own devices that day—on September 11—that anyone could anticipate would bring trouble?

Our generals have testified the United States was not even looking at Libya, but rather Tunisia, Egypt, and Sudan. Less than 1 year after Qadhafi, and no one was concerned about safety in Libya? Does anyone believe this assessment? Given the turmoil and danger, did the State Department really believe that we could normalize Libya? That the country was stable?

This has been an incredible example of condescending arrogance and elitism, putting politics and personal agenda ahead of protecting the lives of Americans. The insult is that 16 months later we still can't get the truth. We now know, without a shadow of doubt, there was actionable intelligence. Yet no action was taken. I personally, as a Senator and, yes, as a Marine, am fed up with the lack of accountability this administration has taken in response.

I am fed up with the stonewalling by several of those in the State Department who have ignored a request from the Intelligence Committee for testimony.

When then Secretary Clinton came before Congress to testify, she replied: "What difference does it make?" The difference is our Ambassador and three other patriots did not have to die. The families of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty deserve better from this country. They deserve more from this President.

With that in mind, I want to make a simple and very respectful request of the President. I simply ask that he take the opportunity during his State of the Union speech on Tuesday, January 28, to give those families and all Americans the whole story.

Mr. President, I simply ask that you be forthright with the American people. Help us get beyond this tragedy. Help us restore confidence and faith for our personnel serving overseas and in harm's way, that the sacred bond of all ways having their back is not gone.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to speak with 40 young Marines, all second lieutenants, who are just about to finish The Basic School at Quantico, VA. They are going to be great officers. I hope someday some of them will be Senators and Congressmen. I looked each one of them in their eyes and let them know, because they needed to know, that a bipartisan majority in this Senate has not forgotten about that promise—the same promise that was made to me when I joined the Corps. I say to President Obama: I hope you can make that promise again soon, too.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam President, the omnibus funding bill before the Senate today is a remarkable accomplishment and a welcome reminder that Congress can function effectively when Members are willing to sit down and work through their differences. The large margin by which the omnibus passed in the House is a testament to the bipartisan nature of the agreement and to the determination, skill, and leadership of Chairwoman MIKULSKI and Congressman ROGERS.

With passage of this bill in the Senate, the threat of another government shutdown is averted and the crippling effects of the sequester will be reversed.

America's vets are well served by this agreement. As chairman of the Senate's Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, I worked to provide the VA with robust funding to ensure our vets receive the benefits they have earned and deserved.

The bill provides \$63.2 billion for the VA, \$2.3 billion above last year. It fully funds a host of vital programs, including compensation, pensions and health care, and it targets funding for crucial initiatives for homeless vets, rural health care, medical research, suicide prevention, women vets, and Iraq and Afghanistan vets, to name just a few.

Of major importance, the agreement also includes a comprehensive plan to address the massive backlog of vets' disability claims. In 2013 the backlog of compensation claims for service-related disabilities soared to record levels. In March of 2013 the backlog of claims pending for more than 125 days had grown to over 630,000 claims—more than 70 percent of the total claims pending. As of this week there are 403,761 claims in the backlog.

The Department has made substantial progress over the past several months, but thousands of vets continue to face lengthy delays in having their disability claims processed. In response to this problem, I included in the omnibus a 10-point action plan to give the VA additional tools to address the claims backlog and to strengthen training, oversight and accountability. This includes important upgrades to computer hardware in VA regional offices and \$100 million in overtime and training money to work through the backlog in processing vets' disability claims.

It is critical we do not sacrifice accuracy in the name of expediency, and my plan also includes quality review teams, spot audits, and additional training for claims processors.

Of special importance to South Dakota, I have worked hard to expand VA health care to rural vets. Nationwide,

nearly 30 percent of America's vets live in rural areas that are often far from major VA medical centers or clinics. The omnibus appropriations bill builds on the rural health initiative I launched in fiscal year 2009 to close gaps in VA medical care in rural and remote areas. The bill provides \$250 million for rural health care, including telehealth and mobile clinics for vets in rural and highly rural areas, including Native American populations.

Our vets deserve the best and highest quality care from the VA. The fiscal year 2014 omnibus appropriations bill provides the VA with significant new tools and funding to carry out its mission, and I look forward to the bill's prompt passage.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I thank the Senator from South Dakota for all the great work he has done at the subcommittee level. He has an enormous responsibility in that subcommittee. It is all about military construction—over there and here.

Many don't realize our military bases are really towns, and they need roads and water supplies. If you talk to a garrison commander, such as those in Maryland, they are small cities. Fort Meade employs over 35,000 people in Maryland—that is a lot of people—from those who work in the commissary to some of our most sensitive national security projects.

So he has done a great job. But what he has really thrown his heart into is veterans. His son is a veteran. One of the things early in my chairmanship we discussed was this issue of the veterans' disability backlog. Senator JOHNSON led the way, along with Senator MARK KIRK, his ranking member, on extensive hearings and due diligence, where we don't throw money at the problem, but we really work on solving the problem. There are very specific line items here that should help with this review process. But, as Senator JOHNSON has said, also accurately, because if they are not accurate then they present other problems, either for the veteran or for the taxpayer.

He has done a great job. In another way he chairs the Banking Committee as the authorizer, of which the Presiding Officer is well aware, and his wise counsel for many of the aspects we needed to deal with on financial services was most welcome.

I must say to the Senator he is a great Member. The way he and Senator KIRK worked was outstanding. Senator KIRK himself is a veteran, a Naval Reserve officer. They knew just how to tackle the problem, and tackle it they did. I think veterans all over should know we are going to meet their health care needs. We are going to deal with the disability backlog area. We are also

going to make a downpayment on this working-age military COLA for both the disabled and the survivors. And we are going to say: Promises made, promises kept.

I thank the Senator and his counterpart Senator KIRK. We appreciate what they have done. I think it has been an enrichment to the overall bill to have done what has been done in the Military-VA.

Madam President, we are waiting for other Senators to come to the floor. I have to talk about my own subcommittee.

I chair the Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee, and my ranking member is also the vice chairman of the full committee, Senator SHELBY. We worked very hard on this bill, also with our counterparts in the House, Chairman FRANK WOLF and Ranking Member CHAKA FATTAH. The CJS bill we agreed upon provides \$51.6 billion in discretionary spending. It focused on community safety, on our jobs and our economy. We used those priorities to guide funding decisions, from Federal law enforcement to space exploration. What could keep America safe? What could make America great? We cannot have vital communities unless they are safe.

The CJS bill has money in here for key grants to help State and local police departments. The legislation we worked on adds money toward the COPS Program that will put cops on the beat.

We also want to deal with the prevention of violence as well as the prevention of crime. This bill includes money for the Violence Against Women Act, \$29 million more than sequester. What it will mean is more help to local enforcement to prosecute, more money to help with prevention for those who are victims of domestic violence and to be able to provide lifesaving shelters and then transitional housing. We are very proud of that.

As we add more police to the streets and neighborhoods in our communities, we want to make sure the police are safe, and we were able to have funding in here to provide a grant program to buy bulletproof vests. We are often disturbed when we talk to our local police chiefs that the crooks and drug dealers and bums have better equipment, technology, better guns, more rapid guns, or they have bulletproof vests while our police officers are out there defending us without vests. We wanted to make sure our officers have what they need.

We also have money in here to deal with prevention. We have money for youth mentoring programs but also to tackle gang violence in our communities.

This is where bipartisanship really worked. Our colleague Senator KIRK of Illinois, who struggled with terrific gang problems in Chicago, acknowl-

edges we have gang problems in every city. He worked very hard to present to the committee a gang violence program and we were able to put money in that so that there can be local solutions.

Acknowledging that indeed schools need to be safe, we also helped create a grant program, modest in funds, where local police departments working with the Department of Education and the parents can come up with ways to keep those schools safe.

This bill also has a strong focus on cyber security where we have money in here to fund the Department of Justice, to prevent attacks in case criminals, particularly organized crime, are behind the keyboard. Before it was Al Capone raiding banks. Now it is hackers, both in this country and around the world, stealing credit cards, stealing our identity. Over 46 million people were victimized. This provides money particularly to the FBI and the National Institutes of Standards to develop the tools and techniques and actually implement them to do it and to work with the private sector on advice and guidance on what steps they could take voluntarily to be able to protect themselves.

We also funded Federal law enforcement. In this legislation we have added more money for the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the U.S. Marshals.

What is the U.S. Marshals? Is this the days of Wyatt Earp? Do they ride the range? Actually they ride our roads, making sure they are going after the most-wanted fugitives. When we have on TV the 10 most wanted, it is the marshals who are in hot pursuit, with the authority to go across State lines. They do it. They also have the legislative mandate to implement the sexual predator laws. They are the ones who are charged with actually finding, identifying, to make sure they are filing their registration, and keeping our children safe. Then they are charged with the responsibility of keeping our courthouses safe. You may recall a few years ago the terrible shootout in Atlanta. Many of our courthouses themselves could be in danger. Because of the violence when you have these types of prosecutions, they can also invite violence against the judges. These marshals do that job. We believe while the high profile agencies may be the FBI and DEA, and we recognize that, there is also the Marshals Service.

In the area of science, Senator SHELBY of Alabama, my ranking member, and I also funded America's space program. This total funding will be \$17.6 billion. Working with Senator SHELBY, we wanted to have a balanced space program to assure America's premier leadership in human space exploration and in space science and also in aeronautics. We worked with the SLS rocket, which will take human beings

beyond the Earth orbit. The bill has \$1.6 billion for that development. But we also funded operations and research on the International Space Station.

The Presiding Officer might have read recently that NASA has extended the duration and operation of the space station. It costs a lot of money to build it and there was a lot of risk of human lives to go up there and assemble it. "Gravity" might win in the Academy Awards, but we have real-life astronauts who keep that space station together, kept it operating, and now that we have been able to accomplish it, it is time to do the compelling research that could be done only by a lab in the sky in microgravity or no gravity at all, to be able to do this. We look forward to being able to conduct the research.

Also, because we are Americans and we believe in the private sector, we now will have commercially crewed vehicles going to the space station. It is going to be amazing.

We had the space shuttle. What a workhorse the space shuttle was. It took astronauts, researchers, up to the space station. That useful life came to an end. We depend on the Russians, with the Soyuz, to do that. We appreciate that, making the Soyuz available—I might add at a really hefty, hefty, hefty price. But we know we wanted to have our own way of getting up there. Thanks to the development of commercial crews—again the American way of competition for the best, most safe vehicle, at the best price—they are going to be able to do it.

I am very proud that a company based in Virginia but hiring Marylanders, Orbital, has a rocket being launched from Wallops Island that now takes cargo, an unmanned vehicle taking cargo—not risking the life of an astronaut, taking cargo to the station.

We also have funding for space science to understand and protect the planet. We think we have done a very good job in that.

Also in the area of science, yes, funding for the National Science Foundation and also in weather, what we have done in terms of weather. Most people think they get weather from the Weather Channel. I bet if they are from Boston, like the Presiding Officer, you are mesmerized by it. But the Weather Channel gets its information from the Weather Service that is operated by NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. We want to make sure we have the best mathematical models and the best satellites working with international partners to make sure we make the best weather forecasts. It saves lives and it also saves money.

For every mile we can be accurate in the prediction of a hurricane, we save \$1 million in evacuation costs. In Maryland, Ocean City, we are vulnerable. So every dollar we can save—and

Key West—all of us, hurricanes, or a nor'easter—we will understand that. We have put money in there. And we have done other things to promote the economy. I am proud of what we did in Commerce, Justice to keep America safe, to do the jobs today and the jobs tomorrow.

I note the subcommittee chairman on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education is here.

I yield the floor and such time as he may use.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I come to the floor to speak in favor of the Omnibus appropriations bill we now have before us. First and foremost, it is noteworthy that this is a bill, not a continuing resolution. For the first time in years, Congress has returned to regular order in the appropriations process. Senior members of the Appropriations Committee from both parties have come together to negotiate their priorities, program by program.

As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, I view this as a huge step onto a better path. The Labor-H bill, as it is sometimes called, has been in continuing resolution every other year since 2009. This is an irresponsible way to allocate \$160 billion in taxpayer funds, and I am pleased that we are putting a stop to that kind of destructive trend today.

For the past year I have had people come up to me and say: There is no way you are going to have an agreement on Labor-HHS. Labor-HHS will be left behind, and it will be folded into a continuing resolution.

I guess no one could imagine that Democrats and Republicans would be able to sit down and come to a fair agreement on health and education issues. I think that attitude sold our subcommittee short. I am proud to say we have worked out a fair agreement with my ranking member Senator JERRY MORAN from Kansas, as well as my colleagues on the House side, including Chairman JACK KINGSTON and ranking member Congressman ROSA DELAURO. No one got 100 percent of what they wanted in this bill, which is often a sign of a pretty good deal.

Despite the fact that I wanted to do more to alleviate the disaster cuts for 2013, I would like to speak about a few of the essential investments in this bill that I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting.

First, the bill advances my long-standing priority of shifting the American health care system—so-called—from a sick care system to a genuine health care system, emphasizing prevention, wellness, and public health. It provides a \$1 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health, as well as a major new funding for brain re-

search and a new initiative to discover ways to prevent and cure Alzheimer's disease.

In addition, this bill allocates nearly \$1 billion from the Prevention and the Public Health Fund, which I created in the Affordable Care Act, title IV, which I was in charge of drafting. There has been some confusion about this fund in news reports, so I will correct the record.

In the past years resources from the fund have been diverted to other health care purposes. This year, however, this omnibus allocates 100 percent of the resources from the fund to prevention and wellness activities. It has been reported that the omnibus cuts or eliminates the fund. I read that in the paper this morning. I read that the prevention and wellness fund was cut by \$1 billion.

Well, that is just not so. That is a misinterpretation. Believe me, if they cut \$1 billion from prevention and wellness, I would not be here supporting the bill. Section 219 of division H of this bill allocates the money, so that is what we did. Far from eliminating the money, we identify where that money is to go, including \$160 million for immunization programs, \$104 million for cancer screenings, and \$105 million for smoking cessation programs. On October 1, another appropriation of \$1 billion will be deposited in the fund under the Affordable Care Act, and, again, I intend to allocate the fund just as we did in this omnibus.

If there is any doubt in anyone's mind that the fund is alive and well and fulfilling the purpose for which it was intended, consider this: The American Public Health Association has praised this Omnibus bill specifically for allocating the prevention fund. They said:

We are also pleased that the bill fully allocates available funds from the Prevention and Public Health Fund for the first time.

As the author of that fund, I consider the allocation of these resources to prevention and wellness as a major achievement in this bill.

This bill also includes significant new investments to support early learning initiatives. We included an increase of over \$1 billion for Head Start, which will more than restore cuts from sequestration. Nearly half of that increase will be used to expand early Head Start for kids from birth through age 3. In addition, the bill provides \$250 million which can be used to help States develop high-quality early learning programs for low- and middle-income 4-year-olds. Both of these investments improve access to high-quality early learning experiences for children from birth to kindergarten. I truly believe these investments lay the foundation for future prosperity by preparing America's next generation.

One of the reasons it is important to reassess programs every year is to respond to current events and changing

needs. The Nation was devastated by the tragic shootings that occurred last year in Newtown, CT. This bill provides increased resources for providing the mental health and school safety activities we have been talking about for over a year. The bill includes \$140 million—an increase of \$29 million—for specific activities that support safe school environments. The bill also provides \$1.13 billion—an increase of \$213 million—for mental health programs, such as mental health first aid training grants, the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative, suicide prevention, and the mental health block grant.

Other highlights of this bill: It supports the economic recovery by providing workers with job training and by protecting workers' rights. In education, it makes it possible for the maximum Pell grant to rise by an estimated \$85, to \$5,730 this year. It allocates an additional \$700 million for community health centers, which is so important to my State of Iowa and, quite frankly, to every State in this Nation. It provides higher funding for activities that support safe and healthy workplaces and, as I said, school environments.

Most in Washington know that the staff of the Appropriations Committee worked diligently on this bill all through the holidays. We all appreciate and commend their excellent work. I would like to thank these unsung heroes for all of the long days and nights and weekends they worked.

I first wish to thank my clerk, the head of my group on Labor-HHS, Adrienne Hallett, and her team: Mark Laisch, Lisa Bernhardt, Mike Gentile, Robin Juliano, Kelly Brown, and Teri Curtin. On the minority side, I thank Laura Frih-Dell, Jennifer Castagna, and Chol Pak.

I also thank Chuck Keifer and Gabriel Batkin—on the full committee—for their hard work and diligence and for sticking with us through this to make sure we got it done. On the minority side, I thank Bill Duhnke for all his hard work.

I also thank the two principals who are here today. First, I will thank my longtime friend, going back to our days in the House together, Senator DICK SHELBY from Alabama. These were long and tough negotiations, but the one thing I have always appreciated about my friend from Alabama is that he is fairminded and willing to negotiate. He understands it is a two-way highway around here. You give a little, you take a little, and we work these things out. Again, I thank my friend for hanging in there and getting this hammered out.

There are not enough accolades in my book or any book I know that has been written to say what a great job Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI did. She gave it her all and really worked hard with Senator SHELBY and her counter-

parts on the House side to bring this bill to fruition.

There were a lot of doubters who said: No, we won't get it done; they are not going to be able to hammer it out.

BARBARA MIKULSKI never gave up. She was willing to stay there for long hours days on end to get this job done. Again, I think a lot of us who served on the Appropriations Committee for a long time—30 years for me—I guess in all the time I was on appropriations, we had four chairmen. We had John Stennis from Mississippi when I first got here and, of course, Senator Byrd, Senator Ted Stevens from Alaska, and Senator Dan Inouye from Hawaii. We think of them as sort of the giants of the Senate, which is a well-earned accolade or praise, I might say. People probably wondered what would happen now that they are gone. We had the sad passing a year ago of Dan Inouye. Well, I can tell you, no longer are they wondering who is going to take over the Appropriations Committee. Senator MIKULSKI has stepped in and pulled us all together—I think on both sides of the aisle—and worked this out. Again, I give my highest compliments to Senator MIKULSKI for her hard work, her intellectual approach, and her rigor in working with others to make sure we got to this point.

Most in Washington, as I said, know that our staff works very hard, but there is just one other person I want to single out. He is not here. In fact, he is not even on the Senate side, but I worked with him for a long time, going back to when Congressman Obey chaired the House committee on Labor-HHS back in the early 1990s. He has been a longtime member of the House appropriations staff. David Reich is currently the minority clerk for Labor-HHS. He is retiring once this bill passes. David has spent nearly his entire career working on the issues in this bill. He has been on or around the Labor-HHS subcommittee since 1996. His collaborative nature, his insightful questions, and his thoughtful approach to the drafting of this bill will be sincerely missed. I wish David well and thank him for his dedicated public service to our country and especially to this committee.

In light of the investments I mentioned, plus many more that I simply don't have time to talk about, I urge all of my colleagues to support the Omnibus appropriations bill. Given the tight overall budget, these are all remarkable achievements.

I have always taken pride in the fact that the Labor-HHS bill, as it is called—Labor, Health and Human Services, Education bill—is a bill where we invest in America's human infrastructure, and that is what this bill does. We have had to make some tough choices, but this new bill lives up to that high calling of investing in America's human infrastructure.

Again, I thank my friend and colleague from Alabama. We were together on the Labor-HHS committee until he took the position as the ranking member on the full Appropriations Committee, but we always had good comity of working together, and I appreciate it very much.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I would like to respond to some of the remarks by my colleague and friend from Iowa. I think he is right on point when he said this is the first time we have been able to bring the appropriations process—I hope—back to regular order, which is what we need. No one wants to shut the government down. My goodness, neither side wants to do that. It is no good, and the American people don't want it. This is a good bipartisan effort. Senator MIKULSKI and other members of the Appropriations Committee have worked together.

I have been at odds sometimes—and a lot of times together—with Senator HARKIN. I first met him 35 years ago when I first went to the House. He had been there a couple of years—a veteran. We have worked together on a lot of issues.

Senator HARKIN is absolutely right when he says we can't say enough about the leadership of the chairperson of this committee, Senator MIKULSKI. She has reached out to both sides. She wants the process to work, as do most of us, and this is an example of that.

I hope later this afternoon that we are going to get a good vote, just as the House did, on this bill. This a big step in how we should be running the government.

I yield the floor.

USE OF FUNDS FOR GUAM

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise today together with Senate Armed Services Chairman LEVIN and Senator MCCAIN to clarify the intent of section 8102 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act contained in the consolidated appropriations bill, 2014. This language should not be interpreted to supersede section 2822 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

I concur with the reporting requirements and limitations established by section 2822 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 and fully expect the Department of Defense to comply with them prior to obligating funds for projects in Guam.

We have also sent a letter to Secretary Hagel from me, Vice Chairman COCHRAN, and Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKEY of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee directing the Department to comply with the requirements in section 2822 prior to obligating funds.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the joint letter sent to

Secretary Hagel on this subject be printed in the RECORD.

Mr. LEVIN. I thank the Senator from Illinois for addressing this important issue. I appreciate both his assessment and his clarification of the relationship between the provision in the National Defense Authorization Act and the provision in the DOD Appropriations Act. Senator McCAIN and I have spent a long time working on this issue, and we believe that the reporting requirements and limitations established by section 2822 are in the best interests of the Department of Defense and the country. I appreciate the willingness of the Senator from Illinois to work with us to ensure that the Department abides by this provision.

Mr. McCAIN. I thank Senate Armed Services Chairman LEVIN for working with me to clarify language in the consolidated appropriations bill of 2014 that directly contravenes section 2822 of the Fiscal Year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act. To date, Congress has not received sufficient cost-analysis supporting the Department of Defense's proposed movement of troops from Okinawa to Guam. For this reason, in the authorization bill, the Armed Services Committees explicitly prohibited any premature investments in Guam until the Secretary of Defense provides Congress with, among other things, a report on military resources necessary to execute the U.S. force posture strategy in the Asia-Pacific region.

I also appreciate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman DURBIN for agreeing that the reporting requirements in section 2822 of the NDAA must be satisfied before the Department of Defense can obligate funds for investments in Guam if the report finds they are needed. In furtherance of these requirements, I fully expect the Senate Armed Services Committee will provide close and careful oversight over the use of any monies that may be appropriated for the transfer of forces covered in this section and obligated by the Department for that purpose and, specifically, hold hearings to determine the extent to which any plan to realign forces from Okinawa to Guam will sufficiently support our operational requirements in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Chairman and Senator McCAIN for their leadership on this issue.

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

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, January 15, 2014.

Hon. CHUCK HAGEL,
Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY HAGEL: We are writing to clarify the intent of Section 8102 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Bill, 2014. This language should not be inter-

preted in any way to supersede Section 2822 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66).

We concur with the direction contained in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 and fully expect that funds will only be obligated for projects in Guam once the Department complies with Section 2822.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

THAD COCHRAN,
Vice Chairman, Senate
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Defense.

RICHARD J. DURBIN,
Chairman, Senate
Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Defense.

PETE VISCLOSKEY,
Ranking Member,
House Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Defense.

RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN,
Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Defense.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President. The bill before us is an important compromise. Neither side got exactly what it wanted, but this legislation will provide much-needed certainty across the government. It keeps the government open for business and helps us turn a corner toward a more regular funding process. It represents much-needed relief from the cycle of crisis and shutdown which has dominated here for too long.

This bill will fund a strong military, cutting edge research projects, and investments in our Nation's families and young people.

For Michigan, the bill will provide much needed funding exciting new research at Michigan State University, for long overdue harbor dredging, to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes, for new transportation projects, and for small airports.

This bill isn't perfect. It short-changes our financial regulators, zeroes out funds for some local communities with large amounts of Federal land, and leaves some other programs at lower levels than is required. Hopefully the PILT funding will be authorized in the farm bill.

This bill is a significant improvement from years of shutdown threats and continuing resolutions that have put our Nation's government on autopilot. This is the first time in 3 years that we will have completed all 12 appropriations bills to properly allocate funding for all Federal agencies.

For the military, the bill provides \$487 billion in base DOD appropriations—the funding level established in the budget agreement—and \$85 billion for overseas contingency operations.

As a result, it appears that DOD's operations and maintenance funding will be reduced by about \$9 billion this year—a substantial reduction, but less than we feared would be the case. While this is a tight budget, I am more concerned at this point about the much greater reductions in DOD funding that will be required in fiscal year 2015 and subsequent fiscal years.

I am pleased that the Defense appropriations bill is consistent with key actions that we took in the National Defense Authorization Act, including provisions on Guantanamo detainees, measures to address sexual assault in the military, and the implementation of the New START Treaty. I also commend the Appropriations Committee for amending the military retired pay COLA change included in the budget agreement to exempt medical retirees and survivor benefit plan annuitants. The Armed Services Committee will be holding hearings to review this issue.

While I have concerns about a few specific provisions, I believe that this is a good Defense appropriations bill and one that deserves our support.

For cutting-edge research, the bill restores \$1 billion of much-needed funding for the National Institutes of Health that was cut last year due to sequestration. This funding is needed to avoid further loss of promising research and make the investments needed to ensure that NIH can continue to support the next generation of scientists and fund cutting-edge research.

For families and children, the bill will fully fund Head Start. Last year, 1,800 children across Michigan were forced out of early childhood programs due to sequestration, and the new funding in this bill is expected to restore and even grow this important early childhood program.

In addition to Head Start funding, the bill also includes a significant increase in funding to educate children with disabilities.

Now, I'd like to talk about a few specific projects that are especially important to Michigan.

First, the bill includes the full \$55 million requested for the Department of Energy for fiscal year 2014 to help fund the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams, FRIB, at Michigan State University. FRIB will let scientists, for the first time, create rare isotopes like those produced in supernovae.

These isotopes will be studied, advancing our knowledge of the origins of elements and the universe, as well as furthering applied science fields like biomedicine, nuclear physics and nuclear chemistry.

The facility will attract top scientists from around the globe, and is a key piece in attracting and training the next generation of nuclear scientists. FRIB will help keep Michigan, and the United States, at the forefront of cutting edge science.

Second, the bill provides important funding for Great Lakes projects. I'm pleased that restoration and protection of our treasured Great Lakes will advance with the funding provided in the bill.

Appropriators fully responded to a request from the Senate Great Lakes Task Force, which I co-chair by including \$300 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative which strategically targets funding at the most significant problems facing the Great Lakes.

In addition, the bill provides more than \$30 million for the Corps of Engineers to fight Asian carp and other invasive species from getting into the Great Lakes. The bulk of that funding will be used for the electric dispersal barrier, which was designed to keep the carp from advancing through the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. We need to recognize that this barrier is only a short-term fix, however, and focus on separating the two basins for a permanent solution. I'm pleased the omnibus includes \$3 million for the Corps to refine its design of such a solution and I will press to speed its implementation.

I'm also glad the bill includes language that I requested that would authorize the Corps of Engineers to implement emergency measures to prevent invasive species from dispersing into the Great Lakes by way of any hydrologic connection to the Mississippi River basin.

I'm also pleased the bill increases funding by about \$12 million from last year for dredging of Great Lakes harbors and channels, operation and maintenance of locks, and repair of breakwaters. The Great Lakes navigation system handles over 160 million tons of cargo, and it is critical this system operates effectively to support our economic growth and international competitiveness.

I will continue to work with my Senate colleagues to restore the payments in lieu of taxes, which are used for such critical needs as public schools, emergency response, and road maintenance.

The bill also restores funding for drinking and wastewater infrastructure by providing about \$2.4 billion to states for investing in these vital water projects, which will both protect public health and our water resources.

Finally, this bill includes important provisions to help our State's transportation system.

I am pleased the bill again includes language allowing the M-1 Rail project in Detroit to use private funds as a match to federal dollars.

In addition, I am pleased that the bill provides funding that for the FAA to keep open contract control towers at the W.K. Kellogg Airport in Battle Creek, the Coleman A. Young Airport in Detroit, and the Sawyer International Airport in Marquette.

This bill is an important compromise, and I am glad that Democrats

and Republicans, from the House and Senate, were able come together to craft this measure.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I first want to congratulate Chairwoman MIKULSKI and Vice Chairman SHELBY for their leadership in bringing these appropriations bills to the floor for final consideration. While I would have preferred these bills to have been brought to the floor individually so that they could be amended, this nevertheless is a noteworthy achievement.

The 2-year budget agreement negotiated by Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN provided the framework for the bill we are considering today, allowing the Appropriations Committees to begin our work of developing bills that will responsibly fund the government.

Since passage of the budget agreement, the Appropriations Committee members have worked tirelessly to craft a true compromise.

As the ranking member for the Transportation and Housing Subcommittee, I worked with Chairman MURRAY to negotiate a bipartisan Transportation and Housing bill. While this bill makes prudent spending reductions—it is \$3.2 billion below the original Senate bill and nearly \$1 billion below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level—it continues to invest in important transportation and housing programs. I would like to mention a few highlights:

First, the TIGER program, which supports transportation infrastructure and economic development in our local communities, is funded at \$600 million. Given the current state of our Nation's highways and bridges with so many being structurally deficient, we included additional resources to help eliminate some of the backlog of vital construction projects.

Second, while the overall funding level for the FAA is reduced by \$167 million from the fiscal year 2013 enacted level, we worked to provide sufficient funding to ensure air traffic controller and safety inspector staffing losses are made whole. The bill also fully funds the Contract Tower program to prevent administration officials from arbitrarily closing towers as they attempted to do last year.

Further, the bill includes program reforms for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which will streamline program requirements, increase oversight, and reduce costs to the taxpayer.

I am proud that the THUD bill strikes the right balance between fiscal responsibility and meeting our Nation's housing and infrastructure needs.

The other divisions of the bill are equally important—from national security, to energy, to health and human services—and I would also like to acknowledge the work of the other sub-

committee chairs and ranking members in completing action on their bills.

For our military and our Nation's security, I particularly appreciate that this bill includes \$100 million for the procurement of the fifth DDG-51 from Bath Iron Works, which Senator KING and I advocated. This funding will allow the Navy to send a tenth DDG-51 to sea that is capable of performing many roles and missions in support of our national defense. Not only will it add stability to the workforce at Bath Iron Works in Maine, but it also will result in significant savings for the taxpayers. The multiyear, 10-ship procurement will save approximately \$1.5 billion—that is the equivalent of an extra destroyer at no cost. I thank Chairwoman MIKULSKI, Vice Chairman SHELBY, Subcommittee Chairman DURBIN, and Subcommittee Ranking Member COCHRAN for this important funding.

I am also grateful to see the \$11.5 million in military construction funding that will go toward the consolidation of structural shops and improve the efficiency of operations at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. While the Department of Defense has delayed or cancelled \$4.1 billion in military construction projects during the next five budget years, this project was accelerated to 2014 due to efforts by members of the Maine and New Hampshire delegations to increase investments to address long overdue modernization needs at PNSY.

For our veterans, I am pleased this bill restores the full cost-of-living increase for disabled military retirees and for survivor benefits, rectifying provisions in the recently-passed budget agreement that unfairly singled out current retirees. Unfortunately, this will not protect all military retirees from a decreased cost-of-living adjustment on their pensions. We must continue to work on behalf of our retired servicemembers and their families to ensure that they receive the full benefits they have been promised and have earned by their service to this country. Congress should act quickly to pass legislation I have cosponsored that completely restores the COLA for all military retirees.

This bill also provides several million dollars in additional funding for medical research, including for Alzheimer's Disease research, treatment, and caregiver programs. This is an important initial step toward the goal of doubling funding for Alzheimer's research and eventually reaching the level of \$2 billion over five years, as recommended by the Alzheimer's Advisory Council. We must continue our efforts in 2015 to increase Alzheimer's research given the tremendous human and economic price of this devastating disease. We are spending \$142 billion annually in Medicare and Medicaid costs on caring for people with Alzheimer's.

I also want to thank Agriculture Subcommittee Chairman PRYOR and Ranking Member BLUNT for addressing the needs of our Nation's farmers and growers, providing critical support for research, and making important nutrition and food security investments during difficult economic times. In particular, I am pleased that the agreement expects USDA to amend its arbitrary decision to exclude the fresh white potato, the only fresh vegetable or fruit to be excluded, from the Women, Infants and Children, or WIC program. Fresh white potatoes are a healthy, affordable, and delicious food choice, and it only makes common sense to include this nutritious vegetable in the WIC package.

This bill also makes important commitments to our energy infrastructure. I would like to thank Subcommittee Chairwoman FEINSTEIN and Ranking Member ALEXANDER for recognizing the potential for creating jobs by providing robust funding for the Department of Energy wind program, which funds the offshore wind demonstration projects. Federal seed money is helping overcome barriers to the development and implementation of new and innovative technologies, such as deepwater offshore wind, which can position the U.S. as a global leader in this promising clean energy field.

To help address the high cost of residential energy, particularly for those living in northern, rural states such as Maine, funding is provided in this bill for the weatherization program. This program plays an important role in permanently reducing home energy costs for low-income families and seniors and training a skilled workforce.

Moreover, for our most vulnerable families and seniors, the increased funding for LIHEAP will help ensure that recipients do not have to choose between paying their energy bills and paying for other necessities such as food or medicine. LIHEAP continues to be an indispensable lifeline for many Americans during these challenging economic times and exceptionally cold winter.

Helping to meet the water infrastructure needs of smaller States and regions is another vital piece of our national infrastructure. I am pleased this bill includes funding for the operation and maintenance of Army Corps projects at "small, remote, or subsistence harbors." Ports and harbors are the economic lifeblood for many rural communities—a fact not fully accounted for under the Corps' budget metrics, which tend to favor larger ports.

The bill also continues to support our Nation's fisheries, which are so important to the economies of our coastal communities, particularly in Maine. In September 2012, the Commerce Department declared a disaster in the Northeast groundfish industry. A vital \$75

million is included in this bill to help fishermen in Maine and in other areas of the country who have had their livelihoods affected by fisheries disasters in recent years. This funding could be used to provide both immediate economic relief to Maine and the region's struggling groundfish industry, and to make targeted investments that will allow the fleet to survive and become more sustainable in the years ahead.

The American people are weary of watching a Congress that can't work. We saw the result of this dysfunction when the government shut down in October. We simply must avoid another shutdown and put our Nation back on sound financial footing. That is why I urge my colleagues to support the compromises the Appropriations Committees worked so hard to achieve.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to discuss the consolidated appropriations bill of 2014, upon which we will soon be voting. While I am pleased that this bill will prevent another government shutdown and hopefully signal to the American people that we can actually work together, I will not be voting for this bill due to serious concerns surrounding specific policy riders and spending provisions. I am also seriously concerned about the process whereby we are passing a 1,582 page, \$1.012 trillion spending bill that we received at 8 p.m. Monday night—giving us very limited time to time to carefully review or debate and no ability to amend.

Now, this is not a new occurrence in Congress. According to the Congressional Research Service, between 1977 and 2013, there were only 4 years when all appropriations were enacted on time—fiscal year 1977, fiscal year 1989, fiscal year 1995, and fiscal year 1997: "[O]ver half of the regular appropriations bills for a fiscal year were enacted on time in only one instance (1978). In all other fiscal years, fewer than six regular appropriations acts were enacted on or before October 1. In addition, in 12 out of the 37 years during this period, none of these regular appropriations bills were enacted prior to the start of the fiscal year." This is unacceptable and must change.

With our country facing a rapidly growing \$17.3 trillion debt, which amounts to more than \$54,000 per citizen, it is time for Congress to go back to the "regular order" and consider each one of the 12 individual appropriations bills in turn to fund the activities of our government before the end of the fiscal year, with ample time for debate and amendments, instead of ramming through a massive 1,582-page Omnibus appropriation bills like the one before us today. The American taxpayer expects more and deserves better than what we are giving them in this bill.

The Omnibus includes appropriations policy riders and pork barrel projects that should raise red flags for all of my

colleagues. For example, tucked away in the classified portion of this bill is a policy rider that has serious national security implications and is a prime example of the appropriators overstepping their bounds. This provision will halt the transfer of the U.S. drone counterterrorism operations from the CIA to the Department of Defense. In doing so, it summarily changes a very important policy that guides how we do certain counterterrorism operations abroad from a direction that the President has specifically prescribed. And how did most of us become aware of this major policy change? By reading this morning's Washington Post; that is how. This is outrageous, and it should not have happened. While there may be differing opinions on who should control drone counterterrorism operations, we should be able to debate these differences in the committees of jurisdiction and eventually on the Senate floor. The fact that a major national security policy decision is going to be authorized in this bill without debate or authorization is unacceptable and should not be the way we legislate on such important national security issues.

The \$1 trillion Omnibus also includes a wasteful provision directing the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA, to continue developing the duplicative Catfish Inspection Office—even though the FDA has a similar inspection office. According to the Government Accountability Office, GAO, this duplicative office will cost taxpayers roughly \$15 million a year once up and running. Both the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, and GAO have recommended that Congress repeal the catfish program because it is "wasteful and duplicative" of FDA's seafood inspection services.

The fact remains that the Catfish Office won't improve food safety. Its true purpose is to ban catfish imports for several years while USDA bureaucrats iron out their procedures with foreign inspectors. A New York Times article from November 2013 explains how this program would disrupt our trade relations with Asian countries. Some nations, including Vietnam, have threatened WTO retaliation against our agriculture exports, like beef and soybeans.

During the Senate debate on the farm bill, I was joined by Senator SHAHEEN and 11 other Senators in offering an amendment to that bill that would have eliminated the Catfish Office, but the managers blocked a vote on our amendment. The House version of the farm bill includes an amendment to eliminate the USDA Catfish Office, but Senate conferees are, likewise, blocking a vote in conference. I urge the Senate conferees to the farm bill to drop their opposition and allow a vote in conference on this important provision. Appropriators should have not included this policy rider in the omnibus.

Instead, we should move to eliminate the duplicative and wasteful USDA Catfish Office.

In addition, the Omnibus bill includes \$120 million in unrequested funding for Guam in direct contravention of the bicameral decisions of the Armed Services Committees. There is absolutely no justification for this. That is why the Armed Services Committees have expressly prohibited such funding in the NDAA. To date, Congress has not received sufficient cost-analysis supporting the Department of Defense's proposed movement of troops from Okinawa to Guam. For this reason, in the authorization bill passed just last month, the Armed Services Committees explicitly prohibited any premature investments in Guam until the Secretary of Defense provides Congress with the strategic plan which includes, among other things, costs associated with the movement to Guam and a report on military resources necessary to execute the U.S. force posture strategy in the Asia-Pacific region.

While this language will stay in the Omnibus bill due to the inability to offer an amendment to strip it, I am thankful to Senate Armed Services Chairman LEVIN for working with me to clarify the language. I also appreciate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman DURBIN and Vice Chairman COCHRAN for agreeing that the reporting requirements in section 2822 of the NDAA must be satisfied before the Department of Defense can obligate funds for investments in Guam if the report finds they are needed. I fully expect the Senate Armed Services Committee will provide close and careful oversight, including hearings, over the use of any monies that may be appropriated for the transfer of forces covered in this section and obligated by the Department for that purpose.

Yet another example of the abuse of the appropriations process is the continued inclusion of a misguided policy rider that prohibits the Postal Service from moving to 5-day mail delivery, which would save the Postal Service \$2 billion a year. This congressional mandate was initially put in place in 1984 and is the only roadblock keeping the Postal Service from transforming the way it delivers mail, while still being able to provide universal service. The Postal Service continues to lose billions of dollars each year; however, some in Congress have decided that they know better than the Postal Service leadership and continue to prohibit the Postal Service from modernizing and transforming the way it does business. Congress must accept the fact that the Postal Service's current way of doing business is no longer viable. The American public communicates and conducts business in a completely different way than they did even 5 years ago. We must allow the Postal

Service to adapt to changing times in order to have a Postal Service in the future, and this includes 5-day mail delivery to save \$2 billion a year.

In addition to these unacceptable policy riders, the bill also includes other examples of pork barrel spending for programs, some duplicative, such as \$65 million for Pacific Coast salmon restoration for States including Nevada, a program that even President Obama has called duplicative and mocked in his 2011 State of the Union Address; \$80 million in additional funding for Amtrak, which continues to operate in the red year after year; \$15 million for an "incentive program" that directs DOD to overpay on contracts by an additional 5 percent if the contractor is a Native Hawaiian-owned company.

There is language that makes it easier for the DOD to enter into no-bid contracts for studies, analysis, and unsolicited proposals. The language in the bill makes it ripe for wasteful spending and earmarks for pet projects. For example, Department of Defense may eliminate competition and use a no-bid contract for a "product of original thinking and was submitted in confidence by one source." With the Department facing cuts now and into the future, this type of vague language could lead to costly wasteful spending on programs that DOD neither needs or can afford.

There are \$600,000 for a program at Mississippi State University to research how to grow trees faster for replanting after hurricanes.

There are numerous "Buy America" provisions that hurt competition and innovation, drive up the costs of procurement, and further increases the taxpayer burden; \$10 million for the USDA High Energy Cost Grants Program that go to subsidize electricity bills in Alaska and Hawaii; \$10 million for a DOD Youth Challenge Program that was neither requested by the President nor authorized to receive funding in the fiscal year 2014 NDAA; and \$3.3 million increase in the STARBASE Program. According to the Internet, this "nice-to-have" but not "necessary-to-have" program "focuses on elementary students, primarily fifth graders. The program's goal is to motivate these students to explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, STEM, as they continue their education. Military volunteers apply abstract principles to real-world situations by leading tours and giving lectures on the use of STEM in different settings and careers." With a war going on and budget crisis at our doorstep, this is how we elect to spend our increasingly scarce defense dollars? We should leave the education of our children to our teachers and parents and not our military.

There is a \$7.7 million increase for the Civil Air Program, or CAP. CAP is

a volunteer organization that provides aerospace education to young people, runs a junior cadet program, and assists when possible in providing emergency services. Its members are hard-working and we are grateful for their volunteerism. This year, as in the past, the Senate Armed Services Committee authorized CAP funding. However, CAP is auxiliary and thus should not be funded given the need for the military to tighten its purse strings and fund programs that are a priority to our national defense, not auxiliary.

The bill also includes \$375 million for Army, Navy, and Air Force "alternative energy research" initiatives. As I have stated in the past, this type of research has yielded such shining examples as the Department of the Navy's purchase of 450,000 gallons of alternative fuels for \$12 million—over 26 dollars per gallon.

There is over \$460 million in funding for Defense Department to do research dealing with research for Alzheimer, autism, prostate and ovarian cancer, HIV/AIDS and numerous other diseases and illnesses. While this type of research is important, it should not be funded by Department of Defense. It should, instead, be funded by the National Institutes of Health, the budget of which this bill more than doubles over last year's.

We cannot continue this process where massive, unamendable, thousand-plus page spending bills totaling trillions of dollars are voted on 2 days after being made available to Members of this body. No Senator could have read and fully understood the long-term impact the policy and spending provisions this bill will have on the future of this Nation. It is a shameful way to do business. The American taxpayers are tired of Washington and our uncontrollable spending habits as well as our inability to cut wasteful, underperforming, and duplicative programs. Furthermore, our refusal to reform our broken tax system and our unsustainable mandatory programs have contributed greatly not only to the current fiscal crisis in our country, but to Americans' unfavorable opinion of the institutions of our government. We must change course and have a fair and open process to fund the Federal Government, not a closed process. For all of these reasons, I will not be voting for this appropriations bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I appreciate the comments from my two dear friends, the Senator from Iowa and the Senator from Alabama. They have been friends of mine for decades, and we have traveled and conspired together—always conspiring for the good of the country, of course. We have shared our thoughts, our philosophy, and our plans, and because we have joined together, we have better legislation.

I want to add my voice to those who have spoken in support of the Omnibus appropriations bill. I spoke about it earlier this week, so I won't repeat others, but I want the American people to understand the importance of what we are doing.

Only Chairwoman MIKULSKI could have said it as well as she did. This compromised bill represents the end of—and hopefully for a long time—“shutdown, slowdown, slamdown politics.” If I spoke for an hour, I would not say it as well as the senior Senator from Maryland did. It shows that the people here want to govern. When they have had enough of political stunts and are no longer intimidated by extremists, they can work together to get it done.

Chairwoman MIKULSKI, Ranking Member SHELBY, Chairman ROGERS, and Ranking Member LOWEY made it possible for the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to do what we all do if we are given the chance. Democrats and Republicans come together and we forge agreements.

Two days ago I spoke about the portions of this omnibus bill that fund the Department of State and foreign operations. But I also know—and I can say this as the most senior member of the Appropriations Committee—the bill also provides funding for many vital domestic programs that have suffered some very painful cuts in recent years. It provides increased funding for public health, including mental health. It is going to increase the National Institutes of Health budget by \$1 billion.

In Vermont, local community health centers are essential for rural families. This bill includes nearly \$700 million more for these health centers nationwide. I know how important they are. I remember during my first term in the Senate helping to start one of our first community health centers in the tiny county of Grand Isle, with a beautiful archipelago of violets in Northern Lake Champlain. We also have Head Start Programs. These are some of the hardest hit by sequestration and the bill will help rebuild these programs by investing nearly \$1 billion.

The bill invests \$194 million more in the Women, Infants, and Children Program, providing nearly 90,000 more mothers and children with nutrition assistance. Talk about something that has a rebounding effect in this country. We all know a hungry child going to school is not going to learn, and they are not going to be as productive a member of society later on. None of us in this Chamber goes hungry. No Senator goes hungry except by choice, but a lot of children and a lot of infants go hungry. Now, 90,000 more can be given nutrition assistance.

Many Americans are struggling to pay for college, and this bill maintains funding for the Pell Grant Program and increases funding for TRIO and

GEAR Up Programs that help low-income and first-generation students get a college education. Many of these programs reach Vermonters through the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. I am pleased this bill includes investment in this and similar nonprofits around the country.

The omnibus includes funding for programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act for grants to rural areas, for transitional housing, for sexual assault services, for legal assistance for victims, and support for Native American victims.

I remember how we joined together in a bipartisan way to pass the Violence Against Women Act, and when they wanted to diminish it in the House of Representatives, some very brave Democrats and Republicans stood and said: No, let's pass the bill the Senate passed. We added a number of things, including Native American victims—something that even some of the previous supporters of the bill were going to take out. We kept it in.

The bill raises the cap on the Crime Victims Fund by \$15 million, which is a historic high. It means more money for victims assistance grants at the State and local levels. How I wish we had such money when I was a prosecutor so we could help victims of crime.

It also makes a lifesaving investment in the bill the former Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell and I wrote, the bulletproof vest program, to protect police officers and other first responders. Every year we hear of police officers whose lives have been saved because of the bulletproof vest program.

We provide increases for homeless assistance grants and the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program. We preserve funding for Rural Economic Area Partnership Zones—something extremely important in the basically rural State of Vermont.

The omnibus also lifts the pay freeze impacting thousands of Federal workers in Vermont and millions across the country and all 50 of our States.

The bill makes strong investments to support our National Guard. I was the cochair of the National Guard Caucus, along with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, who will agree with me on how important that investment is. It overturns a provision in the Bipartisan Budget Act that would have reduced cost-of-living adjustments for medically retired servicemembers and survivor benefit plan recipients. It paves the way for Congress to repeal the reductions for all impacted military retirees.

This bill is not exactly what I might have written, what Chairwoman MIKULSKI would have written, what any one of us would have written if we could write it alone. But after years and years of gridlock on appropriations, we wrote a bill that can pass. So there are compromises. There are programs that are not funded at the levels

many of us wanted, including some provisions important to Vermonters.

I am disappointed that because of limited budget caps we were unable to make larger investments in the Byrne JAG Program and the juvenile justice program, which continue to face steep cuts year after year.

I am disappointed the omnibus includes authorizing language we have been debating as part of the ongoing farm bill negotiation. This antifarmer policy rider will tie the hands of the Grain Inspection, Packers & Stockyards Administration and is an unfortunate case of legislating on behalf of powerful corporations while leaving our family farmers out in the cold.

But I would say that even on the things I would have wanted to include, and many of us would want to include, the alternative was another continuing resolution and more sequestration, which, without question, would have been far worse, especially for programs that I support and I believe the distinguished Presiding Officer supports and most of us support.

So we have taken an important step back from the destructive politics of the past few years. Let's hope it is only the first step. Let's hope we can go on from here to make progress on other important issues the American people sent us to address.

I do not see any Senators seeking recognition. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, as have so many of my colleagues, I rise to speak to this important Omnibus appropriations bill that we have before us today, and I too wish to thank the Senator from Alabama, whom I count as a friend, and the Senator from Baltimore and the great State of Maryland, more broadly, for all the great work they have done and their colleagues on the Appropriations Committee as well. We are showing the country we can work together. We are going to start the new year on a different note. I am excited to be a part of that effort. I will support the bill.

I come to the floor, as have a number of my colleagues, to speak about some of the business yet unfinished, to set the stage for yet work we can do going forward. But before I do that, I wish to mention some of the specific good news in the bill.

I am looking at my good friend from Alabama. We have had a lot of fires in Colorado over these last number of years. This bill takes some important steps to help us combat the threat

posed by what are now very fast-moving, indiscriminately burning, modern mega fires. We have had mega hurricanes and mega tornadoes. We have mega fires now in the great State of Colorado. We have seen those fires not just in my State but all over the West. In the Southeast we have seen increasing fires as well. So the budget includes about \$3 billion for firefighting and wildfire prevention programs, which is essentially the same level we have seen in recent years.

I am a little disappointed that the bill doesn't include the bipartisan Wildfire Disaster Funding Act. This is a bill that I worked on with Senators WYDEN and CRAPO. It is, therefore, bipartisan. It would allow the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior to access funding to support emergency wildfire suppression efforts. It is a lot cheaper to suppress fires at the beginning than to let them get out of control. It is also a lot cheaper to prevent fires from happening in the first place, and I will talk more about that. If we look at current projections, they only suggest that fires are going to increase in intensity and duration, and it underscores the need for us to get ahead of this growing threat to our communities—again, not just in Colorado but all over our country.

There are fiscally responsible reforms in this Wildfire Disaster Funding Act which would help us confront the skyrocketing threat that modern fires pose to our States' fiscal health as agencies work to protect life and property while being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. That is just one of the many reasons I am going to continue to lead the fight—it is a bipartisan fight, a bipartisan cause—to see if we can't get this approach in place. This is a plan that will truly help us with these fires that threaten our communities.

I am also proud that Colorado is leading the way in pioneering commonsense wildfire prevention strategies that cut through redtape and then leverage private sector know-how to create jobs while reducing the fuel loads in our forests. We don't have enough Federal employees. We don't have enough government moneys to do all we need to do in our forests. One of the ways we can do more of that with this private-public sector type of partnership is to reauthorize the Good Neighbor Authority.

The Good Neighbor Authority was a pilot project in Colorado initially, and it has been successful. We want to expand it and apply it in other locales and in other States, and we have succeeded in doing that. It will allow agencies to work collaboratively across arbitrary Federal boundaries to improve forest health and reduce wildfire risks.

This bill also reauthorizes the job-creating Stewardship Contracting Au-

thority, which allows the Forest Service and the BLM to partner with local businesses to improve fire safety on our public lands. This has been a critical tool in Colorado, and it is important that we include it in this bill.

So where do I think we have some shortcomings? I mentioned a couple of successes and important provisions in the bill. The bill doesn't address several key needs in my State, including support for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program and Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program. It is known as PILT. I listened to the Committee on Appropriations chairwoman and I listened to the Senator from New Mexico TOM UDALL and others speak about PILT today. I wish to touch on both the EWP, Emergency Watershed Protection Program, and the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program. We had real devastation in my State last year during the fall with historic amounts of rainfall and then the floods that followed. We had enormous support from all over the country. We deeply appreciate that outpouring. It was the most destructive natural disaster in our State's history. Now the floodwaters have subsided, thankfully—some 3 months ago—but we are still learning the true extent of the damage. Families and towns are clearing debris from their neighborhoods and from their water sources. They are working to rebuild their communities house by house and business by business.

Yet, despite this widespread damage from the floods and the broad consensus that more help is needed, this budget does not fund the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. This is a very important and crucial flood recovery program, and it has been applied all over our country, I think in almost every State.

If we do not get support sooner rather than later, we could see additional flooding this spring. We have a spring thaw that happens all over our State. Streams will overrun their banks, particularly because we have so much debris still in many of those stream courses. So we need these resources. It is simply not acceptable that we would not have them in hand before the spring runoff.

The Federal Government's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the NRCS, estimates that we need at least \$122 million to protect lives and property from future flood damage. That support, as I have said, is not included in the bill, but I am going to continue fighting to secure this critical aid for Colorado's flood-ravaged communities.

Finally, I want to turn to the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program. As I mentioned earlier, many of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle have expressed their disappointment that the budget does not include PILT funding. It includes—when it works—funding for rural counties across the

country. Fifty-five of our 64 counties in Colorado qualify for payment in lieu of taxes funding. Those counties qualify because there are Federal lands within those counties.

Those lands are an important part of the character and heritage of the West. But because Federal lands are not subject to local property taxes, they do not support essential services such as schools, roads, teacher hires, our firefighters, and our police.

I want to give you an example of what I am talking about.

Ouray County is in the southwestern portion of Colorado in the San Juan Mountains. It is home to about 4,400 people. Over half that county is public land, and half of the local school kids are already on free or reduced-price lunch programs. That county's budget is picked to the bone. Without \$400,000 in PILT funds, Ouray County will not be able to maintain local roads or provide other basic services that residents there depend on.

Those funds may seem small by the standards here in Washington, DC, but they are indispensable for the rural communities in my home State of Colorado and across the West. That is why this week I introduced a bill that would fully fund PILT, and I am really pleased Senator HELLER from Nevada has joined me. That fully funded PILT approach would give our rural communities certainty when it comes to their budgets and their futures. This is a commonsense approach. Let us pass it without delay. I am going to continue to work with all of my colleagues who support the PILT Program to ensure that we do the right thing.

I want to take a minute to speak to my county commissioners all over Colorado from those 55 counties I mentioned. I know you are wondering how you are going to keep critical public services going over this next year. To you I want to make this pledge: I will fight doggedly, I will fight every way possible, to make sure you have those PILT funds to which you are entitled and you need to make sure your communities are secure, are safe, and are preparing for the future.

I want to conclude by saying, again, I intend to vote for this bill, in part because of the critical functions across our government that it supports and because, as the Senator from Alabama mentioned just a while ago, it avoids another costly and unnecessary government shutdown. But I do raise some concerns. I know we will tend to the unfinished business that I mentioned. I am going to continue working with everybody on both sides of the aisle. I am going to keep fighting for the great State of Colorado in the process. We will do our part to be a great State in the United States of America.

I appreciate the Presiding Officer's attention. I appreciate the Presiding Office's service.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, with the distinguished senior Senator from Alabama on the floor, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 4:45 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between Senators REED of Rhode Island and DURBIN; further, that the time from 4:45 p.m. until 5:15 p.m. be controlled by the Republican leader or designee; that at 5:15 p.m. there be 15 minutes equally divided between Senators MIKULSKI and SHELBY or their designees; that at 5:30 p.m. today the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived and the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur; that if cloture is invoked, the motion to concur with an amendment be withdrawn, all post-cloture time be yielded back, and the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to concur; that if the motion to concur is agreed to, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 74; that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SHELBY. No objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair hears none.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. I tell the distinguished Presiding Officer, he can tell by all the various clauses of that why we Senators are merely constitutional impediments to our staff who write it up, and why I held it in my hand to read it and make sure it was done right.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair notes the excellent work of the Senator from Vermont, and the clerk will please call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I never would have imagined that today the Senate would be meeting without one of our true heroes, a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, Senator Danny Inouye of Hawaii. He and Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska guided the Subcommittee on Defense of the Senate Appropriations Committee for decades with a steady hand and a commitment to working on a bipartisan basis.

I have been fortunate in working on this appropriations bill to have as my ranking member Senator THAD COCHRAN of Mississippi. He has carried on that legacy of bipartisanship. He is my friend. We trust one another. That has made this job so much more complete and satisfying. We have conferred a

massive Defense appropriations bill on an expedited schedule and we encourage our colleagues to vote for it on final passage.

Virtually 60 percent of all of the domestic discretionary spending of the United States of America is included in this one appropriations bill. Now for nearly 2 years the Department of Defense has been in a state of paralysis because of budget uncertainty caused by the Budget Control Act, sequestration, the threat that was never supposed to become a reality, and, sadly, the 16-day totally unnecessary government shutdown.

This bill is the first step in regaining stability and providing a solid foundation for our Department of Defense to plan for its future. It represents a return to regular order for both the Budget and Appropriations Committees and for Congress. Finally, we are going to exert our constitutional responsibilities over the power of the purse, to make certain that every Federal tax dollar is spent responsibly.

We are really indebted in particular to two of our colleagues. Chairwoman PATTY MURRAY of Washington, chair of the Senate Budget Committee, sat down with PAUL RYAN, the House Republican chair, and hammered out a budget agreement, the first in I believe 5 or 6 years. Then the assignment was sent to the Appropriations Committee chair, BARBARA MIKULSKI of Maryland. She was able to sit down with Chairman ROGERS from the House of Representatives. The two of them worked out an agreement on the actual spending that would follow this budget resolution. That was no small feat.

It is also a fiscally responsible bill. It provides \$572 billion for the current fiscal year in this appropriation, meeting the spending caps that were established in the budget. It meets the spending target \$25 billion before the President's request, by making 1,065 more strategic and thoughtful reductions—1,065 reductions in spending from the President's budget request.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff warned us and the Nation several years ago: If we do not get the people right, the rest will not matter when it comes to our national defense. This agreement implements the wisdom of General Dempsey. It provides necessary resources to the 3 million men and women who proudly serve America in the Department of Defense. Passage of this bill means that nearly 800,000 civilian employees at the Department of Defense finally will get the pay raise, at least some pay raise, which they certainly deserve, rather than face the threat of furloughs which they faced over and over.

Unfortunately, this is the first pay raise since fiscal year 2010, but it will make it a little bit easier for middle-class families who work for our government in defense of our Nation to make

ends meet. The agreement also contains a pay raise for our military. We all heartily support it.

It funds operations of readiness at \$11 billion higher than it would be under a full-year continuing resolution. It means our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines can get the training they need before deploying into harm's way. Training and readiness means survivability.

It provides a \$1 billion increase in the National Guard and Reserve equipment account, includes \$218 million for TRICARE to ensure servicemembers and their families will not pay higher out-of-pocket costs for medical care, \$25 million to fully implement the implementation of Senator MURRAY's Special Victims Counsels, so that the victims of sexual assault in the military through this appropriation will have the advocates, have the counselors, and have the champions they need.

We have increased an already robust budget for suicide prevention by \$20 million, to encourage the Department to expand community-based initiatives, offering greater support as well for the Guard and Reserve. We made sure that the medical care our servicemembers receive will still be the most advanced in the world. It adds \$200 million to peer-reviewed medical research programs. No apologies.

Some Members may come to the floor and criticize the Department of Defense for being engaged in medical research. I can stand and defend every single line item. I will tell you, it will not only benefit our military and their families, it will benefit America and the world for this medical research to take place.

It has \$125 million for traumatic brain injury and psychological health, \$10 million for prosthetic research. I want to thank Congresswoman TAMMY DUCKWORTH of Illinois. She has joined me in this effort. She, more than any other Member of Congress, understands the critical importance to have the modern prosthetics and orthotics for those members of the military who suffer a loss of limb during their course of serving our country.

For embassy security, which is a topic we hear from the other side on almost a daily basis, we have added marine security guard detachments at 35 more State Department posts overseas, as well as Marine Corps response forces around the globe.

Finally, we add a technical correction. I want to make it clear, because this has been the subject of great debate on the floor of the Senate and the House, we added a technical correction to the COLA offset regarding military pensions to make it clear that Congress never, ever intended this to impact medically retired personnel or their survivors. I appreciate the leadership of three of my colleagues on this

issue: Senator MURRAY, Senator PRYOR, and Senator SHAHEEN.

We protect the Defense industrial base. We increase science and technology funding for all the branches by \$400 million. We add \$175 million for the Rapid Innovation Program and \$75 million for the Industrial Base Innovation Fund.

I had the good fortune of visiting Rhode Island during the course of this week. Make no mistake. The men and women who work in these facilities to build the most advanced, innovative, and technical defense equipment in the world constitute a precious national resource. We want to make sure we are committed to them so they will be ready to help us in the future to defend America.

There are two provisions in this bill I want to mention quickly that relate to Illinois. The first is related to the James Lovell Federal Health Care Center in North Chicago. It is a multiyear pilot program to try to do something which seems so obvious, to blend the medical facilities and hospital at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station with the North Chicago Veterans Hospital. It is one of the most challenging things I have ever seen in government. We are getting it done. This bill continues to invest in that concept. I want to thank Senator KIRK. He has been my partner in making sure that this happens from the start.

Second, the bill takes a major step forward in preserving and sustaining the skilled workforce at manufacturing arsenals in support of the Department of Defense. Coming out of two wars, we know the value of these workers. When we had to put shields on humvees to save the lives of our servicemembers, we turned to the Rock Island Arsenal. In dramatic fashion they responded with the very best equipment to save our men and women in uniform. We want to make sure they are ready for the next challenge, whatever it may be. So we have included \$150 million in industrial mobilization capacity to stabilize their rates, to make sure they will continue to serve our military so well.

I see my colleague Senator REED has come to the floor. I know we have a limited amount of time. I want to make a point which I think he will appreciate. When it comes to major Defense programs, this bill contains \$1.2 billion to fully fund two Virginia-class submarines under a multiyear contract.

I visited with the engineers, welders, electricians, and machinists. They have been worried about their jobs through the sequester, and further sequestration would have meant a major disruption.

The agreement also supports the strong view of Congress that we should not retire 9 ships with a century of useful life left in them.

We fully funded Navy Growlers, P-8s, and other aircraft, as well as added advanced procurement for additional Super Hornets.

In the Army, we protected procurement of Army Chinook, Apache and Black Hawk helicopters, as well as provided an additional 14 helicopters to the Army National Guard.

We also remain a steadfast partner with Israel. The bill fully funds U.S.-Israel cooperative missile defense programs. It adds an additional \$173 million for the Arrow programs and David's Sling, and also fully funds Iron Dome procurement.

We also had to make a lot of tough decisions to reach our spending cap. Some programs have significant cuts, and that is going to have an impact somewhere.

But what is the alternative to this bill? The only answer is a full-year continuing resolution. The Department of Defense has never operated under a full-year CR, and I hope it never does.

A full-year CR would mean untold billions of dollars would have to be realigned from literally thousands of programs. It would be a financial management nightmare. Programs might be forced to stop in their tracks because funds were not provided in the right lines, and the effects would ripple throughout the defense industry and American jobs.

This bill takes care of our highest priorities, but not everything can be a priority. I ask that Senators recognize that we had to make some hard choices, that we managed to do more with less, and that the alternatives are much worse.

I inherited an awesome responsibility from Senator Inouye. I also inherited his tremendous staff.

They have worked especially hard this year over the holidays with no fanfare and at great personal sacrifice to ensure that we could get to this day. So I would like to take a moment to thank them.

On the Democratic staff: Betsy Schmid, Colleen Gaydos, David Gillies, Katy Hagan, Kate Käufer, Erik Raven, Jennifer Santos, Teri Spoutz, Andy Vanlandingham, and Maria Veklich.

On the Republican staff, I would like to thank: Stewart Holmes, Alycia Farrell, Brian Potts and Jacqui Russell.

This defense bill provides for the national defense in a responsible, thoughtful way.

It reverses the harshest impacts of sequestration, and provides additional funds to ensure that our troops get the training and equipment they need.

It also looks toward the future, boosting research in medical care, science and technology, and manufacturing innovation.

I hope all of my colleagues who support a strong military and a strong national defense will support this good bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first let me thank the Senator from Illinois for his great leadership on the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee and for joining me in Rhode Island to see those great workers at Electric Boat and many other defense industries in Rhode Island.

I too want to commend Chairwoman BARBARA MIKULSKI and Chairwoman PATTY MURRAY. We would not be here today without their extraordinary efforts, Herculean efforts by two extraordinary individuals. I also want to thank my colleague from the great State of Alaska, LISA MURKOWSKI, for her work. She is an extraordinary colleague, collaborator. We have worked together to make this Interior subcommittee bill a very good one.

Chairman KEN CALVERT of the House, ranking member JIM MORAN, both superb participants and collaborators in this effort. JIM is retiring. I want to thank him for his distinguished service to Virginia and to the Nation.

I am very pleased in particular in this Interior subcommittee bill that we could make a strong investment in clean water and drinking water through the revolving fund or, as it is known, the SRF fund. This is not only about the environment and public health, it is about jobs. In fact, adopting our provisions in contrast to the House's lower numbers will keep approximately 97,000 more Americans on the job this year. That, I think, is significant. It is not just about the environment, it is also about keeping people at work.

We have also ensured that we can staff all of our agencies, including the EPA, so they do not have to face furloughs, so they can have continuity of operations, so they can do their jobs more efficiently and more effectively.

For the Department of the Interior, the bill provides solid funding for resource agencies, including the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as well as the U.S. Geological Survey. The bill also includes \$306 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

With respect to our cultural agencies, we have also been able to restore sequester cuts to the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, and we increased funding of the Smithsonian, which will help them complete the National Museum of African American History and Culture for its opening in 2015.

One challenge in the Interior bill is the firefighting costs. These are costs that cannot be avoided and they continue to increase. We have fully funded these costs and we have done that by increasing resources significantly. But we have to be aware, if these costs continue to grow, it will be something

that is very difficult to sustain. So we have to apply our efforts going forward to see if we can, through suppression efforts, through other efforts, begin to control the cost of firefighting. This is something, particularly for our Western colleagues, that is absolutely essential. We responded to this need completely and thoroughly.

I want to also commend my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee for the other aspects of the bill, Senators HARKIN, FEINSTEIN, MURRAY, and DURBIN. Their subcommittees produced great results. The Low Income Heating Assistance Program, LIHEAP, the Weatherization Program has been adequately funded, funding for Job Corps, TIGER grant funding, and Chairman MIKULSKI particularly effectively added \$75 million for fisheries disasters, which the Presiding Officer from Massachusetts and myself are very keenly aware of and very appreciative of.

Funding for the Securities and Exchange Commission, funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. This is going to help make sure the Dodd-Frank legislation that we passed is actually implemented and the markets are operating efficiently. This is critical to our economic viability and our economic progress.

As Senator DURBIN mentioned, I am extremely pleased that two *Virginia*-class submarines were included in this appropriations bill. They are built in Groton. They all begin in Quonset Point, RI, but they are built in Groton finally and often in Newport News. This is a program vital to our national security, vital to employment. About 2,800 people in Rhode Island will benefit from these important programs.

I think we have to do more to invest in our people, invest in our economy, infrastructure, et cetera, but this bill goes a very long way.

Let me also pay tribute to people who really deserve, as they say, a shoutout. That is the staff members who did this work: Rachael Taylor, Ryan Hunt, Virginia James, Rita Culp, and Tiffany Taylor on my side. Senator MURKOWSKI's extraordinary staff: Leif Foncesbeck, Brent Wiles, and Emy Lesofski. They did extraordinary work.

Before I leave the floor. Let me conclude one point: We will come together this evening on a strong bipartisan basis to pass this appropriations bill. But we still have remaining work to do on the unemployment insurance bill. I hope in the intervening days that we can find a path forward to pass an unemployment insurance bill on a bipartisan basis because if we do not, there are 1.5 million Americans without benefits, 70,000 more a week lose their benefits, and our economy is losing out, because it is approximately \$600 million a week that is being sapped from the economy, as estimated by Professor Lawrence Katz at Harvard if we do not act.

Now is the time not only to put these appropriations to work, but also to put our UI programs to work, so that not only can we help Americans, but we can also help our economy. I want to thank in this regard, with respect to the UI efforts, Senator HELLER and Senator COLLINS. They are extraordinarily thoughtful Members, who are committed, as I am, to helping their constituents and doing it in a wise and prudent way.

With that, let me recognize the chairwoman who has come to the floor and say, thank you, chairwoman, for an extraordinary bit of work. Not surprising coming from a giant like yourself. Thank you.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for his comments. I appreciate them. They were well said. But the compliments should be reversed. This is a committee effort. What I am so excited about for this bill is that it is bipartisan, bicameral. It was agreed upon in the House by an overwhelming vote of 359 to 67.

I look forward to this same type of vote in the Senate, but we did it because we listened to each other, we functioned with maximum respect, and saw where we could compromise without capitulating on principle.

I note that other Senators will be coming shortly.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CRUZ. I rise to speak of pragmatism and irresponsibility.

Four years ago, when this body was debating the law known as ObamaCare, reasonable minds perhaps could have differed as to whether that law might work. The essence of pragmatism is looking to the facts as they are today and responding.

Today reasonable minds can no longer differ in terms of whether ObamaCare is working.

Today it is abundantly clear that millions of Americans are being harmed right now by this failed law.

Today it is the essence of pragmatism to acknowledge the facts of the future of ObamaCare and for Congress to step up and act to stop the harm that has been caused by this body.

Irresponsibility, on the other hand, is seeing undeniable harm, undeniable facts, and saying, nonetheless, we will do nothing.

What are the facts from the American people?

The facts that we now know today are that already at least 4.7 million Americans have received cancellation

notices, have had their health care plans cancelled because of ObamaCare.

This was, of course, after President Obama repeatedly looked in the TV cameras, spoke to the American people, and made the promise: If you like your health care plan, you can keep it, period.

We now know that promise was false, and for over 4.7 million people painfully false in their lives.

Pragmatism is responding to the facts and doing something about it. Unfortunately, what have the Senate majority leader and the Senate Democrats done to protect Americans from ObamaCare? Nothing.

These facts are known and Senate Democrats have done nothing. At least 4.7 million Americans lost their health insurance because of this body. The omnibus bill that this body is galloping to approve does nothing for the 4.7 million Americans who have had their health insurance canceled.

It is not only health insurance plans. What else are the facts that we know now?

As Time magazine observed: "Keeping your doctor under ObamaCare is no easy feat."

President Obama looked at the American people and said: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor, period.

We now know that promise too was deliberately, repeatedly, false. Millions of Americans are facing the very real prospect of losing their doctor.

A good friend of mine, a cancer survivor, is facing the very real prospect—because Texas Oncology has suggested it does not intend to participate—of losing his cancer doctor, not being able to go to the doctors who saved his life. This is the father of two young children facing the terrifying reality of losing his doctor because of the conduct of the Congress.

In response to millions of Americans losing their doctors, what have the Senate majority leader and Senate Democrats done? Nothing. The essence of irresponsibility is seeing a harm, seeing the facts, and refusing to act.

What else do we know? We know ObamaCare is killing jobs all across the country. Indeed, ObamaCare is the biggest job killer in this Nation.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has said:

Of small businesses that will be impacted by the employer mandate, one-half of small businesses say they will either cut hours to reduce full-time employees or replace full-time employees with part-time workers to avoid the mandate. 24 percent say they will reduce hiring to under 50 employees.

The President has recently been talking about income inequality. This exacerbates income inequality. It is why the rich have gotten richer under President Obama. But the people who are struggling—young people, Hispanics, single moms, people like my

dad, who 56 years ago washed dishes for 50 cents an hour as a teenage immigrant—those are the people getting their hours reduced because of ObamaCare; those are the people getting laid off because of ObamaCare.

Income inequality is increasing. What have the Senate majority leader or Senate Democrats done to protect Americans from ObamaCare? The answer is simple: Nothing. In response to the millions of Americans being forced into part-time work, losing their jobs, nothing from Senate Democrats.

What else do we know? The New York Times front-page headline explained “New Health Law Frustrates Many in Middle Class.”

I recognize that not everyone is inclined to listen to a Republican from Texas. So let me instead quote that famed rightwing rag, The New York Times, discussing ObamaCare.

Ginger Chapman and her husband, Doug, are sitting on the health care cliff. The cheapest insurance plan they can find through the new federal marketplace in New Hampshire will cost their family of four about \$1,000 a month, 12 percent of their annual income . . .

Mr. Chapman is a retired fireman who works on a friend’s farm and he and his wife have two sons. Mrs. Chapman had this to say about the cost of that insurance:

That’s an insane amount of money. How are you supposed to pay that?

In response to the middle class, frustrated at getting hit with skyrocketing premiums, what have the Senate majority leader and Senate Democrats done? The answer is the same: Nothing.

But going beyond that, it is not just the middle class that is getting hurt. If we were to look at one demographic group that is getting hammered the worst by ObamaCare, it is young people. ObamaCare is a law designed to be a massive wealth transfer from young people to older wealthier Americans.

Forty percent of young Americans today believe ObamaCare will bring worse care, 51 percent believe it will bring higher costs, and 57 percent of young people disapprove of ObamaCare. And what is the source of this information? Another famed rightwing institution—Harvard, a Harvard Institute of Politics poll.

Young people in particular are getting hammered by ObamaCare, and what have the Senate majority leader and Senate Democrats done to listen to the young people who are losing their jobs, who are forced into part-time work, who are facing skyrocketing premiums? The answer is simple: Nothing.

Looking beyond that, Forbes reported that ObamaCare is to increase individual market premiums by an average of 41 percent—41 percent. That is real money from hard-working people who are being hurt because of the failures of this body. And what have Senate Democrats done in response? Nothing.

Looking beyond that, in my home State of Texas, the average premium increase for Texans will be 26 percent in the individual market. But let’s take a 27-year-old Texas man. The average premium increase will be 70 percent; for a 27-year-old Texas woman, 22 percent. These are young people who are struggling, who are starting to build a family, and their premiums are going up because of ObamaCare. What have the Senate majority leader and Senate Democrats done to listen to young people who are being hurt? The answer is simple: Nothing.

Let’s look beyond that, though. Let’s look beyond Texas and let’s talk about State by State some of the very real harm. Let’s take a State picked at random—the State of Nevada. If we look at the State of Nevada, 24,600 policies have been canceled in Nevada; in the individual market, a 179-percent premium increase.

One might hope that these 24,600 people who had their health insurance canceled would have Senators representing them. One might hope these people paying 179-percent premium increases would have Senators representing them standing up and saying: Let’s act right now. But what have the Senate majority leader and Senate Democrats done to respond to the people of Nevada? The answer is absolutely nothing.

Let’s look at some other States. The State of California. In California, that bright blue State on our west coast, 1.1 million policies have been canceled; a 27-percent increase on average premiums. What have Senate Democrats done to respond to Californians suffering because of ObamaCare? The answer is simple: Nothing.

Let’s take another State: Arkansas. Arkansas people are hurting because of ObamaCare. The State is not tracking cancellations, but in the individual market in Arkansas a 138-percent increase in premiums.

For the millionaires, many of whom populate this Chamber, 138 percent may not be that much. But if you are struggling in Arkansas, you need help. You need relief. And what have Senate Democrats done for the people hurting in Arkansas because of ObamaCare? The answer is nothing.

Let’s look at another State: Louisiana, 92,790 policies canceled because of ObamaCare; a 53-percent increase in average premiums because of ObamaCare in the individual market.

I will note, one Senator from Louisiana has fought hard for those 92,790 people in Louisiana who have had their health insurance canceled, and another Senator in this Chamber has fought hard to ensure the response is not to relieve them from ObamaCare. What have Senate Democrats done in response to the people in Louisiana who are hurting? The answer is simple and it is tragic: Nothing.

Let us look at another State: New Mexico, 26,000 policies canceled; 142-

percent increase in the individual market. What have Senate Democrats done to listen to the citizens of New Mexico being hurt because of ObamaCare? The answer is nothing.

Let’s take one more State: The State of North Carolina, 183,800 policies canceled.

I want my colleagues to think of the single mom raising three kids who receives a notification in the mail that her policy has been canceled not because of anything she has done but because of Congress’s law that is not working.

A 136-percent increase. I want my colleagues to think of the immigrant struggling hard—like my dad was when he was washing dishes—who discovers his premium has gone up 136 percent. What have Senate Democrats done to respond to the people of North Carolina who are being hurt because of ObamaCare? The answer, tragically, is nothing.

Four years ago, reasonable minds might have differed, but today these are the facts. And the facts are Senate Democrats are not listening to the American people. They are not responding to the harm they have caused. I am going to suggest that is the essence of irresponsibility.

I have filed two amendments. One amendment to the omnibus bill would simply provide that ObamaCare would be defunded so long as it is the case that ObamaCare is causing Americans to lose the health insurance policies they wish to keep, increasing their premiums, and preventing them from seeing the doctors they want to see.

All of those, by the way, were promises President Obama and Senate Democrats made to the American people that ObamaCare wouldn’t do, and it is exactly what they are doing.

This amendment, if Senate Democrats disagree that they have done nothing, presents the opportunity for them to do something. Right now they can step in and say: It is the essence of pragmatism to recognize this isn’t working, people are hurting, so let’s start over.

So, accordingly, I am going to ask the first of two unanimous consent requests:

I ask unanimous consent that my amendment No. 2685, to prohibit the funding of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act so long as the Act is harming the healthcare of Americans, be called up and agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Is there objection?

Ms. MIKULSKI. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I want to turn to a second amendment I have introduced. This second amendment provides real relief to the millions of Americans who are being hurt because of ObamaCare, but it also corrects

something this body did just recently that was wrong. Recently, this body acted to decrease the pensions of millions of veterans—millions of men and women who have served our Nation, who have fought for our Nation, and who have bled for our Nation. This body decreased their pensions irresponsibly. So this second amendment I would introduce defunds ObamaCare because millions of Americans are hurting, and it uses the savings from defunding ObamaCare to restore the pensions to the hard-working men and women of the military, which never should have been taken away in the first place.

This is an opportunity for all 100 Senators to demonstrate we stand together with the working men and women in the military and with all Americans who are struggling to make ends meet, struggling to achieve a better life.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that my amendment No. 2686, to prohibit funding of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and to fulfill our Nation's promise to our military retirees, be called up and agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. MIKULSKI. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, last year Members of this body could say they didn't know. They didn't know people's plans would be canceled. They didn't know premiums would skyrocket. They didn't know people would be shut off from seeing their doctors. Now they know. Now they know. And the response of the majority leader and Senate Democrats, tragically, is to do nothing.

This body faces a choice—a choice between pragmatism and irresponsibility. Once this body makes this choice, ultimately, in November, the American people will have a choice as well. At the end of the day, every elected official should not ignore the facts but should listen to the American people. We need to make DC listen.

The majority leader and Senate Democrats right now are not listening to the American people. Instead, they have chosen a course of conduct of doing nothing, that is not responsible, and I hope that, in time, they reconsider.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, we have had a spirited debate today for

very important reasons, and I will conclude my remarks on this bill by observing that, with very few exceptions, we have heard nothing but positive comments from our colleagues today here in the Senate.

We have also heard what an important step this will be to reestablish the regular order of the Senate appropriations process. In the appropriations world, regular order means receiving the President's budget, holding hearings, marking up bills, and bringing them to the floor of the Senate with an open amendment process, which both sides of the aisle need and want.

The passage of this omnibus bill will be a giant step, I believe, in that direction, which is in the best interests, in the long run, of each individual Senator as well as this entire institution.

I would be remiss if I did not once again recognize the chair of the Appropriations Committee Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, my colleague, and the leadership that she demonstrated in creating an environment in which a compromise could be reached here. Anyone who has attempted to bring a single bill to the floor of the Senate understands what a difficult undertaking that can be. This particular legislation contains 12 separate appropriations bills.

I also recognize the efforts of the respective ranking members of each subcommittee. The Christmas holiday, as we all know, is usually an opportunity to refocus their attention on their families and their home States. This past year, however, we asked them to once again go the extra mile, to skip their holidays, to make this bill a reality. Because of that and their work, they have done that—without hesitation.

As has already been mentioned by a number of my colleagues, no bill ever reaches the floor of the Senate without the effort of many different staff members. In this instance it took the effort of literally dozens of staff from both sides of the aisle to bring this together. I personally thank them all for their incredible dedication and professionalism and literally unceasing effort over the past several weeks.

I urge my colleagues once again to support this important legislation, to fund the government and move this body one step closer to being the place we would all like it to be.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, we are coming to the end of a long day and a really long journey. This journey began last year when this committee was dealing with a crisis situation in December 2012 when our beloved and esteemed chairman Senator Dan Inouye passed away. Simultaneously, we were dealing with the emergency legislation to fund Hurricane Sandy relief. At that time I was asked by my

colleagues, based on our seniority system, to become the chair of this committee. It was my goal in taking over the committee that I wanted to continue the great tradition of Senator Byrd, of Senator Ted Stevens, of Senator Danny Inouye, of Senator THAD COCHRAN, that we would work on a bipartisan basis in the interests of the United States of America. Although we come from different places, different States, and have even different priorities, we are one country. It requires us to make sure we do our job.

An Appropriations Committee is one of two committees that are constitutionally referenced. When our Founders wrote the Constitution, they said that there should be a committee that has an annual Appropriations Committee for public review and public vote, and there should be a finance committee to raise the revenue. They didn't call it the finance committee, but a revenue committee to raise the money to pay the bills.

This bill meets its constitutional responsibility. This is the bill that funds the Federal Government for fiscal year 2014. We are a little late, but we have gotten the job done, and we have done that job with due diligence, starting with President Obama giving the Congress his budget.

Remember, the President proposes, the Congress disposes. We took the President's budget request, and we held our due diligence hearings. However, we faced a real problem. The Budget Committee, which sets the overall cap on discretionary spending, had not passed that. Many said you must have a budget. Thanks to the leadership of Senator MURRAY, through hard work, we voted on a marathon budget bill that overwhelmingly passed in March. I was so optimistic. I thought: Great, the Budget Committee is done. They have an April 15 deadline. They are going to go right over to the House and begin negotiations, and we will get our allocation with our cap. Remember, we have a cap on discretionary spending. We cannot be wild spenders.

However, it was not meant to be. There are those in the Congress, in the Senate, who did not allow the Budget Committee to meet. Some 22 times Senator MURRAY asked to go to conference. We were delayed. We missed our October 1 deadline. We did not bring up our individual bills. But we did have all our bills marked up in full committee in full view by August 1. That is what we operated on.

Then in the fall, when we did get our budget, we did get our discretionary spending and a very stringent deadline. On December 20 we began to move to work with the House to come up with an agreement.

We did. We worked across the aisle, and I thank the Senator from Alabama, my vice chairman, for helping me create the environment. Our mutual respect for each other enabled us to work

in a mutual way to move our bill forward.

We reached across the dome to the House Members. We have worked together, and we have finished the bill. We brought to the floor what I think people could vote for. Yesterday it passed the House with 359 votes, with only 67 votes against it. I hope we have a successful margin today. These efforts show that we Democrats and Republicans can work together for the good of the country; that we can avoid drama politics with cliffhangers and fiscal cliffs; we can avoid shutdowns; we can avoid government on autopilot.

Most of all, those are process arguments. I did not come to be a member of the appropriations committee to be a process guru. Process gets you to the objective you seek, and the objective that I seek is to make sure that the United States of America is the best country in the world; that we lead the world in demonstrating American exceptionalism; that the greatest deliberative body continues to deliberate rather than delay; that the greatest country in the world, through American exceptionalism, knows how to resolve conflict, which we were able to do.

We compromised without any side capitulating on principles—give and take on money, give and take on policy. But that is what America is, give and take.

We were able to do that. At the same time, when I say the greatest country in the world, we ensured national security. We met compelling human need. We continued the opportunity ladder that enabled my family to rise as an immigrant family, and the family of the Presiding Officer to rise as an immigrant family. The Senator from Texas, he speaks so eloquently, often, and frequently about his father. We need an opportunity ladder in this country, and we have it in this bill.

We also wanted to make sure that we have jobs today and are looking for those investments in research and development for jobs tomorrow. But we will never forget our veterans. We have money in this bill for adequate funding for veterans health care, fixing the disability backlog. I know earlier in this debate the COLA for disabled military retirees and survivors of working age was raised. We have fixed that, waiting for a comprehensive solution later on in the year.

I think we have a bill that meets the test of working to ensure America's exceptionalism, protecting our national security, continuing that great opportunity ladder that made the United States of America great. At the same time, we made those public investments; we were a frugal committee that kept an eye on public debt.

I urge my colleagues to pass this bill.

There have been many accolades for me today. I thank you for them. This is

a committee. This bill is not about a "me." Behind a "me" there is a whole lot of "we." Working on a bipartisan basis, I thank my vice chairman, the Senator from Alabama, Mr. SHELBY, for being a gentleman of the old school, meaning courteous and civil. He was insistent, he was persistent on those priorities that he represented, and also on keeping that frugal eye that he is known for. But we were able to work together to create a climate in our committee where there was confidence that everybody could be at the table and everybody could have their say.

I thank his staff for their professionalism: Bill Duhnke, Dana Wade, Chris Ford, Jane Lee, and Shelby Begany.

My own staff were no slouches either, and I thank Chuck Kieffer, Gabrielle Batkin, Melissa Zimmerman, Brigid Houton, Vince Morris, Kali Matalon, and Eve Goldsher who helped.

But also, all of us had fantastic subcommittee staff, and that staff has backed those subcommittee chairmen. They worked every single day since December 20, with the exception of Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

Now we are at the end of this journey. As we conclude and vote on the omnibus, the consolidated appropriations bill, I hope the overwhelming majority of the Senate votes yes. Then, later on this month we will hear President Obama's State of the Union. He will give us his budget. We are going to start all over again with the same atmosphere of respect, openness, and due diligence.

Madam President, I know there are just minutes left before the vote. If there is no objection, I yield back the time and urge the Senate vote.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3547, Space Launch Liability Indemnification Extension Act and the Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2014.

Harry Reid, Barbara A. Mikulski, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Brian Schatz, Jack Reed, Tom Udall, Jeanne Shaheen, Tim Kaine, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Mark Udall, Tom Harkin, Mark Begich, Mary L. Landrieu.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived. The question is, Is it the sense of Senate that debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3547 shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 12 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Hagan	Murphy
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Hatch	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Blunt	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Boozman	Isakson	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Burr	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Kirk	Shelby
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Landrieu	Tester
Casey	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Coats	Levin	Udall (NM)
Cochran	Manchin	Vitter
Collins	Markey	Warner
Coons	McCaskill	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wicker
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—26

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Corker	Heller	Risch
Cornyn	Inhofe	Roberts
Crapo	Johanns	Rubio
Cruz	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Enzi	Lee	Sessions
Fischer	McCain	Thune
Flake	McConnell	Toomey
Graham	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Chambliss Coburn

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 72, the nays are 26. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Cloture having been invoked, the motion to refer falls as being inconsistent with cloture.

Under the previous order, the motion to concur with an amendment is withdrawn. All postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 72, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 13 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Alexander	Gillibrand	Moran
Ayotte	Graham	Murkowski
Baldwin	Hagan	Murphy
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Hatch	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Blunt	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Hoeben	Rockefeller
Boozman	Isakson	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Brown	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Kirk	Shelby
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Landrieu	Tester
Coats	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Cochran	Levin	Udall (NM)
Collins	Manchin	Vitter
Coons	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wicker
Franken	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—26

Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Heller	Risch
Corker	Inhofe	Roberts
Cornyn	Johanns	Rubio
Crapo	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Cruz	Lee	Sessions
Enzi	McCain	Thune
Fischer	McConnell	Toomey
Flake	Paul	

NOT VOTING—2

Chambliss	Coburn
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3547 is agreed to.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I move to reconsider the vote and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

PROVIDING FOR A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 3547

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report H. Con. Res. 74 by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 74) providing for a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 3547.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the concurrent resolution is agreed to and the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

FUNCTIONING OF THE SENATE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to continue the discussion about the description of the Senate as a deliberative body and continue to echo the call for the distinguished minority leader for a return to a functional Senate. I have spoken on this issue before. I think it is best to go

back to the Constitution and the people who wrote the Constitution for an understanding of what was intended when the Senate was set up. So I do not intend to dwell on the use of the so-called nuclear option related to the filibuster.

The reason I am not going to spend my time on the nuclear option today as in previous speeches is the majority leader claims the Senate's dysfunction is related to some unprecedented use of filibusters. I think that has been thoroughly debunked. This claim is directly refuted by the very source he has pointed to, the Congressional Research Service.

More importantly, it has been debunked by fact checkers in important media sources in America. Yet, as we know, the Senate is dysfunctional beyond a doubt. To get to the bottom of how and, more importantly, why the Senate is not functioning, we must have a clear understanding of just how the Senate is supposed to function. As I just said, we should turn to the Constitution.

For an understanding of what the Constitution means, there is no better source for this than going back to the Federalist Papers. I have referenced the Federalist Papers before on this subject, but it is worth the detail about what the Framers of the Constitution had in mind when the Senate was created.

Federalist Paper 62, which is usually attributed to the Father of the Constitution, James Madison, begins to lay out the rationale for how the Senate is to operate. He mentioned that the number of Members and the length of terms are different between the House and Senate. Then he said this—but before I quote, I hope you understand that when something was written in 1787 and 1788, they use a little different form of English than what we use. But it is pretty clear what they intended to say about explaining the difference between the House and the Senate. So here begins my quote of James Madison:

In order to form an accurate judgment on both of these points, it will be proper to inquire into the purposes which are to be answered by a Senate; and in order to ascertain these, it will be necessary to review the inconveniences which a Republic must suffer from the want of such an institution.

End of that quote, but I will have several other quotes from the Federalist Papers. In this specific quote, in other words, Madison is going to tell us the purpose of the Senate, starting with the problems a Republic would face without a Senate and how the Senate is designed to correct those problems. As we hear from Madison about how our legislative process is supposed to work, I would encourage my colleagues to think about major legislation that has been considered in the Senate in recent years.

In fact, arguably the most major bill that has passed in recent years, President Obama's health care law, serves as one example. When that law was considered, one party held all political branches of government: the Presidency, the House of Representatives, and even had a supermajority in the Senate. That means they could run the Senate like the House, without the need to compromise with any in the minority.

At that particular time, my party was then and still is in the minority. We are now dealing with daily problems caused by the way the health care law was written, which is something to keep in mind as Madison describes in these coming quotes. The problems the Senate was designed to prevent, here is the first problem Madison discusses. It is a fairly long quote from the Federalist. First he says:

First. It is a misfortune incident to republican government, though in less degree than to other governments, that those who administer it may forget their obligations to their constituents, and prove unfaithful to their important trust. In this point of view, a senate, as a second branch of the legislative assembly, distinct from, and dividing the power with, a first, must be in all cases a salutary check on the government. It doubles the security to the people, by requiring the concurrence of two distinct bodies in schemes of usurpation or perfidy, where the ambition or corruption of one would otherwise be sufficient. This is a precaution founded on such clear principles, and now so well understood in the United States, that it would be more than superfluous to enlarge on it.

Then Madison goes on:

I will barely remark, that as the improbability of sinister combinations will be in proportion to the dissimilarity in the genius of the two bodies, it must be politic to distinguish them from each other by every circumstance which will consist with a due harmony in all proper measures, and with the genuine principles of republican government.

I see it this way: In other words, Madison is saying having a second Chamber of Congress designed to operate differently from the House makes it less likely that a partisan agenda that does not reflect the views of Americans will pass. That is not a function the Senate currently performs, as it has been run on a purely partisan term since 2007.

For example, we will recall that the President's health care proposal did not enjoy widespread public support. Yet it passed the Senate along strictly partisan lines with little input sought or accepted from the minority party. In fact, before a final bill could be passed reconciling the House and Senate bills, a special election was held in the liberal State of Massachusetts, resulting in an election of an opponent of the health care reform proposal.

Instead of moderating the proposal based upon public will and doing it maybe just a little bit so it could attract even one Republican vote, the

House passed a draft Senate bill, then they used a budget tool called reconciliation to ram another bill through the Senate with a simply majority to change items in the first bill.

That is not how Madison intended a bicameral Congress to work. The next point Madison makes:

Secondly. The necessity of a senate is not less indicated by the propensity of all single and numerous assemblies to yield to the impulse of sudden and violent passions, and to be seduced by factious leaders into intemperate and pernicious resolutions. Examples on this subject might be cited without number; and from proceedings within the United States, as well as from the history of other nations. But a position that will not be contradicted, need not be proved. All that need be remarked is, that a body which is to correct this infirmity ought itself to be free from it, and consequently ought to be less numerous. It ought, moreover, to possess great firmness, and consequently ought to hold its authority by a tenure of considerable duration.

That describes what he thought the Senate should be, what the Senate is. But my point is, the Senate is not functioning that way. In other words, if we have just one legislative Chamber with a large number of Members, it is likely to make laws hastily based on a partisan agenda without thinking through all the long-term consequences. A hastily passed partisan agenda that ignores the long-term consequences, does that not remind you of the health care law? Remember how then-Speaker PELOSI said the House had to pass a bill to find out what was in it?

They were in such a rush they could not be bothered to read it.

The Senate is intended, as Madison just said, as I quoted, to be smaller, to be more deliberate, and to be less partisan. Imagine if the Senate had been allowed to operate in a deliberative fashion and craft a truly bipartisan health care proposal. If that had happened, we certainly could have come up with something more workable than the current law.

Madison continues his explanation of the rationale for the Senate:

Thirdly. Another defect to be supplied by a senate lies in a want of due acquaintance with the objects and principles of legislation. It is not possible that an assembly of men called for the most part from pursuits of a private nature, continued in appointment for a short time, and led by no permanent motive to devote the intervals of public occupation to a study of the laws, the affairs, and the comprehensive interests of their country, should, if left wholly to themselves, escape a variety of important errors in the exercise of their legislative trust. It may be affirmed, on the best grounds, that no small share of the present embarrassments of America is to be charged on the blunders of our governments; and that these have proceeded from the heads rather than the hearts of most of the authors of them. What indeed are all the repealing, explaining, and amending laws, which fill and disgrace our voluminous codes, but so many monuments of deficient wisdom; so many impeachments exhib-

ited by each succeeding against each preceding session; so many admonitions to the people, of the value of those aids which may be expected from a well-constituted Senate?

A good government implies two things: first, fidelity to the object of government, which is the happiness of the people; secondly, a knowledge of the means by which that object can best be attained. Some governments are deficient in both these qualities; most governments are deficit in the first. I scruple not to assert, that in American governments too little attention has been paid to the last. The federal Constitution avoids this error; and what merits particular notice, it provides for the last in a mode which increases the security for the first.

That is a long quote. But Madison is essentially saying that the House is to be composed of a representative slice of American citizens while the Senate is supposed to be composed of individuals who have more experience and approach public policy more thoughtfully. I am sure many people might question whether individuals in the House or even in this Senate match those descriptions today that Madison lays out.

But it is true that the rules of the House allow for new ideas to be quickly translated into legislation.

By contrast, the process in the Senate has historically been slower and more deliberative to refine those ideas into law that can stand the test of time. Note that Madison complains about all the “repealing, explaining, and amending laws” that have had to be passed by the unicameral legislatures of that time—of the early days of our Republic.

Our early experiences with passing bills quickly, without thinking things through, led to the understanding that we should take our time and get it right in the first place.

Getting back to Madison and those quotes I gave, that is what the Senate is supposed to do. Failure of the Senate to take the time, examine, and take time to revise legislation is quite obvious. It results in bad laws that don't work.

We now have a situation with the health care law where the President claims the authority to unilaterally suspend or reinterpret parts of the law that are clearly unworkable.

That is very similar to the embarrassing situation Madison refers to, to have a constant stream of “repealing, explaining, and amending laws,” except the President is doing all of the repealing, all of the explaining, and all of the amending, unilaterally.

Our constitutional system is not designed to pass a lot of legislation quickly, and that can be frustrating, particularly to any majority party anxious to enact its agenda.

Still, our deliberative process is a design and not a flaw. Based on experience, the Framers of our Constitution determined that it was better to get it right the first time than to subject the

American people to the upheavals of laws that need to be constantly amended or repealed. The House was designed to act quickly. The Senate was designed to be a deliberative body, implying a slower approach to legislating.

The fundamental problem is that the current majority leader is trying to run the Senate like the House, and the Senate was not designed to be operated in that way. Sure—with the majority then and now the majority, the same majority when they had 60 votes—it was possible to ram legislation through the Senate without any deliberation, but that is no longer the reality.

When the majority leader brings a bill to the floor, routinely blocking amendments and then rapidly moves to end consideration of the bill, that means the Senate is presented with a measure as a fait accompli and has to take it or, the opposite, leave it.

In other words, the majority leadership wants their agenda approved, no questions asked, or nothing at all.

The fact is, if the majority leader allowed the Senate to deliberate, we could get a lot more done than we have been doing. Sure, we might not get as many laws passed as some people might like. The full Senate, through its deliberation, may alter legislation somewhat from how the majority leadership would prefer. Still, we would be able to accomplish some important legislation. But, no, that is not acceptable, we are told. One week ago today there was a strong debate on that very issue. For all the talk about getting things done, the majority leadership has demonstrated repeatedly with cloture motion after cloture motion that it would rather grind this body to a halt than allow the slightest alteration of their agenda.

The latest message from the majority leadership is that they will respect the rights of Senators to offer an amendment only if they have certain assurances about the final outcome. The senior Senator from New York implied that is the way it used to be done.

Well, I want to assure that Senator that in the 33 years I have served in the Senate, it has never been done that way. I have managed a lot of bills over the years, and if I had tried to impose that requirement, I would have been laughed at, to say the least.

Since when did duly elected Senators have to negotiate for the right to represent their constituents? An open amendment process should be the default situation, not something that is granted at the sufferance of the majority party leadership.

We must get back then to what we call in the Senate regular order. I would say do things the way Madison intended. That means an open amendment process without preconditions or special limitations on what amendments will be allowed.

Cloture shouldn't even be contemplated until after a substantial

number of amendments have been processed. That was the standard practice when the Senate got things done, when we accomplished things.

Again, Madison describes a Senate that is to represent all Americans, not only one party. It was designed to be more thoughtful and deliberative and, whether we like it or not, slower than the House of Representatives.

The Senate's purpose is to make sure that Congress passes fewer but better laws. We saw what happened when the Senate was controlled entirely by one party while the voices of the minority party and the citizens they represented were ignored. We got a deeply flawed health care law and the American people are paying the price. Yet the majority leader insists on running the Senate as if he still has 60 votes, doesn't have to compromise, and even refuses to compromise. That is not how the authors of our Constitution intended the Senate to work and, of course, it isn't working.

The Senate is facing a crisis, and the only way to solve it is to restore the Senate as a deliberative body envisioned by the authors of the Constitution and express it in an explanatory way in the Federalist Papers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

SENATE FUNCTIONING

Mrs. BOXER. I appreciate the fact that Senator GRASSLEY has given us his view of how the Senate ought to work. When the Senator says more deliberative and knowing how many filibusters have been supported on that side, that is what it says to me. As someone who didn't want to change the filibuster rules because I thought maybe we would come to some agreement, and we wouldn't be facing historic numbers of filibusters, let me say what the majority leader did was the right thing. It was the right thing.

I have been in Washington a long time. I came to the House in 1983. The Senate worked well. It isn't working well.

What the majority leader said is how can we have a President, be he or she Republican or Democratic, how can we have that President function without a team in place, a team, their team. One person can't run a country; they need a team. One Senator can't run our offices; we need a team.

My God, what if we were told that we couldn't put our team together unless we had a vote that wasn't a majority vote, it had to be a supermajority? We would never get anything done. We would be running in circles. It would be very difficult.

It sounds to me as if my friend wants to go back to the bad old days where we would have all of these nominees objected to, stalled. It took 154 days to get the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

My view, having been here, loved this institution, loved my work, and enjoyed my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, the Senate has changed because the parties have moved so far apart. Let's call it what it is. In my eyes Republicans have moved so far to the right that, unlike years ago when I came, it is very difficult to get anything done legislatively.

That is why today is one of those bright, rare moments. My hat is off to Senator MIKULSKI, Senator SHELBY, and their House counterparts. We actually got something done. Half of the Republicans joined all of the Democrats to pass an Omnibus appropriations bill. This is a good thing for America. No side got everything it wanted, we know that. Do you know what the American people received? They got compromise, they got security, and they got stability. In the near future we are not going to have shutdowns, shouting matches, and debates through the night on whether we should have a government.

We need more legislating such as this. That is why I so look forward to getting the Water Resources Development Act done. This is so important to so many of our States. We need to do flood control. We need to do adaptation. We need to make sure there is recreation on our wetlands and so on. We need dredging in our ports. Those are the economic engines of our Nation.

We have a bill we passed. Over in the House they have a bill. We are now in the middle of trying to conference the differences, and I am very hopeful we are going to get it done. Senator VITTER and I are working together to get it done. It is a little slower than we would like in terms of progress, but I am convinced we are going to have a bill before this body. We need to take care of the people's business.

Guess what. The President of the United States has a right to get his team in place. It is as simple as it is.

The people know it. I go home and the people say: Hooray, thank God you people are doing something. You are getting people confirmed.

Then we have the courts. We have courts where the judgeships are vacant. Justice delayed is justice denied. We need those judges in their places. The Senator from Iowa, I remember, made a big, eloquent speech about how we wanted to "pack" the courts. Anyone who knows anything about history knows pack the courts means wanting to add more judges and put your people in it. It doesn't mean filling vacancies. I think he got off that. But that was something to listen to.

We need to take care of the people's business and not play politics depending on who is in the White House. Unemployment insurance was a perfect example of this.

Under George W. Bush, between putting in place the unemployment insur-

ance and extending it, we did it five times, no offsets. Now all of a sudden the Republicans—people are struggling. I am stunned that we couldn't come together and extend unemployment insurance for the 1.5 million people right now and the 250,000 Californians included in that 1.5 million who have run out of hope.

The Republicans said: Pay for it, even though the deficit has been cut in half. They have suddenly noticed the deficit. After George Bush it was \$1.4 trillion. They put two wars on the credit card, and they put a huge tax cut for millionaires on the credit card. Oh, no problem. Now they have discovered the deficit even though it has been cut in half by this President. Oh, we have to pay for it.

OK, we said, we have to pay for it, we will pay for it. We gave them an offset that we took out of PAUL RYAN's budget. It wasn't good enough for them. Then they said: We want amendments. We have to have amendments, just give us some amendments. I will give you some unemployment insurance for these struggling people.

Then HARRY REID: Twenty amendments, OK; 5 a side and 5 side-by-sides, 20 amendments.

Oh, no, that wasn't good enough.

It is childish. People are struggling. They are deciding whether they can put heat on in their house. They are wondering whether they can pay the rent, whether they are going to lose their homes, whether they are going to have to beg other family members for their help. This is outrageous. Outrageous.

Income inequality is outrageous.

Does the Presiding Officer know that 400 families are worth more in wealth than 150 million Americans? Let me say that again: Four hundred families in America are worth more than half the United States of America. And when there were tax cuts for those people, I never heard one word from one Republican about a pay-for. The deficit soared. They all voted to go to war. No problem. But we want to help these families who are desperate—middle-class families, people who have paid into the workers unemployment insurance fund, people who are looking for work because they can't get that extended unemployment unless they can prove that—and no. Nobody is home over there.

I appreciate that some of my colleagues made a speech about poverty. Great. How about doing something about it? How about doing something about it, and not just speechifying? Where are they in raising the minimum wage? I don't know, maybe they will come with us. I don't see it. I really don't see it. I hope so. I pray so. I do. So far, I don't see it.

In the last Presidential election of 2012, the Republican leader said his top priority was defeating President

Obama. That is what the Republican leader said—not working for the people of this country, not passing legislation to make their life better, not moving forward and making sure the air we breathe is clean, the water we drink is safe, not making sure our kids have a good education and workers get job training—no. Top priority: Defeating President Obama. President Obama won; so why don't you wake up and smell the roses and understand we need to work together. You have to accept reality.

Look. I have had my candidates in the past win and lose. I have been here through tough elections. We lost the Senate, then we won the Senate. We lost the House, then we won the House. We won the Presidency, then we lost it. Guess what. I had to understand that when it comes to legislating, we put that aside. We fight hard during an election, but once it is over you don't carry that over. You work together.

But too many on the other side are politically motivated. All they want to do is hurt our President, day in and day out criticizing him endlessly, not working with him. He has offered that olive branch over and over, whether it is on economic recovery, jobs, health care, the environment, income inequality—even foreign policy—day after day.

Here is the thing you never hear from the other side, so I am going to talk about it tonight. When President Obama took office, the economy was losing over 700,000 jobs a month. Now we have added 8 million private-sector jobs in the past 45 months. How does that compare to George W. Bush? After 8 years in office, President Bush's record was that we lost 665,000 private-sector jobs. So far we have added 8 million private-sector jobs in the past 45 months.

When President Obama took office—we remember those days, frightening days with the stock market collapsing. Now the stock market has gone up 10,000 points. That is unbelievable. The GDP—gross domestic product—was contracting at a rate of 8.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008 as we said goodbye to George W. Bush. Now we just learned that the GDP grew by 4.1 percent in the third quarter. Is this President satisfied? Are we? No. But have we turned it around? Yes. Does the President ever get one ounce of credit for any of this? No. No.

How about looking at our deficit. Let's look at that, something the Republicans claim is a very central part of it. This is it—a \$1.4 trillion deficit down now to 680, going down to 560, and falling at the fastest rate in many, many years, just as health care costs are not rising the way they used to. Do you think we would hear one word about it from the other side? No. No.

Even on foreign policy, even on foreign policy, politics used to stop at the water's edge. Senator GRASSLEY has a

historic perspective. I do too. Politics used to stop at the water's edge when it came to foreign policy. No more. No more.

But you would never know the deficit has been cut in half, and you would never know that 8 million private-sector jobs have been created if you listen to my friends on the other side because they can't give any credit to President Obama. But history will. History will.

The last thing I am going to talk about is health care. I listened to my colleague Senator CRUZ go after this President and the Democrats on health care. So let us look at a few things.

First fact: Even though we had a horrible roll-out of the health care site—not in California but the Federal site, healthcare.gov—and a couple of States had a horrible roll-out, let's put that aside. This is what we know.

There are more now, but I didn't have a chance to make a new chart. We are getting to 10 million Americans, but over 9 million Americans have new, secure health insurance; 3 million young adults have stayed on their parents insurance policies; 3.9 million are on Medicaid; and there are 2.1 million exchange plans, the private plans.

Let me show this another way on the private plans—the 2.1 million. Now we think it is more. It is a little bit more. Here we are. Very, very tough roll-out. Nothing worked. Now it is working, and it is spiking, and it is only going to get better.

But you wouldn't know that because Senator CRUZ keeps saying over and over: What have the Democrats in the Senate done to protect the people from ObamaCare? I have to protect the people from him because if he had his way, he would repeal ObamaCare. I ask you: What is going to happen to those young people if Senator CRUZ has his way and we repeal ObamaCare? What happens to the 3 million young adults? They are back on their own. They have no insurance. They are back at the emergency room. What happens to those on expanded Medicaid? Forget it. What happens to the exchanges? They would be gone.

So while Senator CRUZ says we have done nothing to protect the people, the opposite is true. We stand in support of the people—the people's right to get affordable health care. Do we have the perfect answer on every front? No. Do we have to make corrections? Of course.

We had a meeting with the President yesterday. He is reaching out his hand to the Republicans and Democrats. If we can fix this in any way and make it work better, we will.

Let's look at some of our other charts as far as what our Republican colleagues want to do when they say repeal ObamaCare. I am telling you, 400,000 Californians have enrolled, and now it is 500,000. It is 500,000 Californians who have enrolled in an exchange

plan through—coveredCA.com. This is working in my State. It is working.

I am not going to allow Senator CRUZ to take the benefits away from my people who are writing me letters—and I have some of them here, and I will read a little bit of those stories.

John Nunnemacher is a 43-year-old freelance graphic artist from San Jose, and the last time he had health insurance was 15 years ago, when his employer paid for coverage. But as of January 1, John is covered by a plan he can finally afford. This is what he told the San Jose Mercury News:

I hoped this day would come. I worried that it wouldn't. And I'm very glad that it finally has.

So he is happy, and I am not going to let Senator CRUZ take away his insurance. Let's be clear. Let's be clear. He waited for a long time, and I am not going back. We can't go back to those days when there was no insurance for our young people. We can't go back to the days when being a woman was a preexisting condition, and you got charged double that of a man. We can't go back to the days where kids were thrown off their parents' policies. We just can't go back.

Amy Torregrossa, 27, is from San Francisco. She had been without insurance since July, when coverage through her partner's company ended because he changed jobs. She has a congenital heart defect and a history of high blood pressure. She no longer runs because she says "if I twist my ankle or get hit by a car . . . any doctor visit is so expensive."

She signed up on Covered California for a silver plan costing \$310 a month. She made sure her cardiologist was in the insurer's network and plans to schedule a checkup for early this year.

Amy, I am not going to let anyone take this away from you. I am not.

Michelle Strong, 57, is a self-employed product designer. For many years she could not afford any insurance at all because of a false-positive—a false positive—test for lupus, which incorrectly flagged her as having a preexisting condition. For the past 15 years she could only afford catastrophic insurance. Now, thanks to a tax credit, she will pay \$55 a month, with no deductible, and a \$3 copay. Here is what she said:

It just blows my mind that I can get health insurance at this price. I can finally afford checkups, tests, and age-related visits.

Michelle, I am not going to let anyone take your insurance away from you. You deserve it.

Elaine Post, 64, from West Hills, CA. She told CNN:

When I first got laid off, I tried to get private insurance through the big companies. They all rejected me . . . wanted to charge me really, really high premiums for not very good insurance.

Now Elaine has coverage through a bronze plan through Covered California that costs \$461 a month.

Elaine, you are going to keep your insurance and we are going to protect you.

Judith Silverstein, 49, is a Californian who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2007. Her family helps her pay the \$750 monthly cost of her existing plan—which she only had because of Federal law requiring that insurers who provide employer-based insurance continue to offer coverage if the employer goes out of business, as hers did; otherwise, she would be uninsured because of her MS. “I researched the options,” she says. “Nobody’s going to sell you insurance in the individual market if you have MS.” But next year she will get a subsidy that will get her a silver level plan for \$50 a month.

Last summer Ellen Holzman and Meredith Vezina, a married couple in San Diego County, got kicked off their long-term Kaiser health plan, for which they had been paying more than \$1,300 a month. When they applied for a plan with a new insurer, they couldn’t get coverage because Ellen disclosed that she might have carpal tunnel syndrome. Through Covered California, they found a plan through Sharp Healthcare that will cover them both with a subsidy for a total premium of \$142 a month. Holzman says, “If not for the Affordable Care Act, our ability to get insurance would be very limited, if we could get it at all.”

Jason Noble, 44, who has his own property management firm in Southern California, found a gold plan that will cover his wife and their three children for a little less than \$1,300 a month. That is slightly more than they would be paying this year for the plan they had in 2013, but the benefits are much greater, including pediatric dental coverage. Their family deductible will fall from \$3,400 to zero. Last year, the family had a health scare that ran them \$1,800 in out-of-pocket expenses, but next year, a similar event would cost them nothing. “It’s definitely a good deal,” Noble says.

Barbara Neff of Santa Monica, who had been stuck in a bad plan because of a preexisting condition, said she is relieved that under Obamacare, she will get life-saving preventive care at no cost. Neff said, “I have been paying for my mammograms out of pocket, and that’s \$400 to \$450 per year,” Neff says. “That type of care is 100 percent covered under this new policy.”

Rakesh Rikhi of San Jose, CA, paid \$950 a month last year to insure himself, his wife and two children with Kaiser. Through Covered California, he will be able to get a similar Kaiser plan that saves his family \$400 a month.

Tim Wilsbach, a 40-year-old TV editor who lives in Culver City with his family, had been paying for a bare bones policy with an \$11,000 deductible for himself and his 4-year-old son, and another policy with a \$5,000 deductible for his wife. Wilsbach checked out his

options on the Covered California website, and was pleased to find a plan for the whole family that offers broader coverage, a much lower \$4,000 deductible and a more affordable monthly premium. “Our premium went down, not quite 100 bucks, and just looking through what the plan covers versus what used to be covered, yeah, I’m quite happy about it,” Wilsbach said.

Allan Pacela, from Santa Maria, CA, is a retired engineer on Medicare. His wife was insured through Cigna, under a group plan offered by her husband’s engineers’ society, and because of pre-existing conditions, could not leave the plan even though premiums had gone up to \$20,000 per year, because no other plan would take her. This year, her insurer canceled her entire plan, leaving her with no insurance. “So we turned to Obamacare,” Allan told his local paper. “She found it simple and easy to sign up through an agent in a 10-minute phone call. She obtained their best plan, providing much, much better coverage than in the past. . . . My wife would not have insurance coverage at all as of January 1, if not for Obamacare. And, here’s the kicker—we now are saving \$8,000 per year, for a very much better plan.”

Megan Foster, from Kern County, CA, said, “My mom is finally able to get health insurance after being denied for so long because of her Crohn’s disease and epilepsy, and it’s for an affordable price. She works full time but her job doesn’t offer benefits and she can’t work without her medicine. It’s not a perfect solution, but I am happy that my mom doesn’t have to choose any more between medicine or groceries.”

Lori Greenstein Bremner is a cancer survivor, a single mother and a self-employed real estate agent in Sonoma, CA. Before the Affordable Care Act, she struggled to obtain and afford health insurance because of her pre-existing condition. Now Lori says, “In January, for the first time since my diagnosis 36 years ago, I will have an individual health plan that offers quality coverage for me and my family. I will save \$628 every month on premiums. Best of all—I wasn’t even asked if I’ve ever had cancer.”

Mr. President, I just want to say that when you listen to the naysayers and the bad news bears and everyone who comes here and starts criticizing, you should get to the bottom of it. Look at this 9 million number, headed toward 10 million, and understand what is happening in our Nation. People are getting health coverage.

Here is the deal. The way we did it, Obamacare, is just like it was in Massachusetts when Governor Romney put it through. That is where the ideas came from. We did not do another plan. We did that type of plan, and it is working in Massachusetts where I believe 95 percent of the people are covered.

Now, I will close with a couple of other protections that are in effect, so that you can see why, when TED CRUZ and my other Republican colleagues and friends come to the floor who want to repeal ObamaCare, I’m saying: No way. You want to work with us to make it better? Absolutely. But I am not going to let my constituents lose their insurance. You want to tell your constituents they can lose their insurance, that is your business, but don’t mess with California.

Look here: Already in effect, 3 million young adults insured through their parents’ plans; 71 million Americans are getting free preventive care, such as checkups and birth control and immunizations.

You want to take that away from Texans, be my guest. You are not going to do it because we are not going to let you do it.

Health reforms in effect: 17 million kids with preexisting conditions, such as asthma and diabetes, cannot be denied coverage. Insurers cannot cancel your health insurance because you get sick. No lifetime limits on coverage. No annual limits on coverage.

You can’t deny coverage or charge more for preexisting conditions. You can’t charge women more than men. You can’t put annual limits on a plan.

Women. Women. Two-thirds of women are on the minimum wage. Two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women. So if you don’t support raising the minimum wage, you are taking on the women, and that is a fact. They are not students. They are not youngsters.

Look. Women now can get contraception so they can plan their families. Well-women visits, STD screening, breastfeeding support, domestic violence screening, gestational diabetes screening, HIV screening, HPV testing, this is all happening because of ObamaCare.

So I say to anyone within the sound of my voice—if I haven’t put you to sleep—when anyone gets on the floor and starts complaining about ObamaCare and wanting to repeal it, just say to them: Why do you want to hurt the people of this country who have waited so long to get health insurance, who have suffered so much, who have gone bankrupt because somebody had the misfortune of getting cancer? Why do you want to go back to those days? That is not good for America. Just because it was President Obama who signed the bill?

The Affordable Care Act is now called ObamaCare. What a wonderful thing for this President. Anyone who stands and says they want to take away these benefits is hurting the American people and I am going to collect these stories and I am going to come to the floor and read them. This is about real people getting secure insurance for the first time in their lives, and it is affordable.

No one is going to turn back the clock. We can't go back to those days.

So we have to deal with making this health care bill work the best it can. We have to work on income inequality. We have to come back and still work for unemployment insurance extension for the 1.5 million Americans who desperately need help. We have to work on making sure there is a bright future for our families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

PENSACOLA NAVAL AIR STATION

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I am going to get to another issue in a moment, but there is a special anniversary in Florida I wish to commemorate, and it is Naval Air Station Pensacola which is now celebrating its centennial anniversary. NAS Pensacola, as it is more commonly known, is a Florida institution and is known as the Cradle of Naval Aviation.

The first naval airplane flight from Pensacola took place on February 2, 1914. Over 325,000 alums have gone on to bravely serve with honor in our wars, and they have also delighted crowds across the country as part of the Blue Angels. They have made their mark on the Florida Panhandle and on our Nation's defense in the process.

In fact, one of our colleagues, JOHN MCCAIN, trained there. He of course went on to serve our country heroically and admirably and then has also served us in the Senate. Others who have passed through there include many NASA astronauts. Alan Shepard, Neil Armstrong, among others, began their aviation careers at NAS Pensacola, and of course eventually went on to become astronauts and made an immeasurable impact on American and world history.

NAS Pensacola is also the final resting place for thousands of fallen warriors at the Barrancas National Cemetery, a place which truly humbles visitors and reminds us to be thankful that America has been blessed with so many courageous patriots throughout our history.

Today there are over 17,000 service men and women who continue their service to America at NAS Pensacola, and there are an additional 7,000 civilians who support the base's operations. They are part of a real community, where parents are raising their kids, and where many veterans who once served there decide to make it their permanent home. We are proud of this in the Florida Panhandle. It makes our State a better place.

So as the celebrations get underway this weekend, I join our State and our entire Nation in celebrating 100 years of military excellence at NAS Pensacola. We truly give thanks to all the brave men and women who have made this military installation the crown jewel of our national defense and con-

tributed to America's exceptional history.

OBAMACARE TAXPAYER BAILOUT PREVENTION ACT

I also wish to take a moment to talk about an emerging problem with the health care law which has only begun to filter out in the news cycle but bears watching in the days and weeks to come.

As we all know, a key part of the health care law is the exchanges, which are theoretically supposed to be competitive private marketplaces where individuals can go online either through their State exchange or the Federal exchange and buy health insurance at a competitive price, and they can choose between different plans. That is the idea behind a health exchange.

In and of itself, the idea of an exchange is not a bad one, if appropriately administered and it doesn't come accompanied with all the other things the health care law came accompanied with. But there is a problem with the way the exchanges are now designed which has not yet received the attention it deserves but, I promise, we are going to be hearing a lot about in the days to come.

The technical term is risk corridors. What it basically means is companies that participate in an exchange or a marketplace of insurance are told there is a reinsurance plan in place which will protect them in case of loss or catastrophic loss.

For example, let's say you are an insurance provider and go into a marketplace, and then it turns out the demographics of the groups that signed up for your plans didn't turn out the right way or there was an enormous spike in health care costs, whatever it may be, and you suffered dramatic losses. A risk corridor is in place to protect you.

The reason is, No. 1, a safety net per se for the industry on a short-term basis. The reason that is important is because we want patients' bills to be paid and their providers' bills to be paid. The problem is applying that to the health care exchange is going to prove extraordinarily problematic.

What has happened over the last few weeks, as we predicted would happen, is not enough young people are signing up through the exchanges. In order for health insurance to work, you have to have enough younger and healthier people on it. If you have a health insurance plan largely composed of people guaranteed to get sick, economically it doesn't work. There is no dispute about that.

In fact, by the administration's own statistics, they say at least 38 percent of the enrollees in the exchanges had to be under the age of 34 in order for the exchanges to work in an actuarially sound way.

So based on the assumption that was going to happen, insurance companies

bid on these exchanges, offered a product and have begun to sign up people. The problem is so far that figure is not being met.

The numbers are just starting to come in. We don't know the full picture yet, but the trends are troubling.

No. 1, not enough people are signing up. The target goal is a total of about 7 million people or more by a deadline which has now been extended to March 31. The number is less than 2.2 million. There are still 8 weeks left or so, so we will see what happens, but the trends are not positive.

Here is an even more troubling trend: Only 30 percent of national enrollees are from that demographic I described. Only 30 percent are under the age of 34. In Florida, it is only 25 percent.

Here is the fundamental problem we have right now with the exchanges, beyond all the other ones we have already discussed ad nauseam: Not enough people are signing up and not enough people under the age of 34 are signing up.

The result is that the way this is trending now, the exchanges are becoming more like a high-risk pool and less like a true competitive exchange. Here is why that is problematic: If companies lose money, as they are going to if we look at these figures and as the companies themselves anticipate—in fact, in some of the early disclosures these companies are making, we are starting to see the forecast of losses.

If these trends continue and companies lose money because not enough people under the age of 34 signed up for them and not enough people signed up, under the ObamaCare law they will be entitled to a payout from the high-risk pool. This is a program in place for the first 3 years of these exchanges.

What that means is a taxpayer-funded bailout of ObamaCare. For taxpayers of the United States, this means your money is going to go from your pocket into the pocket of these private companies.

What the private companies will tell us is: Look. We bid on this product when you said the rules were going to be this. But since then you changed the rules even more, and so what was already bad has gotten worse.

There is not enough awareness about this, but we are going to be hearing about it in the weeks to come. As we get closer to the reality that billions of dollars in taxpayers' money is going to be used to bail out these exchanges, there is going to be growing outrage around the country and people are going to want answers. I hope my colleagues are starting to think about what we need to do.

That is why I filed a bill in November called the ObamaCare Taxpayer Bailout Prevention Act. What it would do is eliminate this provision which allows for the tax-funded bailouts of these exchanges.

As we get closer to this problem, the numbers are as bad or worse than we anticipated. So in the months to come, here is what we can expect to see:

First, we can expect to see that companies are now going to say: We need our money. Under the law, we were promised this high-risk bailout. We signed up for it under that assumption. Now we need taxpayer money.

I predict the second thing we are going to see is as companies begin to prepare their filings for next year, some companies are going to decide that they are not participating in ObamaCare exchanges next year at all, which means less choice and less competition and, therefore, higher premiums. Other companies are going to say: We will participate but only at these premiums; and they are going to be significantly higher than the ones we have seen this year, meaning it will be even less affordable, meaning even less people under the age of 34 will sign up, meaning even more money will have to go from the taxpayer to bail out these exchanges.

We are still in mid-January and these numbers could change, but nobody realistically expects them to. In fact, I have yet to hear from anyone knowledgeable about this subject who has said to me: Oh, don't worry. In the next 8 weeks, another 5 million to 6 million will sign up and we are going to get to over 30 percent of national enrollees. We are going to get to over 38 percent of the people signing up being in the demographic of 34 or under.

So it is only mid-January. But I come to the floor to sound the alarm that this is coming so people across this country know we are weeks and months away from transferring potentially billions of dollars from taxpayers to private companies to bail out these exchanges. I promise you, this will not be the last time we hear about this.

I encourage my colleagues, as they go home on this recess and talk to people, get informed about this subject because we are going to be hearing a lot about it in the weeks and months to come. This is a very serious threat—to the law itself, by the way. This is unsustainable.

At a time that we have a \$17 trillion debt, when so many Americans are struggling to find employment which pays them enough to live off of, when so many Americans have seen the jobs they once had disappear and cannot find a job to replace it, when so many Americans are struggling with a growing cost of living in every aspect of their lives—childcare, student loans, utility bills, you name it—to be told that at a time when all of these challenges are happening in the personal economies of so many people that billions of dollars of taxpayer money is going to go to bail out this law, there is going to be collective outrage across the political spectrum in this country and rightfully so.

Here is the last point I would make: If this law has to be bailed out, it is one more reason why it doesn't work. These exchanges are supposed to be private competitive marketplaces, where companies could actuarially and soundly price a product and sell it at an affordable rate. That is not where they are headed. We are headed toward a day soon, as early as next year—and we will see the filings this year—when companies are going to decide either not to participate or to participate but only if they can charge substantially higher premiums with higher copayments and higher deductibles; and, on top of that, the only way they will participate is if they are promised this bailout.

We are going to hear a lot about this in the weeks to come, and I encourage my colleagues—irrespective of how you feel about this law, I cannot imagine any of us believing we are at a time in our Nation's history, given the challenges we face now, where we should be bailing out this plan with taxpayer money being transferred to private companies to keep them in business.

That is where we are headed and we better be able to do something about it soon, because people are not going to stand for it.

I yield the floor.

THANKING MEMBERS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I take a moment to thank all the members of that committee for their hard work over the last year. At a time when there is obviously an enormous amount of divisiveness and partisanship here in the Senate, I am happy to report that by and large there has been a great deal of bipartisan effort being made in the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and I think very productive work as well.

(The remarks of Mr. SANDERS and Mr. BLUMENTHAL pertaining to the introduction of S. 1950 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THANKS TO PATRICK KILCUR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I spend long periods of time on the floor compared to most Senators. That is my job. In doing so, I get to know people more than probably a lot of people. Over these many years, I have talked about a Senate family, and it really is a Senate family and, for me, it really is my family. I know I am being way too protective, and a lot of people say it isn't my business, but that is how I feel. When people leave, I really feel badly because you get to know people and you feel comfortable with the people you know.

The reason I mention this today is because one of the people I have learned to really admire and appreciate and joke with and have a good time with is one of the Republican staff members who is leaving. His name is

Patrick Kilcur. I have no idea whether I pronounced his name right, K-I-L-C-U-R. I really don't know the name very well, but I have known him for a long time. We call him Patrick. He is a Republican floor assistant. If I have an issue and there is not a Democratic floor person around, I go to him, and he always gives me the answer that is honest and truthful. That is how we are so well served by these people who fill these spots in this wonderful, historic Chamber.

Patrick came to the Senate from Pennsylvania. He is from Pennsylvania. He worked for a famous Pennsylvania Senator, Arlen Specter. He spent time working with him and worked his way here to the cloakroom and became a floor assistant as he is now. He is going to leave to go to work with one of my dear personal friends—Chris Dodd.

I asked Patrick to come spend a few minutes with me this week before he left and we had a nice visit. I talked about my relationship with Chris Dodd. I said what a good opportunity to be working for one of the great orators we have had during the time I have been in the Senate and one of the nicest people a person could get to know—Chris Dodd.

So Patrick will be missed here. I will miss him. I wish him the very best. He is always—I have to be very careful; I don't want to bring him any bad luck. He is engaged now. He is going to have a job. He can afford it. So I really wish him well. I will miss him, but I will say this: At least he has a first name. The people he works with, they don't even call him by his first name. They call him Duncan.

So, anyway, enough of that. I really will miss you. You have had such a positive effect here. You are always happy, in spite of the pressure placed on you from people in the well: How should I vote? How much longer? Trying to get people here to go late—how much longer is it going to be? So thank you very much. You have been great, and I look forward to visiting with you and, hopefully, you and Dodd will let me watch one of those movies some time, because Chris Dodd is the leader of the Motion Picture Association of America.

THANKING THE PAGES

Mr. President, another short thing I wish to say. Over the years I have come to admire so very much our pages. They sacrifice to come here. It is not easy for them to come here and go to school for a semester, but they do. This school they go to is no soft school. It is hard. They start school at 6 a.m.—I think it is 6 o'clock—and they go for a couple of hours. I know they are supposed to get up around 5. It is such a good environment. We have gone out of our way to have a pleasant place for them to live, the so-called dorm. They have monitors who watch them so very

closely. Their parents don't have to worry about them. It is a good experience. They see what happens on a daily basis in the bowels of government, the Senate, and they all go different ways. They are all juniors in high school. They will go back to their high school and then go on to college, but in their entire life they will never forget their experience here.

I went just for a few days when I was a junior in high school—maybe I was a senior; it was right after my junior year—to Boys State, and I made friends during the five days we spent there, and they are my friends even today, after all those many years ago, and that is the relationship these pages have developed.

So I say to them, thank you very much for the work you do.

I was walking out, as I do, this back door the last night or two, and I see one of the pages. They have a door open, and I see this list of stuff on the wall. So I say: What is that? What they have to know, among other things—each of us can be pretty—what is the right word—demanding, although I don't know if that is the right word. Senator MCCONNELL and I have these podiums here all the time, but we are the only two. So when a Senator comes to speak, they need a podium. But they have to get the right podium and the pages have to know, when a Senator wants to speak, what podium to get. Is it going to be a low one, middle-sized, half middle-sized, or a big one? Anyway, they have to know that. They have a big chart up there to make sure they don't make mistakes.

They make sure we have water. I don't like warm water. I don't like cold water. I don't like ice. The pages have learned we all have our demands for water—sparkling, half sparkling, half regular, half tap. Anyway, I am so grateful they took the time to leave their homes to come here to go to school, to be students in the Senate.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr. President, finally, we are going to have a vote when we come back on flood insurance. Senators MENENDEZ, LANDRIEU, and ISAKSON have worked on this for a long time. Senator LANDRIEU has been—what is the right word—persistent, and that is an understatement. She has been on this as she can get on something and never get off of it. We have come, over the last several months, within just inches, we thought, of being able to have an agreement and move it to the floor. But she and Senator ISAKSON have worked hard to get a unanimous consent request to bring it to the floor, and they are always just a little bit short. So I am filing cloture in just a few minutes on a motion to proceed on this matter, and that will be the vote when we get back. If they are able to work out an agreement, then we can always modify having that vote and

move forward. As I understand it, there are five or ten amendments they want to have to that bill, and we have all agreed that is OK. So I hope we can do that when we come back, and I thank those Senators for their good work.

Mr. President, could I ask what the pending business is before the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending business is the motion to proceed to S. 1926.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk relative to that measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to calendar No. 294, S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Mary L. Landrieu, Sherrod Brown, Richard Blumenthal, Joe Manchin III, Tom Udall, Patrick J. Leahy, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons, Christopher Murphy, Mark R. Warner, Kay R. Hagan, Amy Klobuchar, Tim Kaine, Thomas R. Carper, Dianne Feinstein.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under Rule XXII also be waived; and the vote on the motion to invoke cloture occur at 5:30 p.m. on January 27.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK KILCUR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to say a fond farewell to Patrick Kilcur, a Republican floor assistant who has decided to move on after 7 very eventful years here in the Senate. Patrick has been a real asset to the conference but also just a great guy to have around. And that is something that has been true for everybody from the pages to the Senators. Anytime morale stated to flag in the late hours around here, Patrick was usually the one who gave everybody a lift. He has got a great spirit and a great sense of humor, qualities that we are always in great need of on the floor, especially late at night or during the various crises we have had to deal with over the

past several years. And he has just been a very thoughtful member of the team. On a trip to China a few years back, Patrick returned not just with some new custom shirts but with a panda hat for all the Senate pages. He has always been quick to offer guidance to the pages and to thank them. And he always made time when the end of their terms arrived to take them out to lunch and send them off the right way. Patrick is a proud native of West Chester, PA. He first came here as a floor monitor for Senator Specter in 2006 and moved to the cloakroom 2 years later. He became floor assistant in 2012. We will miss his ready smile and his knowledge of the floor. I know the pages will miss him too. On a happy note, we are glad that Patrick found his future wife Julie here in the Senate. Patrick and Julie just got engaged last month, and we wish them all the very best in their future life together. So to Patrick, I say thank you on behalf of the entire Senate. Best wishes in all your future endeavors.

ELECTIONS IN BELARUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 3 years ago, the country of Belarus held a presidential election that marked—instead of finally joining the rest of democratic Europe—a brutal crackdown on freedom of expression and basic democratic principles. There was a glimmer of hope that perhaps this would finally be an opportunity for the Belarusian people to freely choose their own president in an honest and open election. No longer would the Belarusian people have to endure under the “Last Dictator of Europe,” strongman Alexander Lukashenko.

Tragically, those hopes were quickly dashed when Lukashenko simply claimed another term as president amid elections described by international monitors as seriously flawed.

On election night, December 19, 2010, hundreds of Belarusian citizens were beaten and arrested by KGB henchman—that is right, Belarus still has a KGB security service—for having the nerve to run in the election or peaceably demonstrate for an honest accounting of the election results. It was the worst crackdown in decades—although certainly not the first under Lukashenko's iron fist in which he uses a combination of repression, intimidation, and torture to cling to power.

I have come to the Senate floor a number of times during the past 3 years to talk about the tragic events in Belarus, where the Lukashenko regime has imprisoned and mistreated numerous political and human rights activists. Let me add with great irony and sadness—that Russia is presently trying to strongarm our friends in Ukraine to join a Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan trade bloc instead of letting it sign an association agreement

with the European Union. Sign up with the last dictatorship of Europe or the European Union—not much of a choice if you ask me.

I have been glad to see that with a push from the international community, some of Belarus's political prisoners have been released, including most of the 2010 presidential candidates who had the temerity to run for office.

Some of you may have seen an op-ed in the Washington Post last month, written by one such presidential candidate from the 2010 election in Belarus, Andrei Sannikov. Mr. Sannikov was sentenced to 5 years in jail for having the nerve to run against Lukashenko. At his trial, Sannikov said prison guards threatened to harm his wife and small son in an effort to secure a confession. Lukashenko's henchmen even threatened to take custody of his son, who was then 3 years old. Yet, he has not stopped working for a democratic Belarus. In his December 27 op-ed, he argues,

... it is important to remember that Ukraine's northern neighbor Belarus, [is] a country that lies geographically in the heart of Europe but politically is more akin to a Soviet backwater. The majority of its citizens want to be free, but they are repressed by a brutal dictator. It is not a question of if but when Belarusians will rid themselves of Europe's last dictatorship and join the community of European democracies.

He reminds us that there is still work to be done.

Take for example, president candidate Mikalai Statkevich. Statkevich, who was sentenced to six years in a medium-security prison following the 2010 election, remains in jail. He can barely receive medical assistance or meet with his family or lawyers. He is constantly harassed and pushed to sign bogus confessions for crimes he never committed.

Or for example, Ales Byalyatski, a prominent human rights activist still in jail. He is Vice-Chairman of the International Federation for Human Rights and President of the Human Rights Center Viasna, an organization that offers financial and legal assistance to political prisoners and their families. I don't think Ales or his wife, Natalia, who has visited with my office, ever thought their family would be among the ones they typically helped.

Moreover, the Lukashenko government targeted not only various political and human rights activists after the December 2010 election and protests, but it did so even before anything had happened, arresting for example, Eduard Lobau who had been a member of the youth democracy movement. Lobau was arrested and assaulted for peaceably protesting in the days leading up to the election.

Considering what they have fought for and what they have been through, it is no wonder that Statkevich, Belyatsky, and Lobau had been short-

listed for the Sakharov Prize by the European Parliament, as well as receiving a wide variety of international attention. While the Sakharov prize ultimately went to Malala Yousafzai, a worthy recipient, we cannot forget these three men and the others who rot in Belarusian KGB jails on dubious and trumped up charges. Their families, too, are continuously denied basic legal rights.

In 2012, I joined with my colleagues in the Senate to introduce Senate Resolution 105, which passed unanimously, condemning the sham elections and calling on the Belarusian regime to release all political prisoners. The resolution also called for new elections in Belarus that meet international standards, supported the tightening of sanctions against the Belarusian state oil and petrochemical company, and urged the International Ice Hockey Federation to suspend the 2014 Ice Hockey Championship in Minsk until all Belarusian political prisoners are released.

Sadly, our calls have gone unheeded by the International Ice Hockey Federation, which still plans to hold its 2014 championship in Minsk while political prisoners languish in KGB prisons. I simply cannot understand how the International Ice Hockey Federation can give hockey-loving strongman Lukashenko such a propaganda hook amid his country's human rights travesty.

I visited Belarus just weeks following the sham elections. I met with the family members of many of these jailed activists. The stories of missing or harassed loved ones, including children, were heartbreaking.

But the perseverance we have seen from civil society groups and human rights defenders in Belarus has been deeply inspiring. Despite intimidation and threat, these activists continue to fight for their freedoms. They did so through parliamentary elections during September 2012, also decried by international observers, and they do so through the many anniversaries of the election and ensuing protests. And they persevered most recently, when Lukashenko signed a law that requires future parliamentary elections to be held in single rounds and bans any calls to boycott elections.

I can only hope their efforts come to fruition in 2015 when Belarus is slated to host its next presidential election.

Until then, I will continue to stand in the Senate to call on Lukashenko to release the remaining political prisoners and stand with the people of Belarus in their quest for democracy and justice.

RECOGNIZING GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am not anyone would call a "blue blood"—at

least not in the conventional sense of that term. My ancestors did not come over on the Mayflower. My mom was an immigrant; she came to this country from Lithuania when she was 2 years old. But I do have some blue blood in my veins—Hoya blue—for Georgetown University.

With help of affordable loans from the United States Government, this immigrant's son from East St. Louis, IL was able to earn two degrees from Georgetown University—an undergraduate degree from the Walsh School of Foreign Service and a law degree from the Georgetown Law Center.

In addition, it was a college internship while I was a Georgetown undergraduate 50 years ago that first brought me to the United States Senate. I had the amazing good luck to land an internship with Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois—one of the great ones. He had a brilliant mind and enormous moral and political courage. Had I not gone to Georgetown, it is likely that I never would have met Paul Douglas and I would not be here today. Had I not gone to Georgetown, I never would have met some of my greatest teachers.

I owe Georgetown a great deal, so I would like to take a moment to say thank you as this great university prepares to celebrate an historic milestone. Next week—on January 23—Georgetown University will celebrate its 225th anniversary.

January 23, 1789. That was 6 weeks before the United States Constitution took effect and 6 weeks before the first United States Congress was seated.

Georgetown was founded by John Carroll, America's first Catholic bishop. It was America's first Catholic and first Jesuit college. In his proposal for the new university, Father John Carroll wrote that in keeping with "the liberal Principle of our Constitution, the [school] will be open to Students of Every Religious Profession."

That steadfast commitment to religious liberty remains a hallmark of Georgetown University. Today, only about 40 percent of Georgetown students identify as Roman Catholic. The other 60 percent are Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Bahá'í, Buddhist, Hindu, Mormon and members of other faith traditions.

On November 22, 1791, Georgetown enrolled its first student, William Gaston, from North Carolina. Due to illness shortly thereafter, William Gaston was also Georgetown's first dropout.

But he turned out well. He eventually graduated from Princeton University and returned to North Carolina, where he was elected to the State Senate . . . the state House of Commons . . . and the United States House of Representatives, making him the first Georgetown student to serve in Congress.

Many other Georgetown graduates have gone on to serve in elected office. Among them are former President Bill Clinton, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, several members of this Congress, including the President Pro Tem of this Senate, Senator PATRICK LEAHY.

My State of Illinois may hold the current record for statewide office holders whose views of public service Georgetown helped to shape. Not only are my Senate partner, Senator MARK KIRK and I both Georgetown graduates but so are our Governor Pat Quinn, our Lieutenant Governor, Sheila Simon, and our state Attorney General, Lisa Madigan.

In the years following the Civil War, Father Patrick Healy helped transform Georgetown into a modern university. So profound was his influence that Father Healy is often called Georgetown's "second founder."

Father Healy's accomplishments are all the more extraordinary when you consider that the laws of Georgia, the State in which he was born, made it a crime even to teach him to read. You see, Father Patrick Healy was born a slave. His father was a wealthy Irish American cotton farmer and his mother was mixed race—half white and half African American. His parents joined in a common-law marriage and gave all of their children excellent educations in Northern and European schools.

Father Healy's mixed-race background was not widely known until the 1960s, when he was recognized as the first American of African ancestry to earn a PhD, the first to become a Jesuit priest, and the first to be president of a predominantly white college.

Georgetown University today is one of the top research universities in the world. The university today has around 7,500 undergraduate and over 9,500 post-graduate students from every State and territory in the United States and more than 130 foreign nations. In 2001, Georgetown gained its first lay president, John DeGioia, a philosopher by training and a champion of civil discourse, for whom I have great respect.

Education at Georgetown is rooted in the Jesuit tradition: "for the glory of God and the well-being of humankind."

I am continually impressed by the commitment of Georgetown students to causes of social and economic justice.

Georgetown has the second most politically active student body in the United States according to the Princeton Review. Georgetown is also one of the top-10 yearly producers of Peace Corps volunteers. Georgetown students founded one of the first chapters of STAND, the student-led movement to end mass atrocities in Darfur and elsewhere. And Georgetown faculty, administrators and—especially—students remain fearless and dedicated champions of a cause that is very close to my heart, the DREAM Act.

I could not speak about my alma mater without bragging a little about its athletic teams and programs. The men's basketball team is particularly noteworthy. In 1984, it was the NCAA championship under Coach John Thompson. All told, the Georgetown men's basketball team is tied for the most Big East conference tournament titles with 7, and has made 27 NCAA tournament.

U.S. News & World Report lists Georgetown's athletics program among the 20 best in the Nation. Perhaps even more impressive, Georgetown's student athletes have a 94 percent graduation success rate.

I did not start out at Georgetown. I spent my freshman year at another Jesuit university, St. Louis University, just across the Mississippi River from my home town of East St. Louis, IL.

Partway through my first year, I decided that I wanted to go away for school. So, I went to the university guidance office, looked through some pamphlets and chose two. I had never been to either place.

I told my mom that I wanted to go away for school and I had narrowed it down to two choices. I said the first is a school in California called Stanford. Mom said, "No, if you go to California you'll never come home."

I said the other is a school in Washington called Georgetown University." She thought for a minute and then said, "OK. Your brother goes to Washington frequently for his work. He can keep an eye on you." That is how I ended up attending one of the best universities in America and the world.

My mom is gone now. But on the eve of Georgetown University's 225th anniversary, I want to thank her for steering me to a truly great university. I want to thank all of the professors who taught me—brilliant, brave men like Professor Jan Karski.

Finally, I want to commend President Jack DeGioia and all of the Georgetown administrators, faculty, alumni, supporters, and students for continuing to uphold Georgetown's mission of academic excellence and service to God and humankind.

SURGEON GENERAL'S REPORT ON SMOKING AND HEALTH

Mr. REED. Mr. President, this week is the 50th anniversary of the Surgeon General's landmark report on smoking and health. I join with some of my colleagues who have taken the floor this week to commemorate this anniversary.

Surgeon General Dr. Luther Terry's report was groundbreaking. For the first time, the government warned that "smoking is a health hazard of sufficient importance in the United States". This fundamentally changed how our country thought about smoking and was the basis for many of the

successful tobacco control efforts of the past 50 years.

Indeed, according to CDC data, in 1965 the year after the Surgeon General's report—approximately 42 percent of American adults smoked cigarettes. By 2011, that rate had dropped by more than half to 19 percent. Hopefully this trend will continue, leading to better health for millions of Americans.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have worked on initiatives to discourage our children from becoming smokers, supported measures to ban smoking in schools, and worked to enhance the FDA's ability to regulate the sale and distribution of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco.

We have come a long way since I proposed legislation in the late nineties to deny tobacco companies tax deductions for advertising to children. I was an original cosponsor of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which became law in 2009 and incorporated the goals in my bill to keep the tobacco industry from targeting children as new customers. This law provides the FDA with the explicit authority to protect the public from deceptive cigarette advertisements, prevent the targeting of minors, and remove certain harmful ingredients from cigarettes.

This was an important effort. But we also must continue to address new tobacco-related concerns as they arise. For instance, I was pleased to join several of my colleagues last year in urging the FDA to issue deeming regulations asserting its regulatory authority over e-cigarettes and other tobacco products, and it is my hope that it will do so soon.

We have made great strides during the last 50 years in reducing smoking rates and preventing tobacco-related illnesses, but we can and must do more. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue these efforts, which I believe are critically important to our Nation's long-term health.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 ANDREW LANGSTON
MC ADAMS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to express our Nation's deepest thanks and gratitude to a Wyoming soldier and his family. On January 10, 2014, CWO3 Andrew McAdams of Cheyenne, WY, was killed in the line of duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Along with his fellow MC-12 crew members, Chief Warrant Officer 3 McAdams died from injuries he sustained while conducting surveillance operations in eastern Afghanistan.

Chief McAdams deployed with Wyoming Army National Guard Detachment 53. He was attached to B Company, 306th Aerial Exploitation Battalion, Task Force ODIN-Afghanistan.

Before graduating from Cheyenne East High School, he joined the Army National Guard and graduated from the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Candidate School at Fort Rucker, AL. Andrew's friends have described him as a kind man with an infectious sense of humor. Those who served with Chief McAdams recall his passion for aviation. It is that passion for flight which led him to serve Wyoming and our Nation.

Mr. President, it is because of individuals like Andrew McAdams who wear the uniform that we continue to live safe and free. Our men and women who answer the call to service deserve respect and recognition for the enormous burden that they take upon themselves to protect our Nation. They put everything on the line every day. Because of them and their families, our Nation remains free and strong in the face of danger.

In the book of John, Jesus said that "greater love has no man than this, that he lay his life down for his friend." Andrew gave his life, that last full measure of devotion, so we can live in a free nation. He gave his life defending his country and its people, and we honor him for this selfless sacrifice.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 McAdams is survived by his wife Carol and baby daughter, his mother Katherine and father Brien, sister Laretta and brother-in-law Erick. Andrew is also survived by his brothers and sisters in arms of the U.S. Army. As we say goodbye to a husband, a father, a son, a brother, and an American soldier, our Nation pays its deepest respect to Chief McAdams for his courage, his love of country, and his sacrifice, so that we may remain free. He was a hero in life, and he remains a hero in memory. All of Wyoming, and indeed the entire Nation, is proud of him. May God bless him and his family, and welcome him with open arms.

REMEMBERING WILFRED BILLEY

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, last month the flags of the Navajo Nation flew at half mast, in honor of Wilfred E. Billey. Mr. Billey was one of the legendary Navajo Code Talkers. He died at the age of 90 on December 12. His passing is an occasion to reflect on a truly heroic life, and on the vital contribution of the Navajo Code Talkers to America's victory in World War II.

Wilfred Billey was born on December 28, 1922, in Sanostee, NM. He was raised by his grandparents. In the summers, he herded sheep and farmed in the Chuska Mountains. In 1941, Wilfred was attending Navajo Methodist Mission School in Farmington when a Marine recruiter visited the school. Still a teenager, Wilfred would travel half way around the world with the all-Navajo U.S. Marine Corps Platoon 297.

The Navajo Code Talkers turned their language into an unbreakable

code. They would use the language of the Navajo people as a weapon to defend our freedoms. In battle after battle, in ferocious combat, they used that code time and again to help secure Allied victory. Their service was all the more remarkable in that they fought so bravely for freedom in a world that did not always accord freedom to them.

Wilfred's journey would take him throughout the Pacific theater. He would witness some of the bloodiest, most brutal fighting of World War II at Tarawa, Saipan, and Okinawa. The code he spoke, however, would save countless American lives, and help lead to allied victory.

Despite this work, this brave Marine never forgot those whom he believed to be the real heroes. His daughter, Barbara, in an interview with the Indian Country Today Media Network, recalled her father's humility. "I'm not a hero," he said. "The heroes are the ones we left behind."

While most Americans would learn about the battles at sea and on land, the story of the Navajo Code Talkers was kept a secret, until the true purpose of their service was revealed over 20 years later.

In 2001, Congress honored Wilfred Billey and his fellow Navajo Code Talkers with public recognition and Congressional medals. Wilfred helped draft the words inscribed on the medals: "The Navajo language was used to defeat the enemy."

Wilfred Billey defended our Nation during time of war and peril abroad, and he continued to serve by working to lead the youth of the Navajo Nation. He returned to New Mexico and obtained bachelor's and master's degrees, and embarked on a career as an educator. Wilfred worked for four decades in education, including at the Navajo Methodist Mission School, and as principal at Shiprock High School. When he retired, he continued to ranch and farm, and to advocate for and inspire others in his community.

In Wilfred Billey's long and remarkable life, he exhibited impressive humility and unwavering service to his people, his community, and his country. If we look for exemplars of courage and commitment, we need look no further than Wilfred Billey and his band of brothers among the Navajo Code Talkers and the U.S. Marines. We are all forever in their debt.

My wife, Jill, and I extend our sincere sympathy to Wilfred's family. He will be missed by those who knew him, and he will be forever remembered by a grateful nation.

CONGRATULATING GREG MADDUX

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate one of Nevada's own and four time Cy Young award winner Greg Maddux for being selected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Greg

"Mad Dog" Maddux excelled at the major league level, not only with refined skills and superior pitching mechanics, but also a mental approach to the game that was unmatched. His pitching philosophy has made him one of the greatest pitchers of the "live-ball" era.

A 1984 graduate of Valley High School in Las Vegas, Greg Maddux excelled on the mound as a right-handed pitcher before being drafted by the Chicago Cubs in the second round of the 1984 Major League Baseball draft. Mad Dog then spent the next 23 seasons accruing 355 wins, 3,371 strikeouts, and an unrivaled record of 18 Golden Gloves for the likes of the Chicago Cubs, San Diego Padres, Los Angeles Dodgers, and the Atlanta Braves, a feat that still remains unmatched. Mad Dog's prolific major league career also led him to be the only player in history to record 17 straight, 15-win seasons. It is no doubt that these numbers and records led to his near unanimous vote for entry to the Hall of Fame.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Greg Maddux for a distinguished playing career. It is my hope that he will serve as an example of what great things Nevadans can accomplish when they work with commitment and determination.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING JOSÉ MONTOYA

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of José Montoya, a husband, father, professor, activist, artist, and poet. José Montoya passed away on September 25, 2013. He was 81 years old.

José Montoya was born in Escobosa, NM and grew up in the farm towns of California's Central Valley. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War before earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California College of the Arts and a Master of Fine Arts from California State University, Sacramento.

Cognizant of the plight of farm workers because of his own experience picking grapes as a boy in the fields of Delano and Fowler, José Montoya became an advocate for the rights of farmworkers. In 1969, Mr. Montoya co-founded the Rebel Chicano Art Front—later known as the Royal Chicano Air Force—a highly influential collaboration of artists who worked alongside Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta to generate public awareness of the struggles of migrant farmworkers.

Mr. Montoya also touched the lives of thousands of students during his 27-year tenure as a professor of art, photography, and education at California State University, Sacramento, where he created the Barrio Art Program. Designed to provide students with hands-

on experience working with communities in the arts, this program continues to serve as a model for arts-based service learning programs at other universities. In addition to his contributions as an artist, activist, and educator, Montoya was an accomplished poet who was selected as the city of Sacramento's Poet Laureate in 2002.

José Montoya's legacy was eloquently summarized by his son Richard in an op-ed written for *The Sacramento Bee*: "José Montoya was a cultural front liner and first responder. A doer. A creator who brought levity, defiance and satirical wit to the bloody fields of the San Joaquin as well as to the frigid halls of academe, all the way to the State Capitol and beyond."

He is survived by his wife, Juanita Jue, along with eight children, 19 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. My heart goes out to his family and loved ones, and my thoughts and prayers are with them. We are indebted to him for his dedication to social justice and his immeasurable contributions to the community and our society.●

TRIBUTE TO AARON A. BAER

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to offer my best wishes to a dear friend, the Honorable Aaron A. Baer, who will celebrate his 100th birthday on Saturday, January 25. Judge Baer, known to his family as the "centennial cowboy," was born in Baltimore on January 25, 1914, on High Street in what is now Little Italy. His father came to the United States from Russia, landing in Baltimore's Fell's Point in approximately 1890. His father became a tailor and worked in a factory making clothing. Judge Baer graduated from Forrest Park High School in 1933. He attended the University of Baltimore Law School and graduated in 1937. He supported himself and paid for law school by repairing and replacing tar roofs.

Judge Baer passed the bar in 1937 and practiced real estate law for several years. He then became an assistant Baltimore City solicitor, an assistant attorney general, and a State senator for the 5th District in 1959. He was appointed to the Municipal Court of Baltimore City in 1961 by then-Governor J. Millard Tawes. In 1971 he was appointed to the newly created District Court of Maryland by then-Governor Marvin Mandel. He retired as a district court judge in 1981.

Judge Baer married Judy Weinberg in 1941 and has two children. His first child is Susan Reichmister, who is married to Dr. Jerome Reichmister. They happen to be neighbors as well as friends. They have two children: Beth, who is married to Bart Casper, and Jodi, who is married to Craig Kessler. Judge Baer has four great-grand-

children: Nicole, Sloane, Mitchell, and Blair. His second child is the Honorable Barbara Baer Waxman, who is administrative judge of the District Court of Maryland for Baltimore City. She is married to Dr. Carl Waxman. No list of family members would be complete without mentioning Judge Baer's "grand-dog," Shayna Waxman. Judge Baer and his beloved wife Judy were married for 66 years before she passed away shortly after their 66th wedding anniversary in 2007.

My father Meyer, whose parents were also Russian immigrants, also served on the bench. He and Judge Baer were close friends, which is how I came to know Judge Baer. It has been a great privilege to know Judge Baer, to receive his counsel, and to count him not just as a close friend of my father's but as my close friend too, and not just Judge Baer but the rest of his wonderful family, whom I have just mentioned.

Judge Baer has lived an exemplary life devoted to public service, the community, and to his family. Judge Baer lives independently and spends each winter in Florida. He was an avid horseback rider for over 60 years—hence, the cowboy nickname—and only stopped riding this past July.

It is an understatement to say that Judge Baer has lived an extraordinary life. He grew up without an indoor bathroom or electric lights. He drove one of the first cars and owned one of the first motorcycles, the venerable Indian Scout. Now, he uses a computer and a cell phone. I am sure all of my colleagues here in the Senate will join me in congratulating Judge Baer on his 100th birthday and sending along our best wishes as he begins his second century.●

REMEMBERING BERNIE ANDERSON

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of my colleague, assemblyman Bernie Anderson, who passed on January 10, 2014. Serving with him as a fellow freshman in the Nevada Assembly was a privilege, and I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to know and work alongside such a dedicated public servant. As a longtime teacher, assemblyman, and member of the Nevada National Guard, Bernie honorably served the Silver State for decades. I am proud to join the citizens of Washoe County and the State of Nevada to remember his legacy of service to his community.

A native Nevadan, Bernie was a graduate of Bishop Manogue High School and University of Nevada, Reno alumni. From 1991 to 2010, Bernie served in the Nevada Assembly, representing Washoe County. During his time in the legislature, he served as chairman of the Judiciary Committee, where he displayed a passion for the committee's work and often served as a mentor to

his colleagues, offering invaluable advice and support.

Bernie was also a teacher in Sparks, where he taught government and history in the city's schools for 32 years. As a longtime educator and avid reader, Bernie dedicated his life and career to education. In October 1985, he received the Teacher of the Month award from the Reno/Sparks Chamber of Commerce. Educators work tirelessly to ensure our Nation's students are prepared to compete in the 21st century, and I am grateful for Bernie's dedication on behalf of Nevada's youth.

Not only did he serve the citizens of Nevada as a legislator and a schoolteacher, Bernie was also a member of the Nevada National Guard. In 2007, he was honored with the Charles Dick Medal of Merit in recognition of his contributions to the National Guard. On behalf of all Nevadans, I thank Bernie for his many years of faithful, selfless service.

Today, I extend my deepest sympathies to Bernie's wife Clyda, their children, and family and friends. I would ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of a dedicated public servant who served the Silver State proudly. Nevada will miss him.●

RECOGNIZING CHRISTMAS CAN CURE

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I wish to join the New Hampshire chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA, in recognizing the work of Christmas Can Cure, a New Hampshire organization committed to helping disabled veterans and their families, especially around the holidays. On January 25, 2014, Christmas Can Cure will receive the Granite State Warriors Award, given by the MOAA to New Hampshire organizations making the most significant contributions to the Armed Forces of the United States.

Founded in 2008 by the Carrier family in their Jackson, NH, home, Christmas Can Cure was born from the simple desire to invite returning warriors and their families to experience a white Christmas in New Hampshire. As they further developed their idea, the Carrier family realized that they could give back to wounded warriors and their families by relieving the financial and emotional stress of planning a family vacation for the holidays. The mission of Christmas Can Cure is not only to arrange a fun and memorable vacation, but also to provide servicemembers and their families the opportunity to relax and reconnect.

The organization has enjoyed great success, and has joined with the Wounded Warrior Project to reach veterans around the country. The Carrier family has also recently partnered with the Lee family, owners of Eureka Resort, affording Christmas Can Cure an additional holiday destination in Park

City, UT. It is clear that this already well-established organization is continuing to gain momentum and broaden its impact on the lives of veterans and their families across the Nation.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I thank the Carrier family and others who have donated their time and efforts to Christmas Can Cure. The selflessness and patriotism of their mission is a true example of what makes ours such a great State, and I look forward to hearing more stories of lives that have been touched by the great work of this Granite State organization.●

RECOGNIZING VETERANS COUNT

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to join the New Hampshire chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA, in recognizing the critical work of Veterans Count, a New Hampshire organization that has proven a critical ally in ongoing efforts to support servicemembers, veterans, and their families. On January 25, 2014, Veterans Count will receive the Granite State Warriors Award, given by the MOAA to New Hampshire organizations making the most significant contributions to the Armed Forces of the United States. A program of Easter Seals, Veterans Count helps servicemembers and their families throughout the deployment cycle and beyond.

The hallmark of Veterans Count's approach to providing support is their partnership with the Deployment Cycle Support Program, DCSP, which has assisted thousands of servicemembers and their families since its inception in 2007. The program was built on the understanding that the strains of a military deployment are shared and can both precede and outlast the deployment itself. Thanks to the work and collaboration of New Hampshire groups like Veterans Count, the DCSP has provided extraordinary support to veterans and their families.

Veterans Count also deserves recognition for their work addressing mental health and suicide awareness. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan wounded our warriors in ways that were not previously well understood and although mental health and suicide prevention efforts are ongoing, we must do more to help those soldiers and veterans in need. Veterans Count is at the forefront of these efforts and, in 2012 alone, the group intervened successfully in 29 suicide risk situations. Moreover, since the program's inception, none of its participants have committed suicide. Veterans Count's success in suicide prevention is due in large part to their work helping veterans secure permanent employment and easy access to mental health care.

I look forward to hearing more success stories as a result of Veterans Count's determined efforts, and I am

pleased to congratulate them on a well-deserved award from the Military Officers Association of America.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1931. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1950. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4343. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Releasing Information; General Provisions; Accounting and Reporting Requirements; Reports of Accounts and Exposures" (RIN3052-AC76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4344. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tolfenpyrad; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9904-70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4345. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans" (RIN1557-AD70) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 10, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4346. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant

to law, a report relative to the continuation of a national emergency declared in Executive Order 13222 with respect to the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4347. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security Annual Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4348. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Commerce's 2014 Report on Foreign Policy-Based Export Controls; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4349. A communication from the President of the Federal Financing Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's Annual Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4350. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 10, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4351. A communication from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to mileage reimbursement rates for Federal employees who use privately owned vehicles while on official travel; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4352. A communication from the Acting Administrator of the Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report from the Office of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4353. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report from the Office of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4354. A communication from the Chairwoman of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4355. A communication from the Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2013 Performance and Accountability Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4356. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-232, "Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4357. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-233, "YMCA Community Investment Initiative Real Property Tax Exemption Act of 2013"; to the Committee on

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4358. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-234, "Transportation Infrastructure Mitigation Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4359. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-235, "Transportation Infrastructure Improvements GARVEE Bond Financing Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4360. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-236, "Department of Health Grant-Making Authority for Clinical Nutritional Home Services Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4361. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-237, "Critical Infrastructure Freedom of Information Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4362. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-238, "Party Officer Elections Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4363. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-239, "Department of Corrections Central Cellblock Management Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4364. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-240, "Board of Elections Nominating Petition Circulator Affidavit Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4365. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-241, "Board of Ethics and Government Accountability Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4366. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-242, "Parent and Student Empowerment Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4367. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-247, "Controlled Substance, Alcohol Testing, Criminal Background Check and Background Investigation Temporary Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4368. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-248, "Distillery Pub Licensure

Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4369. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-249, "Campaign Finance Reform and Transparency Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4370. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-250, "Prohibition on Government Employee Engagement in Political Activity Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4371. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-251, "Manufacturers' Sunday Sale Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4372. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-252, "Manufacturer Tasting Permit Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4373. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-253, "Funeral and Memorial Service Leave Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4374. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-254, "Focused Student Achievement Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4375. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-255, "Tax Clarity Equity Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4376. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-256, "Historic Music Cultural Institutions Expansion Tax Abatement Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4377. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-257, "Fair Student Funding and School-Based Budgeting Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4378. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-258, "Closing of a Portion of a Public Alley in Square 858, S.O. 12-03336, Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4379. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-259, "Earned Sick and Safe Leave Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4380. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-260, "Tax Exemption for

Teacher Awards Temporary Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS, from the Committee on Finance:

Report to accompany S. 1871, An original bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate formula and to improve beneficiary access under the Medicare program, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113-135).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. WYDEN for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

*Ellen Dudley Williams, of Maryland, to be Director of the Advanced Research Projects Agency—Energy, Department of Energy.

*Christopher Smith, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fossil Energy).

*Elizabeth M. Robinson, of Washington, to be Under Secretary of Energy.

*Franklin M. Orr, Jr., of California, to be Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy.

*Neil Gregory Kornze, of Nevada, to be Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

*Esther Puakela Kia'aina, of Hawaii, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

*Marc A. Kastner, of Massachusetts, to be Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

*Jonathan Elkind, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (International Affairs).

*Steven Croley, of Michigan, to be General Counsel of the Department of Energy.

*Michael L. Connor, of New Mexico, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

*Tommy Port Beaudreau, of Alaska, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary:

Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Timothy L. Brooks, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas.

James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Vince Girdhari Chhabria, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Peter Joseph Kadzik, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

John B. Owens, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

Michelle T. Friedland, of California, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

Nancy L. Moritz, of Kansas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

David Jeremiah Barron, of Massachusetts, to be United States Circuit Judge for the First Circuit.

Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Laurie J. Michelson, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

Gerald Austin McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Sheryl H. Lipman, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee.

Stanley Allen Bastian, of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington.

Manish S. Shah, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

Daniel D. Crabtree, of Kansas, to be United States District Judge for the District of Kansas.

Cynthia Ann Bashant, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California.

Jon David Levy, of Maine, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maine.

Theodore David Chuang, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

George Jarrod Hazel, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

By Mr. SANDERS for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

*Sloan D. Gibson, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

*Linda A. Schwartz, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Policy and Planning).

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

*Daniel Bennett Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research).

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. THUNE (for himself and Mr. MORAN):

S. 1935. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to restore access to diabetic testing supplies for Medicare beneficiaries; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 1936. A bill to improve the response to missing children and victims of child sex trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1937. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to develop contingency plans to address unexpected emergencies or natural disasters that may threaten to disrupt the administration of an election for Federal office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1938. A bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act to replace the current requirement for a biennial energy policy plan with a Quadrennial Energy Review, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. McCAIN, and Mr. KING):

S. 1939. A bill to repeal the War Powers Resolution and to provide for proper war powers consultation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 1940. A bill to provide reimbursement under the Medicaid program to individuals and entities that provide voluntary non-emergency medical transportation to Medicaid beneficiaries for expenses related to no-load travel; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. JOHANNIS):

S. 1941. A bill to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. KIRK, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 1942. A bill to ensure that the United States promotes women's meaningful inclusion and participation in mediation and negotiation processes undertaken in order to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and implements the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1943. A bill to incentivize State support for postsecondary education and to promote increased access and affordability for higher education for students, including Dreamer students; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1944. A bill to amend XVIII of the Social Security Act to distribute additional information to Medicare beneficiaries to prevent health care fraud, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 1945. A bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for deter-

mining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1946. A bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. CHAMBLISS):

S. 1947. A bill to rename the Government Printing Office the Government Publishing Office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 1948. A bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 1949. A bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 1950. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 1951. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to make responsible parties liable for certain costs relating to the release of pollutants or contaminants; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 1952. A bill to provide support to develop career and technical education programs of study and facilities in the areas of renewable energy; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 1953. A bill to amend certain provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978 and the Inspector General Improvement Act of 2008, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 1954. A bill to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. LEE):

S. 1955. A bill to protect the right of law-abiding citizens to transport knives interstate, notwithstanding a patchwork of local and State prohibitions; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. 1956. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WARNER, Ms. AYOTTE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. KING, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. COATS, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1957. A bill to establish the American Infrastructure Fund, to provide bond guarantees and make loans to States, local governments, and infrastructure providers for investments in certain infrastructure projects, and to provide equity investments in such projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 1958. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 to raise the per-incident cap on removal actions; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOPE, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RISCH, Mr. BURR, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. LEE, Mr. COATS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S.J. Res. 30. A joint resolution to disapprove a rule of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to greenhouse gas emissions from electric utility generating units; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. Kaine, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. Res. 333. A resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS):

S. Res. 334. A resolution recognizing the goals of Catholic Schools Week and honoring the valuable contributions of Catholic schools in the United States; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARPER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. WARREN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 335. A resolution designating January 2014 as "National Mentoring Month"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REID, and Mr. TESTER):

S. Res. 336. A resolution designating the first week of April 2014 as "National Asbes-

tos Awareness Week"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 178

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to provide for alternative financing arrangements for the provision of certain services and the construction and maintenance of infrastructure at land border ports of entry, and for other purposes.

S. 214

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 214, a bill to prohibit brand name drug companies from compensating generic drug companies to delay the entry of a generic drug into the market.

S. 226

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 226, a bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 to provide leave because of the death of a son or daughter.

S. 534

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 534, a bill to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 623, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the continued access of Medicare beneficiaries to diagnostic imaging services.

S. 629

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 629, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes.

S. 666

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 666, a bill to prohibit attendance of an animal fighting venture, and for other purposes.

S. 709

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 709, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, leading to bet-

ter care and outcomes for Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

S. 742

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 742, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 919

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 919, a bill to amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to provide further self-governance by Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1208

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1208, a bill to require meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes.

S. 1236

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1236, a bill to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

S. 1417

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1417, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1726

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr.

MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1726, a bill to prevent a taxpayer bailout of health insurance issuers.

S. 1798

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1798, a bill to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not counted as full-time employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 1902

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1902, a bill to require notification of individuals of breaches of personally identifiable information through Exchanges under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes.

S. 1911

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1911, a bill to reform and strengthen the workforce investment system of the Nation to put Americans back to work and make the United States more competitive in the 21st century, and for other purposes.

S. 1913

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1913, a bill to make permanent the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program.

S. 1921

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1921, a bill to require a Federal

agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense.

S. 1926

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 13

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 13, a concurrent resolution commending the Boys & Girls Clubs of America for its role in improving outcomes for millions of young people and thousands of communities.

S. CON. RES. 26

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 26, a concurrent resolution recognizing the need to improve physical access to many federally funded facilities for all people of the United States, particularly people with disabilities.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. KING):

S. 1939. A bill to repeal the War Powers Resolution and to provide for proper war powers consultation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased today to join my colleague, the junior Senator from Virginia, as we introduce the War Powers Consultation Act of 2014.

This legislation is the final product of the National War Powers Commission, which was a bipartisan effort coled by former Secretary of State Jim Baker and former Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The commission was set up by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia to devise a modern and workable war powers consultation mechanism for the executive and legislative branches. It included some of our Nation's most distinguished and respected thinkers and practitioners of national security policy and law. In 2008, after more than a year of hard work, the commission released the final product—an actual legislative proposal to repeal and replace the War Powers Resolution of 1973, which no American President has ever accepted as constitutional.

As does my colleague, I view our introduction of this legislation today as the start of an important congressional and national debate, not the final word in that debate. We wish to pick up where the National War Powers Commission left off 6 years ago, and we do so fully understanding and hopeful that this legislation should be considered and debated and amended and improved through regular order.

My colleague from Virginia has done a great job on this legislation, and I am proud to join him. I wish to expand a bit on why updating the War Powers Resolution is such a worthwhile endeavor for the Senate to consider right now.

The Constitution gives the power to declare war to the Congress, but Congress has not formally declared war since June of 1942 even though our Nation has been involved in dozens of military actions of one scale or another since that time. There is a reason for this. The nature of war is changing. It is increasingly unlikely that the combat operations our Nation will be involved in will resemble those of World War II, where the standing armies and navies of nation states squared off against those of rival nation states on clearly defined fields of battle. Rather, the conflicts in which increasingly we find ourselves and for which we must prepare will be murkier, harder to reconcile with the traditional notions of warfare; they may be more limited in their objectives, their scope, and their duration; and they likely will not conclude with a formal surrender ceremony on the deck of a battleship.

The challenge for all of us serving in Congress is this: How do we reconcile the changing nature of war with Congress's proper role in the declaration of war? It is not exactly a new question, but it is a profound one, for unless we in Congress are prepared to cede our constitutional authority over matters of war to the executive, we need a more workable arrangement for consultation and decisionmaking between the executive and legislative branches.

We have seen several manifestations of this challenge in recent years. In 2011 President Obama committed U.S. military forces to combat operations in Libya to protect civilian populations from imminent slaughter by a brutal, anti-American tyrant. I, for one, believe he was right to do so. But 6 months later, when our armed services were still involved in kinetic actions in Libya—not just supporting our NATO allies but conducting air-to-ground operations and targeted strikes from armed, unmanned aerial vehicles—the administration claimed, as other administrations would, that it had no obligations to Congress under the War Powers Resolution because our Armed Forces were not involved in combat operations. That struck many Members

of Congress, including me, as fundamentally at odds with reality, and unfortunately it pushed more Members of Congress into opposition against the mission itself.

More recently, we saw the opposite problem manifested with regard to Syria. Perhaps due to the backlash in Congress that the administration's handling of the Libya conflict engendered, President Obama decided to seek congressional authorization for limited airstrikes against the Assad regime after it slaughtered more than 1,400 of its own citizens with chemical weapons last August. An operation that likely would have lasted a few days and thus been fully consistent with the President's authority under the existing War Powers Resolution had he decided to act decisively and take limited military action instead devolved into a stinging legislative repudiation of executive action. The tragic result was that the Assad regime was spared any meaningful consequences for its use of a weapon of mass destruction against innocent men, women, and children, and, as with Libya, the forces that want to turn America away from the world were not checked but empowered.

Some of us may see the problem in these two instances as a failure of Presidential leadership, and I would agree, but I also believe the examples of Libya and Syria represent the broader problem we as a nation face: What is the proper war power authority of the executive and legislative branches when it comes to limited conflicts, which are increasingly the kinds of conflicts with which we are faced?

It is essential for the Congress and the President to work together to define a new war powers consultative agreement that reflects the nature of conflict in the 21st century and is in line with our Constitution. Our Nation does not have 535 commanders in chief. We have one—the President—and that role as established by our Constitution must be respected. Our Nation is poorly served when Members of Congress try to micromanage the Commander in Chief in matters of war.

At the same time, now more than ever, we need to create a broader and more durable national consensus on foreign policy and national security, especially when it comes to matters of war and armed conflict. We need to find ways to make internationalist policies more politically sustainable.

After the September 11 attack, we embarked on an expansive foreign policy. Spending on defense and foreign assistance went up, and energy shifted to the executive. Now things are changing. Americans want to pull back from the world. Our foreign assistance and defense budgets are declining. The desire to curb Presidential power across the board is growing, and the political momentum is shifting toward

the Congress. America has gone through this kind of political rebalancing before, and much of the time we have gotten it wrong. That is how we got isolationism and disarmament after World War I, that is how we got a hollow army after Vietnam, and that is how we weakened our national security after the Cold War in the misplaced hope of cashing in on a peace dividend. We can't afford to repeat these mistakes.

A new war powers resolution—one that is recognized as both constitutional and workable in practice—can be an important contribution to this effort. It can more effectively invest in the Congress the critical decisions that impact our national security. It can help build a more durable consensus in favor of the kinds of policies we need to sustain our global leadership and protect our Nation. In short, the legislation we are introducing today can restore a better balance to the way national security decisionmaking should work in a great democracy such as ours.

Let me say again. Neither the Senator from Virginia nor I believe the legislation we are introducing today answers all of the monumental and difficult questions surrounding the issue of war powers. We believe this is a matter of transcendent importance to our Nation, and we as a deliberative body of our government should debate this issue, and we look forward to that debate. This legislation should be seen as a way of starting that discussion both here in the Congress and across our Nation. We owe that to ourselves and our constituents. Most of all, we owe that to the brave men and women who serve our Nation in uniform and are called to risk their lives in harm's way for the sake of our Nation's national defense.

Before I yield to my tardy colleague from Virginia, I wish to mention again another reason why I think this legislation should be the beginning of a serious debate which we should bring to some conclusion. The fact is that no President of the United States has recognized the constitutionality of the War Powers Act. That is a problem in itself. That is a perversion, frankly, of the Constitution of the United States of America. That is one reason, but the most important reason is that I believe we are living in incredibly dangerous times. When we look across the Middle East, when we look at Asia and the rise in the tensions in that part of the world and we look at the conflicts that are becoming regional—and whose fault they are is a subject for another debate and discussion, but the fact is that we are in the path of some kind of conflict in which—whether the United States of America wants to or not—we may have to be involved in some ways.

We still have vital national security interests in the Middle East. It is evolving into a chaotic situation, and

one can look from the Mediterranean all the way to the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Aqaba, and throughout the region. So I believe the likelihood of us being involved in some way or another in some conflict is greater than it has been since the end of the Cold War, and I believe the American people deserve legislation and a clear definition of the responsibilities of the Congress of the United States and that of the President of the United States.

Again, I thank my colleague from Virginia, whose idea this is, who took a great proposal that was developed at the University of Virginia and was kind enough to involve me in this effort. I thank him for it. I thank him for his very hard work on it, despite the fact that, as the Chair will recognize, he was late for this discussion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Arizona for pointing out to all in the Chamber my tardiness, and I should not have been tardy because I do not like to follow the Senator from Arizona. I would rather begin before him. But I want to thank him for his work with me, together, on this important issue and amplify on a few of the comments he has made.

Today, together, as cosponsors we are introducing the War Powers Consultation Act of 2014, which would repeal the 1973 War Powers Resolution and replace it. I could not have a better cosponsor than Senator MCCAIN and appreciate all the work he and his staff have done over the last months with us.

I gave a floor speech about this issue in this Chamber in July of 2013, almost to the day, 40 years after the Senate passed the War Powers Resolution of 1973. Many of you remember the context of that passage. When it was passed in the summer of 1973, it was in the midst of the end of the Vietnam war. President Nixon had expanded the Vietnam war into Cambodia and Laos without explicit congressional approval, and the Congress reacted very negatively and passed this act to try to curtail executive powers in terms of the initiation of military hostilities.

It was a very controversial bill. When it was passed, President Nixon vetoed it. Congress overrode the veto at the end of 1973. But as Senator MCCAIN indicated, no President has conceded the constitutionality of the 1973 act, and most constitutional scholars who have written about the question have found at least a few of what they believe would be fatal infirmities in that 1973 resolution.

It was a hyperpartisan time, maybe not unlike some aspects of the present, and in trying to find that right balance in this critical question of when the Nation goes to war or initiates military action, Congress and the President did not reach an accord.

I came to the Senate with a number of passions and things I hoped to do. But I think I came with only one obsession, and this is that obsession. Virginia is a State that is most connected to the military of any State in the country. Our map is a map of American military history—from Yorktown, where the Revolutionary War ended, to Appomattox, where the Civil War ended, to the Pentagon, where 9/11 happened. That is who we are. One in nine Virginians is a veteran. If you add our Active Duty, our Guard and Reserve, our military families, our DOD civilians, our DOD contractors, you are basically talking about one in three Virginians. These issues of war and peace matter so deeply to us, as they do all Americans.

The particular passion I had in coming to this body around war powers was because of kind of a disturbing thought, which is, if the President and Congress do not work together and find consensus in matters around war, we might be asking our men and women to fight and potentially give their lives without a clear political consensus and agreement behind the mission.

I do not think there is anything more important that the Senate and the Congress can do than to be on board on decisions about whether we initiate military action, because if we do not, we are asking young men and women to fight and potentially give their lives, with us not having done the hard work of creating the political consensus to support them. That is why I have worked hard to bring this to the attention of this body with Senator MCCAIN.

The Constitution actually sets up a fairly clear framework. The President is the Commander in Chief, not 535 commanders-in-chief, as Senator MCCAIN indicated. But Congress is the body that has the power both to declare war and then to fund military action. In dividing the responsibilities in this way, the Framers were pretty clear. James Madison, who worked on the Constitution, especially the Bill of Rights, wrote a letter to Thomas Jefferson and said:

The constitution supposes, what the History of all Governments demonstrates, that the Executive is the branch of power most interested in war, and most prone to it. It has accordingly with studied care vested the question of war in the Legislature.

Despite that original constitutional understanding, our history has not matched the notion that Congress would always be the initiator of military action. Congress has only declared war five times in the history of the United States, while Presidents have initiated military action prior to any congressional approval more than 120 times.

In some of these instances where the President has initiated war, Congress has come back and either subsequently

ratified Presidential action—sometimes by a formal approval or sometimes by informal approval such as budgetary allocation—but in other instances, including recently, Presidents have acted and committed American military forces to military action without any congressional approval. The Senator from Arizona mentioned the most recent one. President Obama committed military force to NATO, action against Libya in 2011, without any congressional approval, and he was formally censured by the House of Representatives for doing so.

The current context that requires a reanalysis of this thorny question, after 40 years of the War Powers Resolution, was well stated by the Senator from Arizona. Wars are different. They start differently. They are not necessarily nation state against nation state. They could be limited in time or, as of now, we are still pursuing a military force that was authorized on September 18, 2001, 12 or 13 years later. Wars are of different duration, different scope, different geography. Nation states are no longer the only entities that are engaged in war.

These new developments that are challenging—what do we do about drones in countries far afield from where battles were originally waged—raise the issue of the need to go back into this War Powers Resolution and update it for the current times.

As the Senator from Arizona mentioned, this has been a question that Members of Congress have grappled with and thought about, as have diplomats and scholars and administration officials and Members of Congress for some time.

In 2007, the Miller Center for the study of the presidency at the University of Virginia convened a National War Powers Commission under the chairmanships of two esteemable and bipartisan leaders—former Secretaries of State Warren Christopher and James Baker. The remaining members of the Commission were a complete A list of thinkers in this area—Slade Gorton, Abner Mikva, Ed Meese, Lee Hamilton. The Commission's historian was no less than Doris Kearns Goodwin, who looked at the entire scope of this problem in American history and what the role of Congress and the President should be.

The Commission issued a unanimous report, proposing an act to replace the War Powers Act of 1973, briefed Congress and incoming President Obama on the particular act in 2007 and 2008, but at that time, the time was not yet ripe for consideration of this bill.

But now that we are 40 years into an unworkable War Powers Resolution and now, as the Senator indicated, we have had a string of Presidents—both Democratic Presidents and Republican Presidents—who have maintained that the act is unconstitutional and now

that we have had a 40-year history of Congress often exceeding to the claim of unconstitutionality by not following the War Powers Resolution itself, we do think it is time to revisit.

Let me just state two fundamental, substantive issues that this bill presents in the War Powers Consultation Act of 2014.

First, there is a set of definitions. What is war? The bill defines significant military action as any action where involvement of U.S. troops would be expected to be in combat for at least a week or longer. Under those circumstances, the provisions of the act would be triggered.

There are some exceptions in the act. The act would not cover defined covert action operations. But once a combat operation was expected to last for more than 7 days, the act would be triggered.

The act basically sets up two important substantive improvements on the War Powers Resolution.

First, a permanent consultation committee is established in Congress, with the majority and minority leaders of both Houses and the chairs and ranking members of the four key committees in both Houses that deal with war issues—Intel, Armed Services, Foreign Relations, and Appropriations.

That permanent consultation committee is a venue for discussion between the executive and legislative branches—permanent and continuous—over matters in the world that may require the use of American military force.

Because the question comes up often: What did the President do to consult with Congress? Is it enough to call a few leaders or call a few committee chairs? This act would normalize and regularize what consultation with Congress means by establishing a permanent consultation committee and requiring ongoing dialogue between the Executive and that committee.

The second requirement of this bill is that once military action is commenced that would take more than 7 days, there is a requirement for a vote in both Houses of Congress. The consultation committee itself would put a resolution on the table in both Houses to approve or disapprove of military action. It would be a privileged motion with expedited requirements for debate, amendment, and vote, and that would ensure that we do not reach a situation where action is being taken at the instance of one branch with the other branch not in agreement, because to do that would put our men and women who are fighting and in harm's way at the risk of sacrificing their lives when we in the political leadership have not done the job of reaching a consensus behind the mission.

To conclude, I will acknowledge what the Senator from Arizona said. This is a very thorny and difficult question that has created challenges and differences of interpretation since the

Constitution was written in 1787. Despite the fact that the Framers who wrote the Constitution actually had a pretty clear idea about how it should operate, it has never operated that way.

Forty years of a failed War Powers Resolution in today's dangerous world suggests that it is time now to get back in and to do some careful deliberation to update and normalize the appropriate level of consultation between a President and the legislature.

The recent events as cited by the Senator—whatever you think about the merits or the equities, whether it is Libya, whether it is Syria, whether it is the discussions we are having now with respect to Iran or any other of a number of potential spots around the world that could lead to conflict—suggest that while decisions about war and initiation of military action will never be easy, they get harder if we do not have an agreed-upon process for coming to understand each other's points of view and then acting in the best interest of the Nation to forge a consensus.

With that, I appreciate the opportunity to stand with my colleague, after a number of months of discussion, to introduce this bill, and I look forward to the opportunity to carry this dialogue forward with my colleagues in this body.

Thank you very much.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. COONS):

S. 1945. A bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, almost five decades ago, President Lyndon Johnson signed the original Voting Rights Act into law. At the signing, he spoke eloquently about the central purpose of the law. He said:

This act flows from a clear and simple wrong. Its only purpose is to right that wrong. Millions of Americans are denied the right to vote because of their color. This law will ensure them the right to vote. The wrong is one which no American, in his heart, can justify. The right is one which no American, true to our principles, can deny.

A lot has changed since 1965 and much progress has been made, but 7 years ago the Senate and House examined whether racial discrimination in voting was still a problem that required a Federal solution. After a long series of hearings in both Chambers and based upon a mountain of evidence, Democrats and Republicans came together to conclude that racial discrimination in voting is still a problem and the protections that voters have had under the Voting Rights Act were still needed. Yet, last summer, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision that struck at the heart of the Voting

Rights Act when it held that the coverage provision of section 5 was unconstitutional because it was not sufficiently based on current conditions. In doing so, the Court made clear that Congress could update the law to reinstitute the protections of section 5 coverage if it were based on more recent conduct.

Today, I am pleased to announce that we are responding to the Court's decision by introducing a bill that helps reinvigorate the most vital protections of the act. Through months of cooperation, negotiation, and compromise, Congressmen SENSENBRENNER and CONYERS and I have agreed on a bipartisan and bicameral proposal to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act that were weakened by the Supreme Court's decision last summer. Our sole focus throughout this entire process was to ensure that no American would be denied their constitutional right to vote because of discrimination on the basis of race or color. We believe that this is a strong bipartisan bill that accomplishes this goal and that every Member of Congress can support.

Under our bipartisan bill, all States and jurisdictions are eligible for section 5 protections under a new coverage formula, which is based on repeated voting rights violations in the last 15 years. This coverage provision is based solely on a State's or local jurisdiction's recent voting rights record. Significantly, the 15-year period "rolls" or continuously moves to keep up with "current conditions," as the Supreme Court stated should be a basis for any coverage provision. If a State that is covered establishes a clean record moving forward, it will fall out of coverage. In addition, the existing bailout provision would still be available for States or jurisdictions that can establish that they had a clean record in a 10-year span. These provisions ensure that the coverage provision is not over-inclusive because jurisdictions that have not repeatedly violated the voting rights of its constituents can come out from under preclearance requirements.

Our bill would also improve the Voting Rights Act to allow our Federal courts to bail-in the worst actors for preclearance. Current law permits States or jurisdictions to be bailed in only for intentional voting rights violations, but to ensure that the worst discrimination in voting is captured, the bill would amend the act to allow States or jurisdictions to be bailed in for results-based violations, where the effect of a particular voting measure is to deny an individual his or her right to vote.

In recognition that voters need to be aware of changes in laws affecting their right to vote, the bill provides for greater transparency in elections. Sunlight is a great disinfectant, as Justice Brandeis once observed, and in this in-

stance, the additional sunlight will protect voters from discrimination. The transparency provisions provide for public notice and information in three areas. The first part requires public notice of late breaking changes in Federal elections. The second part requires information on polling place resource allocation for Federal elections. The third part requires information on changes to electoral districts, including demographic information, to prevent racial gerrymandering, impermissible redistricting, and infringement on minority voters. The last part requires this information for Federal, State, and local elections because the most impermissible conduct oftentimes occurs in State and local elections.

Finally, our bill revises the preliminary injunction standard for voting rights actions. The principle behind this part of the proposal is the recognition that when voting rights are at stake, obtaining relief after the election has already concluded is too late to vindicate the individuals' voting rights. We recognize that there will be cases where there is a special need for immediate, preliminary relief where the plaintiff can establish that the voting measure is likely to be discriminatory.

This proposal is a bipartisan effort to provide a narrow fix to address the Supreme Court's Shelby County decision to ensure that all Americans are protected from racial discrimination in voting. I am confident and hopeful that the Congress can work together as a body—not as Democrats or Republicans but as Americans—to ensure that we root out all voter discrimination with a strong and reinvigorated Voting Rights Act.

I am confident we can do this because protecting voting rights has always been a bipartisan effort. In 1965 President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law. That law was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress. In the Senate the vote was 79 to 18. In the House the vote was 328 to 74. In the four times since it was reauthorized, the support for the law has only increased. In fact, when President George W. Bush signed the most recent reauthorization in 2006, the vote in the Senate was 98 to 0 and the vote in the House was 390 to 33. Too often there is gridlock in Congress, but when it comes to the Voting Rights Act, there is almost unanimous agreement on the principle that no American should be denied his or her right to vote or to participate in our democracy.

My hope is that we can continue this legacy of bipartisanship on the issue of voting rights. As we prepare to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on Monday, we should remember the words of Dr. King, who, in a powerful speech about the right to vote, said:

So long as I do not firmly and irrevocably possess the right to vote I do not possess myself. I cannot make up my mind—it is made

up for me. I cannot live as a democratic citizen, observing the laws I have helped to enact—I can only submit to the edict of others. So our most urgent request to the president of the United States and every member of Congress is to give us the right to vote.

I believe that the bipartisan bill we are introducing today honors the spirit of those words. I thank Senators DURBIN and COONS for working with me and I look forward to working with all Senators on this important legislation.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1946. A bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I rise to introduce a bill to protect valuable water resource infrastructure across the West. I am pleased to be joined by Senators SCHATZ and FEINSTEIN who share my concern for dam safety. The Bureau of Reclamation's Dam Safety Program is not a new program, but it is vital for farmers, local economies, and communities in 17 Western States. Because the Safety of Dams, SOD Program is running out of money, it is essential that Congress extend the program and allow projects to proceed by permanently authorizing the funding needed.

The SOD Program has a straightforward mission: "to ensure that Reclamation facilities do not present unreasonable risks to the public, public safety, property, and/or the environment." The challenge of meeting that mission is complicated by the strains of aging infrastructure and population growth within dam failure zones. Reclamation manages 476 dams and dikes, 370 of which are listed within the high or significant hazard class, meaning failure of the dam or dike would cause life loss or significant damages. Once Reclamation begins risk modifications to a dam, the local partners share 15 percent of the associated costs. Since the creation of the SOD Program, Congress has seen fit to raise the program's authorized ceiling four times—in 1984, 2000, and 2002. Twelve years later, it is time to keep this program going once more before we hit the ceiling.

My bill would do away with the authorization ceiling and permanently authorize this important program. No longer would the ceiling be a hindrance on advancing dam safety. A project in my home State helps to illustrate the problem. Scoggins Dam is located in Washington County, OR. The dam forms the heart of the water system in the Tualatin Basin, providing drinking water to residents, irrigation for valuable croplands, and support for nearly a quarter million jobs. The risk to Scoggins Dam comes from its position within the Cascade subduction zone, where a typical earthquake has a mag-

nitude of 8.7 to 9.2. As the first U.S. Senator to visit Fukushima after its devastating subduction zone earthquake and resulting tsunami, I saw firsthand the incredible damage a seismic event can have on a region and its infrastructure.

The Bureau of Reclamation is already well into the process of risk assessment on Scoggins Dam, and the current SOD Program ceiling poses a significant obstacle to advancing the project to concrete risk-mitigation actions. Reclamation has evaluated Scoggins Dam and predicted that an earthquake could cause spill wall failure and potential embankment failure due to deformation, overtopping, or erosion through cracks. Reclamation completed the correction action study for Scoggins in late 2012; however, no modifications can proceed until there is room in the SOD Program budget. The uncertainty around fixing this Federal facility is taking a toll on economic development at a time when pivotal Oregon companies like Intel and Nike are undertaking expansions in Washington County. Scoggins Dam joins a list of other dam projects on the near horizon that won't be able to proceed without this bill.

Ensuring that dams continue to provide the benefits they do across the West in a safe manner is an important responsibility. I want to express my thanks to the Tualatin Basin Water Supply Partners for their diligent work to see that safety modifications are made for the public's benefit and to meet the region's long-run water needs. I look forward to working with Senator SCHATZ, Senator FEINSTEIN, and other colleagues and the bill's other supporters to continue the work of the SOD Program.

By Mr. SANDERS:

S. 1950. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; read the first time.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, today as the chairman of the committee I have introduced the most comprehensive piece of veterans legislation that we have seen in a very long time. The Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefit and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 delivers on the promises that we have made to our servicemembers and I believe will have the support of Members of the Senate and of the House. It addresses virtually every single issue the veterans community has been concerned about.

What we have done now is taken two omnibus bills and wrapped them into this legislation. In addition, we have taken other pieces of legislation passed by the committee, and we have added to that based on some recent developments.

This legislation is the product of a year of bipartisan work and includes

provisions important to almost every single veterans service organization and dozens of Members of the Senate, Republican, Democrat, and Independent, many of which were reported out of the Veterans' Affairs Committee with strong bipartisan support.

This legislation completely eliminates the cuts that were made to the military retiree cost-of-living adjustments. I know there was great concern here in the Senate from Democrats and Republicans about that cut, as well as in the House of Representatives. I am happy to say this legislation completely eliminates the cuts that were made to the military retiree cost-of-living adjustments.

As we all know, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 that was passed a few days ago would lower cost-of-living adjustments for military retirees by reducing the annual adjustment by 1 percent until age 62. The American people have spoken very loudly and very clearly. They have told the Congress to restore those cuts to military retirees and we have listened. I applaud the House and the Senate for restoring these cuts for disabled military retirees and survivors in the appropriations act we passed today. Today we took care of part of the problem. But we have to do more. What the comprehensive veterans bill I have introduced today does is restore the full COLA to all military retirees, every single retiree. This bill restores these COLAs and does much more.

I wish to take a moment to highlight some of the key provisions of this comprehensive piece of legislation. Let me say, this legislation is based on listening very carefully to what the veterans organizations have told us in private meetings, in hearings, and at some of the very large hearings we have held with the American Legion, the VFW, the DAV, and many other service organizations. Let me briefly touch on some of the provisions we are addressing, some of the concerns we are addressing in this comprehensive veterans legislation which, I should add, is fully paid for. It is fully paid for.

In the first omnibus bill that we passed, S. 944, the Veterans Health and Benefits Improvement Act of 2013, we dealt with in-State tuition assistance for post-9/11 veterans, an issue of great concern to young veterans and to all of the veterans organizations. This package includes provisions the committee's ranking member Senator BURR and I worked together on, that would help servicemembers transition back into civilian life by making recently separated veterans eligible for tuition at the in-State rate.

Given the nature of our Armed Forces, servicemembers have little to no say as to where they reside during military service. Therefore, many of these servicemembers have not had sufficient time to establish residency by

the time they go back to school. This legislation would help the transition of our brave men and women who have sacrificed so much in defense of our country by giving them a fair shot at attaining educational goals without incurring an additional financial burden. We address that issue in this legislation.

Clearly one of the issues that has been an embarrassment to all of us is the degree of sexual assault we have seen in the military. What this legislation does is address that issue as well. While the Pentagon, Congress, and other stakeholders continue to work to end sexual assault within the military, something we have to focus on, we must nonetheless do everything we can to ensure that the VA is a welcoming place for those who have survived sexual assault. That is why this legislation includes important provisions that would improve the delivery of care and benefits to individuals who experience sexual trauma by serving in the military. These provisions were inspired by Ruth Moore, a veteran who struggled for 23 years to receive VA disability compensation.

It would expand access to VA counseling and care to active-duty servicemembers and members of the Guard and Reserve who experienced sexual assault during inactive-duty training. It also takes a number of steps to improve the adjudication of disability compensation claims based on military sexual trauma.

This legislation will give the VA additional tools to provide victims of sexual trauma with the care and benefits they need to confront the emotional and physical consequences of these horrific acts. Sexual assault in the military is unacceptable and this committee is, in a significant way, addressing that issue.

One of the concerns we have heard from many veterans and veterans organizations is the issue of overmedication. Many of our veterans come back and receive in some cases 5, 10 different types of pills to address some of the very serious problems they have. What this bill does is expand, among many other things, access to complementary and alternative medicine. The VA already does a good job in that area. This would expand their capability to provide complementary and alternative medicine.

Maintaining the VA's world-class health care system remains a priority for our committee. I am pleased we were able to respond to calls from veterans to increase access to complementary and alternative medicine for the treatment of chronic pain, mental health conditions, and chronic disease. By expanding access to these treatment options—options such as acupuncture, meditation, massage therapy, and many others—we can enhance the likelihood veterans get the care

they need in the way that works for them. These treatments are becoming more and more popular. More and more veterans want access to them and that is what we do in this legislation.

Additionally, this legislation calls for the VA to promote healthy weight in veterans by increasing their access to fitness facilities as a healthy weight is critical to combating multiple chronic diseases, including diabetes and heart disease. In other words, the most cost-effective and best way to treat disease is to prevent that disease by making sure our veterans have the opportunity to keep healthy. This legislation does that as well.

This legislation further honors as veterans certain persons who performed service in the Reserve components of the Armed Forces. I know how important this provision is for all those who wore this Nation's uniforms as members of the Reserves. I am pleased we will finally honor their service with passage of this legislation.

This legislation also expands benefits for surviving spouses, for the spouses of those who gave their lives to defend this country. I want to make special note of provisions that will be included in this package that would also strengthen the benefits and services provided to surviving family members by addressing a number of concerns brought to the attention of this committee by the Gold Star Wives in testimony last year.

Obviously the Gold Star Wives are the spouses of those soldiers who died in combat. Specifically, this bill would provide additional dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses with children in order to provide financial support in the difficult period following the loss of a loved one. This bill would also expand the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to include surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty. That means surviving spouses would become eligible for post-9/11 GI bill benefits, setting them and their families up for success in the years to follow.

One of the issues that has occupied a great deal of time and energy on the committee deals with claim processing. We all know that for the last number of years the VA has had a very significant backlog. That is clearly not acceptable. When a veteran brings forth a claim, that claim should be processed in a reasonable period of time with a reasonable degree of accuracy. We are all too well familiar with the challenges of the claims backlog. I am very pleased to see that the VA is making significant progress on this complex issue. They are going from paper to digital. That is a huge process. As a result, the backlog is declining. That is good news, but we have to do more.

This legislation would support VA's ongoing efforts and would make needed

improvements to the claims system. Among a number of claims-related provisions, this bill for the first time would require the Department to publicly report on both claims processing goals and actual production. This would allow Congress and the public to closely track and measure VA's progress on this difficult issue. The Secretary of the VA Eric Shinseki has proposed a very ambitious goal for the end of 2015. We want to make sure they are on track.

That is some of the provisions included in the first bill. Let me talk a little about bit about the second omnibus bill. Both of those bills passed unanimously out of committee. The Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 includes provisions from S. 1581, a second omnibus bill that moved out of the committee with unanimous support at the November markup. Here are some of the provisions in that omnibus.

The improvement and expansion of dental care. I don't know about New Mexico, but I can tell you that in Vermont, and in fact in many parts of this country, inability to access affordable dental care is a major crisis. It is true for the general public and it is true for veterans as well. The truth is, right now the VA, with the exception of service-connected oral problems, does not provide dental care to our veterans. I think that is a very significant omission.

What this legislation does is, starting off with a large-scale pilot project, begin the effort to make sure dental care becomes part of VA health care. This is something that I think the veterans throughout this country will be very excited to learn about and to participate in.

Those are some of the provisions that were in the two omnibus bills, and they passed unanimously.

Let me talk about some other legislation that came out of the committee, in some cases with bipartisan support, but not unanimously. The first one deals with advanced appropriations for the VA; that is, S. 932, the Putting Veterans Funding First Act of 2013. That was introduced, as I recall, by Senators BEGICH and BOOZMAN in a bipartisan way. Here is the story, which is very important: As we saw last year, in the event of a prolonged government shutdown, the Veterans' Administration would not have been able to issue disability compensation or pension payments or provide educational benefit to millions of deserving veterans.

The truth is that during that shutdown, we were perhaps a week or 10 days away from disabled veterans, and others, not getting the benefits so many of them depend upon. It is what they depend upon to buy groceries, it is what they depend upon to pay a mortgage, and to make their car payments.

We were a week or 10 days away from those veterans not getting those benefits.

I am happy to say that in this legislation we have addressed that issue, and we have moved forward with advanced appropriations for mandatory accounts at the VA.

Our economy is making slow progress. We are creating jobs, but nobody believes we are anywhere near where we want to be. Real unemployment in this country is close to 13 percent. In my view, we owe a great deal to our veterans who have left their families, their jobs, gone abroad, and then when they come back, they are unable to find employment. What our legislation does is put into this comprehensive bill the Renew Our VOW to Hire Heroes, S. 6, the Putting Veterans Back to Work Act of 2013. This legislation would reauthorize provisions from the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, including a 2-year extension to the Veterans Training Assistance Program which re-trains unemployed veterans for high-demand occupations. There are other employment provisions in this legislation as well.

Several years ago, under the leadership of our colleague PATTY MURRAY, who was my predecessor as chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, we proudly passed the Caregivers Act. The Caregivers Act was a very important piece of legislation which said to families who were taking care of disabled veterans: We understand what you are doing is very difficult, and we are going to give you some assistance.

The legislation we had passed dealt with post-9/11 veterans and their families. After listening to the concerns of pre-9/11 veterans and their family members, I introduced S. 851, the Caregivers Expansion and Improvement Act of 2013 to extend eligibility for the caregivers programs to veterans' families of all eras. So we took this program, which was working well, and we said we are going to pay attention to the needs of all families who are taking care of men and women who put their lives on the line to defend us and have become disabled, and that is in this legislation as well.

Also in this legislation is language which will extend eligibility to enroll in VA health care, and that is S. 1604. We all know that early diagnosis of health care conditions is critically important. Under the current law, recently separated veterans have 5 years of free health care from the VA. This legislation would extend the period of time for these individuals, including members of the active component, the National Guard, and Reserves. They will be eligible to enroll in the VA health care system for 10 years post deployment. We go from 5 years to 10 years.

This benefit has been incredibly helpful to our most recent generation of

servicemembers, and extending the enrollment period will allow more individuals to take advantage of VA's high-quality, cost-effective health care system, including important access to mental health care services.

Additionally, this legislation simplifies the process for determining eligibility for enrollment in VA health care for lower income veterans. Currently VA uses an extremely complex calculation of geographic income thresholds that vary from county to county. You can have one veteran in one county in Vermont, another person living a mile away, and one is eligible for VA health care because of his or her income, but another person with the same income is not eligible. My legislation establishes one income threshold per State, simplifies the process, and will enable more veterans to be eligible for VA health care.

This legislation also includes S. 131, the Women Veterans and Other Health Care Improvements Act of 2013. With the widespread use of improvised explosive devices throughout Iraq and Afghanistan, both female and male servicemembers have found themselves with increased risk of spinal cord, reproductive, and urinary tract injury. Many of these veterans dreamed of starting a family, but their injuries prevented them from conceiving, and this legislation will help them fulfill their dreams.

We have three more important provisions I want to briefly touch upon, and that is, once again, the restoration of full COLA for all military retirees. In an effort to address concerns regarding the cost-of-living adjustments for all military retirees, this bill would reaffirm the commitment Congress made to our servicemembers and veterans by ensuring consistent and appropriate funding for military retirees and veterans. This very important provision is in this legislation.

Furthermore, there has been a concern that many CBOCs, community-based outreach clinics, that have been planned all over this country have been unable to be built for a variety of technical reasons. We addressed that issue as well. This bill also improves access to mental health treatment for veterans.

Let me conclude by saying we give a lot of speeches about the respect we have for the men and women who put their lives on the line to defend this country. They have come forward through the veterans committee and they have said: We have concerns. We have concerns about health care; we have concerns about how quickly the benefits that we apply for come to us. They have been very loud and clear in saying—and we agree with them—that it is unacceptable that pensions promised to veterans have been cut. There have been many other issues dealing with employment and dealing with education.

What this bill does in a comprehensive way is to say to the veterans of this country—the millions and millions of people who have given so much to us—we hear your concerns. We hear your concerns, and we are going to address your concerns.

I want to take this moment to thank majority leader Senator REID. He has been very supportive of not only veterans in general but supportive of this effort to make sure we keep our promises to the veterans of this country. That bill has been introduced. My hope is we can get it to the floor as soon as possible.

I hope very much that although there is a partisan climate, that on this issue of keeping our promises to the men and women who have put their lives on the line to defend this country, we can come together as a Senate and as a House and have the President sign this bill which will mean so much to so many.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to start by thanking Chairman SANDERS of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, where I serve, for his extraordinary vision and leadership and join him in thanking the majority leader for his commitment to this kind of comprehensive and aggressive approach to revise and reinvigorate, reinvent and reform, veterans programs in a comprehensive and overarching approach.

I will be speaking at greater length in the days and weeks to come, but I want to join the Senator in committing all of us—I hope on a bipartisan basis—to this effort to fix the flaws and fulfill the vision this Nation owes to the men and women who have served and sacrificed year after year.

This program recognizes a fundamental truth: We are dealing with different populations of different ages, and within those populations, people with different needs and challenges, and a comprehensive program is necessary to address the obligation. It is an obligation we owe them to make sure that we leave no veteran behind and keep faith with every man and woman who has served and sacrificed for this Nation.

It fixes the flaws of the last budget agreement that reduced the cost-of-living adjustment on retirees' pensions. It commits the Nation to economic opportunity and real jobs—training for the jobs that exist now and the jobs of the future. It reforms loan and aid programs for college education and also for noncollege education.

It addresses the gaps in health care, not just by promising but performing. And, of course, it will also necessarily help veterans who may be preyed upon by schemes and scams, legal or illegal, and that is a very desperate and challenging need for this Nation to address,

and hopefully it will do so on a bipartisan basis.

There should be no reason and no justification for opposing an effort that is paid for—and I stress paid for. My hope is we will have bipartisan support for this visionary and courageous measure that says to America's veterans: We will keep faith with you. We will leave no veteran behind.

One of the first promises I made 3 years ago in the first speech I gave on the floor of this Chamber was I would work and fight aggressively for the veterans of this Nation. I intend to work for this program—work to improve it—and continue to listen to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Legion, and all of the groups that represent our veterans so ably, and speak for them. The voices and faces of Connecticut's veterans have been with me always, and I see them always when I return. I will work tirelessly for this program.

Again, my thanks to all of the members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee who will be supporting this program, and to our chairman Senator SANDERS for his great leadership.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RISCH, Mr. BURR, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. LEE, Mr. COATS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORKER, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S.J. Res. 30. A joint resolution to disapprove a rule of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to greenhouse gas emissions from electric utility generating units; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

S.J. RES. 30

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to new source performance standards for emissions of carbon dioxide for new affected fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units (published at 79 Fed. Reg. 1430 (January 8, 2014)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

SENATE RESOLUTION 333—STRONGLY RECOMMENDING THAT THE UNITED STATES RENEGOTIATE THE RETURN OF THE IRAQI JEWISH ARCHIVE TO IRAQ

Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 333

Whereas, before the mid-20th century, Baghdad had been a center of Jewish life, culture, and scholarship, dating back to 721 BC;

Whereas, as recently as 1940, Jews made up 25 percent of Baghdad's population;

Whereas, in the 1930's and 1940's, under the leadership of Rasheed Ali, anti-Jewish discrimination increased drastically, including the June 1-2, 1941, Farhud pogrom, in which nearly 180 Jews were killed;

Whereas, in 1948, Zionism was added to the Iraqi criminal code as punishable by death;

Whereas, throughout 1950-1953, Jews were allowed to leave Iraq under the condition that they renounce their citizenship;

Whereas, as result of past persecution, few Jews remain in Iraq today, and many left their possessions and treasured artifacts behind;

Whereas the Ba'ath regime confiscated these artifacts, later dubbed the Iraqi Jewish Archive, from synagogues and communal organizations;

Whereas, on May 6, 2003, members of the United States Armed Forces discovered the Iraqi Jewish Archive, which included 2,700 books and tens of thousands of documents, in the heavily damaged and flooded basement of the Mukhabarat (secret police) headquarters;

Whereas, under great urgency and before adequate time could be dedicated to researching the history of the Iraqi Jewish Archive, an agreement was signed between the National Archives and Records Administration and the Coalition Provisional Authority on August 20, 2003, stating that the Iraqi Jewish Archive would be sent to the United States for restoration and then would be sent back to Iraq after completion;

Whereas, the Iraqi Jewish community is the constituency of the Archive and is now represented by the diaspora outside Iraq;

Whereas, the current Government of Iraq has publicly acknowledged the importance of the Archive and demonstrated a shared respect for the wishes of the Iraqi Jewish diaspora by attending the December 2013 burial of several Torah fragments from the Archive in New York;

Whereas United States taxpayers have invested \$3,000,000 to restore the Iraqi Jewish Archive, and the National Archives and Records Administration has worked diligently to preserve the artifacts;

Whereas the National Archives and Records Administration is displaying the Iraqi Jewish Archive in Washington, D.C. from October 11, 2013, to January 5, 2014, and in New York City from February 4, 2014, to May 18, 2014; and

Whereas the Iraqi Embassy to the United States has said that the Iraqi Jewish community, like other communities in Iraq, played a key role in building the country, shared in its prosperity, and also suffered exile and forced departure because of tyranny: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly urges the Department of State to renegotiate with the Government of Iraq the provisions of the original agreement that was signed between the National Archives and Records Administration and the Coalition Provisional Authority in order to ensure that the Iraqi Jewish Archive be kept in a place where its long-term preservation and care can be guaranteed;

(2) recognizes that the Iraqi Jewish Archive should be housed in a location that is accessible to scholars and to Iraqi Jews and their descendants who have a personal interest in it;

(3) recognizes that the agreement between the National Archives and Records Administration and the Coalition Provisional Authority was signed before knowing the complete history of the Iraqi Jewish Archive;

(4) reaffirms the United States commitment to cultural property under international law; and

(5) reaffirms the United States commitment to ensuring justice for victims of ethnic and religious persecution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 334—RECOGNIZING THE GOALS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK AND HONORING THE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. VITTER (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 334

Whereas Catholic schools in the United States have received international acclaim for academic excellence while providing students with lessons that extend far beyond the classroom;

Whereas Catholic schools present a broad curriculum that emphasizes the lifelong development of moral, intellectual, physical, and social values in the young people of the United States;

Whereas Catholic schools in the United States today educate 2,001,740 students and maintain a student-to-teacher ratio of 13 to 1;

Whereas the faculty members of Catholic schools teach a highly diverse body of students;

Whereas the graduation rate for all Catholic school is 99 percent;

Whereas 85 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to college;

Whereas Catholic schools produce students who are strongly dedicated to faith, values, families, and communities by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in spiritual character and moral development; and

Whereas in the 1972 pastoral message concerning Catholic education, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops stated: "Education is one of the most important ways by which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and building of community. Community is central to education ministry, both as a necessary condition and an ardently desired goal. The educational efforts of the Church, therefore, must be directed to forming persons-in-community; for the education of the individual Christian is important not only to his solitary destiny, but also the destinies of the many communities in which he lives." Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the goals of Catholic Schools Week, an event cosponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops that recognizes the vital contributions of thousands of Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the United States; and

(2) commends Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers across the United States for ongoing contributions to education and for playing a vital role in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 335—DESIGNATING JANUARY 2014 AS “NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH”

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARPER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. WARREN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 335

Whereas the goals of National Mentoring Month are to raise awareness of mentoring, recruit individuals to volunteer as mentors, and encourage organizations to engage and integrate quality mentoring into their efforts;

Whereas mentoring is a longstanding tradition in which a dependable, caring adult provides guidance, support, and encouragement to facilitate the social, emotional, and cognitive development of a young person;

Whereas a mentor is a caring, consistent presence who devotes time to a young person to help that young person discover personal strength and achieve their potential through a structured and trusting relationship;

Whereas research on mentoring shows that formal, high-quality mentoring programs focused on developing the competence and character of mentees promote positive outcomes, such as improved academic achievement, self-esteem, social skills, and career development;

Whereas research shows that young people who are matched with a caring adult through a quality mentoring program are 46 percent less likely to use illegal drugs, 27 percent less likely to start drinking, 52 percent less likely to skip school, 37 percent less likely to skip class, and are more trusting of their parents or guardians;

Whereas more than 5,000 mentoring programs in communities of all sizes across the United States focus on building strong, effective relationships between mentors and mentees;

Whereas approximately 3,000,000 young people in the United States are in formal mentoring relationships due to the remarkable vigor, creativity, and resourcefulness of the thousands of mentoring programs in communities throughout the United States;

Whereas in spite of the progress made to increase mentoring, the United States has a serious “mentoring gap”, with nearly 15,000,000 young people in need of mentors;

Whereas, in 2012, 399,546 children were in foster care in the United States, many of whom were without a mentor and 26,000 of whom “aged out” of foster care by reaching adulthood without being placed in a permanent home;

Whereas mentor programs that serve foster children are unique and require additional considerations, including specialized training and support necessary to provide for consistent, meaningful, and long-term relationships for children in foster care;

Whereas mentoring is a proven cost-effective investment;

Whereas for every dollar invested in mentoring, there is a 3 dollar return to society;

Whereas mentoring partnerships between the public and private sectors bring State and local leaders together to support mentoring programs by preventing duplication of efforts, offering training in industry best practices, and making the most of limited resources to benefit young people in the United States;

Whereas the designation of January 2014 as “National Mentoring Month” will call attention to the critical role mentors play in helping young people realize their potential; and

Whereas a month-long celebration of mentoring will encourage more individuals and organizations, including schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith institutions, and foundations, to become engaged in mentoring and close the mentoring gap in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of January 2014 as “National Mentoring Month”;

(2) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring adults and students who are already serving as mentors and encourages more adults and students to volunteer as mentors;

(3) supports the goals of mentoring to increase educational achievement, reduce juvenile delinquency, and improve life outcomes for mentees; and

(4) promotes the creation and expansion of quality mentoring programs across the country to equip more young people with the tools needed to lead healthy and productive lives.

SENATE RESOLUTION 336—DESIGNATING THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL 2014 AS “NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK”

Mr. BAUCUS (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. REID, and Mr. TESTER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 336

Whereas dangerous asbestos fibers are invisible and cannot be smelled or tasted;

Whereas the inhalation of airborne asbestos fibers can cause significant damage;

Whereas asbestos fibers can cause cancer such as mesothelioma, asbestosis, and other health problems;

Whereas symptoms of asbestos-related diseases can take 10 to 50 years to present themselves;

Whereas the projected life expectancy for an individual diagnosed with mesothelioma is between 6 and 24 months;

* * * *lioma, at a significantly higher rate than people in the United States as a whole; and

Whereas the designation of a “National Asbestos Awareness Week” will raise public awareness about the prevalence of asbestos-related diseases and the dangers of asbestos exposure: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the first week of April 2014 as “National Asbestos Awareness Week”;

(2) urges the Surgeon General of the United States to warn and educate people about the public health issue of asbestos exposure, which may be hazardous to their health; and

(3) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Office of the Surgeon General.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2660. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2661. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2662. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2663. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2664. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2665. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2666. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2667. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2668. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2669. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2670. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2671. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2672. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2673. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2674. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2675. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2676. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2677. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2678. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2679. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2680. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2681. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2682. Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. LEE, and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2683. Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2684. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2685. Mr. CRUZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2686. Mr. CRUZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2687. Mr. CRUZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2688. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2689. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2690. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1846, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2691. Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mr. PRYOR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1846, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2660. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title VII of division A, strike section 745.

SA 2661. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page __, between lines __ and __, insert the following:

SEC. __. REPEAL OF ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RETIRED PAY AND RETAINER PAY AMOUNTS FOR RETIRED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES UNDER AGE 62.

Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-67), as of the date of the enactment of such Act, is hereby repealed, and that section and the amendments made by that section shall be null and void and have had no effect.

SEC. __. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO TAXPAYER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any taxpayer for any taxable year unless the taxpayer includes the taxpayer’s Social Security number on the return of tax for such taxable year.

“(B) JOINT RETURNS.—In the case of a joint return, the requirement of subparagraph (A) shall be treated as met if the Social Security number of either spouse is included on such return.

“(C) LIMITATION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the extent the tentative minimum tax (as defined in section 55(b)(1)(A)) exceeds the credit allowed under section 32.”.

(b) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct Social Security number required under section 24(d)(5) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), or a correct TIN under section 24(e) (relating to child tax credit), to be included on a return.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of such Code is amended by inserting “WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN” after “IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT” in the heading thereof.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2662. Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 748, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES

For necessary expenses to carry out the payment in lieu of taxes program under

chapter 69 of title 31, United States Code, \$421,000,000.

On page 1167, line 12, strike “\$2,982,967,000” and insert “\$2,950,247,000”.

On page 1186, lines 8 through 11, strike “\$344,020,000” and all that follows through “Convention on Climate Change” and insert “\$334,020,000”.

On page 1186, strike lines 16 through 20.

On page 1187, strike lines 14 through 23.

On page 1357, strike lines 1 through 13.

On page 1357, line 16, strike “\$123,500,000” and insert “\$90,780,000”

SA 2663. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. __. DEDUCTION FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO DISASTER SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part VII of subchapter B of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to additional itemized deductions for individuals) is amended by redesignating section 224 as section 225 and by inserting after section 223 the following new section:

“SEC. 224. DISASTER SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.

“(a) DEDUCTION ALLOWED.—In the case of a eligible individual, there shall be allowed as a deduction for the taxable year an amount equal to the aggregate amount paid during such taxable year by or on behalf of such individual to a disaster savings account of such individual.

“(b) LIMITATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount allowed as a deduction under subsection (a) to an individual for the taxable year shall not exceed \$5,000.

“(2) PARTIAL YEAR OF ELIGIBILITY.—In the case of an individual who is an eligible individual for only a portion of the taxable year, the limitation under paragraph (1) shall be same proportion of \$5,000 as such portion bears to the entire taxable year.

“(c) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘eligible individual’ means any individual if such individual occupied any residence in the United States at any time during the taxable year.

“(d) DISASTER SAVINGS ACCOUNT.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘disaster savings account’ means a trust created or organized in the United States as a disaster savings account exclusively for the purpose of paying the qualified disaster expenses of the account beneficiary, but only if the written governing instrument creating the trust meets the following requirements:

“(A) Except in the case of a rollover contribution described in subsection (f)(5), no contribution will be accepted—

“(i) unless it is in cash, or

“(ii) to the extent such contribution, when added to previous contributions to the trust for the calendar year, exceeds the dollar limitation in effect under subsection (b).

“(B) The trustee is a bank (as defined in section 408(n)), an insurance company (as defined in section 816), or another person who demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the manner in which such person will administer the trust will be consistent with the requirements of this section.

“(C) No part of the trust assets will be invested in life insurance contracts.

“(D) The assets of the trust will not be commingled with other property except in a common trust fund or common investment fund.

“(E) The interest of an individual in the balance in his account is nonforfeitable.

“(2) QUALIFIED DISASTER EXPENSES.—The term ‘qualified disaster expenses’ means—

“(A) disaster mitigation expenses, and

“(B) disaster recovery expenses.

“(3) DISASTER MITIGATION EXPENSES.—The term ‘disaster mitigation expenses’ means expenses for any of the following with respect to the residence referred to in subsection (c):

“(A) Tornado safe rooms manufactured or constructed in accordance with FEMA 320 or FEMA 361 guidance or tornado shelters manufactured or constructed in accordance with the National Storm Shelter/International Code Council 500 standard.

“(B) Opening protection, including impact and wind resistant windows, exterior doors, and garage doors.

“(C) Reinforcement of roof-to-wall and floor-to-wall connections for wind or seismic activity.

“(D) Roof covering for impact, fire, or high wind resistance.

“(E) Cripple and shear walls to resist seismic activity.

“(F) Flood resistant building materials.

“(G) Elevating structures and utilities above base flood elevation.

“(H) Fire resistant exterior wall assemblies/systems.

“(I) Lightning protection systems.

“(J) Whole home standby generators.

“(K) Any activity specified by the Secretary as appropriate to mitigate the risks of future hazards (including earthquake, flood, hail, hurricane, lightning, power outage, tornado and wildfire) and other natural disasters.

“(4) DISASTER RECOVERY EXPENSES.—The term ‘disaster recovery expenses’ means with respect to the residence referred to in subsection (c) any expense incurred to replace or repair disaster-related uninsured personal casualty personal losses totaling \$3,000 or greater.

“(5) DISASTER-RELATED UNINSURED PERSONAL CASUALTY LOSS.—The term ‘disaster-related uninsured personal casualty loss’ means a personal casualty loss (as defined in section 165(h)(4)(B)), determined without regard to the second sentence thereof attributable to a State or federally declared disaster for which a deduction is allowable under section 165 (without regard to subsection (h)(1)).

“(6) FEDERALLY DECLARED DISASTER.—The term ‘federally declared disaster’ has the meaning given such term by section 165(h)(3)(C).

“(7) ACCOUNT BENEFICIARY.—The term ‘account beneficiary’ means the individual on whose behalf the disaster savings account was established.

“(e) TREATMENT OF ACCOUNT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A disaster savings account is exempt from taxation under this subtitle unless such account has ceased to be a disaster savings account. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, any such account is subject to the taxes imposed by section 511 (relating to imposition of tax on unrelated business income of charitable, etc. organizations).

“(2) ACCOUNT TERMINATIONS.—Rules similar to the rules of paragraphs (2) and (4) of section 408(e) shall apply to disaster savings accounts, and any amount treated as distributed under such rules shall be treated as not used to pay disaster mitigation expenses.

“(f) TAX TREATMENT OF DISTRIBUTIONS.—

“(1) AMOUNTS USED FOR DISASTER MITIGATION EXPENSES.—Any amount paid or distributed out of a disaster savings account which is used exclusively to pay qualified disaster expenses of any account beneficiary shall not be includible in gross income.

“(2) INCLUSION OF AMOUNTS NOT USED FOR DISASTER MITIGATION EXPENSES.—Any amount paid or distributed out of a disaster savings account which is not used exclusively to pay the qualified disaster expenses of the account beneficiary shall be included in the gross income of such beneficiary.

“(3) EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS RETURNED BEFORE DUE DATE OF RETURN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If any excess contribution is contributed for a taxable year to any disaster savings account of an individual, paragraph (2) shall not apply to distributions from the disaster savings accounts of such individual (to the extent such distributions do not exceed the aggregate excess contributions to all such accounts of such individual for such year) if—

“(i) such distribution is received by the individual on or before the last day prescribed by law (including extensions of time) for filing such individual’s return for such taxable year, and

“(ii) such distribution is accompanied by the amount of net income attributable to such excess contribution.

Any net income described in clause (ii) shall be included in the gross income of the individual for the taxable year in which it is received.

“(B) EXCESS CONTRIBUTION.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ‘excess contribution’ means any contribution (other than a rollover contribution described in paragraph (5)) which is not deductible under this section.

“(4) ADDITIONAL TAX ON DISTRIBUTIONS NOT USED FOR DISASTER MITIGATION EXPENSES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The tax imposed by this chapter on the account beneficiary for any taxable year in which there is a payment or distribution from a disaster savings account of such beneficiary which is includible in gross income under paragraph (2) shall be increased by 20 percent of the amount which is so includible.

“(B) EXCEPTION FOR DISABILITY OR DEATH.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply if the payment or distribution is made after the account beneficiary becomes disabled within the meaning of section 72(m)(7) or dies.

“(5) ROLLOVER CONTRIBUTION.—An amount is described in this paragraph as a rollover contribution if it meets the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B).

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) shall not apply to any amount paid or distributed from a disaster savings account to the account beneficiary to the extent the amount received is paid into a disaster savings account for the benefit of such beneficiary not later than the 60th day after the day on which the beneficiary receives the payment or distribution.

“(B) LIMITATION.—This paragraph shall not apply to any amount described in subparagraph (A) received by an individual from a disaster savings account if, at any time during the 1-year period ending on the day of such receipt, such individual received any other amount described in subparagraph (A) from a disaster savings account which was not includible in the individual’s gross income because of the application of this paragraph.

“(g) COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a taxable year beginning after 2015, the \$5,000 amount in subsection (b) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

“(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

“(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which such taxable year begins determined by substituting ‘calendar year 2014’ for ‘calendar year 1992’ in subparagraph (B) thereof.

“(2) ROUNDING.—If any increase under paragraph (1) is not a multiple of \$50, such increase shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$50.

“(h) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(1) DENIAL OF DEDUCTION TO DEPENDENTS.—No deduction shall be allowed under this section to any individual with respect to whom a deduction under section 151 is allowable to another taxpayer for a taxable year beginning in the calendar year in which such individual’s taxable year begins.

“(2) TAXABLE YEAR MUST BE FULL TAXABLE YEAR.—Except in the case of a taxable year closed by reason of the death of the taxpayer, no deduction shall be allowed under this section in the case of a taxable year covering a period of less than 12 months.

“(3) CERTAIN RULES TO APPLY.—Rules similar to the following rules shall apply for purposes of this section:

“(A) Section 219(d)(2) (relating to no deduction for rollovers).

“(B) Section 219(f)(3) (relating to time when contributions deemed made).

“(C) Section 219(f)(5) (relating to employer payments).

“(D) Section 408(g) (relating to community property laws).

“(E) Section 408(h) (relating to custodial accounts).

“(F) Section 224(f)(7) (relating to transfer of account incident to divorce).

“(G) Section 224(f)(8) (relating to treatment after death of account beneficiary).

“(4) COORDINATION WITH CASUALTY LOSS DEDUCTION.—No deduction shall be allowed under section 165 for a loss for which a disaster recovery expense payment is made from a disaster savings account.

“(i) REPORTS.—The Secretary may require the trustee of a disaster savings account to make such reports regarding such account to the Secretary and to the account beneficiary with respect to contributions, distributions, the return of excess contributions, and such other matters as the Secretary determines appropriate.”

(b) DEDUCTION ALLOWED WHETHER OR NOT INDIVIDUAL ITEMIZES OTHER DEDUCTIONS.—Subsection (a) of section 62 of such Code is amended by inserting after paragraph (21) the following new paragraph:

“(22) DISASTER SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.—The deduction allowed by section 224.”

(c) TAX ON EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS.—Section 4973 of such Code (relating to tax on excess contributions to certain tax-favored accounts and annuities) is amended—

(1) by striking “or” at the end of subsection (a)(4), by inserting “or” at the end of subsection (a)(5), and by inserting after subsection (a)(5) the following new paragraph:

“(6) a disaster savings account (within the meaning of section 224(d)),” and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h) EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS TO DISASTER SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.—For purposes of this section, in the case of disaster savings accounts (within the meaning of section 224(d)), the term ‘excess contributions’ means the sum of—

“(1) the aggregate amount contributed for the taxable year to the accounts (other than a rollover contribution described in section 224(f)(5) which is not allowable as a deduction under section 224 for such year, and

“(2) the amount determined under this subsection for the preceding taxable year, reduced by the sum of—

“(A) the distributions out of the accounts which were included in gross income under section 224(f)(2), and

“(B) the excess (if any) of—

“(i) the maximum amount allowable as a deduction under section 224(b) for the taxable year, over

“(ii) the amount contributed to the accounts for the taxable year.

For purposes of this subsection, any contribution which is distributed out of the disaster savings account in a distribution to which section 224(f)(3) applies shall be treated as an amount not contributed.”.

(d) FAILURE TO PROVIDE REPORTS ON DISASTER SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.—Paragraph (2) of section 6693(a) of such Code (relating to reports) is amended by redesignating subparagraphs (D) and (E) as subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively, and by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following new subparagraph:

“(D) section 224(i) (relating to disaster savings accounts).”.

(e) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for part VII of subchapter B of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by striking the last item and inserting the following:

“Sec. 224. Disaster savings accounts.
“Sec. 225. Cross reference.”.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2664. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of division D, insert the following:

SEC. 117. (a) In this section—

(1) the term “Fund” means the land and water conservation fund established under section 2 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–5);

(2) the term “level of receipts” means the level of taxes, receipts, bonuses, and rents credited to the Fund for a fiscal year as set forth in the budget baseline projection of the President, as determined under section 257 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 907), for that fiscal year submitted pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code; and

(3) the term “total budget resources” means the total amount made available by appropriations Acts from the Fund for a fiscal year for making expenditures under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–4 et seq.), as determined by the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget of the Senate.

(b)(1) For each fiscal year, the total budget resources made available from the Fund shall be equal to the level of receipts credited to the Fund for that fiscal year.

(2) The amounts described in paragraph (1) shall be used only to carry out land and water conservation activities authorized under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–4 et seq.).

(3) No amounts may be appropriated for land and water conservation activities authorized under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (16 U.S.C. 4601–4 et seq.) unless the requirement under paragraph (1) has been met.

(c) It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any Act making appropriations that would cause total budget resources for a fiscal year for land and water conservation activities described in subsection (b)(2) for that fiscal year to be less than the amount required by subsection (b)(1) for that fiscal year.

SA 2665. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I of division L, insert the following:

SEC. 193. Section 610 of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

“(A) 10 percent of the funds apportioned to the State for each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 under each of sections 104(b)(1), 104(b)(2), and 144; and”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “2005 through 2009” and inserting “2013 and 2014”;

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “2005 through 2009” and inserting “2013 and 2014”;

(D) in paragraph (5), by striking “section 133(d)(3)” and inserting “section 133(d)(4)”;

(2) in subsection (h)(2)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking “shall” and inserting “shall not”; and

(B) in the second sentence, by striking “shall” and inserting “shall not”; and

(3) in subsection (k), by striking “2005 through 2009” and inserting “2013 and 2014”.

SA 2666. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title I of division L, after section 142, insert the following:

HOURS OF SERVICE OF DRIVERS

SEC. 143. (a) FUNDING RESTRICTION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds provided in this Act may be used to implement the revised 34-hour restart provision published by the Department of Transportation in the Federal Register on December 27, 2011, as part of the rule entitled “Hours of Service of Drivers” (76 Fed. Reg. 81134) until the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Comptroller General submits the final report required under subsection (c)(3).

(b) DELAY IN APPLICATION OF RULE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The 34-hour restart rule published by the Department of Transportation in the Federal Register on December 27, 2011, shall have no force or effect during the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending 6 months after the Comptroller General submits the report required under subsection (c)(3).

(2) APPLICATION OF PREVIOUS RULE PROVISION.—The 34-hour restart rule issued on April 28, 2003 (68 Fed. Reg. 22456), shall be in

effect during the period described in paragraph (1).

(3) DECEMBER 2011 RULE.—The Secretary of Transportation shall not apply the rule described in paragraph (1) if the conclusions of the field study completed pursuant to section 32301(a) of MAP-21 do not support or concur with the conclusions of the laboratory study on which such rule was based.

(c) GAO REPORT.—

(1) ASSESSMENT OF METHODOLOGY FOR MAP-21 RESTART STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—After the report regarding the field study on the efficacy of the 34-hour restart rule, published on December 27, 2011, is submitted to Congress pursuant to section 32301(a) of MAP-21, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an assessment of the methodology followed by the Secretary of Transportation in carrying out the efficacy of such restart rule.

(B) SCOPE.—The assessment required under subparagraph (A) shall determine the extent to which the methodology followed by the Secretary meets the requirement under MAP-21 that—

(i) the data collected is representative of the drivers subject to the restart rule;

(ii) the methodology is statistically valid; and

(iii) the study followed the plan for the “Scheduling and Fatigue Recovery Project” developed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

(2) ASSESSMENT OF REGULATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General shall conduct an assessment of the regulatory impact analysis that accompanied the final rule published by the Department of Transportation in the Federal Register on December 27, 2011, entitled “Hours of Service of Drivers” (76 Fed. Reg. 81134).

(B) SCOPE.—The assessment required under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an analysis of the methodology and data used by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in its Regulatory Impact Analysis;

(ii) an evaluation of the validity and representativeness of the driver data used to evaluate the operational and economic impacts of the new 34-hour restart rule applicable to operators of commercial motor vehicles;

(iii) an analysis of the data and methodology used to develop the proposed safety and health benefits of the new 34-hour restart rule applicable to operators of commercial motor vehicles;

(iv) a review of the safety, health, cost, and operational implications of the restart rule, and the potential impact of a greater number of commercial motor vehicles on major roads during “morning commutes” as a result of the restart rule; and

(v) a review of the research used in developing and justifying the new restart rule, particularly as the rule relates to the use of a laboratory test to justify the rule rather than an operational test in the field.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit a final report to the appropriate committees of Congress on the assessments required under paragraphs (1) and (2), including any recommendations.

SA 2667. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for

other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 107, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

SEC. 109. SELECTUSA.

(a) PROHIBITION.—None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this title under the heading “OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION” under the heading “INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION” may be used to carry out activities of SelectUSA.

(b) REDUCTION.—The amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this title under the heading “OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION” under the heading “INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION” is hereby decreased by \$7,000,000.

SA 2668. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 537 of title V of division B, insert the following:

SEC. 538. (a) In this section, the term “Crime Victims Fund amounts” means the sums described in section 1402(d)(3) of chapter XIV of title II of Public Law 98-473 (42 U.S.C. 10601(d)(3)) that are available for obligation under section 510 of this division.

(b) The Crime Victims Fund amounts—
(1) shall be available for—

(A) the United States Attorneys Offices and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to provide and improve services for the benefit of crime victims in the Federal criminal justice system (as described in 3771 of title 18, United States Code, and section 503 of the Victims’ Rights and Restitution Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 10607)) through victim coordinators, victims’ specialists, and advocates, including for the administrative support of victim coordinators and advocates providing such services; and

(B) a Victim Notification System; and

(2) may not be used for any purpose that is not specified in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1).

SA 2669. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 135, strike lines 8 and 9.

SA 2670. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 127, strike lines 15 and 16.

SA 2671. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 378, lines 14 and 15, strike “\$1,912,104,111, to remain available until expended: *Provided,*” and insert “\$1,902,104,111,

to remain available until expended: *Provided,* That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used to maintain or support the Energy Efficient Buildings Hub: *Provided further,*”.

SA 2672. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 32, line 7, strike “\$900,000,000” and insert “\$360,000,000”.

On page 32, line 19, strike “\$24,480,000” and insert “\$9,792,000”.

SA 2673. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1394, line 9, insert “*Provided further,* That none of the funds provided in this Act may be used to subsidize food, beverage, or first class services: ” after “Public Law 112-55”.

SA 2674. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1449, line 7, strike “\$1,000,000,000” and insert “\$950,000,000”.

SA 2675. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1354, line 3, strike “\$600,000,000” and insert “\$475,000,000”.

SA 2676. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Under the heading “INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE” in title I of division E, at the end of the matter under the heading “ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS—INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)”, add the following:

SEC. ____ . None of the Funds made available under this Act may be used by the Internal Revenue Service—

(1) to promulgate, finalize, or enforce the proposed regulations published at 78 Fed. Reg. 71535 (November 29, 2013), any successor regulation, or any regulation of substantially similar substance; or

(2) to issue, implement, or enforce any regulation, revenue ruling, or interpretive guidance which delineates political activities that are not for the promotion of the social welfare for purposes of determining whether an organization is described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986

and exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code, unless such regulation, ruling, or guidance fully protects rights established under the First Amendment of the Constitution.

SA 2677. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 437 of division G, insert the following:

STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING PROJECTS

SEC. 43 ____ . (a) IN GENERAL.—Title VI of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 602. STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING PROJECTS.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CHIEF.—The term ‘Chief’ means the Chief of the Forest Service.

“(2) DIRECTOR.—The term ‘Director’ means the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

“(b) PROJECTS.—The Chief and the Director, via agreement or contract as appropriate, may enter into stewardship contracting projects with private persons or other public or private entities to perform services to achieve land management goals for the national forests and the public lands that meet local and rural community needs.

“(c) LAND MANAGEMENT GOALS.—The land management goals of a project under subsection (b) may include—

“(1) road and trail maintenance or obliteration to restore or maintain water quality;

“(2) soil productivity, habitat for wildlife and fisheries, or other resource values;

“(3) setting of prescribed fires to improve the composition, structure, condition, and health of stands or to improve wildlife habitat;

“(4) removing vegetation or other activities to promote healthy forest stands, reduce fire hazards, or achieve other land management objectives;

“(5) watershed restoration and maintenance;

“(6) restoration and maintenance of wildlife and fish; or

“(7) control of noxious and exotic weeds and reestablishing native plant species.

“(d) AGREEMENTS OR CONTRACTS.—

“(1) PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE.—A source for performance of an agreement or contract under subsection (b) shall be selected on a best-value basis, including consideration of source under other public and private agreements or contracts.

“(2) CONTRACT FOR SALE OF PROPERTY.—A contract entered into under this section may, at the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture, be considered a contract for the sale of property under such terms as the Secretary may prescribe without regard to any other provision of law.

“(3) TERM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Chief and the Director may enter into a contract under subsection (b) in accordance with section 3903 of title 41, United States Code.

“(B) MAXIMUM.—The period of the contract under subsection (b) may exceed 5 years but may not exceed 10 years.

“(4) OFFSETS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may apply the value of timber or other

forest products removed as an offset against the cost of services received under the agreement or contract described in subsection (b).

“(B) METHODS OF APPRAISAL.—The value of timber or other forest products used as an offset under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall be determined using appropriate methods of appraisal commensurate with the quantity of products to be removed; and

“(ii) may—

“(I) be determined using a unit of measure appropriate to the contracts; and

“(II) may include valuing products on a per-acre basis.

“(5) CANCELLATION CEILINGS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may obligate funds to cover any potential cancellation or termination costs for an agreement or contract under subsection (b) in stages that are economically or program-matically viable.

“(B) NOTICE.—

“(i) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days before entering into a multiyear agreement or contract under subsection (b) that includes a cancellation ceiling in excess of \$25,000,000, but does not include proposed funding for the costs of cancelling the agreement or contract up to the cancellation ceiling established in the agreement or contract, the Chief and the Director shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a written notice that includes—

“(I)(aa) the cancellation ceiling amounts proposed for each program year in the agreement or contract; and

“(bb) the reasons for the cancellation ceiling amounts proposed under item (aa);

“(II) the extent to which the costs of contract cancellation are not included in the budget for the agreement or contract; and

“(III) a financial risk assessment of not including budgeting for the costs of agreement or contract cancellation.

“(ii) TRANSMITTAL TO OMB.—At least 14 days before the date on which the Chief and Director enter into an agreement or contract under subsection (b), the Chief and Director shall transmit to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a copy of the written notice submitted under clause (i).

“(6) RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.—Notwithstanding subsections (d) and (g) of section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a) and section 2(a)(1) of the Act of July 31, 1947 (commonly known as the ‘Materials Act of 1947’) (30 U.S.C. 602(a)(1)), the Chief and the Director may enter into an agreement or contract under subsection (b).

“(7) CONTRACTING OFFICER.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary or the Secretary of the Interior may determine the appropriate contracting officer to enter into and administer an agreement or contract under subsection (b).

“(8) FIRE LIABILITY PROVISIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Chief and the Director shall issue for use in all contracts and agreements under subsection (b) fire liability provisions that are in substantially the same form as the fire liability provisions contained in—

“(A) integrated resource timber contracts, as described in the Forest Service contract numbered 2400-13, part H, section H.4; and

“(B) timber sale contracts conducted pursuant to section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a).

“(9) RETROACTIVE APPLICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.—Paragraph (5) and the fire liability provisions issued under paragraph (8) shall also apply to any stewardship contracts and agreements that—

“(A) are entered into during fiscal year 2014 pursuant to the authority provided by section 347 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (as contained in section 101(e) of division A of Public Law 105-277; 16 U.S.C. 2104 note); and

“(B) remain in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

“(e) RECEIPTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may collect monies from an agreement or contract under subsection (b) if the collection is a secondary objective of negotiating the contract that will best achieve the purposes of this section.

“(2) USE.—Monies from an agreement or contract under subsection (b)—

“(A) may be retained by the Chief and the Director; and

“(B) shall be available for expenditure without further appropriation at the project site from which the monies are collected or at another project site.

“(3) RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the value of services received by the Chief or the Director under a stewardship contract project conducted under this section, and any payments made or resources provided by the contractor, Chief, or Director shall not be considered monies received from the National Forest System or the public lands.

“(B) KNUTSON-VANDERBERG ACT.—The Act of June 9, 1930 (commonly known as the ‘Knutson-Vanderberg Act’) (16 U.S.C. 576 et seq.) shall not apply to any agreement or contract under subsection (b).

“(f) COSTS OF REMOVAL.—Notwithstanding the fact that a contractor did not harvest the timber, the Chief may collect deposits from a contractor covering the costs of removal of timber or other forest products under—

“(1) the Act of August 11, 1916 (16 U.S.C. 490); and

“(2) the Act of June 30, 1914 (16 U.S.C. 498).

“(g) PERFORMANCE AND PAYMENT GUARANTEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may require performance and payment bonds under sections 28.103-2 and 28.103-3 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, in an amount that the contracting officer considers sufficient to protect the investment in receipts by the Federal Government generated by the contractor from the estimated value of the forest products to be removed under a contract under subsection (b).

“(2) EXCESS OFFSET VALUE.—If the offset value of the forest products exceeds the value of the resource improvement treatments, the Chief and the Director shall—

“(A) use the excess to satisfy any outstanding liabilities for cancelled agreements or contracts; or

“(B) if there are no outstanding liabilities under subparagraph (A), apply the excess to other authorized stewardship projects.

“(h) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director shall establish a multiparty monitoring and evaluation process that accesses the stewardship contracting projects conducted under this section.

“(2) PARTICIPANTS.—Other than the Chief and Director, participants in the process described in paragraph (1) may include—

“(A) any cooperating governmental agencies, including tribal governments; and

“(B) any other interested groups or individuals.

“(i) REPORTING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section,

and annually thereafter, the Chief and the Director shall report to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives on—

“(1) the status of development, execution, and administration of agreements or contracts under subsection (b);

“(2) the specific accomplishments that have resulted; and

“(3) the role of local communities in the development of agreements or contract plans.”

(b) OFFSET.—To the extent necessary, the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management shall offset any direct spending authorized under section 602 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (as added by subsection (a)) using any additional amounts that may be made available to the Chief or the Director for the applicable fiscal year.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 347 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (16 U.S.C. 2104 note; Public Law 105-277) is repealed.

(2) EFFECT OF REPEAL.—Notwithstanding the amendment made by paragraph (1), nothing in this Act or an amendment made by this Act invalidates or otherwise affects any stewardship contract entered into by the Chief of the Forest Service or the Director of the Bureau of Land Management that is in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2678. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM” under the heading “NATIONAL PARK SERVICE” in title I of division G, strike “\$2,236,753,000” and insert “\$2,236,653,000”.

In the matter under the heading “OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM” under the heading “NATIONAL PARK SERVICE”, before the period at the end, insert “: Provided, That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used to carry out the Route 66 corridor preservation program established under Public Law 106-45 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 113 Stat. 226)”.

SA 2679. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 1341, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 1342, line 2.

SA 2680. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1343, strike lines 4 through 11.

SA 2681. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal

year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 218, line 25, strike “That of the funds” and all that follows through “further,” on page 219, line 17.

SA 2682. Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. LEE, and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM” under the heading “NATIONAL PARK SERVICE” in title I of division G, insert “of which \$2,000,000 is available to the Director of the National Park Service to refund to each State all funds of the State that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the period in October 2013 in which there was a lapse in appropriations for the unit and” before “of which”.

SA 2683. Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM” under the heading “NATIONAL PARK SERVICE” in title I of division G, insert “of which \$2,000,000 shall be transferred to the general fund of the Treasury and used for Federal budget deficit reduction and” before “of which”.

SA 2684. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 362, strike line 5 and all that follows through page 364, line 18, and insert the following:

SEC. 10001. REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO TAXPAYER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any taxpayer for any taxable year unless the taxpayer includes the taxpayer’s Social Security number on the return of tax for such taxable year.

“(B) JOINT RETURNS.—In the case of a joint return, the requirement of subparagraph (A)

shall be treated as met if the Social Security number of either spouse is included on such return.

“(C) LIMITATION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the extent the tentative minimum tax (as defined in section 55(b)(1)(A)) exceeds the credit allowed under section 32.”.

(2) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct Social Security number required under section 24(d)(5) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), or a correct TIN under section 24(e) (relating to child tax credit), to be included on a return.”.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting “WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN” after “IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT” in the heading thereof.

(4) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2685. Mr. CRUZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

No funds made available under any portion of this Act shall be used to carry out any provisions of federal law, including the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148) or title I and subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), or of the amendments made by either such Act, so long as those statutes have the effect causing Americans to lose any health insurance policy they wish to keep, increasing the premiums of any health insurance policy by which the individual is currently covered, or resulting in the inability of any American to obtain treatment from the doctors by which a patient is currently treated.

SA 2686. Mr. CRUZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

No funds made available under any portion of this Act shall be used to carry out any provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148) or title I and subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), or of the amendments made by either such Act, and Section 403 of Pub. L. 113-67 is hereby repealed.

SA 2687. Mr. CRUZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ PROHIBITION ON FUNDING FOR THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

No funds made available under any portion of this Act shall be used to carry out any provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148) or title I and subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), or the amendments made by either such Act.

SA 2688. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. UDALL of Colorado) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In the matter under the heading “DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS” under the heading “OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY” under the heading “DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES” in title I of division G, strike “\$264,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2015” and insert “\$689,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2015; of which \$425,000,000 shall be made available for necessary expenses of the payment in lieu of taxes program under chapter 69 of title 31, United States Code”.

After section 437 of division G, insert the following:

OFFSET FOR PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES PROGRAM

SEC. 43 ____. (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 251(c)(1)(B) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(c)(1)(B)) is amended by striking “491,773,000,000” and inserting “492,198,000,000”.

(b) OFFSETTING REDUCTION IN NON-MEDICARE DIRECT SPENDING.—Section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(11) ADDITIONAL REDUCTION OF NON-MEDICARE DIRECT SPENDING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For each of the fiscal years 2015 through 2023, in addition to the reduction in direct spending under paragraph (6), on the date specified in paragraph (2), OMB shall prepare and the President shall order a sequestration, effective upon issuance, reducing the spending described in subparagraph (B) by the uniform percentage necessary to reduce such spending for the fiscal year by \$47,223,000.

“(B) SPENDING COVERED.—The spending described in this paragraph is spending that is—

- “(i) nonexempt direct spending;
- “(ii) not spending for the Medicare programs specified in section 256(d); and
- “(iii) within the revised nonsecurity category.”.

SA 2689. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1 ____ FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR URBAN BUILDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidelines for property owners that—

(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to urban residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

- (A) types of building materials; and
- (B) types of floodproofing; and

(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.

(b) **CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.**—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under subsection (a) of this section.

SA 2690. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. AUTHORITY OF STATES TO REGULATE PRIVATE FLOOD INSURANCE.

Section 102(b)(7) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(b)(7)) is amended to read as follows:

“(7) **PRIVATE FLOOD INSURANCE DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term ‘private flood insurance’ means an insurance policy that—

“(A) provides flood insurance coverage; and

“(B) is issued by an insurance company that is—

“(i) licensed, admitted, or otherwise approved to engage in the business of insurance in the State or jurisdiction in which the insured building is located, by the insurance regulator of that State or jurisdiction;

“(ii) eligible as a nonadmitted insurer to provide insurance in the State or jurisdiction where the property to be insured is located, in accordance with section 524 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (15 U.S.C. 8204); or

“(iii) not disapproved as a surplus lines insurer by the insurance regulator of the State or jurisdiction where the property to be insured is located.”.

SA 2691. Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mr. PRYOR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), res-

pectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking “(A) or (B), if—” and inserting the following: “(A)—

“(i) if—”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(E) by adding at the end the following

“(ii) in the case of a loan that—

“(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

“(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

“(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

“(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

“(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

“(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

“(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

“(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

“(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.”.

(b) **APPLICABILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—

(A) **REQUIRED APPLICATION.**—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) **OPTIONAL APPLICATION.**—

(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms “Federal entity for lending regulation”, “improved real estate”, “regulated lending institution”, and “servicer” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term “outstanding loan” means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) **OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.**—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower’s payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) **REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.**—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

**TEXT OF AMENDMENTS ON
JANUARY 15, 2014**

SA 2652. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1846, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE II—UNEMPLOYMENT PROVISIONS

SEC. 201. EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) **EXTENSION.**—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “January 1, 2014” and inserting “January 1, 2015”.

(b) **FUNDING.**—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting “and” at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

“(K) the amendment made by section 201(a) of the ‘Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2013’.”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 202. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111-5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking “December 31, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “December 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “June 30, 2015”.

(b) **EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.**—Section 5 of the

Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “June 30, 2015”.

(c) EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “December 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “December 31, 2014”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 203. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “through fiscal year 2014” and inserting “through fiscal year 2015”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 204. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking “June 30, 2013” and inserting “June 30, 2014”; and

(2) by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “December 31, 2014”.

(b) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board \$250,000 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. 205. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) FLEXIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before December 1, 2013, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after December 29, 2013.

(b) PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.—Nothing in such title IV shall preclude a State whose agreement under such

title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this Act if the State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on January 29, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a business meeting to consider the following legislation and nomination: S. 1448, to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydropower by the Grand Coulee Dam, and for other purposes; and the President's nomination of Vincent G. Logan to be Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Department of the Interior.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on January 29 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a legislative hearing to receive testimony on the following bill: S. 919, to amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to provide further self-governance by Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 10 a.m. in order to conduct a hearing entitled “Progress Report on Public Transportation Under MAP-21.”

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building. The committee will hold a hearing entitled “Locating 911 Callers in a Wireless World.”

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to conduct a Business Meeting on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 16, at 9:15 a.m. in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Review of the President's Climate Action Plan.”

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Advancing Congress's Trade Agenda: the Role of Trade Negotiating Authority.”

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a nominations hearing.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to conduct a hearing entitled “Strengthening Federal Access Programs to Meet 21st Century Needs: A Look at TRIO and GEAR UP” on

Thursday, January 16, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room 106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 16, 2014, at 10 a.m. in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at a time to be determined during first vote of the day in S-219 to consider pending nominations before the Committee.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 16, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to hold a closed hearing.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to Laura Markstein, a member of my staff.

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

NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 335.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 335) designating January 2014 as "National Mentoring Month."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to speak for just a minute in honor of National Mentoring Month. Senator ISAKSON and I have submitted a Senate resolution to pay tribute to the millions of men and women whose lives are enriched every day by mentoring in our country. I know we are going to get right back on the discussion on the Appropriations bill, but I want to take just a point of personal privilege for 2 or 3 minutes to talk about the fact that this is the 13th an-

niversary of National Mentoring Month, and today is Thank Your Mentor Day. With heartfelt gratitude, I would like to thank all of the mentors who serve in communities across Louisiana and all those who serve across the nation.

I wish to acknowledge and I am very grateful to the following Senators: Senator BALDWIN, Senator BROWN, Senator CARPER, Senator COCHRAN, Senator DURBIN, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator MURRAY, Senator RUBIO, Senator SCHUMER, Senator SCOTT, Senator WARREN, and Senator WYDEN, who co-sponsored our mentor resolution and have been real leaders in the mentorship movement.

In situations in which a young person is missing a caring, consistent presence, there is one simple intervention that can make all the difference: a good mentor. Research shows that mentoring improves academic achievement, self-esteem, social skills, and career development in children.

The U.S. has strong mentoring programs, but more are needed. More than 4.5 million young people in the U.S. are in formal mentoring relationships; however, there are a growing number of young people who need mentors but do not have them. More than one in three young people, about 16 million Americans, are in need of a mentor. More than half of those who are without a mentor are at-risk youth. There is a particular need for an increase in mentors for foster youth who perhaps more than anyone else could benefit from a steady, dependable mentor. Because foster youth tend to move from home to home and school to school, they often lack the consistent academic guidance and emotional support they need to succeed. We need more caring mentors for these at-risk youth.

We can all identify hundreds of young people or people of all different ages who are stepping up and doing an act of support and mentoring for a young person and who is making a real difference in their lives.

I wish to just point out four in Louisiana today.

One, as shown in this picture, is Lorita. She is serving 20 hours a week as a foster grandparent, working with special needs children at the James Ward Elementary School in Lake Charles, LA.

With Lorita's loving guidance, her student mentee went from a 47-percent skill mastery in math to 80 percent. That is a pretty significant jump. That is a life-changing improvement for that child and opens a real opportunity for future mentorship work.

One of my favorite mentor programs is the National Guard Youth Challenge Program, which started in Louisiana in 1993. The program opens its doors to young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who have dropped out of

school, in many instances have dropped out of their families. Their families have given up on them and they have given up on their families and in many instances they are headed nowhere but to either prison or to a homeless shelter or worse.

Our National Guard steps up and helps; doing all the amazing things our National Guard does here at home in peacetime and in war, they have also mentored over 15,000 young people in Louisiana in the last 20 years. We graduate from our three programs in Louisiana about 1,400 kids a year, each one with a mentor.

So I wish to give a shout out to the National Guard and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

Of course, a program we all support on both sides of the aisle is Big Brothers Big Sisters. There are three Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies, serving 871 at-risk youth in the State of Louisiana.

These are youth who include children of single parent families, those with a parent who currently may be incarcerated or children who have been involved in the juvenile justice system. We have a wonderful Big Brother Big Sister mentor here. Urmie is an outstanding Big Sister serving in Jennings, LA, who proudly says her most rewarding aspect of serving as a mentor is: Knowing I am making a difference in a young person's life.

Finally, our Big Buddy Program. Big Buddy is a leading community program in Baton Rouge, LA. It is national as well, supported broadly by Members of Congress and local officials. We in our program serve 700 disadvantaged youth each week.

One of their most dedicated mentors, John, has served since 2008 and is a product of mentoring.

John's father wasn't a presence in his life, so by his own admission, he lacked guidance growing up. However, he was blessed with some caring adults—his coach, teacher, and pastor—who stepped in to make sure he did not fall through the cracks.

Once into adulthood and established in his career, John felt the need to reconnect and give back to children who face adversity. John is now the proud mentor of two mentees: Bobby and Charles.

I encourage all Americans to seek out opportunities in their community to serve as a mentor, and I urge the public and private sectors to come together and create partnerships to close the mentoring gap.

With an increase in dedicated mentors like Lorita, Michael, Urmie, and John we can ensure that more young Americans are better prepared for school, work, and life.

Once again, please join me in celebrating January 2014 as National Mentoring Month and in honoring the millions of Americans who guide our

youngest citizens towards achieving their dreams.

Now I am going to end. But I do want to particularly say how proud I am of the Million Women Mentors which I find very exciting as a woman leader. I know the Presiding Officer will be thrilled to see the number of extraordinary businesses and organizations that are trying to identify 1 million mentors for girls in America to go into the field of science, technology, engineering, and math, which is a game changer for little girls and young women to think about careers such as science, technology, engineering, and math. There is often a need in our country for that skilled labor, so mentors are stepping up and filling in the gap.

I want everyone to be proud that today is a celebration of mentorship month. I thank Senator ISAKSON for joining me in supporting this effort.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 335) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 336.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 336) designating the first week of April 2014 as "National Asbestos Awareness Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 336) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1950

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told that S. 1950 is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1950) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for its second reading but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

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

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, January 16, through Monday, January 27, Senators LEVIN, WARNER, and ROCKEFELLER be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

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

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2014, THROUGH MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn and convene for pro forma sessions only with no business conducted on the following dates and times and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, January 17, at 11:15 a.m.; Tuesday, January 21 at 10:30 a.m.; and Friday, January 24 at 9:30 a.m.; that the Senate adjourn on Friday, January 24, 2014, until 2 p.m. on Monday, January 27, 2014; that on Monday, following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926, the flood insurance legislation.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the next rollcall vote will be Monday, January 27, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11:15 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:55 p.m., adjourned until Friday, January 17, 2014, at 11:15 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

STEPHEN R. BOUGH, OF MISSOURI, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI, VICE FERNANDO J. GAITAN, JR., RETIRING.
 RICHARD FRANKLIN BOULWARE II, OF NEVADA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA, VICE PHILIP M. PRO, RETIRED.
 SALVADOR MENDOZA, JR., OF WASHINGTON, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON, VICE LONNY R. SUKO, RETIRED.
 STACI MICHELLE YANDLE, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS, VICE JOHN PHIL GILBERT, RETIRING.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

GUSTAVO VELASQUEZ AGUILAR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE JOHN D. TRASVINA, RESIGNED.

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

JEROME H. POWELL, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM FOR A TERM OF FOURTEEN YEARS FROM FEBRUARY 1, 2014. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NINA HACHIGIAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.
 MATTHEW H. TUELLER, OF UTAH, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, VICE KAREN GORDON MILLS, RESIGNED.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

RICHARD CHRISTMAN, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2017. (REAPPOINTMENT)
 SHAMINA SINGH, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2014. VICE ALAN D. SOLOMONT, RESIGNED.
 SHAMINA SINGH, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 6, 2019. (REAPPOINTMENT)

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203(A):

To be captain

RUBY L. COLLINS
 MICHAEL W. WAMPLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C. SECTION 271(E):

To be lieutenant commander

WILLIAM C. ADAMS

LISA M. AGUIRRE
 SCOT C. ALBRECHT
 MICHAEL D. ANDERSON
 RYAN G. ANGELO
 MORGAN D. ARMSTRONG
 NICOLE D. AUTH
 LEE D. BACON
 AMMIE L. BALDWIN
 ARMELL V. BALMACEDA
 DAVID BARKALOW
 ALEXANDER S. BARKER
 PRESTON A. BARROW
 KEVIN A. BEAUDOIN
 MICHAEL A. BENSON
 TIMOTHY J. BERNADT
 RICHARD J. BIRBLAS
 JASON R. BLYTH
 JEREMY A. BOHN
 THOMAS R. BOLIN
 MICAH W. BONNER
 KURT F. BRANDSTAETTER
 JASON A. BUSTAMANTE
 MICHAEL J. CAGLE
 JASON R. CAMERON
 ACE V. CASTLE
 ADAM T. CERNOVICH
 NATHANIEL E. CHAMPLIN
 BRIAN M. CHAPMAN
 ALEXANDRA K. CHERRY
 RICHARD M. CHMIELECKI
 MUHAMMADALI N. COCHRAN
 LEAH M. COLE
 DANIEL K. COMUNALE
 CARA J. CONDIT
 NEAL A. CORBIN
 CHRISTOPHER H. COURTNEY
 JEFFREY D. COWAN
 TREVOR C. COWAN
 JEFFREY R. DAIGLE
 ADAM M. DAVENPORT
 ROBERT B. DAVENPORT
 JESSICA S. DAVILA
 KELVIN J. DAVIS
 JARROD A. DEIR
 KELLY A. DEUTERMANN
 RYAN P. DEVLIN
 TODD R. DEVRIES
 KRISTINA K. DEWINTER
 JESSE M. DIAZ
 JOHN R. DOGGETT
 PATRICK A. DRAYER
 TIFFANY A. DUFFY
 BROCK S. ECKEL
 STEVEN R. ELLIOTT
 KRISTOPHER R. ENSLEY
 TODD D. FARRELL
 MICHAEL G. FAULKNER
 JOEL S. FERGUSON
 JOHN A. FILIPOWICZ
 ROBERT F. FITZGERALD
 CHRISTOPHER A. FLOYD
 DAVID M. FRENCH
 GAVIN V. GARCIA
 CHRISTIAN C. GAUDIO
 SARAH J. GEOFFRION
 EMILY M. GIBBONS
 MICHAEL S. GLINSKI
 JUSTIN H. GORDON
 ANNA A. GRAFCHIKOVA
 JOSEPH F. GRAHAM
 DOUGLAS D. GRAUL
 MATTHEW E. GRAY
 MICHAEL P. GREENE
 MYLES J. GREENWAY
 ANDREW T. GREENWOOD
 JEREMY M. GREENWOOD
 MATTHEW A. GULLY
 JASON D. HAGEN
 KRISTEN A. HAHN
 PETER K. HAHN
 JONATHAN E. HANNAN
 CHAD E. HANSON
 JOSHUA B. HARRINGTON
 TODD E. HARTFIEL
 AMANDA R. HENDERSON
 DIRK E. HEPWORTH
 ROBERTO R. HERRERA

SCOTT M. HIGBEE
 GREGORY E. HIGGINS
 MICHAEL A. HJERSTEDT
 KENNETH E. HOGUE
 ANDREA M. HOLT
 DANIEL B. HOWE
 NATHAN R. HUDSON
 JUSTIN C. HUNT
 WILLIAM J. JACOBS
 BEAU J. JAMES
 JEFF G. JANARO
 JEANITA A. JEFFERSON
 SEAN P. JEHU
 WILL D. JOHNSON
 HANNAH K. KAWAMOTO
 MATTHEW M. KEENEY
 RYAN P. KELLEY
 KALEM M. KENNY
 JEREMY A. KIME
 MARVIN L. KIMMEL
 JOSEPH M. KLINKER
 SEAN J. KONECCI
 JAMIE L. KOPPI
 HEIDI L. KOSKI
 AARON J. KOWALCZK
 MARK E. LABERT
 MICHAEL W. LALOR
 JILLIAN M. LAMB
 RYAN L. LAMPE
 IGOR V. LANDYSHEV
 JON D. LANE
 MARC J. LANORE
 ADAM G. LEGGETT
 BRIAN S. LIED
 TONYA M. LIM
 KIRTLAND L. LINEGAR
 JEREMY D. LOEB
 LORI A. LOUGHRAN
 ASHLEY F. LOVEJOY
 GREGORY R. LYNCH
 DAVID S. MACCAFERRI
 BRYON J. MACE
 JOHN K. MACKINNON
 RHIANNA N. MACON
 JODY J. MAISANO
 PATRICK A. MARSHALL
 MARY E. MARTIN
 THOMAS P. MARTIN
 ROGER M. MASSON
 CHARLES R. MATTHIS
 CAMERON A. MCCAMPBELL
 AMY D. MCELROY
 WILLIAM T. MCGHEE
 GREGORY A. MCLAMB
 YANCEE L. MCLEMORE
 KEVIN J. MCQUILLEN
 CHRISTIAN T. MEDICK
 CHARLES A. MELLOR
 JEANINE M. MENZE
 GARRETT R. MEYER
 MICHAEL J. MEYER
 JASON A. MICHALCZAK
 ALLISON M. MIDDLETON
 JAMES R. MILLER
 JODI J. MIN
 ALEXANDER J. MOORE
 JOSEPH W. MORGANS
 JASON G. MORITZ
 GREGORY C. MOSKO
 GREGORY N. MOURITSEN
 ZACHARY M. MUNDY
 SEAN M. MURRAY
 JUSTIN P. NADOLNY
 THAO V. NGUYEN
 KEIDI M. NIEMANN
 MICHAEL J. NORDHAUSEN
 JOSHUA L. O'BRIEN
 ESTEVAN OLIVERA
 JENNIFER M. OSBURN
 CORRINA OTT
 JAMES H. PAFFORD
 ERIC C. PARE
 KALEB PEREZ
 SEAN M. PETERSON
 ARIEL E. PIEDMONT
 WALTER S. PIERCE
 STEPHEN W. PITTMAN

DAVID C. PIZZURRO
 CHRISTIAN T. POLYAK
 NICHOLAS R. PORTA
 JONATHAN H. POTTERTON
 THOMAS E. PRZYBYLA
 WAYNE E. REED
 JOSEPH R. REINHART
 LISA M. RODMAN
 WILLIAM B. ROGERS
 JOSE M. ROSARIO
 JOHNA N. ROSSETTI
 DANA E. RUPPRECHT
 BEN P. RUSSELL
 DANA E. SCHULMAN
 MARK E. SEAVEY
 MAX J. SEDA
 COURTNEY A. SERGENT
 MARIE L. SEVIN
 LISA M. SHARKEY
 JONATHAN D. SHUMATE
 DANIELLE M. SHUPE
 JOHN M. SINGLETARY
 JASON A. SMILIE
 JERRY L. SMITH
 MATTHEW B. SMITH
 TRAVIS R. SMITH
 BAXTER B. SMOAK
 DAVID N. SOLORZANO
 MATTHEW M. SPOLARICH
 CHARLES B. STANLEY
 JEFFREY J. SULLENS
 CHRISTINA D. SULLIVAN
 DANIEL B. SWEIGART
 LAURA M. SWIFT
 BRYAN J. SWINTEK
 JOSHUA M. TABOR
 MARIO B. TEIXEIRA
 MAILE I. TESLER
 PAUL D. TESSITORE
 CHAD R. THOMPSON
 RYAN J. TICKELL
 KELLEY L. TIFFANY
 BRYAN D. TILEY
 JASON E. TRICHLER
 HOWARD E. VACCO
 KELLY A. VANDENBERG
 ERIC A. VANVELZEN
 PEDRO L. VAZQUEZ
 JONATHAN R. WAECHTER
 JASON S. WARREN
 CHRISTIANE D. WEBER
 CHRISTOPHER L. WEBER
 ANDREW S. WEISS
 EUSTACIA Y. WEIST
 KYLE A. WEIST
 JENNIFER L. WESCOTT
 JUDSON B. WHEELER
 BRIAN R. WHISLER
 MICHAEL E. WHITTREDGE
 BRYAN P. WICK
 WILLIAM D. WICKLINE
 DUSTIN R. WILLIAMS
 JAMES E. WILLINGHAM
 JOSHUA D. WINE
 KEVIN L. WINTERS
 KISMET R. WUNDER
 ADAM K. YOUNG

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT
 IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED
 UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. PAUL W. TIBBETS IV

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF
 THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO
 THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY
 UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

STEPHEN E. FORSYTH, JR.
 ERIC J. FRYE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, January 16, 2014

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 16, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KEVIN YODER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They have faced difficult decisions in difficult times, but have labored hard to forge a significant compromise. As has been the testimony of history, difficult losses have been felt while possibilities for a more positive future have been created.

Bless our Nation, O God, that this legislation, as difficult as it has been to work out, will prove to be beneficial for us, and that our fellow citizens might know that all of us are responsible for creating a stronger community as a Nation.

Bless all who have labored so hard in these past days and weeks and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILMER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

CLEAN WATER IS A PRIORITY

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, for a week now, residents across the Kanawha Valley have been told not to use their tap water for any purpose. Businesses and schools have been closed for over a week. While things are returning to normal for some residents, tens of thousands of residents of West Virginia remain under a do-not-use water order due to a chemical leak from Freedom Industries into the Elk River which is upstream from the public water system, our water system.

For more than two decades, no government agency inspected this facility. Precious response time was lost because Freedom Industries did not immediately report the spill, and responders did not have sufficient information about the chemical.

We must examine our existing laws at all levels of government—local, State, and Federal—and find the gaps that allowed this spill to occur.

At my request, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing in Charleston to examine the causes of the spill, the response, and the actions that should be taken.

I want to thank the West Virginia National Guard, the West Virginia Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, first responders, and many, many West Virginians and volunteers across the State, along with our neighbors from neighboring States. But West Virginians were just amazing. We joined together to meet this challenge and have exemplified once again that Mountaineer spirit which we are very well known for.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, the evidence for climate change is over-

whelming, be it superstorms, megadroughts, migration of biological systems, the disappearance of historic glaciers, ocean acidification, or the melting of the polar ice cap. The potential for catastrophic change grows every year.

Unfortunately, House Republicans continue to push legislation that exacerbates climate change. Last year, Republicans reduced funding for the clean energy technologies, interfered with R&D at the Department of Energy, and prevented the EPA from addressing carbon emissions.

Our economy is expected to grow this year; and with that growth, carbon emissions will rise. The United States is a leader in technology and innovation. We should use this leadership as an opportunity to foster cooperation between public and private interests, to work together to provide low-cost, clean energy. Instead, it has been used by the House Republicans to bludgeon the EPA and to roll back the environmental gains of the past half century.

SUPPORTING COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, last week Hadi Partovi, co-founder of Code.org, testified in the Science Committee that by 2020 there will be 100,000 more computer science jobs in America than American students to fill them, and that women and minorities are underrepresented in these growing fields.

I have got 24,002 reasons to care about this: there are 24,000 open computing jobs in my State right now, and I have two little girls who will be entering into a workforce that will rely on skills in computing.

Right now, only 17 States accept computer science as a core math or science credit. That is why I support the Computer Science Education Act to fix this. According to an article in Education Week, in this last year in 11 States, not a single African American student took the AP computer science course; not a single Latino student in eight States, not a single female student in two States.

If we are going to compete and ensure all students can make it in America, we have got to close the participation gap and provide these opportunities in every State. We have got to step it up.

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

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

COMMEMORATING RICHMOND HEIGHTS' 65TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 65th anniversary of Richmond Heights, a community that from its very beginning fostered inclusion and respect.

I recently had the opportunity to read a great book, "Miami's Richmond Heights," which was written by Patricia Harper Garrett and her daughter, Jessica Garrett Modkins, good friends of mine. It chronicles the story of a community that was set up by Captain Frank Martin, a White Pan Am pilot, who bought the land in 1949, knowing that a lot of World War II veterans, African American World War II veterans, would be returning armed with the GI Bill, but unable to purchase homes. He created this community based on racial equality and inclusion. It is one of the great communities of my district.

The African American leadership that it inspired—folks like Canon Theodore Gibson, Reverend John A. Ferguson, who created the Second Baptist Church, and Senator Larcenia Bullard—that leadership has been passed on to others in Richmond Heights where today we have Senator Dwight Bullard and Reverend Alphonso Jackson.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I commemorate the 65th anniversary of Richmond Heights and Patricia Garrett's terrific book.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, on December 28, 1.3 million Americans lost their unemployment insurance because Congress failed to act. These families are struggling to put food on the table, to pay their bills, to heat their homes; and we have a responsibility to assist them in their time of need and as they continue to look for work.

But instead, Congress will go home today without taking action, and this is just outrageous. Every week that Congress ignores its responsibilities to our citizens, 72,000 more Americans lose their unemployment insurance, crucial assistance which not only supports them, but also our economy.

That is why I call on leadership to keep the House in session and to extend unemployment insurance now. We should stay here and do our job, for we are representing the people of America and those who we have a duty to serve. Let us stay here and make sure that Americans know that we have their back, that we are going to take care of them in their desperate time of need. I urge the House to stay in session and pass an extension to the unemployment insurance program.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

(Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have learned a lot in my first year in Congress, but I could serve here a lifetime and never understand how some Members could be so callous and so shortsighted that they are ready to cut off a lifeline for millions of Americans, including 137,000 New Yorkers.

These New Yorkers are hardworking people, like Stephen from Sugar Loaf, who wrote to me because he needs unemployment insurance to stay in his house; like Brenda in Fishkill, where she and her husband are both enrolled in retraining courses right now trying to get work and need this insurance just to make ends meet; like Johnine in Warwick, who lost her job to outsourcing, but still has to take care of her daughter; like Carol in Dutchess County, who may not be able to take care of her disabled husband without this assistance; like Ingrid from Highland Falls, who fought for her country in war and now has to worry about putting food on the table for her children.

We must renew unemployment insurance for people like these now because every week that goes by, there are 5,000 more people like Stephen and Brenda and Johnine and Carol and Ingrid. These aren't statistics. They are hardworking Americans, and they need this Congress to act, and act now.

HONORING CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER STOVER

(Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER asked and was given permission to address the House.)

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Captain Christopher Stover of Vancouver who was tragically killed last week in a military training accident near Salthouse, England. A 4.0 student at Evergreen High School, Captain Stover chose to serve his country and attend the United States Air Force Academy.

Captain Stover was a pilot of the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter and served tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. According to his family and friends, Chris had a passion for flying and he loved his job. A high school teacher said he was caring and nurturing and was known for fostering a strong sense of community. Not long ago, he visited an elementary school in Vancouver to thank a group of children who had sent him cards while he was overseas, and to tell them about his passion for flying.

He is survived by his wife, Sarah, and his parents, Maribel and Richard. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. We can never replace what you have lost, but on behalf of a grateful Nation, we

thank you; and we will always remember his service.

There is an Air Force Academy tradition for those graduates who pass away. It comes from the third verse of the Air Force song. I will carry on that tradition by saying:

Captain Stover, here's a toast.

EXCHANGE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3362.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 455, I call up the bill (H.R. 3362) to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to require transparency in the operation of American Health Benefit Exchanges, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 455, the amendment printed in part B of House Report 113-322 is adopted. The bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3362

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Exchange Information Disclosure Act".

SEC. 2. WEEKLY REPORTS ON HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGES.

Section 1311(c)(5) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18031(c)(5)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

"(C) not later than the first Monday after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, and each Monday thereafter through March 30, 2015 (or the next business day when Monday occurs on a Federal holiday), in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor, submit to Congress and make available to State governors, State insurance commissioners, and the public, a report concerning consumer interactions with the Internet website maintained by the Federal Government for health insurance coverage (healthcare.gov or any subsequent Internet site (or sites) that is established in whole or in part by the Federal Government to facilitate enrollment in qualified health plans, the receipt of advance premium tax credits or cost sharing reduction assistance, or comparisons of available qualified health plans) and any efforts undertaken to remedy problems that impact taxpayers and consumers, such report to include—

“(i) a State-by-State break down of—
 “(I) the number of unique website visits;
 “(II) the number of web chat logins;
 “(III) the number of individuals who create an account;
 “(IV) the number of individuals who have selected a qualified health plan;
 “(V) the number of individuals who enrolled in Medicaid, and, of such number, the number who became eligible to enroll because of changes in eligibility effected under this Act and the number who otherwise were eligible to enroll;
 “(VI) the number of individuals who have effectuated enrollment in a qualified health plan through payment of the first monthly premium;
 “(VII) the age of individuals who have effectuated enrollment in a qualified health plan through payment of the first monthly premium;
 “(VIII) the number of enrollees in each zip code; and
 “(IX) the level of coverage obtained;
 “(ii) a detailed description of the problems identified with website functionality, the actions that have been taken to resolve those problems, the identity of the contractors that are involved in such actions, the cost of such actions, how such actions are being paid for, and the names of the Federal officials responsible for overseeing the process; and
 “(iii) a description of the separate problems with the website, including problems relating to—
 “(I) logging into the website;
 “(II) enrolling in coverage;
 “(III) transferring to the State Medicaid programs;
 “(IV) the calculation of advance premium tax credits or cost sharing reductions;
 “(V) eligibility for qualified health plans, advance premium tax credits, cost sharing reductions, Medicaid, or the Children’s Health Insurance Program;
 “(VI) income or identity verification;
 “(VII) the transfer of information to health insurance issuers; and
 “(VIII) consumer privacy and data security; and
 “(D) not later than the first Monday after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, and each Monday thereafter through March 30, 2015 (or the next business day when Monday occurs on a Federal holiday), in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor, submit to Congress and make available to State governors, State insurance commissioners, and the public, a report concerning the Federally operated customer service call center, including the number of calls received by the call center, the Internet website or enrollment problems identified by users, how many calls are referred to the Centers for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, how many calls are referred to State insurance commissioners, and how many callers enrolled in a qualified health plan through the call center.”.

SEC. 3. DISCLOSURE OF NAVIGATOR AND CERTIFIED APPLICATION COUNSELOR GRANTEEES.

Section 1311(i) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18031(i)) is amended by adding at the end the following:
 “(7) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF LIST OF NAVIGATORS.—Not later than 5 days after the date of enactment of the Exchange Information Disclosure Act, the Secretary shall make available to Congress, State attorneys general, State insurance commissioners, and the public a list of all navigators and certified

application counselors that have been trained and certified by Exchanges, including contact information for all navigator entities and their partner organizations, including subcontractors. Such list shall be updated by the Secretary on a weekly basis through March 31, 2015.”.

SEC. 4. DISCLOSURE OF CERTIFIED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

Section 1312(e) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18032(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following flush sentence: “Not later than 5 days after the date of the enactment of the Exchange Information Disclosure Act, the Secretary shall make available on the Internet website maintained by the Federal Government for health insurance coverage (healthcare.gov or any subsequent Internet site (or sites) that is established in whole or in part by the Federal Government to facilitate enrollment in qualified health plans, the receipt of tax credits or cost sharing reduction assistance, or comparisons of available qualified health plans) a list of all agents and brokers who have been trained and certified by the Federal Exchange, including their name, business address (if available), and phone number. Such list shall be updated on a weekly basis through March 31, 2015.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 60 minutes, with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) each will control 20 minutes. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3362, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act. This bill is fundamentally about transparency. Since healthcare.gov’s disastrous launch, the public has received confusing and conflicting information about the site’s functionality and the number of individuals actually able to purchase insurance through the Web site.

□ 1015

States trying to enroll individuals in Medicaid and insurance companies trying to sign people up for private insurance have received incomplete and inaccurate applications from the Web site.

H.R. 3362 would require the Secretary of HHS to provide a State-by-State breakdown of the number of unique Web site visits, the number of individuals who create an account, the number of individuals who select a qualified health plan, and the number of individuals who enrolled in a qualified health plan or Medicaid. The report must also describe the problems Amer-

icans are encountering with the Web site and how HHS is addressing them.

The American people have a right to firm data and an accurate picture of the exchanges. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am afraid the bill before the House today, H.R. 3362, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act, is simply an effort by Republicans to continue to impede the efforts of the administration to implement the Affordable Care Act.

Transparency and enrollment information is important for Members of this body to receive. But this bill’s requirements on the Secretary go way above and beyond what I think is necessary and valuable information. This is just an attempt to pile so many requirements on the administration that they are taking away from the true job of enrolling people in the law.

Enrollment numbers and visitors to the site are important pieces of information, and we certainly all know that, but this bill is simply unnecessary. There is already extensive disclosure of data on health insurance enrollments being provided. The administration releases enrollment data monthly, just like they do with Medicare and the children’s health insurance program and other Federal programs. The monthly HHS enrollment reports are excellent, detailed reports. In fact, the newest HHS monthly enrollment report, which was issued this Monday, which covers enrollment through December, has even more extensive data than the two earlier monthly reports.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to providing data on total enrollments nationally and in the States, the latest report includes data both for the Nation and the States on, first, greater breakdown of those who have selected marketplace plans; second, age breakdown—I stress, age breakdown—of those who have selected marketplace plans; third, financial assistance status of those who have selected marketplace plans; and, lastly, a breakdown of the coverage level—or metal level—of the plans people have selected.

So these numbers show that there is a very strong demand for the quality, affordable coverage options now available to Americans because of the Affordable Care Act. More than 6 million Americans have now either signed up for a private health insurance plan or for Medicaid, including the nearly 2.2 million who signed up for private insurance through the marketplace. Nearly 1.8 million of these consumers signed up for private plans in December, and that is nearly five times as many people as signed up in October and November combined.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged and excited by these numbers. Americans aren’t going to the Web site

because they are forced to, like the Republicans claim. They are going to the Web site because they want and need access to health insurance. This should be no surprise. Thirty percent—nearly one in three—of people who have enrolled in a marketplace plan are younger than age 35; 24 percent are between 18 and 34 years old; and there was a more than eightfold increase in December enrollments in the Federal marketplace. In addition, more than 3 million young adults have gained coverage because the Affordable Care Act allows them to stay on their parents' plan until they turn 26. So we are getting more of the younger people as well.

Meanwhile, healthcare.gov and State Web sites have received more than 53 million visits, and State and Federal call centers have received more than 11 million calls.

The administration has committed to release this information monthly, the way they have done with every other Federal program to date. So I am sorry to say that I simply do not believe this is a serious effort in any sense of the word by Republicans. This bill is nothing but a weak effort to smear the law.

I urge Members to oppose the bill. There are only so many resources out there. Why would we want HHS to have to provide this excessive information? I would rather they spent their time trying to enroll people, doing more outreach, and encouraging people to sign up so that they actually have health insurance.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to oppose this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3362, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act.

This bill would require that HHS provide weekly progress reports regarding the President's health care law and attempt to ensure greater transparency from an administration that has done everything that it can so far to bury the facts when it comes to its signature health care law. Remember, this is the administration that knew millions of Americans would receive cancellation notices, but they only acted to allow people to keep their health care plans that they had and liked after we forced their hand back a few months ago. Perhaps by acting today we can again force them to do the right thing and share basic information with policymakers and the public about how the law is working or not.

In building healthcare.gov for the October 1 start of open enrollment, the administration chose not to allow Americans to window-shop and find ac-

curate and reliable prices of health care plans in the exchange.

Over the last 17 weeks since the law was launched, this administration has released enrollment figures on just a handful of occasions. We are still left asking the most important question: "Who's paid?"

Instead, the administration has gone to great lengths to redefine enrollment as the number of folks who have selected a plan through the exchanges. These numbers simply don't tell us the true status of the law, however. More than 3 months after the start of open enrollment, we still don't know how many Americans have actually enrolled in health plans by paying their first month's premium.

Just 1 day before the start of open enrollment, Secretary Sebelius defined success as enrolling 7 million Americans by the end of March of 2014. The administration has since distanced itself from enrollment being a measure of success at all. If enrolling individuals in health plans is not the goal, what is?

Preventing access to reliable data about the exchanges is not exactly what you would expect from the self-proclaimed "most transparent administration in history." It should not take a vote in Congress to get basic information from the administration, but without voluntary transparency, we don't have any other choice.

The bill before us would require HHS to provide accurate, useful figures about enrollment and the operation of the exchanges on a weekly basis. It also is going to require HHS to report to the American people other key metrics, including demographics of enrollees, Medicaid enrollment, regular reporting on ongoing problems with healthcare.gov, and HHS' efforts to address those issues.

The President's health care law will cost the taxpayers an estimated \$2 trillion over the next decade. At the very least, the administration should provide the American people regular and ongoing information about its implementation. There is no reason for the administration to keep the public and the Congress in the dark. Whether the news is good or bad, it is time for full disclosure.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I applaud Mr. TERRY for his leadership.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina, G.K. BUTTERFIELD, a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you, Mr. PALLONE, for yielding time, and especially thank you for your leadership on our committee. It has been nothing less than extraordinary.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the Exchange Information Disclosure Act. This bill would

cost millions of dollars of limited Federal resources but doesn't include any mechanism for paying for it. It is an unnecessary piece of legislation that will have no impact or benefit to the American people. It is just the latest attempt by the Republican majority to incite fear and distrust of the Federal health insurance marketplace and discredit President Obama and the Affordable Care Act.

Washington Post columnist Greg Sargent wrote that the Exchange Information Disclosure Act is "a political attack coming from a party that wants to see the law fail." The House has voted 47 times, Mr. Speaker, on bills that would repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act, but not one of them has become law.

My friend Mr. TERRY's bill that we are considering today marks the 48th attempt, and it is another nail in the coffin of haphazard Republican efforts to disenfranchise the American people by chipping away at the Affordable Care Act, with the ultimate goal of taking away Americans' access to affordable health care.

Make no mistake, this bill is not about transparency and open government. Its true purpose is to pile on more and more unnecessary, cumbersome, and unprecedented requirements so that HHS will be forced to focus time and attention away from managing the Federal health insurance marketplace and redirect it to completing worthless weekly reports.

I am particularly disappointed in the committee process—or more accurately, the lack of committee process—with regard to this bill. I sit on Energy and Commerce's Health Subcommittee, and at no point did the chairman of the subcommittee nor the full committee hold a legislative hearing or markup on this bill. I don't recall one. Surely, adding mountains of onerous reporting requirements that will cost the government millions in order to comply would have warranted an opportunity for members to weigh in before it was brought to the floor. Apparently, the chairman of the committee felt differently.

This bill is now the 48th example of House Republicans pandering to their base by ramming through partisan policies that attack the President. The bill would require HHS to supply Congress weekly reports detailing the number of unique Web site visitors to healthcare.gov, the number of chat logins, the number of enrollees by ZIP Code, their level of coverage, and other data sets. What exactly my friends hope to accomplish with this weekly data dump still escapes me.

Perhaps House Republicans weren't aware of the extensive disclosure of data on health insurance enrollments that is already being provided on a monthly basis. The administration releases enrollment data monthly, Mr.

Speaker, just like they do with Medicare, CHIP, and other Federal programs.

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. The monthly HHS enrollment reports are excellent, detailed reports. Weekly reports will shed no more light on enrollment in the health exchange than would monthly reports.

The bill also demands that HHS make publicly available a list of navigator grantees. Were my colleagues unaware that the Department released the entire list of navigator grantees back in October? I have those here for your inspection.

I will say it again: this bill is completely unnecessary, and it is Republican fear mongering. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is the law of the land. I ask my colleagues to embrace it. It is benefitting millions of Americans in my district and in your district as well.

Thank you for the time, Mr. PALLONE.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY), the prime sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, to clarify one thing, we did have a legislative hearing on this bill with robust debate on it in that committee hearing. Evidently, you didn't get the notice of that hearing.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TERRY. No, I only have 3 minutes. If I have extra time, I will.

Today we are taking what should be an easy vote and, frankly, a bipartisan vote.

My legislation, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act, does nothing more than ask the administration to provide Congress, Governors, State insurance commissioners, and the American people with information.

By the way, the information that is outlined in this bill to be provided or accessible on a weekly basis is simply what most States already require to be done by health insurance companies within their States. This is a request by State insurance commissioners, especially ours from Nebraska that are very frustrated with the lack of information that they are receiving about who is signing up for what plans in the State of Nebraska.

This should be easy. What we are talking about here today is basic transparency so we all have the data to assess what is working and what is not. This bill is a mechanism for accountability so we can get the answers that both Democrats and Republicans and State insurance commissioners and Governors need to know in order to un-

derstand what is working and what is not.

We are asking for information that an entity overseeing a health insurance operation should have at the tip of their fingers at all times.

□ 1030

Our metrics are not complex. We are simply asking for: How many people have enrolled? How many of these people have paid their first month's premiums, which means they are actually insured, that they have been effectuated? What plans did they pick? What ZIP Codes are they from so we know if people from Nebraska or Iowa or Kansas have signed up? Were they already eligible for Medicare or are these new enrollees from the expansion? These are critical issues in determining the safety and soundness of the policies being issued, and is, again, information that State insurance commissioners usually receive.

This administration and some on the other side say that this information that we are requesting is extraneous and costly and burdensome, but yet this data is already being obtained; it is already on a realtime basis being calculated. It is just the issue of when and in what form this is released to the public. As to cost, here is the CBO score—zero—not the millions that we are being told by our friends on the other side of the aisle and the White House. This is necessary, usual course of business data.

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

Mr. PITTS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. TERRY. We do add another part in here and another frustration from our State insurance commissioners, which is that they don't know who is selling the insurance. They would like to have the names of the people who are the navigators out there. Grants go to organizations, but we don't know who is actually sitting down and selling policies or helping them through the exchange. That is, again, basic information that is the normal course of business in the insurance world. We are just asking that they provide the same information that the State law would require of an insurance company that has had a salesman who is out signing people up.

So that is the totality of this bill, and you have to ask the question: If they are fighting so hard, what are they trying to hide?

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, supporters of this legislation claim that it is simply an effort to get more information about how the Affordable Care Act is being imple-

mented, but it is not really that. It is an effort to slow down the implementation of the new law by drowning the Department of Health and Human Services in red tape.

They want enrollment information, but this week, they got enrollment information from the administration. That enrollment information showed that 2.2 million Americans have signed up for private coverage. They want demographic information. HHS has given them demographic information. HHS is going to release all of the information that they are asking for every month, but the Republicans say, "Oh, that is not good enough. We want it every week." They want more than what otherwise might be available to them because they want to know some things that I can't understand why they would want to know them.

They want to know the ZIP Codes of everybody who has signed up. They want to know what the details are of a chat between somebody who is asking a question on the Web site and what answers he got. I can't understand why that is important. They want to know what transpired in the call centers. In other words, they want to know what somebody said in a call center. Is it their business to know what questions are asked in a call center? They want a list of the people who are the adjusters and the brokers. There are thousands of them around the country, so there is no purpose to knowing that. They are not accredited by the government. If they are by the States, it is up to each State. They could ask each State that information.

Let me put this in perspective.

If anybody had a bill asking the private sector to come up with reports every single week on information that they could wait a couple of more weeks to get, it would be looked at as just straight harassment, government red tape, bureaucracy that is intruding into the business for no purpose. That is what this bill is all about. They want to intrude in a government agency. I guess, if they have a bureaucratic intrusion and the harassment of a government agency, it is okay, but if it were to happen to a private sector business, it would be inappropriate. If we asked polluters this information, you could get the information. If you asked them to give you the information every week, why do you need it every week?

I ask the Republicans: Why do they need this every week if they are going to get it every month?

It is obvious. This law is working, and they don't want to come again to the floor and ask for its repeal because people have insurance. Millions of people now have insurance. If they want to repeal the law, they are going to take that insurance away from them.

They want to continue to say: What are they hiding? What are they hiding

that they are not giving you on a weekly schedule but that they are giving you on a monthly schedule?

Absolutely nothing that is significant. The enrollment reports we already have indicate that over 6 million people have signed up for coverage since October 1. The Web site can handle 80,000 simultaneous users, and it has been stable even though there was a surge of enrollment in late December.

The law is working. Republicans don't want to hear these facts. They don't want to know about it, but they think they should get everybody at HHS—maybe even have them hire more people—to report to them every week so they can still not recognize that there is good news in what is actually happening.

This is a goofy bill—it is absolutely unnecessary—and I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, we hear the words “sign up,” “signed up,” “equal to enrollment.” We may know how many people have signed up. We do not know how many have actually enrolled and have paid their first month's premiums. Secondly, we are stewards of the taxpayers—we are not shareholders—and the lack of data is precisely what led the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee to declare this law as a train wreck in that there are no metrics, no data, to determine whether this law is working and on track.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. SARBANES. I thank the chairman of the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge a “no” vote on H.R. 3362, which, I think, is really just designed to harass the Department of Health and Human Services as it is trying to do its job in bringing affordable health care to people all across this country.

If you look at the metrics that are already being assembled by the agency on a monthly basis, they really present a very clear picture of whether there is progress being made or not being made with respect to the Web site and signing people up for affordable health care, and of course, we know that there is a lot of progress being made. That monthly report includes the total enrollments nationally and by State so that we can get a clear picture of what that trend is, and that is a positive trend. It includes a gender breakdown of those who have signed up for the plans, an age breakdown, the financial assistance, and what kinds of plans people are choosing. That is all good, useful information. Frankly, it is the kind of information that it makes sense to collect on a monthly basis, not

on a weekly basis. I mean, these numbers sort of naturally evolve month to month. That is the picture, the photograph, you want to take—month to month. Week to week doesn't really get you any added insight into what is happening with the Web site or with the signups.

Then look at some of the information that they would require on a weekly basis, and you have got to ask yourself: What purpose would it serve, a State-by-State breakdown—I am reading from the bill now—of the number of Web chat logins? What are we going to do with that information? That is not useful. That does not add anything to the clear picture that can emerge on a monthly basis of how we are doing with the Web site.

Finally, I have to observe, as Ranking Member WAXMAN just did a moment ago, that we hear all the time from our friends on the other side about the importance of government efficiency and about working well and streamlining. We hear them talk about that both with respect to government and, obviously, in terms of what they want to do for private sector businesses out there. These kinds of requirements don't help with that. They are not going to make the agency function more smoothly and more efficiently and get the information out in a sensible way to the American people.

This is really just designed to kind of harass the agency, to make them run around in small circles, gathering information and providing stuff that doesn't give us any added perspective or insight into the progress that really is now being made. We can get that picture on a monthly basis. The information that HHS is providing to us and to the public—to the American people—I think, is very valuable on that monthly basis, and that is the way we ought to continue to have it presented to us and presented to the American people.

So I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 3362. Let's let the agency do its job and do it well.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, opponents of the Exchange Information Disclosure Act have argued that requiring weekly reports on the health care law to the American people is too burdensome, too costly for the Department of Health and Human Services. Yet, somehow, HHS managed to find money in its budget for taxpayer-funded grants spent on such things as bike lane signs, dog neutering campaigns, promoting a sport called “pickleball,” and lobbying campaigns for soda taxes. Clearly, HHS does not suffer from a lack of resources.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, may I just ask how much time remains.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has 5 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS), who has spent so much effort in passing and drafting the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. ANDREWS. I thank my friend from New Jersey for his tireless leadership on this very important cause. It is inspirational.

Mr. Speaker, since the Affordable Care Act became law, 9 million Americans have health insurance who did not have it before—9 million people. Now, not surprisingly, there have been problems in the implementation of the law. Many customer service problems need to be addressed, and we should come together in good faith and make sure they get addressed. This bill takes us in the opposite direction. It says that people who could be working on solving the very real and important problems of customers who are trying to enroll in health insurance will have to write a report once a week instead of once a month.

If you go to get your car fixed and if there is a long line of people ahead of you and if you are going to be late to get back to work and if you find out the reason the line takes so long is that the person at the counter explains the history of the carburetor to every person who comes to pick up his car instead of waiting on the people who are in line, requiring a report a week instead of a report a month just doesn't make any sense.

There is another reason to oppose this bill, though, that is even more important than that. Today, 10,000 Americans will go home and tell their children or their loved ones that they have run out of income because their unemployment benefits have expired. This week, 72,000 Americans will have that happen to them. There is a bill in this House, on this floor, that could be taken up this morning and voted on to provide relief to our neighbors and family members who are in that position. This majority leadership has ignored that legislation.

This is a breathtaking misplacement of priorities. We can spend an hour of the House's time on harassing Health and Human Services into filing one report every week instead of one report every month, but we can't take 5 minutes and debate on a bill that will restore a measure of decency and income to 72,000 Americans a week. Many of these Americans are over 50 years old. For every one job that is advertised there are three people looking for that job. The callous indifference of the House majority leadership to these people is just wrong—and so is this bill.

We should reject this bill and, instead, proceed with a vote on aid to America's long-term unemployed.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the vice chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

□ 1045

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for the great work that he has done on this bill.

What is so interesting and one of the reasons we find it necessary to come and address these issues is Secretary Sebelius told us in December that 5,000 people a day were getting access to health care that they had not had before.

The other side of that story, which was not told, is 74,000 American families a day were getting cancellation notices. They were looking at one another across the dinner table and saying, Guess what, our insurance has been canceled.

It has had a devastating effect. And as we try to do oversight and due diligence and continue to push for that oversight and due diligence and carry it out, even this morning at the Energy and Commerce Committee, where we had Mr. COHEN, what we have found is it is very difficult to get information, even when we are sometimes hearing from employees admitting what they told us was wrong; but then we do not get the straight story.

So it is very appropriate that we require HHS to release weekly detailed reports about the exchanges, including their enrollment, their functionality, and efforts to address the technical issues at healthcare.gov.

It is absolutely appropriate because this is all being done with the taxpayers' money. The American taxpayers have paid for every bit of this. It is not the Federal Government's money. It is not President Obama's money. It is not Congress' money. It is the taxpayers' money. This is a failed rollout and a failed program.

This administration was supposed to be the most transparent administration in history. It has not been that. It is well documented that it hasn't been. Indeed, the rollout and the implementation of this law have been even less transparent. The reason, I think, is because there have been so many problems, such as millions of Americans losing access to their health insurance.

None of the information being shared by the administration regarding enrollment means much of anything. We talk about people that enrolled, but we don't know how many people have paid and how many people have completed that process. What are the demographics of the individuals that are enrolling?

All of this is information that the individual that is paying for this—the American taxpayer—deserves to know.

Who has paid for this insurance? The White House has backed away from using any measure of enrollment as a means to determine success.

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

Mr. PITTS. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. As recently as September, Secretary Sebelius herself said that 7 million enrolled by the end of March would define success of the law. Well, is that 7 million that go to the Web site, put an insurance product in their cart, and then go think about it?

Mr. Speaker, when I was growing up, I spent a lot of time working in the retail industry selling clothes in a little dress shop. Every once in a while we would have somebody that would come in and put something on hold. They would say, I'm going to be back.

Well, we called them the "be-backs" because, guess what, more often than not, they did not come back and complete that purchase. Yes, they put it on hold. Yes, they put it in an online shopping cart. But then they move away from it because this program is broken, it is too expensive to afford, and the American people do not want it.

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. CASSIDY, a very active member of the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, I kind of keep asking myself why we would not want to provide transparency.

If the Federal Government is going to impose a massive bureaucratic regime involving the American people, why should we not at least require them to be accountable for the success or failure of that regime?

The Exchange Information Disclosure Act requires accountability and transparency, which has been, frankly, elusive from the administration on these issues. And, indeed, before committees and before Americans there has been a tendency to give information which is misleading.

For example, enrollment numbers are calculated by the numbers who sign up for coverage, not those who actually pay for their first month's premium. In reality, unless you pay for that first month's premium, you are not enrolled. Coverage does not become effective until these are paid; and history shows many will sign up who will never actually enroll.

The American people are affected by this. They are paying for it. We are their employees, so to speak. They pay our salary. They have a right to know, and the only way to know is to see the results.

I keep on smiling in kind of an angry sort of way when I think about those folks who came to testify about the Web site.

Two weeks before it was to open, we were told that it was ready and that there were no problems. I specifically asked if the Spanish-language Web site was ready. Oh, yes, there's no problem. We can just stand it up.

In truth, none of that was true. The only way we learned it was not true

was when the numbers came out, it was clear that folks were not enrolling. So everything we had been told was exposed as a lie, and yet we would not have known had we not seen those enrollment figures.

Compliance should not be difficult. Insurance companies know on a daily basis how many people have clicked on, how many people have signed up, how many checks they receive. Insurance companies know this on a daily basis. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government can tell the American people these results on a weekly basis.

The Exchange Information Disclosure Act is a commonsense piece of legislation that all my colleagues who champion transparency and accountability should support. All it does is ensure full disclosure of the most important data points needed to determine what is really going on with the President's health care law's implementation.

It is vitally important for the public, and it is vitally important for us as we attempt to do the American people's will in our oversight of the program.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, we are told that the Exchange Information Disclosure Act is just a good-faith effort to try to get some transparency. But wait, isn't this bill coming from the same party that shut the government down to try to kill it? Didn't that just happen?

My memory is not faint about it. My memory is very clear that we stood here watching the Republican majority shut down all of government to prevent people from health care access.

And now we are supposed to believe, Oh, we just want to make the bill a little better with transparency. No. What has happened is that millions of people are signing up. People know that if you snatch a benefit from people that they have—and expect to have—that is going to cause issues. And so now the tactics have changed. Instead of an overt 50th repeal bill, now we will just try to undermine it by making a bunch of paper requirements—more distraction, more paperwork, more division, more obstruction.

I think I prefer the days when we just had repeal bills.

Vote "no" on this bill.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, again, this GOP bill is designed to harass the Department, preventing it from doing its job. It is an unworkable, unnecessary bill that places onerous, unrealistic, and costly reporting requirements on HHS, with no benefit to the general public.

I heard my colleagues say over and over again, Oh, nobody is going to enroll. Now people are enrolling, and they

say they want to know whether they paid or not.

Where does it end? Why don't you spend your time trying to get people to enroll, trying to give people information and do more outreach so people actually are able to get health insurance? That is what we are trying to do with the Affordable Care Act—make people who don't have insurance get insurance, make people who do have it, have it more affordable and have a better benefit package.

All these things are wonderful. This is what people want. That is why so many people are, in fact, signing up. And I just cannot help but think that this is nothing but another effort to make it more burdensome, to scare people to make it less likely that people actually enroll.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention that the administration opposed the bill. The administration said that they oppose the passage because it would require unfunded, unprecedented, and unnecessary reporting requirements that exceed those of other public and private programs.

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, as Secretary Sebelius acknowledged at an Energy and Commerce hearing in December, enrollment in an exchange plan is not complete until the first month's premium has been paid.

The administration, so far, has refused to tell the American people how many people are actually enrolled by paying their first month's premium in the health care law's exchanges.

Asking the Department to provide the American people regular updates is simply a matter of transparency. Given that HHS officials were so blatantly wrong about the readiness of the health care law's exchanges, they don't deserve the benefit of the doubt.

Regular disclosure is necessary to assess the status of the law, and that is all this bill requires. Let's make the administration, who has continually held back facts regarding implementation of the health care law, meet their pledge to be the most transparent in history.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3362, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act. There is widespread agreement that the ObamaCare rollout was a failure. Most of us believe the administration's lack of transparency and candor with Congress and the American people caused most of the problems.

Since the beginning of the rollout, I have pressed the administration to release enrollment data to Congress. That data, including who is actually

enrolling and what the mix of those who signed up looks like, are the kinds of hard facts we need before us to evaluate how this fundamental restructuring of our health care is really operating.

Yet the administration did not provide that long-promised transparency. Instead, I was forced to subpoena the administration to get any information. While I received some of what I requested, it is not enough for Congress to understand the true impact of this law.

It is clear that, more than halfway through the enrollment, the administration is failing to meet its own goal of 7 million enrollees by March 31.

Last week, the administration released data that showed it has failed to meet an even more important goal—the right mix of young and healthy enrollees. The reality is that you need a good balance of young and healthy individuals in order to offset the more expensive costs of those who are older and less healthy.

Without enough young and healthy enrollees, millions of Americans, including those who have had their plan canceled as a result of the President's broken promise, will see higher costs and fewer choices. With the little data we have, we can see this is actually what is happening.

The American people deserve better than the administration's empty promises. They deserve to know what is really going on. Additionally, the administration has not provided any information on the number of people who have completed enrollment. We don't know how many people have paid their premium.

Taxpayers don't know how many people are receiving tax credits. There is no harm to national security if the administration provides this information to Congress, the media, and the American people; but there may be harm to an individual's health security if their interests aren't protected.

Frankly, I believe this administration cares more about implementing this law than protecting the health care of American families.

The American people have every right to know this information and the future of their health care. Having this data will not change the President's broken promise that "if you like your plan, you can keep it," or his promise that families will see a \$2,500 reduction in their premiums.

□ 1100

However, it will undoubtedly affect Americans' health care future. This is not just arbitrary data. This information will determine how much premiums will increase next year, whether access to care will become more limited, how many insurers may no longer offer coverage, and whether or not you can keep seeing your current doctor.

This administration's failed rollout has given the American people little confidence that they can effectively oversee the overhaul of one-sixth of the economy. What possible reason, other than politics, could there be for the administration not releasing this information? This is data that Congress and the American people deserve to know and that the administration should readily and willingly provide.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill today, and I call on the Senate to take quick action to move this commonsense legislation forward.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think informed people are asking why are we taking up this bill this morning. I guess one reason is the Republicans will do anything they can to undermine ACA. Indeed, the more it is successful, the more desperate they become.

The administration says it quite clearly:

To implement this new reporting system, contracts may need to be modified and new staff would need to be hired on an expedited basis, adding millions of dollars in costs to States and the Federal Government, without additional funding from the Congress, for information that is already largely being provided on a monthly basis, consistent with other publicly funded health care programs.

Maybe a second reason we are taking up this bill is because the Republicans in this House think there is nothing else to do. This bill is going nowhere in the Senate, and you know that. You know that. But there is something else that we should be doing.

We are leaving here for 11 days. The House Republicans have said we are not going to be in session next week. 1.5 million Americans have lost their unemployment insurance because of inaction from this House of Representatives. Next week, 72,000 more will be added to the 1.5 million people, 50,000 in the State from which Mr. CAMP and I come, 50,000 left out in the cold—left out in the cold—left, really, to their own devices, without a single bit of assistance that they really worked for. These are people out of work through no fault of their own, looking for work, and essentially they get, from this institution, action this morning on a bill going nowhere when there is somewhere we should be going.

I think this morning represents maybe more vividly than in recent times a reprehensible distortion of priorities of the majority in this House. There are 50,000 people in Michigan looking for work at a time when there remains a historically high percentage of the unemployed who are long-term unemployed. There are three people looking for work for every job that is available. And we come forth here with a bill that is going nowhere? Reprehensible. Inexcusable. You can go home.

I suggest you go home and talk—I guess you haven't done this yet—to the long-term unemployed. Every single person who votes for this bill should go home and talk to those out of work and out of luck, because the majority in this institution, in this House, are simply out of synch with the needs of the American people.

We shouldn't vote "no" on this bill, because we need the opportunity to vote "yes" on what really matters.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. CAMP. I thank the Chair for that admonition, and I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, since the launch of open enrollment and healthcare.gov on October 1, I have heard repeated stories of frustration from my constituents trying to enroll in the Federal exchanges.

The President and his administration have tried to assure us time and again that the Web site is improving and that Americans are enrolling.

Unfortunately, neither the stories I have been told, nor the claims of this administration, are easy to verify because HHS is giving us very little data to go off of. Now, that is a shame, because one of the greatest constitutional obligations of the legislative branch is robust oversight of the executive branch—to be sure that laws are working and being enforced as intended.

But there is an even bigger shame here. In August of 2013, HHS estimated that approximately 900,000 individuals in my home State of Indiana were uninsured. This week, HHS offered us a progress report. Now, can you guess how many Hoosiers, according to this report, actually selected a plan through healthcare.gov as of December 28? Only 30,000. Now, that means, according to the HHS estimates, the Obama administration estimates 29 out of every 30 uninsured Hoosiers have not selected a plan through healthcare.gov.

That 30,000 figure, by the way, is suspect in itself, to put it charitably. Since HHS is only reporting those who put a plan in a shopping cart, we don't know how many actually went through with the purchase.

Now, with a big deadline coming up for the individual mandate tax penalty, it is imperative that Congress understands exactly how many people are in compliance with the law. Merely selecting a plan won't help you avoid being taxed by the IRS.

That is why I am a strong supporter of the Exchange Information Disclosure Act. The Obama administration should be required to provide the American people and Congress weekly

reports on the status of healthcare.gov. They should be required to tell us how many are actually purchasing plans. They should be required to tell us all sorts of additional data points they are already tracking that will help Congress perform our oversight role on behalf of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure here in the House and, hopefully, in the Senate.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), a member of our committee.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, it is a shame we are not up here considering an extension of the unemployment insurance. American families are looking for some kind of sign that their Congress isn't going to leave town without extending unemployment insurance, and I don't think they are amused by this 48th attempt to undermine health care in our country.

The fact is the legislation before us is supposedly all about the numbers. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are fixated on the numbers behind the Affordable Care Act. They seem to think they will find numbers that somehow discredit the law and the important benefits it provides. But you know what? It is true that numbers tell an important story, so here are some numbers that actually matter for the American people:

Nine million, that is how many people have already obtained health insurance under the Affordable Care Act—9 million. It is also 9 million people who don't have to worry that a major medical incident could bankrupt them and their families;

Twenty-five million, that is how many seniors on Medicare received free preventive care last year because of the Affordable Care Act—25 million. That is 25 million seniors who can get a mammogram or a cholesterol screening without financial barriers, so that serious diseases can be caught and treated earlier, saving taxpayers' dollars;

Eight million—big number, 8 million—that is how many jobs have been created in this country since the passage of the Affordable Care Act—8 million. That is more than twice as many jobs created than were lost during the 10 years before the Affordable Care Act was enacted.

These are just some of the numbers that tell the true story of the Affordable Care Act, not to mention the number of people with preexisting conditions who can no longer be discriminated against, or the seniors who are seeing reduced prices on their prescription drugs, or the small business owners who now have a way to provide insurance for themselves and their employees.

These are the numbers. These are the numbers that matter to me because the Affordable Care Act is about helping the American people afford care in this country.

So my colleagues on the other side of the aisle can go and play their numbers games as long as they want, but their fixation doesn't add up. These numbers do.

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, how much time is left on either side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, what we are engaged in today is what I call loving a bill to death. Every legislator knows how you do it. You load it up with a bunch of stuff to kill it. They are still trying to do this. They are not talking about transparency or accountability. It is simply another plan to muck up the path to better health for Americans.

It is not surprising, because the House Republicans don't want a health care system that works any more than they want a balanced budget. If they wanted a balanced budget, they wouldn't push for health care policies that cost more to get less.

America spends more on health care than any other advanced nation, and we get worse outcomes. Let me tell you one of the reasons for that. We spend less on social services. Instead of helping people afford good food to stay in shape, we cut food stamps. Instead of supporting families who care for their parents in the comfort of their home, we force them to push them into nursing homes. Instead of helping people to stay in their homes, instead of strengthening the bridge between job and new career, we pull the rug out from under them.

And right now, every 8 seconds, another American loses his unemployment insurance. While I am speaking, 15 families will lose their way of supporting themselves.

Where do these people go? How do they stay healthy? Is it any wonder our diet is full of what we call comfort food? And is it any wonder that we are the most anxious country in the world? Is it any wonder that the ER has become more common than the doctor's office?

We can pay now. We can invest in a country where people have jobs. We can help people keep their homes and care for themselves, or we will pay later in skyrocketing health care costs and the economic drag of a sick nation.

□ 1115

If Republicans wanted a health care system that works, we would be investing, not wasting our time in forcing States and the Federal Government to spend more on useless bureaucracy.

Nobody is asking for this. Maybe the insurance companies want to have more data. I don't know. But nobody who is administering this program has said, Let's have more reports. We don't know enough.

It is like babies; you don't weigh them every day to see if they have gained weight. You take them in every couple of months or every month to get the baby checked. That is what we are doing here already. And they say, No, let's do it every day. Let's do it every week. Let's waste more time and money.

Vote "no" on this wasteful, destructive bill.

Mr. CAMP. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the reason this legislation is important is that, from what little information we do have, we know the administration is not meeting their stated goals, and they are not on track to meet 7 million people by March 31. We don't know the mix of people that have enrolled. We don't know how many of them are young and healthy. We don't know how many of them have paid a premium. The reason these things are important for us to know and to track is, this is a big deal. This is one-sixth of the American economy. There is probably no legislative area that affects people more than their health care.

The reason we have to know this information is because if they aren't meeting their stated goals and their projections in terms of the cost of this bill, it could mean that people's premiums skyrocket next year. It could mean that the physician that they are used to seeing and being treated by, many times for an ongoing illness, may not be available to them under their insurance plan.

So these are important issues. These are important benchmarks for us to know. It is important for the American people to know. It is important for the media to know. Because then, if we can understand what is really happening as we are in the middle of this, constructive changes could be made to this bill. What they want to do is keep us in the dark. They say vote "no." Make sure we don't know what is going on, and then we will have a health care crisis even greater than the one we have now.

So I urge a "yes" vote on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Exchange Information Disclosure Act. This legislation is needed because of what we know and what we do not know.

Congress has repeatedly asked this administration for information about the rollout of

Obamacare. We know this administration is not transparent. We know this administration has not been forthcoming or willing to acknowledge problems. The administration repeatedly came before Congress and testified the exchange was ready. Now know the federal exchange was not ready and there is mounting evidence just how early the administration knew.

We know enrollment is in serious trouble. Based on the Administration's projections, December enrollment was over 1 million people below their own goal. At the current pace, enrollment for 2014 will fall over 2.4 million people short of the Administration's own projections. They project they need 38 percent of enrollees to be young and healthy, so far only 24 percent are. We know, without the right demographic mix premiums will continue to go up.

This is what we know. But there is a lot we do not know.

We do not know how many people have completed enrollment by actually paying premiums. We need this information to understand just how bad the problem really is. The administration has been unwilling to regularly release data about enrollments; instead we get limited, sterilized data of the administration's choosing provided on seemingly random dates.

Our health care system is facing a crisis, and Congress needs to be a full partner with the Administration in fixing this disaster. For that, we need the raw data, we need the hard truths and we need to know what the administration knows, when they know it. This bill requires weekly reports of all of the important data. This bill is needed if Congress is going to be able to do its job for the American people.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3362. It's very important for the administration to disclose data on enrollments in coverage through the health care Marketplaces, at the same frequency as it does for Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and other federal programs. In fact, Monday's monthly report provided extensive national and State-by-State data for December, breaking it down by gender, age, and financial assistance status of new enrollees, as well as the levels of coverage selected. Today's bill is not about enhancing data disclosure in the Marketplaces. Rather, its goal appears to be to tie the hands of State and federal agencies with unnecessary, unrealistic requirements, and delay their efforts to enroll people in quality, affordable coverage. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 455, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. I am.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3362 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the bill back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end of the bill the following new section:

SEC. 5. DISCLOSURE OF LOWER COSTS AND ADDITIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS PROVIDED TO INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES.

Not later than 5 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every month thereafter through March 2015, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress and make available to State governors, State insurance commissioners, and the public a report containing information, with respect to individuals and families enrolling in health insurance coverage through an Exchange established under title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, on each of the following:

(1) The number of such individuals and families who have received premium tax credits or have lower out-of-pocket costs.

(2) The number of such individuals and families who are no longer subject to discrimination based on pre-existing conditions.

(3) The number of such individuals and families who are no longer subject to annual and lifetime limits on health insurance coverage.

(4) The number of such individuals and families who were uninsured prior to enrolling in health insurance coverage through such an Exchange.

Nothing in this Act shall limit the ability of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to inform individuals and families of the lower costs for health insurance coverage and additional benefits that are available pursuant to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and title I and subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is the final amendment to the bill. This amendment will not kill the bill; and should it pass, the House will immediately take up the bill, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, having just been sworn in a month ago, may I first say, it is an honor to serve the Fifth District of Massachusetts. My district is looking to us to focus on jobs, rebuild the economy, and extend unemployment benefits. Instead, Republicans have scheduled the 48th vote to undermine the Affordable Care Act.

We have a job to do. We have to ensure that the hardworking families we serve are able to navigate the health

care law and are able to make informed decisions about their health care coverage. Our job is to ensure that should problems arise, we are able to direct resources toward a timely fix.

Some of my colleagues believe that an increase in transparency will help us achieve those goals. So why not do that? Why not let Americans know exactly what has been going on since this law has been implemented? Why not let people understand all facets of this law? I support transparency and making the law the best it can be for millions of families and children who will benefit from it.

I know firsthand how good this reform will be for the American people because I watched it happen in my own State. In 2006, Massachusetts implemented health care reform which today is benefiting hundreds of thousands of families. It took hard work, and it meant lawmakers who didn't always agree on everything had to work together to do right by those they served. Today, 98 percent of the people in Massachusetts are benefiting from some form of health care coverage.

Because I was not yet elected last fall, like millions of Americans, I watched from home as the destructive and irresponsible fight against the ACA shut our government down. It is time to stop the obstruction over this issue and get back to work for the American people.

If our goal is truly transparency—not just harassment to make sure the law never works—why not give the full picture? Let's give families and businesses all of the information they need regarding what is available to them, as well as what we are going to do to make the law work better.

My motion to recommit will better inform those we serve with facts about the benefits which millions of American families are seeking. My amendment will provide the full picture, not just data handpicked to support a partisan argument.

This includes information regarding how many families and individuals have received tax credits. It will include disclosures on the number of Americans who are no longer subject to discrimination based on preexisting conditions. Families at home will know how many people are no longer subject to annual and lifetime limits on coverage. They will know how many people who were previously uninsured are now able to access health care and plan for the future.

If we are to do right by those we serve—do what we were elected to do, which is to make health care reform work for the American people—then we should spare the partisan agendas and pass this commonsense amendment.

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my point of order, and I claim the time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order is withdrawn.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, opponents of the Exchange Information Disclosure Act argue that HHS is already reporting data. Yet more than 3 months after the disastrous launch of the exchanges, we simply do not know how many Americans have actually completed enrollment by paying their first month's premium. As Secretary Sebelius acknowledged at an Energy and Commerce Committee hearing in December, enrollment in an exchange is not complete until the first month's premium has been paid.

The administration so far has refused to tell the American people how many people are actually enrolled in the health care law's exchanges. Either the administration is refusing to tell us how many people are actually enrolled or they simply do not know. Neither answer should instill confidence in a law that puts over 2 trillion taxpayer dollars on the line.

This underlying bill would require the administration to give us real and actual enrollment data. The American people deserve transparency, and this is what the Exchange Information Disclosure Act would deliver. I urge all Members to oppose this motion to recommit and vote for the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 186, nays 226, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 22]

YEAS—186

Andrews	Butterfield	Conyers
Barber	Capps	Cooper
Barrow (GA)	Capuano	Costa
Bass	Cárdenas	Courtney
Beatty	Carney	Crowley
Becerra	Cartwright	Cuellar
Bera (CA)	Castor (FL)	Cummings
Bishop (GA)	Castro (TX)	Davis (CA)
Bishop (NY)	Chu	Davis, Danny
Blumenauer	Ciциlline	DeFazio
Bonamici	Clark (MA)	DeGette
Brady (PA)	Clarke (NY)	Delaney
Braley (IA)	Clay	DeLauro
Brown (FL)	Clyburn	DelBene
Brownley (CA)	Cohen	Deutch
Bustos	Connolly	Doyle

Duckworth	Levin	Quigley
Edwards	Lewis	Rahall
Ellison	Lipinski	Rangel
Engel	Loeb sack	Richmond
Enyart	Lofgren	Royal-Allard
Eshoo	Lowenthal	Ryan (OH)
Esty	Lowe y	Sánchez, Linda
Farr	Lujan Grisham	T.
Fattah	(NM)	Sanchez, Loretta
Foster	Luján, Ben Ray	Sarbanes
Frankel (FL)	(NM)	Schakowsky
Fudge	Lynch	Schiff
Gallego	Maffei	Schneider
Garamendi	Maloney,	Schrader
Garcia	Carolyn	Schwartz
Grayson	Maloney, Sean	Scott (VA)
Green, Al	Matheson	Scott, David
Green, Gene	Matsui	Serrano
Grijalva	McCollum	Sewell (AL)
Gutiérrez	McDermott	Shea-Porter
Hahn	McGovern	Sherman
Hanabusa	McNerney	Sinema
Hastings (FL)	Meeks	Sires
Heck (WA)	Meng	Smith (WA)
Higgins	Michaud	Speier
Himes	Miller, George	Swalwell (CA)
Holt	Moore	Takano
Honda	Moran	Thompson (CA)
Horsford	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (MS)
Hoyer	Nadler	Tierney
Israel	Napolitano	Titus
Jackson Lee	Neal	Tonko
Jeffries	Negrete McLeod	Tsongas
Johnson (GA)	Nolan	Van Hollen
Johnson, E. B.	O'Rourke	Vargas
Kaptur	Pallone	Veasey
Keating	Pascrell	Vela
Kelly (IL)	Pastor (AZ)	Velázquez
Kennedy	Payne	Visclosky
Kildee	Pelosi	Walz
Kilmer	Perlmutter	Wasserman
Kind	Peters (CA)	Schultz
Kirkpatrick	Peters (MI)	Waters
Kuster	Peterson	Waxman
Langevin	Pingree (ME)	Welch
Larsen (WA)	Pocan	Wilson (FL)
Larson (CT)	Polis	Yarmuth
Lee (CA)	Price (NC)	

NAYS—226

Aderholt	Denham	Herrera Beutler
Amash	Dent	Holding
Amodei	DeSantis	Hudson
Bachus	DesJarlais	Huelskamp
Barletta	Diaz-Balart	Huizenga (MI)
Barr	Duffy	Hultgren
Barton	Duncan (SC)	Hunter
Benishek	Duncan (TN)	Hurt
Bentivolio	Ellmers	Issa
Bilirakis	Farenthold	Jenkins
Bishop (UT)	Fincher	Johnson (OH)
Black	Fitzpatrick	Johnson, Sam
Blackburn	Fleischmann	Jordan
Boustany	Fleming	Joyce
Brady (TX)	Flores	Kelly (PA)
Bridenstine	Forbes	King (IA)
Brooks (AL)	Fortenberry	King (NY)
Brooks (IN)	Foxx	Kingston
Broun (GA)	Franks (AZ)	Kinzinger (IL)
Bucshon	Frelinghuysen	Kline
Burgess	Gardner	Labrador
Byrne	Garrett	LaMalfa
Calvert	Gerlach	Lamborn
Camp	Gibbs	Lance
Campbell	Gibson	Lankford
Cantor	Gingrey (GA)	Latham
Capito	Gohmert	Latta
Carter	Goodlatte	LoBiondo
Cassidy	Gosar	Long
Chabot	Gowdy	Lucas
Chaffetz	Granger	Luetkemeyer
Coble	Graves (GA)	Lummis
Coffman	Graves (MO)	Marchant
Cole	Griffith (AR)	Marino
Collins (GA)	Griffith (VA)	Massie
Collins (NY)	Grimm	McAllister
Conaway	Guthrie	McCarthy (CA)
Cook	Hall	McCauley
Cotton	Hanna	McClintock
Cramer	Harper	McHenry
Crawford	Harris	McIntyre
Crenshaw	Hartzler	McKeon
Culberson	Hastings (WA)	McKinley
Daines	Heck (NV)	McMorris
Davis, Rodney	Hensarling	Rodgers

Meadows	Rice (SC)	Southerland	Davis, Rodney	Kuster	Rigell	Kelly (IL)	Moore	Schiff
Meehan	Rigell	Stewart	Denham	Labrador	Roby	Kennedy	Moran	Schwartz
Messer	Roby	Stivers	Dent	LaMalfa	Roe (TN)	Kildee	Nadler	Scott (VA)
Mica	Roe (TN)	Stutzman	DeSantis	Lamborn	Rogers (AL)	Kilmer	Napolitano	Scott, David
Miller (MI)	Rogers (AL)	Terry	DesJarlais	Lance	Rogers (KY)	Kind	Neal	Serrano
Miller, Gary	Rogers (KY)	Thompson (PA)	Diaz-Balart	Lankford	Rogers (MI)	Kirkpatrick	Negrete McLeod	Sewell (AL)
Mullin	Rogers (MI)	Thornberry	Duffy	Latham	Rohrabacher	Langevin	Nolan	Sherman
Mulvaney	Rohrabacher	Tiberi	Duncan (SC)	Latta	Rokita	Larsen (WA)	Owens	Smith (WA)
Murphy (PA)	Rokita	Tipton	Duncan (TN)	LoBiondo	Rooney	Larson (CT)	Pallone	Speier
Neugebauer	Rooney	Turner	Ellmers	Loebsack	Ros-Lehtinen	Lee (CA)	Pascrell	Swalwell (CA)
Nugent	Ros-Lehtinen	Upton	Enyart	Long	Roskam	Levin	Pastor (AZ)	Takano
Nunes	Roskam	Valadao	Farenthold	Lucas	Ross	Lewis	Payne	Thompson (CA)
Nunnelee	Ross	Wagner	Fincher	Luetkemeyer	Rothfus	Lipinski	Pelosi	Thompson (MS)
Olson	Rothfus	Walberg	Fitzpatrick	Lujan Grisham	Royce	Lofgren	Perlmutter	Tierney
Owens	Royce	Walden	Fleischmann	(NM)	Runyan	Lowenthal	Peters (MI)	Titus
Palazzo	Runyan	Walorski	Fleming	Lummis	Ryan (WI)	Lowe	Pingree (ME)	Tonko
Paulsen	Ryan (WI)	Weber (TX)	Flores	Maffei	Salmon	Lujan, Ben Ray	Pocan	Tsongas
Pearce	Salmon	Webster (FL)	Forbes	Maloney, Sean	Sanford	(NM)	Polis	Van Hollen
Perry	Sanford	Westmire	Fortenberry	Marchant	Scalise	Lynch	Price (NC)	Veasey
Petri	Scalise	Westmoreland	Fox	Schneider	Ros-Lehtinen	Maloney, Carolyn	Quigley	Velázquez
Pittenger	Schock	Whitfield	Franks (AZ)	Schock	Schrader	Matsui	Rangel	Visclosky
Pitts	Schweikert	Williams	Frelinghuysen	McAllister	Schweikert	McCollum	Richmond	Wasserman
Poe (TX)	Scott, Austin	Wilson (SC)	Gallego	McCarthy (CA)	Scott, Austin	McDermott	Roybal-Allard	Schultz
Pompeo	Sensenbrenner	Wittman	Garcia	McCauley	Sensenbrenner	Ryan (OH)	McGovern	Waters
Posey	Sessions	Womack	Gardner	McClintock	Sessions	McNerny	McGovern	Waxman
Price (GA)	Shimkus	Woodall	Garrett	McHenry	Shea-Porter	Meeks	T.	Welch
Radel	Shuster	Yoder	Gerlach	McHenry	Shimkus	Meng	Sanchez, Loretta	Wilson (FL)
Reed	Simpson	Yoho	Gibbs	McIntyre	Shuster	Miller, George	Sarbanes	Yarmuth
Reichert	Smith (MO)	Young (AK)	Gibson	McKeon	Simpson		Schakowsky	
Renacci	Smith (NE)	Young (IN)	Gingrey (GA)	McKinley	Sinema			
Ribble	Smith (TX)		Gohmert	McMorris	Rodgers	Buchanan	Gutiérrez	Ruppersberger
			Goodlatte	Rodgers	Sires	Carson (IN)	Hinojosa	Rush
			Gosar	Meadows	Smith (MO)	Castor (FL)	Jones	Slaughter
			Gowdy	Meehan	Smith (NE)	Cleaver	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman
			Granger	Messer	Smith (NJ)	Doggett	Miller (FL)	Wolf
			Graves (GA)	Mica	Smith (TX)	Gabbard	Noem	
			Graves (MO)	Michaud	Southerland		Ruiz	
			Griffin (AR)	Miller (MI)	Stewart			
			Griffith (VA)	Miller, Gary	Stivers			
			Grimm	Mullin	Stutzman			
			Guthrie	Mulvaney	Terry			
			Hall	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (PA)			
			Hanna	Murphy (PA)	Thornberry			
			Harper	Neugebauer	Tiberi			
			Harris	Nugent	Tipton			
			Hartzler	Nunes	Turner			
			Hastings (WA)	Nunnelee	Upton			
			Heck (NV)	O'Rourke	Valadao			
			Hensarling	Olson	Vargas			
			Herrera Beutler	Palazzo	Vela			
			Holding	Paulsen	Wagner			
			Hudson	Pearce	Walberg			
			Huelskamp	Perry	Walden			
			Huizenga (MI)	Peters (CA)	Walorski			
			Hultgren	Peterson	Walz			
			Hunter	Petri	Weber (TX)			
			Hurt	Pittenger	Webster (FL)			
			Issa	Pitts	Wenstrup			
			Jenkins	Poe (TX)	Westmoreland			
			Johnson (OH)	Pompeo	Whitfield			
			Johnson, Sam	Price (GA)	Williams			
			Jordan	Radel	Wilson (SC)			
			Joyce	Rahall	Wittman			
			Kelly (PA)	Reed	Womack			
			King (IA)	Reichart	Woodall			
			King (NY)	Renacci	Yoder			
			Kingston	Ribble	Yoho			
			Kinzinger (IL)	Rice (SC)	Young (AK)			
			Kline		Young (IN)			

NOT VOTING—20

Bachmann	Hinojosa	Ruppersberger
Buchanan	Huffman	Rush
Carson (IN)	Jones	Slaughter
Cleaver	McCarthy (NY)	Smith (NJ)
Dingell	Miller (FL)	Stockman
Doggett	Noem	Wolf
Gabbard	Ruiz	

□ 1151

Messrs. ROGERS of Michigan, RICE of South Carolina, ROGERS of Kentucky, WHITFIELD, STIVERS, and FORTENBERRY changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK and Mr. PETERSON changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 259, nays 154, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 23]

YEAS—259

Aderholt	Brady (TX)	Cassidy
Amash	Braley (IA)	Chabot
Amodei	Bridenstine	Chaffetz
Bachmann	Brooks (AL)	Coble
Bachus	Brooks (IN)	Coffman
Barber	Broun (GA)	Cole
Barletta	Brownley (CA)	Collins (GA)
Barr	Bucshon	Collins (NY)
Barrow (GA)	Burgess	Conaway
Barton	Bustos	Cook
Benishek	Byrne	Cooper
Bentivolio	Calvert	Costa
Bera (CA)	Camp	Cotton
Bilirakis	Campbell	Cramer
Bishop (UT)	Cantor	Crawford
Black	Capito	Crenshaw
Blackburn	Capps	Culberson
Boustany	Carter	Daines

Andrews	Conyers	Fudge
Bass	Courtney	Garamendi
Beatty	Crowley	Grayson
Becerra	Cuellar	Green, Al
Bishop (GA)	Cummings	Green, Gene
Bishop (NY)	Davis (CA)	Grijalva
Blumenauer	Davis, Danny	Hahn
Bonamici	DeFazio	Hanabusa
Brady (PA)	DeGette	Hastings (FL)
Brown (FL)	Delaney	Heck (WA)
Butterfield	DeLauro	Higgins
Capuano	DelBene	Himes
Cárdenas	Deutch	Holt
Carney	Doyle	Honda
Cartwright	Duckworth	Horsford
Castro (TX)	Edwards	Hoyer
Chu	Ellison	Huffman
Cicilline	Engel	Israel
Clark (MA)	Eshoo	Jackson Lee
Clarke (NY)	Esty	Jeffries
Clay	Farr	Johnson (GA)
Clyburn	Fattah	Johnson, E. B.
Cohen	Foster	Kaptur
Connolly	Frankel (FL)	Keating

NAYS—154

NOT VOTING—19

Buchanan	Gutiérrez	Ruppersberger
Carson (IN)	Hinojosa	Rush
Castor (FL)	Jones	Slaughter
Cleaver	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman
Dingell	Miller (FL)	Wolf
Doggett	Noem	
Gabbard	Ruiz	

□ 1200

So the bill was passed.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical procedure, I was unable to vote the week of January 13, 2014. On Monday, January 13, had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on rollcall vote 12 (H.R. 1513), and “yes” on rollcall vote 13 (S. 230).

On January 14, had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on rollcall vote 14 (H.R. 2274), “yes” on rollcall vote 15 (H.R. 801), “yes” on rollcall vote 16 (Journal), “yes” on rollcall vote 17 (H.R. 2860), and “yes” on rollcall vote 18 (H.R. 1233).

On January 15, had I been present, I would have voted “no” on rollcall vote 19 (Previous Question on H.R. 1233), “no” on rollcall vote 20 (H. Res. 458), and “yes” on rollcall vote 21 (H.R. 3547).

On January 16, had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on rollcall vote 22 (Motion to Recommit H.R. 3362) and “no” on rollcall vote 23 (H.R. 3362).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote Nos. 22 and 23. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on rollcall vote No. 22 and “no” on rollcall vote No. 23.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I attended the funeral of Army Sergeant, First Class William Kelly Lacey, a fallen soldier from my district, and missed the following rollcall votes: Nos. 22 and 23 on January 16, 2014.

If present, I would have voted: rollcall vote No 22—On Motion to Recommit with Instructions, H.R. 3362, Exchange Information Disclosure Act, “nay,” rollcall vote No. 23—H.R.

3362, Exchange Information Disclosure Act, "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on January 16, 2014, I missed rollcall votes 22 and 23 because of district business. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall 22 and "no" on rollcall 23.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO BOARD OF VISITORS TO UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 6968(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy:

Mr. MIKE ROGERS, Michigan

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

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

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 460

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

(1) COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.—Mr. Cicilline.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 75

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the two Houses of Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 9 p.m., for the purpose of receiving such communication as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, Congressman JIM LANGEVIN and I serve as the cochair for the bipartisan Career and Technical Education, or the CTE, Caucus.

During the two previous Congresses, we worked to raise awareness of the importance of career and technical education. We have also led the charge to ensure that CTE programs receive robust funding.

For nearly a decade, CTE programs were largely marginalized, receiving level funding and even taking sizable reductions. The CTE Caucus, in turn, has advocated for maintaining funding levels for CTE programs. We are pleased that yesterday the House passed modest funding increases for CTE programs. This is a good start.

Mr. Speaker, with so many unemployed or underemployed in this country, it is time for us to take a more strategic approach to helping Americans get back to work. We can no longer afford to undervalue CTE. In fact, we will only succeed if career and technical education is an essential element of our strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like, as a point of personal privilege, a valued House staff member, Trudi Terry, is retiring before we return from this coming week's recess. I want to thank her for her service to this country.

Thank you, Trudi.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague, Congressman "GT" THOMPSON from Pennsylvania, as co-chairs of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus in commending House appropriators and my colleagues for the increase in Perkins Act funding for career and technical education funding.

This funding is vitally important for training the next generation of workers who will enter the career and technical education fields. These are good-paying jobs. At a time where Rhode Island—my home State—has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country, this funding for career and technical education could not come at a more critical time.

It is frustrating to see so many people out of work. Yet when you talk to businesses around our State and around the country, one of the main things that they found a real challenge is finding the people with the right skills to do the jobs that are available right now.

So by focusing on these areas of career and technical education, whether it be in IT or woodworking or culinary or engineering, these are vitally important jobs in our communities, in our country, and they are going to do a lot to get people back to work.

I want to thank my colleagues for their support of Perkins Act funding and career and technical education programs.

I, again, thank my colleague, Congressman "GT" THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, for the bipartisan effort that he and I have put into this vitally important area.

BETTER CARE, LOWER COST ACT

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I along with PETER WELCH, my colleague, and Senators WYDEN and ISAKSON introduced the Better Care, Lower Cost Act, bipartisan legislation to truly bend the cost curve and improve chronic care management in Medicare.

Medicare today, Mr. Speaker, is very different than it was in 1965, as 68 percent of all beneficiaries have two or more chronic conditions, which account now for 93 percent of all Medicare costs.

Our legislation will help seniors like Darlene from my district, who suffers from multiple chronic conditions, including arthritis and diabetes. The complexity involved with gaining input from her many doctors and nurses makes it very difficult for her to manage her own health. This is a difficulty that many seniors typically face today.

But by modernizing the Medicare payment system—paying for results, not just activity; incentivizing people to take care of themselves; and removing the barriers to innovation—we can ensure that seniors get the right care at the right time.

We can also take advantage of health care technology, like telehealth. We can break down the barriers, the geographic barriers, to bring chronic care management skills and experience of institutions like the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota to light.

Mr. Speaker, we can create a better system, and this bipartisan group shows that it can be done with a little cooperation and collaboration.

RECOGNIZING THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HAITIAN EARTHQUAKE

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

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I stand here before you to acknowledge, and in remembrance of, the fourth anniversary of the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti in January 2010. I come in honor and in awe of the unmitigated strength, hope, and faith of the Haitian people.

Although there is still significant progress to be made, let us take this time to remember those who have died and those who continue living with the visible and invisible scars of trauma.

We cannot forget those who still remain in IDP camps, subject to forced evictions, and living in squalid and precarious conditions. We must remember those who are victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and we cannot turn a blind eye on those Haitians suffering from cholera, which was introduced to the country through no fault of their own.

Mr. Speaker, the passion of the Haitian people continues to inspire a sense of community, generosity, strength, and drive throughout the Caribbean diaspora.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to draw on the energy, will, and determination of the Haitian people and continue to fight to help Haiti to truly recover from the devastating earthquake of 2010.

CONCEPTION

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I gave a speech on the floor drawing attention to the important pro-life rally that is occurring in Washington next week.

At one point, I misspoke, but today I want to make it crystal clear that life begins at conception.

I am proud of my record fighting and voting to protect the right of the unborn.

Yesterday, we also passed an important appropriations bill to move our Nation in a financially sound way. Four years in a row, we have reduced spending. It is the first time since the Korean war. But equally important, in that bill, it keeps in place laws that protect the life of the unborn. For that, I am very proud of that vote we took yesterday.

URGING CONGRESS TO RENEW UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Dana Haverman from my home State of Florida is frightened.

Despite the fact that she got her first job at age 15, despite the fact that she worked continuously her entire adult life, despite the fact that at age 60 she lost a long-time job because of this country's economic downturn, despite the fact that she has been looking for a job every day and has not found one, despite all these facts, this Congress has failed to extend emergency unemployment insurance that would give her and thousands of Floridians a little bit of help in paying their electricity and water bills until they find their next job.

Mr. Speaker, let us vote today to extend relief deserved by America's job seekers.

Mr. Speaker, Dana Haverman from my home State of Florida is frightened.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I and a number of our colleagues in the House asked for unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 3824, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act, for a simple up or down vote. Time and time again, we were denied that simple vote.

Mr. Speaker, poll after poll shows us that Independents, Republicans, and Democrats support at least a 3-month extension of unemployment insurance. We continue to be in dereliction of our duty every day we let this critical lifeline to our long-term jobless friends and neighbors expire.

Last week, I met with two New Yorkers from my district who paid into this program for years, and they are shocked, as am I, Mr. Speaker, that elected officials in Washington continue to sit idly by without supporting them.

A simple up or down vote, that is all we are asking for, Mr. Speaker. Let's pass this critical lifeline; let's do what is fair and just; and let's get back to the business of growing jobs and our economy.

□ 1215

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be a part of the Safe Climate Caucus and to speak on the urgent need to take action on climate change.

The effects of climate change are undeniable, and their consequences are unavoidable without action, which means action by Congress.

In my home State of Wisconsin, farmers could face more pests and widespread disease from higher humidity and warmer winter temperatures. Ice fishermen are already noticing fewer days they can be out on our ice-covered lakes. By 2055, winters in Wisconsin are expected to be 7 to 9 degrees warmer, and by the middle of the century, extreme heat in Wisconsin, which is responsible for more deaths in my State than any other natural disaster combined, will be more prevalent, with up to a month more of 90-degree-plus days.

These types of dramatic shifts must be met with equally big changes in our behaviors. We must continue to push for alternatives to fossil fuels like oil and coal. We must reduce our emissions and accurately assess their true costs, and we must boost our energy efficiency by investing in clean energy manufacturing for our environment and for our jobs.

SYRIA

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

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as one of two congressional representatives to the United Nations, I rise to recognize and talk about the continued human suffering in Syria.

According to the United Nations, there are over 2 million registered refugees from Syria, including 1.4 million children. Last September, the United Nations Security Council urged Syria to take immediate steps to grant aid organizations full access to conduct relief operations. Yet, today, there are reports that the government continues to block aid to victims desperately in need of relief, causing needless hunger and suffering among Syria's civilian populations. These actions are not just an offense against our conscience; they are also offenses against international law and United Nations' obligations.

As world leaders gather next week in pursuit of a political solution, we must hold all parties to the Syrian conflict accountable and find a negotiated settlement to ending this crisis once and for all through the hard work of diplomacy.

I am proud that the United States is the leading donor of humanitarian aid, and I am pleased that the omnibus bill we passed yesterday included increased funding to support our ongoing humanitarian response.

PASS UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that we are, in fact, our brothers' and sisters' keeper, and I want to debunk the terrible definition and description of some 1.3—now 1.9—million unemployed Americans.

I reject the theory that they only sit around for unemployment and will not look for a job unless they are not getting unemployment insurance when everybody knows that the requirements of emergency unemployment insurance require individuals to look for work. For everyone I have spoken to, including learning the story of a woman in New York who is 58 years old and who has looked for work over and over and, likewise, is desperate and devastated because she is not able to provide the bare minimum, I have introduced H.R. 3888.

I ask my colleagues to join me in legislation that will target and train the chronically unemployed, that will provide their unemployment insurance and that will give them a stipend for emerging industry training. I say to my Republican colleagues: if you are interested in jobs, jobs, jobs, join this legislation; but right now, today, let's stay here and vote on unemployment insurance for the millions of Americans who have contributed and shed their blood—many of them veterans, many of them willing to sacrifice. All they need is a helping hand. Pass unemployment insurance.

Where is our heart?

THE CITY OF ALPINE

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

Mr. GALLEGRO. Mr. Speaker, I am sure every Member of Congress thinks that his or her district is the most beautiful, the most unique of all, but the 23rd District in Texas is about 24 percent of the land area of Texas—it is a huge, huge area. I would like to highlight in 1 minute parts of the 23rd, take you around the 23rd in 1 minute. I think it is appropriate to start with the city of Alpine, my hometown.

Alpine is the county seat of Brewster County, which is the largest county in Texas. It is the home of Sul Ross State University. Sul Ross has more national rodeo championships than any other college or university in the Nation, and it is the birthplace of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association. If you have the opportunity, look up Brewster County. Look up Alpine.

I am thinking about Alpine a lot as I go home this weekend to address the Chamber of Commerce for my first time as a Member of Congress, and I am so looking forward to being home in the highest, tallest peaks of west Texas.

HONORING THE LIVES OF THREE NAVY SAILORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives of the Navy sailors who were tragically killed in last week's helicopter crash off the coast of Virginia. The crash touched my office in a personal way.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Andrew Collins was one of the three sailors who lost his life in that crash. He is the brother of one of my staffers, Morgan. My entire staff and I shared her grief as we received the news at work in our office.

Brian was 25 years old. He was born and raised in Truckee, California, and was a graduate of Truckee High School. He was an avid skier, who first strapped on his first pair of skis at the age of 2. He loved to fly down the mountains of California, bouncing in and out of the trees. After high school, Brian briefly attended trade school before deciding to enlist in the military. It was in the Navy that he found his calling.

Brian was a member of the Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron. Those teams patrol the waters to locate and destroy sea-based mines that could harm Navy vessels. Brian loved that mission. He enjoyed jumping out of helicopters and into the water as the team's primary rescue swimmer. It was during his service that he married his wife, Cheyenne. The young couple just celebrated their 1-year anniversary and had bought their first home. They were starting their life together and still had so much to experience. Cheyenne said: "We just scratched the surface."

I will never have the fortune of meeting Brian. However, I feel honored to have gotten to know him through the memories shared by the people he loved. There are few words that can comfort his family and friends in their loss. All I can offer is a sincere and humble "thank you."

Thank you for your service.

Thank you for sharing Brian's story, Cheyenne.

On behalf of all Americans, thank you to all of the military men and women in service.

I ask that this House join me in a moment of silence in honor of the life of Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Andrew Collins and in honor of his two fellow crewmembers who lost their lives in that crash, Lieutenant Sean Snyder and Lieutenant Wesley Van Dorn.

A REDUCTION OF MILITARY FORCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2013, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), my colleague.

OBAMACARE

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of one of my constituents—Janet, from Crawfordsville—pictured here with her husband, Steve. Like millions of our fellow Americans, she is finding out just how deceptive ObamaCare's cheerleaders were when they sold this insidious law to the American people.

Following surgical treatment for cancer last year, Janet was receiving radiation treatment, and, as if battling a serious illness weren't stressful enough, Janet recently lost her job and was notified that the insurance provided through her severance package would be ending soon. Her family faced the decision to either continue the same coverage under what we call "COBRA" or enroll in an ObamaCare plan. She was skeptical of the process of enrolling in ObamaCare, but as the end date of her employer-sponsored insurance loomed, she was reassured by the news that the President and his team had fixed the technical glitches plaguing healthcare.gov.

Mr. Speaker, I wish I could report that the story ends there on a good note, but it only gets worse, as it does for millions of Americans.

Imagine Janet's frustration when she encountered glitch after glitch throughout the enrollment process. She spent hours on the phone with call center workers, only to find out that the call center workers were as bewildered by the Web site as she was. Several times, she was cut off after holding for over 2 hours.

Mr. Speaker, I would surmise that Members of this Congress get frustrated when holding for a few minutes for anything—2 hours repeatedly, a cancer patient who can't get coverage.

Eventually, Janet had to enroll via the United States mail. This is after taxpayers—and future generations, for that matter, since we borrow 4 percent of what we spend around here—paid nearly \$500 million for a Web site that was supposed to handle a relatively simple signup process. Believing she had successfully enrolled, Janet submitted the appropriate payments for her ObamaCare coverage. She paid for it, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, Janet did not receive any confirmation that those payments were received or that she had actually enrolled in her plan.

Adding to the uncertainty, neither Obama's bureaucrats nor the insurer can verify her enrollment now. Despite efforts, my staff could not get an answer from the bureaucrats either because of how this law was designed. Meanwhile, Janet continues to receive

notices that payment is due, again, adding insult to injury since she already submitted her payment.

It still doesn't end there.

Janet was also informed that she can no longer continue her cancer treatment with her doctor of choice as the provider would only be able to accept certain health care plans off the ObamaCare exchange. The plan Janet chose did not qualify, and it was virtually impossible to verify this during the enrollment period. Janet will have to continue her cancer treatment with a new doctor several times per week. Thankfully, she is allowed to do that, but the doctor is a 60-mile round trip drive.

ObamaCare has only served to exacerbate already trying and complicated health care issues with bureaucratic red tape and customer service so terrible that it is one only this Federal Government can provide. Like many Hoosiers, Janet was misled by ObamaCare's proponents. Her choices have been severely limited, and she is hardly able to shop around for a doctor she is comfortable with. This is not health care reform. ObamaCare is leading to a health care crisis.

I continue to receive stories from Hoosiers—and I know you do as well—about how ObamaCare has misleadingly done the complete opposite of what was promised. Insurance policies continue to be canceled. Premiums are skyrocketing, and deductibles are soaring. Choice has been reduced, not amplified, and specialty services are in increasingly short supply. In other words, they are being rationed.

I will continue fighting to repeal and replace this insidious law for people like Janet and for millions of Americans in similar situations.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. ROKITA.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an issue that maybe is unknown to many Members and many citizens but should be known, which is the reduction of forces—the reduction in the capability of our military services across all branches, across the whole spectrum—and how that process is going. It has been my studied opinion at this point that the process is what we should discuss at this time—a process that has lacked transparency, a process that has lacked deliberation.

Now, while it is this Member's belief that the chiefs at the DOD are under significant pressure from an administration to defend this Nation, they are also under significant pressure to make cuts, not only to make those cuts, but to make those cuts in a very particular way. That is part of the discussion today—the cuts to the reserve forces.

□ 1230

Before I recognize some of my colleagues, I just want to provide from the Joint Chiefs the definition of the oper-

ational reserve, which is your Guard and Reserve:

As such, the services organize, resource, equip, train, and utilize their Guard and Reserve components to support mission requirements—

This is important:

—to the same standards as their Active components.

To the same standards, which is interesting to me because some of the recent reports and quotes that I have heard are things like it is structured to be complementary, and capabilities in its three components are not interchangeable. So that statement flies in the face of the original definition of what Guard and Reserve forces do.

And things like saying that Guard and Reserve members only train 39 days a year, which, again, I think the Chiefs are under considerable pressure. DOD is fighting for its life—not among its members but, in my opinion, against an administration; and they are doing what they have to do.

I am an Army soldier. I joined an Army of one, not an Army of some of us get this and some of us get that. We all do the same work together at the same level; and that is the expectation, as it should be. But that is what we are going to discuss for the next hour.

At this time, I yield to my colleague and friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT).

Mr. DENT. Thank you, Representative PERRY. I really appreciate this opportunity to talk about the National Guard.

I first want to start by thanking Congressman PERRY for his service in the Pennsylvania National Guard for some time. He is very committed to our country and committed to the Guard. I commend him for putting this on.

I also want to commend his chief of staff, who is seated right next to him, Colonel Lauren Muglia, who is also an active guardswoman; and I am very proud of her service at Fort Indiantown Gap in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, at the National Guard center up there, which is located in my congressional district—a very important asset to this country's homeland security and emergency preparedness, as well as any other missions that would be called upon them.

But I have a few things I just wanted to say about the Guard very, very quickly.

The Army's plan for the National Guard includes, frankly, drastic plans to slash the force structure, end strength and aviation assets, and will put the Guard on the back shelf as a strategic reserve. I am very concerned about this. And I know many of my colleagues are as well.

Congress has made a very significant investment in the Guard over the past 12-or-so years to train and equip the Guard as an operational reserve. At a time when the Pentagon must dig very deep for savings in their programs and agencies, the Guard remains a viable investment.

I say this as a member of the Appropriations Committee. We have to make a lot of very hard choices with respect to how we allocate our very limited resources. The Defense Department is coming under a great deal of stress.

But I want you to consider this: the most recent report of the Reserve Forces Policy Board, or RFPB, concluded that a National Guard member costs about one-third of their Active component counterpart. This would translate into nearly \$2.6 billion in savings for every 10,000 positions shifted from a full-time to a part-time status.

What's more, the Army National Guard provides 32 percent of the Army's total personnel and 40 percent of its operating force, while only consuming 11 percent of the Army's budget. That represents a value to this country and, frankly, to the taxpayer.

I mean no disrespect to anybody, but I think we have to understand the real value of this National Guard to the taxpayer.

The Air National Guard provides 19 percent of the Air Force's total personnel and 30 to 40 percent of its overall fighter, tanker, and airlift capacity, at 6 percent of the Air Force budget.

Many of those Air National Guardsmen and pilots are very experienced and have many, many hours of service. So I think we should acknowledge how experienced those folks are.

In conclusion, I just wanted to say that not only does the Guard provide this operational asset to our overall national security and defense structure; but, just as important, it provides an emergency preparedness and homeland security function that they have to help us deal with all the time. In my State, it is usually floods and weather emergencies. The Guard plays an absolutely critical role to help us during those times.

So they have that operational component. They obviously contribute significantly in the wars, and we have seen this, too. By the way, if you have been to Afghanistan or Iraq—and I know some of our colleagues here have served there and paid very heavy prices—frankly, we have seen how well integrated our Guard and Reserve units are with regular Army and regular Air Force units. So I am very proud of that service.

Again, that dual mission—they can help us fight wars and they are certainly a critical component to our over homeland security and emergency preparedness strategy in the country.

With that, I thank Congressman PERRY for his leadership on this issue, and I really appreciate that he put this Special Order together.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Representative DENT. I appreciate your comments and I appreciate your support for our Guard.

Again, that is the discussion—a discussion about a process that should be

open, that we should have a part in. What we would ask at this point is that the DOD not proceed with the plan until they have had input from everybody involved, which includes our Nation's Guard and Reserve and includes hometown heroes that serve right in every single town, every city, every hamlet, every village across the country, and serve their Nation well.

In this Nation's wars in the last 10 to 15 years, they have been 50 percent of the fighting force. Why haven't we included them in the conversation in a meaningful way?

With that, I would like to again yield to another colleague of mine from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. I would like to thank my good friend and fellow Pennsylvanian (Mr. PERRY) for hosting this important discussion.

As my colleague Congressman DENT noted, it is Colonel PERRY who in 2008 left the comforts of our country to serve in Iraq. His chief, Lauren Muglia, also is with the National Guard and went overseas for our country.

I rise today in support of the Pennsylvania National Guard and, in particular, the brave soldiers who serve in the 1-104th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, based in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Their future, like that of many other National Guard units across the Commonwealth, is being placed in serious jeopardy as part of the Army's most recent force structure plan.

Major General Wesley Craig, the adjutant general for the Pennsylvania National Guard, put it best when he wrote in a letter to the editor that recently appeared in one of our local newspapers, the Johnstown Tribune-Democrat, that the 1-104th is "under attack." In fact, Major General Craig's letter encapsulates this issue so well that I would like to read it into the RECORD now.

Major General Craig writes:

Johnstown battalion is under attack.

The more than 250 members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 1-104th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, based in Johnstown, may lose their Apache helicopters and a number of them could be furloughed if the Army has its way.

These are the same highly trained soldiers who recently returned from a year-long deployment in Afghanistan, where they provided aerial support using AH-64 Apache helicopters fighting side-by-side with their active component counterparts.

The Army wants to restructure its aviation fleet by divesting itself from Kiowa helicopters and replacing them with Apache helicopters taken from the Army National Guard.

Consequently, the removal of 24 Apaches from our inventory in Johnstown will render the 1-104th a nonmission-capable force when it comes to defending our Nation at home and abroad.

In turn, the Army proposes to replace the Apaches with only 12 other aircraft—a 50 percent reduction in the number of aircraft that we have in Johnstown.

Detrimental actions like this prove that the National Guard is still considered "second-rate" by the Active component despite us demonstrating our competence and effectiveness over the last 11 years of war.

Taking away highly trained personnel and equipment from the Reserve component—which cost a fraction of what it does in the Active component to operate—does not make sense for our community, Commonwealth or country.

Major General Craig concludes:

Having worn the uniform for more than 40 years, I, too, have been trained to fight; and fight I will for the skilled and courageous troops of our Nation's reserve forces.

Signed, Major General Wesley E. Craig, Adjutant General, Pennsylvania National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, there are better options than this. Let us commit to working together to ensure that the National Guard units like the 1-104th continue to receive the support they have earned and deserve.

Mr. PERRY. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

At this time, we are going to talk a little bit about aviation, and Guard aviation in particular, because it is something I have been familiar with since the mid-1980s, when I first went to flight school. It is one of the issues that has become the forefront of this discussion and this argument.

Mr. ROTHFUS noted the drawdown and the cuts to Guard aviation and the claim, or the charge, that the Guard is not trained, accessible, or ready. With that, I just harken back to my short time in Iraq when I served with some of the finest aviators on the planet from Alpha 106 from Indiana, a group of fine people under my command in the task that had been to Iraq, many of them, before. They told me the stories of their time there before.

They were just above reproach, and they were the most professional and well-trained individuals that were competent to do the mission from the day they showed up on the ground; and they proved that every single day for a year.

With that, I yield to my friend from the great State of Illinois, who also served with those fine individuals from that very company and has sacrificed greatly for our Nation. She would like to discuss this issue as well.

Congresswoman DUCKWORTH.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, my National Guard aviation battalion was deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom. We performed missions ranging from forward refueling point operations to air assaults all across the battlefield in Iraq. We were so effective that the multinational forces headquarters assigned us to help Active Duty aviation units to fly their missions as well as our own. Yet when we first reported to coordinate these missions, our Active Duty counterparts welcomed us lit-

erally by dismissively saying, Well, here comes the JV team.

Despite this less than friendly welcome, my Guard unit seamlessly integrated and carried out not only our own, but also their Active flight missions as well. In the process, we gained trust and mutual appreciation and respect.

We have come so far as a Nation and as a military. For 12 years, our Guard and Reserve units have fought side-by-side with our Active Duty counterparts in combat zones all over the world. This Nation spent precious blood, sweat, and treasure to build a fully interchangeable, cost-effective operational reserve that has been key to our successes in defending our Nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic. To squander this investment and divest our training and equipping of the reserve forces is a huge disservice to our taxpayers and to our national security.

The Guardsman is "twice the citizen," relied on heavily by our Governors and generals alike. They respond whether the duty station is a mountain pass in Afghanistan or the flooding banks of the Mississippi River.

The Guardsman is one-third the cost of an Active Duty soldier or airman. The Guardsman is the least expensive asset our military has and a critical and complementary component of our overall force structure.

We are a better Nation with a better military than to dismantle the sacrifices made on the battlefield with false claims of National Guard and Reserves' lack of capability. For 22 years I have served in the Reserves and in the Guard, the last 8 years of which were without pay.

I certainly have devoted much more than 39 days a year to serving my Nation as a military pilot; and so have my fellow Guard troops, whose sacrifices and capabilities are often underrepresented and under appreciated.

I urge my colleagues to join me in helping preserve the operational capability of the Guard in this year's National Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you.

At this time I would also like to yield to my colleague from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO), for a few comments.

Mr. PALAZZO. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, as he is being called today, Colonel PERRY, for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, the recent comments by Army leadership are as ridiculous as anything I have seen in quite some time. In a transparent effort to protect their own, they have effectively thrown the men and women of the National Guard out with the bath water.

It is a fact that the average National Guardsman costs one-third of what his Active Duty counterpart does.

□ 1245

Now, I ask the American people, what is the better investment here?

Giving these brave citizens soldiers a pink slip is not only ridiculous from a readiness standpoint, but it amounts to throwing away billions of dollars and hours of training.

Here is your pink slip. Thanks for all your hard work, but we won't be needing you anymore is basically what they are saying.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the men and women of our National Guard are not only the smarter financial decision, but they have also earned their stripes over the past 12 years at war.

As a current member of the Mississippi National Guard, I know that the men and women I serve with and those who come from all over the United States and the territories to train at Camp Shelby before deployment are some of the most professional and most capable soldiers and airmen that our Nation has ever produced, regardless of what General Odierno has said. These men and women are the best-trained, most battle-hardened force that the Guard has seen in their 377-year history. These men and women have fought side by side for over 12 years with the men and women of our Active Duty. To put them back on the shelf will not only waste that experience, but it does nothing to deal with what many military leaders have said is the biggest threat to our national security, and that is our national debt.

Meanwhile, some Members of this body are content to watch our national debt climb on the back of runaway entitlement spending that continues to suck away resources from every sector. We are cutting right to the bone from our best capabilities. I honestly have trouble believing that Army leadership truly thinks the best way to handle budget pressures is to gut our military capability, but that is exactly what they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I promise that if the Army and the President bring this half-baked idea to us here in Congress, I will do everything, along with my colleagues, in my power as a Member of this House and as a member of the House Armed Services Committee to ensure that it is soundly defeated.

Congressman, thank you very much for putting on this Special Order.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Mississippi for his comments.

Again, we are not saying that the Guard and the Reserve aren't willing to do their part. It is my belief, it is this Member's belief, that the DOD and the Chiefs are under significant pressure from the administration to do what they are doing.

We are asking for an open process and to be involved in the conversation because we want to do our part. But we can't watch the investments that have been mentioned here today be eviscerated, be thrown away, be cast away like so many things.

We understand very clearly over the course of this last 5 years this administration's tenor and attitude towards our Nation's fighting forces, but we must continue on for the sake of what we have invested in and the sacrifices that have been made by members of our hometowns in the Guard and Reserve.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the fine gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ENYART).

Mr. ENYART. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. PERRY and I might debate about the causes for the budget cuts at the Pentagon and for the reasons for the budget cuts there, but what we do not debate and what we stand shoulder to shoulder on is the fact that the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, is the best-trained, best-equipped, best-led National Guard force that we have ever had in our history.

I had the honor, before I came to Congress, of serving as the Adjutant General, commanding the 13,000 Army and Air National Guardsmen of the great State of Illinois.

Unfortunately what has happened, as the drawdown has started to occur, the Pentagon has put forth a plan that would slash the Army National Guard. The Army National Guard and, for that matter, the Air National Guard—today we are specifically talking about the Army, but every remark I make applies to the Air National Guard as well.

The Army National Guard serves as America's insurance policy. It serves as the shock absorber for our military. We can't maintain a large enough military to answer every contingency, and that is why we have the Army National Guard and that is why we have the Army Reserve. Those are the soldiers that we call forth when we need them. When we don't need them, they train at home.

In 2005, in Iraq, 51 percent of the soldiers in Iraq were Army National Guardsmen and Reservists—51 percent. Over half were Army National Guard and Reserves. Yet today, folks in the Pentagon want to slash the Army National Guard.

We had a blizzard in Illinois last week. That blizzard was so bad that Interstate 57 at its juncture with Interstate 70 in Effingham, Illinois was closed. There were six jackknifed semitrucks. There were 375 cars stacked up, couldn't get through, snow blowing, 35-below windchill factor. That blizzard was so bad that the wreckers couldn't get through. That blizzard was so bad that the snowplows, the Illinois Department of Transportation could not get through.

Who got through? What did the Governor do? The Governor called out the Illinois National Guard. He called out those battlefield wreckers that serve the purpose in battle of going forth on the battlefield and pulling the Humvees and other Army vehicles that are damaged and inoperable off the

battlefield. Those eight wheel-drive vehicles could get through that blizzard. They could get through those snowdrifts. They rescued those hundreds of stranded people in those 375 cars and six semitrucks on Interstate 57.

Now, that equipment, that is wartime equipment. And you know what the folks over at the Pentagon are arguing today? Well, they are going to strip every single AH-64 attack helicopter out of the Army National Guard, saying, well, the Governors don't need them. What do you need an attack helicopter in the Illinois National Guard or the Pennsylvania National Guard or any other National Guard for?

And, by the way, Illinois doesn't have AH-64s, so I don't have a dog in this fight other than supporting the National Guard.

The Pentagon is saying you don't need them.

What is the first maxim you learn in the Army? You train as you fight. You have to train as you fight so you know what you are doing when you go into battle. That is why the Army National Guard needs those attack helicopters, so they can go into battle with them. They will train with them so that they can fight with them.

Based on the Army's logic, the Illinois National Guard wouldn't have had those battlefield wreckers to go in and rescue those people.

We can't let this happen to the National Guard.

I went to the retirement ceremony for Lieutenant General Bill Ingram this week over at Fort Myer, and General Ingram was the TAG of North Carolina. We served together as TAGs. He commanded North Carolina; I had Illinois. He got promoted to Lieutenant General; I got demoted to Congress.

But at his retirement ceremony, he got up and spoke. And what was the first unit that the Army called up out of North Carolina in 2001 when we were ready to go to war? It was the attack helicopters. It was the AH-64s. They were the shock absorber. They were the insurance policy for America.

While we are talking about the Pentagon, when you look at the Pentagon today, you look at the Active Duty military establishment. We have more generals and admirals today than we had during World War II. We have an army of less than 500,000 people. In World War II, it was about 5 million. It was about 10 times the size. But today we have more generals, and every one of those generals on Active Duty has a staff, and they have cooks and drivers and so on and so forth. Right now they have 250 one- or two-star generals serving on Active Duty in the Army.

Now, a division, you need to understand, is commanded by a two-star general.

Does anybody in here besides Representative PERRY and Representative

DUCKWORTH know how many Active Duty divisions we have in the United States Army?

We have 10. That is 10 two-star generals. We have 250 on Active Duty.

I think before we start cutting those soldiers who go out onto that battlefield of a blizzard, operating that battlefield wrecker, pulling people and saving lives, doing that double duty, doing that double duty of saving lives in floods, blizzards, and hurricanes, as well as deploying to Afghanistan, I think maybe we need to look at cutting some of the fat, some of that excess, some of those excess two-stars.

That is what we need to do. We need to preserve our insurance policy. We need to preserve that best-trained, best-equipped and best-led National Guard force that has fought for us, not only in Afghanistan, not only in Iraq, but also on the home front.

And one last pitch for the Illinois National Guard. We have had Illinois National Guard soldiers on duty 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in the battle, first in Iraq, and then in Afghanistan, every day since we went into Iraq—every single day, National Guard soldiers. So to those folks over in the Pentagon who think that National Guard soldiers are second-class soldiers, I have got a few brave people I would like you to meet, and one of them is sitting right there, Lieutenant Colonel TAMMY DUCKWORTH.

Thank you very much, Mr. PERRY.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ENYART for his service to our Nation, both in the military forces as well as here in Congress. I would like to just reflect upon his remarks as well. It is my intent to bring a different standard of decorum and bearing to the discussion.

Again, we understand that DOD is under significant pressure and fighting for its life. We would like a place at the table to have a discussion, because we don't think that a proportional cut—if you are cutting 100 percent, and you say 50 percent to the active component and 50 percent to the reserve component is the same thing, it is not the same thing if the reserve component costs one-third, yet you yield the same results when you have those servicemembers on the battlefield.

We are going to continue the discussion, but at this time I would like to yield to my friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO).

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, my friend, Congressman PERRY, from the great State of Pennsylvania, for organizing this Special Order to talk about the importance of the National Guard to our great Nation.

The Third District of Florida is home to the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center and to over 2,000 National Guardsmen and -women and their families. And we in the Third District of

Florida, as well as the State of Florida, are extremely proud of the National Guard and of their service in the past, and especially in the recent years in the wars in the Middle East. They answered the call and performed admirably.

The National Guard is a cost-effective force that is integral to the effectiveness of the United States military. Over the past 12 years, Congress has invested billions of dollars to train and equip the National Guard as an operational reserve. It would be a disservice to the taxpayers and to national security to squander this investment away.

They are that well-regulated militia, the minutemen of our Nation, which is necessary in order to have a free and secure Nation. They are ready, when called upon, to aid our Nation in times of need. Be it for national security or for national disaster, they answer the call.

We must ensure that their effectiveness and readiness is not adversely affected by a lack of our foresight. We are proud of all of our Guardsmen and -women, and we must not forget the great sacrifices that they have made in defense of our Nation.

Again, I want to thank my colleague, Mr. PERRY, for arranging this Special Order. Thank you for your service, too.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. YOHO.

And to continue the conversation, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from the great State of Arizona (Ms. SINEMA).

Ms. SINEMA. Thank you to the gentleman from Pennsylvania for hosting that bipartisan Special Order.

Unfortunately, these days in Washington there are too few issues that bring Republicans and Democrats together to find reasonable solutions to the challenges facing our country, but supporting the National Guard is one issue that certainly brings us together, which is why I appreciate the opportunity to join my colleagues today.

The United States needs a fully functional and operational National Guard. The active military and the National Guard may have different attributes, but they train and certify to the same standards, and Guard units and personnel can function interchangeably with their Active Duty brothers and sisters.

We rely on the National Guard to protect our country overseas and here at home. Arizona has a proud tradition of service, and we are proud of our fellow Arizonans who become citizen soldiers.

Since September 11, over 12,000 members of the Arizona National Guard have deployed, and we have 150 members currently mobilized.

Not only does the Arizona National Guard deploy overseas, it has a critical mission here at home: responding to natural disasters, improving border security, and performing counterdrug operations.

The Arizona National Guard is also leading the way in helping our citizen soldiers and their families balance the challenges of service with civilian life.

Under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Denise Sweeney, Director of Arizona's National Guard Total Force Team, the Be Resilient Program is promoting mission readiness and retention by increasing the resilience of each servicemember and their family.

□ 1300

The Total Force Team focuses on integrating and coordinating the efforts of all resilience and support programs for Arizona National Guard members and their families, and it leverages public-private partnership to engage the broader community.

This program is strengthening servicemembers and their families and is another example of why the Arizona National Guard is so important to our State and why the National Guard deserves our full support.

I support a defense budget that responsibly uses taxpayer dollars and keeps our country safe and secure. I have serious concerns that the proposed cuts to our National and Reserve component would undermine the ability of Arizona's National Guard to perform its critical missions.

Substantially reducing the size of National Guard, and in particular, removing all helicopter attack aviation, could hurt Arizona and our national security. You can't build emergency response, combat, and leadership capabilities overnight. We will continue to call on our National Guard in times of need. We should make sure they have all the training, tools, and force strength to answer that call.

As a member of a military family, I understand that these citizen soldiers and their families make great sacrifices in order to serve our country. We should stand up and support these brave and committed men and women, and give them the tools that they need to keep us safe.

Thank you, Colonel PERRY, for hosting this time. I look forward to working with my colleagues on this important issue more.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Arizona and would also like to commend her on her comments regarding the Guard.

Specifically, for me as an Army aviator, one of the main topics of discussion in the reduction of forces in the Guard is Army-Guard aviation. The comments that, quite frankly, that are disappointing and hit my heart are that Guardsmen train 39 days a year, and that is 2 days a month and 15 days a year of annual training. I would suggest to you that I know very few—as a matter of fact, I don't know one single Guard member that trains only 39 days a year.

As a commissioned officer who was on flight status, I spent the bulk of my

time during the 2 days a month, and 15 days in the year, commanding, doing administrative things, leading my troops, planning for the future, planning their training.

The other time that I came in at least once a week, if not more often, was to get my flight time because I had the exact same requirements. It is important to note when folks say, well, they are not as trained, they are not accessible, and not ready as Active components, it is not to take anything away from the Active component, because they train every single day.

I will tell you this: I have the same standards, require the same amount of flight hours, the same check rides, flight evaluations, the same physical requirements every single year as an Active Duty aviator. If I am a gun pilot, I must do gunnery. If I am a utility pilot, I must do sling loads, I must fly with night-vision goggles so that I am ready to go. Indeed, we are ready to go every single time.

People say, well, why do we need attack assets? Why do we need the AH-64 Apache in the Guard? I am not sure, quite honestly, from the standpoint of are you protecting your State that we need that AH-64 Apache in the Guard, but I will tell this: most Guard units are replete with former members of the Active component. They did their time on Active Duty, whether it was 6 years, or whether it was 15 or 18, and then they came to the Guard, and they enhanced their skills.

As a matter of fact, on Active Duty when you are downrange, when you are over the wire, and you are serving with Active Duty members and Guard and Reservists, oftentimes if given a choice to fly with members of the Guard as opposed to Active Duty, many Active Duty components will choose to fly with the Guard members.

There is one simple reason. It is because the Active Duty component, even though they are serving all day long, every day of the year, as a captain you are administering your administrative duties. You are leading your troops. You are planning their training, but you are not flying. So the bulk of the experience in doing the job of flying the aircraft is actually in the Guard. If you have a choice between flying with a captain and a lieutenant who have 800 hours between them or flying with a Guard CW-4 and a captain that have 35 to 4,000 hours between them in difficult terrain, in difficult conditions, what would you choose?

The mechanics who work on these aircraft don't work on them just a little bit and then move on to something else. They work on these aircraft for 20, 30 years at a stretch. They know every single thing about them; they live with them, they sleep with them. Oh, by the way, many of these folks are active Guard and Reserves. So it is not just 39 days a year, and not only more

than that, it is every single day of the year. That is why the Guard and the Reserves are ready to go when called upon, and people will say, well, you are not ready to go. You have got to go to a MOB site and train before you can go.

As a task force commander, a battalion commander who went through that, I was ready to go. I met my minimums, and I met every single requirement that the Active component met. So did all of the members of my unit, men and women who had served for years and years. When they send you to a place like that they give you a unit from Illinois, they give you a unit from Alaska, or a unit from Oregon, a unit on Active Duty, a unit from the Reserves. You haven't worked together. You have got to spend a little time figuring out your SOPs, your standard operating procedures, so that you can work together, and that does take some time.

I would also say that sometimes the Guard and Reserve, things are placed upon them for training purposes that the Active component says we need, when we would argue we don't need, and they slow us down from getting to the fight.

As an aviator, I wondered why I had to get into the heat trainer. I had to do rollover drills in a Humvee. I am not driving a Humvee around the streets of Iraq or Afghanistan. I am flying an aircraft, and that is where I should spend my time, but the Active component says, no, you all are going to do this and it takes some time. We get that. They want us to be safe and they want us to have that training. Okay, we get it.

Our core mission, the things that we do, the things we train for, the things the taxpayers pay for is exactly the same for an Army aviator in the Guard as an Army aviator serving on Active Duty. Now, it might not be the same for artillery men or an infantryman or a medic or something like that, it might not be. I don't know because I don't serve in those branches, but I know my branch.

I would say that each of us have our strengths and we recognize that. We recognize the Active component strength. I think in my heart that the Active component, DOD recognizes the strength of the Guard, but again, it would be my contention that DOD is fighting for its life, not against its brethren who have served in an Army of one, but against an administration who arguably doesn't have the same view as many of those who serve and many Americans that support the armed services of the armed services. So they are in a difficult position.

I think about when they say that we are not ready to go, the Eastern Army Aviation Training Site, located at Fort Indiantown Gap where I serve, the folks that serve there work every single day, and they train Army aviators.

That is what they do there. When you leave Fort Rucker and need to get an advanced aircraft, you come to EAATS many times—Eastern Army Aviation Training Site—and learn to fly a Chinook, learn to fly a Black Hawk. They don't do that in Fort Rucker in many cases. Your advanced training happens in the Guard. That is where that experience is.

Not only is it the same aircraft that many times the Active component is flying, but the EAATS folks oftentimes train even more advanced aircraft than the Active component's flying. I think that those EAATS guys are out training the special operations guys in the F model Chinook. These are Guard folks, training the Active component to go do their mission, and not just any Active component, special operations, the best of the best. Guard folks are training them. I don't want anybody to lose sight of that argument and that discussion.

You know, I am not saying, again, that the Guard shouldn't do its part. We are ready to do our part. We understand that the budget is tight and that changes must be made. But we are asking again for an open and a transparent conversation that meets the standards of decorum and bearing that we have so come to love, and one of the reasons why many people serve in our Armed Forces. I want to be an army of one that doesn't fight with his brothers and sisters in the Active component.

As a task force commander, I was privileged—and I mean well privileged—to command a task force of 800 to 1,000 souls that included National Guard, Active component, Reserves from the continental United States, from places in Europe, all fine individuals working under one commander, one mission, with one standard. I am concerned when I hear that the chiefs are being put into, in my opinion, a position to say that the Guard and the Reserves are lesser, because it is my experience that they are not.

It is my experience when soldiers are serving side by side that they don't see, and they don't recognize, and they don't notice any difference. They do their jobs. I don't want the chiefs to be put in that position. So we are asking, we are pleading, through this, with the administration. Let's have an open process. Let's have one that is transparent. Let's have one that we can engage in a conversation, because if the Guard costs 30 percent of what the Active Duty costs are, then a proportional cut really isn't proportional. If we offer things that are important to the Nation, as is evidenced in the last 10 or 15 years of war by our presence, where 50 percent of the component is fighting those wars, not only in just logistics, but in kinetic activity, engaging the enemy in close combat, with the tools of the trade, with what you have offered and have sacrificed greatly, greatly, your Guard and Reserve,

those men and women, they go, and some of them don't come home. Their sacrifice is just as important as those in the Active component.

It would be my contention, Mr. Speaker, that we need to slow this process down. It needs to be opened up so that everybody can see, and so that everything can be evaluated and that the Guard and Reserve can do its part but shouldn't have to do more than its part.

The Nation's investment in this readiness that you find in your States that comes into play when you have storms, when you have natural disasters, comes to play right there; that that readiness isn't lost, and that the days of the strategic Reserve are long in the past and that we don't go back to that failed model, and that we don't draw down so significantly that when we have a new administration, the American taxpayer will be asked, well, we are not ready to fight. We are not ready to meet our constitutional obligation to defend this Nation. Now we must spend more money to get back to where we were. We don't have to do that.

This administration's actions right now, we are making a conscious choice to reduce our readiness without cause, without reason, without justification, without a conversation. So, while some will say that it is too expensive, we have an obligation. It is expensive. Training and equipment is expensive. There is a great deal to be had in the Guard and Reserve. Again, I would like to have a discussion that honors the decorum and bearing that all servicemembers are bound to.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I appreciate the time that the Nation has taken to listen to this argument. I would ask that you call, that you write, that you email, that you correspond with your Representatives in this House of Representatives, and in the Senate, and with this administration to talk to them about having an open process by which we have to make changes to our fighting forces and to the defense of this Nation.

Well, let's have it open, let's have an open process, let's have a candid discussion, let's not pit one brother, one sister against another in this fight. We are all on the same team. Let's not do that. Let's have an open conversation and let's make the best arrangement we can that serves both the Guard, both the Reserve, both the Active forces, and in particular, the necessary defense of this Nation.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PERRY. With that, Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE). Is there objection to the re-

quest of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to draconian budget cuts that would adversely impact the Army National Guard.

Currently, my State of West Virginia is under a State of Emergency because of a chemical spill into our Capital's water supply. Our state's National Guard has been critical in getting clean drinking water to affected residents and ensuring their health and safety.

The Guard's assistance is an absolute necessity in times of state emergencies, but let us not forget that the men and women of the Guard are also serving overseas and safeguarding our Nation's security as Soldiers in the Total Army, held to the same standards and exposed to the same risks as their active component counterparts.

I strongly believe that a proposal to reduce the Army National Guard to its lowest level in over 50 years would not only weaken our national security and homeland defenses, but makes very little fiscal sense within a long-term military strategy, as personnel costs for Guardsmen are roughly one-third the cost of active component personnel.

Congress should be clear from the beginning of the budget cycle that draconian, end strength reductions to the Reserve Component are dangerous. We owe our Guard and the American people better.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my concern about the proposed size of our Army. Our active Army should not be reduced to 420,000 personnel and our National Guard to 315,000 personnel as this represents a substantial risk to our national security policy. Within the Army, I am concerned about the restructuring of the Army Aviation force. This restructuring would represent a significant policy shift away from the Army's, "Total Force Policy." It would also negatively impact Army National Guard aviation and the communities in which those units are based.

I fully understand that sequestration has caused the Army to make some very difficult decisions about their future force structure. I do not want to see a repeat of the 1990s when the active and reserve components fought one another for the limited resources available. However, that seems to be the path we are on and it in no way advances our national security. That is why; I begin by asking and imploring my colleagues in the House of Representatives to work together to find a solution to sequestration and repeal this misguided method of reducing spending. It is our Constitutional duty to provide for the common defense and we should not be reducing spending by placing half of the cuts on the back of the Department of Defense when defense spending only represents 15.1 percent of the budget.

Following the Vietnam War, former Chief of Staff of the Army, General Creighton Abrams devised the Total Force Policy. This policy vested much of the Army's reserve combat power in the hands of the Army National Guard. The Army National Guard was meant to be a "mirror image," of the active force to

the extent possible and to provide strategic depth in times of conflict. Mirror imaging meant that the National Guard would be trained and fielded with the same equipment as the active Army and this proposed aviation restructuring veers away from the total force policy.

There are those that say that Army National Guard aviation currently is not a mirror image of the active force because the structure of units is different. Providing a mirror image of brigade structure is not the point, the National Guard is not resourced or intended to follow the active duty Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) structure. The mirror imaging is in smaller units such as battalions that permit the Army to have strategic depth in its forces so that in wartime, the active units do not have to bear the full brunt of the fight. Without the National Guard and strategic depth, these past 12 years of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq would have broken our Army.

Divesting the Army National Guard of the Apache helicopter is a mistake. The active Army will have all of its attack and scout aviation power in the active force with no strategic depth and no reserve relief available if we find ourselves engaged in another major conflict. Enormous amounts of training dollars will be wasted. Years of aviation and combat experience will have been squandered.

Our National Guard Apache pilots are amongst the finest in the world. In my home state of South Carolina, the 1st of the 151st (1-151) attack reconnaissance battalion is one of the best attack battalions in the Army. There operational tempo is not as high as the active Army and it gives them a chance to train on critical skills that active duty simply does not have time for with the fight ongoing in Afghanistan. The 1-151st recently began to train its pilots on how to land an Apache on a Navy ship. Prior to these pilots becoming qualified, the Army did not have one single Apache pilot currently qualified to perform deck landings. Now however, the pilots of the 1-151 are helping to train the rest of the Army on this difficult and important task.

In closing, the battle we have is with sequestration. The active and reserve components should not be fighting one another; we in Congress should be providing them the necessary resources they require. We need to resource the Army at a level that protects our national security and keeps our personnel levels at the necessary levels, and keeps our equipment in the reserve and active components modernized and ready.

□ 1315

FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY:
PROVIDE FOR OUR COMMON DEFENSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. I appreciate so much my dear friend, Mr. PERRY's, last hour, almost, talking about such an important issue. I know there are those who say the number one job of Congress is

to create jobs; but I think a more appropriate reading of our constitutional duties is, number one, we are supposed to provide for the common defense. Every American should do as George Washington prayed that we would, to never forget those who have served in the field—that is our military men and women—some of whom have given all, but all gave something.

That was Washington's prayer at the end of his resignation as he resigned as the commander of the Revolutionary forces—something that had never been done before. And my understanding is it has not happened since. As a leader in the Maldives Islands said a few years ago, unsolicited, he said:

We have never had a George Washington to set the proper example, so we are always worried about a military coup.

And, unfortunately, they have had one.

What a blessed Nation we are because people like Washington were raised up for such a time as they were in. Abraham Lincoln spoke more than once so eloquently about the need to help those who have served and their widows and orphans. So it is particularly dismaying when Congress passes anything that does not properly honor and address the issues of those who have served in the field, and as we have talked about before, to follow up and fulfill our obligation to keep our promises. This government promises individuals if you come into the military and you serve until retirement, here is what you will get in return. We should not break our promises to those who have served and risked life and limb to protect us.

Just as my friend, Marcus Latrel, said recently on CNN, basically that they didn't go to the mission in Afghanistan senselessly, that it is not senseless when someone hears the call, sees the order of his country, and acts in accordance with their order, win, lose or draw. And that is the mentality. Of my 4 years in the Army, probably 2½ were under Commander Jimmy Carter and a year and a half under Commander in Chief Ronald Reagan. The last year and a half was far better because we had a Commander in Chief that truly appreciated more the opinion of those who were serving in the field and restored honor for the military. President Carter, obviously, from his background had respect, but you sure couldn't tell it from the actions when we were in the military. As a result, our reputation suffered around the world and we had an act of war on our embassy in Tehran. And other than a scaled-back rescue attempt—scaled back by the White House itself—we were embarrassed. And it is still used for recruiting today among radical extremists. Muslim Brotherhood members abroad say that these guys don't have the backbone to do what is necessary to win.

In such an important time in this world where so much is at risk to have an administration and some in the House or Senate that think it is okay to break our word to our military. We have got to turn this around. To those who think it is okay, we need to make clear, Mr. Speaker, it is not okay. We have the moral obligation to keep our promises and to do everything we can to protect those who are protecting us and to never send them into harm's way unless they have been given authority to win.

That should have been the lesson learned from Vietnam that wasn't learned. The lesson was not that we couldn't win—we could. And as SAM JOHNSON says in his book and points out in person after his 7 years in the Hanoi Hilton—much of it in complete isolation, brutally treated—after carpet bombing North Vietnam for 2 weeks, which could have happened many years before and ended the war early, a vindictive commander at the Hanoi Hilton laughed, saying, in effect, you stupid Americans, if you had just bombed us for 1 more week, we would have had to surrender unconditionally.

So it should be. We should not get involved anywhere where we do not give full authority to those in our military to go kick rear-ends, win, and then come home.

In an article today by Kristina Wong from "The Hill" publication, headline "Pentagon's hands tied on hunting down Benghazi attackers," this article says:

The U.S. military cannot hunt down and kill people responsible for the deadly 2012 attack on an American compound in Benghazi, Libya, as long as the terrorists are not officially deemed members or affiliates of al Qaeda, newly declassified transcripts from congressional hearings show.

This article goes on to say:

"In other words, they don't fall under the AUMF, that stands for authorized use of military force, authorized by the Congress of the United States. So we would not have the capacity to simply find them and kill them either with a remotely piloted aircraft or with an assault on the ground," Dempsey said.

They are talking about General Dempsey in his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, and those were the transcripts that were released.

But he is the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and here is where I have become amazed how this administration could think that the AUMF somehow gives this President authority without consulting Congress to go over and bomb and have our military play an active role in taking out Qadhafi, provide weapons to Libyans who very well may have been used to help attack our consulate, by the way, in Benghazi. We don't know enough to know for sure, but there is a good chance we were giving them the weapons. But how this President, this administra-

tion, thinks you can go over and go to war against Qadhafi, who had become an ally after he got scared enough after the invasion of Iraq that he just opened up all of his weapons systems, became an ally and, as some moderate Muslim leaders in the Middle East have said to me, he wasn't a good guy, but he was one of your good friends after he got scared of you in 2003. And some have said he was doing more to help fight terrorism in that part of the world than anybody besides Israel, and yet you bomb him and you give weapons to go against him. We don't understand you.

But this administration felt as if under the AUMF it had full authority to go in and attack a place where even the Secretary of Defense said we have no national security interest in Libya. Oh, sure, the Organization of Islamic Council, the 57 states that make up that organization—sometimes confused with the 50 States we have here in America—but that 57 states that make up the OIC, they wanted us to go in and take out Qadhafi because they didn't like him because he was fighting terrorism, radical Islam, and the Muslim Brotherhood.

How would an administration, how would a Commander in Chief have authority to go into Libya, and then when we find out there are people that still want to destroy America, kill Americans and destroy our way of life, all of a sudden you say, but we don't really have authority to go after people who have declared war on us, have committed an act of war in attacking our embassy, but we are just not sure we can go after them.

That did not seem to stop this administration and the President from issuing an order to murder, to kill a guy I wasn't a fan of, Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen because his parents came over on a visa and he was born here, and then he went back and was taught to hate America. Even though earlier, even during the Bush administration, he came to Capitol Hill and led congressional Muslim staffers here in prayer here on Capitol Hill; even though he had contacts within this administration, he visited with people in this administration's government, for some reason, we didn't see the need to arrest him and put him on trial here in America, but they thought it would be better just to hit him with a drone attack in Yemen and kill him over there.

And I'm not finding fault necessarily. That is a different debate over whether a President should order a drone attack on an American citizen without a trial. My point is if this administration felt as if the AUMF, the authorization for use of military force, allowed him to take out an American citizen in Yemen, then how is it that this administration all of a sudden gets scared and says, gee, we might violate the AUMF if we go after the people that

killed our Ambassador in an act of war against U.S. property, which was our consulate in Benghazi?

I think it is helpful to read directly from the language. It is something I was extremely concerned about and a number of my friends here have been extremely concerned about. It is why we have pushed amendments to rein in the Presidential authority to go after American citizens, and we have worked on language and passed language to effect this to prevent any U.S. President, whether it was former President Bush while he was still President or this President or a future President, it would prevent them from being able to just arrest an American citizen and hold them indefinitely. We put restraints on the President.

Here is the language that now-General Dempsey and this administration say we just don't really have the authority under the AUMF to go after the guys that assassinated our Ambassador and killed three others including two former Navy SEALs and took much of the leg of a former Army Ranger that was on the rooftop with Ty Woods and Glen Doherty.

Here is the language. It says:

That the President is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons.

So we have had people that took that and said, gee, you know, al-Awlaki didn't help plan 2001's 9/11 attack. In fact, we had him around Washington, leading prayers here on Capitol Hill and having contacts with this administration. But, gee, they didn't have a problem using this language to kill an American citizen in Yemen—not because he participated or helped plan 9/11/2001, but simply because they were using language here in the last part that:

Or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations.

So that has been interpreted by this administration for a long time now, gee, you didn't have to participate or help plan 9/11/2001; but if you did anything to aid, abet, assist, encourage in any way any of these organizations that may have participated in some way in 9/11/2001, then the President can do whatever he needs to with military force to, as it says:

Prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons.

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Well, if al-Awlaki could have this language used to take him out with a drone attack, then certainly under this

administration's definition and usage of that language, it sure ought to authorize them to go after people that declared war on us and committed an act of war against our enemy, or harbored such persons or organizations. And we already know, everybody but The New York Times, everybody knows that the organizations, some of the organizations that participated in the 9/11/12 attack, the act of war on our consulate in Benghazi, were affiliated with al Qaeda, organizations that did participate in 9/11.

So these organizations didn't necessarily part in 9/11 on 2001, but they certainly were working with them. So anyway, it just seems to be contradictory for the administration to use the AUMF to possibly accede their authority to kill people abroad and then turn around and hide behind it.

And perhaps if Dr. Gates had not written the book he did and given us insight into things that are said or not said in this administration, then maybe we wouldn't know as much. But since we now know that even the Secretary of Defense and our top generals can feel the President is doing the wrong thing but not have the guts to tell him to his face, then I don't know, perhaps possibly General Dempsey is in that category now. Maybe he is one of those who fits in the category of maybe knowing something is appropriate but, instead, popping those heels together, saluting, yes, sir, and never fulfilling their duty not just to follow orders, but to give helpful information to a commander above you, in this case the Commander in Chief.

This article says:

The U.S. could seek to capture the Benghazi attackers under the existing AUMF, but it would need to allow forces in Libya, or any other countries in which the attackers are hiding, to do so.

Well, isn't that interesting, because that is not what this President did to kill al-Awlaki, Anwar al-Awlaki. They just killed him. They didn't allow any Yemen force, or anybody else. They just took him out with one of our drones bombs. And now all of a sudden they want to hide behind this language and say, Oh, well, actually, we can't do that. So is that our excuse now for why, after a year and a half—and I feel sorry for the President because basically he wasn't going to rest until we got these guys. So, man, a year and a half is a long time not to rest.

This article says Dempsey's classified comments highlight the limits of the existing authority which was approved by Congress after the September 11, 2001, attacks and the difficulty of fighting a constantly evolving enemy that in al Qaeda has inspired independent terrorist groups to try to murder American forces and civilians. The AUMF gives the military authority to hunt and kill those responsible for the 2001 attacks, wherever they are, and

has allowed President Obama to authorize hundreds of drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya. It has also been used to authorize several Special Operations raids, such as the one that took out Osama bin Laden.

But, see, the article just accepts what the administration says. General Dempsey said apparently in his testimony, Oh, well, gee, apparently you can go after all these other people. Well, if you can go after them, you can use the same language to go after the perpetrators of 9/11. So what is the administration afraid of?

I keep wanting these questions asked, and I think we need a select committee to ask these questions. Why don't you just come forward, all those in the administration that have information, why do you keep polygraphing our intelligence agents who knew what went on in Libya and what was going on in Libya? Why do you keep polygraphing them to make sure that they are not talking to Congress or anybody else? Why don't you just let them tell Members of Congress so we have better information from which we can authorize other actions and appropriate money to help with those actions? Why don't you just come forward and tell us what was going on? Why don't you try for a change being the most transparent administration in history? It is a long way to go, but maybe it is time to start.

We are in a war; and as others have so appropriately said, apparently we have been in a war since 1979 when radical Islamists committed the act of war against American property. An embassy belongs to the country and the soil is considered to be the country that occupies that embassy. You commit an act against that, military act, hostile act, it is an act of war. So we have been at war since 1979. The trouble is until 9/11/01, most Americans didn't know we were in a war. Only one side knew we were in a war. That was borne out in 1983 when our marines, over 200 marines, were killed in Beirut by a bombing, a truck bombing that came in there.

So many acts of war, of violence, including the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, including the two embassies that were bombed under the Clinton administration, although perhaps some in the administration might be tempted to ask, as Secretary Clinton asked not that long ago, What difference at this point does it make how or why they were killed basically in those embassies. Well, it makes a difference because we can prevent them in the future if we know why they were killed and what went wrong in the present. But it is a mystery.

Why hide behind the same AUMF as an excuse not to have brought the assassins of our Ambassador to justice? And something I heard, I heard a

former JAG officer talking on Fox News one night this week, obviously a smart man, but an ignorant man. You can be smart, but be ignorant. He was ignorant of the Constitution because he seemed to think that the Constitution requires you capture someone who has declared war on you, you have to give them all kinds of access and let them send manifestos around, you have to give them all kinds of freedom; and that is simply not the case. Some people who mean well but are ignorant of the Constitution say everybody has to be treated exactly the same under the Constitution. Their constitutional rights mean this or that, not understanding that actually under the Constitution everybody is not entitled to the same court. They are entitled to due process, but constitutionally that means different things.

So in the Army, in the military—I say the Army because that is what I was in—but in the military, constitutional rights are different. So you don't have the right to freedom of assembly. I wanted to claim that many times. We were ordered to be out for a 5 a.m. forced 25-mile march. I wanted to claim, Sir, I have a right to freedom of assembly wherever and whenever I want, and I would just rather not assemble for this 25-mile forced march. Or the—and I can't remember now—two 5-mile runs, whatever we used to do, early in the morning before you even started the day. It would have been nice to say, No.

It would be nice to have freedom of speech so as a member of the military we could have said what we really thought about some of President Carter's orders, but he was Commander in Chief. And as it should be, you are not allowed when you are Active Duty military to publicly criticize your command chain. In order to have good order and discipline, that is the way it needs to be. But once you are not on Active Duty, you can say whatever you want. You should be able to say without worrying about a drone taking you out.

So constitutional rights are different when you are in the military. The Constitution also makes clear that Congress has the authority to set up the disciplinary procedures, the court systems, tribunals for the military. It makes clear that Congress has the authority to set up different courts for immigration purposes, entirely constitutional.

So I get amused when some people that are smart, but ignorant about the Constitution, start saying everybody in America has a constitutional right to be tried before a United States district court. Well, that is ridiculous. There is not a U.S. district court that is even established in the Constitution. That is completely up to Congress. This Congress has the authority to get rid of every district court in America, get rid

of every Federal court of appeals in America and just set up a whole new system. We have the authority to do that.

As Professor David Guinn used to say, there is only one court established in the Constitution, all others owe their existence, their jurisdiction, their very being to Congress. As Bill Cosby used to say, his daddy told him and his little brother, I brought you into this world and I can take you out.

Well, Congress brought these courts into this world, and Congress can remove them. We have that authority. So nobody has a constitutional right to a U.S. district court. There is no constitutional creation of a U.S. district court. It is up to Congress.

So to have some former JAG officer go on TV and say, Oh, yeah, you have to give all of these rights. No, you don't. Under our Constitution, if you declare war against the United States, we have every right if we capture you to hold you until the cessation, the stopping, of the hostility, the war that you declared against us. And then once the war is over, we don't have to try you. Convince your buddy, we will let you send a letter to your buddy telling them stop the war so I can be released as a POW. We don't have to release them if they are part of a group that is at war with us. And then when the end of the hostilities comes and the war is over, then you don't even have to release everybody that was a POW. If somebody you believe has probable cause, that is a good standard, you believe that they have committed a war crime, then instead of just releasing them and sending them home, you can try them for a war crime.

But I understand that there are a lot of people in this administration that don't really understand that part of the Constitution. Perhaps they got a bad professor at the University of Chicago Law School or somewhere, and they don't really understand what the Constitution actually says or doesn't say. But you can hold people indefinitely, and the Supreme Court verified that. You may have to give them a writ of habeas corpus hearing, but you don't have to let them go or send manifestos. We owe an obligation to protect this country. We have authority to do it here in Congress; and, Mr. Speaker, that is what we should do.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. SLAUGHTER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of family illness.

BILL AND A JOINT RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on January 15, 2014, she

presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill and joint resolution.

H.J. Res. 106. Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2014, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3527. To amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the poison center national toll-free number, national media campaign, and grant program, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 17, 2014, at 1 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4506. A letter from the Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting the Bureau's final rule — Defining Larger Participants of the Student Loan Servicing Market [Docket No.: CFPB-2013-0005] (RIN: 3170-AA35) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4507. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRA, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Community Reinvestment Act Regulations [Docket ID: OCC-2013-0024] (RIN: 1557-AD77) received January 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4508. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Information Sharing Among Federal Home Loan Banks (RIN: 2590-AA35) received December 2, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4509. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Removal of Certain References to Credit Ratings Under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 [Release No.: 34-71194; File No. S7-15-11] (RIN: 3235-AL14) received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4510. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments [Docket No.: 120814338-2711-02] (RIN: 0648-BD71) received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4511. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Pacific Whiting and Non-Whiting Allocations; Pacific Whiting Seasons [Docket No.: 130114034-3422-02] (RIN: 0648-XD016) received January 13, 2014,

pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4512. A letter from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; 2014 Commercial Summer Flounder Quota Adjustments [Docket No.: 121009528-2729-02] (RIN: 0648-XD026) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4513. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Revisions to Headboat Reporting Requirements for Species Managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council [Docket No.: 130409354-3999-02] (RIN: 0648-BD21) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4514. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Amendment 27 [Docket No.: 130312236-3999-02] (RIN: 0648-BD05) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4515. A letter from the Deputy Chief Counsel, Regulations and Security Standards, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Aircraft Repair Station Security [Docket No.: TSA-2004-17131; Amendment No. 1554-X] (RIN: 1652-AA38) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DENHAM (for himself, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. COOK, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. NUNES, Mr. ISSA, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. MCKEON):

H.R. 3893. A bill to provide for the suspension of Federal funding for the California High Speed Rail Project until sufficient non-Federal funds are available; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MASSIE (for himself, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. DESANTIS):

H.R. 3894. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the inclusion in gross income of Social Security benefits; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. RADEL, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. STUTZMAN):

H.R. 3895. A bill to renew America's founding principles by freeing Americans to

produce more energy in the United States from all sources and contribute to the strength of American national security through North American energy independence; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, Ways and Means, Agriculture, Armed Services, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself, Mr. PETRI, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 3896. A bill to amend the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act to provide a definition of recreational vessel for purposes of such Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. LEE of California, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 3897. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to strengthen the rules for approved structured settlement factoring transactions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3898. A bill to prohibit students who have been convicted of a criminal hazing offense under State law from receiving assistance under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. HOYER):

H.R. 3899. A bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself and Mr. SCHIFF):

H.R. 3900. A bill to amend the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 to facilitate access by the Comptroller General of the United States to information in the possession of the intelligence community, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. GARRETT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. ROSS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. MULVANEY, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. HURT, and Mr. BACHUS):

H.R. 3901. A bill to prohibit contributions by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to the Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Market Fund while such enterprises are in conservatorship or receivership, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SCHIFF (for himself and Mr. ROGERS of Michigan):

H.R. 3902. A bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. BUCSHON, and Mr. OLSON):

H.R. 3903. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish fair and consistent eligibility requirements for graduate medical schools operating outside the United States and Canada; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BARROW of Georgia:

H.R. 3904. A bill to reduce the period of the availability of allowances for former Speakers of the House of Representatives to one year, beginning on the date of the expiration of an individual's service as Speaker; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 3905. A bill to improve the response to missing children and victims of child sex trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa (for himself and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 3906. A bill to require States to carry out Congressional redistricting in accordance with plans developed by nonpartisan service agencies of the legislative branch of State governments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3907. A bill to increase public confidence in the justice system and address any unwarranted racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal process; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3908. A bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide for improvements under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3909. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to provide that the payment of a bill, invoice, or statement of account due, if made by mail, shall be considered to have been made on the date as of which the envelope which is used to transmit such payment is postmarked; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3910. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to allow the United States Postal Service to provide nonpostal services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3911. A bill to amend the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to include bullying and harassment prevention programs; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mr. KIND, and Ms. PINGREE of Maine):

H.R. 3912. A bill to provide reimbursement under the Medicaid program to individuals and entities that provide voluntary non-emergency medical transportation to Medicaid beneficiaries for expenses related to no-load travel; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 3913. A bill to amend the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 to require agencies to make considerations relating to the promotion of efficiency, competition, and capital formation before issuing or modifying certain regulations; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. QUIGLEY,

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. HOLT):

H.R. 3914. A bill to provide for improvements in the treatment of detainees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3915. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to modify the FAFSA to include a space for the purpose of identifying whether a student is a foster youth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3916. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to promote the expansion of spectrum-based services to exceptionally hard-to-serve populations in unserved and underserved geographic locations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3917. A bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PETERS of California, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. BERA of California):

H.R. 3918. A bill to amend sections 25 and 27 of the Stevenson-Wylder Technology Innovation Act of 1980 to improve the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and regional innovation programs; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3919. A bill to redesignate Rock Creek Park in the District of Columbia as Rock Creek National Park in the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NUGENT (for himself, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 3920. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to limit the acquisition of certain business records under that Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 3921. A bill to incentivize State support for postsecondary education and to promote increased access and affordability for higher education for students, including Dreamer students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. YARMUTH (for himself, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. COHEN):

H.J. Res. 107. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures with respect to Federal elections; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CANTOR:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. HOLT (for himself, Mr. NUNES, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr.

RANGEL, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. VALADAO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. COSTA, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mr. PETERS of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. CHU, and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H. Con. Res. 76. Concurrent resolution recognizing the significance of the anniversary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellowship program, and reaffirming the commitment to support the use of science in governmental decision-making through such program; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H. Con. Res. 77. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress opposing the proposal by the United States Department of State to relocate the United States Embassy to the Holy See; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BECERRA:

H. Res. 460. A resolution electing a Member to a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr.

SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. REED, Mr. NEAL, Mr. JONES, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HOLT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. JOYCE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. LATTA, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RUPERSBERGER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MORAN, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. PETRI):

H. Res. 461. A resolution supporting the contributions of Catholic schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. WILSON OF FLORIDA (for herself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. HOLT, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. POLIS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BASS, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H. Res. 462. A resolution recognizing January as "National Mentoring Month" and encouraging more people in the United States to mentor young people in their communities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 3893.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (relating to providing for the common defense and general welfare of the United States), Clause 3 (related to regulation of Commerce among the several States), and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress).

By Mr. MASSIE:

H.R. 3894.

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

The Constitutional authority for the Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act is found in Article I, Section 8, which gives Congress the power to lay and collect taxes.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina:

H.R. 3895.

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

Congress has the power to enact legislation pertaining to the rules and regulations for property owned by the United States pursuant to Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

Authority for additional functions of this legislation having to do with tax credits are found within Article I, Section 7; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. Authority to stay misapplied regulations from the executive Branch stems from Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ:

H.R. 3896.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, and to regulate commerce as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 3897.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3898.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 3899.

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

Fifteenth Amendment, Section 2

Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2: The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 3900.

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

Article I, Sec. 8.

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 3901.

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

Under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 ("The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United

States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States”), 3 (“To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes”), and 18 (“To make all Laws which shall be necessary and power for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof”).

By Mr. SCHIFF:

H.R. 3902.

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

Congress has the power to enact the Child Protection Improvements Act pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, the Necessary and Proper Clause. The Necessary and Proper Clause supports the expansion of congressional authority beyond the explicit authorities that are directly discernible from the text. Additionally, the Preamble to the Constitution provides support of the authority to enact legislation to promote the General Welfare.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 3903.

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

The attached bill is constitutional under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: “To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes” as well as Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: “The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.”

By Mr. BARROW of Georgia:

H.R. 3904.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 3905.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 3906.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3907.

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

Clauses 1 and 3 of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3908.

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

Clauses 1 and 3 of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3909.

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

Article 1, Section 8 under the United States Constitution

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 3910.

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

Article 1, section 8, clause 3 (relating to the power to interstate commerce).

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3911.

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

Civil Rights Enforcement: Fourteenth Amendment, Sections 1 and 5—Section 1: All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. Section 5: The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article. Spending Authorization: Article I, Section 8, Clause 1—The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 3912.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 3913.

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

Article 1, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 3914.

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

Article I, Section 8, “The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay Debts and provides for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.”

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3915.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3916.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3917.

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

Article I Section 8 Clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States)

Article I Section 8 Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

Article IV Section 3 Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States)

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3918.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3919.

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

clause 2 of section 3 of article IV of the Constitution.

By Mr. NUGENT:

H.R. 3920.

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

The Commerce Clause in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, and prohibition of unreasonable searches in Amendment IV of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 3921.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

By Mr. YARMUTH:

H.J. Res. 107.

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

Article V of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 38: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 118: Ms. CHU.

H.R. 184: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 352: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 477: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 508: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 578: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 720: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 940: Mr. MCALLISTER.

H.R. 964: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 973: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1010: Ms. GABBARD and Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 1070: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1074: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 1250: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 1339: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1355: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 1518: Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 1528: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 1666: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1726: Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. CAPPS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 1731: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 1732: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1750: Mr. TERRY, Mr. MCALLISTER, and Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 1761: Mr. CALVERT, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 1852: Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 1918: Ms. BROWN of Florida and Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 1972: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 1975: Ms. MENG and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2103: Mr. PAYNE and Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 2247: Mrs. BACHMANN and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 2288: Mrs. LOWEY and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 2305: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 2409: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 2502: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 2504: Mr. WALZ, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. FORBES.

- H.R. 2536: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.R. 2602: Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 2839: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 2841: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, and Mr. ENYART.
 H.R. 2847: Mr. DEFazio.
 H.R. 2854: Mr. WILLIAMS.
 H.R. 2866: Mr. LAMBORN.
 H.R. 2939: Mr. PASCARELL, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
 H.R. 2959: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. OWENS, Mr. HARPER, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
 H.R. 2998: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
 H.R. 3040: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
 H.R. 3081: Mrs. WAGNER.
 H.R. 3121: Mrs. ROBY and Mr. BENISHEK.
 H.R. 3133: Mr. WENSTRUP and Mr. REICHERT.
 H.R. 3179: Mr. MARCHANT.
 H.R. 3279: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 3335: Mr. SOUTHERLAND.
 H.R. 3367: Mr. WOMACK.
 H.R. 3370: Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 3374: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 3408: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
 H.R. 3413: Mr. MCALLISTER.
 H.R. 3461: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 3467: Mr. NADLER.
 H.R. 3471: Mr. RUIZ, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mrs. LOWEY.
 H.R. 3482: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 3486: Mr. PITTS.
 H.R. 3488: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. KILMER, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. TIBERI.
 H.R. 3489: Mr. JOYCE.
 H.R. 3493: Mr. WALZ.
 H.R. 3516: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 3518: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
 H.R. 3529: Mr. COTTON.
 H.R. 3539: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 3541: Mr. WOMACK.
 H.R. 3590: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. KING of Iowa.
 H.R. 3601: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 3658: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LATTA, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. WOMACK, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
 H.R. 3676: Mr. WOMACK.
 H.R. 3693: Mr. OLSON and Mr. MASSIE.
 H.R. 3717: Mr. CALVERT and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
 H.R. 3721: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
 H.R. 3732: Mr. MESSER, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. MCHENRY.
 H.R. 3747: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
 H.R. 3771: Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. HAHN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 3776: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
 H.R. 3784: Mr. MULVANEY.
 H.R. 3788: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia and Mr. SOUTHERLAND.
 H.R. 3824: Mr. BARBER, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. ESTY, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. GARAMENDI.
 H.R. 3829: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. PEARCE, and Mrs. LUMMIS.
 H.R. 3852: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 3855: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H.R. 3865: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. REED, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. HARPER, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. NUNES, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. REICHERT, and Mr. SCHOCK.
 H.R. 3872: Mr. SIREs.
 H.R. 3878: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
 H.R. 3879: Mr. HORSFORD.
 H.R. 3880: Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 3881: Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 3882: Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 3885: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
 H. Con. Res. 47: Ms. DELBENE.
 H. Res. 75: Mrs. BEATTY.
 H. Res. 356: Mr. KLINE.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

**CONGRATULATIONS TO DICK
SLAGLE**

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Dick Slagle on receiving the Middletown Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.

This award is given to an individual who has demonstrated his or her dedication to improving the Middletown community. For more than 50 years, Dick has been committed to Middletown, Monroe, and Trenton through his involvement with the Chamber of Commerce.

A World War II Veteran and dedicated public servant, Dick has played an integral role in the betterment of the Middletown area. His service began in 1959 with the Middletown Area Chamber of Commerce, where he served as president for 10 years. He then went on to work for Armco Steel in Middletown, Ohio, until he retired in 1985. During his retirement, Dick has served as interim president for the Chamber of Commerce for the following years: 1984, 2001 to 2003, and 2013.

He had a vision for the Middletown community and worked with key leaders to develop strategies that will have a strong and lasting impact for years to come. As one of the founders and a former chairman of the Butler County Port Authority, he supported many important economic development initiatives for the region. The Atrium Medical Center, which supports more than 2,600 jobs within the region, is considered one of his largest and most significant projects.

Dick is a highly respected individual in the community and continues to work on projects that will have a positive effect on the region. Without his hard work and dedication, I am certain that places such as the MADE Industrial Park, Miami University's Middletown Campus, Weatherwax Golf Course, and Shaker Run Golf Course would not exist today.

It is no secret that Dick Slagle is a selfless individual who focuses his time and energy on his community. Without his guidance, I may never have entered into public office. He encouraged me and many others to pursue this path.

I am very proud to call Dick Slagle my good friend, and I extend my most sincere congratulations to him. His drive is unparalleled and his devotion to serving others is inspiring. I am certain he has inspired others to follow in his footsteps.

CELEBRATING MS. SUSAN STOMPE

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Ms. Susan Stompe on the occasion of her recognition as the Novato Citizen of the year. Residing in the City of Novato for four decades, Susan has been actively involved with an extensive list of community organizations and her stellar service has resulted in many impressive awards including the Sierra Club's Resource Conservation Award, Marin Conservation League's Volunteer Award, and the City of Novato's Outstanding Leadership Award.

Ms. Stompe's passion and commitment to Novato and to the wider Marin community has been characterized by her enduring spirit of volunteerism. She has devoted her time to educational, environmental and civic organizations, providing leadership and passion to a wide array of public projects.

Ms. Stompe has been an exemplary citizen of Novato, striving to improve the city for all of its residents. Her inspiring commitment and dedication will have a lasting impact on her community for many years to come.

Please join me in expressing deep appreciation to Ms. Susan Stompe for her long and impressive record of service.

**RECOGNIZING MRS. BARBARA
BOOZER**

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the inspiring life and contributions of Mrs. Barbara Boozer to her hometown of Granbury, Texas. She is being honored by her friends, family, and the people of Granbury for her 40 years of tireless and selfless service to the community.

Mrs. Boozer and her family have been pillars of the community for many years. She comes from the Carmichael and Cash families of Granbury who were some of the first to settle in the area in mid-1800s. It was an era when folks leaned on each other to make it through hard times. The origins of her giving and charitable character are easy to find when you glance back to her pioneer roots.

While we are many years removed from the hard life and ways of those pioneers, we all, including my colleagues in this House, has experienced hard times. At one point or another, we have all sought and relied on the kindness of family and friends, and Mrs. Boozer has continually been that person in Granbury. The

fruits of her life-long commitment can be seen by the smiles on the faces of all the people gathered around her to celebrate.

We are blessed to live in a country with individuals like Mrs. Boozer. Her actions embody our nation's greatest ideals. She proceeds without hesitation to help those around her while asking nothing in return. With her lifetime of service and sacrifice she has proven to be an invaluable treasure to those around her.

As she gathers with family and friends who honor her dedication to Granbury, may they be blessed by her wisdom and learn from her experiences. I congratulate Mrs. Boozer on living a life so worthy of our praise and admiration. I am honored to call her a constituent and share her story with you all today.

**TRIBUTE TO THE BAKERSFIELD
HIGH SCHOOL DRILLER FOOT-
BALL TEAM**

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Bakersfield High School Drillers football team, who took home their seventh state football title after a triumphant win at the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Division I State Football Championship Bowl Game this past December.

Drillers football has long been synonymous with winning in California state high school football history, with 36 section championships since its first unofficial game 120 years ago. In a magical 12-year span, the Drillers won six state championships, with the sixth title win coming in 1927. That same year, the state playoff system was disbanded, resurrected 79 years later in 2006 with the establishment of the state bowl championship. With the 56-26 win against Del Oro High on December 20, 2013, a new and modern era of Driller state champions was born.

Winning this championship was a team effort on both the offensive and defensive side of the football. This historic victory, however, was also the product of months of hard work and skill, refined by grueling summer practices and an unequivocal determination from every player, coach, and support staff to not only reach the state championship bowl, but to take home the trophy. This team overcame early obstacles, but with their eyes on the prize, charged through the season to cap off an amazing 13-2 record and secured wins by an average margin of victory of several touchdowns.

I commend Drillers Head Coach Paul Golla and his coaching staff for their leadership and ability to mold their students into champions and uphold the Drillers' century-old legacy as California's winningest high school football

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.
 Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

team. Serving the Drillers for nine years, Coach Golla brought all the players together so each one not only knew his individual responsibilities to cohesively form elaborate offensive and defensive units that scored at will and stifled their opponent's offense. The same can be said for the team's senior class leaders who, through their unique ability to lead their teammates, made game-winning adjustments and executed each play to the highest level.

As a Driller myself, I join our community in congratulating the coaches and players for their achievement. The 2013 Division I State Championship Driller coaching staff includes: Head Coach Paul Golla, Darren Carr, Terry Chapman, DeMarcus Clear, Jay Durant, Adam Levinson, Johnny Maran, Lance McCullah, Eduardo Romero, Craig Buckley, Paxton Garner, Rick Mosher, Bill Solan, Devon Pitts, Kirk Erickson, and Chris Figueroa. The 2013 CIF Division I State Championship Driller football team includes: Derrick Vickers, Lameshio Hill, Asauni Rufus, Johnathon Malone, Darias Dallas, Nate Stancil, Amone Gragg, Jeremiah Reddick, Coleman Olivas, Joseph Conley, Joshua Maran, Kevin Hayes, Ryder Dilley, Noah Holley, Desmond Stancil, Kira Burton, Keayr Gragg, Eddie Sanchez, Marcus Watkins, Deion Nobles, Anthony Mackey, Desmon McGhee, Bryson Briggs, Alex Fulmer, Ben Sanchez, Darrious Eaton, Nick Marchetti, Nigel Flores, Brian Douglas, Marcus Bruce, Patrick Liles, Jake Vasquez, Chris Sierra, Chris Agtang, Ethan Carter, Patrick Crowley, David Bonilla, Dimas Ramos, Greyson Burt, Dillon Littles, Nigel Brooks, Paulie Salazar, Brenden Hacker, Albert Salas, Joshua Nunez, Benjamin O'Bannon, Seth Valdes, Jordan Beltran, Julian Sanders, Anastacio Barrientos, Fletcher Dilley, Dyllan Guillermo, Cassidy Johnson, McKenzie McCoy, Robert Trujillo, Sergio Barriga, Daniel Schoene, Ulunder Martin, and Tyler Alvarez. You all have made our community so proud. Once a Driller, Always a Driller.

DEATH OF ARIEL SHARON

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, Israel laid former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to rest in a coffin draped in blue and white. What Ariel Sharon accomplished in life is a compliment to how he lived it.

Called "Bulldozer" by many, Ariel Sharon paved the way to maintain a strong and secure Israel during his time in the military and government.

Sharon is considered one of Israel's most brilliant military strategists and finest field commanders. Sharon provided leadership in numerous Israeli conflicts, including the 1956 Suez Crisis and the 1973 Yom-Kippur War.

After achieving the rank of major general, he chose to serve his country in a different arena, politics.

Ariel Sharon bulldozed his way into political power, with the same ferocity used to rout Israel's enemies, by becoming prime minister in 2001, with what was then, the largest electoral margin in Israel's history.

During his time as prime minister, he led with distinction and poise, with the protection of Israel as his guiding light.

My personal reflection on Ariel Sharon brings to mind a quote from General MacArthur's retirement speech before Congress, in which he said, "old soldiers never die; they just fade away."

I am confident that this body will remember Ariel Sharon's legacy, as well as this country's commitment to Israel's standing in the region.

CONGRATULATING JUDGE RUSSELL B. SUGARMON, JR. ON RECEIVING THE 2014 BE THE DREAM MLK LEGACY AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Judge Russell B. Sugarmon, Jr. on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a trailblazer for African-American stewardship in public office in Memphis and a leader in the Civil Rights Movement, it is fitting that this award be bestowed upon Judge Sugarmon in recognition of his accomplishments and contributions.

Judge Sugarmon was born in Memphis, Tennessee on May 11, 1929, and graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis. He attended Morehouse College before receiving his B.A. degree from Rutgers University in 1950 and his J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1953. He then served in the Army for two years, where he received a letter of commendation for his tour of duty in Japan. Upon returning to Memphis, in 1956, Russell began his work in private practice and later became a founding partner in the Memphis law firm of Ratner, Sugarmon, Lucas, Willis & Caldwell, the preeminent firm for civil and human rights cases. This was the first integrated law firm in the South.

In 1959, Russell Sugarmon became the first African-American in Memphis to run for a major city office when he ran for Public Works Commissioner. While this race was marred by heavy racial opposition to his candidacy, Russell's tenacity during this campaign paved the way for other African-Americans in Memphis to seek public office. Never one to be deterred by racial injustice, Russell successfully ran for a position on the Tennessee Democratic Party Executive Committee in 1964. Two years later, he was elected to the Tennessee General Assembly, becoming the second African-American in Tennessee to be elected to the Assembly post Reconstruction. From 1976 to 1987, Russell was a Referee in the Memphis Juvenile Court System before being appointed to serve as a judge for the General Sessions court. Judge Sugarmon was subsequently elected and re-elected to the bench and held his seat for 20 years until his retirement in 2006.

Over the course of Judge Sugarmon's life, he has been an active member of the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Working alongside notable Memphis pioneers and leaders in the fight for racial justice and equality, including the late Judge H. T. Lockard, Vasco and Maxine Smith, and A.W. Willis, Judge Sugarmon was instrumental in using the courts to desegregate public transportation, restaurants and public facilities. He also made headway in desegregating Memphis public schools. Both the NAACP and ACLU have honored Judge Sugarmon for his contributions to Memphis.

Judge Sugarmon was often a behind-the-scenes strategist in nearly every progressive political campaign in Memphis, including helping me during my State Senatorial and U.S. Congressional races. I am honored to know Russell Sugarmon as an attorney, a judge, a civil rights leader, an instrument of change and a friend. There is no doubt that his work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Judge Russell B. Sugarmon, Jr. on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

IN HONOR OF THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF GAY'S CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the establishment of Gay's Chapel United Methodist Church in Salisbury, North Carolina.

The commitment and reverence that the congregation of Gay's Chapel United Methodist church has shown is a great accolade to their shared faith, and I commend them on this milestone.

Gay's Chapel, established on January 17, 1839, has withstood as a beacon of God's love and blessings in our community for 175 years. It provides community members fellowship and a place to gather together to worship and grow closer to God. The congregation has continually upheld Gay's Chapel mission statement: "Follow Jesus, make disciples, and lovingly serve others through our gifts and talents." The church has been an essential, devoted piece of the community for many years.

Mr. Speaker, as I work here in Washington serving my constituents, I rely on my faith and my relationship with God to help me make the right decisions and to guide my daily undertakings. I wish to honor and commemorate the 175 years of fellowship Gay's Chapel United Methodist Church has offered to the citizens of Salisbury and Rowan County.

CONGRATULATING GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY ON THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, on January 23, 1789, America's first Bishop, the Reverend John Carroll, S.J., secured the deed to a plot of land overlooking the Potomac River in the State of Maryland to move forward in establishing what is today Georgetown University. That was 225 years ago this month and it occurred during the same year that these United States were formed. That was more than coincidence, but instead a recognition that an educated population would be critical to the success of this new nation.

A few years earlier, Father Carroll had laid out his vision for an "Academy at Georgetown, Potowmack River, Maryland." As he explained it in that document, Georgetown was to be a place where "... an undivided Attention may be given to the Cultivation of Virtue, and literary Improvement; and that a System of Discipline may be introduced and preserved, incompatible with Indolence and Inattention in the Professor, or with incorrigible Habits of Immorality in the Student." In short, his vision was for a place of serious learning which also reflected Jesuit values. Beyond that, Father Carroll made clear that he intended for the institution "to agreeably to the liberal Principle of our Constitution, . . . be open to Students of EVERY RELIGIOUS PROFESSION." The emphasis was his, and, fortunately, that emphasis on diversity has been carried forward not only with regard to religious belief, but also in terms of geographic, ethnic and cultural aspects.

Indeed, when students first began studying at Georgetown in 1792, the student body included both U.S. and international students. That tradition has continued and evolved over the last two-plus centuries. Today, among the nearly 18,000 students who are enrolled at Georgetown—including undergraduate, graduate, medical and law students, students come from all fifty of the states of this country, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, and from 141 countries around the globe. Clearly, Georgetown is a national and a global university today. Over recent years, it has consistently ranked among the most highly regarded post-secondary institutions in the United States.

Since its founding and the granting of the federal charter by legislation enacted by this Congress in 1815 to "the College of Georgetown in the District of Columbia," the University has grown and incorporated new components. In 1850, the Georgetown Medical School was established, and, in 1870, the Georgetown University Law Center began operation. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Georgetown University School of Dentistry was established (1901), followed shortly thereafter with the opening of the "Georgetown Training School for Nurses." In 1919, the Walsh School of Foreign Service was established, followed by the Institute for

Languages and Linguistics in 1949 and the McDonough School of Business in 1957. Just this year, the University's Public Policy Institute became the McCourt School of Public Policy.

Indeed, this institution, which I am proud to call my alma mater, is a University that has remained true to its founding principles while evolving to reflect the changes that have taken place in this nation and, indeed, internationally. Having begun my own studies at Georgetown nearly six decades ago and maintaining ongoing contact with the University since that time, I can attest to the University's commitment to addressing the challenges faced by our society and its consistent focus on developing students who are ready to contribute to future prosperity and positive civic leadership.

There is no doubt that Georgetown has left an indelible mark on my life and my career in public service. Indeed, the University's Mission Statement identifies Georgetown as committed to educating women and men "to be responsible and active participants in civic life and to live generously in service to others." Today, fourteen members of the House of Representatives, of both political parties and wide ranging political philosophies, hold Georgetown degrees. Likewise, six current United States Senators hold Georgetown diplomas. The same can be said of governors, cabinet secretaries and a large number of members of our diplomatic corps. Though we do not all agree on many policy issues, we all have been imbued with a commitment to public service that is an intrinsic part of what a Georgetown education is all about.

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to study at Georgetown and to have witnessed its ongoing progress. I am proud to call the University's President, Dr. John DeGioia, a friend. He is indeed an exemplary leader for the University and in American higher education. To President DeGioia and everyone else with any tie to Georgetown, I extend hearty congratulations on this occasion and best wishes for the century ahead which will, no doubt, build on its sustaining traditions and its adaptability.

CELEBRATING MS. BARBARA HELLER

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Ms. Barbara Heller on the occasion of her retirement from the San Rafael City Council. Ms. Heller's two decades of service on the San Rafael City Council have been marked by her dedication to improving the quality of life for those who live and work in the City of San Rafael.

Ms. Heller's commitment to San Rafael and the wider Marin community has been characterized by her leadership on a wide array of groups, as President of the Marin County Council of Mayors and Councilmembers, President of the Marin Transit Board of Directors, the San Rafael Planning Commission, the San Rafael Sanitation District, and many other committees.

Throughout her service, Barbara demonstrated a fundamental and deep understanding of the many ways in which the entire San Rafael community would benefit from vibrant, civic-minded economic development. She has set a prime example of caring, insightful, and pragmatic governance focused on the people whom she served.

Please join me in expressing deep appreciation to Ms. Barbara Heller for her long and impressive career, and her exceptional record of service.

CONGRATULATING FRED L. DAVIS ON RECEIVING THE 2014 BE THE DREAM MLK LEGACY AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Fred L. Davis on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a businessman, public servant and a leader in the Civil Rights Movement, it is fitting that this award be bestowed upon Fred Davis in recognition of his accomplishments and contributions.

Fred Davis was born in Memphis, Tennessee on May 8, 1934, and graduated from Manassas High School in 1953 before graduating with a B.S. from Tennessee State University in 1957. Mr. Davis entered the Army after college and served two years in France. Soon after returning from the Army, he opened the Fred L. Davis Insurance Agency in 1967, becoming one of the first African-American insurance agencies in the South. He was the first African-American policy writing agent in six neighboring states and the first African-American member of the Independent Insurance Agents of America. In 1968, his insurance agency was appointed to represent the Hartford Group and has maintained the contract ever since.

In that same year, Fred Davis was one of three African-Americans elected to serve on the newly formed Memphis City Council. He was selected Chairman of the Public Works Committee and fought for sanitation workers during the Sanitation Strike of 1968. The strike, which brought Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Memphis, afforded Davis the opportunity to march with and stand alongside Dr. King as he delivered his "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech at Mason Temple Church of God In Christ in Memphis.

In 1972, Davis became the first African-American to chair the Memphis City Council and was judged by black and white Memphians alike as fair and honest in his dealings. Davis also served as president of the Liberty Bowl, a beacon of pride for Memphis sports, making him one of the few African-Americans to head a major bowl in the U.S. He holds certifications in many areas of the insurance industry, including licenses in property and casualty coverage, the Life Underwriting Training

Council (LUTC) Certificate and a securities registered series seven with the National Association of Security Dealers (NASD). Mr. Davis is also a founding director and past president of the Mid-South Minority Business Council and a Certified Minority Vendor. In addition, he is an active member of Beulah Baptist Church, serving as a senior deacon and trustee.

Fred Davis has always supported me in my State Senatorial and U.S. Congressional races, and I am honored to know him as a successful businessman, a leader in the community for over half a century and a friend. A civil rights activist and defender of democracy for all, he has shown his dedication to the people of Memphis no matter their race. There is no doubt that his work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Fred L. Davis on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

CONGRATULATING JOHN OPOKA
ON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE ILLINOIS
HOCKEY HALL OF FAME

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Opoka who will be inducted into the Illinois Hockey Hall of Fame as a member of the 9th class of inductees on January 26, 2014. Mr. Opoka and his fellow inductees have demonstrated their personal commitment to the sport and the community by enhancing the lives of Illinois' young hockey players and contributing to the rich history of hockey in Illinois. I appreciate John's 34 years of service as an Illinois hockey official and would like to congratulate him on this special honor.

After playing hockey in high school, John began to officiate games while in college. Thanks to the recommendation of a role model and fellow referee, Chet Stewart, John was chosen to officiate collegiate games at the age of 19. He spent nearly three decades leading the college chapter of Illinois hockey officials and also served as referee-in-chief for the Illinois-Wisconsin Collegiate Hockey League and the Central State Collegiate Hockey League. John led seminars on rule interpretation for the NCAA and helped to bring about essential changes to the NCAA's ice hockey rules.

During his 34 years as an official, John has been committed to the betterment of hockey in Illinois. He served as Ethics Chairperson and Seminar Director while a member of the Illinois Hockey Officials Association (IHOA) Board of Directors. As IHOA's Seminar Director, John was the first to bring together officials from all levels for an exchange of ideas and best practices. In every game that he worked, whether it was a tournament, state playoff, or national championship, John served as an example of professionalism and commitment to excellence.

John continues to serve his community, now acting as a leader of the Community Emer-

gency Response Team (CERT) in his hometown of New Lenox, Illinois. I look forward to John's continued involvement in Illinois hockey and know that he will serve as a role model to many of Illinois' young hockey players and officials.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the tremendous accomplishments and contributions of Mr. John Opoka and to congratulate him for being inducted into the Illinois Hockey Hall of Fame.

CONGRATULATING MARY ANNE
ROONEY

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mary Anne Rooney, the newly-elected president of the Oxnard Harbor District's Board of Commissioners.

On January 13, 2014, the board held their first meeting of the year and unanimously voted to appoint Mary Anne Rooney to take the helm as its president, the first woman to hold the position in the board's 77-year history.

As president, Mary Anne will lead the five-member governing body that oversees the Port of Hueneme and its operations. As one of the primary economic drivers in Ventura County and Southern California, the Port of Hueneme is a critical asset to our community. Currently, the Port of Hueneme supports the transport of over \$7 billion in cargo, generates \$1 billion of economic impact, and provides more than 9,400 jobs to the region. Without a doubt, under Mary Anne's strong leadership and dedicated service, the Port of Hueneme will continue to thrive.

With more than 15 years of experience in various business industries, Mary Anne brings a knowledgeable and unique perspective to the community. Her commitment to the advancement and success of Ventura County is evident from her various roles of involvement throughout the region. Mary Anne has served as treasurer of Oxnard Sister City Committee, she is a member of the World Affairs Council, founding member of the Ventura County Women's Political Council, member of the League of Women Voters, former trustee of Ventura County Community College District, past president of Gull Wings Children's Museum, and former president of the Associated Student Government at Oxnard College.

Mary Anne also serves as program director at the Economic Development Collaborative—Ventura County (EDC-VC), and serves as an advisor to the Small Business Development Center, a comprehensive business service through the collaborative. Additionally, with her extensive experience and knowledge base, Mary Anne developed a program that focuses on international trade. She also leads an outreach program for manufacturers that promotes business services to bolster the international trade sector in the county.

In recognition of her hard work and dedication to the community, Mary Anne was one of

the Pacific Coast Business Times' Top 50 Women in Business for 2010, 2012, and 2013.

Mary Anne's energetic character and creative leadership style, coupled with her vision to improve Ventura County's economic competitiveness, will be a continued asset to the Board of Commissioners. I congratulate Mary Anne Rooney on her continued success and look forward to working with her in her new role.

CONGRATULATING REVEREND
SAMUEL BILLY KYLES ON RECEIVING
THE 2014 BE THE DREAM MLK LEGACY AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Reverend Samuel Billy Kyles on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a revered pastor and a leader in the Civil Rights Movement, it is fitting that this award be bestowed upon Rev. Kyles in recognition of his accomplishments and contributions.

Samuel Kyles was born in Shelby, Mississippi in 1934. At age 17, he moved to Memphis, Tennessee and in 1959, at age 25, he was installed as the first pastor of Monumental Baptist Church and to date, has served as its only pastor. Under his nearly 55 year leadership, Monumental has served the Memphis community well. The church strives to uplift young people and operates Monumental Pride Homes, which offers senior citizens affordable living. Rev. Kyles maintains his connection with the broader religious community through his membership with the World Baptist Alliance and his participation in the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC). He is also a former instructor at the National Training Congress of the PNBC and previously served on the Board of Directors of the Morehouse School of Religion.

Rev. Kyles was an important leader during the Civil Rights Movement, helping to desegregate public institutions and businesses. As a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in 1961, he enrolled his five-year old daughter in the all white public school system, thereby helping Memphis to become the first city in the South to integrate elementary schools. Rev. Kyles, along with other prominent Memphis fighters for racial justice and equality, worked to integrate the city buses and end segregation in restaurants, movie theaters, department stores and workplaces. Rev. Kyles once referred to his work as, "an extension of my ministry."

In the early 1970s, Rev. Kyles became a founding national board member of People United to Serve Humanity (PUSH). He was also the executive director of Rainbow/PUSH—Memphis and the executive producer of Rainbow/PUSH WLOK Radio for over 30 years. During the Clinton Administration, he served

on the Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad, investigating religious persecution throughout the world, and as a panelist at the White House Conference on Hate Crimes. In 1994, he traveled to South Africa as an election monitor in its first multi-racial election, which saw Nelson Mandela elected as South Africa's first black President.

Reverend Kyles shares a unique connection with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as pastors, civil rights leaders and friends. He stood beside Dr. King while he delivered his famous "Mountaintop" speech at Mason Temple Church of God In Christ in Memphis. There is no doubt that Rev. Kyles' work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Reverend Samuel Billy Kyles on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF ARMY SERGEANT FIRST CLASS WILLIAM KELLY LACEY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness and deepest sympathy that I rise to pay tribute to a fallen American hero. Army Sergeant First Class William Kelly Lacey of Niceville, Florida was killed on January 4, 2014, in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, while in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. SFC Lacey was assigned to the 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Knox, Kentucky.

SFC Lacey was a native Northwest Floridian who came from a family deeply committed to military service, with both his father and older brother serving in our Armed Forces. He was born at Eglin Air Force Base in Valparaiso, Florida and raised in Niceville, Florida, where he graduated from Niceville High School. SFC Lacey was proud of his family's service record, and in 2003, he continued this noble tradition by joining the Army with the goal of attaining the same rank as his father, which he achieved within the past months. During his time in the Army, he served as a paratrooper with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division and as a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 1st Infantry Division. SFC Lacey served three tours in Iraq and was completing his second in Afghanistan when his life was taken.

SFC Lacey was described by his friends and family as an easy-going and fun-loving individual, but on the battlefield, he was a fearless warrior who, according to one of his commanders, "always ran towards the gun." He dedicated his life to military service to ensure those who would do our Nation harm were defeated and that our Constitutional rights were upheld. We will never forget his ultimate sacrifice toward that honorable end. To SFC Lacey's loving wife, Ashley; his daughter, Lily, and stepdaughters, Caiden, Trinity, and Brandy-Lynn; his mother, Pam; his father, John, and stepmother, Karla; and two older brothers;

three younger stepbrothers; his extended family, and friends, my wife Vicki joins me in offering our most sincere condolences and prayers.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful United States Congress and Nation, I stand here today to honor Sergeant First Class William Kelly Lacey and all of the heroes we have lost. May God continue to bless them and the men and women of our United States Armed Forces.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF DR. MARION DOWNS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th birthday of Dr. Marion Downs and celebrate her pioneering work to expand hearing screening in newborns and early intervention for individuals with hearing problems. Dr. Downs' groundbreaking work has served as an inspiration for many generations of Coloradans and the medical community.

Dr. Downs is a Distinguished Professor Emerita at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. She began her esteemed career in Colorado, at University of Denver, where she was a professor of Audiology and Director of the Audiology Clinic from 1951 to 1959. It was there that Dr. Downs began implementing hearing aids for infants as young as six months old during a period of time when hearing aids were typically fitted at the age of three. Her practice of applying hearing aids at such a young age has shown tremendous results in hearing, speech and communications development. Dr. Downs then moved to the University of Colorado School of Medicine where she developed the first national infant hearing screening program in 1963. Since that time, she has devoted her professional career to identifying and managing infant hearing issues and developmental strategies.

Throughout her 35 year career, Dr. Downs has received numerous awards such as the Outstanding Achievement award from the University of Minnesota, Gold Medal Recognition from the University of Colorado, Northern Colorado and the University of Arizona School of Health and Sciences. She has received honors from nearly every auditory and speech society and has co-authored textbooks such as Hearing in Children, which serves as a worldwide resource to educate students on childhood auditory disorders.

At the age of 100, the lively Dr. Downs continues her work on important health issues related to auditory, speech and communication disorders. There is no doubt that Dr. Downs tireless efforts will continue to inspire future generations for many years to come.

CONGRATULATING FATHER DONALD MOWERY ON RECEIVING THE 2014 BE THE DREAM MLK LEGACY AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Father Donald Mowery on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As an agent of change during the Civil Rights Movement, it is fitting that this award be bestowed upon Father Mowery in recognition of his accomplishments and contributions.

Donald Mowery was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee and was brought up in a funeral home, which he had intended to make his life's work before being called to ministry. He attended school in Chattanooga before finishing college then seminary school at Berkeley Divinity School at Yale. While studying at Yale, he worked with young people at St. Peter's Episcopal Church and upon completion, he was assigned to a parish in Nashville, Tennessee, where he continued this important work. In Nashville, he became involved with the police department, holding services for the officers during the shift changes on Saturdays. This garnered him recognition from his Bishop and the Mayor of Nashville.

In 1963, Father Mowery received an invitation from the Bishop to continue his work with young people and the police department at St. Mary's Cathedral in Memphis, Tennessee. He joined Youth Service and began working with kids from different social and economic backgrounds, taking them on camping, boating, fishing and basketball trips in parks around the city. In 1968, following the assassination of Dr. King, Father Mowery received a warning that the parks would not be safe to conduct his program out of fear that he or one of the kids could be hurt among the unrest. He was advised to end the program but for Father Mowery, this only underscored the importance of the youth program.

Determined to keep the program open, Father Mowery appealed to the Navy base in Millington, Tennessee to use its facilities. Although his proposal was initially turned down, over the course of a weekend, the Navy reversed its decision and became a large supporter of the program. The Navy provided food assistance, shirts for the kids and exposure to military training techniques, which would become the first military youth training program. The program was such a success that the Department of Defense invited Father Mowery to Washington, D.C. to discuss starting 125 similar programs on military bases across the country. This led to the establishment of the national Youth Service USA.

Father Mowery's Memphis-based Youth Service and the Bridge Builders program, founded by Becky Wilson, joined to become BRIDGES in 1996. Today, BRIDGES is considered the "premier youth organization in the

Memphis area." There is no doubt that Father Mowery's work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Father Donald Mowery on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

"DO IT FOR YOUR DAUGHTER"
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS
CAMPAIGN GROWS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Michelle Coyoti-Varela, Joyce Falotico, Morgan Fuebacher, Jacqueline Hennessy, Adriana Poznanski, and Francesca Poznanski of Girl Scout Troop 1701 of Middletown, New Jersey for their breast cancer prevention and awareness campaign. Their national initiative, "Do It For Your Daughter," encourages moms to get mammograms so as to ensure and promote early detection, and if necessary, effective treatment.

The National Cancer Institute estimates that in 2013 alone, 232,340 Americans were diagnosed with breast cancer, and 39,620 died as a result. Roughly one in eight American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer sometime in their lifetime. For them and their loved ones, research and treatment provide hope as they fight the disease. Many survivors and their families commit to awareness campaigns as an opportunity to save lives and help others going forward.

Each of one of these extraordinarily bright and articulate girls has had their life touched by someone who has had breast cancer. They realized this common thread during their Troop Health Walk while discussing what they could accomplish as a troop—and how they could change the world for the better. Through research and meetings with health experts, they learned that early detection can be key to survival. When breast cancer is detected at the localized stage—confined to the primary site—the five year relative survival rate is 98.6%. As the stage of the cancer progresses, the relative survival rate drops.

This knowledge led the girls to film a public service announcement (PSA) urging mothers everywhere to have mammograms done—if not for themselves, for their daughters. The PSA has played for several months on several TV channels, and the girls have appeared on shows like Good Day New York to spread their message. Through their campaign, the girls of Troop 1701 are educating us all—men and women—about the importance of early detection.

I hosted the girls in my office after they reached out to me about the project. Let me tell you, these are impressive young citizens. They are incredibly passionate and smart, and they truly are making a difference, both in our home state of New Jersey and across the county. The girls have already heard from dozens of mothers—and others—who have scheduled their mammograms after seeing the PSA. A number of organizations, both national

and local—the American Cancer Society and Meridian Health of New Jersey, to name a couple—have joined the girls on the initiative.

The girls have implemented their campaign in a number of creative ways. They held the inaugural "Jam for the Exam" Health Fair at their school, attracting 400 attendees who were able to meet with health professionals and learn valuable health tips. It was there that they launched their "Pinkie Promise" campaign, having mothers sign a banner, making a pinkie promise to their daughters that they will get their mammograms done.

The girls were recently honored at the annual Girl Scouts delegate meeting where—after presenting their PSA and receiving a standing ovation—they received their Bronze Award in front of the New Jersey Delegates. It is the highest honor a Junior Girl Scout can achieve. As a fellow scout—a boy scout and Eagle Scout—I know that these girls exemplify the scout traits of courage, confidence, character, and citizenship.

This coming March, the girls will receive a further honor when they receive The Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore's first-ever Junior Women of Distinction Award. The Woman of Distinction Award was traditionally reserved for adult women in the state and local community for making a positive impact.

The award is certainly well deserved, and these girls are just getting started. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking the girls of Girl Scout Troop 1701—Michelle Coyoti-Varela, Joyce Falotico, Morgan Fuebacher, Jacqueline Hennessy, Adriana Poznanski, and Francesca Poznanski—for their truly impressive efforts in the fight against breast cancer. They are an inspiration to us all.

CONGRATULATING BEVERLY ROBERTSON ON RECEIVING THE 2014
BE THE DREAM MLK LEGACY
AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Beverly Robertson on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As the President of the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee for the past 17 years, it is fitting that this award be bestowed upon Beverly Robertson in recognition of her accomplishments and contributions.

Beverly Robertson attended Memphis State University where she earned her BA degree in 1973. While there, she was active in the student body and became a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, an organization well known for academic excellence, commitment to service, and providing assistance and support in local communities throughout the world. In 2013, the College of Education, Health and Human Services Alumni Chapter inducted her into its Hall of Fame.

For 19 years, Mrs. Robertson worked in corporate America before starting a successful business with her husband, Howard. In 1997, she was selected to be president of the National Civil Rights Museum, which is housed in the transformed Lorraine Motel—the location of Dr. King's tragic assassination. While she expressed concerns about her qualification for such a prestigious position, she pushed any doubts aside and said that she knows "how to treat people" and "how to manage a business." With these and other skills will in hand, the museum, its visitors and the city of Memphis have been well-served under her leadership.

Under her 17-year tenure as president, from which she is now preparing for a much deserved retirement, Beverly was instrumental in elevating the museum to new heights. She oversaw two major renovation projects, which included a 12,800-square-foot addition dedicated to the examination of Dr. King's assassination and the continuing struggle for civil rights, and a \$27 million renovation that is scheduled to open in March of 2014 and will add new exhibit space, more automation, state-of the art interactivity, an educational and cultural center, and a redesigned lobby. She has overseen 16 Freedom Awards programs honoring iconic leaders such as U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter as well as other notable figures including Rosa Parks, the Dalai Lama, Oprah Winfrey, Elie Wiesel, and Nelson Mandela. As a result of her dedication, the museum is a strong, fiscally sound and national recognized organization.

Beverly Robertson has been a true visionary at the National Civil Rights Museum and while I congratulate her on her upcoming retirement, her presence at the museum will be missed. There is no doubt that her work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Beverly Robertson on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

CONGRATULATING JACKSON FINE

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Jackson Fine, a talented young man from Thousand Oaks, California, who was awarded a U.S. patent for his 3D imaging system. With only one percent of U.S. patents awarded to students 18 years or under, Jackson Fine is among a select group of young inventors who is already making a big impact in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

Jackson's invention, which has come to be known as the "Iron Man" patent, is a system that allows for easy guidance and manipulation of holographic tools and objects within a 3D sensor grid. His invention can be used to conduct remote medical procedures, repair equipment on orbiting spacecraft, and enhance gaming and next generation computing. Jackson hopes that his invention will significantly enhance the quality of human lives.

Although Jackson acknowledges many entities as his source of inspiration, he attributes much of his motivation to his family, particularly his maternal grandfather. Jackson's grandfather had lost his arm as a teenager while working at a lumber camp. Despite the difficulties and challenges that he faced, his grandfather taught himself the trade of engineering and built and maintained several radio stations that he operated with his one hand. Similarly to his grandfather, Jackson is self-taught for the most part, but also recognizes his teachers and advisors—Mr. Jim Altizer, Mr. Jeff Morrow, Mr. Kenn Gorman, Mr. Matt Northrup, and Mr. Tim Fenderson—at Oaks Christian School for their nurturing advice and flexibility to work with his academic priorities while consistently encouraging him in his technology studies.

In addition to being a talented student, Jackson is also a celebrated athlete. As a member on the Oaks Christian Varsity Baseball team, Jackson received Perfect Game's USA All-American Honorable Mention team selection and was recently named an Under Armour 2014 Pre-Season All-American.

After completing his senior year at Oaks Christian School, Jackson plans to attend a university where he will pursue a degree in business and entrepreneurship while playing college baseball. I have no doubt that he will be just as accomplished in his adult life as he has been during his years at Oaks Christian School.

With such an impressive resume already, I look forward to seeing Jackson succeed in all of his future academic and professional endeavors. I join with Jackson's family, friends, and mentors in congratulating Jackson on such a momentous achievement.

REBUTTAL OF GENERAL
ODIERNO'S NATIONAL GUARD
COMMENTS

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday I had the pleasure of welcoming home the soldiers of the 1/214th Field Artillery Division located in Elberton, Georgia. The Georgia National Guard unit deployed to Afghanistan for a year, fighting for the freedoms we enjoy.

While speaking before the audience of recently returned veterans, I never made a distinction between National Guard and Active Duty. What I lauded these soldiers for was putting their lives on the line in defense of their nation. The flag they wear on their right shoulder, signifies them as a fighting force on behalf of the United States.

That flag doesn't distinguish whether they are National Guard or Active Duty.

So I was very disheartened three days ago when I heard reports that U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Odierno said, "the capabilities are not interchangeable," referring to the National Guard and Active Duty.

It appears to me the National Guard's capabilities have been interchangeable as they

have defended the nation during its 13 year war on terrorism.

The members of the 1/214th Field Artillery capabilities were interchangeable as they served with distinction during their year in Afghanistan. They executed 724 missions, conducted 9,300 vehicle searches, and were awarded numerous Purple Hearts and Bronze Star Medals. The 1/214th was awarded the Army's Meritorious Unit Citation which is given only to units whose performance is considered to be outstanding, heroic and actions valorous in nature.

It is hurtful to me as a Reservist, and the Guard members in my state, to say their skills are not interchangeable even though it is well known the Guard does the same job as Active duty with fewer resources. And yes, the Guard traditionally trains only 39 days a year, but yet, still fights for a year straight when deployed.

In addition to a year deployed, National Guard and Reservist are sent to mobilization stations for three months prior to deployment.

These mobilization stations are the last stop prior to being deployed. So a Guardsman, citizen soldiers as they are often called, is actually away from their families for a total of fifteen months.

For General Odierno to say Active Duty and National Guard are not interchangeable is disingenuous. The National Guard has to train to the same standards and adheres to the same doctrinal fighting form as Active Duty units.

In addition to fighting the foes of our nation, the National Guard is called up at a moment's notice to respond to hurricanes, tornadoes, chemical spills, and all manners of man-made and natural disasters. National Guard only trains for 39 days, when there isn't a state emergency.

As of recent, between Hurricane Sandy to the chemical spill in West Virginia, the Guard has been activated to serve the citizens of their state.

The members of the 1/214th Field Artillery would be disheartened to learn that their chief of staff doesn't think they are as capable as an Active Duty unit. I know, they know, that they can function in every terrain, weather condition, and operational environment as any other combat unit, why doesn't General Odierno?

CONGRATULATING LINDA ALWEISS

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize a local hero, Linda Alweiss, from Camarillo, California.

On December 30, 2013, Linda and her family were aboard a flight from Des Moines, Iowa to Denver, Colorado, when only twenty minutes into the flight, a call for medical assistance came over the intercom. Unbeknownst to Linda, the man in distress was the pilot of their flight. As Linda and another nurse, Amy Sorensen from Wyoming, were brought to the cockpit by flight attendants to assist in the medical emergency, they realized the gravity of the situation. The pilot, who seemed to be

suffering from a blood clot or heart attack, was hunched over in his seat; his face was pale, his lips were blue and both nurses could barely get a pulse. They quickly realized that their pilot could no longer fly the Boeing 737 that carried 154 passengers. With the help of Linda's husband and another passenger, they moved the pilot to the galley where they hooked up an IV and set up a diagnostic defibrillator.

Without hesitation, Linda rose to the occasion and quickly began to administer medical attention to the pilot. Although they were 30,000 feet in the air, Linda acted with poise, professionalism and valor. Her selfless actions aboard that flight saved the life of the pilot and the safety of all passengers and crew members. As the plane conducted an emergency landing in Omaha, Nebraska, Linda and Amy stayed with the pilot until he was transported and taken into emergency care.

Linda does not call herself a hero, but rather, someone who just did what she was trained to do. She is quick to give credit and attention to the other individuals who assisted; this shows her moral character and modest demeanor.

Linda's background as a nurse is extensive and proved to be the saving grace that day. Linda earned her baccalaureate of science in nursing from the University of Iowa in 1983 and worked as a registered nurse at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics. In 1984, Linda moved from Des Moines, Iowa to Southern California where she has worked as a charge nurse at Saddleback Community Hospital and later, as a charge nurse for the pediatric intensive care unit at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. In 1990, Linda made the decision to focus her career on being an in-house Legal Nurse Consultant. For the next twenty years, she worked for the law firm of Magana, Catchcart, & McCarthy. Today, Linda is currently employed as a home health nurse for Buena Vista Home Health Care.

Aside from her duties as a nurse, Linda is also a dedicated mother, wife and community leader. When her daughter, Sarah, attended elementary school, Linda was involved in the Parent Faculty Organization (PFO) for the Mesa Union School District, where she served as the President and Chairperson of the allocations committee for 7 years. Linda is an exemplary role model and citizen. She continues to be active in the community and provides pro-bono legal nurse consulting and actively raises funds for charities, including the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer.

For her selfless and heroic actions, I want to recognize and thank Linda Alweiss. She is a true hero in the hearts and minds of those on the flight, especially in the eyes of her family and community.

CONGRATULATING DR. JAMES L. NETTERS, SR. ON RECEIVING THE 2014 BE THE DREAM MLK LEGACY AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. James L. Netters, Sr. on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a pastor, a public official and a leader in the Civil Rights Movement, it is fitting that this award be bestowed upon James Netters in recognition of his accomplishments and contributions.

James Netters was born in Aliceville, Alabama in 1927 and moved with his family to Memphis, Tennessee in 1942. He graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in 1946, and nine years later was ordained by Reverend L.O. Taylor at Olivet Baptist Church. In 1956, Mr. Netters was installed as pastor of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church-Westwood in Memphis. Under his leadership, Mt. Vernon has been active in the community, operating Mount Vernon Christian Academy, which provides education for infants, and Westwood Manor Elderly Cottages, which offers affordable housing for independent-living seniors. In 1963, James received his B.A. degree from Lemoyne-Owen College and later earned his Master of Divinity from Memphis Theological Seminary in 1987 and his Doctor of Ministry in 1994.

In 1963, as the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum throughout the country, Dr. Netters travelled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the March on Washington, standing on stage while Dr. King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech. Invigorated and inspired by this experience, Dr. Netters returned to Memphis and was successful at working to integrate public buses. Dr. Netters later joined Reverend J.O. Patterson and Fred Davis to become the first African-Americans elected to the newly formed Memphis City Council. As a Councilman, James Netters worked to bring Dr. King and other national civil rights figures to Memphis to support the sanitation workers during the strike of 1968. He was also influential in working out an agreement to end the strike. In 1971, he stepped down from the City Council to serve as the Administrative Assistant to Mayor Wyeth Chandler from 1972 to 1975. Dr. Netters was the first African-American to serve in this position in Memphis.

Dr. Netters has received numerous awards and recognitions, and has served in various leadership positions including Chairman of the Board of Memphis Light, Gas and Water as well as its Interim President and CEO. He continues to pastor at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church and has grown its membership from 300 to over 4,000. Today, Reverend Netters is the most senior pastor in Memphis. There is no doubt that his work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to

join me in congratulating Dr. James L. Netters, Sr. on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

TRIBUTE TO THE FRANKENMUTH ROTARY CLUB

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Frankenmuth Rotary Club in commemoration of the group's 75th anniversary.

The Frankenmuth Rotary Club began operations on April 21, 1939, with a goal of gathering community leaders to provide humanitarian services to those in need—from the local to the international scale. Over the past 75 years, the members have continued to promote a high moral standard in the community while providing assistance with philanthropic projects.

The club began as a small gathering of 35 charter members. Today, the club boasts over 125 members. Over the course of the club's presence in Frankenmuth, various projects helped change the landscape of the community. On multiple occasions, the club has collaborated with area foundations and businesses on building projects, maintenance funds, and renovations throughout the community. These endeavors have emphasized the club's passion for growth and goodwill in Frankenmuth.

In addition to supporting local events and activities every year, the Frankenmuth Rotary Club has supported international service programs; each with a specific cause tailored to the project involved. The club has conducted philanthropic work in Brazil, the Dominican Republic, India, and South America. These projects have provided beneficial services such as clean drinking water pumps, school facility improvements, and dental work for those in need. Through these efforts to improve communities and lives both locally and abroad, the club has served as a model for humanitarian action.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, it is with great honor that I commemorate this 75th anniversary of the Frankenmuth Rotary Club. I offer my sincerest thanks for all that the organization has done and all that it will continue to do in the future.

BLACK JANUARY AND KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss several matters of importance to Azerbaijan. I note that January 20, 2013 marked the 23rd anniversary of an historic and tragic day in the history of the country of Azerbaijan. On the night of January 19, 1990, 26,000 Soviet troops invaded the capital city of Baku

and surrounding areas. By the end of the next day, more than 130 people had died, 611 were injured, 841 were arrested and 5 were missing. This event is memorialized as "Black January," and, for the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan this event left an indelible mark on the minds of all citizens.

Soviet troops entered Azerbaijan under the pretext of restoring public order, while actually aiming to forcefully end peaceful demonstrations for independence. However, Soviet incursion further incited aspirations of Azerbaijani people to regain their independence after 70 years of Soviet rule.

In the end, Azerbaijan's pro-Moscow regime grew weaker and by 1991, popular pressure resulted in restoration of independence of Azerbaijan. On August 30, 1991, Azerbaijan's Parliament adopted the Declaration on the Restoration of the State Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on October 18, 1991, the Constitutional Act on the State Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan was approved. November 1991 marked the beginning of international recognition of Azerbaijan's independence. The United States opened an embassy in Baku in March 1992 and it has remained committed to aiding Azerbaijan in its transition to democracy and its formation of an open market economy.

Some historical observers have noted that the violence inflicted on the citizens of Baku may have been intended to send a message to other Soviet republics that similar aspirations of nationalism would not be tolerated. In the wake of this horrific act and inspired by the strength of the Azerbaijani people's belief in the principles of democracy, the Republic of Azerbaijan has maintained its independence for more than 16 years, despite lingering economic and social problems from the Soviet era. Today, Azerbaijan has developed into a thriving country with double digit growth, in large part due to a freely-elected president and parliament, free market reforms led by the energy sector, and most importantly, no foreign troops on its soil.

The road to independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity for the Azerbaijani people has not come without adversity and sacrifice. Although Azerbaijan thrives today, the people of Azerbaijan recognize those who lost their lives on Black January in 1990 and honor their sacrifice through their commitment to the ideals of democracy. As we reflect on this terrible tragedy, we who believe in the tenets of freedom and the hope of democracy should recognize the incredible sacrifice made by the people of Azerbaijan and by free people all around the world.

I also rise to commemorate the 21st anniversary of the Khojaly massacre perpetrated by Armenian armed forces on February 25 through February 26, 1992 in the town of Khojaly in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. Khojaly, now under the occupation of Armenian armed forces, was the site of the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians in the course of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Khojaly, once the home to 7,000 people, was completely destroyed. Six hundred thirteen people were killed, of which 106 were women, 83 were children and 56 were purported to have been killed. In addition, 1,275 people were taken hostage, 150 went missing and

487 people became disabled. Also in the records maintained, 76 of the victims were teenagers, 8 families were wiped out and 25 children lost both of their parents while 130 lost one of their parents. According to Human Rights Watch and other international observers, the Armenian Armed forces were reportedly aided by the Russian 366th Motor Rifle Regiment.

At the time, Newsweek magazine reported: "Azerbaijan was a charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refugees and dozens of mangled corpses dragged to a makeshift morgue behind the mosque. They were ordinary Azerbaijani men, women and children of Khojaly, a small village in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh overrun by Armenian forces on 25–26 February. Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped."

As part of the Khojaly population that tried to escape, they encountered violent ambushes that led to abuses, torture, mutilation and death. The Russian organization, Memorial, stated that 200 Azerbaijani corpses were brought from Khojaly to Agdam within four days.

Time magazine published the following description: "While the details are argued, this much is plain: something grim and unconscionable happened in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly 2 weeks ago. So far, some 200 dead Azerbaijanis, many of them mutilated, have been transported out of the town tucked inside the Armenian-dominated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh for burial in neighboring Azerbaijan. The total number of deaths—the Azerbaijani claim 1,324 civilians have been slaughtered, most of them women and children—is unknown."

The extent of the cruelty of this massacre against women, children and the elderly was unfathomable. This anniversary reminds us of the need to redouble efforts to help resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. The United States as a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group should intensify its efforts to reach a resolution of this protracted conflict.

Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan is a strong ally of the United States in a strategically important and complex region of the world. I ask my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the tragedy that occurred in the town of Khojaly as well as Black January.

CONGRATULATING JOCELYN
(JOCIE) WURZBURG ON RECEIVING
THE 2014 BE THE DREAM
MLK LEGACY AWARD

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jocelyn (Jocie) Wurzburg on receiving the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award. This special award is given to those individuals whose lives have "embodied the spirit and legacy of service, sacrifice and hope" that characterized the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a women's rights and civil rights activist, it is fitting that this award

be bestowed upon Jocelyn Wurzburg in recognition of her accomplishments and contributions.

Jocelyn Wurzburg was born in Memphis, Tennessee in 1940, and received her B.A. in sociology and anthropology from Rhodes College in 1965. While she had always been keenly aware of injustices toward minority groups, it was not until the assassination of Dr. King in 1968 that Jocie became moved to take a stand. Later that year, she founded the Memphis Chapter of the Panel of American Women to "discuss the nature of prejudice and the effects it has on our fellow citizens." Over the course of 10 years, the panel met with over 100,000 people and slowly changed attitudes on race in Memphis.

Jocie was also important in helping to prevent a second sanitation strike in Memphis. She and a group of women organized as the Concerned Women of Memphis and Shelby County (CWMSC) to encourage the City Council and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) to "negotiate in good faith to avoid a strike." While city officials at the time denied CWMSC's role in preventing a strike, Rhodes College history professor Gail Murray says that the city negotiated on all the terms set forth by CWMSC. Then AFSCME national director, Jerry Wurf, confided in Jocelyn, saying that it was CWMSC that warded off a second strike.

In 1971, Jocelyn was appointed by Governor Winfield Dunn to the Tennessee Human Rights Commission (THRC) and immediately began working on language that became the Tennessee Human Rights Act, which passed the Tennessee General Assembly in 1978. This was the first anti-discrimination law in the state of Tennessee covering employment, housing and public accommodations, and it gave THRC the power to investigate, mediate and litigate claims of discrimination for the first time. She was reappointed to the commission in 2007 by Governor Phil Bredesen.

After Jocie successfully worked to avoid a second sanitation strike and pass the Tennessee Human Rights Act, she received her J.D. from the University of Memphis School of Law in 1979, and worked to negotiate marital dissolution agreements. Inspired by the belief that mediation was an effective way to avert crises, she gained over 600 hours of Mediation Training and opened Memphis' first mediation firm in 1984. She established the Mediation Association of Tennessee and it has since spread statewide. Her clients include the Shelby County Government, United States Postal Service, the EEOC Panel and the Department of Justice ADA Claims.

Jocelyn Wurzburg has received numerous appointments and awards throughout her career, including an appointment to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and an appointment by President Gerald Ford to the U.S. Commission for the Observance of International Women's Year. There is no doubt that her work is worthy of this award named after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jocelyn (Jocie) Wurzburg on being awarded the 2014 Be the Dream MLK Legacy Award.

IN RECOGNITION OF SENIOR
PRESIDING ELDER ELIJAH SMITH

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Presiding Elder Elijah Smith, who will be retiring as Senior Presiding Elder of the Eastern District for the Southwest Georgia Annual Conference for the African Methodist Episcopal Church after forty-nine years of faithful and dedicated service to the Lord. He will be honored at a retirement celebration on Friday, January 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Columbus Convention and Trade Center in Columbus, Georgia.

A native of Fort Valley, Georgia and a man after God's own heart, Presiding Elder Smith began serving the ministry in the early 1960s. After being ordained an Itinerant Elder in 1967, he spent twenty-seven years pastoring various congregations in the Southwest Georgia Conference, including Eastman Circuit, Allen Chapel in Americus, Mountain Creek in Sumter County, and Saint John in Columbus. Under his leadership as pastor, the Saint John A.M.E. Church chapel was built on Steam Mill Road in Columbus. In June 1994, Bishop Donald George Kenneth Ming appointed him as a presiding elder. For many years, Presiding Elder Smith served as an instructor and assistant dean of the Board of Examiners in the Southwest Georgia Conference.

Presiding Elder Smith's commitment to the ministry and support of civil rights led him to be a notable minister among other African American ministers rising up to challenge the segregation laws and suppression of voting rights in the South. After serving as president of the Sumter County Branch of the NAACP, he was recognized as an NAACP Life Member.

In addition to being a servant of God, Presiding Elder Smith was a civil servant and retired from Robins Air Force Base as an electronic technician.

A widely respected civic, community, and ministerial leader, Presiding Elder Smith has received numerous accolades and commendations. He was honored as one of the "50 Most Influential African Americans in the Columbus-Ft. Benning-Phenix City Areas" by the Courier Eco Latino.

Presiding Elder Smith, a man highly favored by God, has accomplished many things in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of his wife, Janet, and their nine children.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife Vivian, and the Columbus, Georgia community in paying tribute to Senior Presiding Elder Elijah Smith for forty-nine outstanding years of Pastoral Ministry. Through his service to God's people, he has transformed many lives and inspired others to serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

CONGRATULATING THE ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorees of the 2014 Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner. The Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce serves the people and business community of the greater Lewiston/Auburn area, working hard to strengthen economic opportunity throughout the region and the state.

Each year, the Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce recognizes local businesses, business leaders, and individuals who promote and advance a vital and healthy business environment. These individuals and businesses are committed to strengthening opportunity and prosperity in Maine.

This year's award recipients include: Jason Levesque of Argo Marketing, recipient of the Business Leadership Award for a Larger Company; John Grenier of Rainbow Bicycle, recipient of the Business Leadership Award for a Smaller Company; Art Boulay of Strategic Talent Management, recipient of the Ray Geiger Award; Kathy Durgin-Leighton of YWCA, recipient of the Community Service Leadership Award; Positive Change Lisbon, recipient of the Lisbon Business Award; Jodi Cornelio of Turner Publishing, recipient of the Turner Business Award; Hurricane Café and Deli, recipient of the Greene Business Award; Community Credit Union, recipient of the Education Award; Pettengill Academy, recipient of the "Cool Chamber Award;" Craig Saddlemire, recipient of the Public Service Leadership Award; Sandra Jones and Shanna Rogers, recipients of the Young Professionals of the Lewiston Auburn Area (YPLAA) Award; and John Story of L-A Harley-Davidson and Rinck Advertising, recipients of the President's Award.

These recipients are among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and incredible commitment to their communities and the region, Maine is a better place in which to live and do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce and these individuals on their outstanding service and achievement.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MARY SERVINO

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, President Barack Obama has awarded Mary Servino of Bridgeport, Connecticut, the annual Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Ms. Servino is a science teacher at Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School in Bridgeport,

where she has taught for nine years. During that time, she has instilled in her students an impressive curiosity and passion for science. Ms. Servino told a Connecticut newspaper that her students "are constantly discovering new ways to help them explain what is in our world and how things impact their lives." It is this academic curiosity that will help inspire the next generation of scientists, inventors, and innovators who will drive our economy and keep America competitive in the 21st century.

Congratulations to Ms. Servino on receiving this prestigious award. Ms. Servino exemplifies the type of teaching that will turn the students of today into the leaders of tomorrow. This recognition is a testament to her long-standing commitment and dedication to her students, and I want to thank Ms. Servino for her service to the community of Bridgeport and to the future of our city and our nation.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF MARY SUE SWEENEY PRICE

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mary Sue Sweeney Price for her outstanding leadership of the Newark Museum as its Director and Chief Executive Officer. The Newark Museum, the largest in the State of New Jersey, is a respected public institution that has built a national reputation as a museum of service to the larger community, State and Nation and as a leader in the collection of objects, ideas, innovations, artifacts and documentation that tell the story of our rich culture and accomplished history.

In countless ways the Museum has grown under Mary Sue's tenure, expanding its holdings and exhibits on its eight-building, 80-gallery campus. She oversaw the restoration of the 1885 Ballantine House, the opening of the interactive Victoria Hall of Science and the dedication of Horizon Plaza, the Museum's new entrance. The education division has flourished, visitation and donors have grown, an international symposium has been initiated and groundbreaking exhibitions have heightened public discourse.

Mary Sue is the recipient of numerous awards including the coveted Katherine Coffey Award, which is the Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums' highest honor for distinguished achievement. She has received honorary degrees from Rutgers University, Drew University, Caldwell College and the New Jersey Institute of Technology. She has also attended Harvard University's Publishing Procedures Program, served as President of the Association of Art Museum Directors and sat on the Newark Arts Council. Mary Sue and her spouse, Rutgers historian Dr. Clement Alexander Price, have helped launch a renaissance that is transforming Newark, the City that they love and where they live.

Mary Sue has been associated with the Newark Museum for the past 38 years, including 20 years as its Director. I became a friend and admirer of her work as a member of its Board of Trustees. I have seen her intense vi-

sion and energy profoundly reshape the organization founded by the visionary John Cotton Dana in 1909. I thank her for her dedicated public service to the Museum, to the City of Newark, to the State of New Jersey and, indeed, to the arts and cultural history of the United States. I commend her for her lasting legacy of excellence.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, cutting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program will adversely affect poor people and lower benefits to households with children. SNAP helps families obtain nutritious and healthy foods. This anti-hunger program is immensely effective in providing assistance to a minimum of 46 million individuals and families across America. In addition to food benefits, SNAP educates ways to use food dollars wisely and live a healthier lifestyle by promoting the importance of nutrition. A key component of SNAP is their "No Kid Hungry" campaign, which, aims at fighting against childhood hunger in America by partnering with communities to enroll eligible families with half of the program recipients being children. Reducing spending over the next few years by billions of dollars will affect the lives of Americans who depend on these programs to help put food on the table for their families.

Currently, the legislative language included in the House farm bill, would develop unintended consequences resulting in ancillary hardships to our neediest population. Given our nation's economic recovery, high unemployment rate, and the wide prevalence of food insecurity among children, all are directly problematic to the SNAP program. Every \$1 in SNAP new benefits would generate up to \$1.80 in economic activity. Every time a family uses SNAP benefits for healthy food on the table, it benefits the store and the employees where the purchase was made including the truck driver who delivered the food, the warehouses that stored it, the plant that processed it, and the farmer who produced the food. Each \$1 billion increase in SNAP benefits is estimated to create and maintain 18,000 full time jobs including 3,000 farm jobs. SNAP benefits have a powerful anti-poverty effect that the Census Bureau reports would lift 3.9 million Americans—including 1.7 million children—out of poverty. SNAP alleviates hunger and improves nutrition by increasing the food purchasing power of low-income households, enabling them to obtain a more nutritious diet that contributes to the prevention of obesity, diseases, and food insecurity.

Cutting funding is a threat to SNAP's mission to alleviate the health problems many children face in America. Studies indicate that children who are provided with healthier food are less likely to develop health problems and more likely to excel better in school. Sixty-two percent of teachers in a survey said that they have children in their classrooms that come to

school hungry regularly because they are not getting enough food to eat at home.

TRIBUTE TO ALEXANDRA
REYNOLDS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Alexandra Reynolds of Clive, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Alexandra's host country for the 2013–2014 academic year is Germany.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Alexandra from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award and I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, January 9; Friday, January 10; and Monday, January 13, 2014, I was unable to be present for recorded votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted: "yes" on rollcall vote No. 7 (on the Sinema Amendment to H.R. 2279); "yes" on rollcall vote No. 8 (on the Tonko Amendment to H.R. 2279); "yes" on rollcall vote No. 9 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 2279 with instructions); "no" on rollcall vote No. 10 (on passage of H.R. 2279); "no" on rollcall vote No. 11 (on passage of H.R. 3811); "yes" on rollcall vote No. 12 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1513), and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 13 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass S. 230).

ALLEVIATING HUNGER IN
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I submit an article that appeared recently in *The Boston Globe* about innovative work being done to help alleviate hunger in developing countries using safe storage technologies.

[From the *Boston Globe*, Dec. 17, 2013]

FOR PHIL VILLERS, HELPING FEED THE WORLD
IS IN THE BAG

(By Bella English)

CONCORD.—Phil Villers has founded several high-tech companies, but the one he oversees now offers something much more basic: a way to alleviate hunger in developing countries. GrainPro, Inc., which Villers runs out of Concord, makes airtight, impermeable bags of polyvinylchloride, similar to the material used by the Israeli Army to protect its tanks in the desert heat.

The bags are critical because about one-fourth of grain products grown in developing countries or shipped to them—rice, peanuts, maize, seeds, beans—are lost to insects or rodents, or rot in cloth or jute storage bags.

GrainPro's "cocoon" are made of the same material as the company's bags, and serve as huge "ultra-hermetic" encasings for grain bags. They can reduce grain losses from 25 percent to less than 1 percent, Villers says, and the company concentrates on hot and humid countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

"The insects suffocate, and the rats can't get a tooth-hold," says Villers, who joined GrainPro as a board member in 1996 and took over shortly after, when the company's president was injured in a car accident.

"We eliminate the need for pesticides, and we can protect food supplies against all kinds of calamities such as typhoons and earthquakes," Villers says.

"We eliminate the need for pesticides, and we can protect food supplies against all kinds of calamities such as typhoons and earthquakes."

During Typhoon Haiyan, which recently devastated the Philippines, the rice, cocoa, and seeds stored inside the cocoons were protected. In fact, GrainPro's products are all made at a factory on the former US Naval Base at Subic Bay, 75 miles from Manila.

"The cocoons are massively solid when filled with bags," Villers says. "They're like a brick outhouse. They just don't move."

The bags and cocoons are used in 97 countries, from small villages to national food authorities. Villers deals with the US Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and other agencies and private companies. "We know that there are over 100 million people who don't have enough to eat in Africa alone," he says.

GrainPro is, as he calls it, a "not-only-for-profit" company. "We take our social mission very seriously," he says. "But to be successful we have to be profitable, and we are. We're growing at 50 percent a year." The smaller bags sell for \$2 to \$3 each, while the cocoons start at \$1,000. The company is developing a thinner, cheaper line of cocoons.

One of their biggest customers is the Ghana Cocoa Board, and in Rwanda, hundreds of cocoons are protecting corn, seeds, and rice.

GrainPro also has a minor market of coffee growers and roasters in the United States.

"We tell them we can't change bad coffee to good coffee, but we can make sure your good coffee stays good," says Villers.

The walls of Villers's small office bear some health care posters and awards. The staff consists of him, an administrative assistant, and a financial manager. In Washington, there's a vice president for food security.

The rest of the 125 employees are in the Philippines, in research and development, and production.

Martin Gummert is a senior scientist with the International Rice Research Institute, a nonprofit headquartered in the Philippines and dedicated to improving the yield and quality of rice in poor countries. The agency has collaborated with GrainPro to develop the grain bags.

"GrainPro is a company with a big social conscience," says Gummert. "They started small, promoting hermetic storage against many odds in the initial years."

That his company is doing well while doing good makes Villers a happy man. "I love what I do and I'm trying very hard to make sure my life counts, not just to me and my family," he says.

Philippe Villers was 5 years old when he fled Paris with his family two hours ahead of the German Army. His father, a member of the French Army, left for London disguised as a Polish officer. Once there, he joined the resistance.

Philippe, his sister, and mother headed to the safety of Montreal. After the war, the family was reunited and moved to New York. At age 10, Philippe became a US citizen, and his life since then has unfolded like an immigrant version of the American Dream.

He graduated with honors from Harvard and earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering from MIT. He founded companies and made good money. Long a social activist, he put his money where his mouth was.

In 1982, Villers and his wife, Kate, started the nonprofit Families USA Foundation, dedicated to achieving quality health care for all Americans, and they've been cited by President Obama for their work.

Kate Villers is also the president and founder of the foundation's sister organization, Community Catalyst, a nonprofit working in more than 40 states to build support for improved health care and insurance rights.

The couple, who live in Concord, apparently have passed along their helping hands philosophy to their daughters. Their oldest runs a foundation in Costa Rica to improve preschool education for poor children. Their youngest is executive director of the Mass. Senior Action Council, a nonprofit grassroots group of senior citizens fighting for social justice. Their son, who is in the film business, lives in Budapest.

Though he can talk on and on about his pet subjects—alleviating hunger, providing affordable health care—Villers is less talkative about himself. He's not interested in discussing the motives behind his do-good work.

"My lifelong goal has been to make a difference in this country," he simply says. Is it because of the opportunities the United States provided an immigrant boy? "I'll leave that to psychologists," he adds, with a bemused half-grin.

He won't even give his age, but will say that he graduated from Harvard in 1955, along with David Halberstam, "a great guy."

Villers is a member of the ACLU's President's Council and the executive director's leadership council of Amnesty International.

He describes himself as “a change agent and a human rights activist.”
Just don’t ask him why.

TRIBUTE TO DR. RONALD BAKARI

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Dr. Ronald Bakari of West Des Moines, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to promote a stronger global understanding abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America’s flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Ronald’s host country for the 2013–2014 academic year is the United Kingdom.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow’s leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Dr. Bakari from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating him for receiving this prestigious award and I wish him the best of luck as he continues his career excellence.

HONORING JUAN C. MÁRQUEZ

HON. BETO O’ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. O’ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of World War II Veteran and El Pasoan, Juan C. Márquez.

Private Márquez served as a rifleman in the United States Army during the Second World War. He began his tour of duty in Europe, where he served with the 44th Infantry Division, 3rd Battalion, and the 71st Infantry Regiment. While in combat, Private Márquez suffered shrapnel wounds. Later, while serving in northeastern France, a German tank struck Private Márquez, as a result of which he endured broken ribs and a separated shoulder.

For his courageous efforts, Private Márquez was awarded two Bronze Star Medals, the Purple Heart, the Good Conduct Medal, and the European-African-Middle Eastern Cam-

paign Medal with three stars, the World War II Victory Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Honorable Service Lapel Button.

On August 29, 1948 after returning home to El Paso, Mr. Márquez was in a fatal car crash. He was survived by his wife and four children. This great El Pasoan’s distinguished service is an inspiration to all Americans and his dedication and resolve is an example to all serving in the Armed Forces.

HONORING ELEANOR
MONTGOMERY

HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of the Eleventh Congressional District of Ohio, I rise today to recognize and reflect on the achievements of Eleanor Montgomery, who was inducted into the U.S. Track and Field Hall of Fame in 2013 on her 67th birthday. Ms. Montgomery passed away three weeks later on December 28, 2013.

A native Cleveland, Ms. Montgomery literally set the bar high early in life. At the tender age of 14, she won her first national title in the long jump, and while in high school, she set a record and won a gold medal at the 1963 Pan American Games as a high jumper. Ms. Montgomery went on to compete in the 1964 and 1968 Olympics as a member of the U.S. Track and Field Team. She was the U.S. high jumping champion, placing 8th at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. She won six Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) national high jump titles from 1963 to 1967 and in 1969, and won the Pan American games in 1967.

A member of the famous Tennessee State TigerBelles, which dominated women’s track and field before there was a Title IX, Ms. Montgomery was ranked top 10 in the world through most of the 1960’s.

Later in life, Ms. Montgomery raised the bar for us all as she worked tirelessly for decades encouraging youth and promoting academic and athletic opportunities for them. As an employee of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, she served as a high school track and cross country official. She was also the executive director of the NFL Players Association Youth Camp and coordinated Special Olympics events.

Eleanor Montgomery achieved what many merely dream of doing. She will be missed and long remembered.

HONORING LINDA KOZFKAY FOR 23
YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED AND
HONORABLE SERVICE AS
SANILAC COUNTY CLERK

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Linda Kozfkay for 23 years

of distinguished and honorable service as the Sanilac County Clerk.

Linda began her career as the Chief Deputy Clerk of Sanilac County in 1981 and was appointed county clerk in 1990 following the retirement of her predecessor.

During her time as clerk, Linda Kozfkay earned the respect and admiration of everyone in Sanilac County due to her incredible commitment to the people she served. In fact, she was reelected six times and became the longest serving county clerk in Sanilac County history.

Linda also earned the respect of her peers across the entire State of Michigan for her dedication to her important work. I had the honor during my time as Michigan’s Secretary of State to work closely with Linda as we developed our State’s Qualified Voter File, which due to the hard work of her and others, Michigan became a national model for how to ensure free, open, fair, and accurate elections.

On December 27, 2013, Linda decided it was time to enter a new phase in her life and retired as county clerk. I wish Linda nothing but the best in her retirement and I know everyone in Sanilac County joins me in thanking her for 23 years of tremendous service as county clerk and 32 years of honorable public service.

IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF REV-
EREND ELIZABETH CARPENTER

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Reverend Elizabeth Carpenter, who ministered to hundreds of families as rector of St. Anne’s Episcopal Church in Damascus for more than thirteen years. Sadly, Reverend Carpenter passed away on January 3, 2014.

Born and raised in Mobile, Alabama, Reverend Carpenter graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Duke University in 1963. Her first job was as a parish secretary for St. Peter’s Episcopal Church in New York City. She later worked as a computer software designer for John Hancock Mutual and Humble Oil (now Exxon Mobil). At that time, the term “software designer” didn’t even exist—she was a pioneer in that field.

At the age of 47, Reverend Carpenter heard her call to ministry. She enrolled in Harvard Divinity School, where she received her Master of Divinity degree in 1991. She was ordained a deacon by the Episcopal Church of Dallas that June. On July 22, 1992, Reverend Carpenter was ordained into the priesthood by the Diocese of Massachusetts. She served several parishes in Massachusetts until she was called to be rector of St. Anne’s Episcopal Church in Damascus, Maryland in August 1997.

St. Anne’s longest-tenured rector, Reverend Carpenter served from 1997 until her retirement in January 2011. During that time, she touched the lives of hundreds of families. She preached some 1,200 times to the people of St. Anne’s, performed hundreds of weddings

and baptisms, and comforted hundreds of families at funerals and memorial services. Without a doubt, Reverend Carpenter was part of the heart and soul of the St. Anne's community.

Reverend Carpenter brought wisdom and a steady hand to St. Anne's. Under her leadership, a beautiful new sanctuary was constructed and the church's 50th anniversary was celebrated. Her dedication inspired many new families to join the St. Anne's community. Moreover, Reverend Carpenter was well-respected by her colleagues in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington. She preached love and compassion and was an inspiration to her parishioners.

Places of worship play an indispensable role in our communities. Reverend Carpenter helped strengthen Damascus and the surrounding communities through her years of service and dedication to St. Anne's.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the life and deeds of this very special woman and in offering condolences to Reverend Carpenter's family, friends and the entire St. Anne's community. She will be sorely missed.

HONORING THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY OF GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, more than two centuries ago, with the dawn of a new nation, our Founding Fathers declared to the world that we, as a people, would forever be united in service to one country and to one another. These United States stand together under a single banner: E pluribus unum. "Out of many, one."

For 225 years, that bedrock principle of our young Republic has served as an extraordinary mission of our nation's oldest Jesuit and Catholic University. Founded by Bishop John Carroll of Maryland, America's first Catholic bishop, Georgetown University challenges students from every faith, race, and region of the world to use their unique and individual gifts in service of the common good. As its motto states, Utraque Unum. "Both into one."

That creed and common purpose is why Georgetown students, who fought on both sides of the Civil War, elected the Union blue and Confederate grey to fly together as their university colors.

It is why, in the capital of a once-divided nation, Father Patrick Healy, a man born to a slave, rose to lead Georgetown as the first African American president of a major American university.

It is why in 1880, long before many of its peer institutions, Georgetown welcomed women students to study at its medical school. Today, the world's best and brightest young women make up a majority of the university's student body.

Georgetown University's intellectual openness, pursuit of progress, and unwavering

dedication to social justice has educated and shaped leaders for more than two centuries. Students have graduated to become leaders of countries, leaders in science, in business, in academia, in humanitarianism, and proudly to become a president of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton.

For generations, U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense, Ambassadors, and Foreign Service Officers, and countless representatives of foreign countries, have honed their diplomatic craft under the guidance and tutelage of Georgetown faculty and experts.

While Georgetown is fostering lifelong learners from every state, this remarkable university's reach goes well beyond our nation's borders. The Georgetown University School of Foreign Service (SFS) is world-renowned for providing a theoretical and practical approach to international relations that teaches students from 129 countries to act with imagination, sound judgment, values, and in service to others.

And in the Capitol, from Congressman William Gaston in its first class in 1792 to the present, many Georgetown graduates have enriched Congress with their committed leadership. Congress has been blessed with the great Georgetown wisdom of the Dean of the House, John Dingell, Class of '49 and Law Class of '52.

For 225 years, Georgetown University has been a national treasure that stands as an international beacon of a simple truth, and deep American faith: that out of many backgrounds and beliefs, through times of discord and peace, our common humanity binds us together; and our common hopes and dreams unite us as one.

To President John DeGioia, to the students, faculty, and graduates of Georgetown University, congratulations on more than two centuries of leadership for America, for the greater glory of God, and well-being of humankind.

CONGRATULATING THE KENNEBEC VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorees of the 2014 Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Banquet. The Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce serves the people and business community of the Augusta area, working hard to strengthen economic opportunity throughout the region and the state.

Each year, the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce recognizes local businesses, business leaders, and individuals who promote and advance a vital and healthy business environment. These individuals and businesses are committed to strengthening opportunity and prosperity in Maine.

This year's honorees include: MaineGeneral Health, recipient of the Business of the Year Award; Norman Pomerleau of NRF Distributors, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award; John Babb and Cassie Babb of J&S

Oil, recipients of the Business Person of the Year Award; Charlie and Nancy Shuman of Charlie's Motor Mall, recipients of the Special Service Award; Sue Grenier, recipient of the Community Service Award; Amanda Bartlett, recipient of the Young Professional Award; Linda Markham of Cape Air, recipient of the President's Award; Mike and Kim Meservey of the Downtown Diner, recipients of the President's Award; and Scott Cowager and Vince Hannan of Maple Hill Farm Inn & Conference Center, recipients of the President's Award.

These recipients are among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and incredible commitment to their communities and the region, Maine is a better place to live and do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce and these individuals on their outstanding service and achievement.

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND WATER TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH INITIATIVES IN NEW MEXICO

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, while other regions in the U.S. have recently encountered super storms and experienced catastrophic flooding, the southwest has continued to endure shortages in available water resources. Mounting pressures, created by persistent drought and a rapidly growing population, have put additional strains on the area's water resources. For states in this region, such as my home state of New Mexico, it is very clear that water is not a commodity to be taken for granted; instead it must be considered the most important natural resource, essential for the survival of the environment, households, businesses and quality of life.

My fellow members of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation and Congressional colleagues in the Southwestern States share my commitment to help communities facing drought-like conditions; together we are developing ideas and support for legislation that would promote innovation in water efficiency research and promote job creation in water infrastructure and conservation.

New Mexico has abundant brackish water resources, it is reported that the state has approximately 15.4 billion acre feet, which is enough to sustain a population of three million for 300 years. In its current state, brackish water is useless and undrinkable but once it is pumped up, desalinated, and put to use, it can be added incrementally to our dwindling supplies of lakes, rivers and streams.

Our communities could greatly benefit from investments in desalinization technology, which would activate our brackish water resources and create a new water supply for our municipalities, businesses and industries. I have visited international communities with fewer available water resources at their discretion, but they have flourished by employing

new technology to better manage their limited water resources. New Mexico should follow this example.

In my discussions with water experts and researchers, they have identified areas where New Mexico can take immediate action to better manage our existing water resources. Investing in new irrigation methods can save about 40 percent of water being applied to the fields. Providing more funding and technical assistance for the rehabilitation of old water infrastructure can conserve water by eliminating leaks while also creating more jobs for New Mexicans.

New Mexico can and should be the next innovation hub for water management technology. But in order to achieve this, we have to continue forming partnerships between the public, government, and the private sector. We also have to continue investing in water technology research initiatives that will show us how to better manage existing water resources and will allow us to unlock alternative new water resources.

Mr. Speaker, I eagerly anticipate the input from my constituents and colleagues as we set a dynamic course that will demonstrate to the region, the country and the world that New Mexico can respond to adversity and become a leader in water resources management.

HONORING THE CAMERON YOE
HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Cameron Yoe High School on their back-to-back Texas 2A Division 1 football state championship wins.

On December 19, 2013 the Yoemen played in the state championship against Wall High School and defeated them 35–14.

The game was tied 14–14 at the half, during the third and fourth quarters the Yoemen persevered and claimed their third state championship title in school history and the second title in two years.

The Yoemen defense shutout Wall in the second half and the offense would go on to put another 21 points on the scoreboard.

Under the direction of Coach Rick Rhoades, the Yoemen completed the season with a 15 091 overall record.

The championship was won as a result of both the players' and coaches' hard work and dedication to their football program.

I congratulate Coach Rhoades on the victory that wouldn't have been possible without his guidance and the devotion from his players and fans.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I just want to say congratulations to an outstanding Texas District 17 high school football team, coaching staff, and community.

Go Yoemen!

TRIBUTE TO KELSIE MILLER

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Kelsie Miller of Urbandale, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Kelsie's host country for the 2013–2014 academic year is Indonesia.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Kelsie from the great State of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award and I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

IN MEMORY OF MAYOR KEN
MERCER

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ken Mercer, the former mayor of Pleasanton, California, who died this past Monday at age 71.

Ken devoted his life to public service in Pleasanton. He was elected to three terms on the Pleasanton City Council, serving from 1976 to 1986. Then he became the first person directly elected to serve as mayor, and held that position from 1986 to 1992.

It is in part thanks to Ken's dedication that Pleasanton is the wonderful and vibrant community that it is today. His diligent efforts helped pave the way for the Hacienda Business Park and the Stoneridge Mall, among other developments.

He also held various posts in the community, including with Pacific Bell and ValleyCare Health System.

His enthusiastic devotion to Pleasanton serves as an inspiration.

My condolences go out to Ken's daughter Shelley, son Chuck, brothers Ron and Norm,

and his grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. He will be missed greatly.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,287,251,611,151.62. We've added \$6,660,374,562,238.54 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING SUSAN RASKY

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Susan Rasky, former political reporter for The New York Times and lecturer at the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. Known throughout the nation as an accomplished reporter, Ms. Rasky has left an indelible mark on the national discourse. With her passing on December 29, 2013, we look to the outstanding quality of her life's work and the inspiring role she played in shaping the nature of political reporting and inspiring future journalists.

Born on June 10, 1952, Susan Rasky was raised in the Los Angeles area. Her passion for politics grew out of discussions at family dinners, where it was common place for her to bring up the most salient political issues of the day. Her drive and enthusiasm for political discussion propelled her to study History at UC Berkeley, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974. Ms. Rasky went on to earn her Master's degree in Economic History from the distinguished London School of Economics.

Arriving in Washington, D.C. with an academic background in economics and an interest for journalism, Ms. Rasky began her career as a reporter. She covered issues concerning the economy and economic policy for different news organizations, including the Bureau of National Affairs and Reuters. After just five years, she began reporting for The New York Times as a Congressional correspondent. At The New York Times, she wrote more than 1,700 articles for both New York and Washington, D.C., exploring issues relating to the tax code and the Federal Reserve.

Renowned for her insight and powerful voice, Ms. Rasky received the George Polk Award in 1990. Acknowledged for her coverage of the Congressional budget crisis, she and her colleagues shared recognition for this

prestigious award for their critical and insightful research and reporting on these complex issues facing the nation.

Later, as a UC Berkeley senior lecturer, Ms. Rasky effortlessly moved from the newsroom to the classroom. Ms. Rasky left an imprint on a generation of students, specializing in teaching political and government reporting. Through her mentorship, students were continuously inspired and challenged to "twist the lens" and find a more nuanced perspective in journalism. Her teaching was so influential that students began to refer to themselves as "Rasky-ites", illustrating their devotion to her and her style of political reporting.

In addition to her prolific career, Ms. Rasky established and supervised the J-School's California News Service, offering students the opportunity to cover government and politics for news organizations throughout the country. She enjoyed being able to guide younger generations of journalists on how to cover presidential and other campaigns. Even after her students graduated, she was known to advise them well into their professional careers. She will be remembered as a distinguished reporter, a supportive leader, and a dedicated mentor.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and stalwart journalist, Susan Rasky. As a constituent and UC Berkeley professor, Ms. Rasky inspired many future journalists and impacted so many lives throughout the nation. I join all of Susan's loved ones in celebrating her incredible life. She will be deeply missed.

TRIBUTE TO REBECCA TAYLOR

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Rebecca Taylor of Urbandale, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Rebecca's host country for the 2013-2014 academic year is Colombia.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Rebecca from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award and I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

IN TRIBUTE TO WINTHROP BEAN OF STRAFFORD, VERMONT

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Bean family of Strafford, Vermont, and in tribute to their exceptional young son and brother murdered thirty years ago because of his sexual orientation, I submit the following Herald of Randolph story. Winthrop Bean's story is a tragic tale of senseless loss in the face of homophobia and reminds us of the need to end discrimination and achieve fundamental equality for all.

[From the Herald of Randolph]

WINTHROP BEAN REMEMBERED

(By Bruce Kogan)

This month will mark the 30th anniversary of a guilty plea entered in a New York City court by a man named Alfred Desjardin, 25, pleading guilty to manslaughter-1 in connection with the stabbing death of Strafford native Winthrop Bean on May 19, 1983.

It was a story little reported in the mainstream media, but in the White River Valley of Vermont it was the major news of the year, because of the effect that Winkie Bean had on all around him.

My own connection with this case came with my job at New York State Crime Victims Board, where I was an investigator.

A woman named Linda Strohmeier, who volunteered at the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, approached me on behalf of Alta Varney, Winthrop's mother, who had filed a claim for funeral reimbursement. Ms. Strohmeier was from the area and knew Winkie and his family.

She told me of his ambitions for a career in the theater, which was why he was in New York City, living with friends on East 93rd Street. I knew that the location where his body was found was right near a gay bar called Chaps, long since gone now.

All the police of the 19th precinct in New York told me in an official capacity was that he was indeed an innocent victim, and there was no reason not to grant \$1500 from the state to Alta Varney to bury her son.

ANOTHER DIMENSION

The case always nagged at me, and when I got a chance to speak on my experiences for a documentary on anti-gay violence, I decided to do some research on it.

To begin with, 10 days after Winkie's death, there was an arrest made of Alfred Desjardin, who was described as both a truck driver and a junkie. As Jerry Orbach used to say on "Law and Order," "I love it when they're stupid." Desjardin left a steak knife with his fingerprints next to Winkie's body.

But it was Winkie's story that really got to me. The Herald of Randolph provided a lot of answers. By all accounts, Winkie was a charismatic young man who had the great good fortune to grow up in a primarily loving and accepting atmosphere.

He came from South Strafford, population 1024 at the last census, and that's about a 25% growth since 1983. It's a community that is a haven for artistic types of all kinds, sculptors, painters, and folks who make their living at the theater. That's where Winkie, at an early age, developed a love for the theater.

It was the passion of his life. While still in grade school he wrote plays, designed sets, and organized the other kids into theater groups. Later on in high school he worked at adult theater companies.

Former Strafford resident Peter Smith, whom I met, told me that his best memory of Winkie Bean was watching him build, out of whatever scrap material he could find, a set for a local production of "The Elephant Man." Smith later wrote a beautiful obituary for Winkie for The Herald of Randolph. (Smith was for many years the director of the Hopkins Center.)

NOT AN ISSUE

For most people in Strafford, Winkie being gay was simply not an issue. That in itself makes his story unique, as most of the gay men and lesbians I've become acquainted with from small towns couldn't wait to get out of them to move to the big city because of the prejudice against them.

To be sure, he heard the word "faggot" every so often, usually from other kids. But Therese Linehan, whose mother Kate was friends with Alta Varney and whose older brothers were Winkie's contemporaries in school, said that those same kids who called him "faggot" would listen to him when they were part of his theater projects. Winkie had to have extraordinary charisma and leadership skills for that to happen.

Kate Linehan told me that Winkie was loved by just about everyone in the area, and by area I include the surrounding towns in the White River Valley. She remembers him always having a kind word for all, never failing to ask sincerely about people's health and welfare.

OFF TO NEW YORK

When he left to go to New York to become a set designer in the theater, it was with the well wishes of one and all in the region. No exile to the big city for Winthrop Bean. He could have been the local high school jock hero who signs a major league baseball contract; it was how he was viewed. This was a story about gay youth from a small town, a story that I had never heard before.

But on the night of May 19, 1982 after an evening of good food and drinks with some friends, Winthrop Bean decided to have a nightcap at Chaps Bar, which was on Third Avenue in the upper eighties.

Maybe feeling a bit liberated and not on his guard, he was easy prey for Desjardin who was waiting outside the bar, no doubt looking for a gay victim who would not put up much struggle. Winkie was stabbed about eight times and left in a pool of his own blood to bleed out and die in a stairwell at 229 East 88 Street.

His screams did awake residents who called the police.

I grew up in Brooklyn myself, and in the big city you do learn street smarts. My own theory of the crime is that Winthrop Bean, because of the loving and nurturing atmosphere he was raised in, never developed them.

Therese Linehan told me that Winkie believed in the best in and of everybody. It was beyond his grasp that people could want to harm him for any reason. Evil as a concept is something that a lot of people can't comprehend.

A police tip led to Desjardin's arrest, and the case was ready to be tried by the New York County district attorney's office.

WITNESS RECANTS

A source in the DA's office told me that one of the witnesses, a key witness who could have testified and linked the circumstantial and forensic case that they had developed, went bad on them. After that, Asst. DA Patrick Dugan had no choice but to make the best bargain he could and Desjardin copped to a manslaughter-1 plea and got eight to 35 years for a brutal murder, which to me had overtones of bias.

The fact is that Desjardin selected the area around Chaps as a hunting ground. The fact that Winkie was stabbed multiple times could only come from some primitive rage. And most important for me was that not only was the incriminating steak knife left behind with the killer's fingerprints, but in what he said was a robbery, nothing was taken.

Asst. D.A. Dugan himself was saddened by this turn of events. In a letter to Alta Varney he wrote that "during the course of our investigation . . . I have learned that Winthrop was a wonderful person whose loss to his family, friends, and society is irreplaceable."

As for Desjardin, he got out after his minimum and went back to a life of crime. He was caught and pled guilty to a robbery and got 12 additional years that started in 1994. After 2006, who knows where he is now?

A HATE CRIME

The savagery of the crime is similar to a few other crimes motivated by homophobia, some that I handled claims for in the course of my years at Crime Victims Board.

And this crime seems similar to one that got national attention, that of Matthew Shepard. There is another similarity: The mothers in each case became activists of sorts.

Judy Shepard's life as spokesperson for hate crimes legislation is well known. Alta Varney chose a different route. A Winthrop Bean memorial scholarship was established shortly after Winkie's death to give funds to students who want to go into the theater. That's something that honored his passion, and something I believe he would have approved.

Winkie's name should be on a list of LGBT honored dead, right up there with Matthew Shepard, Julio Rivera, James Zappalorti, Henry Marquez, and so many others.

Time and circumstance have allowed his name to fade from consciousness in a way the others haven't except in the White River Valley of Vermont, where people still talk of him as one of the most unforgettable individuals they ever came to know.

IN RECOGNITION OF 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF PETERBILT MOTORS COMPANY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Peterbilt Motors Company as they celebrate their 75th Anniversary. Founded January 16, 1939, Peterbilt has led the commercial vehicle industry in the design and production of innovative and technologically advanced trucks and trailers.

With their headquarters and primary manufacturing efforts based in Denton, TX, they are the largest employer in the city. A strong community partner, Peterbilt has supported charitable efforts within their community through organizations such as the United Way. They have also supported higher education through their support of the University of North Texas.

Peterbilt's leadership is particularly noteworthy in the development and production of a line of environmentally friendly trucks, including compressed natural gas and electric hybrid engines. Through these products, Peterbilt has continued its legacy as a forward-thinking organization and has generously shared and displayed their efforts with the public at several of my Annual Energy Efficiency Summits.

I am honored to join Peterbilt in celebrating this milestone in their history. As a leader in the commercial vehicle industry and a major contributor to the North Texas economy, I am proud to represent the company and their employees in the U.S. House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO JERRY COLEMAN

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on January 18, San Diegans of all generations will flock to San Diego's Petco Park to celebrate the life of baseball legend Jerry Coleman.

Lt. Colonel Gerald Francis Coleman was a San Diego icon. He was also a decorated war hero, an All-Star baseball player and an award-winning broadcaster.

But more than that he was a husband, father, and grandfather.

At a recent gathering of family and friends, his daughter Chelsea spoke of her dad and any parent would have been proud of the eulogy she gave.

Before being the voice of the San Diego Padres, before he played for the New York Yankees, Jerry, a young man from San Jose, California, answered his country's call to duty.

In 1942, at just 18, he joined the Marines to fight in World War II, flying missions in the Pacific as a combat aviator.

After the war, he traded his flight suit for pinstripes.

Jerry was called up to the Yankees in 1949 and was an anchor at second base smoothly fielding and turning double plays for the Yankees.

In 1950, he was an All-Star. That same year he would be named MVP of the World Series. In his playing days, he would help the Yankees win six World Series.

When war raged in Korea, his country called a second time. Jerry hung up his cleats and donned the flight suit once again.

Over the span of his service in two wars, he flew 120 missions. Jerry was awarded two Distinguish Flying Crosses, 13 Air Medals and three Navy Citations. He was the only Major League Baseball player to see combat in two wars.

After baseball, he moved to the broadcasting booth. Generations of San Diegans

watched baseball with Jerry where he regaled everyone with his knowledge of and enthusiasm for the game.

We can still hear his signature phrase on stellar plays: "Man, you can hang a star on that one!"

In 2005, the Hall of Fame honored Jerry with the Ford C. Frick Award for his broadcasting.

With his passing, we are hearing about Jerry what many of us already knew that he was a genuinely nice man. "Class act," "Hall of Fame guy," and "like a favorite Uncle" are the apt descriptions being mentioned of Jerry.

In his book *An American Journey*, he wrote: "I've always said this, though it sounds corny. There are two important things in life: the people who you love and who love you, and your country."

We will miss Jerry. And all of us can agree: You can hang a star on this life.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE ROCK CREEK NATIONAL PARK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 125th anniversary of Rock Creek Park, I introduce a bill to redesignate Rock Creek Park in the District of Columbia as "Rock Creek National Park in the District of Columbia." The bill will help clarify the difference between the contiguous Rock Creek Park land that is owned by the State of Maryland and the portion that is under federal jurisdiction in the District of Columbia. Renaming this park will also highlight the significance of the park for the nation, including visitors to the nation's capital, and particularly for the residents of the District of Columbia, to encourage more daily use and involvement with the park's beautiful trails, waterways and features.

Rock Creek Park is a historically rich park, established by Congress in 1890 "for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States," and is the oldest urban park and the third federal park ever created, after Yellowstone and Sequoia. Rock Creek Park was designed to preserve animals, timber, forestry, and other interests in the park, and to ensure that the natural state of the park is maintained as much as possible.

Over time, several structures have been established or donated to further preserve Rock Creek Park. In 1892, for example, the federal government acquired Peirce Mill in Rock Creek Park, one of the mills used by local farmers during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. In 1950, the Old Stone House located at 3051 M Street NW., with great pre-Revolutionary War architectural merit, was acquired. The building was restored, and programs explain the house's rich history from the colonial period to present day. The Fort Circle Parks were also acquired to interpret and preserve the Civil Defenses of Washington, which created a ring of protection for the nation's capital during the Civil War.

Today, Rock Creek Park offers District of Columbia, Maryland, and Northern Virginia

residents an escape from urban living. Residents and tourists alike also enjoy many activities in the park's 2,000 acres, including hiking and bike riding on the historical trails, horseback riding, picnicking, tennis, and other recreational activities in some of the open fields. Moreover, residents are involved in the clean-up and maintenance of the trails and waterways. Rock Creek Conservancy works directly with the National Park Service and is dedicated to protecting and promoting the entirety of the Rock Creek watershed through conservation, recreation, and education programs.

Redesignating Rock Creek Park will help highlight its national status and protect and revitalize this remarkable resource in our nation's capital. It also is fitting that we recognize its historical significance as we approach the 125th anniversary of Rock Creek Park.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GUYER
HIGH SCHOOL WILDCATS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Guyer High School football team as Class 4A Division I Texas State champions. With a decisive win over San Antonio Brennan on December 20, 2013, the Guyer Wildcats defended their state title, becoming only the fifth Division I program in Class 4A or 5A to win back-to-back championships since 1996.

Guyer began the season with 11 returning starters, including quarterback and 2013 championship game offensive MVP, Jerrod Heard. With the victory over Brennan, the Guyer Wildcats completed a season which tested their ability to overcome both tremendous physical and emotional challenges. Through focused discipline and perseverance, Guyer demonstrated for all the power that exists when preparation, execution and dedication are directed toward a common objective.

I am honored to join the team and the entire Guyer community in honoring the team's accomplishment in returning the state football title to Denton, TX. It is my privilege to join in the celebration of their achievement and to represent all of the champions at Guyer High School in the U.S. House of Representatives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION ON
ROLLCALL VOTE 23

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I missed roll call vote 22, on consideration of a motion to recommit with instructions for H.R. 3362, and rollcall vote 23, on final passage of H.R. 3362, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act, because I was chairing the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission hearing on "Defending

Freedoms: Highlighting the Plight of Prisoners of Conscience around the World." This hearing addressed the plight of prisoners of conscience who are currently unjustly detained by repressive governments all over the world and explored strategies for securing their release.

Witnesses traveled at their own expense from across the country and all over the world, including Israel and Europe, to testify before the commission. We heard from Mr. Natan Sharansky, the noted human rights activist who spent nine years in the Soviet Gulag and current Chairman of the Executive for the Jewish Agency for Israel; Ms. Geng He, wife of imprisoned Chinese human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng, who was accompanied by Mr. Jared Genser, founder, Freedom Now and pro bono counsel for Gao Zhisheng; Mr. Josh Colangelo-Bryan, pro bono attorney on behalf of imprisoned Bahraini human rights activist Nabeel Rajab; and Mrs. Tran Thi Ngoc Minh, mother of imprisoned Vietnamese labor activist Do Thi Minh Hanh. Dr. Robert P. George, chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and Mr. Gal Beckerman, author, When They Come for Us We'll be Gone: The Epic Struggle to Save Soviet Jewry also testified.

I felt it was important to continue this hearing as these witnesses were advocating for the lives of their friends and loved ones.

Had I been present I would have voted "no" on roll call 22, the motion to recommit, and "aye" on roll call 23, final passage of H.R. 3362, the Exchange Information Disclosure Act, as I fully support efforts to require transparency in the operation of American Health Benefit Exchanges.

TRIBUTE TO KIMBERLEY THOMAS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Kimberley Thomas of Des Moines, Iowa for receiving a coveted Fulbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fulbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fulbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Kimberley's host country for 2014 is Bangladesh.

To receive a Fulbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Kimberley from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award and I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

CONGRATULATING THE BANGOR
REGION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorees of the 2014 Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner. The Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce serves the people and business community of the greater Bangor area, working hard to strengthen economic opportunity throughout the region and the state.

Each year, the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce recognizes local businesses, business leaders, and individuals who promote and advance a vital and healthy business environment. These individuals and businesses are committed to strengthening opportunity and prosperity in Maine.

This year's award recipients include: Miles Theeman, recipient of the Norbert X. Dowd Award; Hollywood Casino, recipient of the Business of the Year Award; Senator Edward Youngblood, recipient of the Catherine Lebowitz Award for Public Service; the City of Bangor, recipient of the Community Service Award; Acadia Hospital, recipient of the Non-Profit of the Year Award; Steve Pound, recipient of the Arthur A. Comstock Professional Service Award; Cerahelix, recipient of the Bion and Dorain Foster Entrepreneurship Award.

These recipients are among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and incredible commitment to their communities and the region, Maine is a better place in which to live and do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce and these individuals on their outstanding service and achievement.

TRIBUTE TO ARNOLD PINKNEY

HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 16, 2014

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of the Eleventh Congressional District of Ohio, I rise today to recognize a great Ohioan, Arnold Pinkney, who passed away Monday, January 13, 2014, at 83 years of age.

Arnold Pinkney was an extraordinary political strategist and mentor to generations of elected leaders, including me. He had an innate understanding of people's needs and knew how elected officials could best articulate and pursue policies that achieved the common good.

Mr. Pinkney managed the Cleveland mayoral campaign of Carl Stokes, who in 1967 became the first African-American mayor to lead a major American city. Mr. Pinkney went on to manage successful campaigns for the Honorable Louis Stokes. He also co-managed Ohio gubernatorial campaigns of Dick Celeste.

Arnold managed the 1984 presidential campaign of Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr. Notably, the strategy used in Rev. Jackson's campaign resulted in the significant presence of delegates at the Democratic National Convention. The presence of Rev. Jackson and his delegates allowed for their meaningful input into the party's focus and priorities for the election cycle and beyond, and opened a door that eventually culminated in the election and re-election

of President Barack Obama over 20 years later.

Mr. Pinkney was elected to and served many years on the Cleveland Metropolitan School District Board of Education, including time as its president. He also helped the school district pass levies critically needed to educate the city's children and provided successful strategic advice to other local public office candidates.

What I remember most about Arnold is his passion to use the talents with which he was blessed to improve our community. His love of politics was inspired and nurtured early on by the great Hubert Humphrey, having served as deputy manager for the Vice President's 1968 presidential campaign. Vice President Humphrey once said, "The moral test of a govern-

ment is how it treats those who are at the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadow of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped." Mr. Pinkney kept those words close to heart as he strategized with and advised so many of us.

Mr. Pinkney was also an astute businessman. He was the first African American agent for the Prudential Insurance Company, and later co-founded the Pinkney-Perry Insurance Agency, which remains a thriving business in northeast Ohio today.

Financial success did not blind Arnold Pinkney to the needs of the people and the need of government to serve all people. He lived his life to the fullest, and left the world a better place than he found it.

SENATE—Friday, January 17, 2014

The Senate met at 11:15 and 8 seconds a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 17, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TUESDAY,
JANUARY 21, 2014, AT 10:30 A.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate now stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, January 21, 2014.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:15 and 49 seconds a.m., adjourned until Tuesday, January 21, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, January 17, 2014

The House met at 1 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 17, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We thank You once again that we, Your creatures, can come before You and ask guidance for the men and women of this assembly. Send Your spirit of peace, honesty and fairness during this week of constituent visits. May their ears and hearts be open to listen to the hopes and needs of those whom they represent.

Bless the people of this great Nation with wisdom, knowledge and understanding, that they might responsibly participate in our American democracy.

Please keep all who work for the people's House in good health, that they might faithfully fulfill the great responsibility given them in their service to the work of the Capitol.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 4(a) of House Resolution 458, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

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

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 17, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 17, 2014 at 9:50 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 74.

That the Senate concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment H.R. 3547.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by Speaker pro tempore HARRIS on Friday, January 17, 2014:

H.R. 3547, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker pro tempore, Mr. HARRIS:

H.R. 3547. An act making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 4(b) of House Resolution 458, the House stands adjourned until 1 p.m. Tuesday, January 21, 2014.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Tuesday, January 21, 2014, at 1 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4516. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding appropriation, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

4517. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Photovoltaic Devices (DFARS Case 2014-D006) (RIN: 0750-A118) received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4518. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Trade Agreements Thresholds (DFARS Case 2013-D032) (RIN: 0750-A117) received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4519. A letter from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Terms of Service and Open-Ended Indemnification and Unenforceability of Unauthorized Obligations [FAC 2005-72; FAR Case 2013-005; Item III; Docket 2013-0005, Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AM45) received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4520. A letter from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Prioritizing Sources of Supplies and Services for Use by the Government [FAC 2005-72; FAR Case 2009-024; Item II; Docket 2011-0086, Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AM07) received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4521. A letter from the Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4522. A letter from the Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to North Korea that was declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4523. A letter from the Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-

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

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

month periodic report on the national emergency blocking property of the government of the Russian Federation relating to the disposition of the highly enriched uranium extracted from nuclear weapons that was declared in Executive Order 13617 of June 25, 2012; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4524. A letter from the President, Federal Financing Bank, transmitting the Annual Report of the Federal Financing Bank for Fiscal Year 2013, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 5528(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4525. A letter from the Deputy Director of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Copayments for Medications in 2014 (RIN: 2900-AO91) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3922. A bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. BASS (for herself, Ms. CHU, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. COOK, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 3923. A bill to amend the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 to expand the authority of governmental social service agencies with child protection responsibilities to access the national crime information databases; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GARCIA:

H.R. 3924. A bill to delay increases in premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program, establish a refundable tax credit for flood mitigation expenses, and authorize increased funding for flood damage mitigation programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for con-

sideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3922.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States);

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress); and

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Ms. BASS:

H.R. 3923.

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

Article I.

Section 1.

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. GARCIA:

H.R. 3924.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 & 3 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 445: Mr. CLYBURN.

H.R. 647: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 946: Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 956: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 1070: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 1199: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 1423: Mr. BARR.

H.R. 1624: Mr. LANKFORD.

H.R. 1658: Mr. WALZ and Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 1726: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1732: Mr. POSEY.

H.R. 1838: Mr. CICILLINE and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 1851: Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 2619: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 2968: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 3043: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 3086: Mr. RIGELL, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. SENBRENNER, and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 3147: Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 3344: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3370: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 3407: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 3445: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 3485: Mr. MEADOWS and Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 3486: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 3518: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 3529: Mr. MEEKS, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. BARROW of Georgia.

H.R. 3530: Mr. DEUTCH and Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 3578: Mr. WOMACK, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3732: Mr. SCALISE and Mr. LONG.

H.R. 3774: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 3787: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 3790: Mr. LAMALFA.

H.R. 3796: Ms. SCHWARTZ.

H.R. 3819: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3855: Mr. TONKO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 3865: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 3867: Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. YOHO, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. BARBER, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.J. Res. 55: Mr. SCALISE.

H. Res. 425: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H. Res. 442: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SIMPSON, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. MESSER, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. SCALISE.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LETTER OF RECOGNITION FOR 2013 CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLAR- SHIP RECIPIENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Grace Meng, a resident of Vienna, Virginia, who is a recipient of the 2013 Critical Language Scholarship.

The Critical Language Scholarship Program was established in 2006 by the Department of State as part of an effort to train American young people in languages that are critical to our nation's global interests. For three months, attendees are immersed in an intensive cultural environment that teaches a new language, new culture, and new sense of self. The CLS program is remarkably competitive; in 2013 nearly 4,000 students from around the country applied, but only 597 were accepted. Due to her impressive academic success, I am proud to say that Grace Meng was one of those chosen.

Participants in the Critical Language Scholarship Program do more than simply enrich their own appreciation of a foreign culture. Their deep understanding of these critical regions ensures that our nation has capable individuals that can work on issues vital to the interests of the United States. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the service of Grace Meng, and in wishing her heartfelt congratulations on her achievements.

HONORING THE NON-DENOMINA- TION HOUSE OF PRAYER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Christian organization, The Non-Denomination House of Prayer.

The Non-Denomination House of Prayer was founded in 1948 by Pastor Charity Waffer in the historical city of Mound Bayou, Mississippi. Pastor Waffer was the first female pastor in the Mississippi Delta. As a pastoral pioneer she was instrumental in opening doors for women and youths through various church auxiliaries and functions. Her leadership guided many to various freedoms and liberties.

The current overseer is Dr. Earnestine Flowers which over sees other churches in Mississippi with the communities of Duncan, Batesville, Sardis, Oxford and in Chicago, Illinois. The Non-Denomination House of Prayer in the City of Mound Bayou current ministerial leaders are Pastor Willie Joe Flowers, Assis-

ant Pastor Carl Henry, and Minister Martha Sanders.

They have increased the church membership and have embarked on renovating and expanding their facilities in order to continue to be a blessing to its members, community, and surrounding communities by being able to be a place of refuge to those who are hungry physically and spiritually and by offering comprehensive programs to meet the needs of others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Non-Denomination House of Prayer for their dedication in being a corner stone in the Mound Bayou Community.

LETTER OF RECOGNITION FOR 2013 CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLAR- SHIP RECIPIENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Christopher Haberland, a resident of Herndon, Virginia, who is a recipient of the 2013 Critical Language Scholarship.

The Critical Language Scholarship Program was established in 2006 by the Department of State as part of an effort to train American young people in languages that are critical to our nation's global interests. For three months, attendees are immersed in an intensive cultural environment that teaches a new language, new culture, and new sense of self. The CLS program is remarkably competitive; in 2013 nearly 4,000 students from around the country applied, but only 597 were accepted. Due to his impressive academic success, I am proud to say that Christopher Haberland was one of those chosen.

Participants in the Critical Language Scholarship Program do more than simply enrich their own understanding and appreciation of a foreign culture. Their deep understanding of these critical regions ensures that our nation has capable individuals that can work on issues vital to the interests of the United States. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the service of Christopher Haberland, and in wishing him heartfelt congratulations on his achievements.

HONORING MS. JOAN WILLIAMS

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Ms. Joan Williams. A lifelong community lead-

er, Ms. Williams is being honored with the Martin Luther King Community Service Award on January 23rd for her unending service to our city and its people.

Since her graduation from Lincoln University in 1971, Ms. Williams has been a force for change. Professionally, Ms. Williams worked in the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights from 1972 to 2006, eventually becoming a Senior Equal Opportunity Specialist, investigating discrimination complaints regarding elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education programs. She now serves as the First Vice President & Director of Programs & Projects for the West Philadelphia Coalition of Neighborhoods and Businesses. In this role, Ms. Williams acts as a liaison between businesses and corporations and community members seeking employment, working to help all of her neighbors achieve better circumstances.

Ms. Williams was also instrumental in establishing the Community Advisory Committee, which serves as an oversight committee for the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Service Center, making the Center safe and of assistance to the community. For her personal and professional work, Ms. Williams has received many awards, including, but not limited to, the 190th Legislative District Image Award from State Representative Vanessa Lowery Brown and the Community Service Award from the Henry Hill Post 385 American Legion. On reflecting on Ms. Williams's long history of working for social justice, I cannot think of someone more deserving of this year's Martin Luther King Community Service Award.

It is a privilege to recognize a person whose leadership and commitment to our city has enriched the lives of countless individuals. I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending Ms. Williams for her lifetime of service and dedication to Pennsylvania's First Congressional District.

HONORING WILL T. TURNER, SR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Will T. Turner, Sr., who is a remarkable Civil Rights Worker, Extraordinary and public servant.

Mr. Will T. Turner, Sr. was born in Jefferson County, Mississippi on February 23, 1930 to Rena and Warren Turner, Sr. At the age of 7, his mother died shortly after childbirth and his Uncle and Aunt, Howard and Mary Lou Nichols, reared him along with his siblings.

Mr. Turner, Sr. attended Jefferson County Training School. Being independent and desiring a better life, at the age of 16 he began working with Sidney Brown, a white contractor.

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

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

He remained in his employment for 20 years. During this period he became adept in the construction field and well known in this arena. He was approached to do private jobs, independent of Sidney Brown, which led to the beginning of Turner Construction.

Well known throughout the community for his generosity and kindness, Mr. Turner, Sr. became instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement in Fayette, Mississippi. In 1963, he moved Charles Evers, brother of slain civil rights advocate Medgar Evers, to Fayette. He became instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement of Fayette, Mississippi as well as the surrounding communities. He attended weekly NAACP Mass Meetings, participated in numerous civil rights marches and was often jailed for equality and justice for all.

In 1964, Mr. Turner, Sr. was elected as one of the first Black Aldermen to serve in a bi-racial town in the State of Mississippi along with four other blacks and Charles Evers as Mayor. He served three terms as an Alderman of the City of Fayette. He also served as Coroner of Jefferson County for 24 years.

Mr. Turner, Sr. is married to the former Florence Clark and they are the proud parents of two sons—Will T., Jr. and Perry (deceased) and five daughters—Delories, Mary, Patricia, Tina and Janice.

After working to register people to vote, after encouraging others to participate in the work of the movement in several different places, Mr. Turner participated in the slate of blacks seeking to make changes with the elected officials in the town of Fayette and they were all elected.

When elected to the Board of Alderman of Fayette, he was interviewed by JET magazine and they were all published in that month's issue of Jet.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a Civil Rights Worker Extraordinaire, Mr. Will T. Turner, Sr., for his dedication to serving others and giving back to the African American community.

RECOGNIZING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY 2013 LAND CONSERVATION AND TREE PRESERVATION AND PLANTING AWARDS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the recipients of the Fairfax County 2013 Land Conservation and Tree Preservation and Planting Awards.

Fairfax County is considered one of the best counties in the nation in which to live, work and raise a family. One reason for this designation is the innovative environmental protection policies that have been implemented by the County and embraced by its business partners. I was pleased to have led that effort during my tenure as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. These awards recognize the following developers, designers and site superintendents who have excelled in their stewardship of the environment:

- Land Preservation Awards:
 - Large Commercial: Jennings Toyota
 - Owner: Jennings Business Park, LLC
 - Small Commercial: MTPD District II Substation and Training Facility
 - Owner: Washington Metro Area Transit Authority
 - Large Single Family Residential: The Reserve at Timber Lake
 - Owner: Winchester Homes, Inc.
 - Small Single Family Residential: Leatherland Property
 - Owner: Palisades Development at Telegraph Road, LLC
 - Special Project: Timber Ridge at EDS Park Facility
 - Owner: Timber Ridge at Discovery Square, Inc.
 - Linear Project: Timber Ridge at EDS North—South Collector
 - Owner: Timber Ridge at Discovery Square, Inc.
 - Best Protected Environmentally Sensitive Site: Jennings Toyota
 - Owner: Jennings Business Park, LLC
 - Best Protected Environmentally Sensitive Site: Huntley Meadows Park Wetland Restoration Project
 - Owner: Fairfax County Park Authority
 - Outstanding Engineering Firms: Walter L. Phillip, INC for Jennings Toyota
 - Outstanding Superintendent: Garen Khoranian for Huntley Meadow Park Wetland Restoration Project
 - Outstanding Contractor: S.W. Rodgers for Jennings Toyota
 - Outstanding Developer/Owner: Jennings Business Park, LLC/Jennings Toyota
 - Outstanding E/S Inspectors of the Year: Mike Ernst, Gary Cook, and Mark Evans
 - Outstanding E/S Plan Reviewers of the Year: Walt Hamilton, Laura O'Leary, and Greg Rodgers
 - Tree Planting Awards:
 - Project: Clemyjontri Park
 - Developer: Fairfax County Park Authority
 - Project: Lee Highway and Nutley Street
 - Developer: Washington Property Company, LLC
 - Project: Oakton Library
 - Developer: Fairfax County, DPWES, Capital Facilities
 - Tree Preservation Awards:
 - Project: Huntley Meadows
 - Developer: Fairfax County Park Authority
 - Project: Roseglen
 - Builder: Stanley Martin Homes
 - Project: The Reserve at Stone Hill
 - Builder: Winchester Homes, Inc.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating these honorees. Fairfax County and its residents have benefitted greatly from the collaborative spirit that is represented by these awards today, and I thank each of the awardees for their efforts.

IN HONOR OF ROD RICE

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Rod Rice as he prepares to hang

up his microphone after a 40 year career in radio.

Rod Rice has more than three decades on the air in Houston—providing us news and information. Much of that time, he's spent at Houston's Public Radio station, 88.7 KUHF.

He joined KUHF from KTRH as a reporter and leaves this Friday morning as the anchor of KUHF Morning Edition. As Rod told a media reporter, "It's been a pleasure playing a small role in the daily life of this wonderful city." Well, Rod, it's been our pleasure as listeners.

During Rod Rice's tenure at KUHF, the station has grown their news operation from a 5 person newsroom to a full service news and information station that Houston relies on each and every day.

Rod Rice may sound like he was born behind a news microphone, but he served in the US Army and as a disc jockey in many formats over several years before coming to Houston in 1991 to anchor the news on NewsRadio 740 KTRH. That's because Rice's fascination with radio began with his grandfather and listening to radio programs. That fascination never left him and those he mentored say he is always eager to pass it on to a new generation.

Rod quickly developed a reputation for working with new reporters and helping them to make their news coverage better. One of those reporters mentored by Rod Rice now serves as my Communications Director.

Rice has been honored more times that we can address here for excellence in broadcast journalism, including a regional Edward R. Murrow Award from the Radio and Television News Directors Association.

What's next for Rod Rice is turning off his early morning alarm and enjoying life, but his roots in radio will always be a part of him. And, those who know him are convinced he will continue to mentor and share his love of radio for many years to come.

HONORING MR. L.C. LEACH, SR.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable civil rights advocate and public servant, Mr. L.C. Leach, Sr. Throughout his remarkable life, Mr. Leach made unprecedented strides towards the ongoing battle of ensuring civil rights for African Americans in his community.

Born February 7, 1927, Mr. Leach was a lifelong resident of Bolton, Mississippi. He received his formal education at Champion Hill Elementary School, Champion Hill High School, and Southern Christian Institute College. He received additional education at Jackson State University and became a prominent figure in the community through his employment at Universal Life Insurance, located in Jackson, Mississippi.

As an African American male living in a small rural town of segregated Mississippi, Mr. Leach witnessed and endured many injustices towards himself and others in the community.

But with the necessity of change beckoning his spirit, Mr. Leach set aside any fears or reservations he may have had to help his community rise above the systematic inequalities of segregation.

Through a coordinated effort with other African American members of the community, Mr. Leach put forth his determination to integrate the white-only elementary school in Bolton, Mississippi by sending his son (along with three other African American students) to attend class there. Although many in town were uneasy with the decision to do so (both whites and blacks), the stance proceeded without incident.

Using the stance on the white-only elementary school as a catalyst for advancing other significant changes in the community, Mr. Leach became an avid member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He worked extremely close with many other civil rights advocates in the state, most notably brothers Charles and Medgar Evers.

Through organized boycotts orchestrated through the NAACP, Mr. Leach and others were instrumental in integrating white-only grocery stores in Jackson, Mississippi, the Jackson Zoological Park, and public restrooms and water fountains in and around the city of Jackson. At times, Mr. Leach helped local residents strategize boycott tactics under the cover of his insurance office.

In addition to advocating for the dismantlement of segregation, Mr. Leach will be forever known for his courage in seeking and obtaining the elected position as first African American Alderman of Bolton, Mississippi. After serving as Alderman, he would later sit as Judge Leach of Bolton, as well as spearhead an effort with other community leaders to establish the community's first Head Start program for area preschool children to attend.

Through all his community advocacy and public servitude, Mr. Leach was a wonderful husband and father. He was married to his loving wife, Earnestine Perry Leach, for 55 years at the time of his death. He has two sons (Joe and L.C., Jr.) and two daughters (Veronica and Bobbie) who also will continue to carry on the legacy of Mr. L.C. Leach, Sr. He transcended this life on earth on April 28, 2008.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. L.C. Leach, Sr. for his dedication and service as a civil rights advocate and pioneer during the civil rights movement.

RECOGNIZING THE PARTICIPATION OF THE HERNDON HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND IN THE 2013 PEARL HARBOR MEMORIAL PARADE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Herndon High School Marching Band for being selected to participate in the 2013 Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade and for receiving Grand Champion honors in recognition of their outstanding performance.

Known as "The Pride of Herndon," the Herndon High School Band is the oldest established high school band in Fairfax County and has been a part of Northern Virginia since 1947. Since its founding, the band program at Herndon High School has grown from that original group of fifteen musicians to more than 200 instrumentalists comprising the following ensembles: Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band and Jazz Band, all currently under the direction of Ms. Kathleen Jacoby.

The National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day was established by an Act of Congress on August 23, 1994 to commemorate the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. The Pearl Harbor Memorial Day Parade, which began in 2011, honors the survivors, veterans, active duty military and their families, and most especially the more than 2,400 members of U.S. Armed Services who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Each year, one high school band from each state that bears the same name as an American battleship or other vessel that was attacked at Pearl Harbor is invited to participate in the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade. This year, The Herndon High School Marching Band was chosen to represent Virginia. While in Hawaii, the Pride of Herndon toured the USS *Arizona* Memorial, performed in front of the USS *Missouri*, met with World War II Veterans who survived the Pearl Harbor attack and served as Virginia's official "ambassador" to the parade. Following the parade, a three-judge panel designated the band as Grand Champions for the quality and appropriateness of its performance.

The band's participation in this event would not have been possible without support of the Herndon High School Band Parents Association and the Herndon High School community, including the Herndon Rotary which raised more than \$15,000 to help fund the cost of the trip.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Principal William Bates, Band Director Kathleen Jacoby, and the Herndon High School Marching Band on this tremendous achievement and in commending them for their roles in honoring and paying tribute to our Greatest Generation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 23 I voted "yea," I wanted to vote "nay."

HONORING DIANNE J. TAYLOR

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Dianne J. Taylor, an employee of the Mississippi Department of Human Services for over twenty years.

The opportunity to become a civil servant of any branch of the government is a great privilege to be able to serve the American people. Dianne graduated from Troy State University in 1993 with her B.S. Degree in Resource Management and shortly afterwards she began her career with the Mississippi Department of Human Services in that same year.

In an effort to build upon her academic training and hands on learning within the agency, Dianne returned to school and received her MBA from Delta State University in 2004.

During this entire time, she maintained her employment as a case manager in Tallahatchie County where she administers the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. This program is designed to help single parents become self-sufficient so that they can transition off of public assistance.

Dianne has all intentions of retiring as a civil servant employee, realizing the opportunity given to her twenty years ago has been not only more than a privilege but rewarding by allowing her to help others in need.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Dianne J. Taylor for her longevity and dedication to helping others as an employee of the Mississippi Department of Health and Human Services.

RECOGNIZING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2014 PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AWARDS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the recipients of the 2014 Prince William County Human Rights Commission Awards.

The Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) implemented the Human Rights Ordinance January 15, 1993, formally establishing the Human Rights Commission. Two years prior, the BOCS formed the Human Rights Study Committee to explore the needs of a community that was growing in population and diversity. An exhaustive effort that included numerous committee meetings and public hearings identified a strong community desire for a human rights ordinance and an agency to enforce it. The Human Rights Ordinance prohibits discriminatory practices based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, marital status, or disability, as well as in the consideration of employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and credit, in Prince William County.

The BOCS approved the ordinance in September 1992 to ensure that "each citizen is treated fairly, provided equal protection of the law, and equal opportunity to participate in the benefits, rights, and privileges of community life." Residents enlist the services of the commission if they feel their rights have been violated in the areas of employment, fair housing, credit, education and public accommodation.

In celebration of Universal Human Rights Day, the Human Rights Commission recognizes individuals and organizations that promote the principles of human rights in Prince William County. It is my honor to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the recipients of the 2014 Prince William County Human Rights Commission Awards:

Vicky Castro
 Father Gerry Creedon
 Doreen Dauer
 Cydney A. Neville
 Sam Sanders

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the recipients of the 2014 Prince William County Human Rights Commission Awards. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to these honorees for their efforts to safeguard our most basic rights and remind us of our common humanity. Let us use their example to rededicate ourselves to the fight against inequity and injustice.

IN HONOR OF THE LONE STAR
 FLAG'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to honor the "The Lone Star Flag" of Texas. 175 years ago, Texas' Red, White and Blue banner was adopted as the flag of the Republic of Texas. The blue stands for loyalty. The white stands for purity. The red stands for the courage with which Texans have been blessed.

One-third of our flag is blue with a single centered white, five-pointed star. The remaining two-thirds of the flag are horizontal white and red bars. It's an image known the world over.

When Texas became our nation's 28th state, Texas' national flag became our state flag. Our state pledge starts with "Honor the Texas flag."

Dr. Charles Stewart lived in Montgomery, Texas when he led a committee appointed by Mirabeau Lamar tasked with designing our flag. You can see how he envisioned Texas' flag at the Nat Hart Davis Museum on Liberty Street in Montgomery. Our county, and this community's Lone Star Flag ties, are second to none.

In 1997, the Texas Legislature honored Montgomery County, Texas as the birthplace of the Texas Lone Star Flag. Our community is so proud of this honor.

The Patrons of Cedar Brake Park in Montgomery have partnered with the Montgomery Economic Development Corporation and the Historic Montgomery Business Association to hold a 175th Anniversary Celebration for our great flag on Saturday, January 25, 2014.

Special thanks to Bill Koltian, Shannan Reid, Sonya Clover, Julia Wall and Patti Stafford and other volunteers for coordinating this event to celebrate the birth of this iconic symbol of our state.

May our Lone Star Flag always wave proudly over the great state of Texas.

HONORING GABRIELLE NICOLE
 TERRETT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a multi-talented young lady, Miss Gabrielle Nicole Terrett.

Gabrielle Nicole Terrett is the 14-year-old daughter of Dr. André and Attorney Toni Terrett. She is the eldest of five and a 9th grader at Warren Central High School in Vicksburg.

Gabrielle is an all around student that has excelled in both academics and extracurricular activities. She is a member of the Warren Central Big Blue Band flute section. She also plays the violin and has performed at local nursing homes over the years.

Gabrielle has received several awards including placing 1st in Jewelry in the Hobbs-Freeman Art competition-2012, 2nd place in the Hobbs-Freeman Art competition-2012, 2nd place in the 2013 Blacks in Government Oratorical Contest, 3rd in the 2012 NAACP essay contest, and 2nd Runner Up in the 2013 Miss Southland Pageant.

Gabrielle volunteers at the Mountain of Faith Women's Shelter Retail Store. As a volunteer she helps stock shelves, organize the store and assist customers to the store. She is very pleasant to work with and supports the Women's Shelter as often as possible. In her spare time she enjoys quiet time reading, preparing for pageants, and shopping.

She is a faithful member of Pleasant Green Baptist Church in Vicksburg, MS where she is active in Sunday school.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Miss Gabrielle Nicole Terrett for her hard work, dedication and a strong desire to achieve.

RECOGNIZING THE 24TH ANNUAL
 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
 YOUTH ORATORICAL COMPETITION

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 24th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Oratorical Competition hosted by the Prince William Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and its Education Foundation.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. left an indelible mark on our nation in his pursuit of civil rights through civil dialogue. Despite the violence perpetrated against Dr. King and other leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. King responded with reverent oratory and nonviolent resistance to condemn the injustice of social inequality. His legacy is one of tolerance and steadfast commitment to principled and peaceful communication.

Contestants in the MLK Youth Oratorical Competition pay tribute to Dr. King's legacy

with their ability to exercise the strength of the spoken word. This skill will serve them well as they seize future leadership opportunities and forge the personal relationships necessary for effective community engagement and organizing.

I congratulate and applaud the following contestants in the 24th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Oratorical Competition:

Middle School Contestants
 Morgan Foster: Manassas Park Middle School
 Ayesha Khursheed: Graham Park School
 Emmanuel Murphy: Parkside Middle School
 High School Contestants
 Jacob Gonzalez: Thomas Jefferson High School
 Norman Jones: Stonewall Jackson High School
 Issac Mensah Yeboah: Osbourn Park High School

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. for recognizing the benefit that Dr. King's teachings bring to the development of our youth. We lay the foundations of a more tolerant society when we nurture the ability to engage and communicate with one another in a way that respects our common humanity.

HONORING THE RESIDENTS OF
 ADAMS, NEW YORK

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to focus the Nation's attention on the residents of Adams, New York. Adams is a small village located near Interstate 81 and about forty minutes south of the U.S.-Canadian border. The residents of this town recently demonstrated why small towns like those dotting the North Country are what give America its strength.

Recently, a major storm featuring bitter cold and as many as four feet of snow closed I-81, a major artery for travelers and trucks, and stranded about 150 people in Adams. According to local news reports, this town rallied around their unexpected guests. About 100 volunteers headed to the town's firehouse to brew coffee and assemble cots. Local businesses donated nearly 2,000 sandwiches and slices of pizza. Around 40 families opened their homes so their visitors had a comfortable place to sleep.

One story in the Watertown Daily Times said the town's residents used social media to help find places for the stranded truckers and travelers to spend the night. Other fire halls in the area also accommodated stranded travelers and the local chapter of the American Red Cross helped supply cots.

In another article, the Syracuse Post-Standard reported Adams resident Mollie Bangs, who is 93, and her caregiver Michael Smith hosted a family from Quebec who were on their way home from Florida. Most of the family spoke only French and none had winter clothing. Ms. Bangs and Mr. Smith lent them winter clothes and entertained them in Ms. Bangs' home.

The stranded travelers pitched in too. The Post-Standard told of how a stranded soldier from Fort Drum in Watertown, NY named Jesse Brown helped shovel four feet of snow at the home of Kathy Sheley, the Adams resident who took him in.

Many communities across the country would be crippled for days by the volume of snow the area received. The town's fire department worked with a local pharmacy to bring medicine and supplies to those in need. Crews of State and local snow plow drivers and New York State Troopers worked around the clock. The local and State workers were able to reopen the highway for the stranded travelers just a day after the storm hit.

Mr. Speaker, cynics have said that our Nation is losing its sense of community. I submit this story as proof to the contrary. Please join me in recognizing the residents of Adams, the local fire and public works departments, the American Red Cross, the New York State Troopers serving in the North Country and the employees of the New York State Department of Transportation whom it is my privilege to represent in Congress for their selfless actions during this recent storm.

**DUNN LORING VOLUNTEER FIRE
AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT**

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, and to congratulate the 2013 award recipients and incoming 2014 officers and board members.

The Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department (DLVFRD) is 1 of 12 volunteer fire departments in Fairfax County, and since its founding in 1942, it has provided lifesaving, fire suppression/prevention, and emergency medical/rescue services to the residents of the Dunn Loring area and the surrounding community.

Currently, the Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department and Ladies Auxiliary operates from Station 13 on Gallows Road and boasts 80 active members. Alongside career firefighters, these brave volunteers contribute more than 29,000 hours each year to enhance public safety for the approximately 22,000 citizens of Dunn Loring.

Each year DLVFRD recognizes those volunteers who have excelled in service and commitment, and it is my honor to enter the following names of the 2013 honorees into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Firefighter of the Year—Adam Nielson
EMT of the Year—Houmam Ali
EMS Rookie of the Year—Robert Seoane
Robbie Allen Award—Terri Fisher
Distinguished Service Award—Kenneth Kubiak
Distinguished Service Award—Lisa White
Spirit Award—Jason Trautman
Robert J. J. Seoane Award—Houmam Ali
Special Recognition Award—Anna Gradishar
Special Recognition Award—Aria Khodabakhchian

President's Award—Kenneth Kubiak

The following individuals are also being recognized for their years of service to the Department:

40 Year Service Award—David Banks
15 Year Service Award—Shawn P. Stokes
10 Year Service Award—Keith Edgemon
10 Year Service Award—Carrie Toreno
5 Year Service Award—Michelle Mallek
5 Year Service Award—Erin Keating
Hudiburgh

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the 2013 award recipients and in commending the Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department for 71 years of service. I also extend my personal thanks to the outgoing DLVFRD officers and trustees for 2013 and to those who will serve in those roles for 2014. All these brave men and women deserve our highest praise for their dedication to public safety, and to each of them I say: "Stay safe."

**RECOGNIZING JANUARY AS
HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARE-
NESS MONTH**

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Human trafficking is modern-day slavery. Although some may think that this only happens in dark, remote corners of the world, human trafficking happens in our own backyard. The sickening fact is that it is a big, booming business—trafficking a child for sex is often more lucrative than drug trafficking. This horrific crime can happen to anyone—girl, boy, rich, poor, U.S. citizen or not. We must work harder to protect our sons and daughters, leveraging community resources to find and rehabilitate victims and prosecute traffickers to the fullest extent of the law. In honor of Human Trafficking Awareness Month, I would like to thank all of the dedicated community advocates in south Florida including Palm Beach County District Attorney Dave Aronberg, and the Junior Leagues of the Palm Beaches and of Broward County. I would also like to thank Katarina Rosenblatt—a courageous south Florida survivor of human trafficking who uses her experience to help other victims get their lives back. I look forward to working with all of them to protect victims in Florida and around the world.

HONORING DERRICK JOHNSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. Derrick Johnson who is State president of the Mississippi State Conference NAACP. Elected in 2004, he is the youngest State president in the country.

Mr. Johnson earned his Jurist Doctorate degree from South Texas College of Law in Houston, TX and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Tougaloo College in Tougaloo, MS.

After completing law school Mr. Johnson joined the staff of Southern Echo, Inc., a non-profit organization located in Jackson, Mississippi, serving as the regional organizer. He provided legal, technical, and training support for communities within 6 States across the south (Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, and South Carolina).

Mr. Johnson has GIS (Geographic Information System) and Database Management training and has provided redistricting services to municipal and county governments across the State of Mississippi.

Mr. Johnson served as a Fellow with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation in Washington, DC, while working in the office of Congressman BENNIE G. THOMPSON and as a Fellow with the George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management Minority Fellowship Program.

In response to Hurricane Katrina's devastation in Mississippi, Mr. Johnson was appointed to serve as vice-chair of the Governor's Commission for Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal. He has become a leading voice for the equitable rebuilding for the working poor in the aftermath of the hurricane. He serves on many Boards: the Mississippi ACLU, Hope Community Credit Union, and the Advisory Council of the Mississippi Economic Policy Center.

Mr. Johnson was appointed by the Chief Justice of the Mississippi Access to the Justice Commission.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Derrick Johnson for his dedication to serving others.

**TO RECOGNIZE ANTIOCH BAPTIST
CHURCH**

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Antioch Baptist Church on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary and to commend the Church for its continued commitment to our community.

Founding Pastor John Q. Gibbs prayed with a small group of four others for more than one year while planning the Church, seeking guidance and strength from the Almighty. The first worship service was held at the Salvation Army Chapel on January 8, 1989, and three people came forward to be baptized during this inaugural service. From these humble beginnings, under the leadership of Pastor Gibbs, the congregation and ministries of Antioch Baptist Church grew and the first sanctuary was built.

After the passing of Pastor Gibbs in 1995, the Reverend Marshal Ausberry, Sr. was selected to lead the congregation. The Church has continued to grow, serving as a warm, loving, and welcoming spiritual home. The Church has expanded its reach into the community through multiple ministries that reflect diverse and compelling needs. Thanks to

strong support from its members, Antioch is able to offer services for Nursery, Children and Youth Ministries, as well as Christian Education, Family Life, and Discipleship Ministries to promote a Christian life. The Church has also become a contributing partner to local homeless prevention efforts, and it has programs to provide outreach to the sick and elderly as well as to those who are incarcerated. Antioch Baptist Church also partners with the Fairfax County Government in foster care and adoption efforts, and I was honored to nominate Antioch Baptist Church as the 11th Congressional District's 2011 Angel in Adoption in recognition of its tremendous work for children in need. The congregation's generous ministry activities extend well beyond the community to reach those in need in faraway places such as Zimbabwe, Brazil, and Haiti, where it provides aid, comfort, and religious support.

Throughout the years, Antioch Baptist Church has become an integral part of Fairfax County through its foundation in faith and its commitment to the community. Thanks to its steadfast leadership under Pastors Gibbs and Ausberry and the dedication of its congregation, Antioch Baptist Church is leading by example, strengthening our community by working together and helping our neighbors in need.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Antioch Baptist Church for its

dedication and commitment to its Christian values and in wishing them continued success in the next 25 years and beyond.

HONORING OLYMPIAN SHANNON MILLER ON RECEIVING THE CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM'S EXCELLENCE IN CANCER AWARENESS AWARD

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 17, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Olympian and President of Shannon Miller Lifestyle, Mrs. Shannon Miller, on receiving the Excellence in Cancer Awareness Award from the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program.

Shannon is a two-time world all-around champion gymnast, winning seven Olympic medals and nine world championships. In late 2010, Shannon received the staggering news that she had a rare form of ovarian cancer. However, with the strength and determination that helped her to be so successful in her gymnastic career, Shannon defeated the disease in 2011. Finally, overcoming all odds this

past June, she was blessed with a "miracle baby"—a second child, Sterling Diane, who joins her 3 year old brother Rocco.

Shannon has become an inspiration to all and publically shares her experience to encourage others to fight against cancer. She has been unwavering in her dedication to the health and wellness of women and children, using her visibility to advocate for early detection, cancer awareness, and give hope to those currently fighting this terrible disease.

On November 19, 2013, Shannon was honored with the Excellence in Cancer Awareness award at the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program's annual luncheon. This bipartisan program aims to increase the public's understanding of cancer prevention and early detection. Families of Members of the House, Senate, Cabinet, and Supreme Court work within their respective constituencies—as well as nationwide—to raise awareness and help reduce risks of cancer. Congressional Families' initiatives include giving presentations to civic and community groups, making radio and television presentations, organizing health fairs and conferences, as well as writing opinion pieces for local papers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in this very special congressional salute to this leader and cancer advocate, Shannon Miller.

SENATE—Tuesday, January 21, 2014

The Senate met at 10:30 and 8 seconds a.m., and was called to order by the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 21, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND, a Senator from the State of New York, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY,
JANUARY 24, 2014, AT 9:30 A.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. on Friday, January 24, 2014.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:30 and 36 seconds a.m., adjourned until Friday, January 24, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, January 21, 2014

The House met at 11:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER).

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 12(c) of rule I, the Speaker established this time for reconvening and notified Members accordingly.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 4(a) of House Resolution 458, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 21, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LUKE MESSER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of life, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As the members of this people's House are home with family and taking time to meet with constituents, our Nation has paused to remember a period of America's history when the ideals of our founding documents were put to the test and a new era of greater rights for all citizens emerged.

We thank You for the greatness of those times and the individuals who toiled and suffered to call us to our better selves as a people. May we remain vigilant, for the rights of men seem still in jeopardy.

In these days as well, many Americans come to the Capital, as so many did 50 years ago, to make their voices heard about another major issue affecting our Nation. May Your spirit of truth and justice descend upon all who are exercising one of the great freedoms our Nation stands for—to peaceably assemble and make known our concerns to government.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

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

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on January 17, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 3547. Making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(c) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 33 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SERGEANT AT ARMS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 21, 2014.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER, As you are aware, the time previously appointed for the next meeting of the House is 1 p.m. on Tuesday, January 21, 2014. This is to notify you, pursuant to clause 12(c) of rule I, of an imminent impairment of the place of reconvening at that time. The impairment is due to the weather.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. IRVING,
Sergeant at Arms.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2013 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO SOUTH AFRICA, EXPENDED BETWEEN DEC. 9 AND DEC. 11, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Aaron Schock	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Marcia Fudge	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. John Conyers	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Charles Rangel	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. John Lewis	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Jim McDermott	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Eleanor Holmes Norton	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Maxine Waters	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Robert Scott	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Mel Watt	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Sheila Jackson Lee	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Elijah Cummings	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Donna Christensen	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Gregory Meeks	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Barbara Lee	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. G.K. Butterfield	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Al Green	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Gwen Moore	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00
Hon. Yvette Clarke	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(3)				2,127.00

¹ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO SOUTH AFRICA, EXPENDED BETWEEN DEC. 9 AND DEC. 11, 2013—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Karen Bass	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(³)				2,127.00
Hon. Terri Sewell	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(³)				2,127.00
Hon. Joyce Beatty	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(³)				2,127.00
Michael Long	12/10	12/11	South Africa		2,127.00		(³)				2,127.00
Committee total					48,921.00						48,921.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Military air transportation.

HON. AARON SCHOCK, Jan. 8, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, Chairman, Jan. 9, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. PAUL RYAN, Chairman, Jan. 6, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. JOHN KLINE, Chairman, Jan. 16, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ETHICS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEE

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY, Chairman, Jan. 8, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan	9/29	10/2	Palau		861.00		1,277.00				2,138.00
Committee total					861.00		1,277.00				2,138.00

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. DOC HASTINGS, Chairman, Jan. 8, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON RULES, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. PETE SESSIONS, Chairman, Jan. 6, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. SAM GRAVES, Chairman, Jan. 6, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. JEFF MILLER, Chairman, Jan. 7, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, JOINT COMMITTEE ON TAXATION, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. DAVE CAMP, Chairman, Jan. 7, 2014.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4526. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a letter regarding the designation of Overseas and Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism funding; (H. Doc. No. 113-88); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

4527. A letter from the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Safety Standard for Hand-Held Infant Carriers [CPSC Docket No.: CPSC-2012-0068] received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4528. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; Total Suspended Particulate Matter SIP Revision [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0502; FRL-9905-32-Region 5] received January 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4529. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Ehrenberg, First Mesa, Kachina Village, Munds Park, Wickenburg, and Williams, Arizona) Application of Univision Radio License Corporation KHOV-FM, Wickenburg, Arizona [MB Docket No.: 11-207] [RM-11517] [RM-11518] [RM-11669] [File No.: BPH-20080915AFP] [Facility ID No.: 29021] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4530. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits received January 7, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4531. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting notification that the national emergency regarding terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2014, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1622(d); (H. Doc. No. 113-87); to the

Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4532. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 13-67, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4533. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 13-73, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4534. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4535. A letter from the Chief Financial Officer, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, transmitting the FY 2013 annual report under the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) of 1982, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3512(c)(3); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4536. A letter from the General Counsel, Peace Corps, transmitting a report pursuant

to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4537. A letter from the Chief, Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Depart-

ment of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Extension of Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological Material from China [CBP Dec.

14-02] (RIN: 1515-AD99) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TO RECOGNIZE NATIONAL
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, the heart of Catholic education is encompassed in this year's theme for National Catholic Schools Week—January 26 to February 1—Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service, the three measures by which any Catholic school can and should be judged. This year's theme will be highlighted throughout the week in all Catholic schools in daily celebrations of the inherent value of Catholic education to the students, which is the development of mind and body, soul and spirit. Similar to a small family, Catholic schools are part of a larger community comprised of home, church, city and nation. Students will draw upon this concept

through the week as they recognize their parents for providing them with a Catholic education, and also connect the mission of their schools with the greater community. Therefore, we join in the celebration of Catholic education as a gift to the Church and also the nation, on this, the 40th anniversary of National Catholic Schools Week.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN C. CARNEY, JR.

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 2014

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to clarify my position on rollcall votes 12 and 13 cast on January 13, 2014.

On rollcall vote No. 12, on consideration of H.R. 1513 I did not vote. It was my intention to vote "aye."

On rollcall vote No. 13, on consideration of S. 230 I did not vote. It was my intention to vote "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 21, 2014

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, due to a meeting with constituents from New Mexico, I was not able to be present for a vote on the House floor on December 12, 2013.

Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 641, on motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 441, providing for concurrence by the House in the Senate amendments to H.R. 3304, with an amendment, I would have voted "aye."

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

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, January 23, 2014

(Legislative day of Tuesday, January 21, 2014)

□ 0900

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOLF) at 9 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, when the House adjourns today, it shall adjourn to meet on Monday, January 27, 2014.

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the House stands adjourned until noon on Monday, January 27, 2014, for morning-hour debate.

There was no objection.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 1 minute a.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, January 27, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4538. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan; El Dorado County Air Quality Management District [EPA-R09-OAR-2013-0753; FRL-9905-29-Region 9] received January 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4539. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Tolfenpyrad; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0909; FRL-9904-70] received January 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4540. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Missouri; Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) for the 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) [EPA-R07-OAR-2012-0767; FRL-9905-03-Region 7] received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4541. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Environmental Speed Limit Revision for the Dallas/Fort Worth 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area [EPA-R06-OAR-2010-0819; FRL-9905-16-Region 6] received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4542. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to Rules and Regulations for Control of Air Pollution; Permitting of Grandfathered Facilities [EPA-R06-OAR-2011-0202; FRL-9905-05-Region 6] received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4543. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-158, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4544. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-166, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4545. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-132, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4546. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-141, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4547. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period August 1 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

[January 23 (legislative day of January 21), 2014]

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 908. A bill to preserve the Green Mountain Lookout in the Glacier Peak Wilderness of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (Rept. 113-328). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 915. A bill to authorize the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-329, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1308. A bill to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to reduce predation on endangered Columbia River salmon and other nonlisted species, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-330). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2166. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recover missions, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-331, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 7. A bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions (Rept. 113-332, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

[January 23 (legislative day of January 21), 2014]

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on the Budget discharged from further consideration. H.R. 915 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2166 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

[Submitted January 21, 2014]

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. SHMKUS, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. ENYART, and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 3925. A bill to require rulemaking by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to address considerations in evaluating the need for public and individual disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3926. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to discharge student loans for borrowers who are determined by the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration to be under a disability without expectation of medical or functional improvement; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

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

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

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3927. A bill to amend section 3716 of title 31, United States Code, to raise to at least the poverty line the amount of Social Security benefits that are exempt from being offset to satisfy student loan debt; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

[Submitted January 21, 2014]

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS OF ILLINOIS:

H.R. 3925.

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

Under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, the Necessary and Proper Clause. The bill is constitutionally authorized under the Necessary and Proper Clause, which supports the expansion of congressional authority beyond the explicit authorities that are directly discernible from the text.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3926.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3927.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

[Submitted January 21, 2014]

- H.R. 129: Ms. TSONGAS.
- H.R. 139: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
- H.R. 543: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
- H.R. 685: Mr. LONG.
- H.R. 713: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
- H.R. 940: Mr. LANCE.
- H.R. 1020: Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 1523: Mr. CLAY and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
- H.R. 1814: Mrs. NOEM.
- H.R. 2027: Mr. LUCAS.
- H.R. 2315: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

- H.R. 2364: Mrs. LOWEY.
- H.R. 2575: Mr. WENSTRUP and Mr. ROSS.
- H.R. 2807: Ms. CHU.
- H.R. 2939: Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 3086: Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. CONAWAY.
- H.R. 3154: Mr. PITTS.
- H.R. 3416: Mr. BARR.
- H.R. 3426: Mr. CASSIDY.
- H.R. 3600: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. ESTY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
- H.R. 3662: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
- H.R. 3673: Mr. RANGEL.
- H.R. 3698: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. LATHAM, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
- H.R. 3707: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
- H.R. 3708: Mr. HALL and Mr. BARROW of Georgia.
- H.R. 3732: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
- H.R. 3781: Ms. HAHN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Ms. CHU.
- H.R. 3857: Mr. LANKFORD.
- H.R. 3901: Mr. FINCHER.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO HONOR THE LIFE
OF ALBERT JOSEPH BERTI

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Albert J. Berti who died at the age of 94 on November 28, 2013. He leaves his beloved wife, Mary Vitelli Berti, and his children Paula Lake, Linda Bonforte, Dana Berti Cassillo, Andrea Hennessy, Peter Berti, Christopher Berti, Mary E. Berti, Martha Berti and Monica Casazza. He was the devoted grandfather of 21, and the great grandfather of 5, as well as the brother of Iris Scott Bangston.

Mr. Berti served our country with distinction during World War II and was buried with the military honors he earned and deserved. He also enjoyed a long career with the United States Department of the Treasury.

I'm blessed to enjoy the friendship of one of Mr. Berti's daughters, Andrea Hennessy. In Andrea's words, her father's life was "rich in all the ways that matter, and his large family will cherish his memory forever."

Albert Berti lived a life rooted in the best traditions of our country. He was a patriot who served his country. He was an exemplary husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, and he contributed to the life of his community and strengthened our country with his integrity and values.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Albert J. Berti, and in extending our condolences to his family.

HONORING GARY FRANCE, OWNER
OF FRANCE PROPANE SERVICE,
INC., IN SCHOFIELD, WISCONSIN
AND HIS SERVICE TO THE NA-
TIONAL PROPANE GAS ASSOCIA-
TION AND PROPANE INDUSTRY

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special honor to my constituent Gary France, owner of France Propane Service, Inc., in Schofield, Wisconsin. After decades of hard work in the propane industry, Mr. France has received the distinct honor of being named Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Propane Gas Association (NPGA). As Chairman, Gary brings experience and wisdom to the position, leading a national organization of more than 3,000 members of the propane gas industry.

Mr. France has served as an industry leader on both the state and national levels for al-

most four decades. He started his work in the propane industry in 1964 working at his family's retail propane business at the young age of 13. After decades of commitment to growing his family's business, Mr. France became a small business owner in 1990 when he bought his family business and formed France Propane Service, Inc.

Prior to serving as Chairman of NPGA, Mr. France represented the state of Wisconsin on the NPGA Board of Directors from 2002 until 2010, and received the State Director of the Year Award in 2009. During this period, he also chaired NPGA's Member Services Committee and was a member of the Government Affairs Committee. Mr. France also has served on the Board of the Wisconsin Propane Gas Association for 35 years, during which time he served as President and as Chair of the Education and Legislative Committees.

On a personal level, Mr. France's servant's heart extends to his beloved family. He has been married to his wife Nancy for nearly 40 years, and has raised three children and now four grandchildren. Mr. France has also been a stalwart in his local communities of Schofield and Wausau, taking on leadership roles with the Wausau Early Bird Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, the Wausau Area Catholic School System, and the Mobile Meals charitable organization.

Mr. France's innate ability to lead by example and his natural penchant to take pride in his work resonates throughout the propane community. He stands as an example of the work ethic, genuine humility, and love-for-country that one finds in Wisconsin.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to call Gary France a constituent and a friend, and I congratulate him on attaining this high honor.

SOLAR ENERGY

HON. MATT SALMON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the great progress being made in the use of clean, reliable solar energy across America and particularly in my home state of Arizona. I urge my colleagues to join me on January 24 for the national Shout Out for Solar Day.

Arizona's solar industry employs almost 10,000 people at more than 250 companies. Not only are we the second-largest solar user in the country, solar in Arizona is growing faster than in every state besides California. There is now enough solar generation in Arizona to power almost 200,000 homes.

2013 was a record-shattering year for solar, in Arizona and across the Nation, and I am proud to lend my voice to supporting the continued success of solar energy. Please join me on January 24 and Shout Out for Solar.

HONORING ETHAN YOUNG

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to honor an exceptional high school student from my District whose commonsense and eloquent words brought national attention to education policy.

Ethan Young, a senior at Farragut High School in Knox County, Tennessee, recently testified in front of the Knox County School Board against Common Core, the one-size-fits-all educational scheme being implemented across the Nation.

Ethan's speech was noticed by outlets such as FOX News and Glenn Beck, who called the remarks possibly the best case against Common Core ever made.

I have been friends with Ethan's grandmother for many years and know him to be a very passionate and intelligent young man.

Mr. Speaker, Ethan has learned through his own experience that, in his words, "creativity, appreciation, and inquisitiveness are impossible to scale." I bring his powerful speech, which is reprinted below in its entirety, to the attention of my Colleagues and other readers of the RECORD. All education policy-makers should listen closely to his wisdom.

SPEECH TO KNOX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

(By Ethan Young)

In a mere five minutes, I hope to provide insightful comments about a variety of educational topics. I sincerely hope you disprove the research I've compiled.

Here's the history of the Common Core. In 2009, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers partnered with Achieve Inc., a nonprofit that received millions in funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Thus the initiative seemed to spring from states, when in reality it was contrived by an insular group of educational testing executives with only two academic content specialists. Neither specialist approved the final standards, and the English consultant, Dr. Sandra Stotsky, publicly stated she felt the standards left students with an empty skill set, lacking literary knowledge.

While educators and administrators were later included in the validation committee and feedback groups, they did not play a role in the actual drafting of the standards. The product is a, quote, "rigorous preparation for career and college," yet many educators agree that "rigorous" is a buzzword. These standards aren't rigorous, just different, designed for industrial model of school.

Nevertheless, Common Core emerged. Keep in mind, the specific standards were never voted upon by Congress, the Department of Education, state or local governments. Yet, their implementation was approved by 49 states and territories. The president essentially bribed states into implementation via

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

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

Race to the Top, offering 4.35 billion taxpayer dollars to participating states, \$500 million of which went to Tennessee. And much like No Child Left Behind, the program promises national testing and a one-size-fits-all education, because, hey, it worked really well the first time.

While I do admire some aspects of the core, such as fewer standards and an emphasis on application and writing, it's not going to fix our academic deficit. If nothing else, these standards are a glowing conflict of interest. And they lack the research they allegedly received. And most importantly, the standards illustrate a mistrust of teachers, something I believe this county has already felt for a while.

I've been fortunate to have incredible educators that opened my eyes to the joy of learning, and I love them like my family. I respect them entirely, which is why it frustrates me to review the TEAM and APEX evaluation systems. These subjective anxiety-producers do more to damage a teacher's self-esteem than you realize. Erroneous evaluation coupled with strategic compensation presents a punitive model that, as a student, is like watching your teacher jump through flaming hoops to earn a score. Have you forgotten the nature of a classroom? A teacher cannot be evaluated without his students, because as a craft, teaching is an interaction. Thus how can you expect to gauge a teacher's success with no control for student participation or interest?

I stand before you because I care about education, but also because I want to support my teachers. And just as they fought for my academic achievement, so I want to fight for their ability to teach. This relationship is at the heart of instruction, yet there will never be a system by which it is accurately measured.

But I want to take a step back. We can argue the details ad infinitum. Yet I observe a much broader issue with education today. Standards-based education is ruining the way we teach and learn. Yes, I've already been told by legislators and administrators, Ethan, that's just the way things work. But why? I'm going to answer that question. It's bureaucratic convenience. It works with nuclear reactors, it works for business models, why can't it work with students? I mean, how convenient calculating exactly who knows what and who needs what. I mean, why don't we just manufacture robots instead of students? They last longer and they always do what they're told.

But education is unlike every other bureaucratic institute in our government. The task of teaching is never quantifiable. If everything I learned in high school is a measurable objective, I haven't learned anything. I'd like to repeat that. If everything I learned in high school is a measurable objective, I have not learned anything. Creativity, appreciation, inquisitiveness—these are impossible to scale, but they're the purpose of education, why our teachers teach, and why I choose to learn.

And today we find ourselves in a nation that produces workers. Everything is career and college preparation. Somewhere our founding fathers are turning in their graves, pleading, screaming, and trying to say to us that we teach to free minds, we teach to inspire, we teach to equip. The careers will come naturally.

I know we're just one city in a huge system that excitedly embraces numbers, but ask any of these teachers, ask any of my peers, and ask yourselves, haven't we gone too far with data?

I attended tonight's meeting to share my critiques, but as Benjamin Franklin quipped, any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain, and most fools do. The problems I cite are very real. And I only ask that you hear them out, investigate them, and do not dismiss them as another fool's criticisms. I'll close with a quote of Jane L. Stanford that Dr. McIntyre shared in a recent speech:

"You have my entire confidence in your ability to do conscientious work to the very best advantage to the students—that they be considered paramount to all and everything else. We're capable of fixing education, and I commit myself to that task. But you cannot ignore me, my teachers, or the truth. We need change, but not Common Core, high-stakes evaluations, or more robots." Thank you.

IN TRIBUTE TO MR. LESTER BAUM

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great solemnity to share with you the recent death of Mr. Lester Baum.

Lester Baum dedicated his life to working in the community. As a local fixture of Vernon, Connecticut, Lester was involved in politics, education, sports and the business community, working as a mentor, leader and friend to many.

Lester was also passionate about his country, which he loved, and as a Korean war veteran believed deeply in participation with the democratic process that makes America the great country it is today. During a long distinguished career in politics, Lester was one of Senator Christopher Dodd's earliest and consistent supporters during his campaigns for Connecticut's second district and the U.S. Senate, and served as 2nd Congressional District Coordinator for President Carter. Lester also sat as the Vernon Democratic Town Chairman for 10 years during the 1970s and 1980s.

On a personal note, from my first campaign for state representative from the town of Vernon to my most recent race for Congress, Lester was an incisive and consistent supporter of my efforts. I will never forget his simple but powerful advice, "there is no such thing as a shutout in politics," which was a strong source of support during my 2006 campaign for Congress, which I won by only 83 votes out of 242,000 ballots cast.

As a graduate of the University of Connecticut in 1948, Lester showed an unwavering dedication to the university which spanned several decades. As a familiar sight at most UConn basketball and soccer matches, Lester served as member of the UConn President's Athletic Task Force and the Athletic Advisory Committee. A two-term president of the UConn Club and a recipient of the UConn Alumni Association Jorgensen Award and the UConn Outstanding Contribution Award, Lester played an integral role in inspiring future generations of the university's graduates.

As a zealous participant in Connecticut civic life, Lester served in board member capacities for a number of local organizations including

the Vernon Board of Tax Review, Hockanum Valley Community Council, Rockville Redevelopment Commission, the Advisory Board of South Windsor Bank and Trust and the Planning and Growth Committee at Rockville General Hospital. Also the owner and President of the local business Farm Car Care Center Inc., Lester was an upstanding member of his local Connecticut community.

Lester is succeeded by his his wife; two children and eight grandchildren, and will be sorely missed by his family along with a vast community of friends. Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and service of Lester Baum, and sharing our condolences with the family and friends he leaves behind.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. DON FAUGHT

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Don Faught, as he completes his term serving as the 2013 President of the California Association of Realtors (CAR).

For over 25 years, Don has worked in the real estate industry in California. A second generation real estate professional, Don is currently Vice President and Managing Broker at Alain Pinel Realtors located in Pleasanton, California, in my district.

Don has been a member of the California Association of Realtors since 1987, and has served as a CAR Director since 1997. Before his term as CAR President in 2013, Don also served in leadership positions within the association, acting as President-Elect in 2012 and Treasurer in 2010 and 2011.

Throughout his career, Don has been an active member of CAR, serving on numerous committees, including as chair of the Federal Issues Committee and chair of the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee.

Don also has been involved in the real estate industry at the local and national levels. In 2000, Don served as President of the Bay East Association of Realtors, and was named Bay East's Outstanding Leader in both 2002 and 2008.

A National Association of Realtors Director since 2002, Don currently serves as Chair of the Economic Issues and Commercial Real Estate Trends Forum and is a member the Strategic Planning Committee. Don has received designations as a Certified Residential Specialist, and is a graduate of the Realtor Institute.

As CAR President, Don has worked to engage California Realtors and inspire them to get involved in their communities, taking action to ensure that the voice of the real estate industry is heard. During his term as President, Don has sought to reinforce the values of professionalism, ethics, and integrity within the industry.

Mr. Speaker, Realtors are a critical part of every community, as they enable the American dream of home ownership. I want to recognize Don for his service to his community

and his contributions to the real estate industry. I wish him the best of luck as he continues to serve the residents of the East Bay.

HONORING HEALTH CARE DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY ON 25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, FUNDING, AND HEALTH CARE SERVICE TO RESIDENTS OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Health Care District of Palm Beach County. This organization is renowned in the South Florida community for its excellent work in providing comprehensive planning, funding, and health care service delivery to residents of Palm Beach County.

In the 25 years since its founding, the District's staff and volunteers have greatly contributed to the health and well-being of the citizens of Palm Beach County. In 1987, the Florida Legislature wisely recognized the need to provide ample access to health care services in the county, which worked as an impetus for the establishment of the Health Care District.

The Health Care District has since grown to encompass a wide variety of safety-net pro-

grams. These programs include the newly constructed Lakeside Medical Center for treating acute-needs patients, school health clinics that serve over 170 public schools, the Edward J. Healy Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, as well as a variety of other coverage programs for uninsured residents of this predominantly rural and agricultural county.

As the operator of the sole public hospital in Palm Beach County, the District has provided lifesaving care to over 3,000 severely injured trauma patients. It also provides health coverage to over 40,000 uninsured county residents, enables uninsured expectant mothers to receive over 70,000 services, and continues to assist over 170,000 county students, where nearly 683,000 visits have been made during the school year. In addition to this critical work, they have also treated over 23,000 visits to the Emergency Room at Lakeside Medical Center.

I am very proud of the Health Care District's work, and privileged to have such a phenomenal organization serving in my Congressional district. I want to personally commend all the hardworking and dedicated staff, along with the countless volunteers of the Health Care District for their service to the community.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to recognize the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, and express my most sincere gratitude for all that they have accomplished. I wish them many more years of continued success.

S. 230, PEACE CORPS MEMORIAL

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 23, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Natural Resources ordered S. 230 favorably reported on December 4, 2013, without amendment. However, when the bill was passed by a vote of 387-7 by the House on January 13, 2014, the Committee had not filed its bill report.

For this reason, I wanted to take this opportunity to briefly elaborate on the substance of the legislation. S. 230 authorizes the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation to establish a commemorative work on federal land in the District of Columbia and its environs. The project must be planned and constructed with non-federal funds and executed consistently with the Commemorative Works Act (CWA). Accordingly, the work is not eligible for placement in the Reserve as defined by the CWA. This legislation would not have been approved by the Committee on Natural Resources without this clear inclusion of language affirming the moratorium on new memorials within the Reserve.

That being said, I am pleased that the House has enacted yet another bipartisan bill from the Committee on Natural Resources and I look forward to future successes.

SENATE—Friday, January 24, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 and 3 seconds a.m., and was called to order by the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 24, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2014 AT 2 P.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday, January 27, 2014.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 9:30 and 34 seconds a.m., adjourned until Monday, January 27, 2014, at 2 p.m.

SENATE—Monday, January 27, 2014

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, our souls long for You, for we find strength and joy in Your presence. Guide our lawmakers to trust You, seeking in every undertaking to know and do Your will. When they go through difficult seasons, may they remember that a bountiful harvest is certain if they persevere with integrity. Lord, give them a faith that will trust You even when the darkness is blacker than a thousand midnights. May they always find strength in Your providential leading.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 27, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of Rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 294.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 294, S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at 5:30 p.m. there will be a rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the flood insurance bill.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1950

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told that S. 1950 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1950) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I would object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I announced earlier, today the Senate will vote at 5:30 to advance legislation which will protect millions of homeowners and small businesses from drastic increases in flood insurance premiums. This bipartisan measure will save many homeowners thousands of dollars a year and protect America's recovering housing market.

Since higher premiums would kick in whenever a home is sold, still struggling housing markets across the country could stumble if Congress allows flood insurance rates to skyrocket. That will happen if we don't move this legislation.

The bill before the Senate will preserve current rates until the Federal Emergency Management Agency submits a plan to keep premiums reasonable and provide stability to home and business owners.

I wish to thank Senators MENENDEZ and LANDRIEU, as well as Senator ISAKSON, for their leadership on this issue. Their bill will cut through the redtape and give consumers better, cheaper options when they shop for insurance.

So I hope the Senate can wrap up work quickly on this measure. We have tried for weeks to get agreement to move forward on it, but we are never quite there. Always there are requests

to give a little more time. That time has run out. Homeowners deserve certainty, and the Senate faces a substantial workload over the next 3 weeks.

Tomorrow, President Obama will address Congress and the Nation in his annual State of the Union address. I, like the American people, look forward to hearing the President's vision to create an economy in which the middle class grows and prospers, because every individual should have a fair shot at success.

The Senate must also consider a number of critical national security and judicial nominations in the coming weeks. With the help of my Republican colleagues, we could process these nominations swiftly and painlessly—without late night or weekend votes. As always, it will depend upon the level of cooperation we receive from the Republicans.

This work period the Senate will also consider a farm bill conference report. This legislation is a compromise that was reached thanks to the leadership of Chairwoman STABENOW, and it will reduce the deficit and cut waste and fraud, all while protecting hungry children and families.

The Senate will also debate legislation to effectively prevent and punish sexual assault in the Nation's Armed Forces, and we have competing views of this with Senator MCCASKILL and Senator GILLIBRAND.

Democrats will continue our fight to restore benefits to 1.6 million Americans looking for work during difficult economic times. In the last 2 weeks since Republicans filibustered a bill to restore this important lifeline, an additional 150,000 Americans have lost their emergency unemployment benefits. For many families already suffering through hard times, the loss of \$300 a week has meant going without food, turning down the heat on freezing days or staring down homelessness.

One Nevada woman—a Vietnam veteran in her sixties who has worked all her life and raised a family—said she is afraid she will end up on the streets if Washington doesn't restore her emergency benefits. This is what she wrote to me:

It is not that I don't want to work. It is that I am unable to procure job . . . I do feel that it might be my age, but I am more energetic than some young people I know. Please continue to [work to] get this passed, as I am fearful that I will end up homeless.

Her situation is not unique. Nationwide, thousands upon thousands of veterans looking for work have been kicked off unemployment. In Nevada, where unemployment is still almost 9

percent, 21,000 people struggling to find jobs have been cut off from these benefits. In fact, unemployment actually ticked up slightly in Las Vegas last month. As long as there are three job seekers for every available position, we owe it to Americans to lend a helping hand during this emergency.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes as if in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MARGARET CHASE SMITH

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, 50 years ago today, on January 27, 1964, Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine announced her candidacy for President of the United States. The following July, at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco, the great lady from Maine became the first woman in history to ever have her name entered into nomination by a major party for our Nation's highest office. I rise to commemorate this remarkable leader and this significant milestone in our history.

At the time of her announcement, Senator Smith was in her 24th year in Congress and was an established groundbreaker. She was the first woman elected to both the House and the Senate and the first to serve on the Armed Services Committee. She was the woman who gave other women the opportunity to pursue careers in the military. Due to her early and energetic support for the space program, she has been called the woman who put a man on the Moon.

Her courageous "Declaration of Conscience" delivered in the Senate on June 1, 1950, turned the tide against McCarthyism and reminded all Americans of our Nation's core values of free expression and independent thought.

Senator Smith made her Presidential announcement in a speech at the Women's National Press Club in Washington. Yes, Mr. President, there was a separate press club for women in those days. It was an important address in

which she described both the progress that America had made against bigotry, prejudice, extremism, and hatred as well as the challenges that remained, but Margaret Chase Smith saved the best for last. After telling her audience of the flood of letters she had been receiving from all over the country urging her to run for President, Senator Smith described the reasons offered by her supporters, such as she had more experience at the national level than any of the other confirmed candidates, she had the stature that could break the barrier against women being seriously considered for President, she would provide a moderate, middle-of-the-road option in an election that was shaping up as one between a very conservative and very liberal philosophy.

Then she described the reasons she should not run: The widespread contention that the Presidency was a man's job, her lack of financial resources, and a professional political organization, and the fact that the odds were stacked heavily against her. Senator Smith said she found the reasons offered against running far more compelling than those in favor. So imagine the surprise of her audience when she said that because of those very reasons, she had decided to enter the New Hampshire primary.

Senator Smith's campaign was off and running, and what a campaign it was. Senator Smith accepted no money from anyone. All contributions—whether they were large or small—were returned to sender. She took to the campaign trail only when the Senate was not in session in order to preserve her perfect record of never missing a rollcall vote and to keep the pledge of dedicated service she had made to the people of Maine. Her campaign motto was: "There is nothing more effective than a handshake and a little conversation."

As a consequence of her self-imposed financial and time restraints, Senator Smith did not win a primary. But in the one primary where she was able to campaign somewhat extensively—the State of Illinois for all of two weekends and a total expenditure of \$85—she finished a strong second in a field of six. She lost only to the eventual nominee, Barry Goldwater. With 25 percent of the vote, she came in far ahead of such well-known candidates as Richard Nixon, Nelson Rockefeller, and Henry Cabot Lodge. It is intriguing to think what she might have done with a more traditional campaign.

At the Republican National Convention in San Francisco that year, Senator Smith's name was entered into nomination by Senator George Aiken of Vermont. He told the delegates that Senator Smith's integrity, ability, common sense, and courage made her "the best qualified person you ever voted for." On the first ballot, 27 dele-

gates did vote for Margaret Chase Smith from the great State of Maine.

Unlike the other candidates, Senator Smith did not release her delegates to the landslide victor, Senator Goldwater. That was not done out of spite. Indeed, she campaigned earnestly for him in the general election. It was done because she wanted to demonstrate—she wanted the historical record to show that a woman had been given serious consideration for the Presidency of this country.

Many words have been spoken over many years in attempts to describe the character of Senator Margaret Chase Smith. Perhaps the best were offered by the candidate herself on that campaign trail a half century ago. She said:

I have few illusions and no money, but I'm staying for the finish. When people keep telling you, you can't do a thing, you kind of like to try.

On this milestone anniversary, I am honored to celebrate an extraordinary woman from Maine who tried and failed in one endeavor but in doing so inspired generations of Americans with her strength and determination and demonstrated, as she once said, that a woman's place is "everywhere."

Today, the Senate has a record 20 women Senators. In a sense each of us owes a debt to Senator Margaret Chase Smith, but none more so than I. You see, I first met Senator Smith when I was a high school senior from Caribou, ME. I was selected as one of two students to come to Washington as part of the Senate Youth Program sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, a program that still exists today. I remember how excited I was to see Senator Smith and her graciousness in inviting me into her office and spending nearly 2 hours with me.

As the Presiding Officer can appreciate, for any of us to spend 2 hours with anyone is remarkable nowadays, but Margaret Chase Smith carved out that time to talk with me. Recently her library sent me copies of her appointment book for that day so I could see that my appointment with her was listed and preserved for all time.

She talked to me not about what it was like being the only woman in the Senate, she talked to me instead about her service on the Armed Services Committee, about what we could do to create more jobs in this country and, most of all, about her famous "Declaration of Conscience" in which she stood up against the smear campaign and the excesses of Senator Joseph McCarthy. Through that speech she taught us all to stand tall for what we believe in and to speak out against injustice and bigotry.

I remember when I left her office I was so thrilled and inspired. I remember thinking women could do anything. This was back in 1971, and although I came from a family with wonderful

role models in both my mother and my father, who were so active in their community and in their State, there were a lot of other messages about that time that raised doubts in the minds of growing girls about whether we could, in fact, be whatever we wanted to be. So that message that I learned from Margaret Chase Smith was so important in shaping who I am today.

Although I did not know it at the time at all, that meeting with Margaret Chase Smith shortly after I had turned 18 as a high school senior taught me I could achieve my dream, and in many ways it was the first step on a journey that led me to run for her seat in the Senate 25 years later.

Today I am so proud that the desk at which I stand—the desk that I use and is assigned to me on the Senate floor—once belonged to the legendary Senator from Maine Margaret Chase Smith. What a wonderful role model she was to me the entire time I was growing up when she was representing the State of Maine with such integrity, skill, and courage. I feel so fortunate to hold her seat in the Senate.

So today it gives me great pride as well as great pleasure to inform my colleagues that this is the 50th anniversary of the day that Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine became the first woman in history to announce her candidacy for President of the United States and later that year to be the first woman to have her name placed in nomination by a major political party. Let us celebrate this day as we also celebrate the presence of a record number of women in the Senate. I believe that would have made Senator Smith very proud.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the immigration issue the country is wrestling with is broad and deep and has huge ramifications in a host of areas. But one area that has just been ignored systematically, it seems to me—at least to a degree that is unacceptable—is the impact a massive increase in immigration to America will have on the already declining wages and job prospects of Americans who are hurting today. That is just a fact that needs to be discussed. We need to be honest about it.

Prime Minister David Cameron in the United Kingdom has announced major reductions in immigration and said there may be more. He said we cannot

expect that foreign workers would take jobs we need to be training Britons to do. How simple and valuable a concept is that?

So we are talking about legislation that can shift the power, wealth from working people to businesspeople, the corporations, because it will shift, if not done properly—and we believe in immigration. We are not opposed to immigration. It just needs to be done at the level and in the proper way so our workers are not so adversely impacted, as would occur if the Senate bill were to become law. Thank goodness the House is saying they are not going to pass that bill.

President Obama is preparing to deliver a State of the Union Address tomorrow night in which he will address the continued financial collapse of the American middle class, much of which has occurred on his watch. However, it did start before he took office.

Since 2000, the average wage of working Americans has declined. As adjusted for inflation, it is negative. In the last 2 or 3 years—since the recession is supposed to be over and has been announced is over—that decline has accelerated. Professor Borjas and others have tagged a lot of that result as occurring because of a substantial increase in immigration that has been occurring in America. If the President wishes to demonstrate a sincere concern for struggling workers, then he must recognize the negative impact his immigration policies are having on wage earners throughout the country right now.

According to Harvard Professor Borjas, the Nation's leading expert on immigration and an economist—himself an immigrant from Cuba as a young man—Professor Borjas says every dollar of increased profit for companies that use immigrant labor is offset by a dollar in lost wages for the Americans competing with that immigrant labor. Think about that.

In fact, he estimates that businesses lobbying for this bill will benefit on an order of \$400 billion. They and their political activist allies lobbying for this bill, they definitely receive a financial benefit. He estimates, based on rigorous analysis that virtually every dollar of that will come from reduced wages of American workers.

That is the way, colleagues, the free enterprise system works. If we have more cotton in America, the price of cotton goes down. If we bring in more labor than we have had before, the price of labor comes down. That is just the way it works. We have not eliminated the law of supply and demand. The law of supply and demand dictates that an increased supply of workers will result in a reduced cost of hiring workers.

The President's push for higher Federal wage controls and extended unemployment jobless benefits is effectively

an admission that his policies have cut wages and reduced the ability of Americans to get jobs.

But these measures he is proposing are treating the symptoms. Why are not wages going up as they have throughout most of the history of our country, naturally through supply and demand? Could it be that we have had, as Professor Borjas said, for the last 30 years an incredible increase in the flow of foreign workers who are competing for these jobs every single year?

One cannot return to full employment and rising wages for workers at all skill levels without tightening the labor market. We have a loose labor market. We have a surplus of people looking for jobs.

Gene Sperling, the President's top adviser on the economy, said just a few weeks ago that we have three workers applying for each one job that exists in America. Why in the world then would we want to bring in and allow businesses to demand increased numbers of low-skilled workers?

The President's plan will provide companies an incentive to hire even fewer American workers, and they will be less likely to hire a person who has been unemployed for a long time—the long-term unemployed.

The United States has already formally admitted more immigrants, largely lesser skilled, in the last 10 years than any prior 10-year period in America's history. So the question every reporter, pundit, and lawmaker should ask is this: How does the President think it will help Americans trying to climb into the middle class to pass an immigration plan that would double the number of immigrant workers competing against them for jobs and wages?

The single largest category in our budget right now is welfare and poverty support programs helping people who have lower incomes. Including State contributions, my Budget Committee staff has discovered we spend more than a \$1 trillion on Federal means-tested support programs each year—over \$1 trillion. That is greater than the defense budget, more than Social Security, more than Medicare. A record one in five households today received food stamps in 2013—one in five. The majority of them are working age. That is the first time that has happened that a majority of the recipients of food stamps are within the working age group.

Our urgent national mission is to begin transitioning these struggling workers into good jobs with rising wages. Instead, the President proposes to increase Federal spending even more to sustain millions on welfare while increasing the supply and the admission of lower skilled immigrants to take the available jobs that exist.

House leaders are reportedly rushing to assemble a plan that is similar to

the President's. I hope not. But that is what is being suggested. This would be the worst thing they could do at such a time. Instead, the Democratic Senate having spoken, the Republican House must stand, expose the President's disastrous policies, and advocate a new direction that promotes assimilation, rising wages, and a growing middle class for all Americans, including those who have recently immigrated.

Our lower skilled workers are the ones who are adversely affected the most from increased flows of immigrant labor into the country. I just hope we will consider this and talk honestly about it because it is not going away. It is a reality. The suggestion that somehow this will not happen is not so. The Congressional Budget Office, in scoring the Senate bill, concluded it would pull down wages of Americans for 20 years.

The last thing this Senate or any President of the United States should do would be to advocate and promote a policy that will pull down wages. We need to be looking for ways to increase wages. When you are in a hole, the first thing you do is stop digging. Do not make it worse. Do not create four or five applicants for every one job that exists in America.

I hope the President will talk about that. I challenge him to talk about it. I am going to watch what he says. I expect him, as President of the United States addressing a joint session of Congress, to tell the truth and be accurate about his analysis and discussion of this important issue. It is important to America. We believe in immigration, but we want a lawful system of immigration, an immigration system that first and foremost does not damage, hurt, and weaken the financial position of already struggling American workers. Isn't that our first responsibility?

We should create this lawful system in a way that serves the long-term interests, the legitimate long-term interests of the United States of America and all the people who are in it, not just a few special ones with big money and special political power.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to speak about the flood insurance bill. I am speaking with a smile on my face because I believe we have the 60 votes to break the filibuster so we can get to the bill. I would hope that if we exceed that 60-vote threshold, indeed those who have been trying to torpedo this

bill would then, instead of stringing us out all week, making us go through all of the parliamentary procedures when we have the votes, would let us get it passed.

The problem is going to be down at the other end of that hallway because the Speaker of the House has already said that he does not like it. But what he is going to find out that he does not like is that a lot of Members of the House of Representatives have constituents who are facing 10-fold increases in their flood insurance because of something that was tacked onto a transportation bill.

That was a year ago, Biggert-Waters, the sponsors in the House for this law which is now causing these unforeseen and never-expected huge increases. We can rectify that today. At 5:30 we are going to have the vote on the motion for cloture to cut off debate so that we can get to the bill.

What does this bill do? It is really easy. It delays these giant rate hikes for 4 years, and it mandates on FEMA an affordability study so that we can see. I mean, you can say you want rates to go up and be actuarially sound. But if what happens is what has been happening, that people cannot afford it because it is 10 times as much, or that because it is so high it completely dries up the real estate market, that is not helping anybody.

That is hurting a lot of people. It is hurting our economic recovery just at the moment in which the real estate market is coming back all along the coasts of America, as well as along the rivers and lakes, the very places that flood insurance is necessary for a homeowner or a business.

I might say that today, as I was in Florida, the temperature was in the 60s, moving to the 70s. I got off the plane here, and it was in the 30s. But the chilling winds of Biggert-Waters, with the gargantuan flood insurance rate hikes—those chilling winds are not only killing real estate sales, they are killing commerce, and it is putting an impossible financial burden on our people.

We can take care of this at 5:30. Some have opposed us the whole way as we have tried a handful of times to bring up this legislation, asking unanimous consent. Finally, thanks to the leader, who has forced the issue, we are going to vote on cutting off debate today.

I have several documented cases along Florida's gulf coast where the premiums for flood insurance have gone up by 10 times. In one particular case in Pinellas County, chronicled by the Tampa Bay Times, the premium was \$4,500, and it has gone to \$45,000.

No homeowner can endure and afford that kind of increase. In another case, a \$1,400 flood insurance premium has gone to \$14,000. It is the same. We should be around here promoting home ownership. But if the poor homeowner

has a mortgage because they have gotten a loan from the bank, what is the bank going to do to require some security for their loan? They are going to require flood insurance.

So how can we expect a homeowner to have to go through this. You can say this is a subsidized program. It is. But the big losses in the program have been because of very unusual climatic events. In the first place, it was Hurricane Katrina. That was an ordinary, garden-variety category 3 Hurricane. Those of us in Florida understand hurricanes.

But what happened with this hurricane? It went to the east of New Orleans, so the counter clockwise winds were not coming directly from the gulf. They were coming in over New Orleans, over Lake Pontchartrain. It caused the lake to rise, it filled up the canals. The water rose in the canals. The water pressure against the side of the canals increased. There were faulty canal dikes, and they breached in a couple of places, and then all of the water flooded into parts of New Orleans and filled up the bowl of New Orleans.

That was a huge loss to the Federal Flood Insurance Program. Then there was another extraordinary event. This was just a year ago. This was a category 1 storm, and it was extraordinary because it hit in the winter. Where did it hit? It hit the highly urbanized coasts of New Jersey, New York, and parts of New England. As a result, there were huge losses there and people were desperate to have assistance. Look at what those folks are facing with regard to the flood insurance hikes.

We can take care of all of this at 5:30 p.m. this afternoon as we start the process of getting on the bill. I urge all of our Senators—because sooner or later somebody in your State is going to face a flood, and they are going to get remapped. They may not be paying those rates now, but they are going to get remapped because of those floods, and then they are going to get hit with these unaffordable, gargantuan rate hikes on the premiums of Federal flood insurance—this is the right thing to do.

I see my colleague from Utah. The Senator used to tell me they don't ever have floods there, but I will bet they do. Even though Utah is a dry State, I know Utah has water because it supports a population which is represented by my most distinguished and dear personal friend Senator HATCH.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. I thank my dear colleague. The Senator is a very close personal friend of mine too.

I have to say we have had our floods out there too, and thank goodness we have had some of these things to help us, no question about it. The last one

was in St. George. It was very devastating to people. I appreciate the Senator's work.

ALTERNATIVE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. President, I rise today to speak on a legislative proposal I unveiled yesterday with two of my colleagues, Senator RICHARD BURR and Dr. TOM COBURN, that represents our vision for an alternative to ObamaCare.

Let me start by saying something that most Americans—from Utah to North Carolina to Oklahoma—know to be true: ObamaCare just is not working. Try as he might during the State of the Union Address tomorrow, President Obama will not be able to convince the American people that his health care law is anything other than an unmitigated disaster. This horribly misguided law puts government between people and their doctors. It includes over \$1 trillion in new taxes and a new unsustainable entitlement.

It includes mandates and regulations that have forced too many Americans off their health plans and businesses to cut back on hiring. It has done next to nothing to put a brake on skyrocketing health care costs that are hitting every family in this country.

The three of us knew there was another way, a better way—a way that doesn't need 2,700 pages of government programs and mandates to enact commonsense reforms that the American people want and need.

Let me say that these two Senators with whom I have joined on this proposal have been looking at this for some time, as have I. I commend them for their leadership.

Our plan rests on four simple principles. First, repeal ObamaCare with all its costly mandates, taxes, and regulations in its entirety.

Second, reduce costs by taking government out of the equation, and, instead, empowering consumers to make choices about their own health care.

Third, provide commonsense consumer protections to protect individuals with preexisting conditions.

Fourth, reform our broken Medicaid system by giving States more flexibility to provide the best coverage for their citizens.

We are confident our plan will accomplish all of this, and it would do so without adding one red cent to our \$17 trillion debt.

These four principles are the core of what we unveiled today. They are smart, they make sense, and they are what the people of my State have been looking for, and I think the people of every State. We start with the biggest barrier to health care in this country, and that happens to be skyrocketing health costs. Too many families cannot afford to buy insurance or to see a doctor. Why? Because of costs.

We recognized this. Our plan would give people affordable options that meet their needs by harnessing the

power of the marketplace, not through Washington-directed mandates. With more options in the private insurance marketplace—particularly in the small group and individual markets—on top of greater consumer protections and more transparency, the American people would be better able to purchase coverage that is right for them.

We can see the importance of choice in the failings of ObamaCare, which is struggling to sign up young people who might need a health plan that is affordable instead of one that includes coverage they will never use or need. Maybe a 25-year-old male auto mechanic, for example, only wants catastrophic coverage and not a plan that includes maternity care. We give people those options to allow them to find coverage that best meets their needs. Our plan does that.

We also include significant commonsense consumer protections, such as making sure a person cannot have their coverage cancelled if they get sick. We help make sure patients with preexisting conditions can gain access to affordable coverage and let children stay on their parents' insurance through age 26—something we were always willing to do.

We also get rid of lifetime limits. Under our plan, insurers won't be able to put a cap on total benefits to be paid out over a person's lifetime, eliminating a patient's fear of maxing out their health care coverage. We give States more options to provide people with more coverage while once again reducing costs.

Under our plan, families earning up to \$71,000—or 300 percent of the Federal poverty level—will get a tax credit to purchase the insurance of their choosing. We help small businesses enjoy the same advantages as large businesses by allowing them to band together to leverage their purchasing power to buy insurance. This just plain makes sense.

I have to say one of the most absurd aspects of ObamaCare is that a good portion of the people it covers is through Medicaid. Yet as we all know, Medicaid is a financially unsound program that is threatening State budgets. Its expansion under ObamaCare only threatens the program further.

Our plan includes a key reform that is similar to the Medicaid modernization plan that House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman FRED UPTON and myself put out last year. Currently, Federal taxpayers have an open-ended liability to match State Medicaid spending, which is a significant driver in Medicaid's budgetary challenges.

Our proposal would create per capita spending caps—similar to what President Clinton and many Democrats who remain in this Chamber supported in the past—to ensure that the dollars follow the patient. This structural reform of Medicaid is coupled with new flexi-

bility for States to best manage their Medicaid populations.

On top of that, we give those on Medicaid the option of purchasing private health insurance, which is more frequently accepted by quality doctors.

I want to emphasize that our proposal trusts the American people to make the best choices for themselves. That is why we include an expansion of health savings accounts so people can plan and save for their future medical needs. That also means injecting transparency into health care costs so people know which provider charges what and how successful those providers are.

We include other cost-containing measures such as medical malpractice liability reform to help reduce the costly practice of defensive medicine.

In my early life, I actually tried medical liability cases, defending doctors, hospitals, nurses, and health care practitioners, et cetera. Most of those cases were frivolous. They were brought to get the defense costs. Doctors were scared, so doctors were told: Fill up your records to show that you went way beyond the standard of care and the standard of practice. Thus, we have had hundreds of millions of dollars in unnecessary defensive medicine ever since.

We also reduce the distortions in the Tax Code that actually increase the cost of health care in our country by capping the employee exclusion. This is a key way of restraining costs that has been cited across the economic spectrum.

The bottom line is that this proposal is sustainable and achievable, and without the tax hikes, mandates, and budget-busting spending that have made ObamaCare care so unpopular with the American people. Most importantly, unlike ObamaCare, our plan will reduce health care costs for American individuals, families, and businesses.

I look forward to working with my colleagues and experts throughout the health care community to better refine and improve our blueprint, and that is what it is right now, it is a blueprint.

I am confident we will be able to build strong consensus around our ideas and be in a position to formally introduce legislation that will repeal the President's health law and replace it with strong reforms that will actually lower costs, reduce spending, and put high-quality care within the reach of every American. Frankly, this approach should appeal to everyone, Democrats and Republicans.

I know my colleagues on the other side are very nervous about the failures—already—of ObamaCare, and it is just starting. Anybody who thinks that once we heal the rollout disaster everything is going to be OK, let me say that is only the beginning. ObamaCare is a disaster, and every day it continues is going to be more of a disaster. I think

my colleagues on the other side ought to take a look at what we are proposing because it may be one way of helping their colleagues and their constituents understand that they really are serious about trying to get health care we can live with and can help our country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH.) The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to talk about the President's sixth State of the Union Address tomorrow night. Although I do not think the Framers imagined the pageantry that has come to accompany the State of the Union, it certainly is enshrined in the Constitution. According to article II, section 3:

The President shall from time to time, give the Congress information on the State of the Union and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.

"Recommend for Congress consideration such measures"—I note with interest in today's Wall Street Journal on the front page that President Obama intends to assert a unilateral agenda at the State of the Union, according to press reports, at least in the Wall Street Journal. The article begins:

President Barack Obama Tuesday night will seek to shift the public's souring view of his leadership.

It goes on to say in paragraph 2:

Mr. Obama will emphasize his intention to use unilateral Presidential authority, bypassing Congress when necessary, to an extent not seen in his previous State of the Union speeches.

This certainly does not sound like article II, section 3, where the State of the Union is anticipated by our Founders as an opportunity for the President to make recommendations to the Congress, but we shall see. It should not be difficult for President Obama to outline a number of national priorities that are necessary and expedient for the Congress to consider. As we enter the sixth year of the Obama administration, the economy continues to suffer from anemic growth and chronically high unemployment. Family poverty statistics are at record high levels. Small businesses, the ones that create our Nation's jobs for the most part, are struggling to pay for govern-

ment mandates and keep Americans at work at the same time.

Of course, a major concern for Americans is the President's health care law, legislation that was rammed through Congress without bipartisan support. Individuals, families, businesses, and investors can plainly see that the law is plagued with problems. Hardly a day goes by without hearing from our citizens back home who are frustrated and worried about how the law impacts them.

Instead of more affordable and more accessible health care, families in my State and across the country are dealing with a backlash of canceled insurance policies, higher premiums, and fewer choices. No one can dispute these facts. At this point, Americans are right to be doubtful of more promises. They want to see results. They want to see real health care reform. They want to see job-creating strategies that will work, that have been proven to work.

Americans need more tomorrow night than phraseology from the President. Without leadership and accountability, the public is right to lack confidence that the President's big government approach can move us forward or that the President wants to work with Congress toward bipartisan solutions.

I hope we can work together for bipartisan solutions. One recent poll suggests—and this is stunning—that a majority of Americans actually question the Obama administration's competence in running the government. The same survey showed that most Americans believe the economy is either staying the same or getting worse.

I believe the American public sees things correctly. Until Americans see significant improvements in their lives, attempts by the White House to spin a positive economic message will ring hollow. Many Americans have been forced to take part-time work or have left the labor force altogether. In the December jobs report, an official report of the government, we saw that the labor force participation rate, which reflects the number of adult Americans who have a job or are looking for one, has fallen to its lowest level since 1979.

Let me repeat that. After 5 years of the Obama administration's leadership, the labor force participation rate is the worst it has been since 1978. Recent estimates indicate that median household income is almost \$2,400 less than it was 4 years ago, in inflation-adjusted dollars.

President Obama has tried to shift the blame for the harm caused by his health care law, but that attempt to duck responsibility will not wash with the American people. Millions of Americans have had their health coverage canceled, even though the President repeatedly promised: If you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan. Oftentimes he pun-

tuated that with "... you can keep your health care plan, period."

The President recently said he regrets that Americans find themselves in that situation. Americans find themselves in that situation because of the health care law which he rammed through Congress on a strictly partisan basis. They find themselves in that situation because they were told a very flat and emphatic statement by the President of the United States, the leader of the free world. That emphatic direct statement turned out not to be the case.

Americans are uncertain of how they will afford significantly higher premiums. Employers are facing costly mandates. Now we learned at the end of last week that Moody's has downgraded the economic outlook for health insurers, citing the law's difficult implementation and the administration's numerous delays. So Moody's downgraded the outlook of these health insurers that are trying to make the law work.

As the country's chief executive, the President should start a dialogue in his State of the Union speech tomorrow night that focuses on ways to empower Americans to create jobs and opportunities. This body is controlled by the Democrats. The other body is controlled by the Republicans. We need bipartisan solutions to create jobs and opportunities. We have seen a big government approach with more burdensome regulations and more bureaucratic intrusions. We have seen how that approach does not work.

The State of the Union offers the President an opportunity to outline issues where he is willing to work with Republicans in a bipartisan way. We should be talking about market-driven strategies to reform health care. We should be talking about the Keystone XL Pipeline and how to advance America's rich energy potential, the most abundant energy sources in the world right here in America. Keystone XL Pipeline would be a jobs win for the Obama administration. Yet the President cannot bring himself to come forward on this bipartisan idea.

Of course the best welfare program is a jobs program. The best unemployment program is one that creates jobs for Americans. Americans are ready to go to work. Rather than focus on the politics of jealousy and income inequality, the President should demonstrate leadership and cooperation. In a divided government, both leadership and cooperation are needed to bring about the enduring economic recovery this country needs.

I look forward to the President's address tomorrow night and hope we can hear bipartisan solutions to move us forward.

I yield the floor.

MLB HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to three gentlemen

who, as a result of a vote taken by the baseball writers of America a couple of weeks ago, are going to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. These three men are former Atlanta manager Bobby Cox and former pitchers Tom Glavine and Greg Maddux. These incredible athletes have left their imprint not only on Georgians but on the entire baseball community around the world. These three gentlemen are among baseball's most accomplished coaches and players and will deservedly be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in July of this year.

So far as I know, there has never been three individuals who spent most of their time with the same team, inducted into the Hall of Fame in the same year—truly remarkable.

First, let me mention and honor Bobby Cox, a baseball legend and one of Major League Baseball's winningest managers. With a record of 2,504 wins, he ranks fourth on baseball's all-time managers win list. Bobby Cox started his career with the Braves in 1978. He left briefly in 1982 to manage the Toronto Blue Jays, only to return to the Braves in 1985, where he would spend the remainder of his career until his retirement following the 2010 season.

In 1995 he led the Braves to the World Series Championship, where they faced the Cleveland Indians. The Braves won the series in game 6 in Atlanta, claiming the team's third championship in franchise history. Aside from Bobby's remarkable .556 percent winning percentage, he is also remembered for his all-time record for ejections in Major League Baseball with 158. For those of us who know Bobby well and know he is one of the nicest people you will ever meet—and he is a big teddy bear—it is fair to say that if Bobby did not agree with a call on the field, he was quick to express his dissatisfaction and his disgust with it, and nobody could protect their players as a manager better than Bobby could.

It was no surprise when he would sometimes find himself watching the game ultimately from the locker room. No one can question Bobby's sheer passion and love for the game of baseball. Both the city of Atlanta and the State of Georgia are in his debt.

I would also like to acknowledge the impressive careers of Tom Glavine and Greg Maddux and highlight a few of their accomplishments.

As Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine combined for over 400 wins, they will be the first players in 40 years who spent the majority of their careers together to become Hall of Famers in the same year. The last to do so were New York Yankee players Mickey Mantle and Whitey Ford.

The Braves drafted Tom Glavine in the second round in 1984. He was such a talented athlete that the very same year the Los Angeles Kings drafted him in the fourth round to play professional

hockey. Luckily for the Braves and for baseball, he chose baseball.

He went on to spend 17 of his 22 decorated seasons in Atlanta. The famous left-hander ended his distinguished professional career with 305 wins, 2,607 strikeouts, and two Cy Young Awards, which he received in 1991 and 1998, both as a Brave.

In the Brave's 1995 World Series victory, Glavine was named the most valuable player. When the lefty pitcher grabbed the bat and stepped up to the plate, we saw something not often seen in today's game. He came out swinging and he could hit.

Glavine was the recipient of four Silver Slugger Awards, an award given to the best offensive player at each position each year.

His teammate Greg Maddux was known as a right-handed control pitcher with great precision and accuracy, not missing his targets often. He wouldn't beat you with a 100-mile-per-hour fastball, but he would embarrass you with placement and movement rarely seen before or since.

Maddux started his career in 1986 with the Chicago Cubs. Following his seventh season with the Cubs, and with the Cy Young Award under his belt, the Braves signed Maddux as a free agent in 1993, in what is widely described as one of baseball's best free agent deals.

He then went on to win five more consecutive Cy Young Awards in a Braves uniform. Maddux ended his career with 335 wins, a 3.13 ERA, 3,371 strikeouts, an impressive four Cy Young Awards, and a record 18 Gold Gloves in 23 seasons.

Together these individuals led the Braves to 14 straight division championships—an unparalleled accomplishment in any sport. I daresay that record will likely never be broken.

It comes as no surprise that the Braves have retired the numbers 6, 31, and 47 to celebrate and recognize the distinguished careers of these three men.

I am pleased to join Georgians in congratulating Bobby Cox, Tom Glavine, and Greg Maddux on their tremendous accomplishment of being inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the quorum call and to speak for up to 5 minutes.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, at 5:30 today the Senate is going to cast a very important vote to people in many States, not just the State of Louisiana, which I have had the honor and the

privilege of representing now for almost 18 years, but to States from one end of this country to the other, including coastal States and interior States, on an issue that is very important to homeowners and business owners alike. The vote we are going to cast is a vote to begin debating a Menendez-Isakson bill that will fix the many urgent problems that have presented themselves in a recently passed bill called Biggert-Waters.

Biggert-Waters is a bill that had wonderful intentions, which were to strengthen the flood insurance program and to make it self-sustainable. It is a program many people depend on. It is a public-private partnership that provides affordable flood insurance for the middle class. But the bill was built backward and upside down. The bill had good intentions, but it has had very detrimental consequences. So the bill we are going to vote to go to debate on—the Menendez-Isakson bill—is really a good-faith attempt to correct some of the problems with Biggert-Waters and to lead us in a direction to a place where this country can have a public-private partnership for flood insurance that actually works for the taxpayer, for the millions and millions of people—5 million plus—who are going to have to have flood insurance, whether they have had it in the past or not. There are new maps that are coming and millions and millions of people will be required by the law to have flood insurance if they have a mortgage on their home, and most people have mortgages. Most people are unable to pay cash for their homes. Some people are fortunate to do so, but I would say 95 percent of the people have mortgages on their homes. So if people have mortgages, they are going to be required to have flood insurance, and if they are required to have flood insurance they will have Biggert-Waters, unless we can postpone it and instead get Menendez-Isakson.

Many of the critics who are not supporting the reform effort we have underway say we are trying to protect mansions on the beach. So I pulled some random pictures from the Web page I set up called "My Home My Story." This is in St. Amant, LA, Walker, Belle Chasse, Chalmette, Pointe Coupee, Mandeville—these are a variety of neighborhoods—Independence, LA; New Orleans—there is no beach within miles of this home. There is no beach within miles of Independence. This is very far inland.

We can see this is a home where there is water all around here, but this house is raised probably 13 to 17 feet, which is now the required elevation in many parts of Louisiana and the gulf coast. But except for this home, which looks like a beautiful old mansion, none of these are mansions and none of them are on a beach. What is happening all over America is that these

flood maps are being put into place, not just on the coast of California or Louisiana or Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, but I call the attention of my colleagues particularly to inland States such as Pennsylvania. We have had a lot of criticism from some of the representatives from Pennsylvania about what we are doing.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the statistics about States that are not coastal States such as Pennsylvania. We just got some new material which I will submit for the RECORD.

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

Community means any State, or area or political subdivision thereof, or any Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization or Alaska Native village or authorized native organization, which has authority to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations for the areas within its jurisdiction. The number of communities is approximate for each state.

	FIRMs Effective After July 2012	Proposed FIRM Updates Introduced	FIRM Updates Possible	Total
AK	5	10	10	25
AL	50	50	150	250
AR	30	15	50	95
AZ	30	5	10	45
CA	75	15	125	215
CO	100	5	25	130
CT	30	—	25	55
DC	—	5	—	5
DE	—	25	25	50
FL	75	150	125	350
GA	75	100	75	250
HI	—	5	5	10
IA	75	15	300	390
ID	5	5	50	60
IL	50	125	250	425
IN	75	5	25	105
KS	10	15	100	125
KY	100	125	75	300
LA	50	10	50	110
MA	125	—	50	175
MD	50	100	10	160
ME	15	100	150	265
MI	75	—	475	550
MN	75	—	100	175
MO	75	5	100	180
MS	50	75	75	200
MT	50	5	10	65
NC	15	300	250	565
ND	125	5	5	135
NE	30	15	50	95
NH	50	25	—	75
NJ	10	350	75	435
NM	25	—	10	35
NV	10	5	5	20
NY	50	225	350	625
OH	30	—	300	330
OK	100	50	5	155
OR	30	50	15	95
PA	425	700	300	1425
PR	5	—	—	5
RI	25	—	15	40
SC	75	75	50	200
SD	50	—	5	55
TN	30	25	5	60
TX	125	100	100	325
UT	50	—	50	100
VA	15	150	15	180
VT	25	—	5	30
WA	150	15	50	215
WI	50	75	75	200
WV	75	15	15	105
WY	25	—	5	30
Total	2,950	3,150	4,200	10,300

All of these dots on this map represent flood maps. The purple are flood maps that are in effect. Green are proposed flood maps that will be introduced, and gold are new flood maps that are possible. The State of Penn-

sylvania is No. 1 in the number of new flood maps that will be proposed, by a long shot. There will be 1,425 new maps in Pennsylvania alone—people who have never been in a flood zone, people who will soon be in a flood zone, and when they find out their insurance is \$10,000 or \$5,000 a year or \$20,000 a year, they are not going to be happy, let me assure my colleagues. Pennsylvania is No. 1. No. 2 is New York where 625 new maps are going to be executed; in New Jersey, 435 new maps; in North Carolina, 565 new maps; and in Michigan, 550 new maps.

Everyone thinks this is a Louisiana issue. I have been trying to say for a year and a half: Yes, this affects my State; yes, it affects Mississippi and Georgia and Alabama. But the country needs to wake up. This issue will affect people in many places, because of the new maps that are coming out, because of the new science, the new ability to measure elevations. There are going to be people who have never been in a flood zone, and they are going to be told they are now in a flood zone. We better get a program they can afford.

I thank Senator MENENDEZ and Senator ISAKSON for their leadership. They will both speak later this evening as we move to this vote. Let's have this debate. Let's come up with a new approach that works for the taxpayer, the homeowners, as well as the realtors, the bankers, and the stakeholder groups that have been so supportive. Realtors, home builders, the National Association of Counties, League of Cities, Bankers Association, Community Bankers, and Independent Insurance Agents are all supporting these efforts.

I yield the floor and thank my colleague for his courtesy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for 1 minute.

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

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Iowa for allowing me to jump in front of him.

I commend the Senator from Louisiana and confirm everything she said. The vote tonight on the motion to proceed is important. This is an important debate not just for coastal States and not just for the coastline but for the entire United States, because the unintended consequences of Biggert-Waters as it goes into place are less insurance coverage for less and less Americans and more damage in case of another terrible storm such as Sandy or Katrina.

I commend the distinguished Senator from Louisiana and the coalition she has worked with to bring this issue forward. I hope all of our colleagues will vote yes on the motion to proceed this evening.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

WAR ON POVERTY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, tomorrow night we have the State of the Union Address, and news reports say that one of the issues the President will be speaking about is income inequality. That brings me to something I should have spoken on a couple of weeks ago, because January 8, 2014, marked the 50th anniversary of President Johnson's call for a war on poverty. This anniversary provides a time to reflect on and reevaluate its twin aims of poverty relief and economic opportunity.

The goal of poverty relief is to ensure that even those who might find themselves in tough times have sufficient assistance to meet their basic human needs while lifting themselves out of abject poverty. In other words, we have to make sure people have a roof over their heads and food on their table, as minimums.

The goal of economic opportunity is to ensure the lower rungs on the economic ladder are strong enough to support that climb out of poverty. Economic opportunity is another term for the American dream that through hard work, as we know, we can improve not just a person's own lot in life but that a person's children and a person's children's children will be better off.

If we judge the war on poverty according to the first aim, a good case can be made that we have been very successful. Looking at the official poverty level that is based on income prior to many transfer payments, little has changed since 1964. However, consumption-based studies show the poor are much better off today than they were decades ago. A study available from the National Bureau of Economic Research that looks at consumption rather than income shows over a 26-percent decline in poverty since 1960.

There is little doubt that programs from Social Security to food stamps, from Medicaid to heating assistance, have helped increase the standard of living for those at or below the poverty level. However, economic growth and the general decline in the cost of technology have also been a great source of poverty reduction.

While providing relief from poverty is an admirable goal, the American dream has always been about opportunity. As President Johnson said in his State of the Union Address 50 years ago, the goal of the war on poverty "is not only to relieve the symptoms of poverty, but to cure it and, above all, to prevent it."

It is this goal of the war on poverty that has largely fallen flat. As I referenced earlier, the official poverty level has changed little in the 50-year fight on poverty, despite spending trillions of dollars on antipoverty measures. In 1964, around 19 percent lived in

poverty. Today, according to the most recent census data, that number stands only slightly lower at 15 percent.

We all know America is the land of opportunity. In America, we have no caste system. Laws and social norms do not relegate any individual or any group of individuals to lower social status. It can be tough, but individuals can and do climb their way to the top. Sometimes this process can take generations, but it has always been a source of pride that the next generation is better off and has more opportunities than the generation that came just before.

Indeed, there is considerable upward mobility in our economy. A 2007 Treasury study on income mobility found that between 1996 and 2005, around half of those taxpayers who found themselves in the bottom quintile in 1996 moved to a higher income group in 2005.

How about the very top of the income distribution my colleagues are fixated on? Contrary to what some may claim, those at the top are not the same year after year. The Treasury study found of those taxpayers who were in the top one-hundredth of 1 percent in 1996, only 25 percent remained in that group in 2005.

While there is upward mobility in America, there is always room for improvement. And there certainly are those who feel trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Unfortunately, too often programs meant to help the less fortunate can act as an anchor, preventing Americans from climbing up the ladder of success. I have no doubt the vast majority of those living at or below the poverty lines are very hard-working people. Our programs do not act as an anchor because of the poor themselves but because too often programs meant to help actually turn out to punish success. Too often those who are seeking to escape generations of poverty feel as if the harder they work, the further behind they get.

The landmark welfare reform legislation Congress passed in 1996 sought to lift the anchor off the backs of the poor. It sought to increase opportunity by incentivizing individuals to work.

The welfare reform law was meant to reward personal responsibility and a strong work ethic rather than punish these traits so essential to success.

The landmark law established work requirements, requiring individuals to work when job ready and within 2 years after coming on assistance. To receive funding, States must require a minimum amount of work, and that participation must be in hours by families receiving assistance. This meets one of TANF's—Temporary Assistance for Needy Families—primary goals: to end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation.

In other words, if you are going to move up the economic ladder, you have to be in the world to work. If you are shunted off to the side of society, out of sight, out of mind, then there is no opportunity to move up.

In the years that followed, those who argued dire consequences would result, particularly for single mothers—these people were proven wrong. Following the enactment of welfare reform, there was a precipitous decline in welfare caseload and usage. At the same time, the single mother labor force participation rose and their incomes rose.

Unfortunately, President Obama has persistently implemented policies that erode these statutory regulations; thereby, discouraging personal responsibility and a strong work ethic.

On July 12, 2012, the administration issued what is referred to as guidance to States about this TANF Program. This guidance explained how States can now seek waivers of work requirements for welfare recipients for the first time since the TANF Program was created in the 1996 welfare reform law.

The 1996 welfare reform helped families to enjoy the dignity of self-sufficiency. It reduced poverty. Instead of pushing families out of poverty, the President's policies trapped Americans in soul-crushing government dependency.

While welfare reform made strides, too often those working hard to get a leg up feel as if they are only treading water. In November 2012, the Congressional Budget Office released a report looking at the effective marginal tax rate of low- and moderate-income workers; that is, how much extra tax or reduction in government benefits is imposed on an American worker when he or she earns an additional dollar of income; in other words, people are pretty sophisticated about looking at how much they get in a government program, and if they go into the world to work, are they going to be penalized for it instead of drawing help.

According to CBO, in 2013, the average marginal effective tax rate faced by low- to moderate-income workers was 32 percent. Keep in mind this is just the average. Many workers experience marginal effective rates far exceeding the top statutory rate of 39.6 percent paid by the highest income people in America.

For an example, an economist with the Urban Institute calculated the marginal effective tax rate of a single parent with two children under various scenarios. Just one scenario examined what would happen if a household income rose from \$10,000 to \$40,000.

Perhaps a single mother was able to increase her skills and earning potential by taking classes at night at a local community college. If this single mother had been receiving all the benefits she was eligible for, she would face a marginal effective tax rate of 80 per-

cent as a reward for trying to make a better life for her and her family. That is a far higher marginal tax rate than most on the left even proposed for the much derided top 1 percent.

It is difficult to blame an individual in this situation who becomes disgruntled and just gives up, not seeking employment. It is we in the government who have tilted the scales against those low-income Americans trying to realize the American dream. In order to alleviate this disincentive, there must be a better coordination between benefits and how they are phased out.

Instead of reducing this disincentive to work, in recent years we have actually made it worse. The premium tax credit and cost-sharing subsidies that were enacted as a part of the Affordable Care Act will increase marginal tax rates by an average of 12 percentage points. Moreover, according to an analysis by the Joint Committee on Taxation, when the premium tax credit is fully in effect, some workers could experience “infinite marginal tax rates.”

Some of you may wonder what is an infinite marginal tax rate. To put this into more understandable language, this means some workers could actually face marginal effective rates exceeding 100 percent.

For a worker in this situation, it means if they decide to put in a few more hours at work or get a second job to earn extra cash, they could actually end up worse off financially. Of course, this is an absurd result that tells people do not work hard, do not try to advance your situation, because if you do, we are going to take it all away from you.

Harvard economics professor and former chief White House economist Greg Mankiw recently opined on this result saying: “It is hard to believe that the law is so badly written as to have this feature.” Well, Professor, believe it or not, the President and the majority party did enact this law with this feature, and they did so with the full knowledge of the Joint Committee on Taxation analysis which I had made public.

Often I hear my colleagues on the other side come to the floor to pound the table about income inequality—something we are going to hear the President talk about tomorrow night in his State of the Union Address, we are told. There are a number of studies that examine income inequality. There is great variation among these studies on how income inequality is measured and the degree to which it has actually increased over the years.

However, all these studies do point to some degree of increasing inequality over the last several decades. That we have to admit. This has occurred during both Republican and Democratic administrations. It has also been occurring across most of the developed

countries. It happens not just in the United States but other places as well.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle often cite income inequality to justify whatever Democratic policy agenda is up at that particular time. Whether it is taxing the rich, raising the minimum wage or extending unemployment benefits, they cite income inequality to justify their aims.

However, these policies either fail to address the root causes of inequality or are nothing more than a temporary bandaid. Income inequality is a symptom of much larger structural problems, not the disease itself. Raising taxes might be successful at generating revenue to fund greater wealth transfer payments, but it does nothing to rectify what caused the inequality in the first place.

Soak-the-rich policies do not create greater opportunity for low-income individuals. In fact, because of the negative effects on economic growth and capital formation, they can reduce opportunity not only for the poor but for all Americans. Our country has historically been a land of opportunity. Whether such policies are well intended or cynical political opportunism, they are not worth trading away our Nation's legacy of opportunity.

You do not have to take my word for the antigrowth effects of increasing taxes. Research by Christina Romer, President Obama's former chief economist, found that a tax increase of 1 percent of GDP reduces economic growth by as much as 3 percent. According to this study, tax increases have such a substantial effect on economic growth because of the "powerful negative effect of tax increases on investment."

In effect, what those who pursue wealth-destroying redistributionist policies are saying—to quote Margaret Thatcher—is that they "would rather that the poor were poorer, provided that the rich were less rich."

That may reduce inequality but at the expense of making us all worse off. Our goal must be to create wealth and to create opportunity for all Americans.

I reject the notion that in order to improve the lot of one individual someone else must be made worse off. The leadership of the majority has become fixated on redistributing the existing economic pie. I believe the better policy is to increase the size of that pie. When this occurs, no one is made better off at the expense of anyone else.

This is best achieved through progrowth policies aimed at growing the economic pie, not by taking from some and giving to others.

Similarly, increasing the minimum wage or extending emergency unemployment benefits also fail to address long-term causes of inequality. These proposals are well intended, and I myself have supported both under the

right circumstances but neither strike at the heart of income inequality.

While there are many contributing factors, much of the research points to the widening wage gap between skilled and unskilled labor. If we are to address income inequality, the primary focus must be on ensuring individuals have the skills necessary to compete in a 21st century economy.

One way to accomplish this is through greater competition in education through increased school choice. We should also further expand our efforts made in 1996 to incentivize individuals to work and ensure those who want to work can gain the skills that are necessary for a 21st century economy.

There are certain ways we can help reduce poverty and promote opportunity. However, just throwing more and more money at existing programs is not the answer. According to a Congressional Research Service report, Federal spending on low-income assistance programs as a percent of Federal outlays has more than doubled since the 1970s.

No amount of money then will change the tried-and-true formula for escaping poverty; namely, graduate high school, wait until marriage to have children, and find a job and keep it for at least 1 year. While even those who follow this formula can fall on tough times, statistically it is rare that they will find themselves poor for a sustained period of time.

We should be sure our laws and programs encourage rather than discourage these three keys to success. One place to start is to take a look at reducing or eliminating the marriage penalty that can arise in both our tax laws and benefit programs.

The war on poverty will not be won as long as the value of marriage is diminished.

You cannot disagree with the facts. Children in single-parent households will face more challenges and are more likely to be poor.

Some economists say that children raised in single-parent homes are four times more likely to be living in poverty. According to census data, in 2012 just 6.3 percent of the families headed by married couples are poor. In contrast, 31 percent of those in single-parent households are poor.

Today, more children are born out of wedlock, more marriages are dissolved, families are not as strong as they could or should be, and we have a social problem that cannot be cured with more government spending. The war on poverty must be solved in part by encouraging and nurturing healthy families.

Of course, there is no magic cure-all for poverty. In fact, that is the point. The notion that experts in Washington can wage a successful war on poverty with spending programs as a weapon was never realistic. We are dealing

with real people, with real lives trying to realize their dreams, not pieces on a chess board that we can move around as we wish.

Our goal should be to tear down the barriers to economic opportunity and simply get out of the way. When we discover that well-intentioned programs designed to help the poor are actually trapping them in generational poverty, we need to have the courage to chart a new course.

The American dream is not to be dependent upon others for bare substance but to have the opportunity to get ahead through your own hard work and perseverance. All Americans deserve the self-respect that comes from earning your own success in life.

Millions of immigrants have flocked to our shores because America offered greater economic opportunity than any other nation. We are at risk of losing part of what has made our society unique. We should seize the opportunity of this anniversary of the war on poverty 50 years ago to reevaluate our approach to ending poverty and get back to what has historically worked for generations of Americans, and that is simply to promote economic opportunity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, my remarks to the Senate will deal with the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. I am pleased the Senate is close to considering a bill to protect homeowners and businesses from unintended increases in the cost of flood insurance.

In July 2012, as part of a larger legislative package that included the highway bill and the Gulf Coast RESTORE Act, Congress passed the so-called Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act with no opportunity for amendments. The Biggert-Waters Act generally succeeded in its aim to strengthen and ensure the long-term fiscal solvency of the National Flood Insurance Program.

But we need to take another look at a few of the act's reforms that are causing a great deal of consternation throughout my State and the rest of the country. At the time of its consideration by the Senate, we knew Biggert-Waters might cause modest increases in flood insurance premiums. Administration officials testified repeatedly before our committees that the increases would be manageable for American homeowners.

Unfortunately, the increases have been anything but manageable, as skyrocketing premiums are driving citizens out of their homes and threatening the future viability of entire communities.

These Americans are receiving notices that their flood insurance premiums are rising to stratospheric

heights, regardless of the fact that their homes may have never flooded or despite investments in flood control infrastructure and mitigation against future risk.

A constituent from Ocean Springs, MS, contacted my office to give us her perspective on the legislation. She wrote:

Built in 1986, [my house] survived all hurricanes including Katrina. I used my retirement savings to buy the house. Before closing, flood insurance was grandfathered at \$245 per year. After closing, the rate skyrocketed to \$18,450. You can understand my shock.

If you do the math, her new rates are more than 75 times the rate when she purchased her home. I hope Senators will vote to end this debate tonight and proceed to the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. This is our opportunity to protect homeowners from skyrocketing flood insurance premiums until Congress is provided assurances from the administration related to affordability and the engineering practices it is using to make flood insurance rate determinations.

A study by the National Academies of Science produced in March 2013 has called into question some of the engineering practices the government uses to determine rates. It is important that we make certain the government's engineering practices and procedures are sound and understand the implications of these rates before we allow them to devalue private property and ruin people's lives. It will be very challenging to rebuild neighborhoods or restore home equity once they are lost. We must get it right.

The long-term solvency of the National Flood Insurance Program is critical to protecting taxpayer investments, communicating flood risk to homeowners and encouraging communities to invest in mitigation measures. The reform legislation enacted in 2012 made positive changes to the program. However, some of those changes are now working in opposition to the broader goals of reform. These shortcomings are alienating the very people the program is intended to help and actually threaten to make the program less solvent in the long run.

The long term viability of the flood insurance program is important to many inland and coastal States. The new insurance rates penalize citizens, who have followed the rules and places the heaviest burden on those who are just now recovering from recent disasters. In my State, communities continue to work to overcome the damage caused by the greatest natural disaster in our Nation's history, the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010, and now dramatic flood insurance rate increases.

Our bill does not create new programs to address rising premiums. It simply leaves in place some current

practices so that we can make sure the productive reforms we enacted in 2012 will actually improve the credibility of the program among communities and homeowners. Our bill would not affect the positive reforms related to expanding program participation or the phase-out of subsidized flood insurance premiums for vacation homes and homes that have a history of repeated flooding.

The consideration and passage of this bill would represent a bipartisan consensus to make modest changes to existing law, while protecting homeowners and steering the National Flood Insurance Program onto a path to fiscal sustainability.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which I have sponsored with Senator ISAKSON. It is a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation to ensure that families will be able to afford flood insurance so they can stay in their homes, businesses can stay open, and property values will not plummet. This broadly bipartisan legislation will stop the most onerous and damaging rate increases while minimizing the impact on the National Flood Insurance Program's solvency.

I want to thank all of those who have supported the legislation, all of our cosponsors, as well as the National Association of Home Builders, the National Association of Realtors, the American Bankers Association, the Independent Community Bankers of America, the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, and Greater New Orleans, Incorporated, who have all endorsed our bill.

I specifically want to thank my lead Republican cosponsor Senator ISAKSON. I have had the pleasure to work with Senator ISAKSON on a number of issues. I have come to respect his honesty and desire to come together and get things done regardless of the issue.

I also want to thank Senator LANDRIEU who has been focused like a hawk on this issue for years now. She is without a doubt the Senate's preeminent expert on disaster recovery and flooding issues. The people of Louisiana are fortunate to have such a tireless champion. She has taken the time and effort to understand every aspect of flooding and disaster recovery.

I saw that expertise firsthand when Senator LANDRIEU came to New Jersey after Sandy struck and worked with us. I cannot thank her enough for the valuable insight she gave to us as we were dealing with Sandy recovery.

When Sandy struck New Jersey, over 2 million households were without power, 346,000 homes were damaged or lay in ruin, and, most tragically of all, 37 fellow New Jerseyans lost their lives. But true to our State's motto we were Jersey tough. People who lost their homes were knocked down but not out. They got up, dusted themselves off and started the long process of rebuilding.

But just as they were getting started, they got hit by another disaster, this time a manmade one that took the form of drastic flood insurance premium hikes that threaten to finish the job that Sandy started. I started receiving letters—first dozens, then hundreds, then thousands of people pleading to me for help. They wrote in desperation that their insurance premium was about to go from about \$1,000 a year to an incredible \$10,000. They told me after exhausting all of their savings on repairing and rebuilding their home, they simply had no more to spare—none left.

They were being hit by what I have come to call a triple whammy. First they got hit by the worst natural disaster in our State's history. Then they were faced with drastically elevated premiums mandated by Biggert-Waters. Finally, they had to contend with fatally flawed mapping processes that further exacerbated the drastic rate increases.

While Sandy made New Jersey especially vulnerable to the rate hikes required under Biggert-Waters, make no mistake about it, this is not a New Jersey or New York issue. It is not even a coastal issue. The reason this bill has such broad support across the ideological and geographical spectrum and the political spectrum is because flood insurance is not just a coastal or a northeast issue, it is an issue that affects the entire country.

The fact remains that 55 percent of Americans live within 50 miles of the coast. National Flood Insurance insures more than 5.5 million properties across all 50 States. Every State in the Nation will see premiums on some of their properties increase as a result of Biggert-Waters. As this map shows, FEMA is in the process of updating maps in every State. The different colors are simply what the status is of that effort.

People who played by the rules and built to code will suddenly find that they are no longer in compliance and will be faced with a difficult decision: Spend upwards of \$100,000 to elevate their home 3, 4, 5 or more feet from its current level or see their annual insurance premium spike from \$1,000 to \$10,000 to \$20,000 over the next 5 years.

Not all of these increases will be so drastic, but the many that are will act as a de facto eviction notice for homeowners who have lived in their homes and played by the rules their entire

lives. If they try to sell their homes, prospective buyers will balk after learning of the high premium cost that comes with it, leaving the owner no choice but to sell at a fire sale.

This will drive down property values just as the housing market is still struggling to recover. We all know that declining property values have a domino effect, causing entire neighborhoods to decline in value, which in turn hurts the broader economy. What is most alarming is the fact that FEMA does not even know the size or scope of this problem.

They were supposed to complete a study into the affordability of rate increases under Biggert-Waters by last April, but they failed to do it. This was a mandated study that I was able to include in Biggert-Waters because I knew that this was going to be a problem. The main reason for the delay is they simply do not know what the new rates are going to look like. They do not know how many families will see rates double or triple—or many times more—so they cannot even guess on how these hikes will affect affordability.

Think about that for a second. We are making dramatic changes in policy that could impact more than 5.5 million policyholders—that is really families. These changes can have ripple effects throughout the housing market and our entire economy, before we even know the extent of the changes and their impact.

That is simply not acceptable. No one can argue to me that is sound public policy. In addition to the impacts on families, the housing market, and the economy, drastic rate increases could actually have the perverse effect of undermining the solvency of the program. It could end up costing taxpayers more in disaster assistance payments by pricing homeowners out of insurance.

Recent reports suggest that only about 18 percent of properties in the flood zones participate in the program. One study has shown that for every 10-percent increase in premiums, program participation decreases by approximately 2.9 percent, almost 3 percent.

If rates are raised too high and too quickly, people will simply opt to drop their insurance, decreasing participation and the risk pool the National Flood Insurance Program draws on. The sharper the increases, the higher the proportion of dropouts. As with any insurance fund, this is about spreading risk. The smaller the risk pool, the greater the risk, and, therefore, the higher the costs. It perpetuates itself.

By pricing people out of the flood insurance program, increasing rates could have the unintended consequences of actually making the program less solvent. Reduced program participation would also increase the amount taxpayers are on the hook in disaster assistance payments.

Since FEMA grants, SBA loans, and other disaster assistance are reserved for unmet needs, more uninsured homeowners translate into more disaster assistance payouts.

Not only are we blind to the extent of these rate hikes and the effect they will have on program participation and the overall budget, we are also allowing what I believe to be a highly questionable mapping process to justify them. My experience with FEMA's map updates has led me to have serious doubts about the process and the accuracy of their results.

In December of 2012, FEMA released advisory base flood elevation maps, or ABFEs, for 10 counties in New Jersey. These showed a dramatic expansion of what are known as a V zone, which are high-risk flood zones that require houses to undergo special retrofitting that is often prohibitively expensive. For the thousands of families who were now in this dread V zone, the notification they received might as well have been an eviction notice, because they were never going to be able to afford the retrofitting, and without it they couldn't afford their premiums.

To be fair, FEMA did say that this first round of maps was conservative and subject to change in the next phase of the updates, but they maintained the changes would be minimal and the zones would remain largely intact.

After working with municipalities and counties, challenging the accuracy of these maps, and pushing FEMA to expedite their review process, they finally released a new iteration that showed as much as an 80-percent decline in the V-zone area in some of our counties. This was not a small mistake or a rounding error, it was a fatally flawed process that resulted in needless anxiety and frustration for thousands of homeowners only months out from Sandy.

While this is bad enough, imagine how much worse the consequences would have been if premium rates were increased to reflect these inaccurate ABFEs. Families would be forced out of their homes and homeowners would lose the most valuable asset they have—something they have worked their whole lives for—all because of inaccurate maps.

While there is no question we need to put the flood insurance program on a more solvent trajectory, we first need to understand the scope of these changes and be sure the mapping process used to set these rates is accurate. We need to understand the impact these dramatic changes in Biggert-Waters will have on the housing market before it is too late.

Unfortunately, Biggert-Waters forces changes that are far too large, far too fast, without having all the facts. It requires FEMA to increase rates dramatically even before FEMA knows the scope of these changes or how they will

impact program participation. That is why our bill would impose a moratorium on the phaseout of subsidies in Biggert-Waters for most primary residences until FEMA completes the affordability study that was mandated in Biggert-Waters and proposes a regulatory framework to address the issues found in the study.

It would also require FEMA to certify in writing that it has implemented a flood mapping approach that utilizes sound scientific and engineering methodologies before certain rate reforms are implemented. For any property sales that occurred during this period, the homeowner would continue to receive the same treatment as the previous owner of the property, unless they trigger some other provision of Biggert-Waters not covered by this bill. For prospective home buyers, the certainty that they will not see their rate dramatically increase simply because they purchased a home is critically important to maintaining property values.

Also, this new legislation would give FEMA more flexibility to complete the affordability study. It would reimburse qualifying homeowners for successful appeals of erroneous flood map determinations. It would give communities fair credit for locally funded flood protection systems. It would continue the fair treatment afforded to communities with floodproof basement exemptions. It would provide for a FEMA ombudsman to advocate for and provide information to policyholders.

Just as important as what this bill would do, it is also important to know what this bill will not do. The legislation would not stop the phaseout of taxpayer subsidies for vacation homes and homes that have substantially been damaged. It would not stop the phaseout of taxpayer-funded subsidies for properties that have been repetitively flooded, including the 1 percent riskiest properties that account for over one-third of all claims. It would not encourage new construction in environmentally sensitive or flood-prone areas, and it would not stop most of the important reforms included in Biggert-Waters.

This legislation simply provides temporary relief to a targeted group of property owners who played by the rules and are now poised to see the most valuable asset in their life become worthless, all through no fault of their own.

This bill doesn't include everything I wanted—and I know there are many other ideas that other cosponsors wanted to include—but in order to reach a true consensus, this bill focuses on ideas that had broad bipartisan support. That is why we are here today, Democrats and Republicans, asking for the support of the Senate on this vital piece of legislation.

We tried to reach a delicate balance with this bill that recognizes the need

to improve solvency and phase out certain subsidies, but tries to do so without discouraging program participation and thus undermining solvency and fiscal responsibility.

Finally, this isn't only about insurance rates, tables, and actuarial risk rates, it is about our fellow citizens. It is about people, people who played by the rules their whole lives and are now facing a life-altering event they never could have prepared or planned for.

If Biggert-Waters is allowed to be implemented as written, we will see property values drop, middle-class families forced from their homes, and our economy suffer.

The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act is a broadly bipartisan, carefully crafted, tightly targeted approach to restore the solvency of the program, while fulfilling the original intent of the program to make flood insurance affordable and accessible. That is why we hope our colleagues will vote yes on cloture so we can proceed to provide relief to families before it is too late.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 294, S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Mary L. Landrieu, Sherrod Brown, Richard Blumenthal, Joe Manchin III, Tom Udall, Patrick J. Leahy, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons, Christopher Murphy, Mark R. Warner, Kay R. Hagan, Amy Klobuchar, Tim Kaine, Thomas R. Carper, Dianne Feinstein.

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

The question is, is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 86, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 14 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Franken	Murkowski
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murphy
Baldwin	Graham	Murray
Baucus	Grassley	Nelson
Begich	Hagan	Portman
Bennet	Hatch	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Rockefeller
Boozman	Hoeven	Rubio
Boxer	Isakson	Sanders
Brown	Johanns	Schatz
Burr	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Cantwell	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Cardin	Kaine	Sessions
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Kirk	Stabenow
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Tester
Coats	Landrieu	Thune
Cochran	Leahy	Toomey
Collins	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cooms	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Markey	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	

NAYS—13

Barrasso	Heller	Risch
Coburn	Inhofe	Roberts
Corker	Lee	Shelby
Crapo	Moran	
Enzi	Paul	

NOT VOTING—1

Harkin

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 86 and the nays are 13. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as if in morning business.

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

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, it has been almost 1 month since Senators and House Members went home and failed to extend unemployment insurance, a lifeline for 1.6 million Americans.

In my home State of Ohio, 52,000 have lost their unemployment benefits—people who were working, lost their jobs, were looking for work, and have had their benefits ended. Another 76,000 in my State alone—from Toledo to Chillicothe to Cleveland to Dayton—will lose their benefits by the end of the year.

This insurance program is not called unemployment welfare; it is called unemployment insurance. People pay into it when they are working and get the benefits when they are laid off, and they only receive these benefits if they are actively seeking work. This is why it is called unemployment insurance. This is a program which has worked. This not only hurts the families who aren't receiving the unemployment benefits of about \$300 a week. It is also

money which goes into our economy and helps our economy grow.

A new report shows that because we didn't have an extension of these benefits, we have lost \$1.76 billion in economic activity just in this 1 month alone. Ohio has lost tens of millions of dollars.

What does that mean? It means people don't have \$300 a week in their pocket to go to the grocery store or to fix their car which they need to look for work. They don't have money to go to the local store or to buy clothes for their kids.

Economic experts have said extending unemployment benefits will create 200,000 jobs in our country because of the economic activity generated. So it is not just these families—in Ohio, 52,000 workers and in many cases their families—who are hurting. It is also the communities from Toledo to Steubenville, all over my State, and all over this country. At a time when Congress should be helping to grow this economy, our inaction slows growth and makes it harder to find work.

We know we are still emerging from the worst recession since the Great Depression. We have made progress, but there are still nearly 11 million Americans unemployed, and about 4 million have been unemployed for at least 27 weeks.

When President Bush signed the latest round of emergency assistance into effect, the unemployment rate was about 5.5 percent—more than 1 point lower than it is today. Today, the long-term unemployment rate is more than double what it has been at any other time Congress has let emergency jobless assistance expire.

Americans work hard. They want to work. Yet there is one job opening for every three job seekers.

The same people who don't like unemployment insurance typically don't like the way Social Security works—another social insurance program—and typically don't like Medicare—another social insurance program. Medicare, Social Security, unemployment insurance—they are social insurance programs you pay into when you are working and get benefits when you are not, whether it is Medicare or Social Security or whether it is unemployment.

I will read a couple stories from real people affected by this. These aren't just numbers. These are real people hurt when Congress doesn't do its job.

Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island has been on this floor over and over. A number of us have pushed for this unemployment insurance extension. We continue to be met by a threatened filibuster. The House of Representatives continues to dig in and do nothing about unemployment insurance because they simply don't believe in the unemployment insurance program.

I'm in my mid-40s, have a Master's degree, and had an excellent career history until I

was laid off—through no fault of my own—late last spring. I've been searching for work for 7 months and hope to find something soon. While I am encouraged that I have had five interviews in the last two weeks, I know that if I am not hired soon, I will not be able to pay my rent and buy groceries.

I would much rather be working, and I am doing the best I can to find something. Please do not assume the long term unemployed have given up. We have not. We need support in continuing our search, however, so we can afford the bare necessities.

The \$300 a week for somebody like Emily—I don't know precisely what she would get based on her income and all the years she worked and all that she would need, but it is clear we are turning our backs on people such as Emily from Lake County.

Matthew from Cuyahoga County:

I was laid off almost a year ago, and I have been diligently looking for work but have not been able to find anything yet.

One of my children was recently diagnosed with an incurable, yet manageable disease, and the medical bills have exhausted our emergency fund.

I have worked extremely hard my entire adult life to provide a good life for my family only to see it threatened by the continual bickering in Congress. For many of us, the recession is not over.

Please work with other Senators to continue the federal unemployment benefits.

That is what we are doing. We are going to continue to bring this issue to the floor. We are going to continue to work to extend unemployment insurance for people such as Matthew, for people such as Emily.

Terry from Medina County writes:

I am a 59 year old single parent and have been diligently looking for employment since November of 2012, [13 months]. I have been able to secure some temporary work but not a permanent job.

I have worked since I was 17 years old and I have never been out of work before. I am also a college educated woman with a Masters Degree in Public Administration. If I don't find something soon, I may have to file for bankruptcy. My house will likely go into foreclosure by the spring. My son may have to live with his dad to finish out his last year of high school, and he will struggle to obtain the necessary finances to afford college.

Senator Brown, I want to work. I do not want to stay home and collect unemployment or not utilize my brain, talents and experience. I am an intelligent, capable, healthy person with a lot to offer. . . .

It is time to stop blaming those who have been unemployed due to these circumstances and stop publicly declaring they don't want to work.

I could have brought 15 more letters to the floor from people who have had long work histories, of people who lost their jobs because of economic situation—not because of anything they did wrong—of people who are looking actively for work, of people who simply want to continue contributing to their family and to their community.

I urge my colleagues to get out of Washington, to do as Pope Francis said when he exhorted his parish priests: Go out and smell like the flock. Go out and understand how people live and

what their lives are like and how people suffer if they cannot find work and, where we can, do something about it to, No. 1, help the 50,000 families in Ohio and over a million around the country and, No. 2, help grow our economy by the infusion of these dollars into communities that will make a difference in the lives of those families and help to create jobs in our communities.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO JOHN ROGERS, SR.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last Friday at Rockefeller Chapel on the campus of the University of Chicago hundreds braved the frigid weather to pay tribute to a fallen American hero. The life story of John Rogers, Sr., recalls an extraordinary chapter in the life of our Nation.

Seventy years ago, during World War II, the first African-American military aviators in the history of the United States Armed Forces deployed to North Africa.

These brave men were part of the now-legendary 99th Pursuit Squadron of the United States Army Air Corps. We know them better today as the very first Tuskegee Airmen to be deployed overseas—the first of the first.

During the war, Tuskegee Airmen were often referred to as “Red Tails,” after the distinctive color of the aircraft tails. Many of the bomber crews whose missions the Tuskegee Airman escorted over Nazi-occupied Europe had another name for them. They called them the “Red-Tailed Angels” because they made possible for so many other pilots to come home after the war to their families.

Last Tuesday, one of those original Red-Tailed Angels went to his final home. I am proud to say that I knew him and his family. His name was Judge John Rogers. He was 95 years old. He lived in Chicago.

Let me tell you about him.

John Rogers was born in Knoxville, TN in 1918. His father was a minister who also owned his own 12-chair barber shop. His mother died of tuberculosis when Judge Rogers was just 4 years old. The family lives across the street from Knoxville College, which John's parents had both attended.

Their father instilled in John and his three sisters a reverence for education. In addition to learning, young John

Rogers also developed a love of flying. These were years when flying was still a new miracle.

As a boy, Judge Rogers would construct his own model planes using paper, string and the light wood from cheese boxes. When he was 9 or 10 years old, he walked miles from his family's home to the Knoxville airport just to be able to say that he had touched an airplane. When he was 12, he suffered another terrible loss. His father died of kidney failure.

John and his three sisters moved to Chicago to live with his mother's brother, a kind man who raised them in a loving home. Judge Rogers attended Tilden Technical High School in Chicago, walking 4 miles each way to school—8 miles a day.

After high school, he earned a degree from Chicago Teachers College. He put himself through college working as a short-order cook, among other jobs. After college, he became a teacher in the Chicago public schools.

At the same time he was studying to be a teacher, he was also learning to fly in the Army's Civilian Pilot Training Program in Chicago, where all the instructors were black.

He received his civilian pilot's license in 1938, when he was 20 years old—one of only about 120 African Americans pilot in the whole country at that time.

When World War II broke out, John Rogers tried to enlist in the Army as a pilot. The Army told him that it didn't have any “colored” pilots and didn't have any plans to have any “colored” pilots,” but they had an opening for a truck driver. John Rogers told them: No thanks. He said he figured if he was going to be in combat, it was safer to be in the air than on the ground. So he volunteered in 1941 for a new Army Air Corps training program that had just been established for African American pilots in Tuskegee, AL.

He became part of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, the first all-black air unit, under the leadership of the legendary Lt. Colonel—later General—Benjamin O. Davis. In April 1943, he one of the first 28 African-American pilots to go overseas.

The 99th was based in Northern Africa and flew escort and bombing missions over Italy. Pilots of the 99th once set a record for destroying five enemy aircraft in under 4 minutes. Even among such an elite group of pilots, John Rogers stood out for his keen eyesight and steady nerves.

Mark Hanson is curator of the Chanute Air Museum—formerly Chanute Air Force Base—in Rantoul, IL, where the 99th was first activated. He said John Rogers was revered as a pilot who was so good he “could put a 500-pound bomb through a building's window.”

A photo at the Chanute museum, taken by an armaments officer and

friend, shows John Rogers standing next to his P-40 Warhawk. An inscription on the photo reads: "This is Jack Rogers, the best dive-bomber pilot in the business."

Another photo of John Rogers and members of the 99th hangs at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC.

The skill of the men of the 99th was well known among pilots, especially by the British, who often asked for the Airmen's close-air support.

What I am about to say here I read as I sat at that church service. I looked at it and I said it must be a misprint, and I read it again and it is true. All told, John Rogers flew 120 often dangerous combat missions for his Nation, over Europe, most of it over Nazi-occupied territory, and he rose to the rank of Army captain—120 missions.

After the war, he returned to Chicago. He decided at that time he wanted to go to law school so he said: I am going to the best. He applied over the phone at the University of Chicago law school. He was told that he lacked "the necessary qualifications."

Undeterred, John Roger showed up the next day at the law school wearing his Army officer's uniform. He said that someone who served his country in war deserved a chance to at least take a test to prove that he did have the qualifications to go to law school. So they gave him a test and he passed it, and he attended law school under the GI bill.

He went to school year-round, summers too, and graduated ahead of his class in 1948. He also, over time, earned a Ph.D. from Ohio State University.

On his first day in law school, John Rogers met his future wife Jewel Stradford, who would go on to become the first African American woman to graduate from the University of Chicago law school. She later served in the administrations of two Presidents of the United States. John and Jewel Rogers have one son, John, Jr. Although they divorced after 15 years of marriage, they remained close friends until her death many years later, and they both were actively engaged in raising an extraordinary son who is my friend today.

Judge Rogers practiced law in Chicago for almost 30 years. He gained a reputation as an outstanding attorney who was committed to justice and to his clients—and to mentoring younger and talented African-American lawyers.

In 1968, on a blind date, he met a fellow University of Chicago graduate, an educator who was active with the NAACP fund. John Rogers and Gwen DuBose dated for 33 years before marrying in 2001. They were a good match, and they were devoted to one another.

In May 1977, John Rogers was appointed an associate judge in Cook

County, and several months later he was assigned to the juvenile division. Some judges don't like the juvenile court and look for a transfer. The cases can be heartbreaking and the proceedings occur out of the public view, so juvenile court judges don't receive the publicity some of their colleagues receive.

John Rogers loved juvenile court. He spent 21 years as a judge there and eventually became the supervising judge. To the often-complicated cases involving minors, Judge Rogers strove to bring wisdom, compassion, and justice.

Gwen Rogers has a stack of letters from men and women who appeared before Judge Rogers as youths and later wrote him letters thanking him for giving them a second chance. There was one letter in particular that he kept close and read several times. It was from a man who appeared before Judge Rogers on three different occasions. On his third court appearance, Judge Rogers said: "I could send you to juvenile detention and you would deserve it. But I still see a glimmer of hope in you, so I am sending you to Boystown." He made it clear to the young man that this was his last chance.

Years later that boy—now a grown man—wrote to him and said he finished at Boys Town, went on to graduate from college, became a minister, and founded a church in the Presiding Officer's home State of Indiana.

Judge Rogers was the sort of man who became a father to many young men who needed someone to look up to. The young man he really poured his hopes and dreams into was his own son John Rogers, Jr. When John Jr. was 12 years old, his parents invested in some stock for him. Every birthday and Christmas after that, instead of toys John Jr. received stock certificates. At the age of 16, he got his first summer job—that was a family rule. Judge Rogers saved every dime he could in order to send his son to the best school. Eventually John Rogers, Jr. graduated from Princeton University. He would go on to found Ariel Capital Management, now called Ariel Investments, the first African-American-owned asset management company in America.

In 2007, the Tuskegee Airmen were honored right here in the U.S. Capitol with a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor our Nation can bestow. The Tuskegee Airmen are the largest group ever to receive the medal. About 300 of the airmen crowded into the Capitol Rotunda on that cold March day to receive their medals. What an incredible sight. Many wore red jackets, a symbol of their Red-Tailed Angels reputation.

Afterwards, I was honored to host a reception in my Capitol office for the 11 Tuskegee Airmen from my home State of Illinois. One of them was John

Rogers. Also joining us for that little reception was my colleague at the time, Senator Barack Obama. What a moment that was to see the arc of history and justice.

Five years later, President Barack Obama invited Judge Rogers and 14 other surviving Tuskegee Airmen to the White House for a screening of "Red Tails," a George Lucas film about the historic flyers. Talk about the arc of history—the first African-American President inviting the first African-American aviators to the White House.

Judge Rogers, this man whose courage helped to break the color barrier in America's military, first knew Barack Obama as a promising young community organizer who was dating Michelle Robinson. The Rogers and Robinson families go back a long, long way. When John Rogers, Jr. was captain of Princeton's basketball team, he recruited Craig Robinson, Michelle's brother, to play for Princeton. Craig Robinson would later help persuade his younger sister to attend Princeton. There they were all those years later, Judge Rogers, President and Mrs. Obama, together in the White House watching a Hollywood film about the Tuskegee Airmen.

Judge Rogers' granddaughter Victoria said her grandfather actually watched the film three different times. Every time he moved his hands as though he were flying. She said, "He said he could remember the tension."

A while back Judge Rogers told a reporter: "I hope there are planes in heaven so I can fly, because you know how much I love to fly."

Well, Judge, I hope there are planes there too for your sake, and I hope you are sitting in first class or in the cockpit where you belong. You earned it.

In closing, Loretta and I and our family extend our sincere condolences again to Judge Rogers, his beloved wife Gwen, his son John, Jr., his granddaughter Victoria, to the rest of the Rogers family, to Judge Rogers' many friends, and all of those whose lives he touched and enriched.

That gathering in that Rockefeller Chapel was such an outstanding turnout of people in Chicago who wanted to pay tribute to the great man John Rogers, Sr. He will be dearly missed.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

U.S.-CHINA SISTER CITY PROGRAM

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Sister City programs in Ohio. The Sister Cities International program was created by President Eisenhower in 1956 with the intent

of fostering peace and prosperity through cultural exchanges that promote appreciation through mutual experience and understanding.

Through the years, relationships have been formed and strengthened through "citizen diplomacy" and person-to-person exchanges between U.S. and international cities. These educational, informational, and cultural exchanges have not only created important diplomatic, economic and trade relationships, but they have also formed lasting personal bonds between individuals and cities.

The Sister City programs have positively impacted many cities throughout the United States, but today I would like to specifically recognize the 2014 U.S.-China Sister City Award recipients in my home State of Ohio. The State of Ohio was one of four recipients in the country for the Longest Relationship Award for its relationship that began in 1979 with the Hubei Province. Cincinnati was one of four programs in our Nation to be recognized as a Best Overall U.S.-China Sister City program in 2014. This strong relationship between Cincinnati and its Chinese Sister City Liuzhou in the Guangxi Province has existed since 1988. I was honored to be one of the original board members of this special Sister City relationship. In addition, the Columbus Sister City program was one of only three U.S.-China Sister City programs in the country to win a Sustainable Development Award. The relationship between Columbus and its Chinese Sister City, Hefei in the Anhui Province also began in 1988.

The U.S.-China Sister City programs in Ohio have been successful in forming relationships that mutually benefit the partnering communities by building global cooperation at the municipal level, promoting cultural understanding, and encouraging economic development. Some of the cultural exchanges made possible through these programs in Ohio include educational student and teacher exchanges, home stays, summer language camp exchanges, art exchanges, and science and medical exchanges.

The participants in these programs have demonstrated a commitment to enrich their communities culturally and economically, and I am inspired by the achievements that have been made in Ohio. I would like to congratulate the Ohio Sister City programs on being 2014 U.S.-China Sister City award recipients.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

VERMONT ESSAY WINNERS

● Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD winning essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the Fourth

Annual State of the Union Essay contest conducted by my office.

The essays follow:

Alexina Federhen, Mount Anthony Union High School, Grade 11 (Winner)

A HOUSE DIVIDED

2013 was a difficult year for America. Nature brought death and disaster by fire, wind, and water; four prominent banks used unethical methods to deprive Americans of their homes; numerous individuals, businesses, and the city of Detroit hit financial rock bottom; and shootings in our schools every other week killed 19 and wounded 24 students and staff. A spy revealed that our government is spying on our private conversations; universal healthcare became a universal headache when the application process required major surgery; and an exciting finish exploded into terror at the Boston Marathon. But Americans are resilient and resolute. Oklahoma is rebuilding and Detroit is reorganizing. Many Americans have healthcare for the first time and dozens of Boston's runners finished their race in the Shires of Vermont Marathon. Americans weathered the tragedies of 2013 with the same determination, innovation, and cooperation that has enabled us to overcome depressions, recessions, wars, and disasters in the past; we pull up our boot straps, plant our feet firmly in the direction of progress, and extend a helping hand to those in need.

Tragically, there was one disaster that the American people could not overcome in 2013—a Congress so dysfunctional that it could not even manage to operate the government for the entire year. And our expectations were not high to begin with. A Gallup poll conducted in January 2013 found that Americans rank Congress lower in popularity than root canals and cockroaches and rate Congressmen lower in ethics and honesty than used car salesmen. Instead of employing collaboration and compromise, our leaders indulged in backstabbing and finger pointing. Rather than seeking common ground to find solutions to the problems facing our country, our elected representatives nitpicked and cherry picked and attacked each other's intentions and integrity to boost their personal prospects for fundraising and reelection. The spectacle of Tea Party Republicans posturing for the press while the government crashed and burned lacked only a violin accompaniment to rival Nero's folly.

The 113th Congress was the least productive legislature in our history, passing only fifty-five bills into law. Public approval of Congress sank from a "high" of 18% on January 1, 2013 to a current low of 8%. In fact, "69% think no matter how bad things are, Congress can always find a way to make them worse." (Rasmussen Reports) We deserve better from our political leaders. We need Congressmen and Senators who will set aside personal gain and divisive ideology in order to build compromise and find consensus on the issues that challenge us: economic opportunity, income parity, gun control, immigration, stagnant academic achievement, climate change, and long-term deficit reduction.

Abraham Lincoln once observed that "a house divided cannot stand." Our House and Senate have splintered into partisan factions of squabbling inactivity. Americans will continue to soldier on, overcoming whatever obstacles impede our advancement. We can only hope that our Congressional leaders will acquire the maturity and wisdom to help rather than hinder our progress. But for now, we are a union without unity.

Katharine Mayo, Twinfield Union School, Grade 11 (Second Place)

In our changing world today we face many challenges, not just in our country and individual regions, but throughout the globe. One of the main problems that could alter our world forever is climate change. Throughout the past century we have spewed hundreds of thousands of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which top scientists now unanimously agree is warming our world and causing extreme weather to become frighteningly common. Our planet has warmed 1.4° in the past one hundred years, and is projected to keep warming if we do not act soon. This warming is causing changing weather patterns that are drastically affecting our world. Flooding, fires, and tornadoes throughout the country and storms such as Tropical Storm Irene right here in Vermont show how the effects of climate change are hurting people everywhere. Even the small changes in my home town in Vermont are starting to add up, we have less snow, more green Christmases, and extreme summer storms. Floods are also becoming increasingly common. However, neither Vermont nor America are the only places that are being heavily affected by climate change. It is a global problem, and we have to think globally and work together in order to mend what we have done to our planet. Our world is beautiful and fragile, and we must put our energy to solving the problem of climate change before it is too late.

America has always been known as a place where individuals are both innovative and creative in order to solve problems. I believe that we can each take steps as individuals and as a country to reduce the carbon we released into the atmosphere. These steps include driving less, and carpooling more, replacing light bulbs for more energy efficient ones, being more conscious of where our food comes from, and recycling and composting as much as possible. We have seen over the past one hundred years that each of us have the power with our small, everyday choices to destroy earth's environment and natural balance. I believe that if we have been able to do that, then we each have the power with our small, everyday choices to change the earth's environment for the better. We must all make small changes in order to live a more sustainable lifestyle and lead the world in the right direction by being a country with a minimal carbon footprint.

We cannot put this issue off any longer. Now is the time to act, now is the time to put our differences aside and work together in the government and around the world to change the world for the better and protect our world for future generations. We must not be selfish about this problem by brushing it under the rug because it is easier that way, or in order to maintain our way of life. We must act now to make changes in the way we live in order to preserve this beautiful world for our future children and for generations to come.

Robert "Will" Aldrich, Mount Abraham Union Middle/High School, Grade 9 (Third Place)

In the world there are many issues that we need to address. There is poverty and debt, the circling case in which innocent people can't feed themselves or their families because they can't afford to, which in turn causes famine. Another problem is pollution, which destroys our environment by making it dirty and useless for future generations. Another problem is communication, a thing that most countries do not know how to do.

All of these problems, every single one, could be solved by promoting sustainable development. Promoting sustainable development will help to make great leaps forward in solving world issues.

One way that promoting sustainable development will help to solve world problems is that it will help developing countries. Aiding the developing countries will prove extremely useful later on when we need help. This will give us the image that we are helpful and are there when other countries need us. Although this will cost a lot of money, it will become a large help later on if and when we're in trouble. Promoting sustainable development in developing countries will also increase peace throughout the world. If all the countries are helping each other out, meaning that we are sharing our information and products, then there will be little to no conflicts, and we can all be happy and get along. Not to mention that helping out other countries will heavily decrease poverty and famine, which will prevent the need for future U.S. aid and thus save us money, since that is what some people are more interested in. Clearly, promoting sustainable development will help to increase peace and equality and decrease poverty and famine.

Promoting sustainable development will definitely help to improve our image as a country. We will be looked at as a great role model and a powerful force with good intentions. The U.S. could be viewed as a gentle giant of sorts. This will improve our favor when it comes to disputes and it will also increase our ally count. Although that should not matter, we should be doing these things out of the goodness of our hearts, not expecting reward. We should not need to receive a reward for us to support the dying, the sick, and the poor. In conclusion, promoting sustainable development will improve our image so that we are looked at in a better light.

Promoting sustainable development will greatly reduce conflict over rare resources. One example of conflict over scarce resources is the U.S. and Iran over oil. Another is against the residents and loggers in South America over the Amazon Rainforest. This could all be avoided if we all shared our resources and promoted the use of sustainable development. Sustainable development would mean that we do not need to constantly deplete the Earth's resources. Sustainable development would mean that we come up with ways to fuel our economies with sources that will never run out! If the countries do work together to achieve that goal, then we will no longer have to fight over the sources that we need because we'll never run out of them.

Promoting sustainable development will help the world make great leaps forward in solving world issues. It will do this by helping developing countries develop in economically and environmentally sound ways, improving the image of the U.S., and reducing disputes and fighting over rare resources. The solving of these problems will help bring about an era of peace all over the world. Sustainable development will save Mother Earth from mutilation and destruction. The world will be a better place if everyone gets along and we all are working toward the same thing: the protection of our planet. Promoting sustainable development will make for a better world for all the generations to come.

Brian Townley, Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10 (Third Place)

Dear Senator Sanders, The American Economy is currently in recovery from the

worst recession to hit this nation since the great depression. This recession has left the American economy in disarray, specifically the American middle class. Stuck on median wages, the American middle class has been hit the hardest by the collapse of the infrastructure of the American economy.

In order to repair this monumental failure of our nation to recognize the middle class as valuable, we must begin to support Main Street America; local businesses. As a nation we tend to ignore the services, and products of local businesses in favor of the cheaper alternatives offered by billion dollar conglomerates. If we, as a nation, can ever hope to change, we must be willing to sacrifice. This phenomenon is responsible for the gradual disappearance of Main Street America, and the lack of attention given to the American Middle Class.

With the ominous threats of climate change advancing, we are offered a second chance to strengthen the middle class. We must create sustainable energy sources, to put an end to global warming. To build our industrial foundation upon a new type of energy will create a surplus of jobs. These jobs must offer respectable wages, health care benefits, and opportunities for growth. If this is done effectively, we may be able to get the American middle class back on track, and simultaneously end the impending threat of global warming.

In order to allow our economy to recover from the recession, we must recognize the youth of America as our future. In doing so, we must stress upon implementing a better educational system to better engage the students, create more affordable collegiate education for the middle class. The middle class faces many challenges, yet are a cornerstone of the American economy. However, when attempting to send their children to college, the middle class faces yet another challenge. The wealthy are able to pay the college tuition, and the poor are given generous financial aid grants. However, the middle class is expected to pay thirty to fifty thousand dollars a year to send their kids to college, money which they don't have. This is unacceptable, and takes away a great deal of incentive for these kids to even attend college. Those who do attend college leave with a degree, but are then faced with enormous amounts of student loans. Lastly, we must involve the youth in the workforce of America. Not only will this strengthen our workforce, but it will also provide the American youth with savings for college, and teach them the value of work.

As I previously stated, in order to change, we must be willing to sacrifice. We must be willing to sacrifice the allure of bargain brands to support a local brand. We must sacrifice our tendency towards gasoline to find more sustainable sources of energy. If we are truly willing to sacrifice, we will change.●

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Catholic schools across our Nation that provide our children with an outstanding education while preparing them to lead lives in the example of Jesus Christ. This year, we mark the 40th year of celebrating Catholic Schools Week, shedding light on the extraordinary contributions these schools and their students make to communities across the country.

This year's theme, "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service," provides a solid representation of the mission of these schools in educating the whole person and forming our children into responsible stewards ready to take on the challenges of the future. Today, more than 2 million children are educated in Catholic schools in the United States. Ninety-nine percent of them graduate from high school, and 85 percent pursue postsecondary education. Such a rate of success is a great testament to the quality of our Catholic schools and their educators.

As an alumnus of a Catholic school in New Orleans, I have firsthand experience of the benefits of receiving a Catholic education. These schools are devoted to nurturing the young minds that pass through their halls each year, instilling in them the values necessary to become active and caring members of their communities, cities, and Nation.

In a recent statement, Bishop George Lucas, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Education, stated:

Our schools have educated millions of young people over the years by providing them a superior academic background, always pointing the way to eternal life. The success of Catholic schools in handing on the faith, generation after generation, is a bright light in the history of the Church in the United States.

During the week of January 26 to February 1, let us recognize the steadfast commitment of the administrators, teachers, students, and families, who support Catholic schools across the United States, and appreciate their efforts to educate the youth of our Nation. In that respect, I am hopeful that the Senate will pass my bipartisan resolution celebrating Catholic Schools Week.●

NOTRE DAME SEMINARY

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, since 1923, the Archdiocese of New Orleans has offered a deeper understanding of Catholic theology and discipleship through Notre Dame Seminary. In its 90 years, Notre Dame Seminary has prepared men for ministerial priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church, promoting a spirit of humility, service, and sacrifice. In addition, the seminary offers graduate theological education programs to deepen the faith of both religious and laity.

Leaving the seminary, these young men are prepared to become servant leaders in their parish communities around the world and to profess the life and good works of Christ in their daily lives. Blessed John Paul II said, "The formation of future priests . . . is considered by the Church one of the most demanding and important tasks for the future of evangelization of humanity."

These 90 years are a testament to Notre Dame Seminary's steadfast commitment to this demanding and important task. Their stewardship of God's grace has blessed our communities, protected the vulnerable, comforted the sick, and offered hope to the broken. Men who have graduated from Notre Dame Seminary have served our communities in over 20 dioceses throughout the United States.

I am grateful for Notre Dame Seminary's leadership in our community and throughout the United States and celebrate their 90 years of preparing servant leaders for our church.

PORTOPERA

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, I am delighted to congratulate PORTopera on its 20th anniversary season.

Since its opening performance of "Carmen" in the summer of 1995, PORTopera has been a pillar of Maine's artisan community and inspired countless young musicians and performing artists to pursue their passion for the opera. Over the years it has brought some of the world's greatest stars and most highly acclaimed productions to Maine audiences and played an invaluable role in enriching our communities.

PORTopera's dedication to excellence has been recognized around the country earning praise in Opera News for its 2012 production of "Madama Butterfly" and the Boston Globe for "Le Nozze di Figaro" in 2001. Furthermore, PORTopera's educational outreach initiatives such as the young artists programs and the opera-in-school program with the University of Maine have provided future generations of singers a place to hone their skills and learn from some of opera's greatest figures.

As Maine's artistic community continues to grow, I am pleased to recognize PORTopera for its leadership and tremendous accomplishments. Congratulations and thank you.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

Under the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the Secretary of the Senate, on January 17, 2014, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 6968(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appointed the following Member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy: Mr. MIKE ROGERS of Michigan.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The message also announced that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS) had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3547. An act making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the enrolled bill was signed on January 17, 2014, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3362. An act to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to require transparency in the operation of American Health Benefit Exchanges.

The message further announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3362. An act to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to require transparency in the operation of American Health Benefit Exchanges; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1950. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1963. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4381. A communication from the Chairman, National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Board's competitive sourcing efforts for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4382. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a biennial report relative to the Do-Not-Call Registry Fee Extension Act of 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4383. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Several Groundfish Species in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XD028) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4384. A communication from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rescission of Quarterly Financial Reporting Requirements" (RIN2126-AB69; Formerly RIN2126-AB48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4385. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; U.S. Navy Training and Testing Activities in the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing Study Area" (RIN0648-BC52) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4386. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Updated Statements of Legal Authority for the Export Administration Regulations" (RIN0694-AG01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4387. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR): Unverified List (UVL)" (RIN0694-AF70) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4388. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Trawl Rationalization Program; Cost Recovery" (RIN0648-BB17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 20, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4389. A communication from the Management Analyst, Office of Internal Control and Management Systems, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removal of Redundant Regulations" (RIN2700-AE11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4390. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Fishery;

2014–2016 Fishing Quotas” (RIN0648–XC855) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4391. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Catch Sharing Plan for Guided Sport and Commercial Fisheries in Alaska” (RIN0648–BA37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4392. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for the Commonwealth of Virginia” (RIN0648–XD004) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4393. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; 2013 Accountability Measure and Closure for Hogfish in the Gulf of Mexico” (RIN0648–XC981) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4394. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area” (RIN0648–XD013) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4395. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Greenland Turbot in the Bering Sea Subarea of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Areas” (RIN0648–XD029) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4396. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries Off West Coast States; Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments” (RIN0648–BD71) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 27, 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4397. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Final Rule to Allow Northeast Multispecies Sector Vessels Access to Year-Round Closed Areas” (RIN0648–BD09) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4398. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Depart-

ment of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Extension of Emergency Fishery Closure Due to the Presence of the Toxin That Causes Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning” (RIN0648–BD84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4399. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures” (RIN0648–BD40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4400. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska Management Area” (RIN0648–XC975) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4401. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska Management Area” (RIN0648–X976) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4402. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer” (RIN0648–XD025) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4403. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Available for the State of New Jersey” (RIN0648–XD012) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4404. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Closure of the 2014 Gulf of Mexico Recreational Season for Red Snapper” (RIN0648–XC967) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4405. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for the State of New Jersey” (RIN0648–XD030) received in the Of-

fice of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4406. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer” (RIN0648–XD021) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4407. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trimester Closure for the Common Pool Fishery” (RIN0648–XD024) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4408. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries” (RIN0648–XD027) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4409. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2013 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Red Porgy” (RIN0648–XC982) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 9, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4410. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; Pacific Whiting and Non-Whiting Allocations; Pacific Whiting Seasons” (RIN0648–XD016) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4411. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; 2014 Commercial Summer Flounder Quota Adjustments” (RIN0648–XD026) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4412. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Revisions to Headboat Reporting Requirements for Species Managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council” (RIN0648–BD21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–4413. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and

South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Amendment 27” (RIN0648-BD05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 13, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4414. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Inner Harbor Navigational Canal, New Orleans, LA” (RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0562) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4415. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Christina River, Wilmington, DE” (RIN1625-AA09) (Docket No. USCG-2012-1085) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4416. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Port of Galveston, Pelican Island Bridge Repairs” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0698) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4417. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Oyster Festival 30th Anniversary Fireworks Display, Oyster Bay, Oyster Bay, NY” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0763) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4418. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Lucas Oil Drag Boat Racing Series; Thompson Bay, Lake Havasu City, AZ” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0746) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4419. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Motion Picture Stunt Work and Filming; Chicago, IL” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0868) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4420. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Old Mormon Slough, Stockton, CA” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0196) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4421. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Fireworks Display, Willam-

ette River, Oregon City, OR” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0623) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4422. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; San Diego Shark Fest Swim; San Diego Bay, San Diego, CA” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0786) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4423. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Barge Launches; Gulfport Lake; Gulfport, MS” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0837) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4424. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Lower Mississippi River Mile 94.1-Mile 95.1; New Orleans, LA” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0989) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4425. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Allied PRA-Solid Works, San Diego Bay; San Diego, CA” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0992) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4426. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; New Year’s Eve Celebration/City of Mobile; Mobile Channel; Mobile, AL” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0980) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4427. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Vessel Launch; Menominee River; Marinette, WI” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-1012) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4428. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; 2013 Holiday Boat Parades, Captain of the Port Miami Zone; FL” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0939) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4429. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Safety Zone; Sausalito Lighted Boat Parade Fireworks Displays, San Francisco Bay, Sausalito, CA” (RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No.

USCG-2013-0930) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4430. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Special Local Regulation; Clearwater Super Boat National Championship Race, Gulf of Mexico; Clearwater FL” (RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0101) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4431. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Waiver for Marking Sunken Vessel with a Light at Night” (RIN1625-AC11) (Docket No. USCG-2012-0054) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4432. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded With Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Inland Rivers, Eighth Coast Guard District; Extension of Stay (Suspension)” (RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0760) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4433. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Weymouth Fore River, Fore River Bridge Construction, Weymouth and Quincy, MA” (RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2012-AA11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4434. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Reporting Requirements for Barges Loaded With Certain Dangerous Cargoes, Inland Rivers, Ninth Coast Guard District; Stay (Suspension)” (RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0849) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4435. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulated Navigation Area; Gulf of Mexico; Mississippi Canyon Block 20, South of New Orleans, LA” (RIN1625-AA11) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0064) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4436. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4437. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to

law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Ehrenberg, First Mesa, Kachina Village, Munds Park, Wickenburg, and Williams, Arizona)" (MB Docket No. 11-207) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 10, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4438. A communication from the Deputy Chief Counsel for Regulations and Security Standards, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Aircraft Repair Station Security" (RIN1652-AA38) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 10, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4439. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Control of Military Training Equipment, Energetic Materials, Personal Protective Equipment, Shelters, Articles Related to Launch Vehicles, Missiles, Rockets, Military Explosives, and Related Items" (RIN0694-AF58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 14, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4440. A communication from the General Counsel, Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Peace Corps, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 10, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 1959. A bill to criminalize the knowing use of commercial robocalls without the prior express written consent of the recipient, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1960. A bill to require rulemaking by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to address considerations in evaluating the need for public and individual disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 1961. A bill to protect surface water from contamination by chemical storage facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1962. A bill to establish the Pullman National Historical Park in the State of Illinois as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 1963. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; read the first time.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. SCHATZ):
S. 1964. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to exempt certain flights from increased aviation security service fees; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON):

S. Res. 337. A resolution expressing support for the designation of January 28, 2014, as "National Data Privacy Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 338. A resolution designating Diane K. Skvarla as Curator Emeritus of the United States Senate; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. RUBIO, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. Res. 339. A resolution commemorating the 150th anniversary of Mayo Clinic; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 204

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 204, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 338

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 338, a bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the land and water conservation fund to maximize the effectiveness of the fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 398

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 398, a bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum, and for other purposes.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contribu-

tions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 666

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 666, a bill to prohibit attendance of an animal fighting venture, and for other purposes.

S. 734

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 734, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation.

S. 946

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 946, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, and for other purposes.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1335

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1335, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1476

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1476, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the denial of deduction for certain excessive employee remuneration, and for other purposes.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1524

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1524, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude major professional sports leagues from qualifying as tax-exempt organizations.

S. 1587

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1587, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal to each of Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 1600

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1600, a bill to facilitate the reestablishment of domestic, critical mineral designation, assessment, production, manufacturing, recycling, analysis, forecasting, workforce, education, research, and international capabilities in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1622

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1622, a bill to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1810

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1810, a bill to provide paid family and medical leave benefits to certain individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1823

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Massachu-

setts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1823, a bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to better enable State child welfare agencies to prevent human trafficking of children and serve the needs of children who are victims of human trafficking, and for other purposes.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 1897

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1897, a bill to prevent and mitigate identity theft, to ensure privacy, to provide notice of security breaches, and to enhance criminal penalties, law enforcement assistance, and other protections against security breaches, fraudulent access, and misuse of personally identifiable information.

S. 1902

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1902, a bill to require notification of individuals of breaches of personally identifiable information through Exchanges under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1908

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 1923

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

S. 1926

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the

Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

S. 1948

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1948, a bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 26

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 26, a concurrent resolution recognizing the need to improve physical access to many federally funded facilities for all people of the United States, particularly people with disabilities.

S. RES. 330

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 330, a resolution recognizing the 50th anniversary of "Smoking and Health: Report of the Advisory Committee to the Surgeon General of the United States" and the significant progress in reducing the public health burden of tobacco use, and supporting an end to tobacco-related death and disease.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 333, a resolution

strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

S. RES. 334

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 334, a resolution recognizing the goals of Catholic Schools Week and honoring the valuable contributions of Catholic schools in the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1960. A bill to require rulemaking by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to address considerations in evaluating the need for public and individual disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follow:

S. 1960

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Fairness in Federal Disaster Declarations Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. REGULATORY ACTION REQUIRED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (in this Act referred to as the "Administrator" and "FEMA", respectively) shall amend the rules of the Administrator under section 206.48 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

(b) NEW CRITERIA REQUIRED.—The amended rules issued under subsection (a) shall provide for the following:

(1) PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Such rules shall provide that, with respect to the evaluation of the need for public assistance—

(A) specific weighted valuations shall be assigned to each criterion, as follows—

(i) estimated cost of the assistance, 10 percent;

(ii) localized impacts, 40 percent;

(iii) insurance coverage in force, 10 percent;

(iv) hazard mitigation, 10 percent;

(v) recent multiple disasters, 10 percent;

(vi) programs of other Federal assistance, 10 percent; and

(vii) economic circumstances described in subparagraph (B), 10 percent; and

(B) FEMA shall consider the economic circumstances of—

(i) the local economy of the affected area, including factors such as the local assessable tax base and local sales tax, the median income as it compares to that of the State, and the poverty rate as it compares to that of the State; and

(ii) the economy of the State, including factors such as the unemployment rate of the State, as compared to the national unemployment rate.

(2) INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Such rules shall provide that, with respect to the evaluation of the severity, magnitude, and impact of the disaster and the evaluation of the need for assistance to individuals—

(A) specific weighted valuations shall be assigned to each criterion, as follows—

(i) concentration of damages, 20 percent;

(ii) trauma, 20 percent;

(iii) special populations, 20 percent;

(iv) voluntary agency assistance, 10 percent;

(v) insurance, 20 percent;

(vi) average amount of individual assistance by State, 5 percent; and

(vii) economic considerations described in subparagraph (B), 5 percent; and

(B) FEMA shall consider the economic circumstances of the affected area, including factors such as the local assessable tax base and local sales tax, the median income as it compares to that of the State, and the poverty rate as it compares to that of the State.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1962. A bill to establish the Pullman National Historical Park in the State of Illinois as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. DURBIN. I rise today to introduce the Pullman National Historical Park Act. This legislation continues our commitment to preserve the unique stories and places that have a special place in our Nation's history.

The Pullman neighborhood has been the site of some major events in U.S. history. The area was first developed in 1880 by George Pullman as the first American industrial town—a mixed-income community where the families of company executives and factory workers could work and live together.

During the economic depression of the 1890s, the Pullman site served as the catalyst for the first industry-wide strike in the United States, which helped lead to the establishment of Labor Day as a national holiday.

The Pullman community then went on to play an important role in African-American and early Civil Rights history through the legacy of the Pullman porters, as well as the development of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—the first Black labor union.

So it is fitting that the area has been recognized as a historical landmark by the city of Chicago, the State of Illinois, and nationally. But more can be done to showcase Pullman's unique place in America's history.

A study released last year by the National Park Service stated that the Pullman Historical District had undisputed national significance and would make an excellent candidate for addition to the national park system. I agree. I am joined by my colleagues Senator MARK KIRK and Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY today to introduce a bill to designate the Pullman district as a national park. If created, the Pullman National Historical Park

would be an important addition to the current national parks system because it would poignantly highlight stories from communities that are rarely represented in other national parks.

The park's urban location on Chicago's South Side would make it easily accessible to millions of people by public transportation—again, setting Pullman apart from other national parks. The Pullman National Historical Park would also provide an opportunity for tourism and facilitate job creation in the Southeast side of Chicago. More than 3,000 Chicagoans and 110 organizations and businesses—including the AFL-CIO and Chicago Federation of Labor—have signed statements of support calling for its creation.

Studies show that for every dollar that is invested in national park operations, \$10 of economic activity is generated locally. Just last year, national park visitors contributed more than \$30 billion to local economies and support more than a quarter million jobs. The benefits are clear.

Creating the Pullman National Historical Park will allow the National Park Service to better represent America's cultural and ethnic diversity while providing a boost to the local economy and conservation opportunities for the area. I urge my colleagues to support Pullman National Historical Park Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follow:

S. 1962

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Pullman National Historical Park Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) in 1970, the Secretary of the Interior designated the Pullman Historic District as a National Historic Landmark District in 1970 because of—

(A) the significance of the District to the labor history, social history, architecture, and urban planning of the United States; and

(B) the pivotal role of events in the District in creating the first national Labor Day holiday in the world;

(2) between 1880 and 1884 George M. Pullman, owner of the Pullman Palace Car Company, built the Pullman community, which was envisioned by Pullman as an industrial town that would provide employees with—

(A) a model community; and

(B) suitable living conditions;

(3) the town developed by George M. Pullman, which consisted of over 1,000 buildings and homes, was awarded "The World's Most Perfect Town" at the International Hygienic and Pharmaceutical Exposition in 1896;

(4) the Pullman factory site is a true symbol of the historic struggle in the United States to achieve fair labor practices for the working class, with the original factory serving as the catalyst for the first industry-wide strike in the United States;

(5) in the midst of economic depression in 1894, to protest unsafe conditions and reductions in pay, Pullman factory workers initiated a strike that—

(A) when taken up as a cause by the American Railway Union, crippled the entire rail industry;

(B) continued even in the face of a Federal injunction and a showdown between laborers and Federal troops that turned violent and deadly; and

(C) set a national example for the ability of working people in the United States to change the existing system in favor of more just practices for protecting workers rights and safety;

(6) following the deaths of a number of workers at the hands of the United States military and United States Marshals during the 1894 strike, Congress unanimously voted to approve rush legislation that created a national Labor Day holiday, which was signed into law by President Grover Cleveland 6 days after the end of the strike;

(7) the Pullman Palace Car Company also played an important role in African-American and early civil rights history through the legacy of the Pullman porters, many of whom were ex-slaves who were employed in a heavily discriminatory environment immediately following the Civil War;

(8) the Pullman porters, who served diligently between the 1870s and the 1960s, have been commended for—

(A) the level of service and attention to detail of the Pullman porters; and

(B) the contributions of the Pullman porters to the development of the African-American middle class;

(9) the information, ideas, and commerce the Pullman porters carried across the country while traveling on trains helped to bring education and wealth to African-American communities throughout the United States;

(10) the positive role of the Pullman porters in the historical image of the first-class service that was made available on Pullman cars is unmistakable;

(11) the Pullman community was the seminal home to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, which—

(A) was the first African-American labor union with a collective bargaining agreement;

(B) was founded by civil rights pioneer A. Philip Randolph in 1925;

(C) fought against discrimination and in support of just labor practices; and

(D) helped lay the groundwork for what became the great Civil Rights Movement of the 20th Century;

(12) the Pullman community is—

(A) a paramount illustration of the work of architect Solon Spencer Beman;

(B) a well-preserved example of 19th Century community planning, architecture, and landscape design; and

(C) comprised of a number of historic structures, including the Administration Clocktower Building, Hotel Florence, Greenstone Church, Market Square, and hundreds of units of rowhouses built for Pullman workers;

(13) the preservation of the Pullman site has been threatened by—

(A) plans for demolition in 1960; and

(B) a fire in 1998, which damaged the iconic clocktower and the rear erecting shops;

(14) the diligent efforts of community organizations, foundations, nonprofits, residents, the State, and units of local government in the restoration and preservation of the District after the 1998 fire were vital to the protection of the Pullman site;

(15) due to the historic and architectural significance of the District, the District is designated as—

(A) a registered National Historic Landmark District;

(B) an Illinois State Landmark; and

(C) a City of Chicago Landmark District; and

(16) the preservation, enhancement, economic, and tourism potential and management of the important historic and architectural resources of the Park requires cooperation and partnerships from among local property owners, the Federal Government, the State, units of local government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and the more than 100 civic organizations who have expressed support for community preservation through the establishment of the Pullman National Historical Park.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **PARK.**—The term “Park” means the Pullman National Historical Park established by section 4(a).

(2) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) **STATE.**—The term “State” means the State of Illinois.

SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PULLMAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.**—There is established in the State a unit of the National Park System, to be known as the “Pullman National Historical Park”—

(1) to preserve and interpret for the benefit of future generations—

(A) the significant labor, industrial, civil rights, and social history of the Park;

(B) the significant architectural structures in the Park; and

(C) the role of the Pullman community in the creation of the first national Labor Day holiday in the world;

(2) to coordinate preservation, protection, and interpretation efforts of the Park by the Federal Government, the State, units of local government, and private and nonprofit organizations; and

(3) to coordinate appropriate management options necessary to ensure the protection, preservation, and interpretation of the many significant aspects of the Park.

(b) **PARK BOUNDARY.**—The boundary of the Park shall be established by the Secretary, but shall not exceed the boundary of the approximately 300-acre Pullman Historic District in Chicago, which is between 103rd Street on the north, 115th Street on the south, Cottage Grove Avenue on the west, and the Norfolk & Western Rail Line on the east.

(c) **INCLUSION OF HISTORIC SITES.**—On conveyance by the State to the Secretary, the Park shall include—

(1) the Pullman Factory Complex, including the Clock Tower Building and rear erecting shops; and

(2) the approximately 13 acres of land on which the structures described in paragraph (1) are located.

SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall administer land within the boundary of the Park in accordance with—

(1) this Act; and

(2) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including—

(A) the National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.); and

(B) the Act of August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.).

(b) **COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.**—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agree-

ments with the State or other public and nonpublic entities, under which the Secretary may identify, interpret, and provide assistance for the preservation of non-Federal land within the boundaries of the Park and at sites in close proximity to the Park but located outside the boundaries of the Park, including providing for placement of directional and interpretive signage, exhibits, and technology-based interpretive devices.

(c) **ACQUISITION OF LAND.**—The Secretary may acquire for inclusion in the Park any land (including interests in land), buildings, or structures owned by the State or any other political, private, or nonprofit entity by donation, transfer, exchange, or purchase from a willing seller.

(d) **MANAGEMENT PLAN.**—Not later than 3 fiscal years after the date on which funds are first made available to carry out this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the State, shall complete a general management plan for the Park in accordance with—

(1) section 12(b) of the National Park System General Authorities Act (16 U.S.C. 1a-7(b)); and

(2) any other applicable laws.

(e) **EFFECT.**—Nothing in this Act modifies any authority of the Federal Government to carry out Federal laws on Federal land located in the Park.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 337—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF JANUARY 28, 2014, AS “NATIONAL DATA PRIVACY DAY”

Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 337

Whereas new and innovative technologies enhance our lives by increasing our ability to communicate, learn, share, and produce;

Whereas integration of new and innovative technologies into our everyday lives has the potential to compromise the privacy of individuals if appropriate protection is not taken;

Whereas there is opportunity for governments, corporations, and civil society to work together to protect the privacy of individuals;

Whereas many individuals and companies are not fully aware of the risks to the privacy of individuals posed by new and innovative technologies, of data protection and privacy laws, or of the specific steps they can take to protect the privacy of individuals;

Whereas “National Data Privacy Day” constitutes a nationwide effort to educate and raise awareness about respecting privacy, safeguarding data, and enabling trust;

Whereas the annual recognition of “National Data Privacy Day” by Congress would encourage more people nationwide to be aware of data privacy and to take all necessary steps to prevent data loss and respect privacy;

Whereas government officials and agencies, as well as representatives of businesses and nonprofit organizations, privacy professionals, academic communities, legal scholars, educators, and others with an interest in data privacy are working together on January 28, 2014, to educate and raise awareness about data privacy and about protecting the privacy of individuals;

Whereas on January 28, 2014, privacy professionals and educators are being encouraged to discuss data privacy and security; and

Whereas January 28, 2014, would be an appropriate day to designate as "National Data Privacy Day": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of January 28, 2014, as "National Data Privacy Day";

(2) encourages State and local governments to observe the day with appropriate activities and initiatives that raise awareness about data privacy and security;

(3) encourages privacy professionals and educators to discuss data privacy and security;

(4) encourages corporations, governments, and other relevant organizations to take steps to protect the privacy and security of individuals and to promote trust in technologies;

(5) encourages individuals across the United States to learn about data privacy and the specific steps they can take to protect the privacy of information they possess about themselves and others; and

(6) encourages everyone to respect privacy, safeguard data they possess, and enable trust.

SENATE RESOLUTION 338—DESIGNATING DIANE K. SKVARLA AS CURATOR EMERITUS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 338

Whereas Diane K. Skvarla will retire from the Senate after 18 years as Senate Curator, and more than 30 years of Senate service;

Whereas she has diligently cared for and greatly enhanced the material history and historic spaces of the Senate as a legacy for future generations;

Whereas she has educated and inspired the Senate community, visitors to the Capitol, and the people of the United States with numerous exhibits, publications, and educational programs;

Whereas her vision and leadership resulted in significant improvements to the restoration and historic interpretation of the Old Senate Chamber and other historic rooms of the Capitol;

Whereas she has caused to be published significant catalogues of the fine and graphic art collections of the Senate for the benefit of the people of the United States;

Whereas she has upheld the highest standards and traditions of the Senate with unwavering dedication; and

Whereas she has earned the respect, affection, and esteem of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That, effective January 27, 2014, as a token of the appreciation of the Senate for her long and faithful service, Diane K. Skvarla is hereby designated as Curator Emeritus of the United States Senate.

SENATE RESOLUTION 339—COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF MAYO CLINIC

Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. RUBIO, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 339

Whereas Dr. William Worrall Mayo first announced his plans to establish a medical practice in Rochester, Minnesota on January 27, 1864;

Whereas 2014 marks 150 years of Mayo Clinic providing continuous, quality service to patients;

Whereas the Mayo Clinic model of integrated, high-quality health care has become an international model for providing health care;

Whereas the many historic achievements of Mayo Clinic include—

(1) developing the first integrated, multi-specialty practice of medicine;

(2) creating the first anti-blackout suits for military pilots during World War II;

(3) winning the Nobel Prize in 1950 for discovering cortisone;

(4) developing a DNA test that detects anthrax in less than 1 hour; and

(5) continuing a tradition of helping individuals in the most need of help, including by deploying medical teams to earthquake-stricken Haiti;

Whereas Mayo Clinic continues to value compassion, integrity, quality, and innovation in its leadership around the world; and

Whereas Mayo Clinic is considered a premiere global center of health and healing dedicated to medical care, research, and education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate commemorates the 150th anniversary of Mayo Clinic.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, January 28, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 1600, the Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2013.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to Dave_Berick@energy.senate.gov.

For further information please contact David Berick at (202) 224-2209, Megan Brewster (202) 224-6689, or Brian Hughes, (202) 224-7555.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-

sions will meet in executive session on Wednesday, January 29, 2013, at 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to markup the nominations of David Weil, of Massachusetts, to serve as Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor; France A. Cordova, of New Mexico, to serve as Director of the National Science Foundation; Nomination of Steven Joel Anthony, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Railroad Retirement Board; James H. Shelton III, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Education, Department of Education; Michael Keith Yudin, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education; James Cole, Jr., of New York, to be General Counsel, Department of Education; Theodore Reed Mitchell, of California, to be Under Secretary of Education, Department of Education; and Ericka M. Miller, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, Department of Education; as well as any additional nominations cleared for action.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the committee at (202) 224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this oversight hearing is to explore opportunities and challenges associated with lifting the ban on U.S. crude oil exports.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by e-mail to Lauren_Goldschmidt@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Todd Wooten at (202) 224-3907, Abigail Campbell at (202) 224-4905, or Lauren Goldschmidt at (202) 224-5488.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ryan Orgera, a Sea Grant fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the flood insurance bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORIZING EXTENSION OF THE NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT WITH KOREA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 295, S. 1901.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1901) to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I further ask that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (S. 1901) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1901

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Support for United States-Republic of Korea Civil Nuclear Cooperation Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In the 60th year of the alliance, the relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea could not be stronger. It is based on mutual sacrifice, mutual respect, shared interests, and shared responsibility to promote peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and throughout the world.

(2) North Korea's nuclear weapons programs, including uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing technologies, undermine security on the Korean Peninsula. The United States and the Republic of Korea have a shared interest in preventing further proliferation, including through the implementation of the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

(3) Both the United States and Republic of Korea have a shared objective in strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at London, Moscow, and Washington July 1, 1968, and a political and a commercial interest in working collaboratively to address challenges to their respective peaceful civil nuclear programs.

(4) The nuclear energy agreement referred to in section 3 is scheduled to expire on March 19, 2014. In order to maintain healthy and uninterrupted cooperation in this area between the two countries while a new agreement is being negotiated, Congress should authorize the President to extend the duration of the current agreement until March 19, 2016.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

Notwithstanding section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2153), the President is authorized to take such actions as may be required to extend the term of the Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Korea

Concerning Civil Uses of Atomic Energy, done at Washington November 24, 1972 (24 UST 775; TIAS 7583), and amended on May 15, 1974 (25 UST 1102; TIAS 7842), to a date that is not later than March 19, 2016.

SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS ON PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter until a new Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Korea Concerning Civil Uses of Nuclear Energy is submitted to Congress, the President shall provide to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the progress of negotiations on a new civil nuclear cooperation agreement.

PROVIDING FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 75, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 75) was agreed to.

NATIONAL DATA PRIVACY DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 337 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 337) expressing support for the designation of January 28, 2014, as "National Data Privacy Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 337) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

DESIGNATING DIANE K. SKVARLA AS CURATOR EMERITUS

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to S. Res. 338 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 338) designating Diane K. Skvarla as Curator Emeritus of the United States Senate.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today we honor the hard work and accomplishments of Ms. Diane Skvarla, who is retiring after 20 years of service as the Senate curator.

In the 27 years that I have served Nevadans in the Senate, I have never lost my appreciation for the rich history, works of fine art, and craftsmanship along the halls of the Senate. The Capitol and Senate office buildings are treasures and symbols of our democracy.

An enduring institution, the Senate is passed down from generation to generation as Senators and visitors come and go. Just as we have a responsibility to preserve the traditions and history of the Senate, we also have a responsibility to preserve the buildings and furnishings. Former majority leader Mike Mansfield understood the need to conserve these adornments of American democracy and advocated for the creation of the U.S. Senate Commission on Art and the Office of Senate Curator to fulfill this objective. Curators usually oversee museums and private collections. The Senate, on the other hand, is a working building. Maintaining a balance between conservation and the considerations of working life for Members and staff is a unique task. In her role as Senate curator, Diane has worked fiercely to successfully strike this balance every day.

Diane began working for the curator's office in 1979 as a staff member following graduation from Colgate University. After she earned her master's degree in museum studies from George Washington University in 1987, Diane took on more responsibility, including work on the Senate's bicentennial celebration in 1989. After a short break from the office, Diane was asked to return in 1994 as the curator to follow Jim Ketchum.

Throughout her tenure as curator, Diane has remained a steadfast advocate for the preservation of the Senate. Diane worked to publish the Catalogue of Fine Art and Catalogue of Graphic Art, both comprehensively documenting the decorative treasures of the

Senate. Diane also worked to acquire the large portrait of Henry Clay that was previously unknown and now hangs in the Brumidi Corridor just off of the Senate floor. In addition, Diane spearheaded restoration efforts of the Old Senate Chamber in 2011–2012 and ongoing restoration and research in the Brumidi Corridor. She has been instrumental in the forthcoming publication of a book detailing the discoveries of the Brumidi Corridor in the Senate.

Among her many achievements are projects close to my heart. Diane worked hard to discover, catalogue, and restore articles of historic furniture such as the Russell barrel-back chairs and rosewood writing desk now used in my office. She also managed the restoration of a portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart that hangs in the entrance to my office.

Managing the working considerations of the Senate can be a challenge, especially following recent emergencies such as September 11 and the anthrax attacks in 2001. Following the terrorist attacks on New York City and the Pentagon new emergency measures and plans were implemented throughout the Federal Government. Diane has been instrumental in developing emergency disaster plans for the Senate's artistic and cultural artifacts. Creating and rehearsing evacuation plans for staff, producing protocols for handling artwork, and coordinating with first-responder agencies to ensure safe access and communication following disasters and emergencies, Diane leaves the Senate more prepared than ever.

I join my colleagues in thanking Diane for her hard work and extend congratulations on her well-earned re-

tirement. I wish her the best in all of her future endeavors.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 338) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST
TIME—S. 1963

Mr. DURBIN. I understand S. 1963 introduced earlier today by Senator PRYOR is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1963) to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

Mr. DURBIN. I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY
28, 2014

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Janu-

ary 28, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926, the flood insurance bill, postcloture; that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; finally, I ask unanimous consent that time during adjournment and recess count postcloture.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the President of the United States will deliver the State of the Union Address at 9 p.m. tomorrow. All Senators are invited to attend the joint session. The Senate will begin gathering in the Senate Chamber at 8:20 p.m. and depart from the Senate Chamber at 8:30 p.m. to proceed as a body to the Hall of the House.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:40 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 10 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Monday, January 27, 2014

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 27, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE WOMACK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

CONGRATULATING BOY SCOUT TROOP 31

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge the 100th anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 31, which is located in State College, Pennsylvania, Juniata Valley Council, Centre County, proudly within the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District.

With Troop 31 scheduled to celebrate this milestone on “Scout Sunday” this coming February 2, I want to offer my praise to the generations of young men who have given their all through service to others. Chartered by St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, Boy Scout Troop 31 should take this time to look back on its many accomplishments.

This unit has awarded 170 Eagle Scout recognitions since it was founded, which is no surprise, considering that, in just the last 5 years, Troop 31 has racked up over 40,000 community service hours, giving back to the local community.

As the former president of the Juniata Valley Boy Scout Council and a

long-time scoutmaster of a Boy Scout troop in the same county, it has been an honor for me to observe the success of State College Troop 31.

The adult leadership of Troop 31, including scoutmasters, assistant scoutmasters, troop committee members, merit badge counselors, and parents are to be congratulated for 100 years of molding boys into men through the principles and the values of Scouting.

The countless boys that have hiked the Scouting trail as members of Troop 31 have gone on to become productive members of their communities, leaders in business, and outstanding citizens.

This Scouting unit has exemplified the vision of Scouting founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell when he stated, “It is the spirit within, not the veneer without, that makes a man.”

Mr. Speaker, Boy Scout Troop 31 deserves our praise and thanks for their service and sacrifice.

Congratulations on this historic milestone.

SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, last week the Drudge Report featured an article with a striking headline, “The World’s Most Ancient Christian Communities Are Being Destroyed—and No One Cares.” This sentiment was expressed in no uncertain terms yesterday at an event in my district at St. John the Beloved in McLean, Virginia.

People from around the Greater Washington, D.C., area gathered to hear directly from five senior Syrian Christian leaders, part of a delegation from the war-ravaged country and the first of its kind that I know of to visit the U.S. since the hostilities began. These men will speak at The Heritage Foundation at 1 p.m. today and will meet with Members of Congress tomorrow. Their story and that of their communities bears telling not only to policymakers, but to the American church at large, for they represent the very cradle of Christendom. They spoke movingly of their identity as Syrian Christians with ancient roots predating the apostle Paul.

Today these communities face violence, kidnapping, sexual assault, displacement, and more. According to the Barnabus Fund, which is hosting this delegation, an estimated 600,000 Christians in Syria have already fled the

country or lost their lives. Of course, general violence plagues Syria, but this ancient Christian community finds itself targeted by Islamist elements in the country, including a significant number of foreign jihadists who have flocked to the battlefield.

Several messages emerged at the talk yesterday, but one held particular relevance for the faith community in America. These Syrian Christian leaders made a plea for engagement from the church in the West. Specifically, they sought for American churches to “adopt” specific Syrian churches—to commit to praying on their behalf and advocating for them when possible. The need is great, but so too is the opportunity.

The plight of Christians in Syria, while horrific, is in some respects a similar story. Time and again, Syrian Christians remark that they fear their fate that befell their brethren in Iraq, where hundreds of thousands fled after being targeted by rival Islamist groups. Today, Iraq’s Christian population has fallen from as many as 1.4 million in 2003 to roughly 200,000 today. In fact, throughout the Middle East, Christian communities are increasingly under siege and imperiled. Christianity is at risk of being ripped from the very fabric of the Middle East when, for centuries, it has been part of the rich tapestry of that region.

Will we permit it to happen on our watch? Will we answer their pleas for help, or will their cries fall on deaf ears? I pray it is not too late.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o’clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We pause now in Your presence and acknowledge our dependence on You.

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

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

We ask Your blessing upon the men and women of this, the people's House, who are returning this day to their stations here on Capitol Hill.

As the new session is in its early days, help each Member to obey Your law, to do Your will, and to walk in Your way. Grant that they might be good in thought, gracious in word, generous in deed, and great in spirit.

Make this a glorious day in which all are glad to be alive and ready to serve You.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HOLDING led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 27, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been an honor to serve my neighbors, friends and family of Florida's 19th Congressional District.

Regardless of some personal struggles in 2013, this year has already been tremendously positive as I focus on my health, family and faith.

Unfortunately, some of my struggles had serious consequences. While I have dealt with those issues on a personal level, it is my belief that professionally I cannot fully and effectively serve as a United States Representative to the place I love and call home, Southwest Florida.

I hereby submit this letter of resignation as the Representative of the 19th District of Florida, effective 6:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, January 27, 2014. Please find the attached letter I have submitted to Governor Rick Scott.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, to you and our colleagues from both parties, I thank you. Thank you for the tremendous support and encouragement. Oftentimes in Congress, our personal relationships and successes are overshadowed by intense but meaningful and necessary debate. However, I leave the House of Representatives with

friendships and memories of great men and women dedicated to helping and improving the lives of our fellow Americans.

As an eternal optimist, I know there are great things in store for our country when we find ways to work together. Whether it is as a father, a husband, or in any future endeavor, I hope to contribute what I can to better our country in the years to come.

Sincerely,

TREY RADEL,
Member of Congress.

Enclosure.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 27, 2014.

Hon. RICK SCOTT,
State of Florida,
Tallahassee, FL.

DEAR GOVERNOR SCOTT: I hereby submit my resignation as the United States Representative of the 19th Congressional District of Florida. My resignation is effective at 6:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, January 27, 2014.

Please find the attached letter I have submitted to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

TREY RADEL,
Member of Congress.

Enclosure.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 27, 2014.

Hon. KEN DETZNER,
Secretary of State, Florida Department of State,
Tallahassee, FL.

DEAR SECRETARY OF STATE DETZNER: I hereby submit my resignation as the United States Representative of the 19th District of Florida. My resignation is effective at 6:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, January 27, 2014.

Please find the attached letter I have submitted to Governor Rick Scott.

Sincerely,

TREY RADEL,
Member of Congress.

Enclosure.

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE FOR CLEAN NUCLEAR ENERGY

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month I unveiled my legislative priorities for 2014. I promised the people of Aiken and Barnwell Counties that I would continue to advocate on behalf of the missions at the Savannah River Site, a Department of Energy facility that has experienced several setbacks as a result of the administration's confused policies on clean nuclear energy.

On Friday, I hosted a roundtable conducted by talented staff members Ted Felder, Sarah Beaulieu, and Baker Elmore with Site contractors, community leaders, and locally elected officials to discuss a path forward. Having all parties in a central setting gave me the opportunity to hear their concerns, thoughts, and proposals for jobs. While many different priorities were discussed, everyone shares the same ob-

jective: ensure current and future missions remain intact with a dedicated workforce for environmental cleanup, nonproliferation compliance, and national security.

As the only Member of Congress who has worked at SRS, I am confident that as we all work together for these missions, our goal will be accomplished.

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

UNEMPLOYMENT

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, today in our country, far too many Americans have been unemployed for too long. Out of every 10 people looking for work, nearly four have been looking for more than 6 months. What for many families began as a crisis has turned into a reality, a new normal.

That's why the House has passed dozens of jobs bills that would create a better environment for hiring and more economic growth. One proposal awaiting action in the Senate is H.R. 803, the SKILLS Act.

Right now, if you want to acquire new skills to qualify for a good job, you are up against a job-training system that is a maze of overlapping programs and waste. The SKILLS Act streamlines and strengthens the system to make it more effective for those who need help. It reduces roadblocks for both job-seekers and employers trying to find the right candidates.

While our economy has been changing, the way we help prepare our workers has not. With so many Americans still asking the question "where are the jobs?" it is clearly past time that we do this.

Unfortunately, not only have Senate Democrats failed to act on this measure, their focus continues to be on improving unemployment. Our focus should be on improving employment, making it easier to create jobs and to boost wages.

To help the nation's long-term unemployed, the Senate should pass the SKILLS Act as soon as possible.

IRAN

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to find anyone outside the Obama administration singing high praises for the nuclear deal with Iran.

In fact, the regime in Tehran has on more than one occasion taken to the media to declare how the Obama administration is overselling the terms of the agreement, how there will be no

dismantling of centrifuges, how the United States “surrendered to the Iranian nation’s will.”

So while this administration, Mr. Speaker, gives back access to billions of dollars in frozen assets and relaxes sanctions on the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism, Iran, their centrifuges will continue to spin.

History has taught us that we are not dealing with an honest broker in Tehran. The election of President Rouhani does nothing to change the fact that the Supreme Leader is still in charge. Nothing in this agreement denuclearizes a hostile and an oppressive regime.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLINS of New York). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o’clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1730

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS) at 5 o’clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH AND RECOVERY ACT

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2166) to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2166

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act”.

SEC. 2. EXPEDITED ACCESS TO CERTAIN FEDERAL LANDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and implement a process to expedite

access to Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for eligible organizations and eligible individuals to request access to Federal lands to conduct good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions. The process developed and implemented pursuant to this subsection shall include provisions that clarify that—

(1) an eligible organization or eligible individual granted access under this section shall be acting for private purposes and shall not be considered a Federal volunteer;

(2) an eligible organization or eligible individual conducting a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section shall not be considered a volunteer under section 3 of the Volunteers in the Parks Act of 1969 (16 U.S.C. 181);

(3) the Federal Torts Claim Act shall not apply to an eligible organization or eligible individual carrying out a privately requested good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section; and

(4) the Federal Employee Compensation Act shall not apply to an eligible organization or eligible individual conducting good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section and such activities shall not constitute civilian employment.

(b) RELEASE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FROM LIABILITY.—The Secretary shall not require an eligible organization or an eligible individual to have liability insurance as a condition of accessing Federal lands under this section if the eligible organization or eligible individual—

(1) acknowledges and consents, in writing, to the provisions listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a); and

(2) signs a waiver releasing the Federal Government from all liability related to the access granted under this section.

(c) APPROVAL AND DENIAL OF REQUESTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall notify an eligible organization and eligible individual of the approval or denial of a request by that eligible organization and eligible individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section not more than 48 hours after the request is made.

(2) DENIALS.—If the Secretary denies a request from an eligible organization or eligible individual to carry out a good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission under this section, the Secretary shall notify the eligible organization or eligible individual of—

(A) the reason for the denial request; and

(B) any actions that eligible organization or eligible individual can take to meet the requirements for the request to be approved.

(d) PARTNERSHIPS.—The Secretary shall develop search-and-recovery focused partnerships with search-and-recovery organizations to—

(1) coordinate good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions on Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary; and

(2) expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a joint report to Congress describing—

(1) plans to develop partnerships described in subsection (d)(1); and

(2) efforts being taken to expedite and accelerate good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission efforts for missing individuals on Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary pursuant to subsection (d)(2).

(f) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION AND ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The terms “eligible organization” and “eligible individual” means an organization or individual, respectively, that—

(A) is acting in a not-for-profit capacity; and

(B) is certificated in training that meets or exceeds standards established by the American Society for Testing and Materials.

(2) GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH-AND-RECOVERY MISSION.—The term “good Samaritan search-and-recovery mission” means a search for one or more missing individuals believed to be deceased at the time that the search is initiated.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as appropriate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the RULE, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

In the Natural Resources Committee, we heard testimony from Jodi Goldberg, who shared a story about the search for her brother Keith, who had been murdered and whose body was presumed to be in the vicinity of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. A nonprofit search-and-rescue team attempted to search within the recreation area but was delayed by the National Park Service for over a year. By the time the search-and-recovery team was allowed access to search for Mr. Goldberg’s remains, they were found in a matter of hours.

The bureaucratic delays and roadblocks constructed by the National Park Service are at best unnecessary. Much worse than that, they have caused undue suffering to families who simply want to look for their loved ones.

This bipartisan bill makes perfect sense. The Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, sponsored by Congressman JOE HECK, would require the Federal land management agencies to quickly issue permits to qualify search-and-recovery groups. This would also eliminate the requirement to obtain costly insurance provided they waive liability against the Federal Government.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation.

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

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

In January 2012, when Keith Goldberg went missing, finding him was all his family wanted. Investigators presumed that he had been murdered and his remains were somewhere in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, a unit administered by the National Park Service. After several months passed, local law enforcement was unable to recover Mr. Goldberg's remains, and they gave up the search.

His family, wanting what any family would want, reached out to a private, nonprofit search-and-rescue outfit for assistance. Unfortunately, it took 15 months for the professional search-and-rescue company to acquire the permits and insurance required to conduct a search. However, within 2 hours of receiving the necessary credentials, Mr. Goldberg's body was recovered.

H.R. 2166 will help speed up the process for granting private Good Samaritan search-and-rescue companies access to Federal lands. The bill strikes a fair balance between guaranteeing safety and sufficient liability insurance for the American taxpayer and improving the process. Under H.R. 2166, private search-and-rescue operations, when appropriate, can have, and should have, timely access to public lands under H.R. 2166.

I support the legislation and urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada, Dr. HECK, the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member of the House Natural Resources Committee, as well as the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Arizona, and the gentleman from Utah for working with me in a bipartisan manner to bring H.R. 2166, the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, to the floor.

H.R. 2166 tears down the bureaucratic roadblocks that are preventing families from receiving closure when their loved ones go missing on Federal land.

This issue was first brought to my attention by the separate, but similarly tragic, cases of Las Vegas taxi driver Keith Goldberg and Air Force Staff Sergeant Antonio Tucker.

Mr. Goldberg and Staff Sergeant Tucker were presumed dead, and their remains were believed to be missing somewhere within the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. In both cases, local, experienced search-and-recovery groups volunteered their time and resources to help locate the remains of these missing individuals.

Unfortunately, due to unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles from the Federal Government, the group volunteering to help locate and recover Mr. Goldberg's remains was denied access to Park Service land for over 15 months. The

group volunteering to help locate the remains of Staff Sergeant Tucker was denied access for 10 months, needlessly delaying the closure both families deserved.

These stories are heart-wrenching, these actions are unacceptable, and they must change. Once these bureaucratic hurdles were finally cleared and these Good Samaritan search-and-recovery groups were allowed access to Park Service land, Mr. Goldberg's remains were recovered in less than 2 hours, and the remains of Staff Sergeant Tucker were recovered in less than 2 days.

As a former member of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Search and Rescue Team, I introduced this bill because unnecessary red tape simply must not continue to get in the way of providing closure for families faced with tragic circumstances.

After a hearing, this bill passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee with a unanimous vote, showing real bipartisan support for the measure, so I ask my colleagues to pass this bill so that other families won't have to needlessly suffer the way the families of Keith Goldberg and Antonio Tucker did.

Again, I want to thank the chairmen and the ranking members of the full committee and of the subcommittee for working diligently to bring this bill to the floor. I urge its passage.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, let me acknowledge and thank the gentleman from Nevada for his sponsorship of the legislation. It is very needed and very important.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I appreciate all of those who have been involved in this piece of legislation, which is very important.

Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago, the National Park Service was established to try and help people enjoy these natural wonders for, indeed, if people are not visiting our national parks, they do not fulfill the measure of their creation. It fills no purpose. Unfortunately, in the last 100 years, it seems like there has been an attitude shift amongst many of those who are involved in our national parks and other wonders that we have, especially in the West, in which people who originally were supposed to be the reason for having these parks have now been placed last.

The horrific example of what happened at Lake Mead in Nevada is a horrible thing to take place. Were it the only example we have of these types of negative things taking place, this legislation would still be well-deserved

and well overdue. Unfortunately, it is not. It is just an example of significant issues that keep coming back in which our administration seems to be putting people last and doing things which are not positive and not helpful.

Let me give you a couple of examples.

In Washington State, we have another national park in which there is an open area, almost like a community park within the National Park System, and yet the land manager in Washington decided to cancel a traditional annual church picnic because it would make too much noise for the rest of the national park. They also canceled a youth soccer tournament because it would make too much noise and disturb the rest of the national park.

During our shutdown, whether, indeed, they were told to try to make life miserable or not, they seemed to be able to do that on their own. The effort for the Park Service was to shut down the parking lot at Mount Vernon until someone had to remind them that Mount Vernon is not Federal property, that it is private property. At the same time, they were able to shut down a road in the Smokies to stop a schoolbus from making its rounds to pick up kids and take them to school and back again.

At Yellowstone, an armed guard came upon a busload of seniors to try and escort them off of the Federal property, not allowing them to make any kind of stops, even for restroom breaks. At Lake Mead, at the same time, residents who were living on their private houseboats were escorted off the lake and were told they could not come back. We have in this particular area the Claude Moore farm and the restaurant over on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Even though they were private establishments, the Park Service was doing everything it could to stop people from attending those areas and allowing them to make a success of the particular business.

This doesn't happen to be just in the shutdown period. This was happening well before that time.

In Alaska, on the Yukon-Charley Rivers, a private boater was stopped by the Park Service personnel. They took him over to the shore. He was held at gunpoint and was told that he could not continue on up the river because they said he couldn't continue on up the river. The unfortunate reality is that they didn't have the right to tell him he couldn't go on up the river. They were simply wrong and eventually were replaced in that particular area.

Other agencies of the Federal Government seem to be doing the same thing. We have a Wyoming rancher who did not want to give an easement to the BLM. Instead, he was threatened; they trespassed his property; they followed him and his guests; they photographed what he was doing, including

his female guests, who were trying to relieve themselves at the time; they were harassed and punished, and were told they would not have any of his permits renewed if he did not accede to the Federal request.

At Cape Hatteras, the Park Service went into a sue-settlement agreement, which shut down areas that had never been before even though the local people were opposed to that particular effort and even though it had a devastating impact on the economy.

The Forest Service, unfortunately, has done the same thing with ski resorts and, in California, on another ski resort where they closed summer activities unless they renegotiated the water rights of those resorts. Then there are the grazing permits in the West. They refused to, once again, renew the grazing permits unless they were willing to renegotiate their water rights.

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

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. All of these are examples which, unfortunately, continue to go on.

What the good Representative from Nevada has presented us is a terrific case in which the Park Service actually disrespected individuals and did not allow them to do what is humanitarily appropriate. Yet, when they were allowed to go in there and they found these bodies, they could have overcome all of this if they had just cared about people first, but they did not.

With the Keystone pipeline, the Park Service, once again, made a comment that the Keystone pipeline would have a devastating impact on parklands that were adjacent to the Keystone pipeline. Unfortunately, the nearest Federal land—the nearest national parkland—to the Keystone pipeline is 30 miles away. That is some kind of buffer zone we have.

If, indeed, we decided that this agency—the Department of this administration—were to put people first, we would have a much better relationship. Unfortunately, time after time, we see where actually people are being put last and bureaucratic responsibility is taking the place of that. That is simply wrong. This bill is an example of what is happening, and it is one that should be passed. I appreciate that both the majority and the minority realize the significance of passing this piece of legislation.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, having completed our presentation and all of our speakers, I urge the adoption of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Chairman FRANK D. LUCAS of the Committee on Agriculture for his assistance in scheduling H.R. 2166 for consider-

ation by the House of Representatives on Monday, January 27, 2014. I submit an exchange of letters between the Committees regarding this bill.

The continued cooperation shown by Chairman LUCAS and his able staff on national forest issues is much appreciated, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Chairman for the remainder of the Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, DC, September 10, 2013.

Hon. DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Longworth HOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HASTINGS: Thank you for the opportunity to review the relevant provisions of the text of H.R. 2166, the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act of 2013. As you are aware, the bill was primarily referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, while the Agriculture Committee received an additional referral.

I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner and, accordingly, I agree to discharge H.R. 2166 from further consideration by the Committee on Agriculture. I do so with the understanding that by discharging the bill, the Committee on Agriculture does not waive any future jurisdictional claim on this or similar matters. Further, the Committee on Agriculture reserves the right to seek the appointment of conferees, if it should become necessary.

I ask that you insert a copy of our exchange of letters into the Congressional Record during consideration of this measure on the House floor.

Thank you for your courtesy in this matter and I look forward to continued cooperation between our respective committees.

Sincerely,

FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2013.

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture, Longworth HOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2166, the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act of 2013. As you know, the Committee on Natural Resources ordered reported the bill on June 12, 2013. I appreciate your support in bringing this legislation before the House of Representatives, and accordingly, understand that the Committee on Agriculture will forego action on the bill.

The Committee on Natural Resources concurs with the mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 2166 at this time, the Committee on Agriculture does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Agriculture represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include your letter and this response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Natural Resources, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2166, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RANCH A CONSOLIDATION AND MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1684) to convey certain property to the State of Wyoming to consolidate the historic Ranch A, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1684

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Ranch A Consolidation and Management Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

(2) STATE.—The term “State” means the State of Wyoming.

SEC. 3. CONVEYANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of the State submitted to the Secretary not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall convey to the State, without consideration and by quitclaim deed, all right, title and interest of the United States in and to the parcel of National Forest System land described in subsection (b).

(b) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The parcel of land referred to in subsection (a) is approximately 10 acres of National Forest System land located on the Black Hills National Forest, in Crook County, State of Wyoming more specifically described as the E½ NE¼ NW¼ SE¼ less the south 50 feet, W½ NW¼ NE¼ SE¼ less the south 50 feet, Section 24, Township 52 North, Range 61 West Sixth P.M.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The conveyance under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) subject to valid existing rights; and

(2) made notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (a) of section 1 of Public Law 104-276.

(d) SURVEY.—If determined by the Secretary to be necessary, the exact acreage and legal description of the land to be conveyed under subsection (a) shall be determined by a survey that is approved by the Secretary and paid for by the State.

SEC. 4. AMENDMENTS.

Section 1 of the Act of October 9, 1996 (Public Law 104-276) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b); and

(2) by designating subsection (c) as subsection (b).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

□ 1745

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, my bill, the Ranch A Consolidation and Management Improvement Act, would convey approximately 10 acres of National Forest Service land to the State of Wyoming to allow for consolidation and improvement of the Ranch A site.

Ranch A is a historic property that was first developed in the 1930s and later came under Federal ownership and was used as a fish hatchery. The property had fallen into significant neglect under Federal ownership. The Ranch A Restoration Foundation was created to restore and operate Ranch A as a center for learning and interpretation of Western heritage.

However, when Ranch A was conveyed to the State of Wyoming in 1997, an oversight kept 10 acres under Federal ownership. The Babcock House, seen in this picture, is owned by the State of Wyoming. This is in Crook County, very near the South Dakota border. So we are talking about the Black Hills. It is a very pretty area, but the land under the Babcock House was not properly conveyed. The Forest Service testified that ownership of this isolated parcel has presented "management challenges" and unknown costs associated with administering the property. It is an isolated tract of 10 acres upon which this house, owned by the State of Wyoming, is built. H.R. 1684 would address this issue by correcting the conveyance and would also allow for the Restoration Foundation to make further improvement for the use and enjoyment of Ranch A.

This bill would provide more flexibility for the use of the property, which would allow for additional revenue sources to pay for maintenance and improvements. Right now, these properties are leased to educational organizations for educational uses, including sometimes South Dakota State and the South Dakota School of Mines. The foundation itself has invested those moneys and raises money at fund-raisers, thereby putting together approximately \$1 million for facility restoration and renovation.

This next photo shows the deck before it was repaired and acquired by the State of Wyoming and then managed by the Ranch A Restoration Foundation. You see the damage that occurred under Federal ownership. This is its most recent state, which indicates the significant repairs.

Here, again, are before and after. It shows the state of repair having been completed by the Ranch A Foundation, using restoration funds that are obtained through the leasing operations.

We are also going to look at some of the other buildings. There are numerous buildings on this property that are used primarily by South Dakota School of Mines and South Dakota State University for educational purposes.

This is a very expensive repair to make, Mr. Speaker. When these lower logs rot over time because of snow and cold and dry air, followed by rain, and are not properly maintained, those lower logs rot, thereby causing the building to settle and creating terrible structural problems. To repair it, you have to lift the upper logs that are not damaged and jack the whole building up, pull the old logs out of the bottom, and reinsert new logs—properly treated—in order to maintain the historic finish back to its state when it was built in the 1930s.

It is hugely expensive and very time consuming. The Ranch A Foundation has undertaken that under State ownership. This was the status of the repairs when the Forest Service had it and it was used as a fish hatchery. It is because it is an isolated property the Federal Government doesn't have the money to manage. It wasn't being used anymore as a fish hatchery.

The State of Wyoming, since acquiring the property from the Federal Government, really has improved its historic condition and its long-term viability. The degraded wood has been all redone. It prevents interior damage from leakage.

Every project for maintaining and renovating the lodge has to be approved under historic designation standards. As we have pointed out, this was built in the 1930s by the Annenbergs. It is beautiful. Going through the historic design standards is a rigorous process and greatly increases the cost, but it also ensures the historic integrity of the restoration.

In order for the foundation to continue to preserve their educational facilities, they need long-term revenue generation. The foundation's academic board members and the State of Wyoming's oversight office of this property have supported the removal-of-use restrictions. With no annual appropriations in the State budget for Ranch A, their education mission is actually harmed by limiting user fees.

Ranch A is a cultural and education asset. My legislation will keep the

ranch financially sustainable and improve its ability to serve educational users. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

H.R. 1684 would require the Forest Service to convey to the State of Wyoming 10 acres of land associated with Ranch A in the Black Hills National Forest.

In 1996, Congress conveyed nearly all of Ranch A to the State of Wyoming for educational purposes. We remain concerned that enactment of this legislation will remove the requirement that this particular property continue being used for educational purposes, potentially denying the public access to a valuable historic resource. It is our hope that, as the bill moves forward, this concern can be addressed.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers on this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1684.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST
LAND CONVEYANCE

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3008) to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3008

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

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term "Federal land" means the approximately 5 acres of National Forest System land in Santa Barbara County, California, as generally depicted on the map.

(2) **FOUNDATION.**—The term "Foundation" means the White Lotus Foundation, a nonprofit foundation located in Santa Barbara, California.

(3) **MAP.**—The term "map" means the map entitled "San Marcos Pass Encroachment for Consideration of Legislative Remedy" and dated June 1, 2009.

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 2. LAND CONVEYANCE.

(a) **LAND EXCHANGE.**—Subject to the provisions of this section, if the Foundation offers to convey to the Secretary all right, title, and interest of the Foundation in and to a parcel of

non-Federal land that is acceptable to the Secretary—

(1) the Secretary shall accept the offer; and
(2) on receipt of acceptable title to the non-Federal land, the Secretary shall convey to the Foundation all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the Federal land.

(b) *APPLICABLE LAW.*—The land exchange authorized under subsection (a) shall be subject to section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716).

(c) *TIME FOR COMPLETION OF LAND EXCHANGE.*—It is the intent of Congress that the land exchange under subsection (a) shall be completed not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) *ALTERNATIVE SALE OF FEDERAL LAND.*—If the land exchange under subsection (a) is not completed by the date that is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall offer to sell to the Foundation the Federal land for fair market value.

(e) *ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.*—The land exchange under subsection (a) and any sale under subsection (d) shall be subject to—

- (1) valid existing rights;
- (2) the Secretary finding that the public interest would be well served by making the exchange or sale;
- (3) any terms and conditions that the Secretary may require; and
- (4) the Foundation paying the reasonable costs of any surveys, appraisals, and any other administrative costs associated with the land exchange or sale.

(f) *APPRAISALS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The land conveyed under subsection (a) or (d) shall be appraised by an independent appraiser selected by the Secretary.

(2) *REQUIREMENTS.*—An appraisal under paragraph (1) shall be conducted in accordance with nationally recognized appraisal standards, including—

- (A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions; and
- (B) the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(g) *MANAGEMENT AND STATUS OF ACQUIRED LAND.*—Any non-Federal land acquired by the Secretary under this Act shall be managed by the Secretary in accordance with—

- (1) the Act of March 1, 1911 (commonly known as the “Weeks Law”) (16 U.S.C. 480 et seq.); and
- (2) any laws (including regulations) applicable to the National Forest System.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

H.R. 3008 would authorize the Forest Service to exchange 5 acres of the Los Padres National Forest with the White Lotus Foundation to allow public access to their property. The surrounding topography makes the land in question

the only practical access point. With no other options for access, the foundation will be forced to cease operations. I would encourage my colleagues to support this bill, which passed the House of Representatives last Congress by voice vote.

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

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

The Los Padres conveyance bill is a technical fix needed to convey 5 acres of land to the White Lotus Foundation and remedy a longstanding land dispute between the foundation and the U.S. Forest Service.

The Federal land in question was encroached on by a previous owner without the foundation's knowledge. Upon discovery of the problem, the foundation made an attempt to work with the Forest Service to remedy the situation. Unfortunately, the fix requires authorization to sell the land at fair market value. The bill simply grants authority to the Secretary to do so.

Congresswoman CAPPs is to be commended for her leadership on this legislation and her commitment to resolve this issue on behalf of her constituents. We support H.R. 3008 and urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs), the sponsor of the legislation.

Mrs. CAPPs. Thank you to my colleague for yielding and to Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for the work that has gone on in bringing this bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my legislation, H.R. 3008. My legislation will authorize the Forest Service to convey a small parcel of land on the perimeter of the Los Padres National Forest in my district to a local non-profit organization, the White Lotus Foundation.

Over 30 years ago, the White Lotus Foundation purchased property on the border of the Los Padres National Forest in the hills above Santa Barbara, California. Soon after acquiring the property, the foundation received notice of a small encroachment onto a piece of Forest Service land that is detached from the rest of the forest. This encroachment is located on the only road that allows White Lotus and the public access to and from the foundation's property.

Due to the steep topography of the area, there are no other reasonable alternatives that would retain public access to the facility. One piece of the encroachment lies on flat ground that holds equipment for fire and flood emergencies and provides access to a water pump and other necessary equipment. There are no other viable areas to move this equipment. So without this small piece of land, the facility would be forced to close its doors.

White Lotus and the Forest Service have spent several years searching for an administrative solution, but have determined that legislation is the only viable way to permanently resolve this matter. My legislation simply authorizes the Forest Service to enter into a land exchange with the White Lotus Foundation for land worth no less than the appraised market value.

If this land exchange does not occur within 2 years, the Forest Service will sell the small parcel of land to the foundation at fair market value. Prior to the exchange or sale of this land, however, the Forest Service must first certify that it is in the public interest, and it can also impose additional conditions it deems appropriate.

Also, it is important to note that if the land sale does go forward, it will not cost taxpayers a single dime. The legislation requires White Lotus to pay for the land, the survey, and all administrative and related costs. There are no exemptions from NEPA or any other environmental laws, and the land in question is not protected wilderness or any other specifically designated area.

This is a straightforward bill to provide a reasonable solution for the White Lotus Foundation and the Forest Service. In fact, nearly identical legislation, sponsored by our former Republican colleague, Elton Gallegly, passed this House unanimously last Congress. The area is now in my congressional district, and I am pleased to sponsor the bill this Congress.

Again, I thank the chairman and the ranking member for bringing the bill to the floor, and I do urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, if the gentleman is prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. In closing, I thank the gentlelady from Wyoming as well, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 3008, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3008, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 6 p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RADEL), the whole number of the House is 432.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 2166, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 3008, by the yeas and nays.

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

GOOD SAMARITAN SEARCH AND RECOVERY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2166) to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 394, nays 0, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 24]

YEAS—394

Aderholt	Barton	Bishop (NY)
Amash	Bass	Bishop (UT)
Andrews	Beatty	Black
Bachmann	Becerra	Blackburn
Bachus	Benishek	Bonamici
Barber	Bentivolio	Boustany
Barletta	Bera (CA)	Brady (PA)
Barr	Bilirakis	Brady (TX)
Barrow (GA)	Bishop (GA)	Braley (IA)

Bridenstine	Garamendi	Lujan, Ben Ray
Brooks (AL)	Garcia	(NM)
Brooks (IN)	Gardner	Lummis
Brown (FL)	Garrett	Lynch
Brownley (CA)	Gerlach	Maffei
Buchanan	Gibbs	Maloney, Sean
Bucshon	Gibson	Marchant
Burgess	Gingrey (GA)	Marino
Bustos	Gohmert	Massie
Butterfield	Goodlatte	Matheson
Byrne	Gosar	Matsui
Calvert	Gowdy	McAllister
Camp	Granger	McCarthy (CA)
Capito	Graves (GA)	McCaul
Capps	Graves (MO)	McClintock
Capuano	Grayson	McCollum
Cárdenas	Green, Al	McDermott
Carney	Green, Gene	McGovern
Carson (IN)	Griffin (AR)	McHenry
Carter	Griffith (VA)	McIntyre
Cartwright	Grijalva	McKeon
Castor (FL)	Grimm	McKinley
Castro (TX)	Guthrie	McMorris
Chabot	Gutiérrez	Rodgers
Chaffetz	Hahn	Meadows
Chu	Hall	Meehan
Cicilline	Hanabusa	Meeks
Clark (MA)	Hanna	Meng
Clarke (NY)	Harper	Messer
Clay	Harris	Mica
Cleaver	Hartzler	Michaud
Clyburn	Hastings (FL)	Miller (MI)
Coble	Hastings (WA)	Miller, Gary
Coffman	Heck (NV)	Moore
Cohen	Heck (WA)	Moran
Cole	Hensarling	Mullin
Collins (GA)	Herrera Beutler	Mulvaney
Collins (NY)	Higgins	Murphy (FL)
Conaway	Himes	Murphy (PA)
Connolly	Hinojosa	Nadler
Conyers	Holding	Napolitano
Cook	Holt	Neal
Cooper	Horsford	Negrete McLeod
Costa	Hoyer	Neugebauer
Cotton	Hudson	Noem
Courtney	Huelskamp	Nolan
Cramer	Huizenga (MI)	Nugent
Crawford	Hultgren	Nunes
Crenshaw	Hunter	Nunnelee
Crowley	Hurt	O'Rourke
Cuellar	Israel	Olson
Culberson	Jackson Lee	Owens
Cummings	Jeffries	Palazzo
Daines	Jenkins	Pallone
Davis (CA)	Johnson (GA)	Pastor (AZ)
Davis, Danny	Johnson (OH)	Paulsen
Davis, Rodney	Johnson, E. B.	Pearce
DeFazio	Johnson, Sam	Pelosi
DeGette	Jordan	Perlmutter
Delaney	Joyce	Perry
DelBene	Kaptur	Peters (CA)
Denham	Keating	Peters (MI)
Dent	Kelly (IL)	Peterson
DeSantis	Kelly (PA)	Petri
DesJarlais	Kennedy	Pingree (ME)
Deutch	Kildee	Pittenger
Diaz-Balart	Kilmer	Pitts
Dingell	Kind	Pocan
Doggett	King (IA)	Poe (TX)
Doyle	King (NY)	Polis
Duckworth	Kinzinger (IL)	Pompeo
Duffy	Kirkpatrick	Posey
Duncan (SC)	Kline	Price (GA)
Duncan (TN)	Kuster	Price (NC)
Edwards	Labrador	Quigley
Ellison	Lamborn	Rahall
Ellmers	Lance	Rangel
Engel	Langevin	Reed
Enyart	Lankford	Reichert
Esty	Larsen (WA)	Renacci
Farenthold	Larsen (CT)	Ribble
Fattah	Latham	Rice (SC)
Fincher	Latta	Richmond
Fitzpatrick	Levin	Rigell
Fleischmann	Lewis	Roby
Fleming	Flores	Roe (TN)
Flores	Forbes	Rogers (AL)
Forbes	Foster	Rogers (KY)
Foster	Fox	Rogers (MI)
Fox	Frankel (FL)	Rokita
Frankel (FL)	Franks (AZ)	Rooney
Franks (AZ)	Frelinghuysen	Ros-Lehtinen
Frelinghuysen	Fudge	Roskam
Fudge	Lujan Grisham	Ross
Gabbard	(NM)	Rothfus
Gallego		Roybal-Allard

Royce	Sires	Visclosky
Ruiz	Slaughter	Wagner
Ryan (OH)	Smith (MO)	Walberg
Ryan (WI)	Smith (NE)	Walden
Salmon	Smith (NJ)	Walorski
Sánchez, Linda	Smith (TX)	Walz
T.	Southerland	Wasserman
Sanford	Speier	Schultz
Sarbanes	Stewart	Waters
Scalise	Stivers	Waxman
Schakowsky	Stutzman	Weber (TX)
Schiff	Takano	Weber (FL)
Schneider	Terry	Welch
Schock	Thompson (MS)	Wenstrup
Schrader	Thompson (PA)	Whitfield
Schweikert	Thornberry	Williams
Scott (VA)	Tiberi	Wilson (FL)
Scott, Austin	Tierney	Wilson (SC)
Scott, David	Titus	Wittman
Sensenbrenner	Tonko	Wolf
Serrano	Tsongas	Womack
Sessions	Turner	Woodall
Sewell (AL)	Upton	Yarmuth
Shea-Porter	Valadao	Yoder
Sherman	Van Hollen	Yoho
Shimkus	Vargas	Young (AK)
Shuster	Veasey	Young (IN)
Simpson	Vela	
Sinema	Velázquez	

NOT VOTING—37

Amodei	Jones	Rohrabacher
Blumenauer	Kingston	Runyan
Broun (GA)	LaMalfa	Ruppersberger
Campbell	Lee (CA)	Rush
Cantor	Lipinski	Sanchez, Loretta
Cassidy	Maloney,	Schwartz
DeLauro	Carolyn	Smith (WA)
Eshoo	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman
Farr	McNerney	Swalwell (CA)
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Thompson (CA)
Honda	Miller, George	Tipton
Huffman	Pascrell	Westmoreland
Issa	Payne	

□ 1855

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST LAND CONVEYANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3008) to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 367, nays 27, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 25]

YEAS—367

Aderholt	Bass	Bishop (GA)
Bachmann	Beatty	Bishop (NY)
Bachus	Becerra	Bishop (UT)
Barber	Benishek	Black
Barletta	Bentivolio	Blackburn
Barr	Bera (CA)	Bonamici
Barrow (GA)	Bilirakis	Boustany

Brady (PA) Gallego
 Brady (TX) Garamendi
 Braley (IA) Garcia
 Bridenstine Gardner
 Brooks (AL) Garrett
 Brooks (IN) Gerlach
 Brown (FL) Gibbs
 Brownley (CA) Gibson
 Buchanan Gingrey (GA)
 Bucshon Gohmert
 Burgess Goodlatte
 Bustos Granger
 Butterfield Graves (MO)
 Byrne Grayson
 Calvert Green, Al
 Camp Green, Gene
 Capito Griffin (AR)
 Capps Griffith (VA)
 Capuano Grijalva
 Cárdenas Grimm
 Carney Guthrie
 Carson (IN) Gutiérrez
 Carter Hahn
 Cartwright Hall
 Castor (FL) Hanabusa
 Castro (TX) Hanna
 Chabot Harper
 Chaffetz Harris
 Chu Hartzler
 Cicilline Hastings (FL)
 Clark (MA) Hastings (WA)
 Clarke (NY) Heck (NV)
 Clay Heck (WA)
 Cleaver Hensarling
 Clyburn Herrera Beutler
 Coffman Higgins
 Cohen Himes
 Cole Hinojosa
 Collins (GA) Holt
 Collins (NY) Horsford
 Conaway Hoyer
 Connolly Huelskamp
 Conyers Hultgren
 Cook Hunter
 Cooper Hurt
 Costa Israel
 Cotton Jackson Lee
 Courtney Jeffries
 Cramer Jenkins
 Crawford Johnson (GA)
 Crenshaw Johnson (OH)
 Crowley Johnson, E. B.
 Cuellar Johnson, Sam
 Culberson Joyce
 Cummings Kaptur
 Daines Keating
 Davis (CA) Kelly (IL)
 Davis, Danny Kelly (PA)
 Davis, Rodney Kennedy
 DeFazio Kildee
 DeGette Kilmer
 Delaney Kind
 DeLauro King (IA)
 DelBene King (NY)
 Denham Kinzinger (IL)
 Dent Kirkpatrick
 DeSantis Kline
 DesJarlais Kuster
 Deutch Labrador
 Diaz-Balart Lamborn
 Dingell Lance
 Doggett Langevin
 Doyle Lankford
 Duckworth Larsen (WA)
 Duffy Larson (CT)
 Duncan (SC) Latham
 Duncan (TN) Latta
 Edwards Levin
 Ellison Lewis
 Ellmers LoBiondo
 Engel Loeb sack
 Enyart Ryant
 Esty Lofgren
 Farenthold Long
 Fattah Lowenthal
 Fincher Lowey
 Fitzpatrick Lucas
 Fleischmann Luetkemeyer
 Fleming Lujan Grisham
 Forbes (NM)
 Foster Luján, Ben Ray
 Foxx (NM)
 Frankel (FL) Lummis
 Frelinghuysen Lynch
 Fudge Maffei
 Gabbard Maloney, Sean
 Marchant

Marino Matheson
 Matsui
 McAllister
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCaul
 McClintock
 McCollum
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McKinley
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 Meehan
 Meeks
 Meng
 Messer
 Mica
 Michaud
 Miller (MI)
 Miller, Gary
 Moore
 Moran
 Mullin
 Murphy (FL)
 Murphy (PA)
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 Negrete McLeod
 Noem
 Nolan
 Nugent
 Nunes
 Nunnelee
 O'Rourke
 Olson
 Owens
 Pallone
 Pastor (AZ)
 Paulsen
 Payne
 Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Peters (CA)
 Peters (MI)
 Peterson
 Petri
 Pingree (ME)
 Pitts
 Pocan
 Polis
 Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Rahall
 Rangel
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rice (SC)
 Richmond
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Roybal-Allard
 Royce
 Ruiz
 Ryan (OH)
 Ryan (WI)
 Sánchez, Linda
 T.
 Sarbanes
 Scallise
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schneider
 Schock
 Schrader
 Schweikert
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, Austin
 Scott, David

Sensenbrenner Terry
 Serrano Thompson (MS)
 Sessions Thompson (PA)
 Sewell (AL) Thornberry
 Shea-Porter Tiberi
 Sherman Tierney
 Shimkus Titus
 Simpson Tonko
 Sinema Tsongas
 Sires Turner
 Slaughter Upton
 Smith (MO) Valadao
 Smith (NE) Van Hollen
 Smith (NJ) Vargas
 Smith (TX) Veasey
 Southerland Vela
 Speier Velázquez
 Stewart Visclosky
 Stivers Wagner
 Stutzman Walberg
 Takano Walden

NAYS—27

Amash Hudson
 Barton Huizenga (MI)
 Coble Jordan
 Flores Massie
 Franks (AZ) McHenry
 Gosar Meadows
 Gowdy Mulvaney
 Graves (GA) Neugebauer
 Holding Palazzo

NOT VOTING—37

Amodei Jones
 Andrews Kingston
 Blumenauer LaMalfa
 Broun (GA) Lee (CA)
 Campbell Lipinski
 Cantor Maloney,
 Cassidy Carolyn
 Eshoo McCarthy (NY)
 Farr McNeerney
 Fortenberry Miller (FL)
 Honda Miller, George
 Huffman Pascrell
 Issa Rohrabacher

□ 1904

Messrs. POE of Texas and MEADOWS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, due to being unavoidably detained, I missed the following Rollcall Votes: No. 24 and No. 25 on January 27, 2014 (today).

If present, I would have voted:

Rollcall Vote No. 24—H.R. 2166, Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, as amended, “aye.”

Rollcall Vote No. 25—H.R. 3008, To provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, “aye.”

GENE PRESCOTT’S 2014 HOTELIER HALL OF FAME AWARD

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and commend Gene Prescott, a dear friend and a pillar within our south Florida community. Gene received the 2014 Hotelier Hall of

Fame Award from the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association for his success in managing a network of hotels that provide exquisite accommodations and excellent service.

Mr. Prescott’s dedication to excellence is best reflected in his leadership role of a 10-year, \$40 million renovation of the Biltmore Hotel, an iconic and historic Coral Gables landmark located in the heart of my congressional district, as all good things are.

Thank you, Gene, for helping to make south Florida an even more welcoming destination for tourists who keep our economy strong, and congratulations on this well-deserved honor. You make us proud, amigo.

Congratulations to Gene Prescott.

RETIREMENT OF COMMAND MASTER CHIEF EVELYN BANKS

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Memphian Command Master Chief Evelyn “Vonn” Banks, will retire on Saturday from the Navy with the honor of being the senior-most enlisted female in the United States Navy.

Her tours have ranged from the Navy recruiting district office in Memphis to a 10-month deployment on the USS *Abraham Lincoln* in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She most recently served as command master chief at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis and has inspired countless young midshipwomen throughout her career by demonstrating that women can succeed and be influential in the Navy.

Command Master Chief Banks was at the Navy Yard in Washington on September 15, the day of the tragic shooting. She knew many, if not all, of the victims personally and attended the funeral of each of the 11 victims and the shooter.

Command Master Chief Banks has worn black for 120 consecutive days to mourn the lives of each: 10 days for each, and 10 for the shooter as well.

I appreciate the service of Command Master Chief Banks, wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement from the Navy, thank her for her service to our country, and welcome her back to Memphis, Tennessee.

She is an outstanding constituent who has served our country in the United States Navy for the last thirty years.

Command Master Chief Evelyn “Vonn” Banks will retire on February 1 with the honor of being the senior-most enlisted female in the United States Navy. After completing her recruit training in Orlando, Florida, her tours ranged from the Navy Recruiting District in Memphis to the USS *Germantown* in Japan to embarking on the USS *Abraham Lincoln* for a 10-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She most recently served as

Command Master Chief at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis.

A native of Memphis, Command Master Chief Banks sets a high standard for compassion. She was at the Navy Yard in Washington, DC on September 15, the day of the tragic shooting there. She knew many of the victims personally and attended the funeral of each of the eleven victims and the shooter. Command Master Chief Banks vowed to wear black for ten days for each of those who died. The shooting was nearly four months ago. True to her word, when I sat next to her on an airplane last month, she was dressed head to toe in black in honor of the lives lost that day.

Known to her grandchildren as “Grandma Navy,” Command Master Chief Banks kept her sights high. She was the first female Command Master Chief to serve at three different commands and was inducted into Career Communication’s Group Black Engineer of the Year/Women of Color Hall of Fame. As she advanced through the ranks, Command Master Chief Banks recognized both the challenges and opportunities presented by serving in the Navy. Because of her demanding travel schedule, she enrolled in an online university and earned Associates, Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees and is currently working towards a Ph.D. She has inspired countless young midshipwomen by demonstrating that women can succeed and be influential in the Navy.

I appreciate the leadership of Command Master Chief Banks and urge others to look upon her career as an example. I wish her the best throughout her well-deserved retirement from the Navy and we thank her for her service.

CONGRATULATIONS, WAYZATA HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL SCIENCE BOWL TEAM

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate two Wayzata High School National Science Bowl teams for winning first and second place at the 2014 regional competition. These teams of dedicated students competed against dozens of neighboring high schools for a chance to represent Minnesota at the Department of Energy’s National Science Bowl.

More than 225,000 students, Mr. Speaker, participated in the National Science Bowl since it first was established in 1991. The top 16 high school teams in the national finals will win \$1,000 for their schools’ science departments.

The winning team of Amanda, Joseph, Jayant, William, Orien, and Nathan will now head to Washington, D.C., in April to compete against other high school teams from across the country in the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, and math.

I want to congratulate all of the teams in Minnesota and encourage everyone to keep up the great work studying science and math.

PASSING OF ADELFA CALLEJO, DALLAS, TEXAS

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize Adelfa Callejo, a legendary Latina civil rights leader in Texas who died Friday at the age of 90.

A Dallas lawyer and civil rights leader who was first exposed to activism as a girl interpreting for her father, Adelfa made a significant impact during her life.

Ms. Callejo became the first Latina to graduate from SMU School of Law and practiced in Dallas for more than 40 years, mentoring many Latino and Latina lawyers along the way.

Adelfa Callejo, La Madrina, or Godmother, as many called her, is well known for her civil rights work to eliminate racial barriers, stop immigrant abuse, and improve education in the State of Texas.

During her dedication of an elementary school named after her in Dallas last year, Adelfa told the audience:

Only through education will we make the world a better place than we found it.

May her commitment to improving education and her legacy of working on behalf of a better Texas continue through her family and all of those lives she has touched throughout the decades.

CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the tragedy of human sex trafficking cannot be fully realized until one sees the pain of hopelessness in the victims’ eyes.

On a recent trip to Honduras, I visited two shelters for sex trafficking victims: La Alianza and El Refugio Shelters. Some of these victims were as young as 12 years of age. They had been raped, drugged, abused, and exploited. These shelters are helping them to regain their lives, their dignity and, yes, their hope.

But don’t be fooled into thinking that this vile crime of sex trafficking only happens somewhere else. It happens in the United States as well. The average age of girls trafficked in the United States is between 12 and 14 years of age.

Like Honduras, our country lacks shelters for these girls. There are about 5,000 shelters for animals throughout the country, according to the ASPCA, but there are only 226 beds available for domestic minor sex trafficking victims, according to Shared Hope.

This has got to change, Mr. Speaker. It is time for us to rescue the child vic-

tims of sex slavery and then put the traffickers and the child abusers in the jailhouse where they belong.

And that’s just the way it is.

□ 1915

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID ALAN MILLER AND THE ALBANY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to recognize and congratulate the Albany Symphony Orchestra and conductor David Alan Miller for winning a coveted Grammy Award last night for Best Classical Instrumental Solo.

It is the first accomplishment of its kind for this orchestra. The composition, “Conjurer,” was recorded at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, also in New York’s 20th Congressional District, and it gave our area yet another reason to be proud of the Capital Region arts and cultural scene. For 84 years, the Albany Symphony Orchestra has been giving a voice to beautifully written pieces of music and enriching our lives in the Capital Region.

I again congratulate David Alan Miller and the Albany Symphony Orchestra for their accomplishments and their victory last night at the 56th annual Grammy Awards.

INCOME INEQUALITY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes, I will join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss a very important topic that has long been one of our crucial issues proliferating now across America and around the world—income inequality—but I wanted to rise as I understand the farm bill is now prepared to go to the Rules Committee, and now will be on the floor of the House this week.

In an Associated Press article on “The New Face of Food Stamps—Working-Age Americans,” now, in 2013–2014, 50 percent of those receiving food stamps are working Americans, such as the young lady pictured here, who is 25 years old, with a 3-year-old son, who, yes, was in the United States Army.

When are we going to realize that even though the economy is churning and that the jobs being created are low-wage jobs that the working and middle class need our help? It is not a handout. It is not a way to be able to close the deficit and the debt, which is closing by breaking the backs of hard-working Americans. What a shame

that a farm bill would come forward as it has never come forward before, and it takes away a lifeline for hard-working Americans.

SIGN THE KEYSTONE PIPELINE PERMIT

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

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have seen reports that the President is going to come to this Chamber tomorrow and talk about avoiding dealing with Congress. He is going to pick up his pen and sign executive orders without coming to this institution and following our Constitution.

Mr. President, if you are that willing to pick up your pen, then pick it up and sign the Keystone pipeline permit so that we can start creating jobs in this country and get 40,000 people off the unemployment rolls and into good-paying jobs that are careers.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus, I urge my Republican colleagues to lift their heads from the sand so that they can see the effects of climate change throughout our country.

Scientists agree that climate change is causing the extreme weather that is devastating our citizens and our economy. The Republican response has been to deny the science. Year after year, Republicans in Congress not only refuse to do something about climate change, but they insist on policies that actually make things worse. Because Republicans are determined to ignore the threats posed by climate change, the President has no choice but to use executive authority to protect the American people.

I look forward to hearing the President's proposals tomorrow at the State of the Union address. Hopefully, Congress can begin to show some leadership on this issue before it is too late.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, at manufacturing plants in the district I represent, employers are having a hard time finding the skilled workers they need, and many other employers can't find low-skilled workers to fill open-

ings. At colleges across the country, gifted students face the reality that, after graduation, they will have to leave this country to achieve their dreams elsewhere.

These are but some of the faces of immigration reform. Their stories underscore the urgent need to fix our broken system. At an immigration roundtable I hosted last year, a DREAMer, Estefania Garcia, told her story and didn't leave a dry eye in the room. I invited Estefania as my guest to the State of the Union tomorrow night in order to personify the need for comprehensive reform. Estefania's story is moving, but it is in no way unique.

With comprehensive immigration reforms, the world's most gifted STEM minds will help us achieve 21st century success; our economy will be injected with the talent and skills it needs to thrive; 11 million people will pay taxes and become fully engaged in our democracy for the first time.

I rise in strong support of comprehensive immigration reform. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

MONAHANS, TEXAS

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about the 23rd District in 1 minute—23 in 1 today. I want to talk about Monahans, Texas, the home of the Loboos.

Monahans High School is known not only for their athletic programs, with several State championships in women's volleyball, for example, but also on the academic side as the host of one of the preeminent—one of the biggest—speech and debate tournaments in west Texas.

Monahans is in Ward County in the Permian Basin, located off of I-20. The economy is booming with high-paying jobs and with an active, full service Chamber of Commerce—one of the more active in the region. If you are looking for recreation, the Monahans Sandhills State Park has sand dunes that are 70-feet high, with sand boarding, sand football, sand surfing, sand tobogganing, hiking, and even horseback riding.

If you go there in the spring, for example, the Rattlesnake Army Airbase will be a new museum. It was one of the largest bomber training bases of World War II, and it was the temporary home of the Enola Gay, which dropped the atomic bomb on Japan in World War II. It is scheduled to open in March.

Nearly 24 percent of Texas is in one district, in the 23rd District. It is an incredible stretch. I am so proud to have the opportunity to represent Monahans, Texas, in Ward County.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS: INCOME INEQUALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege to once again have this opportunity to come to the floor of the House of Representatives and to anchor—along with my good friend and colleague, the distinguished gentleman from Nevada, Representative STEVEN HORSFORD—the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order, where for the next 60 minutes we have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about an issue of great significance for the communities that we represent as well as for the entire country.

Income inequality is an issue that is of increasing concern to working families, to low-income Americans, to middle class folks, to those who aspire to be part of the middle class. We know that at this moment in time in 2014 income inequality is the worst that it has been in America since the Great Depression.

Now, we live in the wealthiest country in the world. Yet we know that all across America there are people who are struggling to put food on their tables, clothing on their backs or to provide shelter for their families. That is an unacceptable situation, and we know that things have gotten worse over the last 5 years since the collapse of the economy. The recovery, while progress has been made, has been uneven, inconsistent and schizophrenic in many ways. Some have benefited, particularly those amongst the wealthiest 5 to 10 percent of Americans, but others have fallen behind.

So, today, the Congressional Black Caucus will speak to the issue of income inequality, but it will also propose why it is something that needs to be addressed and what some of the things are that Congress can do, in working with the President, to deal with this pressing issue in America.

We have been joined by several distinguished members of the Congressional Black Caucus. It is now my honor and privilege to yield some time to the dean of New York's congressional delegation, a legendary Member of the House of Representatives, the Lion of Lenox Avenue, the distinguished gentleman from New York, Representative CHARLES B. RANGEL.

Mr. RANGEL. Let me thank my friend and my colleague from New York for bringing this important issue to the attention of our Congress and the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is a strange thing about those Americans who have been raised in poor communities. That is, as they grow older, it seems that God has blessed them to remember just the good things that they have enjoyed, and the misery and the pain somehow fades away; but I think that the most important thing that comes out of this is the hope for the future. Very few Americans have not witnessed in their families devastating economic impacts, but that was more than compensated for because they knew, if they had to be in any country in the world in which some of these problems could be resolved through opportunity, they would be in the United States of America.

The tragic thing that we have today is that this dream appears to be fading for the poor as well as for the middle class. When that happens, I think what makes America different from so many other countries is that it is possible to have classes that are locked in frigid concrete, as used to be the case in Europe—that is dramatically changing to be more fluid as it relates to upward mobility—while it appears to us that today, if you were born in poverty, you are almost destined to remain in poverty. What a sinful, historic condition that would make. What a tragic example it would set for the rest of the world that has used us as an example as to what human beings can do.

What is it that the economists don't see? Poverty is not only painful; it destroys the very fiber of our economic productivity. Sick people, poor people are not productive people. There are inclinations for them to cost more in terms of dollars and cents than if we provided them with the tools for them to acquire decent jobs with decent living wages. People are talking about equality in wages, but I am not comfortable with that expression because I don't want some of my friends on the other side of the aisle thinking that I think everyone should have the same income in terms of equality; but when it comes to the equality of opportunity—when it comes to making certain that you can tell your kids that you are doing pretty good but that you know that they can do better—and then when it comes to those dreams being hurt because of examples that we find in this country, then it hurts the whole idea of manufacturers wanting to have their workers be in a position to buy the things that they are manufacturing or the services they are providing.

So I am glad that we have this time tonight to go beyond the pain of poverty and to talk about the hopes and the dreams that people have in coming

to this country. They come here not to remain poor. They don't come here to get rich. They come here because of the opportunity we have—and poverty is a poison that can get into any economy and make it impossible for poor folks to get out of it.

Thank you so much for constantly reminding this great country that we can't afford to lose that greatness, because a lot of it was in God we trust. I do hope, as a result of our voices, that we hear from some of the people who hear directly from God—our ministers and our rabbis—to be able to understand that Jesus may have said that the meek shall inherit the Earth, but he sure didn't mean that the meek should suffer while the rich just get richer. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

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Mr. JEFFRIES. I certainly thank the distinguished gentleman from New York for his eloquent, as always, observations.

It is an honor and privilege to be joined by the Representative from Texas, who has been a fighter on behalf of these issues—a voice for the voiceless and someone who is always on the front lines trying to deal with socioeconomic inequality wherever it might be found in America, but certainly in her home district anchored in Houston, Texas. Let me now yield to Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the distinguished coleader of the task force in presenting our case to the American people, the distinguished gentleman from New York—and I say it with great affection and respect—and his coleader, Mr. HORSFORD, the distinguished gentleman from Nevada.

Let me quickly indicate that income equality has been raised by the Congressional Black Caucus and the Task Force on Poverty through our chairwoman, the Honorable MARCIA FUDGE; my colleague, BARBARA LEE; myself and others through the years—one might offer to say decade—and you will hear from our other members. The distinguished dean of New York gave the history. I know the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey is on the floor, as well as our southern anchor, Representative Mr. G. K. BUTTERFIELD. Again, we also have New York, New York's Representative, YVETTE CLARKE. I think our members are here because we come from far and wide.

Income inequality refers to the extent to which income is distributed in an uneven manner among the population. In the United States, income inequality, or the gap between rich and poor, has been growing markedly for some 30 years.

U.S. income inequality has been rising steadily over the past four decades. Let me emphasize to my colleagues that it is reaching levels not seen since

the 1920s; and for those of us who read the history books, we know of the financial collapse leading to the Depression of that era. That is frightening.

In the midst of that discussion, we are hearing babble or conversation about reducing the debt and closing the deficit, when we have decidedly made a mark on that over the last decade. We did so with President Obama's fixing and working to turn Wall Street back on its feet. We did it with the stimulus package which infused dollars into the economy. We fixed the mortgage meltdown, and so now we find that houses are being sold and banks want to be able to relax how they give money to their various clients who are seeking to buy a house.

We are at a point where we need to stop talking about the deficit and the debt—which is closing—and the debt going down, and start talking about investing in America and closing the horror of wealth inequality. Somebody is going to understand from whence they came and know that America was always a place where someone without shoes could walk into the opportunities and the sunlight of opportunity.

Lyndon Baines Johnson's history tells of how very poor he was growing up after the loss of income from his father. It was on his mind that people who are poor should not be treated with indignity.

So one of the biggest factors driving the increase in income inequality since 2000 is the stagnation of the typical American household in terms of income. We need to raise the minimum wage. We need to stop blaming poor people and suggesting that their condition is their own.

There are studies by the University of Wisconsin and the University of Kentucky, and let me give the facts. A low-wage job supplemented with food stamps is becoming more common for the working poor. They have a job, and yet they have to get food stamps. That is not their desire. They are working people. They want to be respected for their work.

Many of the U.S. jobs now being created are low-income or minimum wage, part-time, or in areas such as retail or fast food. Yes, jobs. We don't denigrate them; but it brings about the highest level of income inequality. And then, on top of it, we are cutting billions from food stamps.

As I told you, a young lady in Texas makes \$10 an hour working to be able to provide for her family. Without shame, she has to get on food stamps; and since 2009, 50 percent of the individuals getting food stamps are working. That is a point that we should realize.

We need to increase the minimum wage, and we realize that the highest number of high school graduates head the bulk of the food stamp households, but college graduates or those who

have had some college are also on food stamps.

Income inequality: as recently as 1998, the working age of a share of food stamp households was at 44. It is now up to 50.

Let me say we are finding ourselves in an economy of globalization, automation, and outsourcing. I would like to work with my Republican friends on curing that disease—the disease of outsourcing, giving up people's jobs, and cutting down on manufacturing—which, in actuality, under President Obama, we have been able to surge up.

I would like them to look at legislation that says if you are chronically unemployed, you can get training. You can get a credit and you get the unemployment, and you don't have to touch that. But you get a training credit or a stipend to change your life.

The young lady in this newspaper article is trying to save money to be able to get paramedic training. She wanted to be a nurse. She had to drop out because of the lack of money. What are we doing about people like that?

Let me close, Mr. JEFFRIES, with the CNN commentary, or CNN programing. The individual that gave these words was a prominent wealthy gentleman who is a senior citizen. I have a great respect for senior citizens. I really do. They are all over my district. But I hope that we don't have to come to a time that the idea of trying to balance wealth inequality gets you accused of being like Nazis. My heart is broken to be able to think that someone would misconstrue the idea of helping this young 25-year-old suffering with low wages and trying to close the income gap to a ridiculous comparison as that. Freedom of speech, of course; but that is ridiculous.

Let me show this form as my final expression here.

We are still fighting to get unemployment benefits. The numbers have gone past 1.9 million; and let me be very clear that four out of five beneficiaries have at least one other adult in the household. Many support children, single adults, multiple adults in the household. These people need an unemployment insurance extension for basic benefits, and we can't even do it. And we used to do it on an emergency basis in the same breath as talking about debt and deficit.

We need to invest in America's people. We need infrastructure to create jobs and close the wealth inequality.

One-half of the people who need an unemployment insurance extension have at least some college. Nine in 10 live in households with total income of less than \$75,000 a year. They need that bridge to keep them going; and shamefully, unfortunately, we have not done that.

So I want to thank the gentleman for giving me the opportunity. I feel bipartisanship coming from my colleagues

as they begin to talk on the floor, and that bipartisanship wants to have an increase in the minimum wage, to make it a livable wage, pass the emergency unemployment insurance, and have a reconsideration. Even though I know there is a conference bill, we just can't cut food stamps to those who are suffering.

I want to thank the gentleman. I look forward to investing in jobs that will be equal in income. I look forward to dealing with making automation work for those who want to work, technology work for those who want to work, closing the outsourcing gap and boosting manufacturing to give hard-working Americans who want something more than unemployment, but need it now; who want something more than low-skilled jobs, but need jobs now; and want something more than having to get food stamps, but need it now, to be able to close this heinous income inequality that is plaguing America. It is an epidemic that we must fight with every bit of our breath.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF ACTING ON CRITICAL LEGISLATIVE ISSUES—JANUARY 2014

House Democrats remain committed to policies that will address growing income inequality, the economic well-being of American families, and our economy—including renewing unemployment insurance, raising the minimum wage, and passing comprehensive immigration reform.

Addressing these issues would greatly benefit American families and our economic recovery, according to reports by leading economists and policy analysts.

Renewing Unemployment Insurance

On December 28, 2013, 1.3 million Americans lost access to emergency unemployment insurance. Democrats are committed to restoring this program that expires for an additional 72,000 Americans each week.

Renewing this program would help millions of Americans who are struggling to find a job and put food on the table, and it would also provide economic benefits:

Extending Unemployment Benefits Increases Output and Employment: "CBO estimates that extending the current EUC program and other related expiring provisions until the end of 2014 would increase inflation-adjusted GDP by 0.2 percent and increase full-time-equivalent employment by 0.2 million in the fourth quarter of 2014." [Congressional Budget Office, 12/1/13]

Failure to Extend Emergency Unemployment Benefits Hurts Jobless Workers in Every State: "Failure to extend the Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) program would affect jobless workers in every state. . . . In all, an estimated 4.9 million workers would lose out on EUC benefits by the end of 2014." [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 12/11/13]

Labor Market Will Lose 310,000 Jobs in 2014 if Unemployment Insurance Extensions Expire: "Less understood but equally crucial, the UI benefit extensions boost spending in the economy and thereby create jobs. We find that continuing the extensions through 2014 would generate spending that would support

310,000 jobs. If this program is discontinued, the economy will lose these jobs." [Economic Policy Institute, 11/7/13]

Raising the Minimum Wage

The minimum wage has not been raised since 2007, and raising the minimum wage would help American families while also growing our economy:

Raising Minimum Wage Will Help Low-Wage Workers, With Little Negative Impact on Employment: "The weight of the evidence is . . . that minimum-wage increases of the magnitude that have been enacted in the past . . . are a clear net benefit to low-wage workers as a group as well as a policy tool that pushes back against rising inequality." [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1/7/14]

Raising the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 Would Lift Wages for Millions and Provide an Economic Boost: "Raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 by 2016 would lift incomes for millions of American workers and provide a modest boost to U.S. GDP. . . . Across the phase-in period of the increase, GDP would grow by about \$22 billion, resulting in the creation of roughly 85,000 net new jobs over that period." [Economic Policy Institute, 12/19/13]

Passing Comprehensive Immigration Reform

In addition to providing a pathway to citizenship, passing comprehensive immigration reform would boost economic activity and grow our workforce:

Taking Action on Immigration: "Studies show that highly educated, foreign-born professionals are net job creators. Low quotas for both H-1B temporary visas and permanent residence green cards are the primary problems for employers seeking to hire high-skilled foreign nationals. Visa shortages and long waits created by the current law lead highly sought-after world talent to either leave America or choose to remain overseas and work for foreign competitors." [Business Roundtable, 4/5/13]

Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Creating Jobs and Strengthening the Economy: "The United States continues to lead the world in technology and science innovation; immigrant entrepreneurs play a large role in this competitive thrust. A study by Wadhwa and colleagues found that foreign-born entrepreneurs were founders or co-founders of more than 25% of technology and engineering companies started between 1995 and 2005. In 2005, these technology companies employed 450,000 workers and generated \$52 billion." [Chamber of Commerce, 1/2012]

Economic Impact of S. 744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act: "Taking account of all economic effects (including those reflected in the cost estimate), the bill would increase real (inflation-adjusted) GDP relative to the amount CBO projects under current law by 3.3 percent in 2023 and by 5.4 percent in 2033, according to CBO's central estimates." [Congressional Budget Office, 6/18/13]

Immigration Reform: Implications for Growth, Budget and Housing: "Effective immigration reform can be a powerful instrument of economic revitalization. By increasing the overall population and particularly the number of working-age labor force participants, reform can help expand the economy, contribute to

higher overall average wages, generate more consumer spending, and spur new demand for residential housing construction." [*Bipartisan Policy Center, 10/29/13*]

[From the Houston Chronicle, Jan. 8, 2014]

NO. 1 JOB FOR HOUSE: EXTEND EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT AID

PROGRAM WILL HELP ECONOMY BY CREATING JOBS, BOOSTING GROWTH

(By Sheila Jackson Lee)

Right now, 1.9 million Americans are experiencing an economic emergency, which will turn into a catastrophe for them and their families if Congress does not act immediately to extend the emergency unemployment program that expired on Dec. 28. Unless the aid is extended through 2014, nearly 14 million Americans will be negatively affected—the 4.9 million workers who will see unemployment insurance cut off and the approximately 9 million additional family members those workers are supporting.

There are some who believe that there is no economic emergency justifying an extension of the emergency unemployment program. They are wrong. Let them tell that to jobless veterans looking for a new job in an economy in which there are still nearly 2 million fewer jobs now than there were before the recession began. Let them tell that to the persons who know from experience there are more than three applicants for each new job created. The national employment rate is 7 percent and of these unemployed, the long-term unemployment rate—the share of unemployed workers who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or longer—is 37 percent, the highest it has been in 20 years.

Behind these grim statistics are the heart-breaking stories of real people—veterans, parents, seniors—struggling to get by on about \$300 a week. These benefits, which the recipients earned and paid for through their payroll taxes, are needed to pay rent and utilities, buy groceries, pay for Internet access to search for jobs and gas to get to job interviews.

This is why the most urgent task pending before the House of Representatives is to extend the emergency unemployment program. To address this emergency, I introduced legislation last month, the Unemployed Job Hunters Protection and Assistance Act (H.R. 3773), that would extend the program for 12 months to provide the benefits earned by the recipients and avoid what will be a tragedy not only for those who are unemployed but also for an economy still recovering from the worst recession since the Great Depression.

Extending the program is good for the nation's economy because it will create an estimated 200,000 jobs, increase economic growth by .2 percent and generate \$1.52 in economic activity for each dollar expended.

The emergency unemployment program was established in 2008 during the Bush Administration and has been reauthorized several times as the economy continues its recovery. Congress has never failed to extend emergency unemployment insurance when the rate of long-term unemployment was even half the current level of 37 percent. And because of the emergency nature of the congressional action, the extension was not subject to any offset requirements during the Bush Administration. There is no good reason to impose any such requirements now; doing so serves no purpose other than to punish the persons who need our help.

Despite a slowly recovering job market, these unemployed job hunters have not lost faith. Every morning, they get up and go out

or online looking for jobs. They want to work. They still have hope that things will get better so they can provide for their families. But they need the help that unemployment insurance is intended to provide.

Now is not the time to scapegoat those who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Now is the time to extend the emergency unemployment aid. At a minimum, Congress should and must vote to extend the program for three months while negotiations continue on a long-term solution. On Tuesday, a bipartisan measure that would do this cleared a procedural vote in the Senate, allowing debate to continue on the three-month stopgap. This is an economic emergency. It is time for congressional Republicans to work with their Democratic colleagues on the issues of importance to the American people.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlelady from Texas.

Earlier this month, we marked the 50th anniversary of the declaration of the war on poverty. In this Chamber in January 1964, President Lyndon Baines Johnson spoke before a joint session of Congress and announced a series of initiatives designed to combat chronic poverty in America. As a result of this effort, there were several legislative battles that were won in the march toward trying to create, as President Johnson said, the Great Society—Medicare, Medicaid, the Food Stamp Act, the school breakfast program, college work study, Job Corps, and minimum wage enhancement. These were all part of the war on poverty.

But, unfortunately, as we stand here today, in 2014, some in this Chamber have abandoned this war on poverty and instead have launched a war on the poor. As a result, we have seen income inequality grow. That is why it is such an important issue for us to confront now.

I am pleased that we have been joined by one of the strongest voices in the Congress for dealing with this issue, the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina, someone who is the vice chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Representative G. K. BUTTERFIELD.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Let me thank you, Mr. JEFFRIES, for yielding time, and thank you for your passion and your willingness to come to this floor each week to raise issues that are very important to the Congressional Black Caucus and should be important to every American. Thank you for your energy and the way you represent your district in Brooklyn. Thank you to Mr. HORSFORD for your tireless efforts as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to the State of the Union message tomorrow night. I have seen probably nine or 10 since I have been in Congress, and each one is unique in its own way. But I am really looking forward to the State of the Union message tomorrow night from President Barack Obama.

If press reports are correct, it seems to me that the President is ready to

pull off the Band-Aid and expose the disease of income inequality in this country; and, hopefully, the President will lay out a plan tomorrow night to address poverty and to address the huge income disparity that we see in our country.

These are the facts: there are 46.5 million Americans who live below the poverty level. Mr. JEFFRIES, there are 308 million people in America, and one out of six of those lives in poverty. That is unacceptable. In my district in North Carolina, one of four lives in poverty. That includes some 73,000 children, and my congressional district is among the bottom 10 of all of the congressional districts in the country.

American workers are working very hard, but their purchasing power in my district and your district, Mr. JEFFRIES, and all across America, is getting less. Why is that? It is because wages are flat. Workers are not experiencing pay raises and raises in their income as other Americans are. Wages are flat. Ten percent of wage earners today earn 50 percent of the Nation's income. Each year, the top 1 percent makes 26 times what a minimum wage worker makes, on average.

These are the facts. These are the statistics. We have not concocted this theory of people living in poverty. It is real. Nearly 50 million Americans are living in poverty, and so we must get serious. We must get serious about enabling the American Dream for millions of low-income Americans and millions of middle-income Americans.

A few moments ago, I heard the gentlelady from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, talk about the minimum wage. And she is absolutely correct. It is time for the minimum wage to be raised.

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Raising the wage to \$10.10 per hour would immediately lift 4.6 million Americans out of poverty. And many of those who are in poverty are the working poor.

It is time for corporate America to use their record profits. They are experiencing record profits, and good for them, but they must use their record profits to provide higher wages and better benefits. The fact is that corporate profits are enhanced when workers and their families are secure.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the State of the Union message tomorrow evening and urge the President to demonstrate his resolve to give equal opportunity to every American.

Finally, the Congressional Black Caucus has constantly made the point that there are dozens, if not hundreds, of communities across America represented by Republicans and Democrats that have poverty rates in excess of 20 percent. Some of those communities have had those rates for more than 30 years.

The Congressional Black Caucus has asked President Obama to use his executive authority to target at least 10 percent more resources to these communities. The Congressional Black Caucus has framed this as the 10–20–30 plan. I ask our President to target more resources to low-income communities.

I thank you, Mr. JEFFRIES, for yielding time.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina.

As you pointed out, income inequality and poverty should not be a partisan issue. It impacts urban America and it impacts rural America. It impacts blue States and it impacts red States. It impacts the north, the south, the east, the west, and the heartland of this country.

That is why it has been unfortunate that, heretofore, we have seen a refusal by some of our friends on the other side of the aisle to do commonsense things like raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour, which would lift millions of the working poor out of poverty and set them on a pathway toward the middle class.

Now, one of the places where income inequality is particularly pronounced is in my hometown of New York City, one of the greatest cities in the world, one of the richest cities in the world. But 25 percent of the population in New York City lives below the poverty line. In the shadow of Wall Street, the engine that drives the world economy, that is an unfortunate reality.

One of the people who has been raising this issue and fighting hard to address this back home in New York City is my distinguished colleague who represents the Ninth Congressional District, immediately adjacent to the one that I am privileged to represent. It is my honor to yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Brooklyn, New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), my good friend and colleague, for yielding, and the gentleman from Nevada, the Honorable Mr. HORSFORD, for anchoring the Special Orders of the Congressional Black Caucus.

I join with my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus in rising this evening to address the issue of income inequality that continues to splinter the foundation of our Nation.

In Brooklyn, the lowest income and the lowest fifth of households took home about 2.5 percent of the borough's income in 2011. The top 5 percent claimed 24 percent. Almost 22 percent of the population of Brooklyn lives in poverty.

While the causes of this polarization are complex, I believe they are not insurmountable. The people of Brooklyn have started to stand up and demand action on the issue.

We know that the wage stagnation contributes largely to income disparity, so let's raise the minimum wage.

We know that education is the true ladder of opportunity in our communities, so let's make the vital investments in education.

We know that unemployment insurance is not only an essential tool for individuals, a bridge to find new work, but it is also a stimulus to our local businesses, so let us extend unemployment insurance.

Most importantly, we must make every effort to make sure that no American is allowed to fall through our social safety net and that we, as their national representatives, truly look out for those that have been driven deeper into desperation and poverty by the recent financial crisis.

So our message today is simple: the economic disparity that has crept across our Nation is threatening America's fundamental promise of opportunity for all. We must take action: opportunities for entrepreneurship and job creation; maintain our social compact so that no American has to go hungry, that we provide the food assistance through a robust Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; provide the unemployment insurance that families need to maintain until they get those jobs they have been seeking.

We must take action. That is what we have been sworn to do.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my good friend and colleague, Representative YVETTE CLARKE, and look forward to continuing the fight and the march toward socioeconomic justice on behalf of the people we represent back at home in Brooklyn and New York City.

It is now my honor and my privilege to yield to another good friend, the dean of the freshman class of the CBC, someone who has continued in the great tradition that had been set forth by his father and his predecessor and is carving out his own reputation as a fighter for justice on behalf of the people he represents back at home in New Jersey. Let me now yield to the distinguished gentleman from the Garden State, Representative DONALD PAYNE, Jr.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the dynamic duo of the CBC's freshman class, Mr. HORSFORD and Mr. JEFFRIES, for their tireless leadership in the 113th Congress, and now the Second Session of the 113th Congress. They have demonstrated that they have hit the ground running and understand the issues that are important to the people of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the gap between the rich and poor in this country has really become staggering, and that gap is increasing every single day. Nowhere is that more true than in my home State

of New Jersey. The number of wealthy families has doubled. Meanwhile, the poorest income brackets have increased sharply. In my district alone, more than a quarter of the people live in poverty, and this is likely really underestimated due to the high cost of living in New Jersey.

Not only is there a growing gap, but unemployment is high, the minimum wage is stagnant, and there is a lack of opportunity throughout this Nation for people to find the jobs that they need to have their families live in the manner in which they should. This, in the richest country in the world, the greatest Nation in the world, is absolutely unacceptable. All of these contribute to growing income inequality.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) was correct. We are not saying that everyone should have the same standard of living or the same salary or income, but the opportunity to rise to those salaries and incomes is the issue of today.

One thing that the Congress can do to help lessen this inequality is to extend unemployment insurance right away.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting how some of this issue is couched in: maybe people just don't want to get up and look for a job, and if they take that menial job, then what is the problem? The problem is: you can't feed your children; you can't buy the clothes they need to go to school; you can't educate them. Therein lies the problem.

We are in a time now where there are more than 1 million long-term unemployed who literally have been left out in the cold.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I know what it is like to be unemployed. I know what it is like to be down on your luck. At one time, a company that I worked for for a decade, which I thought would be my career, I would retire from there, get the gold watch, the proverbial gold watch, well, Mr. Speaker, it didn't work out that way. The company closed its doors and I found myself unemployed, going down to the Unemployment Office to get the paperwork needed, and trekking across my community to attempt to get a job.

That is the other thing that people don't understand about this, Mr. Speaker. You see, you can't just sit around and not look for a job in order to collect unemployment insurance.

That it has not been extended is almost a crime because, you see, some of these people have paid into this system for 5 and 10 and 20 years, and now that they need it, we are saying to those people that have played by the rules and done the things that we said they should do, that it is over for you.

I know what it is like not to have a paycheck, to go paycheck to paycheck. Now, I was fortunate. In my situation, I was able to move back home. But

what I understand, Mr. Speaker, is that everyone does not have that opportunity. So I will continue to fight for what is right and what this Nation should stand for.

Take it from me, being unemployed, out looking for a job, is hard work, and it wears on you mentally and emotionally, because a job isn't just a paycheck. It is not just about one's livelihood. A job defines your purpose in life.

The hundreds of thousands of unemployed in New Jersey remain hopeful and optimistic that, if they keep working hard, they keep playing by the rules, they will be rewarded one day and find their new purpose in life. We must fulfill that promise that we have made to them. The faces of the unemployed, of those living in poverty in New Jersey are numerous and diverse.

Mr. Speaker, there is another dynamic. We have the dynamic of people who have great qualifications not being able to find a job because it is an employer's market. And, apparently, the bottom line is what is the most important thing for people. To lose a percentage on their gains or the percentage of income they make for their shareholders is the most important thing. So they are willing to let people lose their income to keep those numbers where they are.

There are middle-aged workers who, after decades at a company they have loved, find themselves unemployed. There are young people with college and master's degrees, as I said, who did everything right but can't seem to find a job no matter how qualified they are.

So I am asking my friends on both sides of the aisle to look at the faces of the long-term unemployed, to look at the faces of minimum wage workers, to look at the faces of the men and women and children living in poverty. I am asking my friends on both sides of the aisle to leave behind their political agendas and move forward with a human agenda, because, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, there is no reason that, in the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth, we have these issues to the degree that we do.

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So I just want to close by saying that there are people in this Nation that play by the rules. There are people in this Nation that have done everything that we have asked them to do. So it is our obligation in this Nation, as its leaders, to find those opportunities for people to live and continue the type of life they have had in the American way.

I am just here to say that I will continue to fight for the less fortunate because I will not turn my back on any American that wants to play by the rules and have done what we have said in this Nation you need to do. The land of the free and the home of the brave—that still should mean something.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his very thoughtful observations and, in particular, for focusing on the need to reauthorize unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed across America. There has been a myth that really has been put forth unfortunately by those who seek to undermine this program that individuals who are receiving unemployment assistance, who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more, simply are sitting home looking to collect a check without going out and actively searching for employment. Nothing can be further from the truth.

The reality is—and this is connected to the dynamic around income inequality that we are discussing here today—is that for every 2.8, 2.9 million Americans who are unemployed, looking for a job, there is only one job that exists. So obviously we need to do more in this country collectively to generate employment as opposed to exploiting good middle class jobs to other parts of the world and not seeing any reciprocal economic benefit in return.

I am thankful that I have been joined by the coanchor of the CBC Special Order, someone whose very district representing urban parts of Clark County in Las Vegas as well as rural parts of Nevada can speak to the issue quite clearly that income inequality and poverty in America is not simply an urban issue or a rural issue. It impacts all of America, and we are thankful here in this Congress that he has been such a strong champion for his district and for these issues that are impacting people all across the country.

Let me yield to my good friend from Nevada, STEVEN HORSFORD.

Mr. HORSFORD. I thank my good friend, a strong advocate for the people of his district in New York as well as representing the interests of all Americans, and for your leadership in coanchoring this hour on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, where we bring the issues that most Americans want this Congress to focus on to the floor of the House of Representatives.

I would like to thank you for anchoring this hour and all of our colleagues who have come to the floor tonight to speak.

You know, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow night, this Chamber will be packed. Every seat will be filled, and every seat in the Chamber will have Representatives here. Millions upon millions of Americans will be listening as our President lays out the State of our Union. I am looking forward to his remarks and his vision for how we can continue to move our country forward.

Tonight, we come here to gather to discuss income inequality and what Congress can do in working with the President to move some of these important legislative issues forward on

behalf of the constituents that we represent and millions of Americans across our great Nation.

There is no easy answer for solving the problem of income inequality or economic mobility. I thank the gentleman from New York for talking about how our various districts are really representative of this issue of income inequality.

In my home district of Nevada, the Fourth District, we have been hit harder than most by higher unemployment, higher home foreclosures which have led to economic loss, and I want to talk about some of that tonight because when we talk about issues of income inequality and economic mobility, it is for all incomes, not just for a select few. It is for the people in rural America as well as urban America. These are issues that are important to all of us.

Now although we cannot expect Congress to solve each person's economic struggle, we can certainly expect our Members of Congress not to target those who are struggling to make ends meet, especially by balancing our budget on their backs.

As of December 28, this past year, Congress did just that, unfortunately, and now, over 1.6 million Americans have lost crucial unemployment insurance benefits. Today, nearly 21,000 Nevadans in my State have been cut off from unemployment benefits. This is personal. As my colleague from New Jersey talked about, for those who understand what it means to be unemployed, for those of us who understand the fact that people are putting in resume after resume, day after day, week after week, it hits a person to their core, being unemployed. To add insult to injury, this Congress failed to do its job.

So its unconscionable to assume that those who are looking for work are lazy or that they want to somehow stay unemployed. Mr. Speaker, the constituents that I have spoken to in my district at the work centers who continue to put their resumes in, they want to be employed.

It is one thing to have our colleagues on the other side believe that the government should not intervene in helping to close the gap between the rich and poor, but it is absolutely wrong to cut critical social safety nets that have been in place for decades—regardless of party—in an effort to reduce spending while maintaining corporate subsidies and tax breaks for the very rich.

Mr. Speaker, it is morally outrageous to target those who have lost their jobs at no fault of their own, but it is even worse to see this happen when we have millions of dollars in tax subsidies to millionaires and major industry.

What is more, the difference between the top and the bottom of the economic ladder is greater than ever before, and climbing this ladder is also becoming increasingly difficult.

Recently, Harvard economist Dr. Raj Chetty found that those who are our parents, and how much our parents earn, are more consequential today than ever before. Dr. Chetty identified five key factors that are heavily correlated with economic mobility and income inequality. First is segregation. Second is inequality. Third is the quality of our public school systems. Fourth is social and civic engagement. Fifth is family structure.

And for decades, low-income workers have seen their wages frozen while the profits of the Nation's wealthiest Americans have continued to explode. Now I have nothing against successful people, people who go out and put their ingenuity and entrepreneurship to work and become successful, but I also believe that it is important for this Congress to also focus on the needs of those who are part of the middle class and those who have fallen into poverty who want to be part of that middle class.

It is time that Congress acted to address the minimum wage crisis in our country. \$7.25, which is the Federal minimum wage, is not a living wage in today's America, and we need to recognize that. We need to recognize that the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013, the bill that has been introduced by our House Democratic colleague, Representative GEORGE MILLER of California, and in the Senate by Senator TOM HARKIN of Iowa, is the type of commonsense legislation that a majority of Americans expect this Congress to focus on.

Gradually increasing the Federal minimum wage from a current rate of \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 per hour by 2016 in three 95-cent installments is the right economic step to take for our country and the people that we represent. \$10.10 is the inflation-adjusted value of the minimum wage compared to what it was in the 1960s. Raising the tipped minimum wage from \$2.13 per hour to \$7.07 per hour.

Now let's talk about who these people are that we are fighting to increase the wage for. First, these are low-wage workers who will benefit from an increase in the minimum wage and are more likely to work full time. In fact, 55 percent of those who are on minimum wage today work full time. Fifty-six percent of those on minimum wage today, Mr. Speaker, are women, and 80 percent are adults who are at least 20 years of age.

Those are not the only groups that would benefit from the minimum wage. Increasing the minimum wage would also generate some \$22 billion in economic activity and create an additional 85,000 jobs nationwide. Contrary to what Republicans and some super-PACs may want the American people to believe, raising the minimum wage is good for the economy. It creates jobs, and it helps lift people out of pov-

erty. It would raise 4.6 million Americans out of poverty and put an average of \$1,700 back into the pockets of our country's lowest-wage workers.

In Nevada alone, over 139,000 people, 20 percent of our State's children, would be directly or indirectly affected by an increase in the minimum wage. Raising the minimum wage would actually take pressure off of our government by allowing people to be in more sustaining wages that help them provide for themselves and their families rather than relying on Federal assistance to take care of themselves.

So these are the growing inequalities that we are here to talk about, Mr. Speaker, and one of the greatest threats to our Nation's future is this issue of growing income inequality. Our country's greatness was built on the foundation of the world's most prosperous middle class and on a society where those who worked hard had the opportunity to rise on that economic ladder of opportunity. That has become far from the truth over the last 30 years but particularly during the recovery from the Great Recession.

Before I turn the time back over to my colleague and engage in a little bit of back and forth, I would like to look at this graph for a moment because it charts our country's various recessions and depressions and our subsequent recoveries. In the Great Depression, everyone suffered. It devastated everyone in the economy, regardless of income. In the following years, when our economy started to grow again, all levels of income recovered at approximately the same rates that had declined. The top 1 percent share of the recovery was only about 28 percent at the time.

During the Clinton expansion years, in the 1990s, it was an economic boom for all levels of income. And although the top 1 percent held 45 percent of that growth, it was still a shared economic prosperity.

Moving ahead to the Bush expansion, after the 2001 recession, you can see more of the growth being concentrated in the top 1 percent at 65 percent. When the recession of 2007 to 2009 came about, only 49 percent of the loss belonged to the 1 percent despite the massive gains they had accrued during the Bush expansion.

So this is not the type of economic system that we want for our country, where the wealthiest elite continues to grow and the Nation's middle class shrinks and suffers, and that is what we are here to talk about tonight.

I thank the gentleman from New York for yielding to me and I yield back.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Nevada for the very precise and comprehensive analysis that was given today on the House floor.

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There were several important points that you raised that I would like to

elaborate on and perhaps have a follow-up discussion. One of the issues that you discuss relates to the failure of the economic expansion as well as the recoveries that have taken place increasingly over the last several decades to benefit in any proportional way people in the middle class and those who aspire to be part of the middle class. This has been a trend that we have seen for the last 30-plus years. It has been particularly pronounced in the 5 years or so since the economy collapsed in 2008.

When we look at the recovery, I mentioned earlier today that it is a particularly schizophrenic and inconsistent one because we know that the stock market is way up, corporate profits are way up, CEO compensation is way up and the productivity of the American worker is way up, but middle class wages remain stagnant.

Now, why is that a problem? This chart illustrates the fact that essentially since 1950, the productivity of the American worker—our ability as workers throughout this country to produce more in a more efficient fashion, costing less in time and resources, has consistently and exponentially increased—the productivity of the American worker. But essentially over the last 30-plus years or so, wages connected to that output of the American worker have remained flat.

So what does that mean? That essentially means that while the American worker is far more efficient and effective in doing their job and in being more productive, the profits and the output generated by the American worker have not inured to the employees. It has inured to the employer and a very small percentage of individuals.

So when we talk about income inequality, we are not saying that we have a problem with success. We are saying everyone should benefit from the success that the American worker has created as opposed to just a small number of individuals—the so-called job creators. We are thankful for their ingenuity and their effort; but the reality is the productivity of the American worker has increased, yet the middle class has not benefited.

Back between 1978 and 2001, CEO compensation had increased 876 percent—CEO compensation between 1978 and 2001. And what has happened as it relates to compensation for the average American worker during that same time period? It has increased 5.4 percent. That is a shameful difference, one that we should not tolerate in this great country.

The other observation that my distinguished colleague made related to the fact that if we increase the minimum wage, it will not just benefit millions of Americans by lifting them out of poverty. Parenthetically, why in the world would we want a society where people work full-time throughout an entire year yet find themselves

in poverty? That makes no sense. But increasing the minimum wage benefits the economy, as my colleague indicated, because it increases consumer demand. An increase in consumer demand leads to economic growth, an increase in economic growth leads to additional job creation, and everybody benefits. It is a commonsense solution.

So let me now turn to my colleague from Nevada for some parting thoughts. And I appreciate, as always, your comprehensive analysis and observation.

Mr. HORSFORD. And I appreciate yours. Just to reinforce the point you were making, this chart illustrates the very facts of the matter. Why is it okay that Wall Street profits are at record highs over the last 3 years since 2009, at 720 percent, but it is not okay to increase the minimum wage for millions upon millions of Americans who are using that minimum-wage job to provide for themselves and their family? Why is it okay that the unemployment rate is over 102 percent during this period, but it is not okay to increase the minimum wage for workers in this country? Why is it okay that CEO pay is 185 times bigger than the average worker according to the Economic Policy Institute, but it is not okay to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25, incrementally, to \$10.10 in order to lift people out of poverty? And why is it okay that Americans' home equity has dropped 35 percent during 2007–2009 thereby affecting the very income wealth that the majority of middle class Americans did have and yet not help to lift our economy by raising the minimum wage?

These are the questions that we would like to pose to our friends and colleagues on the other side. These are the questions that the American public expect this House of Representatives to debate, and these are the issues that would really go to the crux of closing the income inequality and moving economic mobility forward in this country.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on these and other measures. We have introduced legislation to increase the minimum wage, to extend unemployment insurance benefits, to provide training to workers to move into high-growth sectors and to invest in our infrastructure to create the type of jobs that our country desperately needs. But we need our colleagues on the other side to work with us and our President to move these legislative proposals forward and to stop the continued obstructionism that has plagued this Congress for far too long.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my colleague.

In summation, income inequality is a threat to our economy and the integrity of our democracy, and we must do everything possible to right this wrong in America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to income inequality in the United States. As millions of Americans remain without work, while others are underpaid or underemployed, it is imperative that we address the growing threat to our country that is income inequality.

Since the 1970s, we have witnessed a dangerous trend develop where wage growth for middle and lower income households has become stagnant while incomes at the very top continue to rise sharply. From 1973 to 2005, real hourly wages for the top 10 percent rose by 30 percent or more, whereas the bottom 50 percent of all Americans experienced only marginal real wage increases of a little more than 5 percent.

The income gap is further amplified when comparing races. Overall, Caucasian males earn a median income of more than \$40,000 per year while African American males average roughly \$30,000 during the same period. Hispanic Americans average just over \$26,000 in the same category. These discrepancies among demographics is alarming, considering those figures are even lower for women.

The percentage of wealth controlled by the richest Americans is another disturbing fact that is often overlooked. The top 1 percent of Americans own 40 percent of our entire nation's wealth, while the bottom 80 percent of Americans share only 7 percent of the nation's wealth. In historical terms, the last time our nation faced such a wide income gap was during the 1920s leading up to the Great Depression.

Mr. Speaker, while Congress struggles with raising the minimum wage, millions of working individuals and families across the country continue to struggle with stagnant pay and rising inflation. Unless we take a serious approach that transcends simply raising the minimum wage in order to curb income inequality, the consequences could prove catastrophic for our economy.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues Congressmen JEFFRIES and HORSFORD for once again leading the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour. Today's topic of income/economic inequality is one of the most critical challenges currently facing our country.

For too many Americans, the barriers to economic opportunity and mobility have become insurmountable.

Just last week, a Pew Research Center survey found that at least 60 percent of all Republicans, Democrats and Independents say the gap between the rich and everyone else has grown in the past 10 years.

However, we do not need a survey to tell us what we already know to be true. According to the Census Bureau, 95 percent of all economic gains since the recovery began have gone to the top 1 percent.

We also know that, since 1979, our economy has more than doubled in size, but most of that growth has flowed to a fortunate few.

In the past, the average CEO made about 20 to 30 times the income of the average worker, today's CEO makes 273 times more. Meanwhile, a family in the top 1 percent has a net worth 288 times higher than the typical American family, the largest income gap ever for our country.

This is simply egregious.

We cannot continue to believe that a growing economy guarantees higher wages and income for all. Because it does not.

We cannot ignore that in 2014, women continue to lag behind men in wages, with women making 77 cents for every dollar a man takes home.

According to The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink, women make up nearly two-thirds of minimum-wage workers. Given this statistic, it's no wonder that a third of all American women are living on the brink of poverty.

Americans are working harder than ever, for the smallest of gains. This is simply not acceptable.

Congress must renew its focus on investing in the American people through quality programs that promote access to the middle class, equality and accountability.

In order to help the working poor and middle class, we must raise the minimum wage; invest in education; improve our infrastructure; rein in Wall Street and return our focus to Main Street.

Only then will we be on the path toward prosperity and equal economic opportunity for all.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2642, FEDERAL AGRICULTURE REFORM AND RISK MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2013

Mr. LUCAS (during the Special Order of Mr. JEFFRIES) submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 113-333)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642), to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its amendment to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Agricultural Act of 2014".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definition of Secretary of Agriculture.

TITLE I—COMMODITIES

Subtitle A—Repeals and Reforms

PART I—REPEALS

Sec. 1101. Repeal of direct payments.

Sec. 1102. Repeal of counter-cyclical payments.

Sec. 1103. Repeal of average crop revenue election program.

PART II—COMMODITY POLICY

- Sec. 1111. Definitions.
- Sec. 1112. Base acres.
- Sec. 1113. Payment yields.
- Sec. 1114. Payment acres.
- Sec. 1115. Producer election.
- Sec. 1116. Price loss coverage.
- Sec. 1117. Agriculture risk coverage.
- Sec. 1118. Producer agreements.
- Sec. 1119. Transition assistance for producers of upland cotton.

Subtitle B—Marketing Loans

- Sec. 1201. Availability of nonrecourse marketing assistance loans for loan commodities.
- Sec. 1202. Loan rates for nonrecourse marketing assistance loans.
- Sec. 1203. Term of loans.
- Sec. 1204. Repayment of loans.
- Sec. 1205. Loan deficiency payments.
- Sec. 1206. Payments in lieu of loan deficiency payments for grazed acreage.
- Sec. 1207. Special marketing loan provisions for upland cotton.
- Sec. 1208. Special competitive provisions for extra long staple cotton.
- Sec. 1209. Availability of recourse loans for high moisture feed grains and seed cotton.
- Sec. 1210. Adjustments of loans.

Subtitle C—Sugar

- Sec. 1301. Sugar policy.

Subtitle D—Dairy

PART I—MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS

- Sec. 1401. Definitions.
- Sec. 1402. Calculation of average feed cost and actual dairy production margins.
- Sec. 1403. Establishment of margin protection program for dairy producers.
- Sec. 1404. Participation of dairy operations in margin protection program.
- Sec. 1405. Production history of participating dairy operations.
- Sec. 1406. Margin protection payments.
- Sec. 1407. Premiums for margin protection program.
- Sec. 1408. Effect of failure to pay administrative fees or premiums.
- Sec. 1409. Duration.
- Sec. 1410. Administration and enforcement.

PART II—REPEAL OR REAUTHORIZATION OF OTHER DAIRY-RELATED PROVISIONS

- Sec. 1421. Repeal of dairy product price support program.
- Sec. 1422. Temporary continuation and eventual repeal of milk income loss contract program.
- Sec. 1423. Repeal of dairy export incentive program.
- Sec. 1424. Extension of dairy forward pricing program.
- Sec. 1425. Extension of dairy indemnity program.
- Sec. 1426. Extension of dairy promotion and research program.
- Sec. 1427. Repeal of Federal Milk Marketing Order Review Commission.

PART III—DAIRY PRODUCT DONATION PROGRAM

- Sec. 1431. Dairy product donation program.
- Subtitle E—Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs
- Sec. 1501. Supplemental agricultural disaster assistance.

Subtitle F—Administration

- Sec. 1601. Administration generally.

- Sec. 1602. Suspension of permanent price support authority.
- Sec. 1603. Payment limitations.
- Sec. 1604. Rulemaking related to significant contribution for active personal management.
- Sec. 1605. Adjusted gross income limitation.
- Sec. 1606. Geographically disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- Sec. 1607. Personal liability of producers for deficiencies.
- Sec. 1608. Prevention of deceased individuals receiving payments under farm commodity programs.
- Sec. 1609. Technical corrections.
- Sec. 1610. Appeals.
- Sec. 1611. Assignment of payments.
- Sec. 1612. Tracking of benefits.
- Sec. 1613. Signature authority.
- Sec. 1614. Implementation.
- Sec. 1615. Research option.

TITLE II—CONSERVATION

Subtitle A—Conservation Reserve Program

- Sec. 2001. Extension and enrollment requirements of conservation reserve program.
- Sec. 2002. Farmable wetland program.
- Sec. 2003. Duties of owners and operators.
- Sec. 2004. Duties of the Secretary.
- Sec. 2005. Payments.
- Sec. 2006. Contract requirements.
- Sec. 2007. Conversion of land subject to contract to other conserving uses.
- Sec. 2008. Effect on existing contracts.

Subtitle B—Conservation Stewardship Program

- Sec. 2101. Conservation stewardship program.

Subtitle C—Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Sec. 2201. Purposes.
- Sec. 2202. Definitions.
- Sec. 2203. Establishment and administration.
- Sec. 2204. Evaluation of applications.
- Sec. 2205. Duties of producers.
- Sec. 2206. Limitation on payments.
- Sec. 2207. Conservation innovation grants and payments.
- Sec. 2208. Effect on existing contracts.

Subtitle D—Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- Sec. 2301. Agricultural conservation easement program.

Subtitle E—Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- Sec. 2401. Regional conservation partnership program.

Subtitle F—Other Conservation Programs

- Sec. 2501. Conservation of private grazing land.
- Sec. 2502. Grassroots source water protection program.
- Sec. 2503. Voluntary public access and habitat incentive program.
- Sec. 2504. Agriculture conservation experienced services program.
- Sec. 2505. Small watershed rehabilitation program.
- Sec. 2506. Emergency watershed protection program.
- Sec. 2507. Terminal Lakes.
- Sec. 2508. Soil and Water Resources Conservation.

Subtitle G—Funding and Administration

- Sec. 2601. Funding.
- Sec. 2602. Technical assistance.
- Sec. 2603. Regional equity.
- Sec. 2604. Reservation of funds to provide assistance to certain farmers or ranchers for conservation access.

- Sec. 2605. Annual report on program enrollments and assistance.
- Sec. 2606. Administrative requirements applicable to all conservation programs.
- Sec. 2607. Standards for State technical committees.
- Sec. 2608. Rulemaking authority.
- Sec. 2609. Wetlands mitigation.
- Sec. 2610. Lesser prairie-chicken conservation report.
- Sec. 2611. Highly erodible land and wetland conservation for crop insurance.

Subtitle H—Repeat of Superseded Program Authorities and Transitional Provisions; Technical Amendments

- Sec. 2701. Comprehensive conservation enhancement program.
- Sec. 2702. Emergency forestry conservation reserve program.
- Sec. 2703. Wetlands reserve program.
- Sec. 2704. Farmland protection program and farm viability program.
- Sec. 2705. Grassland reserve program.
- Sec. 2706. Agricultural water enhancement program.
- Sec. 2707. Wildlife habitat incentive program.
- Sec. 2708. Great Lakes basin program.
- Sec. 2709. Chesapeake Bay watershed program.
- Sec. 2710. Cooperative conservation partnership initiative.
- Sec. 2711. Environmental easement program.
- Sec. 2712. Temporary administration of conservation programs.
- Sec. 2713. Technical amendments.

TITLE III—TRADE

Subtitle A—Food for Peace Act

- Sec. 3001. General authority.
- Sec. 3002. Set-aside for support for organizations through which non-emergency assistance is provided.
- Sec. 3003. Food aid quality.
- Sec. 3004. Minimum levels of assistance.
- Sec. 3005. Food Aid Consultative Group.
- Sec. 3006. Oversight, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Sec. 3007. Assistance for stockpiling and rapid transportation, delivery, and distribution of shelf-stable prepackaged foods.
- Sec. 3008. Impact on local farmers and economy and report on use of funds.
- Sec. 3009. Prepositioning of agricultural commodities.
- Sec. 3010. Annual report regarding food aid programs and activities.
- Sec. 3011. Deadline for agreements to finance sales or to provide other assistance.
- Sec. 3012. Minimum level of nonemergency food assistance.
- Sec. 3013. Micronutrient fortification programs.
- Sec. 3014. John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program.
- Sec. 3015. Coordination of foreign assistance programs report.

Subtitle B—Agricultural Trade Act of 1978

- Sec. 3101. Export credit guarantee program.
- Sec. 3102. Funding for market access program.
- Sec. 3103. Foreign market development co-operator program.

Subtitle C—Other Agricultural Trade Laws

- Sec. 3201. Food for Progress Act of 1985.
- Sec. 3202. Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust Act.

- Sec. 3203. Promotion of agricultural exports to emerging markets.
- Sec. 3204. McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.
- Sec. 3205. Technical assistance for specialty crops.
- Sec. 3206. Global Crop Diversity Trust.
- Sec. 3207. Local and regional food aid procurement projects.
- Sec. 3208. Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs.
- TITLE IV—NUTRITION
- Subtitle A—Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- Sec. 4001. Preventing payment of cash to recipients of supplemental nutrition assistance benefits for the return of empty bottles and cans used to contain food purchased with benefits provided under the program.
- Sec. 4002. Retail food stores.
- Sec. 4003. Enhancing services to elderly and disabled supplemental nutrition assistance program participants.
- Sec. 4004. Food distribution program on Indian reservations.
- Sec. 4005. Exclusion of medical marijuana from excess medical expense deduction.
- Sec. 4006. Standard utility allowances based on the receipt of energy assistance payments.
- Sec. 4007. Eligibility disqualifications.
- Sec. 4008. Eligibility disqualifications for certain convicted felons.
- Sec. 4009. Ending supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits for lottery or gambling winners.
- Sec. 4010. Improving security of food assistance.
- Sec. 4011. Technology modernization for retail food stores.
- Sec. 4012. Use of benefits for purchase of community-supported agriculture share.
- Sec. 4013. Improved wage verification using the National Directory of New Hires.
- Sec. 4014. Restaurant meals program.
- Sec. 4015. Mandating State immigration verification.
- Sec. 4016. Data exchange standardization for improved interoperability.
- Sec. 4017. Pilot projects to improve Federal-State cooperation in identifying and reducing fraud in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.
- Sec. 4018. Prohibiting government-sponsored recruitment activities.
- Sec. 4019. Tolerance level for excluding small errors.
- Sec. 4020. Quality control standards.
- Sec. 4021. Performance bonus payments.
- Sec. 4022. Pilot projects to reduce dependency and increase work requirements and work effort under supplemental nutrition assistance program.
- Sec. 4023. Cooperation with program research and evaluation.
- Sec. 4024. Authorization of appropriations.
- Sec. 4025. Review, report, and regulation of cash nutrition assistance program benefits provided in Puerto Rico.
- Sec. 4026. Assistance for community food projects.
- Sec. 4027. Emergency food assistance.
- Sec. 4028. Nutrition education.
- Sec. 4029. Retail food store and recipient trafficking.
- Sec. 4030. Technical and conforming amendments.
- Sec. 4031. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands pilot program.
- Sec. 4032. Annual State report on verification of SNAP participation.
- Sec. 4033. Service of traditional foods in public facilities.
- Subtitle B—Commodity Distribution Programs
- Sec. 4101. Commodity distribution program.
- Sec. 4102. Commodity supplemental food program.
- Sec. 4103. Distribution of surplus commodities to special nutrition projects.
- Sec. 4104. Processing of commodities.
- Subtitle C—Miscellaneous
- Sec. 4201. Purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables for distribution to schools and service institutions.
- Sec. 4202. Pilot project for procurement of unprocessed fruits and vegetables.
- Sec. 4203. Seniors farmers' market nutrition program.
- Sec. 4204. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Sec. 4205. Multiagency task force.
- Sec. 4206. Healthy Food Financing Initiative.
- Sec. 4207. Purchase of Halal and Kosher food for emergency food assistance program.
- Sec. 4208. Food insecurity nutrition incentive.
- Sec. 4209. Food and agriculture service learning program.
- Sec. 4210. Nutrition information and awareness pilot program.
- Sec. 4211. Termination of existing agreement.
- Sec. 4212. Review of sole-source contracts in Federal nutrition programs.
- Sec. 4213. Pulse crop products.
- Sec. 4214. Pilot project for canned, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables.
- TITLE V—CREDIT
- Subtitle A—Farm Ownership Loans
- Sec. 5001. Eligibility for farm ownership loans.
- Sec. 5002. Conservation loan and loan guarantee program.
- Sec. 5003. Joint financing arrangements.
- Sec. 5004. Elimination of mineral rights appraisal requirement.
- Sec. 5005. Down payment loan program.
- Subtitle B—Operating Loans
- Sec. 5101. Eligibility for farm operating loans.
- Sec. 5102. Elimination of rural residency requirement for operating loans to youth.
- Sec. 5103. Defaults by youth loan borrowers.
- Sec. 5104. Term limits on direct operating loans.
- Sec. 5105. Valuation of local or regional crops.
- Sec. 5106. Microloans.
- Sec. 5107. Term limits on guaranteed operating loans.
- Subtitle C—Emergency Loans
- Sec. 5201. Eligibility for emergency loans.
- Subtitle D—Administrative Provisions
- Sec. 5301. Beginning farmer and rancher individual development accounts pilot program.
- Sec. 5302. Farmer loan pilot projects.
- Sec. 5303. Definition of qualified beginning farmer or rancher.
- Sec. 5304. Loan authorization levels.
- Sec. 5305. Loan fund set-asides.
- Sec. 5306. Borrower training.
- Subtitle E—Miscellaneous
- Sec. 5401. State agricultural mediation programs.
- Sec. 5402. Loans to purchasers of highly fractionated land.
- Sec. 5403. Removal of duplicative appraisals.
- Sec. 5404. Compensation disclosure by Farm Credit System institutions.
- TITLE VI—RURAL DEVELOPMENT
- Subtitle A—Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act
- Sec. 6001. Water, waste disposal, and wastewater facility grants.
- Sec. 6002. Elimination of reservation of community facilities grant program funds.
- Sec. 6003. Rural water and wastewater circuit rider program.
- Sec. 6004. Use of loan guarantees for community facilities.
- Sec. 6005. Tribal college and university essential community facilities.
- Sec. 6006. Essential community facilities technical assistance and training.
- Sec. 6007. Emergency and imminent community water assistance grant program.
- Sec. 6008. Water systems for rural and native villages in Alaska.
- Sec. 6009. Household water well systems.
- Sec. 6010. Rural business and industry loan program.
- Sec. 6011. Solid waste management grants.
- Sec. 6012. Rural business development grants.
- Sec. 6013. Rural cooperative development grants.
- Sec. 6014. Locally or regionally produced agricultural food products.
- Sec. 6015. Appropriate technology transfer for rural areas program.
- Sec. 6016. Rural economic area partnership zones.
- Sec. 6017. Intermediary relending program.
- Sec. 6018. Rural college coordinated strategy.
- Sec. 6019. Rural water and waste disposal infrastructure.
- Sec. 6020. Simplified applications.
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- Sec. 12401. Short title.
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 Sec. 12408. Lobbying restrictions.
 Sec. 12409. Noncompliance.
 Sec. 12410. Sunset.
- SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.**
- In this Act, the term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Agriculture.
- TITLE I—COMMODITIES**
- Subtitle A—Repeals and Reforms**
- PART I—REPEALS**
- SEC. 1101. REPEAL OF DIRECT PAYMENTS.**
- Sections 1103 and 1303 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8713, 8753) are repealed.
- SEC. 1102. REPEAL OF COUNTER-CYCLICAL PAYMENTS.**
- (a) REPEAL.—Sections 1104 and 1304 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8714, 8754) are repealed.
- (b) CONTINUED APPLICATION FOR 2013 CROP YEAR.—Sections 1104 and 1304 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8714, 8754), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue to apply through the 2013 crop year with respect to all covered commodities (as defined in section 1001 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 8702)) and peanuts on a farm.
- SEC. 1103. REPEAL OF AVERAGE CROP REVENUE ELECTION PROGRAM.**
- (a) REPEAL.—Section 1105 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8715) is repealed.
- (b) CONTINUED APPLICATION FOR 2013 CROP YEAR.—Section 1105 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8715), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue to apply through the 2013 crop year with respect to all covered commodities (as defined in section 1001 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 8702)) and peanuts on a farm for which the irrevocable election under section 1105 of that Act was made before the date of enactment of this Act.
- PART II—COMMODITY POLICY**
- SEC. 1111. DEFINITIONS.**
- In this subtitle and subtitle B:
- (1) ACTUAL CROP REVENUE.—The term "actual crop revenue", with respect to a covered commodity for a crop year, means the amount determined by the Secretary under section 1117(b).
- (2) AGRICULTURE RISK COVERAGE.—The term "agriculture risk coverage" means coverage provided under section 1117.
- (3) AGRICULTURE RISK COVERAGE GUARANTEE.—The term "agriculture risk coverage guarantee", with respect to a covered commodity for a crop year, means the amount determined by the Secretary under section 1117(c).
- (4) BASE ACRES.—
- (A) IN GENERAL.—The term "base acres", with respect to a covered commodity on a farm, means the number of acres in effect under sections 1001 and 1301 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702, 8751), as adjusted pursuant to sections 1101, 1108, and 1302 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 8711,

8718, 8752), as in effect on September 30, 2013, subject to any reallocation, adjustment, or reduction under section 1112 of this Act.

(B) **INCLUSION OF GENERIC BASE ACRES.**—The term “base acres” includes any generic base acres planted to a covered commodity as determined in section 1114(b).

(5) **COUNTY COVERAGE.**—The term “county coverage” means agriculture risk coverage selected under section 1115(b)(1) to be obtained at the county level.

(6) **COVERED COMMODITY.**—The term “covered commodity” means wheat, oats, and barley (including wheat, oats, and barley used for haying and grazing), corn, grain sorghum, long grain rice, medium grain rice, pulse crops, soybeans, other oilseeds, and peanuts.

(7) **EFFECTIVE PRICE.**—The term “effective price”, with respect to a covered commodity for a crop year, means the price calculated by the Secretary under section 1116(b) to determine whether price loss coverage payments are required to be provided for that crop year.

(8) **EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.**—The term “extra long staple cotton” means cotton that—

(A) is produced from pure strain varieties of the *Barbadense* species or any hybrid of the species, or other similar types of extra long staple cotton, designated by the Secretary, having characteristics needed for various end uses for which United States upland cotton is not suitable and grown in irrigated cotton-growing regions of the United States designated by the Secretary or other areas designated by the Secretary as suitable for the production of the varieties or types; and

(B) is ginned on a roller-type gin or, if authorized by the Secretary, ginned on another type gin for experimental purposes.

(9) **GENERIC BASE ACRES.**—The term “generic base acres” means the number of base acres for cotton in effect under section 1001 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702), as adjusted pursuant to section 1101 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 8711), as in effect on September 30, 2013, subject to any adjustment or reduction under section 1112 of this Act.

(10) **INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE.**—The term “individual coverage” means agriculture risk coverage selected under section 1115(b)(2) to be obtained at the farm level.

(11) **MEDIUM GRAIN RICE.**—The term “medium grain rice” includes short grain rice and temperate japonica rice.

(12) **OTHER OILSEED.**—The term “other oilseed” means a crop of sunflower seed, rapeseed, canola, safflower, flaxseed, mustard seed, crambe, sesame seed, or any oilseed designated by the Secretary.

(13) **PAYMENT ACRES.**—The term “payment acres”, with respect to the provision of price loss coverage payments and agriculture risk coverage payments, means the number of acres determined for a farm under section 1114.

(14) **PAYMENT YIELD.**—The term “payment yield”, for a farm for a covered commodity—

(A) means the yield used to make payments pursuant to section 1104 or 1304 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8714, 8754), as in effect on September 30, 2013; or

(B) means the yield established under section 1113 of this Act.

(15) **PRICE LOSS COVERAGE.**—The term “price loss coverage” means coverage provided under section 1116.

(16) **PRODUCER.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “producer” means an owner, operator, landlord, tenant,

or sharecropper that shares in the risk of producing a crop and is entitled to share in the crop available for marketing from the farm, or would have shared had the crop been produced.

(B) **HYBRID SEED.**—In determining whether a grower of hybrid seed is a producer, the Secretary shall—

(i) not take into consideration the existence of a hybrid seed contract; and

(ii) ensure that program requirements do not adversely affect the ability of the grower to receive a payment under this title.

(17) **PULSE CROP.**—The term “pulse crop” means dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, and large chickpeas.

(18) **REFERENCE PRICE.**—The term “reference price”, with respect to a covered commodity for a crop year, means the following:

(A) For wheat, \$5.50 per bushel.

(B) For corn, \$3.70 per bushel.

(C) For grain sorghum, \$3.95 per bushel.

(D) For barley, \$4.95 per bushel.

(E) For oats, \$2.40 per bushel.

(F) For long grain rice, \$14.00 per hundredweight.

(G) For medium grain rice, \$14.00 per hundredweight.

(H) For soybeans, \$8.40 per bushel.

(I) For other oilseeds, \$20.15 per hundredweight.

(J) For peanuts, \$535.00 per ton.

(K) For dry peas, \$11.00 per hundredweight.

(L) For lentils, \$19.97 per hundredweight.

(M) For small chickpeas, \$19.04 per hundredweight.

(N) For large chickpeas, \$21.54 per hundredweight.

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

(20) **STATE.**—The term “State” means—

(A) a State;

(B) the District of Columbia;

(C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and

(D) any other territory or possession of the United States.

(21) **TEMPERATE JAPONICA RICE.**—The term “temperate japonica rice” means rice that is grown in high altitudes or temperate regions of high latitudes with cooler climate conditions, in the Western United States, as determined by the Secretary, for the purpose of—

(A) the reallocation of base acres under section 1112;

(B) the establishment of a reference price (as required under section 1116(g)) and an effective price pursuant to section 1116; and

(C) the determination of the actual crop revenue and agriculture risk coverage guarantee pursuant to section 1117.

(22) **TRANSITIONAL YIELD.**—The term “transitional yield” has the meaning given the term in section 502(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1502(b)).

(23) **UNITED STATES.**—The term “United States”, when used in a geographical sense, means all of the States.

(24) **UNITED STATES PREMIUM FACTOR.**—The term “United States Premium Factor” means the percentage by which the difference in the United States loan schedule premiums for Strict Middling (SM) 1½-inch upland cotton and for Middling (M) 1½-inch upland cotton exceeds the difference in the applicable premiums for comparable international qualities.

SEC. 1112. BASE ACRES.

(a) **RETENTION OR 1-TIME REALLOCATION OF BASE ACRES.**—

(1) **ELECTION REQUIRED.**—

(A) **NOTICE OF ELECTION OPPORTUNITY.**—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide notice to the owners of a farm regarding

their opportunity to make an election, in the manner provided in this subsection—

(i) to retain base acres, including any generic base acres, as provided in paragraph (2); or

(ii) in lieu of retaining base acres, to reallocate base acres, as provided in paragraph (3).

(B) **CONTENT OF NOTICE.**—The notice under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) Information that the opportunity of an owner to make the election is being provided only once.

(ii) Information regarding the manner in which the owner must make the election and the manner of notifying the Secretary of the election.

(iii) Information regarding the deadline before which the owner must notify the Secretary of the election to be in effect beginning with the 2014 crop year.

(C) **EFFECT OF FAILURE TO MAKE ELECTION.**—If the owner of a farm fails to make the election under this subsection, or fails to timely notify the Secretary of the election as required by subparagraph (B)(iii), the owner shall be deemed to have elected to retain base acres, including generic base acres, as provided in paragraph (2).

(2) **RETENTION OF BASE ACRES.**—

(A) **ELECTION TO RETAIN.**—For the purpose of applying this part to a covered commodity, the Secretary shall give an owner of a farm an opportunity to elect to retain all of the base acres for each covered commodity on the farm.

(B) **TREATMENT OF GENERIC BASE ACRES.**—Generic base acres are automatically retained.

(3) **REALLOCATION OF BASE ACRES.**—

(A) **ELECTION TO REALLOCATE.**—For the purpose of applying this part to covered commodities, the Secretary shall give an owner of a farm an opportunity to elect to reallocate all of the base acres for covered commodities on the farm, as in effect on September 30, 2013, among those covered commodities planted on the farm at any time during the 2009 through 2012 crop years.

(B) **REALLOCATION FORMULA.**—The reallocation of base acres among covered commodities on a farm shall be in proportion to the ratio of—

(i) the 4-year average of—

(I) the acreage planted on the farm to each covered commodity for harvest, grazing, haying, silage, or other similar purposes for the 2009 through 2012 crop years; and

(II) any acreage on the farm that the producers were prevented from planting during the 2009 through 2012 crop years to that covered commodity because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster, or other condition beyond the control of the producers, as determined by the Secretary; to

(ii) the 4-year average of—

(I) the acreage planted on the farm to all covered commodities for harvest, grazing, haying, silage, or other similar purposes for such crop years; and

(II) any acreage on the farm that the producers were prevented from planting during such crop years to covered commodities because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster, or other condition beyond the control of the producers, as determined by the Secretary.

(C) **TREATMENT OF GENERIC BASE ACRES.**—Generic base acres are retained and may not be reallocated under this paragraph.

(D) **INCLUSION OF ALL 4 YEARS IN AVERAGE.**—For the purpose of determining a 4-year acreage average under subparagraph (B) for a farm, the Secretary shall not exclude any

crop year in which a covered commodity was not planted.

(E) TREATMENT OF MULTIPLE PLANTING OR PREVENTED PLANTING.—For the purpose of determining under subparagraph (B) the acreage on a farm that producers planted or were prevented from planting during the 2009 through 2012 crop years to covered commodities, if the acreage that was planted or prevented from being planted was devoted to another covered commodity in the same crop year (other than a covered commodity produced under an established practice of double cropping), the owner may elect the commodity to be used for that crop year in determining the 4-year average, but may not include both the initial commodity and the subsequent commodity.

(F) LIMITATION.—The reallocation of base acres among covered commodities on a farm under this paragraph may not result in a total number of base acres (including generic base acres) for the farm in excess of the number of base acres in effect for the farm on September 30, 2013.

(4) APPLICATION OF ELECTION TO ALL COVERED COMMODITIES.—The election made under this subsection, or deemed to be made under paragraph (1)(C), with respect to a farm shall apply to all of the covered commodities on the farm.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF BASE ACRES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the election made under subsection (a), the Secretary shall provide for an adjustment, as appropriate, in the base acres for covered commodities for a farm and any generic base acres for the farm whenever any of the following circumstances occur:

(A) A conservation reserve contract entered into under section 1231 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831) with respect to the farm expires or is voluntarily terminated.

(B) Cropland is released from coverage under a conservation reserve contract by the Secretary.

(C) The producer has eligible oilseed acreage as the result of the Secretary designating additional oilseeds, which shall be determined in the same manner as eligible oilseed acreage under section 1101(a)(1)(D) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8711(a)(1)(D)).

(2) SPECIAL CONSERVATION RESERVE ACREAGE PAYMENT RULES.—For the crop year in which a base acre adjustment under subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1) is first made, the owner of the farm shall elect to receive price loss coverage or agriculture risk coverage with respect to the acreage added to the farm under this subsection or a prorated payment under the conservation reserve contract, but not both.

(c) PREVENTION OF EXCESS BASE ACRES.—

(1) REQUIRED REDUCTION.—Notwithstanding the election made under subsection (a), if the sum of the base acres for a farm, including generic base acres, and the acreage described in paragraph (2) exceeds the actual cropland acreage of the farm, the Secretary shall reduce the base acres for 1 or more covered commodities or generic base acres for the farm so that the sum of the base acres, including generic base acres, and the acreage described in paragraph (2) does not exceed the actual cropland acreage of the farm.

(2) OTHER ACREAGE.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the Secretary shall include the following:

(A) Any acreage on the farm enrolled in the conservation reserve program or wetlands reserve program (or successor programs) under chapter 1 of subtitle D of title

XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3830 et seq.).

(B) Any other acreage on the farm enrolled in a Federal conservation program for which payments are made in exchange for not producing an agricultural commodity on the acreage.

(C) If the Secretary designates additional oilseeds, any eligible oilseed acreage, which shall be determined in the same manner as eligible oilseed acreage under subsection (b)(1)(C).

(3) SELECTION OF ACRES.—The Secretary shall give the owner of the farm the opportunity to select the base acres for a covered commodity or generic base acres for the farm against which the reduction required by paragraph (1) will be made.

(4) EXCEPTION FOR DOUBLE-CROPPED ACREAGE.—In applying paragraph (1), the Secretary shall make an exception in the case of double cropping, as determined by the Secretary.

(d) REDUCTION IN BASE ACRES.—

(1) REDUCTION AT OPTION OF OWNER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The owner of a farm may reduce, at any time, the base acres for any covered commodity or generic base acres for the farm.

(B) EFFECT OF REDUCTION.—A reduction under subparagraph (A) shall be permanent and made in a manner prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) REQUIRED ACTION BY SECRETARY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall proportionately reduce base acres, including any generic base acres, on a farm for land that has been subdivided and developed for multiple residential units or other non-farming uses if the size of the tracts and the density of the subdivision is such that the land is unlikely to return to the previous agricultural use, unless the producers on the farm demonstrate that the land—

(i) remains devoted to commercial agricultural production; or

(ii) is likely to be returned to the previous agricultural use.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary shall establish procedures to identify land described in subparagraph (A).

SEC. 1113. PAYMENT YIELDS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—For the purpose of making price loss coverage payments under section 1116, the Secretary shall provide for the establishment of a yield for each farm for any designated oilseed for which a payment yield was not established under section 1102 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8712) in accordance with this section.

(b) PAYMENT YIELDS FOR DESIGNATED OILSEEDS.—

(1) DETERMINATION OF AVERAGE YIELD.—In the case of designated oilseeds, the Secretary shall determine the average yield per planted acre for the designated oilseed on a farm for the 1998 through 2001 crop years, excluding any crop year in which the acreage planted to the designated oilseed was zero.

(2) ADJUSTMENT FOR PAYMENT YIELD.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The payment yield for a farm for a designated oilseed shall be equal to the product of the following:

(i) The average yield for the designated oilseed determined under paragraph (1).

(ii) The ratio resulting from dividing the national average yield for the designated oilseed for the 1981 through 1985 crops by the national average yield for the designated oilseed for the 1998 through 2001 crops.

(B) NO NATIONAL AVERAGE YIELD INFORMATION AVAILABLE.—To the extent that national average yield information for a des-

ignated oilseed is not available, the Secretary shall use such information as the Secretary determines to be fair and equitable to establish a national average yield under this section.

(3) USE OF COUNTY AVERAGE YIELD.—If the yield per planted acre for a crop of a designated oilseed for a farm for any of the 1998 through 2001 crop years was less than 75 percent of the county yield for that designated oilseed, the Secretary shall assign a yield for that crop year equal to 75 percent of the county yield for the purpose of determining the average under paragraph (1).

(c) EFFECT OF LACK OF PAYMENT YIELD.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT BY SECRETARY.—In the case of a covered commodity on a farm for which base acres have been established or that is planted on generic base acres, if no payment yield is otherwise established for the covered commodity on the farm, the Secretary shall establish an appropriate payment yield for the covered commodity on the farm under paragraph (2).

(2) USE OF SIMILARLY SITUATED FARMS.—To establish an appropriate payment yield for a covered commodity on a farm as required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall take into consideration the farm program payment yields applicable to that covered commodity for similarly situated farms. The use of such data in an appeal, by the Secretary or by the producer, shall not be subject to any other provision of law.

(d) SINGLE OPPORTUNITY TO UPDATE YIELDS USED TO DETERMINE PRICE LOSS COVERAGE PAYMENTS.—

(1) ELECTION TO UPDATE.—At the sole discretion of the owner of a farm, the owner of a farm shall have a 1-time opportunity to update, on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis, the payment yield that would otherwise be used in calculating any price loss coverage payment for each covered commodity on the farm for which the election is made.

(2) TIME FOR ELECTION.—The election under paragraph (1) shall be made at a time and manner to be in effect beginning with the 2014 crop year as determined by the Secretary.

(3) METHOD OF UPDATING YIELDS.—If the owner of a farm elects to update yields under this subsection, the payment yield for a covered commodity on the farm, for the purpose of calculating price loss coverage payments only, shall be equal to 90 percent of the average of the yield per planted acre for the crop of the covered commodity on the farm for the 2008 through 2012 crop years, as determined by the Secretary, excluding any crop year in which the acreage planted to the crop of the covered commodity was zero.

(4) USE OF COUNTY AVERAGE YIELD.—If the yield per planted acre for a crop of the covered commodity for a farm for any of the 2008 through 2012 crop years was less than 75 percent of the average of the 2008 through 2012 county yield for that commodity, the Secretary shall assign a yield for that crop year equal to 75 percent of the average of the 2008 through 2012 county yield for the purposes of determining the average yield under paragraph (3).

SEC. 1114. PAYMENT ACRES.

(a) DETERMINATION OF PAYMENT ACRES.—

(1) GENERAL RULE.—For the purpose of price loss coverage and agriculture risk coverage when county coverage has been selected under section 1115(b)(1), but subject to subsection (e), the payment acres for each covered commodity on a farm shall be equal to 85 percent of the base acres for the covered commodity on the farm.

(2) **EFFECT OF INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE.**—In the case of agriculture risk coverage when individual coverage has been selected under section 1115(b)(2), but subject to subsection (e), the payment acres for a farm shall be equal to 65 percent of the base acres for all of the covered commodities on the farm.

(b) **TREATMENT OF GENERIC BASE ACRES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of generic base acres, price loss coverage payments and agriculture risk coverage payments are made only with respect to generic base acres planted to a covered commodity for the crop year.

(2) **ATTRIBUTION.**—With respect to a farm containing generic base acres, for the purpose of applying paragraphs (1)(B) and (2)(B) of subsection (a), generic base acres on the farm are attributed to a covered commodity in the following manner:

(A) If a single covered commodity is planted and the total acreage planted exceeds the generic base acres on the farm, the generic base acres are attributed to that covered commodity in an amount equal to the total number of generic base acres.

(B) If multiple covered commodities are planted and the total number of acres planted to all covered commodities on the farm exceeds the generic base acres on the farm, the generic base acres are attributed to each of the covered commodities on the farm on a pro rata basis to reflect the ratio of—

(i) the acreage planted to a covered commodity on the farm; to

(ii) the total acreage planted to all covered commodities on the farm.

(C) If the total number of acres planted to all covered commodities on the farm does not exceed the generic base acres on the farm, the number of acres planted to a covered commodity is attributed to that covered commodity.

(3) **TREATED AS ADDITIONAL ACREAGE.**—When generic base acres are planted to a covered commodity or acreage planted to a covered commodity is attributed to generic base acres, the generic base acres are in addition to other base acres on the farm.

(c) **EXCLUSION.**—The quantity of payment acres determined under subsection (a) may not include any crop subsequently planted during the same crop year on the same land for which the first crop is eligible for price loss coverage payments or agriculture risk coverage payments, unless the crop was approved for double cropping in the county, as determined by the Secretary.

(d) **EFFECT OF MINIMAL PAYMENT ACRES.**—

(1) **PROHIBITION ON PAYMENTS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, a producer on a farm may not receive price loss coverage payments or agriculture risk coverage payments if the sum of the base acres on the farm is 10 acres or less, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) **EXCEPTIONS.**—Paragraph (1) does not apply to a producer that is—

(A) a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher (as defined in section 355(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2003(e))); or

(B) a limited resource farmer or rancher, as defined by the Secretary.

(e) **EFFECT OF PLANTING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.**—

(1) **REDUCTION REQUIRED.**—In the manner provided in this subsection, payment acres on a farm shall be reduced in any crop year in which fruits, vegetables (other than mung beans and pulse crops), or wild rice have been planted on base acres on a farm.

(2) **PRICE LOSS COVERAGE AND COUNTY COVERAGE.**—In the case of price loss coverage

payments and agricultural risk coverage payments using county coverage, the reduction under paragraph (1) shall be the amount equal to the base acres planted to crops referred to in such paragraph in excess of 15 percent of base acres.

(3) **INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE.**—In the case of agricultural risk coverage payments using individual coverage, the reduction under paragraph (1) shall be the amount equal to the base acres planted to crops referred to in such paragraph in excess of 35 percent of base acres.

(4) **REDUCTION EXCEPTIONS.**—No reduction to payment acres shall be made under this subsection if—

(A) cover crops or crops referred to in paragraph (1) are grown solely for conservation purposes and not harvested for use or sale, as determined by the Secretary; or

(B) in any region in which there is a history of double-cropping covered commodities with crops referred to in paragraph (1) and such crops were so double-cropped on the base acres, as determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 1115. PRODUCER ELECTION.

(a) **ELECTION REQUIRED.**—For the 2014 through 2018 crop years, all of the producers on a farm shall make a 1-time, irrevocable election to obtain—

(1) price loss coverage under section 1116 on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis; or

(2) agriculture risk coverage under section 1117.

(b) **COVERAGE OPTIONS.**—In the election under subsection (a), the producers on a farm that elect under paragraph (2) of such subsection to obtain agriculture risk coverage under section 1117 shall unanimously select whether to receive agriculture risk coverage payments based on—

(1) county coverage applicable on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis; or

(2) individual coverage applicable to all of the covered commodities on the farm.

(c) **EFFECT OF FAILURE TO MAKE UNANIMOUS ELECTION.**—If all the producers on a farm fail to make a unanimous election under subsection (a) for the 2014 crop year—

(1) the Secretary shall not make any payments with respect to the farm for the 2014 crop year under section 1116 or 1117; and

(2) the producers on the farm shall be deemed to have elected price loss coverage under section 1116 for all covered commodities on the farm for the 2015 through 2018 crop years.

(d) **EFFECT OF SELECTION OF COUNTY COVERAGE.**—If all the producers on a farm select county coverage for a covered commodity under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary may not make price loss coverage payments under section 1116 to the producers on the farm with respect to that covered commodity.

(e) **EFFECT OF SELECTION OF INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE.**—If all the producers on a farm select individual coverage under subsection (b)(2), in addition to the selection and election under this section applying to each producer on the farm, the Secretary shall consider, for purposes of making the calculations required by subsections (b)(2) and (c)(3) of section 1117, the producer's share of all farms in the same State—

(1) in which the producer has an interest; and

(2) for which individual coverage has been selected.

(f) **PROHIBITION ON RECONSTITUTION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that producers on a farm do not reconstitute the farm to void or change an election or selection made under this section.

SEC. 1116. PRICE LOSS COVERAGE.

(a) **PRICE LOSS COVERAGE PAYMENTS.**—If all of the producers on a farm make the election under subsection (a) of section 1115 to obtain price loss coverage or, subject to subsection (c)(1) of such section, are deemed to have made such election under subsection (c)(2) of such section, the Secretary shall make price loss coverage payments to producers on the farm on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis if the Secretary determines that, for any of the 2014 through 2018 crop years—

(1) the effective price for the covered commodity for the crop year; is less than

(2) the reference price for the covered commodity for the crop year.

(b) **EFFECTIVE PRICE.**—The effective price for a covered commodity for a crop year shall be the higher of—

(1) the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year for the covered commodity, as determined by the Secretary; or

(2) the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity in effect for such crop year under subtitle B.

(c) **PAYMENT RATE.**—The payment rate shall be equal to the difference between—

(1) the reference price for the covered commodity; and

(2) the effective price determined under subsection (b) for the covered commodity.

(d) **PAYMENT AMOUNT.**—If price loss coverage payments are required to be provided under this section for any of the 2014 through 2018 crop years for a covered commodity, the amount of the price loss coverage payment to be paid to the producers on a farm for the crop year shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(1) the payment rate for the covered commodity under subsection (c);

(2) the payment yield for the covered commodity; and

(3) the payment acres for the covered commodity.

(e) **TIME FOR PAYMENTS.**—If the Secretary determines under this section that price loss coverage payments are required to be provided for the covered commodity, the payments shall be made beginning October 1, or as soon as practicable thereafter, after the end of the applicable marketing year for the covered commodity.

(f) **EFFECTIVE PRICE FOR BARLEY.**—In determining the effective price for barley under subsection (b), the Secretary shall use the all-barley price.

(g) **REFERENCE PRICE FOR TEMPERATE JAPONICA RICE.**—The Secretary shall provide a reference price with respect to temperate japonica rice in an amount equal to 115 percent of the amount established in subparagraphs (F) and (G) of section 1111(18) in order to reflect price premiums.

SEC. 1117. AGRICULTURE RISK COVERAGE.

(a) **AGRICULTURE RISK COVERAGE PAYMENTS.**—If all of the producers on a farm make the election under section 1115(a) to obtain agriculture risk coverage, the Secretary shall make agriculture risk coverage payments to producers on the farm if the Secretary determines that, for any of the 2014 through 2018 crop years—

(1) the actual crop revenue determined under subsection (b) for the crop year; is less than

(2) the agriculture risk coverage guarantee determined under subsection (c) for the crop year.

(b) **ACTUAL CROP REVENUE.**—

(1) **COUNTY COVERAGE.**—In the case of county coverage, the amount of the actual crop

revenue for a county for a crop year of a covered commodity shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(A) the actual average county yield per planted acre for the covered commodity, as determined by the Secretary; and

(B) the higher of—

(i) the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year for the covered commodity, as determined by the Secretary; or

(ii) the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity in effect for such crop year under subtitle B.

(2) **INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE.**—In the case of individual coverage, the amount of the actual crop revenue for a producer on a farm for a crop year shall be based on the producer's share of all covered commodities planted on all farms for which individual coverage has been selected and in which the producer has an interest, to be determined by the Secretary as follows:

(A) For each covered commodity, the product obtained by multiplying—

(i) the total production of the covered commodity on such farms, as determined by the Secretary; and

(ii) the higher of—

(I) the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year, as determined by the Secretary; or

(II) the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity in effect for such crop year under subtitle B.

(B) The sum of the amounts determined under subparagraph (A) for all covered commodities on such farms.

(C) The quotient obtained by dividing the amount determined under subparagraph (B) by the total planted acres of all covered commodities on such farms.

(c) **AGRICULTURE RISK COVERAGE GUARANTEE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The agriculture risk coverage guarantee for a crop year for a covered commodity shall equal 86 percent of the benchmark revenue.

(2) **BENCHMARK REVENUE FOR COUNTY COVERAGE.**—In the case of county coverage, the benchmark revenue shall be the product obtained by multiplying—

(A) subject to paragraph (4), the average historical county yield as determined by the Secretary for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding each of the crop years with the highest and lowest yields; and

(B) subject to paragraph (5), the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding each of the crop years with the highest and lowest prices.

(3) **BENCHMARK REVENUE FOR INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE.**—In the case of individual coverage, the benchmark revenue for a producer on a farm for a crop year shall be based on the producer's share of all covered commodities planted on all farms for which individual coverage has been selected and in which the producer has an interest, to be determined by the Secretary as follows:

(A) For each covered commodity for each of the most recent 5 crop years, the product obtained by multiplying—

(i) subject to paragraph (4), the yield per planted acre for the covered commodity on such farms, as determined by the Secretary; by

(ii) subject to paragraph (5), the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year.

(B) For each covered commodity, the average of the revenues determined under subparagraph (A) for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding each of the crop years with the highest and lowest revenues.

(C) For each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the sum of the amounts determined under subparagraph (B) for all covered commodities on such farms, but adjusted to reflect the ratio between the total number of acres planted on such farms to a covered commodity and the total acres of all covered commodities planted on such farms.

(4) **YIELD CONDITIONS.**—If the yield per planted acre for the covered commodity or historical county yield per planted acre for the covered commodity for any of the 5 most recent crop years, as determined by the Secretary, is less than 70 percent of the transitional yield, as determined by the Secretary, the amounts used for any of those years in paragraph (2)(A) or (3)(A)(i) shall be 70 percent of the transitional yield.

(5) **REFERENCE PRICE.**—If the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year for any of the 5 most recent crop years is lower than the reference price for the covered commodity, the Secretary shall use the reference price for any of those years for the amounts in paragraph (2)(B) or (3)(A)(ii).

(d) **PAYMENT RATE.**—The payment rate for a covered commodity, in the case of county coverage, or a farm, in the case of individual coverage, shall be equal to the lesser of—

(1) the amount that—

(A) the agriculture risk coverage guarantee for the crop year applicable under subsection (c); exceeds

(B) the actual crop revenue for the crop year applicable under subsection (b); or

(2) 10 percent of the benchmark revenue for the crop year applicable under subsection (c).

(e) **PAYMENT AMOUNT.**—If agriculture risk coverage payments are required to be paid for any of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the amount of the agriculture risk coverage payment for the crop year shall be determined by multiplying—

(1) the payment rate determined under subsection (d); and

(2) the payment acres determined under section 1114.

(f) **TIME FOR PAYMENTS.**—If the Secretary determines that agriculture risk coverage payments are required to be provided for the covered commodity, payments shall be made beginning October 1, or as soon as practicable thereafter, after the end of the applicable marketing year for the covered commodity.

(g) **ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**—In providing agriculture risk coverage, the Secretary shall—

(1) to the maximum extent practicable, use all available information and analysis, including data mining, to check for anomalies in the determination of agriculture risk coverage payments;

(2) to the maximum extent practicable, calculate a separate actual crop revenue and agriculture risk coverage guarantee for irrigated and nonirrigated covered commodities;

(3) in the case of individual coverage, assign an average yield for a farm on the basis of the yield history of representative farms in the State, region, or crop reporting district, as determined by the Secretary, if the Secretary determines that the farm has planted acreage in a quantity that is insufficient to calculate a representative average yield for the farm; and

(4) in the case of county coverage, assign an actual or benchmark county yield for

each planted acre for the crop year for the covered commodity on the basis of the yield history of representative farms in the State, region, or crop reporting district, as determined by the Secretary, if—

(A) the Secretary cannot establish the actual or benchmark county yield for each planted acre for a crop year for a covered commodity in the county in accordance with subsection (b)(1) or (c)(2); or

(B) the yield determined under subsection (b)(1) or (c)(2) is an unrepresentative average yield for the county, as determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 1118. PRODUCER AGREEMENTS.

(a) **COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Before the producers on a farm may receive payments under this subtitle with respect to the farm, the producers shall agree, during the crop year for which the payments are made and in exchange for the payments—

(A) to comply with applicable conservation requirements under subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.);

(B) to comply with applicable wetland protection requirements under subtitle C of title XII of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3821 et seq.);

(C) to effectively control noxious weeds and otherwise maintain the land in accordance with sound agricultural practices, as determined by the Secretary; and

(D) to use the land on the farm, in a quantity equal to the attributable base acres for the farm and any base acres for an agricultural or conserving use, and not for a non-agricultural commercial, industrial, or residential use, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) **COMPLIANCE.**—The Secretary may issue such rules as the Secretary considers necessary to ensure producer compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1).

(3) **MODIFICATION.**—At the request of the transferee or owner, the Secretary may modify the requirements of this subsection if the modifications are consistent with the objectives of this subsection, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) **TRANSFER OR CHANGE OF INTEREST IN FARM.**—

(1) **TERMINATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a transfer of (or change in) the interest of the producers on a farm for which payments under this subtitle are provided shall result in the termination of the payments, unless the transferee or owner of the acreage agrees to assume all obligations under subsection (a).

(B) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The termination shall take effect on the date determined by the Secretary.

(2) **EXCEPTION.**—If a producer entitled to a payment under this subtitle dies, becomes incompetent, or is otherwise unable to receive the payment, the Secretary shall make the payment in accordance with rules issued by the Secretary.

(c) **ACREAGE REPORTS.**—As a condition on the receipt of any benefits under this subtitle or subtitle B, the Secretary shall require producers on a farm to submit to the Secretary annual acreage reports with respect to all cropland on the farm.

(d) **PRODUCTION REPORTS.**—As an additional condition on receiving agriculture risk coverage payments for individual coverage, the Secretary shall require a producer on a farm to submit to the Secretary annual production reports with respect to all covered commodities produced on all farms in the same State—

(1) in which the producer has an interest; and

(2) for which individual coverage has been selected.

(e) **EFFECT OF INACCURATE REPORTS.**—No penalty with respect to benefits under this subtitle or subtitle B shall be assessed against a producer on a farm for an inaccurate acreage or production report unless the Secretary determines that the producer on the farm knowingly and willfully falsified the acreage or production report.

(f) **TENANTS AND SHARECROPPERS.**—In carrying out this subtitle, the Secretary shall provide adequate safeguards to protect the interests of tenants and sharecroppers.

(g) **SHARING OF PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary shall provide for the sharing of payments made under this subtitle among the producers on a farm on a fair and equitable basis.

SEC. 1119. TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FOR PRODUCERS OF UPLAND COTTON.

(a) **AVAILABILITY.**—

(1) **PURPOSE.**—It is the purpose of this section to provide transition assistance to producers of upland cotton in light of the repeal of section 1103 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8713), the inapplicability of sections 1116 and 1117 to upland cotton, and the delayed implementation of the Stacked Income Protection Plan required by section 508B of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508b), as added by section 11017 of this Act.

(2) **2014 CROP YEAR.**—For the 2014 crop of upland cotton, the Secretary shall provide transition assistance, pursuant to the terms and conditions of this section, to producers on a farm for which cotton base acres were in existence for the 2013 crop year.

(3) **2015 CROP YEAR.**—For the 2015 crop of upland cotton, the Secretary shall provide transition assistance, pursuant to the terms and conditions of this section, to producers on a farm—

(A) for which cotton base acres were in existence for the 2013 crop year; and

(B) that is located in a county in which the Stacked Income Protection Plan required by section 508B of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508b) is not available to producers of upland cotton for the 2015 crop year.

(b) **TRANSITION ASSISTANCE RATE.**—The transition assistance rate shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(1) the June 12, 2013, midpoint estimate for the marketing year average price of upland cotton received by producers for the marketing year beginning August 1, 2013, minus the December 10, 2013, midpoint estimate for the marketing year average price of upland cotton received by producers for the marketing year beginning August 1, 2013, as contained in the applicable World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report published by the Department of Agriculture; and

(2) the national program yield for upland cotton of 597 pounds per acre.

(c) **CALCULATION OF TRANSITION ASSISTANCE AMOUNT.**—The amount of transition assistance to be provided under this section to producers on a farm for a crop year shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(1) for the 2014 crop year, 60 percent, and for the 2015 crop year, 36.5 percent, of the cotton base acres referred to in subsection (a) for the farm, subject to adjustment or reduction for conservation measures as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of section 1112;

(2) the transition assistance rate in effect for the crop year under subsection (b); and

(3) the payment yield for upland cotton for the farm established for purposes of section 1103(c)(3) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8713(c)(3)), divided by the national program yield for upland cotton of 597 pounds per acre.

(d) **TIME FOR PAYMENT.**—The Secretary may not make transition assistance payments for a crop year under this section before October 1 of the calendar year in which the crop of upland cotton is harvested.

(e) **PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.**—Sections 1001 through 1001C of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308 through 1308C), as in effect on September 30, 2013, shall apply to the receipt of transition assistance under this section in the same manner as such sections applied to section 1103 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8713).

Subtitle B—Marketing Loans

SEC. 1201. AVAILABILITY OF NONRECOURSE MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS FOR LOAN COMMODITIES.

(a) **DEFINITION OF LOAN COMMODITY.**—In this subtitle, the term “loan commodity” means wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, extra long staple cotton, long grain rice, medium grain rice, peanuts, soybeans, other oilseeds, graded wool, non-graded wool, mohair, honey, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, and large chickpeas.

(b) **NONRECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For each of the 2014 through 2018 crops of each loan commodity, the Secretary shall make available to producers on a farm nonrecourse marketing assistance loans for loan commodities produced on the farm.

(2) **TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—The marketing assistance loans shall be made under terms and conditions that are prescribed by the Secretary and at the loan rate established under section 1202 for the loan commodity.

(c) **ELIGIBLE PRODUCTION.**—The producers on a farm shall be eligible for a marketing assistance loan under subsection (b) for any quantity of a loan commodity produced on the farm.

(d) **COMPLIANCE WITH CONSERVATION AND WETLANDS REQUIREMENTS.**—As a condition of the receipt of a marketing assistance loan under subsection (b), the producer shall comply with applicable conservation requirements under subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.) and applicable wetland protection requirements under subtitle C of title XII of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3821 et seq.) during the term of the loan.

(e) **SPECIAL RULES FOR PEANUTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—This subsection shall apply only to producers of peanuts.

(2) **OPTIONS FOR OBTAINING LOAN.**—A marketing assistance loan under this section, and loan deficiency payments under section 1205, may be obtained at the option of the producers on a farm through—

(A) a designated marketing association or marketing cooperative of producers that is approved by the Secretary; or

(B) the Farm Service Agency.

(3) **STORAGE OF LOAN PEANUTS.**—As a condition on the approval by the Secretary of an individual or entity to provide storage for peanuts for which a marketing assistance loan is made under this section, the individual or entity shall agree—

(A) to provide the storage on a nondiscriminatory basis; and

(B) to comply with such additional requirements as the Secretary considers appropriate to accomplish the purposes of this section and promote fairness in the administration of the benefits of this section.

(4) **STORAGE, HANDLING, AND ASSOCIATED COSTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—To ensure proper storage of peanuts for which a loan is made under this section, the Secretary shall pay handling and other associated costs (other than storage costs) incurred at the time at which the peanuts are placed under loan, as determined by the Secretary.

(B) **REDEMPTION AND FORFEITURE.**—The Secretary shall—

(i) require the repayment of handling and other associated costs paid under subparagraph (A) for all peanuts pledged as collateral for a loan that is redeemed under this section; and

(ii) pay storage, handling, and other associated costs for all peanuts pledged as collateral that are forfeited under this section.

(5) **MARKETING.**—A marketing association or cooperative may market peanuts for which a loan is made under this section in any manner that conforms to consumer needs, including the separation of peanuts by type and quality.

(6) **REIMBURSABLE AGREEMENTS AND PAYMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**—The Secretary may implement any reimbursable agreements or provide for the payment of administrative expenses under this subsection only in a manner that is consistent with those activities in regard to other loan commodities.

SEC. 1202. LOAN RATES FOR NONRECOURSE MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 1201 for a loan commodity shall be equal to the following:

(1) In the case of wheat, \$2.94 per bushel.
 (2) In the case of corn, \$1.95 per bushel.
 (3) In the case of grain sorghum, \$1.95 per bushel.

(4) In the case of barley, \$1.95 per bushel.
 (5) In the case of oats, \$1.39 per bushel.

(6) In the case of base quality of upland cotton, for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the simple average of the adjusted prevailing world price for the 2 immediately preceding marketing years, as determined by the Secretary and announced October 1 preceding the next domestic plantings, but in no case less than \$0.45 per pound or more than \$0.52 per pound.

(7) In the case of extra long staple cotton, \$0.7977 per pound.

(8) In the case of long grain rice, \$6.50 per hundredweight.

(9) In the case of medium grain rice, \$6.50 per hundredweight.

(10) In the case of soybeans, \$5.00 per bushel.

(11) In the case of other oilseeds, \$10.09 per hundredweight for each of the following kinds of oilseeds:

(A) Sunflower seed.
 (B) Rapeseed.
 (C) Canola.
 (D) Safflower.
 (E) Flaxseed.
 (F) Mustard seed.
 (G) Crambe.
 (H) Sesame seed.
 (I) Other oilseeds designated by the Secretary.

(12) In the case of dry peas, \$5.40 per hundredweight.

(13) In the case of lentils, \$11.28 per hundredweight.

(14) In the case of small chickpeas, \$7.43 per hundredweight.

(15) In the case of large chickpeas, \$11.28 per hundredweight.

(16) In the case of graded wool, \$1.15 per pound.

(17) In the case of nongraded wool, \$0.40 per pound.

(18) In the case of mohair, \$4.20 per pound.

(19) In the case of honey, \$0.69 per pound.

(20) In the case of peanuts, \$355 per ton.

(b) SINGLE COUNTY LOAN RATE FOR OTHER OILSEEDS.—The Secretary shall establish a single loan rate in each county for each kind of other oilseeds described in subsection (a)(11).

SEC. 1203. TERM OF LOANS.

(a) TERM OF LOAN.—In the case of each loan commodity, a marketing assistance loan under section 1201 shall have a term of 9 months beginning on the first day of the first month after the month in which the loan is made.

(b) EXTENSIONS PROHIBITED.—The Secretary may not extend the term of a marketing assistance loan for any loan commodity.

SEC. 1204. REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

(a) GENERAL RULE.—The Secretary shall permit the producers on a farm to repay a marketing assistance loan under section 1201 for a loan commodity (other than upland cotton, long grain rice, medium grain rice, extra long staple cotton, peanuts and confectionery and each other kind of sunflower seed (other than oil sunflower seed)) at a rate that is the lesser of—

(1) the loan rate established for the commodity under section 1202, plus interest (determined in accordance with section 163 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7283));

(2) a rate (as determined by the Secretary) that—

(A) is calculated based on average market prices for the loan commodity during the preceding 30-day period; and

(B) will minimize discrepancies in marketing loan benefits across State boundaries and across county boundaries; or

(3) a rate that the Secretary may develop using alternative methods for calculating a repayment rate for a loan commodity that the Secretary determines will—

(A) minimize potential loan forfeitures;

(B) minimize the accumulation of stocks of the commodity by the Federal Government;

(C) minimize the cost incurred by the Federal Government in storing the commodity;

(D) allow the commodity produced in the United States to be marketed freely and competitively, both domestically and internationally; and

(E) minimize discrepancies in marketing loan benefits across State boundaries and across county boundaries.

(b) REPAYMENT RATES FOR UPLAND COTTON, LONG GRAIN RICE, AND MEDIUM GRAIN RICE.—The Secretary shall permit producers to repay a marketing assistance loan under section 1201 for upland cotton, long grain rice, and medium grain rice at a rate that is the lesser of—

(1) the loan rate established for the commodity under section 1202, plus interest (determined in accordance with section 163 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7283)); or

(2) the prevailing world market price for the commodity, as determined and adjusted by the Secretary in accordance with this section.

(c) REPAYMENT RATES FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—Repayment of a marketing assistance loan for extra long staple cotton shall be at the loan rate established for the commodity under section 1202, plus interest (determined in accordance with section 163 of

the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7283)).

(d) PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE.—For purposes of this section and section 1207, the Secretary shall prescribe by regulation—

(1) a formula to determine the prevailing world market price for each of upland cotton, long grain rice, and medium grain rice; and

(2) a mechanism by which the Secretary shall announce periodically those prevailing world market prices.

(e) ADJUSTMENT OF PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON, LONG GRAIN RICE, AND MEDIUM GRAIN RICE.—

(1) RICE.—The prevailing world market price for long grain rice and medium grain rice determined under subsection (d) shall be adjusted to United States quality and location.

(2) COTTON.—The prevailing world market price for upland cotton determined under subsection (d)—

(A) shall be adjusted to United States quality and location, with the adjustment to include—

(i) a reduction equal to any United States Premium Factor for upland cotton of a quality higher than Middling (M) 1³/₃₂-inch; and

(ii) the average costs to market the commodity, including average transportation costs, as determined by the Secretary; and

(B) may be further adjusted, during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending on July 31, 2019, if the Secretary determines the adjustment is necessary—

(i) to minimize potential loan forfeitures;

(ii) to minimize the accumulation of stocks of upland cotton by the Federal Government;

(iii) to ensure that upland cotton produced in the United States can be marketed freely and competitively, both domestically and internationally; and

(iv) to ensure an appropriate transition between current-crop and forward-crop price quotations, except that the Secretary may use forward-crop price quotations prior to July 31 of a marketing year only if—

(I) there are insufficient current-crop price quotations; and

(II) the forward-crop price quotation is the lowest such quotation available.

(3) GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONAL ADJUSTMENTS.—In making adjustments under this subsection, the Secretary shall establish a mechanism for determining and announcing the adjustments in order to avoid undue disruption in the United States market.

(f) REPAYMENT RATES FOR CONFECTIONERY AND OTHER KINDS OF SUNFLOWER SEEDS.—The Secretary shall permit the producers on a farm to repay a marketing assistance loan under section 1201 for confectionery and each other kind of sunflower seed (other than oil sunflower seed) at a rate that is the lesser of—

(1) the loan rate established for the commodity under section 1202, plus interest (determined in accordance with section 163 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7283)); or

(2) the repayment rate established for oil sunflower seed.

(g) PAYMENT OF COTTON STORAGE COSTS.—Effective for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the Secretary shall make cotton storage payments available in the same manner, and at the same rates as the Secretary provided storage payments for the 2006 crop of cotton, except that the rates shall be reduced by 10 percent.

(h) REPAYMENT RATE FOR PEANUTS.—The Secretary shall permit producers on a farm

to repay a marketing assistance loan for peanuts under section 1201 at a rate that is the lesser of—

(1) the loan rate established for peanuts under section 1202(a)(20), plus interest (determined in accordance with section 163 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7283)); or

(2) a rate that the Secretary determines will—

(A) minimize potential loan forfeitures;

(B) minimize the accumulation of stocks of peanuts by the Federal Government;

(C) minimize the cost incurred by the Federal Government in storing peanuts; and

(D) allow peanuts produced in the United States to be marketed freely and competitively, both domestically and internationally.

(i) AUTHORITY TO TEMPORARILY ADJUST REPAYMENT RATES.—

(1) ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY.—In the event of a severe disruption to marketing, transportation, or related infrastructure, the Secretary may modify the repayment rate otherwise applicable under this section for marketing assistance loans under section 1201 for a loan commodity.

(2) DURATION.—Any adjustment made under paragraph (1) in the repayment rate for marketing assistance loans for a loan commodity shall be in effect on a short-term and temporary basis, as determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 1205. LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (d), the Secretary may make loan deficiency payments available to producers on a farm that, although eligible to obtain a marketing assistance loan under section 1201 with respect to a loan commodity, agree to forgo obtaining the loan for the commodity in return for loan deficiency payments under this section.

(2) UNSHORN PELTS, HAY, AND SILAGE.—

(A) MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS.—Subject to subparagraph (B), nongraded wool in the form of unshorn pelts and hay and silage derived from a loan commodity are not eligible for a marketing assistance loan under section 1201.

(B) LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENT.—Effective for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the Secretary may make loan deficiency payments available under this section to producers on a farm that produce unshorn pelts or hay and silage derived from a loan commodity.

(b) COMPUTATION.—A loan deficiency payment for a loan commodity or commodity referred to in subsection (a)(2) shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(1) the payment rate determined under subsection (c) for the commodity; by

(2) the quantity of the commodity produced by the eligible producers, excluding any quantity for which the producers obtain a marketing assistance loan under section 1201.

(c) PAYMENT RATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a loan commodity, the payment rate shall be the amount by which—

(A) the loan rate established under section 1202 for the loan commodity; exceeds

(B) the rate at which a marketing assistance loan for the loan commodity may be repaid under section 1204.

(2) UNSHORN PELTS.—In the case of unshorn pelts, the payment rate shall be the amount by which—

(A) the loan rate established under section 1202 for ungraded wool; exceeds

(B) the rate at which a marketing assistance loan for ungraded wool may be repaid under section 1204.

(3) HAY AND SILAGE.—In the case of hay or silage derived from a loan commodity, the payment rate shall be the amount by which—

(A) the loan rate established under section 1202 for the loan commodity from which the hay or silage is derived; exceeds

(B) the rate at which a marketing assistance loan for the loan commodity may be repaid under section 1204.

(d) EXCEPTION FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—This section shall not apply with respect to extra long staple cotton.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE FOR PAYMENT RATE DETERMINATION.—The Secretary shall determine the amount of the loan deficiency payment to be made under this section to the producers on a farm with respect to a quantity of a loan commodity or commodity referred to in subsection (a)(2) using the payment rate in effect under subsection (c) as of the date the producers request the payment.

SEC. 1206. PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS FOR GRAZED ACREAGE.

(a) ELIGIBLE PRODUCERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, in the case of a producer that would be eligible for a loan deficiency payment under section 1205 for wheat, barley, or oats, but that elects to use acreage planted to the wheat, barley, or oats for the grazing of livestock, the Secretary shall make a payment to the producer under this section if the producer enters into an agreement with the Secretary to forgo any other harvesting of the wheat, barley, or oats on that acreage.

(2) GRAZING OF TRITICALE ACREAGE.—Effective for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, with respect to a producer on a farm that uses acreage planted to triticale for the grazing of livestock, the Secretary shall make a payment to the producer under this section if the producer enters into an agreement with the Secretary to forgo any other harvesting of triticale on that acreage.

(b) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of a payment made under this section to a producer on a farm described in subsection (a)(1) shall be equal to the amount determined by multiplying—

(A) the loan deficiency payment rate determined under section 1205(c) in effect, as of the date of the agreement, for the county in which the farm is located; by

(B) the payment quantity determined by multiplying—

(i) the quantity of the grazed acreage on the farm with respect to which the producer elects to forgo harvesting of wheat, barley, or oats; and

(ii)(I) the payment yield in effect for the calculation of price loss coverage under section 1115 with respect to that loan commodity on the farm;

(II) in the case of a farm for which agriculture risk coverage is elected under section 1116(a), the payment yield that would otherwise be in effect with respect to that loan commodity on the farm in the absence of such election; or

(III) in the case of a farm for which no payment yield is otherwise established for that loan commodity on the farm, an appropriate yield established by the Secretary in a manner consistent with section 1113(c).

(2) GRAZING OF TRITICALE ACREAGE.—The amount of a payment made under this section to a producer on a farm described in

subsection (a)(2) shall be equal to the amount determined by multiplying—

(A) the loan deficiency payment rate determined under section 1205(c) in effect for wheat, as of the date of the agreement, for the county in which the farm is located; by

(B) the payment quantity determined by multiplying—

(i) the quantity of the grazed acreage on the farm with respect to which the producer elects to forgo harvesting of triticale; and

(ii)(I) the payment yield in effect for the calculation of price loss coverage under subtitle A with respect to wheat on the farm;

(II) in the case of a farm for which agriculture risk coverage is elected under section 1116(a), the payment yield that would otherwise be in effect for wheat on the farm in the absence of such election; or

(III) in the case of a farm for which no payment yield is otherwise established for wheat on the farm, an appropriate yield established by the Secretary in a manner consistent with section 1113(c).

(c) TIME, MANNER, AND AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENT.—

(1) TIME AND MANNER.—A payment under this section shall be made at the same time and in the same manner as loan deficiency payments are made under section 1205.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish an availability period for the payments authorized by this section.

(B) CERTAIN COMMODITIES.—In the case of wheat, barley, and oats, the availability period shall be consistent with the availability period for the commodity established by the Secretary for marketing assistance loans authorized by this subtitle.

(d) PROHIBITION ON CROP INSURANCE INDEMNITY OR NONINSURED CROP ASSISTANCE.—A 2014 through 2018 crop of wheat, barley, oats, or triticale planted on acreage that a producer elects, in the agreement required by subsection (a), to use for the grazing of livestock in lieu of any other harvesting of the crop shall not be eligible for an indemnity under a policy or plan of insurance authorized under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) or noninsured crop assistance under section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333).

SEC. 1207. SPECIAL MARKETING LOAN PROVISIONS FOR UPLAND COTTON.

(a) SPECIAL IMPORT QUOTA.—

(1) DEFINITION OF SPECIAL IMPORT QUOTA.—In this subsection, the term “special import quota” means a quantity of imports that is not subject to the over-quota tariff rate of a tariff-rate quota.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall carry out an import quota program beginning on August 1, 2014, as provided in this subsection.

(B) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—Whenever the Secretary determines and announces that for any consecutive 4-week period, the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced United States growth, as quoted for Middling (M) 1½-inch cotton, delivered to a definable and significant international market, as determined by the Secretary, exceeds the prevailing world market price, there shall immediately be in effect a special import quota.

(3) QUANTITY.—The quota shall be equal to the consumption during a 1-week period of cotton by domestic mills at the seasonally adjusted average rate of the most recent 3 months for which official data of the Department of Agriculture are available or, in the

absence of sufficient data, as estimated by the Secretary.

(4) APPLICATION.—The quota shall apply to upland cotton purchased not later than 90 days after the date of the Secretary’s announcement under paragraph (2) and entered into the United States not later than 180 days after that date.

(5) OVERLAP.—A special quota period may be established that overlaps any existing quota period if required by paragraph (2), except that a special quota period may not be established under this subsection if a quota period has been established under subsection (b).

(6) PREFERENTIAL TARIFF TREATMENT.—The quantity under a special import quota shall be considered to be an in-quota quantity for purposes of—

(A) section 213(d) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703(d));

(B) section 204 of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3203);

(C) section 503(d) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)); and

(D) General Note 3(a)(iv) to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule.

(7) LIMITATION.—The quantity of cotton entered into the United States during any marketing year under the special import quota established under this subsection may not exceed the equivalent of 10 weeks’ consumption of upland cotton by domestic mills at the seasonally adjusted average rate of the 3 months immediately preceding the first special import quota established in any marketing year.

(b) LIMITED GLOBAL IMPORT QUOTA FOR UPLAND COTTON.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) DEMAND.—The term “demand” means—

(i) the average seasonally adjusted annual rate of domestic mill consumption of cotton during the most recent 3 months for which official data of the Department of Agriculture are available or, in the absence of sufficient data, as estimated by the Secretary; and

(ii) the larger of—

(I) average exports of upland cotton during the preceding 6 marketing years; or

(II) cumulative exports of upland cotton plus outstanding export sales for the marketing year in which the quota is established.

(B) LIMITED GLOBAL IMPORT QUOTA.—The term “limited global import quota” means a quantity of imports that is not subject to the over-quota tariff rate of a tariff-rate quota.

(C) SUPPLY.—The term “supply” means, using the latest official data of the Department of Agriculture—

(i) the carry-over of upland cotton at the beginning of the marketing year (adjusted to 480-pound bales) in which the quota is established;

(ii) production of the current crop; and

(iii) imports to the latest date available during the marketing year.

(2) PROGRAM.—The President shall carry out an import quota program that provides that whenever the Secretary determines and announces that the average price of the base quality of upland cotton, as determined by the Secretary, in the designated spot markets for a month exceeded 130 percent of the average price of the quality of cotton in the markets for the preceding 36 months, notwithstanding any other provision of law, there shall immediately be in effect a limited global import quota subject to the following conditions:

(A) QUANTITY.—The quantity of the quota shall be equal to 21 days of domestic mill

consumption of upland cotton at the seasonally adjusted average rate of the most recent 3 months for which official data of the Department of Agriculture are available or, in the absence of sufficient data, as estimated by the Secretary.

(B) QUANTITY IF PRIOR QUOTA.—If a quota has been established under this subsection during the preceding 12 months, the quantity of the quota next established under this subsection shall be the smaller of 21 days of domestic mill consumption calculated under subparagraph (A) or the quantity required to increase the supply to 130 percent of the demand.

(C) PREFERENTIAL TARIFF TREATMENT.—The quantity under a limited global import quota shall be considered to be an in-quota quantity for purposes of—

(i) section 213(d) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703(d));

(ii) section 204 of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3203);

(iii) section 503(d) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)); and

(iv) General Note 3(a)(iv) to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule.

(D) QUOTA ENTRY PERIOD.—When a quota is established under this subsection, cotton may be entered under the quota during the 90-day period beginning on the date the quota is established by the Secretary.

(3) NO OVERLAP.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), a quota period may not be established that overlaps an existing quota period or a special quota period established under subsection (a).

(C) ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE TO USERS OF UPLAND COTTON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall, on a monthly basis, make economic adjustment assistance available to domestic users of upland cotton in the form of payments for all documented use of that upland cotton during the previous monthly period regardless of the origin of the upland cotton.

(2) VALUE OF ASSISTANCE.—Effective beginning on August 1, 2013, the value of the assistance provided under paragraph (1) shall be 3 cents per pound.

(3) ALLOWABLE PURPOSES.—Economic adjustment assistance under this subsection shall be made available only to domestic users of upland cotton that certify that the assistance shall be used only to acquire, construct, install, modernize, develop, convert, or expand land, plant, buildings, equipment, facilities, or machinery.

(4) REVIEW OR AUDIT.—The Secretary may conduct such review or audit of the records of a domestic user under this subsection as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out this subsection.

(5) IMPROPER USE OF ASSISTANCE.—If the Secretary determines, after a review or audit of the records of the domestic user, that economic adjustment assistance under this subsection was not used for the purposes specified in paragraph (3), the domestic user shall be—

(A) liable for the repayment of the assistance to the Secretary, plus interest, as determined by the Secretary; and

(B) ineligible to receive assistance under this subsection for a period of 1 year following the determination of the Secretary.

SEC. 1208. SPECIAL COMPETITIVE PROVISIONS FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.

(a) COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAM.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act through July 31, 2019, the Secretary shall carry out a program—

(1) to maintain and expand the domestic use of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States;

(2) to increase exports of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States; and

(3) to ensure that extra long staple cotton produced in the United States remains competitive in world markets.

(b) PAYMENTS UNDER PROGRAM; TRIGGER.—Under the program, the Secretary shall make payments available under this section whenever—

(1) for a consecutive 4-week period, the world market price for the lowest priced competing growth of extra long staple cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location and for other factors affecting the competitiveness of such cotton), as determined by the Secretary, is below the prevailing United States price for a competing growth of extra long staple cotton; and

(2) the lowest priced competing growth of extra long staple cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location and for other factors affecting the competitiveness of such cotton), as determined by the Secretary, is less than 134 percent of the loan rate for extra long staple cotton.

(c) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary shall make payments available under this section to domestic users of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States and exporters of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States that enter into an agreement with the Commodity Credit Corporation to participate in the program under this section.

(d) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—Payments under this section shall be based on the amount of the difference in the prices referred to in subsection (b)(1) during the fourth week of the consecutive 4-week period multiplied by the amount of documented purchases by domestic users and sales for export by exporters made in the week following such a consecutive 4-week period.

SEC. 1209. AVAILABILITY OF RECOURSE LOANS FOR HIGH MOISTURE FEED GRAINS AND SEED COTTON.

(a) HIGH MOISTURE FEED GRAINS.—

(1) DEFINITION OF HIGH MOISTURE STATE.—In this subsection, the term “high moisture state” means corn or grain sorghum having a moisture content in excess of Commodity Credit Corporation standards for marketing assistance loans made by the Secretary under section 1201.

(2) RECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE.—For each of the 2014 through 2018 crops of corn and grain sorghum, the Secretary shall make available recourse loans, as determined by the Secretary, to producers on a farm that—

(A) normally harvest all or a portion of their crop of corn or grain sorghum in a high moisture state;

(B) present—

(i) certified scale tickets from an inspected, certified commercial scale, including a licensed warehouse, feedlot, feed mill, distillery, or other similar entity approved by the Secretary, pursuant to regulations issued by the Secretary; or

(ii) field or other physical measurements of the standing or stored crop in regions of the United States, as determined by the Secretary, that do not have certified commercial scales from which certified scale tickets may be obtained within reasonable proximity of harvest operation;

(C) certify that the producers on the farm were the owners of the feed grain at the time of delivery to, and that the quantity to be placed under loan under this subsection was in fact harvested on the farm and delivered

to, a feedlot, feed mill, or commercial or on-farm high-moisture storage facility, or to a facility maintained by the users of corn and grain sorghum in a high moisture state; and

(D) comply with deadlines established by the Secretary for harvesting the corn or grain sorghum and submit applications for loans under this subsection within deadlines established by the Secretary.

(3) ELIGIBILITY OF ACQUIRED FEED GRAINS.—A loan under this subsection shall be made on a quantity of corn or grain sorghum of the same crop acquired by the producer equivalent to a quantity determined by multiplying—

(A) the acreage of the corn or grain sorghum in a high moisture state harvested on the farm of the producer; by

(B) the lower of—

(i) the payment yield in effect for the calculation of price loss coverage under section 1115, or the payment yield deemed to be in effect or established under subclause (II) or (III) of section 1206(b)(1)(B)(ii), with respect to corn or grain sorghum on a field that is similar to the field from which the corn or grain sorghum referred to in subparagraph (A) was obtained; or

(ii) the actual yield of corn or grain sorghum on a field, as determined by the Secretary, that is similar to the field from which the corn or grain sorghum referred to in subparagraph (A) was obtained.

(b) RECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE FOR SEED COTTON.—For each of the 2014 through 2018 crops of upland cotton and extra long staple cotton, the Secretary shall make available recourse seed cotton loans, as determined by the Secretary, on any production.

(c) REPAYMENT RATES.—Repayment of a recourse loan made under this section shall be at the loan rate established for the commodity by the Secretary, plus interest (determined in accordance with section 163 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7283)).

SEC. 1210. ADJUSTMENTS OF LOANS.

(a) ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY.—Subject to subsection (e), the Secretary may make appropriate adjustments in the loan rates for any loan commodity (other than cotton) for differences in grade, type, quality, location, and other factors.

(b) MANNER OF ADJUSTMENT.—The adjustments under subsection (a) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, be made in such a manner that the average loan level for the commodity will, on the basis of the anticipated incidence of the factors, be equal to the level of support determined in accordance with this subtitle and subtitle C.

(c) ADJUSTMENT ON COUNTY BASIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish loan rates for a crop for producers in individual counties in a manner that results in the lowest loan rate being 95 percent of the national average loan rate, if those loan rates do not result in an increase in outlays.

(2) PROHIBITION.—Adjustments under this subsection shall not result in an increase in the national average loan rate for any year.

(d) ADJUSTMENT IN LOAN RATE FOR COTTON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make appropriate adjustments in the loan rate for cotton for differences in quality factors.

(2) TYPES OF ADJUSTMENTS.—Loan rate adjustments under paragraph (1) may include—

(A) the use of non-spot market price data, in addition to spot market price data, that would enhance the accuracy of the price information used in determining quality adjustments under this subsection;

(B) adjustments in the premiums or discounts associated with upland cotton with a

staple length of 33 or above due to micronaire with the goal of eliminating any unnecessary artificial splits in the calculations of the premiums or discounts; and

(C) such other adjustments as the Secretary determines appropriate, after consultations conducted in accordance with paragraph (3).

(3) CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR.—

(A) PRIOR TO REVISION.—In making adjustments to the loan rate for cotton (including any review of the adjustments) as provided in this subsection, the Secretary shall consult with representatives of the United States cotton industry.

(B) INAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to consultations under this subsection.

(4) REVIEW OF ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary may review the operation of the upland cotton quality adjustments implemented pursuant to this subsection and may make further adjustments to the administration of the loan program for upland cotton, by revoking or revising any adjustment taken under paragraph (2).

(e) RICE.—The Secretary shall not make adjustments in the loan rates for long grain rice and medium grain rice, except for differences in grade and quality (including milling yields).

Subtitle C—Sugar

SEC. 1301. SUGAR POLICY.

(a) CONTINUATION OF CURRENT PROGRAM AND LOAN RATES.—

(1) SUGARCANE.—Section 156(a) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7272(a)) is amended—

(A) by inserting “and” at the end of paragraph (3);

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking “the 2011 crop year; and” and inserting “each of the 2011 through 2018 crop years.”; and

(C) by striking paragraph (5).

(2) SUGAR BEETS.—Section 156(b)(2) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7272(b)(2)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(3) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—Section 156(i) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7272(i)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) FLEXIBLE MARKETING ALLOTMENTS FOR SUGAR.—

(1) SUGAR ESTIMATES.—Section 359b(a)(1) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1359bb(a)(1)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(2) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—Section 359l(a) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1359ll(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

Subtitle D—Dairy

PART I—MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS

SEC. 1401. DEFINITIONS.

In this part and part III:

(1) ACTUAL DAIRY PRODUCTION MARGIN.—The term “actual dairy production margin” means the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed cost, as calculated under section 1402.

(2) ALL-MILK PRICE.—The term “all-milk price” means the average price received, per hundredweight of milk, by dairy operations for all milk sold to plants and dealers in the United States, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) AVERAGE FEED COST.—The term “average feed cost” means the average cost of feed used by a dairy operation to produce a hun-

dredweight of milk, determined under section 1402 using the sum of the following:

(A) The product determined by multiplying 1.0728 by the price of corn per bushel.

(B) The product determined by multiplying 0.00735 by the price of soybean meal per ton.

(C) The product determined by multiplying 0.0137 by the price of alfalfa hay per ton.

(4) CONSECUTIVE 2-MONTH PERIOD.—The term “consecutive 2-month period” refers to the 2-month period consisting of the months of January and February, March and April, May and June, July and August, September and October, or November and December, respectively.

(5) DAIRY OPERATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “dairy operation” means, as determined by the Secretary, 1 or more dairy producers that produce and market milk as a single dairy operation in which each dairy producer—

(i) shares in the risk of producing milk; and

(ii) makes contributions (including land, labor, management, equipment, or capital) to the dairy operation of the individual or entity, which are at least commensurate with the individual or entity’s share of the proceeds of the operation.

(B) ADDITIONAL OWNERSHIP STRUCTURES.—The Secretary shall determine additional ownership structures to be covered by the definition of dairy operation.

(6) MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM.—The term “margin protection program” means the margin protection program required by section 1403.

(7) MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM PAYMENT.—The term “margin protection program payment” means a payment made to a participating dairy operation under the margin protection program pursuant to section 1406.

(8) PARTICIPATING DAIRY OPERATION.—The term “participating dairy operation” means a dairy operation that registers under section 1404 to participate in the margin protection program.

(9) PRODUCTION HISTORY.—The term “production history” means the production history determined for a participating dairy operation under subsection (a) or (b) of section 1405 when the participating dairy operation first registers to participate in the margin protection program.

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

(11) UNITED STATES.—The term “United States”, in a geographical sense, means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

SEC. 1402. CALCULATION OF AVERAGE FEED COST AND ACTUAL DAIRY PRODUCTION MARGINS.

(a) CALCULATION OF AVERAGE FEED COST.—The Secretary shall calculate the national average feed cost for each month using the following data:

(1) The price of corn for a month shall be the price received during that month by farmers in the United States for corn, as reported in the monthly Agricultural Prices report by the Secretary.

(2) The price of soybean meal for a month shall be the central Illinois price for soybean meal, as reported in the Market News—Monthly Soybean Meal Price Report by the Secretary.

(3) The price of alfalfa hay for a month shall be the price received during that month

by farmers in the United States for alfalfa hay, as reported in the monthly Agricultural Prices report by the Secretary.

(b) CALCULATION OF ACTUAL DAIRY PRODUCTION MARGIN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For use in the margin protection program, the Secretary shall calculate the actual dairy production margin for each consecutive 2-month period by subtracting—

(A) the average feed cost for that consecutive 2-month period, determined in accordance with subsection (a); from

(B) the all-milk price for that consecutive 2-month period.

(2) TIME FOR CALCULATION.—The calculation required by this subsection shall be made as soon as practicable using the full-month price of the applicable reference month.

SEC. 1403. ESTABLISHMENT OF MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS.

Not later than September 1, 2014, the Secretary shall establish and administer a margin protection program for dairy producers under which participating dairy operations are paid a margin protection payment when actual dairy production margins are less than the threshold levels for a margin protection payment.

SEC. 1404. PARTICIPATION OF DAIRY OPERATIONS IN MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM.

(a) ELIGIBILITY.—All dairy operations in the United States shall be eligible to participate in the margin protection program to receive margin protection payments.

(b) REGISTRATION PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall specify the manner and form by which a participating dairy operation may register to participate in the margin protection program.

(2) TREATMENT OF MULTIPRODUCER DAIRY OPERATIONS.—If a participating dairy operation is operated by more than 1 dairy producer, all of the dairy producers of the participating dairy operation shall be treated as a single dairy operation for purposes of participating in the margin protection program.

(3) TREATMENT OF PRODUCERS WITH MULTIPLE DAIRY OPERATIONS.—If a dairy producer operates 2 or more dairy operations, each dairy operation of the producer shall separately register to participate in the margin protection program.

(c) ANNUAL ADMINISTRATIVE FEE.—

(1) ADMINISTRATIVE FEE REQUIRED.—Each participating dairy operation shall—

(A) pay an administrative fee to register to participate in the margin protection program; and

(B) pay the administrative fee annually through the duration of the margin protection program specified in section 1409.

(2) AMOUNT OF FEE.—The administrative fee for a participating dairy operation shall be \$100.

(3) USE OF FEES.—The Secretary shall use administrative fees collected under this subsection to cover administrative costs incurred to carry out the margin protection program.

(d) RELATION TO LIVESTOCK GROSS MARGIN FOR DAIRY PROGRAM.—A dairy operation may participate in the margin protection program or the livestock gross margin for dairy program under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.), but not both.

SEC. 1405. PRODUCTION HISTORY OF PARTICIPATING DAIRY OPERATIONS.

(a) PRODUCTION HISTORY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), when a dairy operation first registers to participate in the margin protection program, the production history of the

dairy operation for the margin protection program is equal to the highest annual milk marketings of the participating dairy operation during any one of the 2011, 2012, or 2013 calendar years.

(2) ADJUSTMENT.—In subsequent years, the Secretary shall adjust the production history of a participating dairy operation determined under paragraph (1) to reflect any increase in the national average milk production.

(b) ELECTION BY NEW DAIRY OPERATIONS.—In the case of a participating dairy operation that has been in operation for less than a year, the participating dairy operation shall elect 1 of the following methods for the Secretary to determine the production history of the participating dairy operation:

(1) The volume of the actual milk marketings for the months the participating dairy operation has been in operation extrapolated to a yearly amount.

(2) An estimate of the actual milk marketings of the participating dairy operation based on the herd size of the participating dairy operation relative to the national rolling herd average data published by the Secretary.

(c) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—A participating dairy operation shall provide all information that the Secretary may require in order to establish the production history of the participating dairy operation for purposes of participating in the margin protection program.

SEC. 1406. MARGIN PROTECTION PAYMENTS.

(a) COVERAGE LEVEL THRESHOLD AND COVERAGE PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of receiving margin protection payments for a consecutive 2-month period, a participating dairy operation shall annually elect—

(1) a coverage level threshold that is equal to \$4.00, \$4.50, \$5.00, \$5.50, \$6.00, \$6.50, \$7.00, \$7.50, or \$8.00; and

(2) a percentage of coverage, in 5-percent increments, beginning with 25 percent and not exceeding 90 percent of the production history of the participating dairy operation.

(b) PAYMENT THRESHOLD.—A participating dairy operation shall receive a margin protection payment whenever the average actual dairy production margin for a consecutive 2-month period is less than the coverage level threshold selected by the participating dairy operation.

(c) AMOUNT OF MARGIN PROTECTION PAYMENT.—The margin protection payment for the participating dairy operation shall be determined as follows:

(1) The Secretary shall calculate the amount by which the coverage level threshold selected by the participating dairy operation exceeds the average actual dairy production margin for the consecutive 2-month period.

(2) The amount determined under paragraph (1) shall be multiplied by—

(A) the coverage percentage selected by the participating dairy operation; and

(B) the production history of the participating dairy operation divided by 6.

SEC. 1407. PREMIUMS FOR MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM.

(a) CALCULATION OF PREMIUMS.—For purposes of participating in the margin protection program, a participating dairy operation shall pay an annual premium equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(1) the coverage percentage elected by the participating dairy operation under section 1406(a)(2);

(2) the production history of the participating dairy operation; and

(3) the premium per hundredweight of milk imposed by this section for the coverage level selected.

(b) PREMIUM PER HUNDREDWEIGHT FOR FIRST 4 MILLION POUNDS OF PRODUCTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For the first 4,000,000 pounds of milk marketings included in the production history of a participating dairy operation, the premium per hundredweight for each coverage level is specified in the table contained in paragraph (2).

(2) PRODUCER PREMIUMS.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), the following annual premiums apply:

Coverage Level	Premium per Cwt.
\$4.00	None
\$4.50	\$0.010
\$5.00	\$0.025
\$5.50	\$0.040
\$6.00	\$0.055
\$6.50	\$0.090
\$7.00	\$0.217
\$7.50	\$0.300
\$8.00	\$0.475

(3) SPECIAL RULE.—The premium per hundredweight specified in the table contained in paragraph (2) for each coverage level (except the \$8.00 coverage level) shall be reduced by 25 percent for each of calendar years 2014 and 2015.

(c) PREMIUM PER HUNDREDWEIGHT FOR PRODUCTION IN EXCESS OF 4 MILLION POUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For milk marketings in excess of 4,000,000 pounds included in the production history of a participating dairy operation, the premium per hundredweight for each coverage level is specified in the table contained in paragraph (2).

(2) PRODUCER PREMIUMS.—The following annual premiums apply:

Coverage Level	Premium per Cwt.
\$4.00	None
\$4.50	\$0.020
\$5.00	\$0.040
\$5.50	\$0.100
\$6.00	\$0.155
\$6.50	\$0.290
\$7.00	\$0.830
\$7.50	\$1.060
\$8.00	\$1.360

(d) TIME FOR PAYMENT OF PREMIUM.—The Secretary shall provide more than 1 method by which a participating dairy operation may pay the premium required under this section in any manner that maximizes participating dairy operation payment flexibility and program integrity.

(e) PREMIUM OBLIGATIONS.—

(1) PRO-RATION OF PREMIUM FOR NEW PARTICIPANTS.—In the case of a participating dairy operation that first registers to participate in the margin protection program for a calendar year after the start of the calendar year, the participating dairy operation shall pay a pro-rated premium for that calendar year based on the portion of the calendar year for which the participating dairy operation purchases the coverage.

(2) LEGAL OBLIGATION.—A participating dairy operation in the margin protection program for a calendar year shall be legally obligated to pay the applicable premium for that calendar year, except that the Secretary may waive that obligation, under terms and conditions determined by the Secretary, for any participating dairy operation in the case of death, retirement, permanent dissolution of a participating dairy oper-

ation, or other circumstances as the Secretary considers appropriate to ensure the integrity of the program.

SEC. 1408. EFFECT OF FAILURE TO PAY ADMINISTRATIVE FEES OR PREMIUMS.

(a) LOSS OF BENEFITS.—A participating dairy operation that fails to pay the required annual administrative fee under section 1404 or is in arrears on premium payments under section 1407—

(1) remains legally obligated to pay the administrative fee or premiums, as the case may be; and

(2) may not receive margin protection payments until the fees or premiums are fully paid.

(b) ENFORCEMENT.—The Secretary may take such action as necessary to collect administrative fees and premium payments for participation in the margin protection program.

SEC. 1409. DURATION.

The margin protection program shall end on December 31, 2018.

SEC. 1410. ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations to address administrative and enforcement issues involved in carrying out the margin protection program.

(b) RECONSTITUTION.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations to prohibit a dairy producer from reconstituting a dairy operation for the purpose of the dairy producer receiving margin protection payments.

(c) ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS.—Using authorities under section 1001(h) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(h)) and subtitle H of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act (7 U.S.C. 6991 et seq.), the Secretary shall promulgate regulations to provide for administrative appeals of decisions of the Secretary that are adverse to participants of the margin protection program.

(d) INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL ORDER.—Section 143(a)(2) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7253(a)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “Subsection (b) does not apply to the authority of the Secretary under this subsection.”

PART II—REPEAL OR REAUTHORIZATION OF OTHER DAIRY-RELATED PROVISIONS

SEC. 1421. REPEAL OF DAIRY PRODUCT PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAM.

Section 1501 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8771) is repealed.

SEC. 1422. TEMPORARY CONTINUATION AND EVENTUAL REPEAL OF MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT PROGRAM.

(a) TEMPORARY CONTINUATION OF PAYMENTS UNDER MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT PROGRAM.—Section 1506 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8773) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) TERMINATION DATE.—The term ‘termination date’ means the earlier of the following:

“(A) The date on which the Secretary certifies to Congress that the margin protection program required by section 1403 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 is operational.

“(B) September 1, 2014.”;

(2) in subsection (c)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by inserting after “August 31, 2013,” the following: “and for the period beginning February 1, 2014, and ending on the termination date.”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and thereafter,” and inserting “and ending January 31, 2014.”;

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “For any month beginning on or after September 1, 2013,” and inserting “During the period beginning on September 1, 2013, and ending on January 31, 2014.”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

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

“(3) FINAL ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY.—During the period beginning on February 1, 2014, and ending on the termination date, if the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost for a month during that period is greater than \$7.35 per hundredweight, the amount specified in subsection (c)(2)(A) used to determine the payment rate for that month shall be increased by 45 percent of the percentage by which the National Average Dairy Feed Ration Cost exceeds \$7.35 per hundredweight.”;

(4) in subsection (e)(2)(A)—

(A) in clause (ii), by inserting after “August 31, 2013,” the following: “and for the period beginning February 1, 2014, and ending on the termination date.”; and

(B) in clause (iii), by striking “effective beginning September 1, 2013,” and inserting “for the period beginning September 1, 2013, and ending January 31, 2014.”;

(5) in subsection (g), by striking “during the period beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act and ending on September 30, 2013” and inserting “until the termination date”;

(6) in subsection (h)(1), by striking “September 30, 2013” and inserting “the termination date”.

(b) REPEAL OF MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT PROGRAM.—

(1) REPEAL.—Effective on the termination date, section 1506 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8773) is repealed.

(2) TERMINATION DATE DEFINED.—In paragraph (1), the term “termination date” means the earlier of the following:

(A) The date on which the Secretary certifies to Congress that the margin protection program required by section 1403 is operational.

(B) September 1, 2014.

SEC. 1423. REPEAL OF DAIRY EXPORT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 153 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (15 U.S.C. 713a–14) is repealed.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 902(2) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (D); and

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) and (F) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respectively.

SEC. 1424. EXTENSION OF DAIRY FORWARD PRICING PROGRAM.

Section 1502(e) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8772(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “2015” and inserting “2021”.

SEC. 1425. EXTENSION OF DAIRY INDEMNITY PROGRAM.

Section 3 of Public Law 90–484 (7 U.S.C. 4501) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 1426. EXTENSION OF DAIRY PROMOTION AND RESEARCH PROGRAM.

Section 113(e)(2) of the Dairy Production Stabilization Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 4504(e)(2)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 1427. REPEAL OF FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDER REVIEW COMMISSION.

Section 1509 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 122 Stat. 1726) is repealed.

PART III—DAIRY PRODUCT DONATION PROGRAM

SEC. 1431. DAIRY PRODUCT DONATION PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED; PURPOSE.—Not later than 120 days after the date on which the Secretary certifies to Congress that the margin protection program is operational, the Secretary shall establish and administer a dairy product donation program for the purposes of—

(1) addressing low operating margins experienced by participating dairy operations; and

(2) providing nutrition assistance to individuals in low-income groups.

(b) PROGRAM TRIGGER.—The Secretary shall announce that the dairy product donation program is in effect for a month, and undertake activities under subsection (c) during the month, whenever the actual dairy production margin has been \$4.00 or less per hundredweight of milk for each of the immediately preceding 2 months.

(c) REQUIRED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Whenever the dairy product donation program is in effect under subsection (b), the Secretary shall immediately purchase dairy products, at prevailing market prices, until such time as one of the termination conditions specified in subsection (d)(1) is met.

(2) CONSULTATION.—To determine the types and quantities of dairy products to purchase under the dairy product donation program, the Secretary shall consult with public and private nonprofit organizations organized to feed low-income populations

(d) TERMINATION OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—

(1) TERMINATION THRESHOLDS.—The Secretary shall cease activities under the dairy product donation program, and shall not reinitiate activities under the program until the condition specified in subsection (b) is again met, whenever any one of the following occurs:

(A) The Secretary has made purchases under the dairy product donation program for three consecutive months, even if the actual dairy production margin remains \$4.00 or less per hundredweight of milk.

(B) The actual dairy production margin has been greater than \$4.00 per hundredweight of milk for the immediately preceding month.

(C) The actual dairy production margin has been \$4.00 or less, but more than \$3.00, per hundredweight of milk for the immediately preceding month and during the same month—

(i) the price in the United States for cheddar cheese was more than 5 percent above the world price; or

(ii) the price in the United States for non-fat dry milk was more than 5 percent above the world price of skim milk powder.

(D) The actual dairy production margin has been \$3.00 or less per hundredweight of milk for the immediately preceding month and during the same month—

(i) the price in the United States for cheddar cheese was more than 7 percent above the world price; or

(ii) the price in the United States for non-fat dry milk was more than 7 percent above the world price of skim milk powder.

(2) DETERMINATIONS.—For purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall determine

the price in the United States for cheddar cheese and non-fat dry milk and the world price of cheddar cheese and skim milk powder.

(e) DISTRIBUTION OF PURCHASED DAIRY PRODUCTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall distribute, but not store, the dairy products purchased under the dairy product donation program in a manner that encourages the domestic consumption of such dairy products by diverting them to persons in low-income groups, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) USE OF PUBLIC OR PRIVATE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.—The Secretary shall utilize the services of public and private nonprofit organizations for the distribution of dairy products purchased under the dairy product donation program. A public or private nonprofit organization that receives dairy products may transfer the products to another public or private nonprofit organization that agrees to use the dairy products to provide, without cost or waste, nutrition assistance to individuals in low-income groups.

(f) PROHIBITION ON RE SALE OF PRODUCTS.—A public or private nonprofit organization that receives dairy products under subsection (e) may not sell the products back into commercial markets.

(g) USE OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION FUNDS.—As specified in section 1601(a), the funds, facilities, and authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation shall be available to the Secretary for the purposes of implementing and administering the dairy product donation program.

(h) DURATION.—In addition to the termination conditions specified in subsection (d)(1), the dairy product donation program shall end on December 31, 2018.

Subtitle E—Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs

SEC. 1501. SUPPLEMENTAL AGRICULTURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE PRODUCER ON A FARM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “eligible producer on a farm” means an individual or entity described in subparagraph (B) that, as determined by the Secretary, assumes the production and market risks associated with the agricultural production of crops or livestock.

(B) DESCRIPTION.—An individual or entity referred to in subparagraph (A) is—

(i) a citizen of the United States;

(ii) a resident alien;

(iii) a partnership of citizens of the United States; or

(iv) a corporation, limited liability corporation, or other farm organizational structure organized under State law.

(2) FARM-RAISED FISH.—The term “farm-raised fish” means any aquatic species that is propagated and reared in a controlled environment.

(3) LIVESTOCK.—The term “livestock” includes—

(A) cattle (including dairy cattle);

(B) bison;

(C) poultry;

(D) sheep;

(E) swine;

(F) horses; and

(G) other livestock, as determined by the Secretary.

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

(b) LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PAYMENTS.—

(1) PAYMENTS.—For fiscal year 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary shall use such sums as are necessary of the

funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to make livestock indemnity payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred livestock death losses in excess of the normal mortality, as determined by the Secretary, due to—

(A) attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the Federal Government or protected by Federal law, including wolves and avian predators; or

(B) adverse weather, as determined by the Secretary, during the calendar year, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, disease, wildfires, extreme heat, and extreme cold.

(2) PAYMENT RATES.—Indemnity payments to an eligible producer on a farm under paragraph (1) shall be made at a rate of 75 percent of the market value of the applicable livestock on the day before the date of death of the livestock, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR PAYMENTS MADE DUE TO DISEASE.—The Secretary shall ensure that payments made to an eligible producer under paragraph (1) are not made for the same livestock losses for which compensation is provided pursuant to section 10407(d) of the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8306(d)).

(c) LIVESTOCK FORAGE DISASTER PROGRAM.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) COVERED LIVESTOCK.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the term “covered livestock” means livestock of an eligible livestock producer that, during the 60 days prior to the beginning date of a qualifying drought or fire condition, as determined by the Secretary, the eligible livestock producer—

(I) owned;

(II) leased;

(III) purchased;

(IV) entered into a contract to purchase;

(V) is a contract grower; or

(VI) sold or otherwise disposed of due to qualifying drought conditions during—

(aa) the current production year; or

(bb) subject to paragraph (3)(B)(ii), 1 or both of the 2 production years immediately preceding the current production year.

(ii) EXCLUSION.—The term “covered livestock” does not include livestock that were or would have been in a feedlot, on the beginning date of the qualifying drought or fire condition, as a part of the normal business operation of the eligible livestock producer, as determined by the Secretary.

(B) DROUGHT MONITOR.—The term “drought monitor” means a system for classifying drought severity according to a range of abnormally dry to exceptional drought, as defined by the Secretary.

(C) ELIGIBLE LIVESTOCK PRODUCER.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The term “eligible livestock producer” means an eligible producer on a farm that—

(I) is an owner, cash or share lessee, or contract grower of covered livestock that provides the pastureland or grazing land, including cash-leased pastureland or grazing land, for the livestock;

(II) provides the pastureland or grazing land for covered livestock, including cash-leased pastureland or grazing land that is physically located in a county affected by drought;

(III) certifies grazing loss; and

(IV) meets all other eligibility requirements established under this subsection.

(ii) EXCLUSION.—The term “eligible livestock producer” does not include an owner, cash or share lessee, or contract grower of livestock that rents or leases pastureland or

grazing land owned by another person on a rate-of-gain basis.

(D) NORMAL CARRYING CAPACITY.—The term “normal carrying capacity”, with respect to each type of grazing land or pastureland in a county, means the normal carrying capacity, as determined under paragraph (3)(D)(i), that would be expected from the grazing land or pastureland for livestock during the normal grazing period, in the absence of a drought or fire that diminishes the production of the grazing land or pastureland.

(E) NORMAL GRAZING PERIOD.—The term “normal grazing period”, with respect to a county, means the normal grazing period during the calendar year for the county, as determined under paragraph (3)(D)(i).

(2) PROGRAM.—For fiscal year 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary shall use such sums as are necessary of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to provide compensation for losses to eligible livestock producers due to grazing losses for covered livestock due to—

(A) a drought condition, as described in paragraph (3); or

(B) fire, as described in paragraph (4).

(3) ASSISTANCE FOR LOSSES DUE TO DROUGHT CONDITIONS.—

(A) ELIGIBLE LOSSES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—An eligible livestock producer may receive assistance under this subsection only for grazing losses for covered livestock that occur on land that—

(I) is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover; or

(II) is planted to a crop planted specifically for the purpose of providing grazing for covered livestock.

(ii) EXCLUSIONS.—An eligible livestock producer may not receive assistance under this subsection for grazing losses that occur on land used for haying or grazing under the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.).

(B) MONTHLY PAYMENT RATE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the payment rate for assistance under this paragraph for 1 month shall, in the case of drought, be equal to 60 percent of the lesser of—

(I) the monthly feed cost for all covered livestock owned or leased by the eligible livestock producer, as determined under subparagraph (C); or

(II) the monthly feed cost calculated by using the normal carrying capacity of the eligible grazing land of the eligible livestock producer.

(ii) PARTIAL COMPENSATION.—In the case of an eligible livestock producer that sold or otherwise disposed of covered livestock due to drought conditions in 1 or both of the 2 production years immediately preceding the current production year, as determined by the Secretary, the payment rate shall be 80 percent of the payment rate otherwise calculated in accordance with clause (i).

(C) MONTHLY FEED COST.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The monthly feed cost shall equal the product obtained by multiplying—

(I) 30 days;

(II) a payment quantity that is equal to the feed grain equivalent, as determined under clause (ii); and

(III) a payment rate that is equal to the corn price per pound, as determined under clause (iii).

(ii) FEED GRAIN EQUIVALENT.—For purposes of clause (i)(II), the feed grain equivalent shall equal—

(I) in the case of an adult beef cow, 15.7 pounds of corn per day; or

(II) in the case of any other type of weight of livestock, an amount determined by the Secretary that represents the average number of pounds of corn per day necessary to feed the livestock.

(iii) CORN PRICE PER POUND.—For purposes of clause (i)(III), the corn price per pound shall equal the quotient obtained by dividing—

(I) the higher of—

(aa) the national average corn price per bushel for the 12-month period immediately preceding March 1 of the year for which the disaster assistance is calculated; or

(bb) the national average corn price per bushel for the 24-month period immediately preceding that March 1; by

(II) 56.

(D) NORMAL GRAZING PERIOD AND DROUGHT MONITOR INTENSITY.—

(i) FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE DETERMINATIONS.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall determine the normal carrying capacity and normal grazing period for each type of grazing land or pastureland in the county served by the applicable committee.

(II) CHANGES.—No change to the normal carrying capacity or normal grazing period established for a county under subclause (I) shall be made unless the change is requested by the appropriate State and county Farm Service Agency committees.

(ii) DROUGHT INTENSITY.—

(I) D2.—An eligible livestock producer that owns or leases grazing land or pastureland that is physically located in a county that is rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having a D2 (severe drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least 8 consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period for the county, as determined by the Secretary, shall be eligible to receive assistance under this paragraph in an amount equal to 1 monthly payment using the monthly payment rate determined under subparagraph (B).

(II) D3.—An eligible livestock producer that owns or leases grazing land or pastureland that is physically located in a county that is rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having at least a D3 (extreme drought) intensity in any area of the county at any time during the normal grazing period for the county, as determined by the Secretary, shall be eligible to receive assistance under this paragraph—

(aa) in an amount equal to 3 monthly payments using the monthly payment rate determined under subparagraph (B);

(bb) if the county is rated as having a D3 (extreme drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least 4 weeks during the normal grazing period for the county, or is rated as having a D4 (exceptional drought) intensity in any area of the county at any time during the normal grazing period, in an amount equal to 4 monthly payments using the monthly payment rate determined under subparagraph (B); or

(cc) if the county is rated as having a D4 (exceptional drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least 4 weeks during the normal grazing period, in an amount equal to 5 monthly payments using the monthly rate determined under subparagraph (B).

(4) ASSISTANCE FOR LOSSES DUE TO FIRE ON PUBLIC MANAGED LAND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible livestock producer may receive assistance under this paragraph only if—

(i) the grazing losses occur on rangeland that is managed by a Federal agency; and

(ii) the eligible livestock producer is prohibited by the Federal agency from grazing the normal permitted livestock on the managed rangeland due to a fire.

(B) PAYMENT RATE.—The payment rate for assistance under this paragraph shall be equal to 50 percent of the monthly feed cost for the total number of livestock covered by the Federal lease of the eligible livestock producer, as determined under paragraph (3)(C).

(C) PAYMENT DURATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), an eligible livestock producer shall be eligible to receive assistance under this paragraph for the period—

(I) beginning on the date on which the Federal agency excludes the eligible livestock producer from using the managed rangeland for grazing; and

(II) ending on the last day of the Federal lease of the eligible livestock producer.

(ii) LIMITATION.—An eligible livestock producer may only receive assistance under this paragraph for losses that occur on not more than 180 days per year.

(5) NO DUPLICATIVE PAYMENTS.—An eligible livestock producer may elect to receive assistance for grazing or pasture feed losses due to drought conditions under paragraph (3) or fire under paragraph (4), but not both for the same loss, as determined by the Secretary.

(d) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR LIVESTOCK, HONEY BEES, AND FARM-RAISED FISH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For fiscal year 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary shall use not more than \$20,000,000 of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to provide emergency relief to eligible producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish to aid in the reduction of losses due to disease (including cattle tick fever), adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary, that are not covered under subsection (b) or (c).

(2) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds made available under this subsection shall be used to reduce losses caused by feed or water shortages, disease, or other factors as determined by the Secretary.

(3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Any funds made available under this subsection shall remain available until expended.

(e) TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) ELIGIBLE ORCHARDIST.—The term “eligible orchardist” means a person that produces annual crops from trees for commercial purposes.

(B) NATURAL DISASTER.—The term “natural disaster” means plant disease, insect infestation, drought, fire, freeze, flood, earthquake, lightning, or other occurrence, as determined by the Secretary.

(C) NURSERY TREE GROWER.—The term “nursery tree grower” means a person who produces nursery, ornamental, fruit, nut, or Christmas trees for commercial sale, as determined by the Secretary.

(D) TREE.—The term “tree” includes a tree, bush, and vine.

(2) ELIGIBILITY.—

(A) LOSS.—Subject to subparagraph (B), for fiscal year 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary shall use such sums as are necessary of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to provide assistance—

(i) under paragraph (3) to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers that planted trees for commercial purposes but lost the trees as a result of a natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary; and

(ii) under paragraph (3)(B) to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers that have a production history for commercial purposes on planted or existing trees but lost the trees as a result of a natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary.

(B) LIMITATION.—An eligible orchardist or nursery tree grower shall qualify for assistance under subparagraph (A) only if the tree mortality of the eligible orchardist or nursery tree grower, as a result of damaging weather or related condition, exceeds 15 percent (adjusted for normal mortality).

(3) ASSISTANCE.—Subject to paragraph (4), the assistance provided by the Secretary to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for losses described in paragraph (2) shall consist of—

(A)(i) reimbursement of 65 percent of the cost of replanting trees lost due to a natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary, in excess of 15 percent mortality (adjusted for normal mortality); or

(ii) at the option of the Secretary, sufficient seedlings to reestablish a stand; and

(B) reimbursement of 50 percent of the cost of pruning, removal, and other costs incurred by an eligible orchardist or nursery tree grower to salvage existing trees or, in the case of tree mortality, to prepare the land to replant trees as a result of damage or tree mortality due to a natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary, in excess of 15 percent damage or mortality (adjusted for normal tree damage and mortality).

(4) LIMITATIONS ON ASSISTANCE.—

(A) DEFINITIONS OF LEGAL ENTITY AND PERSON.—In this paragraph, the terms “legal entity” and “person” have the meaning given those terms in section 1001(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(a)).

(B) AMOUNT.—The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (excluding a joint venture or general partnership) under this subsection may not exceed \$125,000 for any crop year, or an equivalent value in tree seedlings.

(C) ACRES.—The total quantity of acres planted to trees or tree seedlings for which a person or legal entity shall be entitled to receive payments under this subsection may not exceed 500 acres.

(f) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS OF LEGAL ENTITY AND PERSON.—In this subsection, the terms “legal entity” and “person” have the meaning given those terms in section 1001(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(a)).

(2) AMOUNT.—The total amount of disaster assistance payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (excluding a joint venture or general partnership) under this section (excluding payments received under subsection (e)) may not exceed \$125,000 for any crop year.

(3) DIRECT ATTRIBUTION.—Subsections (e) and (f) of section 1001 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308) or any successor provisions relating to direct attribution shall apply with respect to assistance provided under this section.

Subtitle F—Administration

SEC. 1601. ADMINISTRATION GENERALLY.

(a) USE OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.—The Secretary shall use the funds, facilities, and authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out this title.

(b) DETERMINATIONS BY SECRETARY.—A determination made by the Secretary under this title shall be final and conclusive.

(c) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, not later than 90

days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Commodity Credit Corporation, as appropriate, shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to implement this title and the amendments made by this title.

(2) PROCEDURE.—The promulgation of the regulations and administration of this title and the amendments made by this title and sections 11003 and 11017 shall be made without regard to—

(A) the notice and comment provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code;

(B) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”); and

(C) the Statement of Policy of the Secretary of Agriculture effective July 24, 1971 (36 Fed. Reg. 13804), relating to notices of proposed rulemaking and public participation in rulemaking.

(3) CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULEMAKING.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall use the authority provided under section 808 of title 5, United States Code.

(d) ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY RELATED TO TRADE AGREEMENTS COMPLIANCE.—

(1) REQUIRED DETERMINATION; ADJUSTMENT.—If the Secretary determines that expenditures under this title that are subject to the total allowable domestic support levels under the Uruguay Round Agreements (as defined in section 2 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3501)) will exceed such allowable levels for any applicable reporting period, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, make adjustments in the amount of such expenditures during that period to ensure that such expenditures do not exceed the allowable levels.

(2) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Before making any adjustment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report describing the determination made under that paragraph and the extent of the adjustment to be made.

SEC. 1602. SUSPENSION OF PERMANENT PRICE SUPPORT AUTHORITY.

(a) AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 1938.—The following provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 shall not be applicable to the 2014 through 2018 crops of covered commodities (as defined in section 1111), cotton, and sugar and shall not be applicable to milk during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act through December 31, 2018:

(1) Parts II through V of subtitle B of title III (7 U.S.C. 1326 et seq.).

(2) In the case of upland cotton, section 377 (7 U.S.C. 1377).

(3) Subtitle D of title III (7 U.S.C. 1379a et seq.).

(4) Title IV (7 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.).

(b) AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 1949.—The following provisions of the Agricultural Act of 1949 shall not be applicable to the 2014 through 2018 crops of covered commodities (as defined in section 1111), cotton, and sugar and shall not be applicable to milk during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and through December 31, 2018:

- (1) Section 101 (7 U.S.C. 1441).
- (2) Section 103(a) (7 U.S.C. 1444(a)).
- (3) Section 105 (7 U.S.C. 1444b).
- (4) Section 107 (7 U.S.C. 1445a).
- (5) Section 110 (7 U.S.C. 1445e).
- (6) Section 112 (7 U.S.C. 1445g).

(7) Section 115 (7 U.S.C. 1445k).

(8) Section 201 (7 U.S.C. 1446).

(9) Title III (7 U.S.C. 1447 et seq.).

(10) Title IV (7 U.S.C. 1421 et seq.), other than sections 404, 412, and 416 (7 U.S.C. 1424, 1429, and 1431).

(11) Title V (7 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.).

(12) Title VI (7 U.S.C. 1471 et seq.).

(c) **SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN QUOTA PROVISIONS.**—The joint resolution entitled “A joint resolution relating to corn and wheat marketing quotas under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended”, approved May 26, 1941 (7 U.S.C. 1330 and 1340), shall not be applicable to the crops of wheat planted for harvest in the calendar years 2014 through 2018.

SEC. 1603. PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1001 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308) is amended by striking subsections (b) and (c) and inserting the following:

“(b) **LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS FOR COVERED COMMODITIES (OTHER THAN PEANUTS).**—The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (except a joint venture or general partnership) for any crop year under sections 1116 and 1117 and as marketing loan gains or loan deficiency payments under subtitle B of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (other than for peanuts) may not exceed \$125,000.

“(c) **LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS FOR PEANUTS.**—The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (except a joint venture or general partnership) for any crop year under sections 1116 and 1117 and as marketing loan gains or loan deficiency payments under subtitle B of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 for peanuts may not exceed \$125,000.”

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **LIMITATION ON APPLICABILITY.**—Section 1001(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(d)) is amended by striking “the marketing assistance loan program or the loan deficiency payment program under title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008” and inserting “the forfeiture of a commodity pledged as collateral for a loan made available under subtitle B of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014”.

(2) **TREATMENT OF FEDERAL AGENCIES AND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.**—Section 1001(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(f)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (5)(A), by striking “or title XII” and inserting “, title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or title XII”; and

(B) in paragraph (6)(A), by striking “or title XII” and inserting “, title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or title XII”.

(3) **FOREIGN PERSONS INELIGIBLE.**—Section 1001C(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3(a)) is amended by inserting “title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014,” after “2008.”

(c) **APPLICATION.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply beginning with the 2014 crop year.

SEC. 1604. RULEMAKING RELATED TO SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION FOR ACTIVE PERSONAL MANAGEMENT.

(a) **REGULATIONS REQUIRED.**—Within 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate, with an opportunity for notice and comment, regulations—

(1) to define the term “significant contribution of active personal management” for purposes of section 1001A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-1); and

(2) if the Secretary determines it is appropriate, to establish limits for varying types

of farming operations on the number of individuals who may be considered to be actively engaged in farming with respect to the farming operation when a significant contribution of active personal management is the basis used to meet the requirement of being actively engaged in farming under section 1001A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-1) by an individual or entity.

(b) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In promulgating the regulations required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall consider—

(1) the size, nature, and management requirements of each type of farming operation;

(2) the changing nature of active personal management due to advancements of farming operations; and

(3) the degree to which the regulations promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) will adversely impact the long-term viability of the farming operation.

(c) **FAMILY FARMS.**—The Secretary shall not apply the regulations promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) to individuals or entities comprised solely of family members (as that term is defined in section 1001(a)(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(a)(2))).

(d) **MONITORING.**—The regulations promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) shall include a plan for monitoring the status of compliance reviews for whether a person or entity is in compliance with the regulations.

(e) **PAPERWORK REDUCTION.**—In order to conserve Federal resources and prevent unnecessary paperwork burdens, the Secretary shall ensure that any additional paperwork required as a result of the regulations promulgated pursuant to subsection (a) be limited to those persons who are subject to such regulations.

(f) **RELATION TO OTHER REQUIREMENTS.**—Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the Secretary to alter, directly or indirectly, existing regulations for other requirements in section 1001A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-1).

(g) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The requirements of any regulation promulgated pursuant to this section shall apply beginning with the 2015 crop year.

SEC. 1605. ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME LIMITATION.

(a) **LIMITATIONS AND COVERED BENEFITS.**—Section 1001D(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a(b)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “LIMITATIONS” and inserting “LIMITATIONS ON COMMODITY AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS”; and

(2) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(1) **LIMITATION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person or legal entity shall not be eligible to receive any benefit described in paragraph (2) during a crop, fiscal, or program year, as appropriate, if the average adjusted gross income of the person or legal entity exceeds \$900,000.

“(2) **COVERED BENEFITS.**—Paragraph (1) applies with respect to the following:

“(A) A payment or benefit under subtitle A or E of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

“(B) A marketing loan gain or loan deficiency payment under subtitle B of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

“(C) Starting with fiscal year 2015, a payment or benefit under title II of the Agricultural Act of 2014, title II of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, title II of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, or title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985.

“(D) A payment or benefit under section 524(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1524(b)).

“(E) A payment or benefit under section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333).”

(b) **UPDATING DEFINITIONS.**—Paragraph (1) of section 1001D(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a(a)) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) **AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME.**—In this section, the term ‘average adjusted gross income’, with respect to a person or legal entity, means the average of the adjusted gross income or comparable measure of the person or legal entity over the 3 taxable years preceding the most immediately preceding complete taxable year, as determined by the Secretary.”

(c) **INCOME DETERMINATION.**—Section 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (c); and

(2) by redesignating subsections (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively.

(d) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) by striking “subparagraph (A) or (B) of”; and

(B) by striking “, the average adjusted gross farm income, and the average adjusted gross nonfarm income”; and

(2) in subsection (a)(3), by striking “, average adjusted gross farm income, and average adjusted gross nonfarm income” both places it appears;

(3) in subsection (c) (as redesignated by subsection (c)(2) of this section)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “, average adjusted gross farm income, and average adjusted gross nonfarm income” both places it appears; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “paragraphs (1)(C) and (2)(B) of subsection (b)” and inserting “subsection (b)(2)”; and

(4) in subsection (d) (as redesignated by subsection (c)(2) of this section)—

(A) by striking “paragraphs (1)(C) and (2)(B) of subsection (b)” and inserting “subsection (b)(2)”; and

(B) by striking “, average adjusted gross farm income, or average adjusted gross nonfarm income”.

(e) **EFFECTIVE PERIOD.**—Subsection (e) of section 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a), as redesignated by subsection (c)(2) of this section, is repealed.

(f) **LIMITATION ON APPLICABILITY.**—Section 1001(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “or title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014”.

(g) **TRANSITION.**—Section 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a), as in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, shall apply with respect to the 2013 crop, fiscal, or program year, as appropriate, for each program described in paragraphs (1)(C) and (2)(B) of subsection (b) of that section (as so in effect on that day).

SEC. 1606. GEOGRAPHICALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS.

Section 1621(d) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8792(d)) is amended by striking “each of fiscal years 2009 through 2012” and inserting “fiscal year 2009 and each succeeding fiscal year”.

SEC. 1607. PERSONAL LIABILITY OF PRODUCERS FOR DEFICIENCIES.

Section 164 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C.

7284) is amended by striking “and title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008” each place it appears and inserting “title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702 et seq.), and title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014”.

SEC. 1608. PREVENTION OF DECEASED INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING PAYMENTS UNDER FARM COMMODITY PROGRAMS.

(a) **RECONCILIATION.**—At least twice each year, the Secretary shall reconcile Social Security numbers of all individuals who receive payments under this title, whether directly or indirectly, with the Commissioner of Social Security to determine if the individuals are alive.

(b) **PRECLUSION.**—The Secretary shall preclude the issuance of payments to, and on behalf of, deceased individuals that were not eligible for payments.

SEC. 1609. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

(a) **MISSING PUNCTUATION.**—Section 359f(c)(1)(B) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1359ff(c)(1)(B)) is amended by adding a period at the end.

(b) **ERRONEOUS CROSS REFERENCE.**—

(1) **AMENDMENT.**—Section 1603(g) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 1739) is amended in paragraphs (2) through (6) and the amendments made by those paragraphs by striking “1703(a)” each place it appears and inserting “1603(a)”.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This subsection and the amendments made by this subsection take effect as if included in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 1651).

(c) **CONTINUED APPLICABILITY OF APPROPRIATIONS GENERAL PROVISION.**—Section 767 of division A of Public Law 108-7 (7 U.S.C. 7911 note; 117 Stat. 48) is amended—

(1) by striking “(a)”;

(2) by striking “sections 1101 and 1102 of Public Law 107-171” and inserting “subtitle A of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014”; and

(3) by striking “such section 1102” and inserting “such subtitle”; and

(4) by striking subsection (b).

SEC. 1610. APPEALS.

(a) **DIRECTION, CONTROL, AND SUPPORT.**—Section 272 of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6992) is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) **DIRECTION, CONTROL, AND SUPPORT.**—

“(1) **DIRECTION AND CONTROL.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Director shall be free from the direction and control of any person other than the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture.

“(B) **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.**—The Division shall not receive administrative support (except on a reimbursable basis) from any agency other than the Office of the Secretary.

“(C) **PROHIBITION ON DELEGATION.**—The Secretary may not delegate to any other officer or employee of the Department, other than the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture or the Director, the authority of the Secretary with respect to the Division.

“(2) **EXCEPTION.**—The Assistant Secretary for Administration is authorized to investigate, enforce, and implement the provisions in law, Executive order, or regulations that relate in general to competitive and excepted service positions and employment within the Division, including the position of Director, and such authority may be further delegated to subordinate officials.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 296(b) of the Department of Agriculture Re-

organization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 7014(b)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “affect—” and inserting “affect.”;

(2) by striking “the authority” each place it appears in paragraphs (1) through (7) and inserting “The authority”;

(3) by striking the semicolon at the end of each of paragraphs (1) through (5) and inserting a period;

(4) in paragraph (6)(C), by striking “; or” at the end and inserting a period; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) The authority of the Secretary to carry out amendments made to this title by the Agricultural Act of 2014.”.

SEC. 1611. ASSIGNMENT OF PAYMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The provisions of section 8(g) of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S.C. 590h(g)), relating to assignment of payments, shall apply to payments made under this title.

(b) **NOTICE.**—The producer making the assignment, or the assignee, shall provide the Secretary with notice, in such manner as the Secretary may require, of any assignment made under this section.

SEC. 1612. TRACKING OF BENEFITS.

As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary may track the benefits provided, directly or indirectly, to individuals and entities under titles I and II and the amendments made by those titles.

SEC. 1613. SIGNATURE AUTHORITY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out this title and title II and amendments made by those titles, if the Secretary approves a document, the Secretary shall not subsequently determine the document is inadequate or invalid because of the lack of authority of any person signing the document on behalf of the applicant or any other individual, entity, general partnership, or joint venture, or the documents relied upon were determined inadequate or invalid, unless the person signing the program document knowingly and willfully falsified the evidence of signature authority or a signature.

(b) **AFFIRMATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this section prohibits the Secretary from asking a proper party to affirm any document that otherwise would be considered approved under subsection (a).

(2) **NO RETROACTIVE EFFECT.**—A denial of benefits based on a lack of affirmation under paragraph (1) shall not be retroactive with respect to third-party producers who were not the subject of the erroneous representation of authority, if the third-party producers—

(A) relied on the prior approval by the Secretary of the documents in good faith; and

(B) substantively complied with all program requirements.

SEC. 1614. IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) **MAINTENANCE OF BASE ACRES AND PAYMENT YIELDS.**—The Secretary shall maintain, for each covered commodity and upland cotton, base acres and payment yields on a farm established under sections 1001 and 1301 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702, 8751), as adjusted pursuant to sections 1101, 1102, 1108, and 1302 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 8711, 8712, 8718, 8752), as in effect on September 30, 2013.

(b) **STREAMLINING.**—In implementing this title, the Secretary shall—

(1) reduce administrative burdens and costs to producers by streamlining and reducing paperwork, forms, and other administrative

requirements, including through the implementation of the Acreage Crop Reporting and Streamlining Initiative that, in part, shall ensure that—

(A) a producer (or an agent of a producer) may report information, electronically (including geospatial data) or conventionally, to the Department; and

(B) upon the request of the producer (or agent thereof) the Department of Agriculture electronically shares with the producer (or agent) in real time and without cost to the producer (or agent) the common land unit data, related farm level data, and other information of the producer;

(2) improve coordination, information sharing, and administrative work with the Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

(3) take advantage of new technologies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery to producers.

(c) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall make available to the Farm Service Agency to carry out this title \$100,000,000.

(2) **ADDITIONAL FUNDS.**—

(A) **INITIAL DETERMINATION.**—If, by September 30, 2014, the Secretary notifies the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate that the Farm Service Agency has made substantial progress toward implementing the requirements of subsection (b)(1), the Secretary shall make available to the Farm Service Agency to carry out this title \$10,000,000 on October 1, 2014. The amount made available under this subparagraph is in addition to the amount made available under paragraph (1).

(B) **SUBSEQUENT DETERMINATION.**—If, by September 30, 2015, the Secretary notifies the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate that the requirements of subsection (b)(1) have been fully implemented and those Committees provide written concurrence to the Secretary, the Secretary shall make available to the Farm Service Agency to carry out this title \$10,000,000 on the date the written concurrence is provided or October 1, 2015, whichever is later. The amount made available under this subparagraph is in addition to the amount made available under paragraph (1) and any amount made available under subparagraph (A).

(3) **PRODUCER EDUCATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Of the funds made available under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide \$3,000,000 to State extension services for the purpose of educating farmers and ranchers on the options made available under subtitles A, D, and E of this title and under section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333).

(B) **WEB-BASED DECISION AIDS.**—

(i) **USE OF QUALIFIED UNIVERSITIES.**—Of the funds made available under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall use \$3,000,000 to support qualified universities (or university-based organizations) that represent a diversity of regions and commodities (including dairy), possess expertise regarding the programs authorized by this Act, have a history in the development of decision aids and producer outreach initiatives regarding farm risk management programs, and are able to meet the deadline established pursuant to clause

(ii) to develop web-based decision aids to assist producers in understanding available options described in subparagraph (A) and to train producers to use these decision aids.

(i) DEADLINES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall—

(I) obligate the funds made available under clause (i) within 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(II) require the products described in clause (i) to be made available to producers on the internet within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Secretary, after the implementation of the first rule implementing programs required under subtitle A of this title.

(d) LOAN IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In any crop year in which an order is issued pursuant 2 U.S.C. 901(a), the Secretary shall use such sums as necessary of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation for such crop year to fully restore the support, loan, or assistance that is otherwise required under subtitles B or C of this title or under the amendments made by subtitles B or C, except with respect to the assistance provided under sections 1207(c) and 1208.

(2) REPAYMENT.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall ensure that when a producer repays a loan at a rate equal to the loan rate plus interest in accordance with the repayment provisions of subtitles B or C that the repayment amount shall include the portion of the loan amount provided under paragraph (1), except that this paragraph shall not affect or reduce marketing loan gains, loan deficiency payments, or forfeiture benefits provided for under subtitles B or C and as supplemented in accordance with paragraph (1).

SEC. 1615. RESEARCH OPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 4(m) of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714b(m)), funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation disbursed pursuant to the memorandum of understanding between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil regarding a fund for technical assistance and capacity building with respect to dispute WT/DS 267 in the World Trade Organization may, upon resolution of the dispute, be used for research consistent with the conditions imposed by subsection (b).

(b) CONDITIONS.—Research authorized by subsection (a) must be conducted in collaboration with research agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture or with a college, university, or research foundation located in the United States. Such research and collaboration shall be subject to the agreement of the parties to the resolved dispute described in subsection (a).

TITLE II—CONSERVATION

Subtitle A—Conservation Reserve Program

SEC. 2001. EXTENSION AND ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS OF CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 1231(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) ELIGIBLE LAND.—Section 1231(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “the date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008” and inserting “the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014”;

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2);

(3) by inserting before paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(3) grasslands that—

“(A) contain forbs or shrubland (including improved rangeland and pastureland) for which grazing is the predominant use;

“(B) are located in an area historically dominated by grasslands; and

“(C) could provide habitat for animal and plant populations of significant ecological value if the land is retained in its current use or restored to a natural condition;”;

(4) in paragraph (4)(C), by striking “filterstrips devoted to trees or shrubs” and inserting “filterstrips or riparian buffers devoted to trees, shrubs, or grasses”; and

(5) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(5) the portion of land in a field not enrolled in the conservation reserve in a case in which—

“(A) more than 50 percent of the land in the field is enrolled as a buffer or filterstrip, or more than 75 percent of the land in the field is enrolled as a conservation practice other than as a buffer or filterstrip; and

“(B) the remainder of the field is—

“(i) infeasible to farm; and

“(ii) enrolled at regular rental rates.”.

(c) PLANTING STATUS OF CERTAIN LAND.—Section 1231(c) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(c)) is amended by striking “if” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “if, during the crop year, the land was devoted to a conserving use.”.

(d) ENROLLMENT.—Subsection (d) of section 1231 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) ENROLLMENT.—

“(1) MAXIMUM ACREAGE ENROLLED.—The Secretary may maintain in the conservation reserve at any one time during—

“(A) fiscal year 2014, no more than 27,500,000 acres;

“(B) fiscal year 2015, no more than 26,000,000 acres;

“(C) fiscal year 2016, no more than 25,000,000 acres;

“(D) fiscal year 2017, no more than 24,000,000 acres; and

“(E) fiscal year 2018, no more than 24,000,000 acres.

“(2) GRASSLANDS.—

“(A) LIMITATION.—For purposes of applying the limitations in paragraph (1), no more than 2,000,000 acres of the land described in subsection (b)(3) may be enrolled in the program at any one time during the 2014 through 2018 fiscal years.

“(B) PRIORITY.—In enrolling acres under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may give priority to land with expiring conservation reserve program contracts.

“(C) METHOD OF ENROLLMENT.—In enrolling acres under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall make the program available to owners or operators of eligible land on a continuous enrollment basis with one or more ranking periods.”.

(e) DURATION OF CONTRACT.—Section 1231(e) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(e)) is amended by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN LAND.—In the case of land devoted to hardwood trees, shelterbelts, windbreaks, or wildlife corridors under a contract entered into under this subchapter, the owner or operator of the land may, within the limitations prescribed under paragraph (1), specify the duration of the contract.”.

(f) CONSERVATION PRIORITY AREAS.—Section 1231(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “watershed areas of the Chesapeake Bay Region, the Great Lakes Region, the Long Island Sound Region, and other”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “WATERSHEDS.—Watersheds” and inserting “AREAS.—Areas”; and

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking “a watershed’s designation—” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “an area’s designation if the Secretary finds that the area no longer contains actual and significant adverse water quality or habitat impacts related to agricultural production activities.”.

SEC. 2002. FARMABLE WETLAND PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 1231B(a)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831B(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) by striking “a program” and inserting “a farmable wetland program”.

(b) ELIGIBLE ACREAGE.—Section 1231B(b)(1)(B) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831B(b)(1)(B)) is amended by striking “flow from a row crop agriculture drainage system” and inserting “surface and subsurface flow from row crop agriculture production”.

(c) ACREAGE LIMITATION.—Section 1231B(c)(1)(B) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831B(c)(1)(B)) is amended by striking “1,000,000” and inserting “750,000”.

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—Section 1231B of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831B) is amended—

(1) by striking the heading and inserting the following: “FARMABLE WETLAND PROGRAM”; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking “section 1234(c)(2)(B)” and inserting “section 1234(d)(2)(A)(ii)”.

SEC. 2003. DUTIES OF OWNERS AND OPERATORS.

(a) LIMITATION ON HARVESTING, GRAZING, OR COMMERCIAL USE OF FORAGE.—Section 1232(a)(8) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3832(a)(8)) is amended by striking “except that” and all that follows through the semicolon at the end of the paragraph and inserting “except as provided in subsection (b) or (c) of section 1233;”.

(b) CONSERVATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—Subsection (b) of section 1232 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3832) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) CONSERVATION PLANS.—The plan referred to in subsection (a)(1) shall set forth—

“(1) the conservation measures and practices to be carried out by the owner or operator during the term of the contract; and

“(2) the commercial use, if any, to be permitted on the land during the term.”.

(c) RENTAL PAYMENT REDUCTION.—Section 1232 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3832) is amended by striking subsection (d).

SEC. 2004. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.

Section 1233 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3833) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 1233. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.

“(a) COST-SHARE AND RENTAL PAYMENTS.—In return for a contract entered into by an owner or operator under the conservation reserve program, the Secretary shall—

“(1) share the cost of carrying out the conservation measures and practices set forth in the contract for which the Secretary determines that cost sharing is appropriate and in the public interest; and

“(2) for a period of years not in excess of the term of the contract, pay an annual rental payment in an amount necessary to compensate for—

“(A) the conversion of highly erodible cropland or other eligible lands normally devoted to the production of an agricultural commodity on a farm or ranch to a less intensive use;

“(B) the retirement of any base history that the owner or operator agrees to retire permanently; and

“(C) the development and management of grasslands for multiple natural resource conservation benefits, including to soil, water, air, and wildlife.

“(b) SPECIFIED ACTIVITIES PERMITTED.—The Secretary shall permit certain activities or commercial uses of land that is subject to a contract under the conservation reserve program if those activities or uses are consistent with a plan approved by the Secretary and include—

“(1) harvesting, grazing, or other commercial use of the forage in response to a drought, flooding, or other emergency, without any reduction in the rental rate;

“(2) consistent with the conservation of soil, water quality, and wildlife habitat (including habitat during primary nesting seasons for birds in the area), and in exchange for a reduction of not less than 25 percent in the annual rental rate for the acres covered by the authorized activity, managed harvesting and other commercial use (including the managed harvesting of biomass), except that in permitting those activities, the Secretary, in coordination with the State technical committee—

“(A) shall develop appropriate vegetation management requirements; and

“(B) shall identify periods during which the activities may be conducted, such that the frequency is at least every 5 but not more than once every 3 years;

“(3) subject to appropriate restrictions during the nesting season for birds in the local area that are economically significant, in significant decline, or conserved in accordance with Federal or State law, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the State technical committee, and in exchange for a reduction of not less than 25 percent in the annual rental rate for the acres covered by the authorized activity—

“(A) prescribed grazing for the control of invasive species, which may be conducted annually;

“(B) routine grazing, except that in permitting such routine grazing, the Secretary, in coordination with the State technical committee—

“(i) shall develop appropriate vegetation management requirements and stocking rates for the land that are suitable for continued routine grazing; and

“(ii) shall identify the periods during which routine grazing may be conducted, such that the frequency is not more than once every 2 years, taking into consideration regional differences such as—

“(I) climate, soil type, and natural resources;

“(II) the number of years that should be required between routine grazing activities; and

“(III) how often during a year in which routine grazing is permitted that routine grazing should be allowed to occur; and

“(C) the installation of wind turbines and associated access, except that in permitting the installation of wind turbines, the Secretary shall determine the number and location of wind turbines that may be installed, taking into account—

“(i) the location, size, and other physical characteristics of the land;

“(ii) the extent to which the land contains threatened or endangered wildlife and wildlife habitat; and

“(iii) the purposes of the conservation reserve program under this subchapter;

“(4) the intermittent and seasonal use of vegetative buffer practices incidental to agricultural production on lands adjacent to the buffer such that the permitted use does not destroy the permanent vegetative cover; and

“(5) grazing by livestock of a beginning farmer or rancher without any reduction in the rental rate, if the grazing is—

“(A) consistent with the conservation of soil, water quality, and wildlife habitat;

“(B) subject to appropriate restrictions during the nesting season for birds in the local area that are economically significant, in significant decline, or conserved in accordance with Federal or State law, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the State technical committee; and

“(C) described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (3).

“(c) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES ON GRASSLANDS.—For eligible land described in section 1231(b)(3), the Secretary shall permit the following activities:

“(1) Common grazing practices, including maintenance and necessary cultural practices, on the land in a manner that is consistent with maintaining the viability of grassland, forb, and shrub species appropriate to that locality.

“(2) Haying, mowing, or harvesting for seed production, subject to appropriate restrictions during the nesting season for birds in the local area that are economically significant, in significant decline, or conserved in accordance with Federal or State law, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the State technical committee.

“(3) Fire suppression, fire-related rehabilitation, and construction of fire breaks.

“(4) Grazing-related activities, such as fencing and livestock watering.

“(d) RESOURCE CONSERVING USE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date that is 1 year before the date of termination of a contract under the program, the Secretary shall allow an owner or operator to make conservation and land improvements for economic use that facilitate maintaining protection of enrolled land after expiration of the contract.

“(2) CONSERVATION PLAN.—The Secretary shall require an owner or operator carrying out the activities described in paragraph (1) to develop and implement a conservation plan.

“(3) RE-ENROLLMENT PROHIBITED.—Land improved under paragraph (1) may not be re-enrolled in the conservation reserve program for 5 years after the date of termination of the contract.

“(4) PAYMENT REDUCTION.—In the case of an activity carried out under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall reduce the payment otherwise payable under the contract by an amount commensurate with the economic value of the activity.”

SEC. 2005. PAYMENTS.

(a) TREES, WINDBREAKS, SHELTERBELTS, AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.—Section 1234(b)(3)(A) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3834(b)(3)(A)) is amended to read as follows:

“(A) APPLICABILITY.—This paragraph applies to land devoted to the production of hardwood trees, windbreaks, shelterbelts, or wildlife corridors under a contract entered

into under this subchapter after November 28, 1990.”

(b) INCENTIVES FOR THINNING.—Section 1234 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3834) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “FEDERAL PERCENTAGE OF”; and

(B) in paragraph (3)(B)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking “or thinning”; and

(ii) by amending clause (ii) to read as follows:

“(ii) DURATION.—The Secretary shall make payments as described in clause (i) for a period of not less than 2 years, but not more than 4 years, beginning on the date of the planting of the trees or shrubs.”;

(2) by redesignating subsections (c) through (g) as subsections (d) through (h), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) INCENTIVE PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make incentive payments to an owner or operator of eligible land in an amount sufficient to encourage proper thinning and other practices to improve the condition of resources, promote forest management, or enhance wildlife habitat on the land.

“(2) LIMITATION.—A payment described in paragraph (1) may not exceed 150 percent of the total cost of thinning and other practices conducted by the owner or operator.”.

(c) ANNUAL RENTAL PAYMENTS.—Section 1234(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (as redesignated by subsection (b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or other eligible lands” after “highly erodible cropland” both places it appears;

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(2) METHODS OF DETERMINATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The amounts payable to owners or operators in the form of rental payments under contracts entered into under this subchapter may be determined through—

“(i) the submission of bids for such contracts by owners and operators in such manner as the Secretary may prescribe; or

“(ii) such other means as the Secretary determines are appropriate.

“(B) GRASSLANDS.—In the case of eligible land described in section 1231(b)(3), the Secretary shall make annual payments in an amount that is not more than 75 percent of the grazing value of the land covered by the contract.”; and

(3) in paragraph (5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “conduct an annual survey” and inserting “, not less frequently than once every other year, conduct a survey”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “annual”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) USE.—The Secretary may use the estimates derived from the survey conducted under subparagraph (A) relating to dryland cash rental rates as a factor in determining rental rates under this section in a manner determined appropriate by the Secretary.”.

(d) PAYMENT SCHEDULE.—Subsection (e) of section 1234 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (as redesignated by subsection (b)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) PAYMENT SCHEDULE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, payments under this subchapter shall be made in cash in such amount and on such time schedule as is agreed on and specified in the contract.

“(2) **ADVANCE PAYMENT.**—Payments under this subchapter may be made in advance of determination of performance.”.

(e) **PAYMENT LIMITATION.**—Section 1234(g) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (as redesignated by subsection (b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “, including rental payments made in the form of in-kind commodities,”;

(2) by striking paragraph (3); and

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

SEC. 2006. CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS.

(a) **EARLY TERMINATION BY OWNER OR OPERATOR.**—Section 1235(e) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3835(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A)—

(A) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “During fiscal year 2015, the Secretary”; and

(B) by striking “before January 1, 1995,”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) Land devoted to hardwood trees.

“(D) Wildlife habitat, duck nesting habitat, pollinator habitat, upland bird habitat buffer, wildlife food plots, State acres for wildlife enhancement, shallow water areas for wildlife, and rare and declining habitat.

“(E) Farmable wetland and restored wetland.

“(F) Land that contains diversions, erosion control structures, flood control structures, contour grass strips, living snow fences, salinity reducing vegetation, cross wind trap strips, and sediment retention structures.

“(G) Land located within a federally designated wellhead protection area.

“(H) Land that is covered by an easement under the conservation reserve program.

“(I) Land located within an average width, according to the applicable Natural Resources Conservation Service field office technical guide, of a perennial stream or permanent water body.

“(J) Land enrolled under the conservation reserve enhancement program.”; and

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking “60 days after the date on which the owner or operator submits the notice required under paragraph (1)(C)” and inserting “upon approval by the Secretary”.

(b) **TRANSITION OPTION FOR CERTAIN FARMERS OR RANCHERS.**—Section 1235(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3835(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “DUTIES” and all that follows through “a beginning farmer or rancher or” and inserting “TRANSITION TO COVERED FARMER OR RANCHER.—In the case of a contract modification approved in order to facilitate the transfer of land subject to a contract from a retired farmer or rancher to a beginning farmer or rancher, a veteran farmer or rancher (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)), or a”;

(B) in subparagraph (A)(i), by inserting “, including preparing to plant an agricultural crop” after “improvements”;

(C) in subparagraph (D), by striking “the farmer or rancher” and inserting “the covered farmer or rancher”; and

(D) in subparagraph (E), by striking “section 1001A(b)(3)(B)” and inserting “section 1001”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “requirement of section 1231(h)(4)(B)” and inserting “option pursuant to section 1234(d)(2)(A)(ii)”.

(c) **FINAL YEAR CONTRACT.**—Section 1235 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3835) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(g) **FINAL YEAR OF CONTRACT.**—The Secretary shall not consider an owner or operator to be in violation of a term or condition of the conservation reserve contract if—

“(1) during the year prior to expiration of the contract, the land is enrolled in the conservation stewardship program; and

“(2) the activity required under the conservation stewardship program pursuant to such enrollment is consistent with this subchapter.

“(h) **LAND ENROLLED IN AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM.**—The Secretary may terminate or modify a contract entered into under this subchapter if eligible land that is subject to such contract is transferred into the agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H.”.

SEC. 2007. CONVERSION OF LAND SUBJECT TO CONTRACT TO OTHER CONSERVING USES.

Section 1235A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3835a) is repealed.

SEC. 2008. EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the amendments made by this subtitle shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract.

(b) **UPDATING OF EXISTING CONTRACTS.**—The Secretary shall permit an owner or operator of land subject to a contract entered into under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, to update the contract to reflect the activities and uses of land under contract permitted under the terms and conditions of section 1233(b) of that Act (as amended by section 2004), as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

Subtitle B—Conservation Stewardship Program

SEC. 2101. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) **REVISION OF CURRENT PROGRAM.**—Subchapter B of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838d et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

“Subchapter B—Conservation Stewardship Program

“SEC. 1238D. DEFINITIONS.

“In this subchapter:

“(1) **AGRICULTURAL OPERATION.**—The term ‘agricultural operation’ means all eligible land, whether or not contiguous, that is—

“(A) under the effective control of a producer at the time the producer enters into a contract under the program; and

“(B) operated with equipment, labor, management, and production or cultivation practices that are substantially separate from other agricultural operations, as determined by the Secretary.

“(2) **CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘conservation activities’ means conservation systems, practices, or management measures.

“(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term ‘conservation activities’ includes—

“(i) structural measures, vegetative measures, and land management measures, including agriculture drainage management systems, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(ii) planning needed to address a priority resource concern.

“(3) **CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN.**—The term ‘conservation stewardship plan’ means a plan that—

“(A) identifies and inventories priority resource concerns;

“(B) establishes benchmark data and conservation objectives;

“(C) describes conservation activities to be implemented, managed, or improved; and

“(D) includes a schedule and evaluation plan for the planning, installation, and management of the new and existing conservation activities.

“(4) **ELIGIBLE LAND.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘eligible land’ means—

“(i) private or tribal land on which agricultural commodities, livestock, or forest-related products are produced; and

“(ii) lands associated with the land described in clause (i) on which priority resource concerns could be addressed through a contract under the program.

“(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term ‘eligible land’ includes—

“(i) cropland;

“(ii) grassland;

“(iii) rangeland;

“(iv) pasture land;

“(v) nonindustrial private forest land; and

“(vi) other land in agricultural areas (including cropped woodland, marshes, and agricultural land used or capable of being used for the production of livestock), as determined by the Secretary.

“(5) **PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERN.**—The term ‘priority resource concern’ means a natural resource concern or problem, as determined by the Secretary, that—

“(A) is identified at the national, State, or local level as a priority for a particular area of a State;

“(B) represents a significant concern in a State or region; and

“(C) is likely to be addressed successfully through the implementation of conservation activities under this program.

“(6) **PROGRAM.**—The term ‘program’ means the conservation stewardship program established by this subchapter.

“(7) **STEWARDSHIP THRESHOLD.**—The term ‘stewardship threshold’ means the level of management required, as determined by the Secretary, to conserve and improve the quality and condition of a natural resource.

“SEC. 1238E. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.**—During each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, the Secretary shall carry out a conservation stewardship program to encourage producers to address priority resource concerns and improve and conserve the quality and condition of natural resources in a comprehensive manner—

“(1) by undertaking additional conservation activities; and

“(2) by improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities.

“(b) **EXCLUSIONS.**—

“(1) **LAND ENROLLED IN OTHER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.**—Subject to paragraph (2), the following land (even if covered by the definition of eligible land) is not eligible for enrollment in the program:

“(A) Land enrolled in the conservation reserve program, unless—

“(i) the conservation reserve contract will expire at the end of the fiscal year in which the land is to be enrolled in the program; and

“(ii) conservation reserve program payments for land enrolled in the program cease

before the first program payment is made to the applicant under this subchapter.

“(B) Land enrolled in a wetland reserve easement through the agricultural conservation easement program.

“(C) Land enrolled in the conservation security program.

“(2) CONVERSION TO CROPLAND.—Eligible land used for crop production after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, that had not been planted, considered to be planted, or devoted to crop production for at least 4 of the 6 years preceding that date shall not be the basis for any payment under the program, unless the land does not meet such requirement because—

“(A) the land had previously been enrolled in the conservation reserve program;

“(B) the land has been maintained using long-term crop rotation practices, as determined by the Secretary; or

“(C) the land is incidental land needed for efficient operation of the farm or ranch, as determined by the Secretary.

“SEC. 1238F. STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS.

“(a) SUBMISSION OF CONTRACT OFFERS.—To be eligible to participate in the conservation stewardship program, a producer shall submit to the Secretary a contract offer for the agricultural operation that—

“(1) demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the producer, at the time of the contract offer, meets or exceeds the stewardship threshold for at least 2 priority resource concerns; and

“(2) would, at a minimum, meet or exceed the stewardship threshold for at least 1 additional priority resource concern by the end of the stewardship contract by—

“(A) installing and adopting additional conservation activities; and

“(B) improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities across the entire agricultural operation in a manner that increases or extends the conservation benefits in place at the time the contract offer is accepted by the Secretary.

“(b) EVALUATION OF CONTRACT OFFERS.—

“(1) RANKING OF APPLICATIONS.—In evaluating contract offers submitted under subsection (a), the Secretary shall rank applications based on—

“(A) the level of conservation treatment on all applicable priority resource concerns at the time of application;

“(B) the degree to which the proposed conservation activities effectively increase conservation performance;

“(C) the number of applicable priority resource concerns proposed to be treated to meet or exceed the stewardship threshold by the end of the contract;

“(D) the extent to which other priority resource concerns will be addressed to meet or exceed the stewardship threshold by the end of the contract period;

“(E) the extent to which the actual and anticipated conservation benefits from the contract are provided at the least cost relative to other similarly beneficial contract offers; and

“(F) the extent to which priority resource concerns will be addressed when transitioning from the conservation reserve program to agricultural production.

“(2) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary may not assign a higher priority to any application because the applicant is willing to accept a lower payment than the applicant would otherwise be eligible to receive.

“(3) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA.—The Secretary may develop and use such additional criteria that the Secretary determines are necessary to ensure that national, State, and local pri-

ority resource concerns are effectively addressed.

“(c) ENTERING INTO CONTRACTS.—After a determination that a producer is eligible for the program under subsection (a), and a determination that the contract offer ranks sufficiently high under the evaluation criteria under subsection (b), the Secretary shall enter into a conservation stewardship contract with the producer to enroll the eligible land to be covered by the contract.

“(d) CONTRACT PROVISIONS.—

“(1) TERM.—A conservation stewardship contract shall be for a term of 5 years.

“(2) REQUIRED PROVISIONS.—The conservation stewardship contract of a producer shall—

“(A) state the amount of the payment the Secretary agrees to make to the producer for each year of the conservation stewardship contract under section 1238G(d);

“(B) require the producer—

“(i) to implement a conservation stewardship plan that describes the program purposes to be achieved through 1 or more conservation activities;

“(ii) to maintain and supply information as required by the Secretary to determine compliance with the conservation stewardship plan and any other requirements of the program; and

“(iii) not to conduct any activities on the agricultural operation that would tend to defeat the purposes of the program;

“(C) permit all economic uses of the eligible land that—

“(i) maintain the agricultural nature of the land; and

“(ii) are consistent with the conservation purposes of the conservation stewardship contract;

“(D) include a provision to ensure that a producer shall not be considered in violation of the contract for failure to comply with the contract due to circumstances beyond the control of the producer, including a disaster or related condition, as determined by the Secretary;

“(E) include provisions requiring that upon the violation of a term or condition of the contract at any time the producer has control of the land—

“(i) if the Secretary determines that the violation warrants termination of the contract—

“(I) the producer shall forfeit all rights to receive payments under the contract; and

“(II) the producer shall refund all or a portion of the payments received by the producer under the contract, including any interest on the payments, as determined by the Secretary; or

“(ii) if the Secretary determines that the violation does not warrant termination of the contract, the producer shall refund or accept adjustments to the payments provided to the producer, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate;

“(F) include provisions in accordance with paragraphs (3) and (4); and

“(G) include any additional provisions the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out the program.

“(3) CHANGE OF INTEREST IN LAND SUBJECT TO A CONTRACT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—At the time of application, a producer shall have control of the eligible land to be enrolled in the program. Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a change in the interest of a producer in eligible land covered by a contract under the program shall result in the termination of the contract with regard to that land.

“(B) TRANSFER OF DUTIES AND RIGHTS.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply if—

“(i) within a reasonable period of time (as determined by the Secretary) after the date of the change in the interest in eligible land covered by a contract under the program, the transferee of the land provides written notice to the Secretary that all duties and rights under the contract have been transferred to, and assumed by, the transferee for the portion of the land transferred;

“(ii) the transferee meets the eligibility requirements of the program; and

“(iii) the Secretary approves the transfer of all duties and rights under the contract.

“(4) MODIFICATION AND TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS.—

“(A) VOLUNTARY MODIFICATION OR TERMINATION.—The Secretary may modify or terminate a contract with a producer if—

“(i) the producer agrees to the modification or termination; and

“(ii) the Secretary determines that the modification or termination is in the public interest.

“(B) INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION.—The Secretary may terminate a contract if the Secretary determines that the producer violated the contract.

“(5) REPAYMENT.—If a contract is terminated, the Secretary may, consistent with the purposes of the program—

“(A) allow the producer to retain payments already received under the contract; or

“(B) require repayment, in whole or in part, of payments received and assess liquidated damages.

“(e) CONTRACT RENEWAL.—At the end of the initial 5-year contract period, the Secretary may allow the producer to renew the contract for 1 additional 5-year period if the producer—

“(1) demonstrates compliance with the terms of the initial contract;

“(2) agrees to adopt and continue to integrate conservation activities across the entire agricultural operation, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(3) agrees, by the end of the contract period—

“(A) to meet the stewardship threshold of at least 2 additional priority resource concerns on the agricultural operation; or

“(B) to exceed the stewardship threshold of 2 existing priority resource concerns that are specified by the Secretary in the initial contract.

“SEC. 1238G. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—To achieve the conservation goals of a contract under the conservation stewardship program, the Secretary shall—

“(1) make the program available to eligible producers on a continuous enrollment basis with 1 or more ranking periods, 1 of which shall occur in the first quarter of each fiscal year;

“(2) identify not less than 5 priority resource concerns in a particular watershed or other appropriate region or area within a State; and

“(3) establish a science-based stewardship threshold for each priority resource concern identified under paragraph (2).

“(b) ALLOCATION TO STATES.—The Secretary shall allocate acres to States for enrollment, based—

“(1) primarily on each State’s proportion of eligible land to the total acreage of eligible land in all States; and

“(2) also on consideration of—

“(A) the extent and magnitude of the conservation needs associated with agricultural production in each State;

“(B) the degree to which implementation of the program in the State is, or will be, effective in helping producers address those needs; and

“(C) other considerations to achieve equitable geographic distribution of funds, as determined by the Secretary.

“(c) ACREAGE ENROLLMENT LIMITATION.—During the period beginning on the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, and ending on September 30, 2022, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(1) enroll in the program an additional 10,000,000 acres for each fiscal year; and

“(2) manage the program to achieve a national average rate of \$18 per acre, which shall include the costs of all financial assistance, technical assistance, and any other expenses associated with enrollment or participation in the program.

“(d) CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PAYMENTS.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall provide annual payments under the program to compensate the producer for—

“(A) installing and adopting additional conservation activities; and

“(B) improving, maintaining, and managing conservation activities in place at the agricultural operation of the producer at the time the contract offer is accepted by the Secretary.

“(2) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—The amount of the annual payment shall be determined by the Secretary and based, to the maximum extent practicable, on the following factors:

“(A) Costs incurred by the producer associated with planning, design, materials, installation, labor, management, maintenance, or training.

“(B) Income forgone by the producer.

“(C) Expected conservation benefits.

“(D) The extent to which priority resource concerns will be addressed through the installation and adoption of conservation activities on the agricultural operation.

“(E) The level of stewardship in place at the time of application and maintained over the term of the contract.

“(F) The degree to which the conservation activities will be integrated across the entire agricultural operation for all applicable priority resource concerns over the term of the contract.

“(G) Such other factors as are determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(3) EXCLUSIONS.—A payment to a producer under this subsection shall not be provided for—

“(A) the design, construction, or maintenance of animal waste storage or treatment facilities or associated waste transport or transfer devices for animal feeding operations; or

“(B) conservation activities for which there is no cost incurred or income forgone to the producer.

“(4) DELIVERY OF PAYMENTS.—In making payments under this subsection, the Secretary shall, to the extent practicable—

“(A) prorate conservation performance over the term of the contract so as to accommodate, to the extent practicable, producers earning equal annual payments in each fiscal year; and

“(B) make such payments as soon as practicable after October 1 of each fiscal year for activities carried out in the previous fiscal year.

“(e) SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENTS FOR RESOURCE-CONSERVING CROP ROTATIONS.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY OF PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall provide additional payments to

producers that, in participating in the program, agree to adopt or improve resource-conserving crop rotations to achieve beneficial crop rotations as appropriate for the eligible land of the producers.

“(2) BENEFICIAL CROP ROTATIONS.—The Secretary shall determine whether a resource-conserving crop rotation is a beneficial crop rotation eligible for additional payments under paragraph (1) based on whether the resource-conserving crop rotation is designed to provide natural resource conservation and production benefits.

“(3) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a payment described in paragraph (1), a producer shall agree to adopt and maintain beneficial resource-conserving crop rotations for the term of the contract.

“(4) RESOURCE-CONSERVING CROP ROTATION.—In this subsection, the term ‘resource-conserving crop rotation’ means a crop rotation that—

“(A) includes at least 1 resource-conserving crop (as defined by the Secretary);

“(B) reduces erosion;

“(C) improves soil fertility and tilth;

“(D) interrupts pest cycles; and

“(E) in applicable areas, reduces depletion of soil moisture or otherwise reduces the need for irrigation.

“(f) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—A person or legal entity may not receive, directly or indirectly, payments under the program that, in the aggregate, exceed \$200,000 under all contracts entered into during fiscal years 2014 through 2018, excluding funding arrangements with Indian tribes, regardless of the number of contracts entered into under the program by the person or legal entity.

“(g) SPECIALTY CROP AND ORGANIC PRODUCERS.—The Secretary shall ensure that outreach and technical assistance are available, and program specifications are appropriate to enable specialty crop and organic producers to participate in the program.

“(h) COORDINATION WITH ORGANIC CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall establish a transparent means by which producers may initiate organic certification under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) while participating in a contract under the program.

“(i) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations that—

“(1) prescribe such other rules as the Secretary determines to be necessary to ensure a fair and reasonable application of the limitations established under subsection (f); and

“(2) otherwise enable the Secretary to carry out the program.”

(b) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under subchapter B of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838d et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract.

(2) CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM.—Funds made available under section 1241(a)(4) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841(a)(4)) (as amended by section 2601(a) of this title) may be used to administer and make payments to program participants that enrolled into contracts during any of fiscal years 2009 through 2013.

Subtitle C—Environmental Quality Incentives Program

SEC. 2201. PURPOSES.

Section 1240 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C) and, in such subparagraph, by inserting “and” after the semicolon; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

“(B) developing and improving wildlife habitat; and”;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(3) by striking paragraph (5).

SEC. 2202. DEFINITIONS.

Section 1240A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-1) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (2) and redesignating paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (2) through (5), respectively; and

(2) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated), by inserting “established under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.)” after “national organic program”.

SEC. 2203. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

Section 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-2) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “2014” and inserting “2018”;

(2) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(2) TERM.—A contract under the program shall have a term that does not exceed 10 years.”;

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking subparagraphs (A) through (G) and inserting the following:

“(A) soil health;

“(B) water quality and quantity improvement;

“(C) nutrient management;

“(D) pest management;

“(E) air quality improvement;

“(F) wildlife habitat development, including pollinator habitat; or

“(G) invasive species management.”; and

(B) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “, a veteran farmer or rancher (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)))” before “or a beginning farmer or rancher”; and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

“(B) ADVANCE PAYMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not more than 50 percent of the amount determined under subparagraph (A) may be provided in advance for the purpose of purchasing materials or contracting.

“(ii) RETURN OF FUNDS.—If funds provided in advance are not expended during the 90-day period beginning on the date of receipt of the funds, the funds shall be returned within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by the Secretary.”;

(4) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(f) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—

“(1) LIVESTOCK.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, at least 60 percent of the funds made available for payments under the program shall be targeted at practices relating to livestock production.

“(2) WILDLIFE HABITAT.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, at least 5 percent of the funds made available for payments under the program shall be targeted at practices benefitting wildlife habitat under subsection (g).”; and

(5) by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(g) WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide payments under the environmental quality incentives program for conservation practices that support the restoration, development, protection, and improvement of wildlife habitat on eligible land, including—

“(A) upland wildlife habitat;
“(B) wetland wildlife habitat;
“(C) habitat for threatened and endangered species;

“(D) fish habitat;
“(E) habitat on pivot corners and other irregular areas of a field; and
“(F) other types of wildlife habitat, as determined by the Secretary.

“(2) STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE.—In determining the practices eligible for payment under paragraph (1) and targeted for funding under subsection (f), the Secretary shall consult with the relevant State technical committee not less often than once each year.”.

SEC. 2204. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS.

Section 1240C(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-3(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “environmental” and inserting “conservation”; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “purpose of the environmental quality incentives program specified in section 1240(1)” and inserting “purposes of the program”.

SEC. 2205. DUTIES OF PRODUCERS.

Section 1240D(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-4(2)) is amended by striking “farm, ranch, or forest” and inserting “enrolled”.

SEC. 2206. LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS.

Section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-7) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 1240G. LIMITATION ON PAYMENTS.

“A person or legal entity may not receive, directly or indirectly, cost-share or incentive payments under this chapter that, in aggregate, exceed \$450,000 for all contracts entered into under this chapter by the person or legal entity during the period of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, regardless of the number of contracts entered into under this chapter by the person or legal entity.”.

SEC. 2207. CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS AND PAYMENTS.

Section 1240H of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-8) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—
(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(E) facilitate on-farm conservation research and demonstration activities; and
“(F) facilitate pilot testing of new technologies or innovative conservation practices.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—
(A) by striking “\$37,500,000” and inserting “\$25,000,000”; and

(B) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) REPORTING.—Not later than December 31, 2014, and every two years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives a report on the status of projects funded under this section, including—

“(1) funding awarded;

“(2) project results; and

“(3) incorporation of project findings, such as new technology and innovative approaches, into the conservation efforts implemented by the Secretary.”.

SEC. 2208. EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.

The amendments made by this subtitle shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under chapter 4 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract.

Subtitle D—Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

SEC. 2301. AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 is amended by adding at the end the following new subtitle:

“Subtitle H—Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

“SEC. 1265. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish an agricultural conservation easement program for the conservation of eligible land and natural resources through easements or other interests in land.

“(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the program are to—

“(1) combine the purposes and coordinate the functions of the wetlands reserve program established under section 1237, the grassland reserve program established under section 1238N, and the farmland protection program established under section 1238I, as such sections were in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014;

“(2) restore, protect, and enhance wetlands on eligible land;

“(3) protect the agricultural use and future viability, and related conservation values, of eligible land by limiting nonagricultural uses of that land; and

“(4) protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving eligible land.

“SEC. 1265A. DEFINITIONS.

“In this subtitle:

“(1) AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENT.—The term ‘agricultural land easement’ means an easement or other interest in eligible land that—

“(A) is conveyed for the purpose of protecting natural resources and the agricultural nature of the land; and

“(B) permits the landowner the right to continue agricultural production and related uses subject to an agricultural land easement plan, as approved by the Secretary.

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(A) an agency of State or local government or an Indian tribe (including a farmland protection board or land resource council established under State law); or

“(B) an organization that is—

“(i) organized for, and at all times since the formation of the organization has been operated principally for, 1 or more of the conservation purposes specified in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of section 170(h)(4)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

“(ii) an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of that Code that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code; or

“(iii) described in—

“(I) paragraph (1) or (2) of section 509(a) of that Code; or

“(II) section 509(a)(3) of that Code and is controlled by an organization described in section 509(a)(2) of that Code.

“(3) ELIGIBLE LAND.—The term ‘eligible land’ means private or tribal land that is—

“(A) in the case of an agricultural land easement, agricultural land, including land on a farm or ranch—

“(i) that is subject to a pending offer for purchase of an agricultural land easement from an eligible entity;

“(ii) (I) that has prime, unique, or other productive soil;

“(II) that contains historical or archaeological resources;

“(III) the enrollment of which would protect grazing uses and related conservation values by restoring and conserving land; or

“(IV) the protection of which will further a State or local policy consistent with the purposes of the program; and

“(iii) that is—

“(I) cropland;

“(II) rangeland;

“(III) grassland or land that contains forbs, or shrubland for which grazing is the predominant use;

“(IV) located in an area that has been historically dominated by grassland, forbs, or shrubs and could provide habitat for animal or plant populations of significant ecological value;

“(V) pastureland; or

“(VI) nonindustrial private forest land that contributes to the economic viability of an offered parcel or serves as a buffer to protect such land from development;

“(B) in the case of a wetland reserve easement, a wetland or related area, including—

“(i) farmed or converted wetlands, together with adjacent land that is functionally dependent on that land, if the Secretary determines it—

“(I) is likely to be successfully restored in a cost-effective manner; and

“(II) will maximize the wildlife benefits and wetland functions and values, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior at the local level;

“(ii) cropland or grassland that was used for agricultural production prior to flooding from the natural overflow of—

“(I) a closed basin lake and adjacent land that is functionally dependent upon it, if the State or other entity is willing to provide 50 percent share of the cost of an easement; or

“(II) a pothole and adjacent land that is functionally dependent on it;

“(iii) farmed wetlands and adjoining lands that—

“(I) are enrolled in the conservation reserve program;

“(II) have the highest wetland functions and values, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(III) are likely to return to production after they leave the conservation reserve program;

“(iv) riparian areas that link wetlands that are protected by easements or some other device that achieves the same purpose as an easement; or

“(v) other wetlands of an owner that would not otherwise be eligible, if the Secretary determines that the inclusion of such wetlands in a wetland reserve easement would significantly add to the functional value of the easement; or

“(C) in the case of either an agricultural land easement or a wetland reserve easement, other land that is incidental to land described in subparagraph (A) or (B), if the Secretary determines that it is necessary for

the efficient administration of an easement under the program.

“(4) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means the agricultural conservation easement program established by this subtitle.

“(5) WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENT.—The term ‘wetland reserve easement’ means a reserved interest in eligible land that—

“(A) is defined and delineated in a deed; and

“(B) stipulates—

“(i) the rights, title, and interests in land conveyed to the Secretary; and

“(ii) the rights, title, and interests in land that are reserved to the landowner.

“SEC. 1265B. AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENTS.

“(a) AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall facilitate and provide funding for—

“(1) the purchase by eligible entities of agricultural land easements in eligible land; and

“(2) technical assistance to provide for the conservation of natural resources pursuant to an agricultural land easement plan.

“(b) COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall protect the agricultural use, including grazing, and related conservation values of eligible land through cost-share assistance to eligible entities for purchasing agricultural land easements.

“(2) SCOPE OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE.—

“(A) FEDERAL SHARE.—An agreement described in paragraph (4) shall provide for a Federal share determined by the Secretary of an amount not to exceed 50 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement, as determined by the Secretary using—

“(i) the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice;

“(ii) an areawide market analysis or survey; or

“(iii) another industry-approved method.

“(B) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Under the agreement, the eligible entity shall provide a share that is at least equivalent to that provided by the Secretary.

“(ii) SOURCE OF CONTRIBUTION.—An eligible entity may include as part of its share under clause (i) a charitable donation or qualified conservation contribution (as defined by section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) from the private landowner if the eligible entity contributes its own cash resources in an amount that is at least 50 percent of the amount contributed by the Secretary.

“(C) EXCEPTION.—

“(i) GRASSLANDS.—In the case of grassland of special environmental significance, as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary may provide an amount not to exceed 75 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement.

“(ii) CASH CONTRIBUTION.—For purposes of subparagraph (B)(ii), the Secretary may waive any portion of the eligible entity cash contribution requirement for projects of special significance, subject to an increase in the private landowner donation that is equal to the amount of the waiver, if the donation is voluntary and the property is in active agricultural production.

“(3) EVALUATION AND RANKING OF APPLICATIONS.—

“(A) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall establish evaluation and ranking criteria to maximize the benefit of Federal investment under the program.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the criteria, the Secretary shall emphasize support for—

“(i) protecting agricultural uses and related conservation values of the land; and

“(ii) maximizing the protection of areas devoted to agricultural use.

“(C) BIDDING DOWN.—If the Secretary determines that 2 or more applications for cost-share assistance are comparable in achieving the purpose of the program, the Secretary shall not assign a higher priority to any of those applications solely on the basis of lesser cost to the program.

“(4) AGREEMENTS WITH ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into agreements with eligible entities to stipulate the terms and conditions under which the eligible entity is permitted to use cost-share assistance provided under this section.

“(B) LENGTH OF AGREEMENTS.—An agreement shall be for a term that is—

“(i) in the case of an eligible entity certified under the process described in paragraph (5), a minimum of five years; and

“(ii) for all other eligible entities, at least three, but not more than five years.

“(C) MINIMUM TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—An eligible entity shall be authorized to use its own terms and conditions for agricultural land easements so long as the Secretary determines such terms and conditions—

“(i) are consistent with the purposes of the program;

“(ii) permit effective enforcement of the conservation purposes of such easements;

“(iii) include a right of enforcement of the Secretary, that may be used only if the terms of the easement are not enforced by the holder of the easement;

“(iv) subject the land in which an interest is purchased to an agricultural land easement plan that—

“(I) describes the activities which promote the long-term viability of the land to meet the purposes for which the easement was acquired;

“(II) requires the management of grasslands according to a grasslands management plan; and

“(III) includes a conservation plan, where appropriate, and requires, at the option of the Secretary, the conversion of highly erodible cropland to less intensive uses; and

“(v) include a limit on the impervious surfaces to be allowed that is consistent with the agricultural activities to be conducted.

“(D) SUBSTITUTION OF QUALIFIED PROJECTS.—An agreement shall allow, upon mutual agreement of the parties, substitution of qualified projects that are identified at the time of the proposed substitution.

“(E) EFFECT OF VIOLATION.—If a violation occurs of a term or condition of an agreement under this subsection—

“(i) the Secretary may terminate the agreement; and

“(ii) the Secretary may require the eligible entity to refund all or part of any payments received by the entity under the program, with interest on the payments as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(5) CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

“(A) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—The Secretary shall establish a process under which the Secretary may—

“(i) directly certify eligible entities that meet established criteria;

“(ii) enter into long-term agreements with certified eligible entities; and

“(iii) accept proposals for cost-share assistance for the purchase of agricultural land easements throughout the duration of such agreements.

“(B) CERTIFICATION CRITERIA.—In order to be certified, an eligible entity shall dem-

onstrate to the Secretary that the entity will maintain, at a minimum, for the duration of the agreement—

“(i) a plan for administering easements that is consistent with the purpose of the program;

“(ii) the capacity and resources to monitor and enforce agricultural land easements; and

“(iii) policies and procedures to ensure—

“(I) the long-term integrity of agricultural land easements on eligible land;

“(II) timely completion of acquisitions of such easements; and

“(III) timely and complete evaluation and reporting to the Secretary on the use of funds provided under the program.

“(C) REVIEW AND REVISION.—

“(i) REVIEW.—The Secretary shall conduct a review of eligible entities certified under subparagraph (A) every three years to ensure that such entities are meeting the criteria established under subparagraph (B).

“(ii) REVOCATION.—If the Secretary finds that a certified eligible entity no longer meets the criteria established under subparagraph (B), the Secretary may—

“(I) allow the certified eligible entity a specified period of time, at a minimum 180 days, in which to take such actions as may be necessary to meet the criteria; and

“(II) revoke the certification of the eligible entity, if, after the specified period of time, the certified eligible entity does not meet such criteria.

“(c) METHOD OF ENROLLMENT.—The Secretary shall enroll eligible land under this section through the use of—

“(1) permanent easements; or

“(2) easements for the maximum duration allowed under applicable State laws.

“(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary may provide technical assistance, if requested, to assist in—

“(1) compliance with the terms and conditions of easements; and

“(2) implementation of an agricultural land easement plan.

“SEC. 1265C. WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENTS.

“(a) AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide assistance to owners of eligible land to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands through—

“(1) wetland reserve easements and related wetland reserve easement plans; and

“(2) technical assistance.

“(b) EASEMENTS.—

“(1) METHOD OF ENROLLMENT.—The Secretary shall enroll eligible land under this section through the use of—

“(A) 30-year easements;

“(B) permanent easements;

“(C) easements for the maximum duration allowed under applicable State laws; or

“(D) as an option for Indian tribes only, 30-year contracts.

“(2) LIMITATIONS.—

“(A) INELIGIBLE LAND.—The Secretary may not acquire easements on—

“(i) land established to trees under the conservation reserve program, except in cases where the Secretary determines it would further the purposes of this section; and

“(ii) farmed wetlands or converted wetlands where the conversion was not commenced prior to December 23, 1985.

“(B) CHANGES IN OWNERSHIP.—No wetland reserve easement shall be created on land that has changed ownership during the preceding 24-month period unless—

“(i) the new ownership was acquired by will or succession as a result of the death of the previous owner;

“(ii) (I) the ownership change occurred because of foreclosure on the land; and

“(II) immediately before the foreclosure, the owner of the land exercises a right of redemption from the mortgage holder in accordance with State law; or

“(iii) the Secretary determines that the land was acquired under circumstances that give adequate assurances that such land was not acquired for the purposes of placing it in the program.

“(3) EVALUATION AND RANKING OF OFFERS.—

“(A) CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall establish evaluation and ranking criteria for offers from landowners under this section to maximize the benefit of Federal investment under the program.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—When evaluating offers from landowners, the Secretary may consider—

“(i) the conservation benefits of obtaining a wetland reserve easement, including the potential environmental benefits if the land was removed from agricultural production;

“(ii) the cost effectiveness of each wetland reserve easement, so as to maximize the environmental benefits per dollar expended;

“(iii) whether the landowner or another person is offering to contribute financially to the cost of the wetland reserve easement to leverage Federal funds; and

“(iv) such other factors as the Secretary determines are necessary to carry out the purposes of the program.

“(C) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall give priority to acquiring wetland reserve easements based on the value of the wetland reserve easement for protecting and enhancing habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife.

“(4) AGREEMENT.—To be eligible to place eligible land into the program through a wetland reserve easement, the owner of such land shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary to—

“(A) grant an easement on such land to the Secretary;

“(B) authorize the implementation of a wetland reserve easement plan developed for the eligible land under subsection (f);

“(C) create and record an appropriate deed restriction in accordance with applicable State law to reflect the easement agreed to;

“(D) provide a written statement of consent to such easement signed by those holding a security interest in the land;

“(E) comply with the terms and conditions of the easement and any related agreements; and

“(F) permanently retire any existing base history for the land on which the easement has been obtained.

“(5) TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EASEMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A wetland reserve easement shall include terms and conditions that—

“(i) permit—

“(I) repairs, improvements, and inspections on the land that are necessary to maintain existing public drainage systems; and

“(II) owners to control public access on the easement areas while identifying access routes to be used for restoration activities and management and easement monitoring;

“(ii) prohibit—

“(I) the alteration of wildlife habitat and other natural features of such land, unless specifically authorized by the Secretary;

“(II) the spraying of such land with chemicals or the mowing of such land, except where such spraying or mowing is authorized by the Secretary or is necessary—

“(aa) to comply with Federal or State noxious weed control laws;

“(bb) to comply with a Federal or State emergency pest treatment program; or

“(cc) to meet habitat needs of specific wildlife species;

“(III) any activities to be carried out on the owner’s or successor’s land that is immediately adjacent to, and functionally related to, the land that is subject to the easement if such activities will alter, degrade, or otherwise diminish the functional value of the eligible land; and

“(IV) the adoption of any other practice that would tend to defeat the purposes of the program, as determined by the Secretary;

“(iii) provide for the efficient and effective establishment of wetland functions and values; and

“(iv) include such additional provisions as the Secretary determines are desirable to carry out the program or facilitate the practical administration thereof.

“(B) VIOLATION.—On the violation of a term or condition of a wetland reserve easement, the wetland reserve easement shall remain in force and the Secretary may require the owner to refund all or part of any payments received by the owner under the program, with interest on the payments as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(C) COMPATIBLE USES.—Land subject to a wetland reserve easement may be used for compatible economic uses, including such activities as hunting and fishing, managed timber harvest, or periodic haying or grazing, if such use is specifically permitted by the wetland reserve easement plan developed for the land under subsection (f) and is consistent with the long-term protection and enhancement of the wetland resources for which the easement was established.

“(D) RESERVATION OF GRAZING RIGHTS.—The Secretary may include in the terms and conditions of a wetland reserve easement a provision under which the owner reserves grazing rights if—

“(i) the Secretary determines that the reservation and use of the grazing rights—

“(I) is compatible with the land subject to the easement;

“(II) is consistent with the historical natural uses of the land and the long-term protection and enhancement goals for which the easement was established; and

“(III) complies with the wetland reserve easement plan developed for the land under subsection (f); and

“(ii) the agreement provides for a commensurate reduction in the easement payment to account for the grazing value, as determined by the Secretary.

“(6) COMPENSATION.—

“(A) DETERMINATION.—

“(i) PERMANENT EASEMENTS.—The Secretary shall pay as compensation for a permanent wetland reserve easement acquired under the program an amount necessary to encourage enrollment in the program, based on the lowest of—

“(I) the fair market value of the land, as determined by the Secretary, using the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice or an areawide market analysis or survey;

“(II) the amount corresponding to a geographical cap, as determined by the Secretary in regulations; or

“(III) the offer made by the landowner.

“(ii) OTHER.—Compensation for a 30-year contract or 30-year wetland reserve easement shall be not less than 50 percent, but not more than 75 percent, of the compensation that would be paid for a permanent wetland reserve easement.

“(B) FORM OF PAYMENT.—Compensation for a wetland reserve easement shall be provided by the Secretary in the form of a cash pay-

ment, in an amount determined under subparagraph (A).

“(C) PAYMENT SCHEDULE.—

“(i) EASEMENTS VALUED AT \$500,000 OR LESS.—For wetland reserve easements valued at \$500,000 or less, the Secretary may provide payments in not more than 10 annual payments.

“(ii) EASEMENTS VALUED AT MORE THAN \$500,000.—For wetland reserve easements valued at more than \$500,000, the Secretary may provide payments in at least 5, but not more than 10 annual payments, except that, if the Secretary determines it would further the purposes of the program, the Secretary may make a lump-sum payment for such an easement.

“(c) EASEMENT RESTORATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide financial assistance to owners of eligible land to carry out the establishment of conservation measures and practices and protect wetland functions and values, including necessary maintenance activities, as set forth in a wetland reserve easement plan developed for the eligible land under subsection (f).

“(2) PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall—

“(A) in the case of a permanent wetland reserve easement, pay an amount that is not less than 75 percent, but not more than 100 percent, of the eligible costs, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(B) in the case of a 30-year contract or 30-year wetland reserve easement, pay an amount that is not less than 50 percent, but not more than 75 percent, of the eligible costs, as determined by the Secretary.

“(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall assist owners in complying with the terms and conditions of a wetland reserve easement.

“(2) CONTRACTS OR AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into 1 or more contracts with private entities or agreements with a State, nongovernmental organization, or Indian tribe to carry out necessary restoration, enhancement, or maintenance of a wetland reserve easement if the Secretary determines that the contract or agreement will advance the purposes of the program.

“(e) WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT OPTION.—The Secretary may enter into 1 or more agreements with a State (including a political subdivision or agency of a State), nongovernmental organization, or Indian tribe to carry out a special wetland reserve enhancement option that the Secretary determines would advance the purposes of program.

“(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENT PLAN.—The Secretary shall develop a wetland reserve easement plan for any eligible land subject to a wetland reserve easement, which shall include practices and activities necessary to restore, protect, enhance, and maintain the enrolled land.

“(2) DELEGATION OF EASEMENT ADMINISTRATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may delegate any of the management, monitoring, and enforcement responsibilities of the Secretary under this section to other Federal or State agencies that have the appropriate authority, expertise, and resources necessary to carry out such delegated responsibilities, or to conservation organizations if the Secretary determines the organization has similar expertise and resources.

“(B) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not delegate any of the monitoring or enforcement responsibilities under this section to conservation organizations.

“(3) PAYMENTS.—

“(A) **TIMING OF PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary shall provide payment for obligations incurred by the Secretary under this section—

“(i) with respect to any easement restoration obligation under subsection (c), as soon as possible after the obligation is incurred; and

“(ii) with respect to any annual easement payment obligation incurred by the Secretary, as soon as possible after October 1 of each calendar year.

“(B) **PAYMENTS TO OTHERS.**—If an owner who is entitled to a payment under this section dies, becomes incompetent, is otherwise unable to receive such payment, or is succeeded by another person or entity who renders or completes the required performance, the Secretary shall make such payment, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary and without regard to any other provision of law, in such manner as the Secretary determines is fair and reasonable in light of all of the circumstances.

“(g) **APPLICATION.**—The relevant provisions of this section shall also apply to a 30-year contract.

“SEC. 1265D. ADMINISTRATION.

“(a) **INELIGIBLE LAND.**—The Secretary may not use program funds for the purposes of acquiring an easement on—

“(1) lands owned by an agency of the United States, other than land held in trust for Indian tribes;

“(2) lands owned in fee title by a State, including an agency or a subdivision of a State, or a unit of local government;

“(3) land subject to an easement or deed restriction which, as determined by the Secretary, provides similar protection as would be provided by enrollment in the program; or

“(4) lands where the purposes of the program would be undermined due to on-site or off-site conditions, such as risk of hazardous substances, proposed or existing rights of way, infrastructure development, or adjacent land uses.

“(b) **PRIORITY.**—In evaluating applications under the program, the Secretary may give priority to land that is currently enrolled in the conservation reserve program in a contract that is set to expire within 1 year and—

“(1) in the case of an agricultural land easement, is grassland that would benefit from protection under a long-term easement; and

“(2) in the case of a wetland reserve easement, is a wetland or related area with the highest wetland functions and value and is likely to return to production after the land leaves the conservation reserve program.

“(c) **SUBORDINATION, EXCHANGE, MODIFICATION, AND TERMINATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may subordinate, exchange, modify, or terminate any interest in land, or portion of such interest, administered by the Secretary, either directly or on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation under the program if the Secretary determines that—

“(A) it is in the Federal Government’s interest to subordinate, exchange, modify, or terminate the interest in land;

“(B) the subordination, exchange, modification, or termination action—

“(i) will address a compelling public need for which there is no practicable alternative; or

“(ii) such action will further the practical administration of the program; and

“(C) the subordination, exchange, modification, or termination action will result in comparable conservation value and equivalent or greater economic value to the United States.

“(2) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall work with the owner, and eligible entity if applicable, to address any subordination, exchange, modification, or termination of the interest, or portion of such interest, in land.

“(3) **NOTICE.**—At least 90 days before taking any termination action described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide written notice of such action to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

“(d) **LAND ENROLLED IN OTHER PROGRAMS.**—

“(1) **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM.**—The Secretary may terminate or modify a contract entered into under section 1231(a) if eligible land that is subject to such contract is transferred into the program.

“(2) **OTHER.**—In accordance with the provisions of subtitle H of title II of the Agricultural Act of 2014, land enrolled in the wetlands reserve program, grassland reserve program, or farmland protection program on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 shall be considered enrolled in the program.

“(e) **COMPLIANCE WITH CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary may not provide assistance under this subtitle to an eligible entity or owner of eligible land unless the eligible entity or owner agrees, during the crop year for which the assistance is provided—

“(1) to comply with applicable conservation requirements under subtitle B; and

“(2) to comply with applicable wetland protection requirements under subtitle C.”

(b) **CROSS REFERENCE; CALCULATION.**—Section 1244 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3844) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “and” at the end of subparagraph (A);

(ii) by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(iii) by striking subparagraph (C);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

“(2) the agricultural conservation easement program established under subtitle H; and”;

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “programs administered under subchapters B and C of chapter 1 of subtitle D” and inserting “conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D and wetland reserve easements under section 1265C”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “an easement acquired under subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D” and inserting “a wetland reserve easement under section 1265C”;

(B) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) **EXCLUSIONS.**—

“(A) **SHELTERBELTS AND WINDBREAKS.**—The limitations established under paragraph (1) shall not apply to cropland that is subject to an easement under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D that is used for the establishment of shelterbelts and windbreaks.

“(B) **WET AND SATURATED SOILS.**—For the purposes of enrolling land in a wetland reserve easement under section 1265C, the limitations established under paragraph (1) shall not apply to cropland designated by the Secretary with subclass w in the land capability classes IV through VIII because of severe use limitations due to soil saturation or inundation.”; and

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

“(5) **CALCULATION.**—In calculating the percentages described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall include any acreage that was included in calculations of percentages made under such paragraph, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, and that remains enrolled when the calculation is made after that date under paragraph (1).”

Subtitle E—Regional Conservation Partnership Program**SEC. 2401. REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.**

Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 is amended by inserting after subtitle H, as added by section 2301, the following new subtitle:

“Subtitle I—Regional Conservation Partnership Program**“SEC. 1271. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES.**

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary shall establish a regional conservation partnership program to implement eligible activities on eligible land through—

“(1) partnership agreements with eligible partners; and

“(2) contracts with producers.

“(b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of the program are as follows:

“(1) To use covered programs to accomplish purposes and functions similar to those of the following programs, as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014:

“(A) The agricultural water enhancement program established under section 1240I.

“(B) The Chesapeake Bay watershed program established under section 1240Q.

“(C) The cooperative conservation partnership initiative established under section 1243.

“(D) The Great Lakes basin program for soil erosion and sediment control established under section 1240P.

“(2) To further the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife, and related natural resources on eligible land on a regional or watershed scale.

“(3) To encourage eligible partners to cooperate with producers in—

“(A) meeting or avoiding the need for national, State, and local natural resource regulatory requirements related to production on eligible land; and

“(B) implementing projects that will result in the installation and maintenance of eligible activities that affect multiple agricultural or nonindustrial private forest operations on a local, regional, State, or multistate basis.

“SEC. 1271A. DEFINITIONS.

“In this subtitle:

“(1) **COVERED PROGRAM.**—The term ‘covered program’ means the following:

“(A) The agricultural conservation easement program.

“(B) The environmental quality incentives program.

“(C) The conservation stewardship program.

“(D) The healthy forests reserve program established under section 501 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6571).

“(2) **ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY.**—The term ‘eligible activity’ means a conservation activity for any of the following:

“(A) Water quality restoration or enhancement projects, including nutrient management and sediment reduction.

“(B) Water quantity conservation, restoration, or enhancement projects relating to

surface water and groundwater resources, including—

“(i) the conversion of irrigated cropland to the production of less water-intensive agricultural commodities or dryland farming; or
“(ii) irrigation system improvement and irrigation efficiency enhancement.

“(C) Drought mitigation.

“(D) Flood prevention.

“(E) Water retention.

“(F) Air quality improvement.

“(G) Habitat conservation, restoration, and enhancement.

“(H) Erosion control and sediment reduction.

“(I) Forest restoration.

“(J) Other related activities that the Secretary determines will help achieve conservation benefits.

“(3) ELIGIBLE LAND.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible land’ means—

“(i) land on which agricultural commodities, livestock, or forest-related products are produced; and

“(ii) lands associated with the lands described in clause (i).

“(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible land’ includes—

“(i) cropland;

“(ii) grassland;

“(iii) rangeland;

“(iv) pastureland;

“(v) nonindustrial private forest land; and

“(vi) other land incidental to agricultural production (including wetlands and riparian buffers) on which significant natural resource issues could be addressed under the program.

“(4) ELIGIBLE PARTNER.—The term ‘eligible partner’ means any of the following:

“(A) An agricultural or silvicultural producer association or other group of producers.

“(B) A State or unit of local government.

“(C) An Indian tribe.

“(D) A farmer cooperative.

“(E) A water district, irrigation district, rural water district or association, or other organization with specific water delivery authority to producers on agricultural land.

“(F) A municipal water or wastewater treatment entity.

“(G) An institution of higher education.

“(H) An organization or entity with an established history of working cooperatively with producers on agricultural land, as determined by the Secretary, to address—

“(i) local conservation priorities related to agricultural production, wildlife habitat development, or nonindustrial private forest land management; or

“(ii) critical watershed-scale soil erosion, water quality, sediment reduction, or other natural resource issues.

“(5) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT.—The term ‘partnership agreement’ means an agreement entered into under section 1271B between the Secretary and an eligible partner.

“(6) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means the regional conservation partnership program established by this subtitle.

“SEC. 1271B. REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS.

“(a) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may enter into a partnership agreement with an eligible partner to implement a project that will assist producers with installing and maintaining an eligible activity on eligible land.

“(b) LENGTH.—A partnership agreement shall be for a period not to exceed 5 years, except that the Secretary may extend the agreement one time for up to 12 months

when an extension is necessary to meet the objectives of the program.

“(c) DUTIES OF PARTNERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Under a partnership agreement, the eligible partner shall—

“(A) define the scope of a project, including—

“(i) the eligible activities to be implemented;

“(ii) the potential agricultural or non-industrial private forest land operations affected;

“(iii) the local, State, multistate, or other geographic area covered; and

“(iv) the planning, outreach, implementation, and assessment to be conducted;

“(B) conduct outreach and education to producers for potential participation in the project;

“(C) at the request of a producer, act on behalf of a producer participating in the project in applying for assistance under section 1271C;

“(D) leverage financial or technical assistance provided by the Secretary with additional funds to help achieve the project objectives;

“(E) conduct an assessment of the project’s effects; and

“(F) at the conclusion of the project, report to the Secretary on its results and funds leveraged.

“(2) CONTRIBUTION.—An eligible partner shall provide a significant portion of the overall costs of the scope of the project that is the subject of the agreement entered into under subsection (a), as determined by the Secretary.

“(d) APPLICATIONS.—

“(1) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—The Secretary shall conduct a competitive process to select applications for partnership agreements and may assess and rank applications with similar conservation purposes as a group.

“(2) CRITERIA USED.—In carrying out the process described in paragraph (1), the Secretary shall make public the criteria used in evaluating applications.

“(3) CONTENT.—An application to the Secretary shall include a description of—

“(A) the scope of the project, as described in subsection (c)(1)(A);

“(B) the plan for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on progress made toward achieving the project’s objectives;

“(C) the program resources requested for the project, including the covered programs to be used and estimated funding needed from the Secretary;

“(D) each eligible partner collaborating to achieve project objectives, including their roles, responsibilities, capabilities, and financial contribution; and

“(E) any other elements the Secretary considers necessary to adequately evaluate and competitively select applications for funding under the program.

“(4) PRIORITY TO CERTAIN APPLICATIONS.—The Secretary may give a higher priority to applications that—

“(A) assist producers in meeting or avoiding the need for a natural resource regulatory requirement;

“(B) have a high percentage of producers in the area to be covered by the agreement;

“(C) significantly leverage non-Federal financial and technical resources and coordinate with other local, State, or national efforts;

“(D) deliver high percentages of applied conservation to address conservation priorities or regional, State, or national conservation initiatives;

“(E) provide innovation in conservation methods and delivery, including outcome-based performance measures and methods; or

“(F) meet other factors that are important for achieving the purposes of the program, as determined by the Secretary.

“SEC. 1271C. ASSISTANCE TO PRODUCERS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into contracts with producers to provide financial and technical assistance to—

“(1) producers participating in a project with an eligible partner; or

“(2) producers that fit within the scope of a project described in section 1271B or a critical conservation area designated under section 1271F, but who are seeking to implement an eligible activity on eligible land independent of an eligible partner.

“(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

“(1) CONSISTENCY WITH PROGRAM RULES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B) and paragraph (2), the Secretary shall ensure that the terms and conditions of a contract under this section are consistent with the applicable rules of the covered programs to be used as part of the partnership agreement, as described in the application under section 1271B(d)(3)(C).

“(B) ADJUSTMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may adjust the rules of a covered program, including—

“(I) operational guidance and requirements for a covered program at the discretion of the Secretary so as to provide a simplified application and evaluation process; and

“(II) nonstatutory, regulatory rules or provisions to better reflect unique local circumstances and purposes if the Secretary determines such adjustments are necessary to achieve the purposes of the covered program.

“(ii) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not adjust the application of statutory requirements for a covered program, including requirements governing appeals, payment limits, and conservation compliance.

“(iii) IRRIGATION.—In States where irrigation has not been used significantly for agricultural purposes, as determined by the Secretary, the Secretary shall not limit eligibility under section 1271B or this section on the basis of prior irrigation history.

“(2) ALTERNATIVE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For the purposes of providing assistance for land described in subsection (a) and section 1271F, the Secretary may enter into alternative funding arrangements with a multistate water resource agency or authority if—

“(i) the Secretary determines that the goals and objectives of the program will be met by the alternative funding arrangements;

“(ii) the agency or authority certifies that the limitations established under this section on agreements with individual producers will not be exceeded; and

“(iii) all participating producers meet applicable payment eligibility provisions.

“(B) CONDITIONS.—As a condition of receiving funding under subparagraph (A), the multistate water resource agency or authority shall agree—

“(i) to submit an annual independent audit to the Secretary that describes the use of funds under this paragraph;

“(ii) to provide any data necessary for the Secretary to issue a report on the use of funds under this paragraph; and

“(iii) not to use any of the funds provided pursuant to subparagraph (A) for administration or to provide for administrative costs through contracts with another entity.

“(C) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may enter into not more than 20 alternative funding arrangements under this paragraph.

“(c) PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with statutory requirements of the covered programs involved, the Secretary may make payments to a producer in an amount determined by the Secretary to be necessary to achieve the purposes of the program.

“(2) PAYMENTS TO CERTAIN PRODUCERS.—The Secretary may provide payments for a period of 5 years—

“(A) to producers participating in a project that addresses water quantity concerns and in an amount sufficient to encourage conversion from irrigated to dryland farming; and

“(B) to producers participating in a project that addresses water quality concerns and in an amount sufficient to encourage adoption of conservation practices and systems that improve nutrient management.

“(3) WAIVER AUTHORITY.—To assist in the implementation of the program, the Secretary may waive the applicability of the limitation in section 1001D(b)(2) of this Act for participating producers if the Secretary determines that the waiver is necessary to fulfill the objectives of the program.

“SEC. 1271D. FUNDING.

“(a) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall use \$100,000,000 of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to carry out the program.

“(b) DURATION OF AVAILABILITY.—Funds made available under subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

“(c) ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND ACRES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the funds made available under subsection (a), the Secretary shall reserve 7 percent of the funds and acres made available for a covered program for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 in order to ensure additional resources are available to carry out this program.

“(2) UNUSED FUNDS AND ACRES.—Any funds or acres reserved under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year from a covered program that are not committed under this program by April 1 of that fiscal year shall be returned for use under the covered program.

“(d) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—Of the funds and acres made available for the program under subsection (a) and reserved for the program under subsection (c), the Secretary shall allocate—

“(1) 25 percent of the funds and acres to projects based on a State competitive process administered by the State Conservationist, with the advice of the State technical committee established under subtitle G;

“(2) 40 percent of the funds and acres to projects based on a national competitive process to be established by the Secretary; and

“(3) 35 percent of the funds and acres to projects for critical conservation areas designated under section 1271F.

“(e) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—None of the funds made available or reserved for the program may be used to pay for the administrative expenses of eligible partners.

“SEC. 1271E. ADMINISTRATION.

“(a) DISCLOSURE.—In addition to the criteria used in evaluating applications as described in section 1271B(d)(2), the Secretary shall make publicly available information on projects selected through the competitive process described in section 1271B(d)(1).

“(b) REPORTING.—Not later than December 31, 2014, and every two years thereafter, the

Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the status of projects funded under the program, including—

“(1) the number and types of eligible partners and producers participating in the partnership agreements selected;

“(2) the number of producers receiving assistance;

“(3) total funding committed to projects, including from Federal and non-Federal resources; and

“(4) a description of how the funds under section 1271C(b)(2) are being administered, including—

“(A) any oversight mechanisms that the Secretary has implemented;

“(B) the process through which the Secretary is resolving appeals by program participants; and

“(C) the means by which the Secretary is tracking adherence to any applicable provisions for payment eligibility.

“SEC. 1271F. CRITICAL CONSERVATION AREAS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In administering funds under section 1271D(d)(3), the Secretary shall select applications for partnership agreements and producer contracts within critical conservation areas designated under this section.

“(b) CRITICAL CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATIONS.—

“(1) PRIORITY.—In designating critical conservation areas under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to geographical areas based on the degree to which the geographical area—

“(A) includes multiple States with significant agricultural production;

“(B) is covered by an existing regional, State, binational, or multistate agreement or plan that has established objectives, goals, and work plans and is adopted by a Federal, State, or regional authority;

“(C) would benefit from water quality improvement, including through reducing erosion, promoting sediment control, and addressing nutrient management activities affecting large bodies of water of regional, national, or international significance;

“(D) would benefit from water quantity improvement, including improvement relating to—

“(i) groundwater, surface water, aquifer, or other water sources; or

“(ii) a need to promote water retention and flood prevention; or

“(E) contains producers that need assistance in meeting or avoiding the need for a natural resource regulatory requirement that could have a negative impact on the economic scope of the agricultural operations within the area.

“(2) EXPIRATION.—Critical conservation area designations under this section shall expire after 5 years, subject to redesignation, except that the Secretary may withdraw designation from an area if the Secretary finds the area no longer meets the conditions described in paragraph (1).

“(3) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not designate more than 8 geographical areas as critical conservation areas under this section.

“(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall administer any partnership agreement or producer contract under this section in a manner that is consistent with the terms of the program.

“(2) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ACTIVITY.—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent

practicable, ensure that eligible activities carried out in critical conservation areas designated under this section complement and are consistent with other Federal and State programs and water quality and quantity strategies.

“(3) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—For a critical conservation area described in subsection (b)(1)(D), the Secretary may use authorities under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), other than section 14 of such Act (16 U.S.C. 1012), to carry out projects for the purposes of this section.”

Subtitle F—Other Conservation Programs

SEC. 2501. CONSERVATION OF PRIVATE GRAZING LAND.

Section 1240M(e) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb(e)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 2502. GRASSROOTS SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM.

Section 1240O(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-2(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) FUNDING.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2018.

“(2) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—In addition to funds made available under paragraph (1), of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use \$5,000,000, to remain available until expended.”

SEC. 2503. VOLUNTARY PUBLIC ACCESS AND HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

(a) FUNDING.—Section 1240R(f)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-5(f)(1)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking “FISCAL YEARS 2009 THROUGH 2012” and inserting “MANDATORY FUNDING”; and

(2) by inserting “and \$40,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2014 through 2018” before the period at the end.

(b) REPORT ON PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report evaluating the effectiveness of the voluntary public access and habitat incentive program established by section 1240R of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-5), including—

(1) identifying cooperating agencies;

(2) identifying the number of land holdings and total acres enrolled by State;

(3) evaluating the extent of improved access on eligible land, improved wildlife habitat, and related economic benefits; and

(4) any other relevant information and data relating to the program that would be helpful to such Committees.

SEC. 2504. AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION EXPERIENCED SERVICES PROGRAM.

Subsection (c)(2) of section 1252 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3851) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) EXCLUSION.—Funds made available to carry out the conservation reserve program may not be used to carry out the ACES program.”

SEC. 2505. SMALL WATERSHED REHABILITATION PROGRAM.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Section 14(h)(1) of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1012(h)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (E), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in subparagraph (F), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon;

(3) in subparagraph (G), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(H) \$250,000,000 for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended.”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 14(h)(2)(E) of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1012(h)(2)(E)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 2506. EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION PROGRAM.

Section 403 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2203) is amended—

(1) by striking “Sec. 403. The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“SEC. 403. EMERGENCY MEASURES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) FLOODPLAIN EASEMENTS.—

“(1) MODIFICATION AND TERMINATION.—The Secretary may modify or terminate a floodplain easement administered by the Secretary under this section if—

“(A) the current owner agrees to the modification or termination; and

“(B) the Secretary determines that the modification or termination—

“(i) will address a compelling public need for which there is no practicable alternative; and

“(ii) is in the public interest.

“(2) CONSIDERATION.—

“(A) TERMINATION.—As consideration for termination of an easement and associated agreements under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall enter into compensatory arrangements as determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

“(B) MODIFICATION.—In the case of a modification under paragraph (1)—

“(i) as a condition of the modification, the current owner shall enter into a compensatory arrangement (as determined to be appropriate by the Secretary) to incur the costs of modification; and

“(ii) the Secretary shall ensure that—

“(I) the modification will not adversely affect the floodplain functions and values for which the easement was acquired;

“(II) any adverse impacts will be mitigated by enrollment and restoration of other land that provides greater floodplain functions and values at no additional cost to the Federal Government; and

“(III) the modification will result in equal or greater environmental and economic values to the United States.”.

SEC. 2507. TERMINAL LAKES.

Section 2507 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (43 U.S.C. 2211 note; Public Law 107-171) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 2507. TERMINAL LAKES ASSISTANCE.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ELIGIBLE LAND.—The term ‘eligible land’ means privately owned agricultural land (including land in which a State has a property interest as a result of State water law)—

“(A) that a landowner voluntarily agrees to sell to a State; and

“(B) which—

“(i)(I) is ineligible for enrollment as a wetland reserve easement established under the agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H of the Food Security Act of 1985;

“(II) is flooded to—

“(aa) an average depth of at least 6.5 feet; or

“(bb) a level below which the State determines the management of the water level is beyond the control of the State or landowner; or

“(III) is inaccessible for agricultural use due to the flooding of adjoining property (such as islands of agricultural land created by flooding);

“(ii) is located within a watershed with water rights available for lease or purchase; and

“(iii) has been used during at least 5 of the immediately preceding 30 years—

“(I) to produce crops or hay; or

“(II) as livestock pasture or grazing.

“(2) PROGRAM.—The term ‘program’ means the voluntary land purchase program established under this section.

“(3) TERMINAL LAKE.—The term ‘terminal lake’ means a lake and its associated riparian and watershed resources that is—

“(A) considered flooded because there is no natural outlet for water accumulating in the lake or the associated riparian area such that the watershed and surrounding land is consistently flooded; or

“(B) considered terminal because it has no natural outlet and is at risk due to a history of consistent Federal assistance to address critical resource conditions, including insufficient water available to meet the needs of the lake, general uses, and water rights.

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall—

“(1) provide grants under subsection (c) for the purchase of eligible land impacted by a terminal lake described in subsection (a)(3)(A); and

“(2) provide funds to the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to subsection (e)(2) with assistance in accordance with subsection (d) for terminal lakes described in subsection (a)(3)(B).

“(c) LAND PURCHASE GRANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Using funds provided under subsection (e)(1), the Secretary shall make available land purchase grants to States for the purchase of eligible land in accordance with this subsection.

“(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—

“(A) AMOUNT.—A land purchase grant shall be in an amount not to exceed the lesser of—

“(i) 50 percent of the total purchase price per acre of the eligible land; or

“(ii)(I) in the case of eligible land that was used to produce crops or hay, \$400 per acre; and

“(II) in the case of eligible land that was pasture or grazing land, \$200 per acre.

“(B) DETERMINATION OF PURCHASE PRICE.—A State purchasing eligible land with a land purchase grant shall ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, that the purchase price of such land reflects the value, if any, of other encumbrances on the eligible land to be purchased, including easements and mineral rights.

“(C) COST-SHARE REQUIRED.—To be eligible to receive a land purchase grant, a State shall provide matching non-Federal funds in an amount equal to 50 percent of the amount described in subparagraph (A), including additional non-Federal funds.

“(D) CONDITIONS.—To receive a land purchase grant, a State shall agree—

“(i) to ensure that any eligible land purchased is—

“(I) conveyed in fee simple to the State; and

“(II) free from mortgages or other liens at the time title is transferred;

“(ii) to maintain ownership of the eligible land in perpetuity;

“(iii) to pay (from funds other than grant dollars awarded) any costs associated with

the purchase of eligible land under this section, including surveys and legal fees; and

“(iv) to keep eligible land in a conserving use, as defined by the Secretary.

“(E) LOSS OF FEDERAL BENEFITS.—Eligible land purchased with a grant under this section shall lose eligibility for any benefits under other Federal programs, including—

“(i) benefits under title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.);

“(ii) benefits under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.); and

“(iii) covered benefits described in section 1001D(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308-3a).

“(F) PROHIBITION.—Any Federal rights or benefits associated with eligible land prior to purchase by a State may not be transferred to any other land or person in anticipation of or as a result of such purchase.

“(d) WATER ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation, may use the funds described in subsection (e)(2) to administer and provide financial assistance to carry out this subsection to provide water and assistance to a terminal lake described in subsection (a)(3)(B) through willing sellers or willing participants only—

“(A) to lease water;

“(B) to purchase land, water appurtenant to the land, and related interests; and

“(C) to carry out research, support, and conservation activities for associated fish, wildlife, plant, and habitat resources.

“(2) EXCLUSIONS.—The Secretary of the Interior may not use this subsection to deliver assistance to the Great Salt Lake in Utah, lakes that are considered dry lakes, or other lakes that do not meet the purposes of this section, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior.

“(3) TRANSITIONAL PROVISION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, any funds made available before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 under a provision of law described in subparagraph (B) shall remain available using the provisions of law (including regulations) in effect on the day before the date of enactment of that Act.

“(B) DESCRIBED LAWS.—The provisions of law described in this section are—

“(i) section 2507 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (43 U.S.C. 2211 note; Public Law 107-171) (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014);

“(ii) section 207 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2003 (Public Law 108-7; 117 Stat. 146);

“(iii) section 208 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006 (Public Law 109-103; 119 Stat. 2268, 123 Stat. 2856); and

“(iv) section 208 of the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-85; 123 Stat. 2858, 123 Stat. 2967, 125 Stat. 867).

“(e) FUNDING.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out subsection (c) \$25,000,000, to remain available until expended.

“(2) COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall transfer to the ‘Bureau of Reclamation—Water and Related Resources’ account \$150,000,000 from the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out subsection (d), to remain available until expended.”.

SEC. 2508. SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES CONSERVATION.

(a) CONGRESSIONAL POLICY AND DECLARATION OF PURPOSE.—Section 4 of the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 (16 U.S.C. 2003) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by inserting “and tribal” after “State” each place it appears; and

(2) in subsection (c)(2), by inserting “, tribal,” after “State”.

(b) CONTINUING APPRAISAL OF SOIL, WATER, AND RELATED RESOURCES.—Section 5 of the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 (16 U.S.C. 2004) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(4), by striking “and State” and inserting “, State, and tribal”;

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting “, tribal” after “State” each place it appears; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “State soil” and inserting “State and tribal soil”; and

(B) by striking “local” and inserting “local, tribal,”.

(c) SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM.—Section 6(a) of the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 (16 U.S.C. 2005(a)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “, tribal,” after “State” the first place it appears;

(2) by inserting “, tribal” after “State” each other place it appears; and

(3) by inserting “, tribal,” after “private”.

(d) UTILIZATION OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION AND DATA.—Section 9 of the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 (16 U.S.C. 2008) is amended by inserting “, tribal” after “State”.

Subtitle G—Funding and Administration

SEC. 2601. FUNDING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) ANNUAL FUNDING.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, the Secretary shall use the funds, facilities, and authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the following programs under this title (including the provision of technical assistance):

“(1) The conservation reserve program under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D, including, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(A) \$10,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to provide payments under section 1234(c); and

“(B) \$33,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to carry out section 1235(f) to facilitate the transfer of land subject to contracts from retired or retiring owners and operators to beginning farmers or ranchers and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

“(2) The agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H using to the maximum extent practicable—

“(A) \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2014;

“(B) \$425,000,000 for fiscal year 2015;

“(C) \$450,000,000 for fiscal year 2016;

“(D) \$500,000,000 for fiscal year 2017; and

“(E) \$250,000,000 for fiscal year 2018.

“(3) The conservation security program under subchapter A of chapter 2 of subtitle

D, using such sums as are necessary to administer contracts entered into before September 30, 2008.

“(4) The conservation stewardship program under subchapter B of chapter 2 of subtitle D.

“(5) The environmental quality incentives program under chapter 4 of subtitle D, using, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(A) \$1,350,000,000 for fiscal year 2014;

“(B) \$1,600,000,000 for fiscal year 2015;

“(C) \$1,650,000,000 for fiscal year 2016;

“(D) \$1,650,000,000 for fiscal year 2017; and

“(E) \$1,750,000,000 for fiscal year 2018.”.

(b) GUARANTEED AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b) through (h) as subsections (c) through (i), respectively;

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

“(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Amounts made available by subsection (a) for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 shall be used by the Secretary to carry out the programs specified in such subsection and shall remain available until expended.”; and

(3) in subsection (d) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking “subsection (b)” and inserting “subsection (c)”.

SEC. 2602. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) is amended by striking subsection (c) (as redesignated by section 2601(b)(1)) and inserting the following:

“(c) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY.—Commodity Credit Corporation funds made available for a fiscal year for each of the programs specified in subsection (a)—

“(A) shall be available for the provision of technical assistance for the programs for which funds are made available as necessary to implement the programs effectively;

“(B) except for technical assistance for the conservation reserve program under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D, shall be apportioned for the provision of technical assistance in the amount determined by the Secretary, at the sole discretion of the Secretary; and

“(C) shall not be available for the provision of technical assistance for conservation programs specified in subsection (a) other than the program for which the funds were made available.

“(2) PRIORITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the delivery of technical assistance under the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S.C. 590a et seq.), the Secretary shall give priority to producers who request technical assistance from the Secretary in order to comply for the first time with the requirements of subtitle B and subtitle C of this title as a result of the amendments made by section 2611 of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

“(B) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report regarding the extent to which the conservation compliance requirements contained in the amendments made by section 2611 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 apply to and impact specialty crop growers, including national analysis and surveys to determine the extent of specialty crop acreage that includes highly erodible land and wetlands.

“(3) REPORT.—Not later than December 31, 2014, the Secretary shall submit (and update

as necessary in subsequent years) to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report—

“(A) detailing the amount of technical assistance funds requested and apportioned in each program specified in subsection (a) during the preceding fiscal year; and

“(B) any other data relating to this provision that would be helpful to such Committees.

“(4) COMPLIANCE REPORT.—Not later than November 1 of each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that includes—

“(A) a description of the extent to which the requests for highly erodible land conservation and wetland compliance determinations are being addressed in a timely manner;

“(B) the total number of requests completed in the previous fiscal year;

“(C) the incomplete determinations on record; and

“(D) the number of requests that are still outstanding more than 1 year since the date on which the requests were received from the producer.”.

SEC. 2603. REGIONAL EQUITY.

Section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) is amended by striking subsection (e) (as redesignated by section 2601(b)(1)) and inserting the following:

“(e) REGIONAL EQUITY.—

“(1) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—When determining funding allocations each fiscal year, the Secretary shall, after considering available funding and program demand in each State, provide a distribution of funds for conservation programs under subtitle D (excluding the conservation reserve program under subchapter B of chapter 1, subtitle H, and subtitle I to ensure equitable program participation proportional to historical funding allocations and usage by all States.

“(2) MINIMUM PERCENTAGE.—In determining the specific funding allocations under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

“(A) ensure that during the first quarter of each fiscal year each State has the opportunity to establish that the State can use an aggregate allocation amount of at least 0.6 percent of the funds made available for those conservation programs; and

“(B) for each State that can so establish, provide an aggregate amount of at least 0.6 percent of the funds made available for those conservation programs.”.

SEC. 2604. RESERVATION OF FUNDS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN FARMERS OR RANCHERS FOR CONSERVATION ACCESS.

Subsection (h) of section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) (as redesignated by section 2601(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

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

“(4) PREFERENCE.—In providing assistance under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give preference to a veteran farmer or rancher (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e))) that qualifies under subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1).”.

SEC. 2605. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS AND ASSISTANCE.

Subsection (i) of section 1241 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841) (as redesignated by section 2601(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “wetlands reserve program” and inserting “agricultural conservation easement program”;

(2) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) as paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), respectively;

(3) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by striking “agricultural water enhancement program” and inserting “regional conservation partnership program”; and

(B) by striking “1240I(g)” and inserting “1271C(c)(3)”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) Payments made under the conservation stewardship program.

“(6) Exceptions provided by the Secretary under section 1265B(b)(2)(C).”

SEC. 2606. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO ALL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.

Section 1244 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3844) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) Veteran farmers or ranchers (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)))”;

(2) in subsection (d), by inserting “, H, and I” before the period at the end;

(3) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “country” and inserting “county”; and

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “subsection (c)(2)(B) or (f)(4)” and inserting “subsection (d)(2)(A)(ii) or (g)(2)”;

(4) in subsection (h)(2), by inserting “, including, to the extent practicable, practices that maximize benefits for honey bees” after “pollinators”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(j) IMPROVED ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS.—In administering a conservation program under this title, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(1) seek to reduce administrative burdens and costs to producers by streamlining conservation planning and program resources; and

“(2) take advantage of new technologies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

“(k) RELATION TO OTHER PAYMENTS.—Any payment received by an owner or operator under this title, including an easement payment or rental payment, shall be in addition to, and not affect, the total amount of payments that the owner or operator is otherwise eligible to receive under any of the following:

“(1) This Act.

“(2) The Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1421 et seq.).

“(3) The Agricultural Act of 2014.

“(4) Any law that succeeds a law specified in paragraph (1), (2), or (3).

“(l) FUNDING FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—In carrying out the conservation stewardship program under subchapter B of chapter 2 of subtitle D and the environmental quality incentives program under chapter 4 of subtitle D, the Secretary may enter into alternative funding arrangements with Indian tribes if the Secretary determines that the goals and objectives of the programs will be met by such arrangements, and that statutory limitations regarding contracts with individual producers will not be exceeded by any tribal member.”

SEC. 2607. STANDARDS FOR STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES.

Section 1261(b) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3861(b)) is amended by striking

“Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, the Secretary shall develop” and inserting “The Secretary shall review and update as necessary”.

SEC. 2608. RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.

Subtitle E of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 1246. REGULATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to implement programs under this title, including such regulations as the Secretary determines to be necessary to ensure a fair and reasonable application of the limitations established under section 1244(f).

“(b) RULEMAKING PROCEDURE.—The promulgation of regulations and administration of programs under this title—

“(1) shall be carried out without regard to chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the Paperwork Reduction Act); and

“(2) shall be made as an interim rule effective on publication with an opportunity for notice and comment.

“(c) CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULEMAKING.—In promulgating regulations under this section, the Secretary shall use the authority provided under section 808 of title 5, United States Code.”

SEC. 2609. WETLANDS MITIGATION.

Section 1222(k) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3822(k)) is amended to read as follows:

“(k) MITIGATION BANKING.—

“(1) MITIGATION BANKING PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Using authorities available to the Secretary, the Secretary shall operate a program or work with third parties to establish mitigation banks to assist persons in complying with the provisions of this section while mitigating any loss of wetland values and functions.

“(B) FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended, to carry out this paragraph.

“(2) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (f)(2)(C) shall not apply to this subsection.

“(3) POLICY AND CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall develop the appropriate policy and criteria that will allow willing persons to access existing mitigation banks, under this section or any other authority, that will serve the purposes of this section without requiring the Secretary to hold an easement, in whole or in part, in a mitigation bank.”

SEC. 2610. LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN CONSERVATION REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report containing the results of a review and analysis of each of the activities (including those administered by the Secretary) that pertain to the conservation of the lesser prairie-chicken, including the conservation reserve program, the environmental quality incentives program, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative, the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for Oil and Gas, and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Lesser Prairie-Chicken Range-Wide Conservation Plan.

(b) CONTENTS.—The Secretary shall include in the report required by this section, at a minimum—

(1) with respect to each activity described in subsection (a) as it relates to the conservation of the lesser prairie-chicken, findings regarding—

(A) the cost of the activity to the Federal Government, impacted State governments, and the private sector;

(B) the conservation effectiveness of the activity; and

(C) the cost effectiveness of the activity; and

(2) a ranking of the activities described in subsection (a) based on their relative cost effectiveness.

SEC. 2611. HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AND WETLAND CONSERVATION FOR CROP INSURANCE.

(a) HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND PROGRAM INELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1211(a)(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811(a)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by adding “or” at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) any portion of the premium paid by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.), on the condition that if a person is determined to have committed a violation under this subsection during a crop year, ineligibility under this subparagraph shall—

“(i) only apply to reinsurance years subsequent to the date of final determination of a violation, including all administrative appeals; and

“(ii) not apply to the existing reinsurance year or any reinsurance year prior to the date of final determination.”

(2) EXEMPTIONS.—Section 1212(a)(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3812(a)(2)) is amended—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking “(2) If,” and inserting the following:

“(2) ELIGIBILITY BASED ON COMPLIANCE WITH CONSERVATION PLAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If,”;

(B) in the second sentence, by striking “In carrying” and inserting the following:

“(B) MINIMIZATION OF DOCUMENTATION.—In carrying”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) CROP INSURANCE.—

“(i) OPERATIONS NEW TO COMPLIANCE.—Notwithstanding section 1211(a), in the case of a person that is subject to section 1211 for the first time solely due to the amendment made by section 2611(a) of the Agricultural Act of 2014, any person who produces an agricultural commodity on the land that is the basis of the payments described in section 1211(a)(1)(E) shall have 5 reinsurance years after the date on which such payments become subject to section 1211 to develop and comply with an approved conservation plan so as to maintain eligibility for such payments.

“(ii) EXISTING OPERATIONS WITH PRIOR VIOLATIONS.—Notwithstanding section 1211(a), in the case of a person that the Secretary determines would have been in violation of section 1211(a) if the person had continued participation in the programs requiring compliance at any time after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 and is currently in violation of section 1211(a), the person shall have 2 reinsurance years after the date on which the payments described in section 1211(a)(1)(E) become subject to section 1211 to develop and comply with an approved

conservation plan, as determined by the Secretary, so as to maintain eligibility for such payments.

“(iii) APPLICABLE REINSURANCE YEAR.—Ineligibility for the payment described in section 1211(a)(1)(E) for a violation under this subparagraph during a crop year shall—

“(I) only apply to reinsurance years subsequent to the date of a final determination of a violation, including all administrative appeals; and

“(II) not apply to the existing reinsurance year or any reinsurance year prior to the date of the final determination.”

(3) CROP INSURANCE PREMIUM ASSISTANCE.—Section 1213(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3812a(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) CROP INSURANCE PREMIUM ASSISTANCE.—For the purpose of determining the eligibility of a person for the payment described in section 1211(a)(1)(E), the Secretary shall apply the procedures described in section 1221(c)(3)(E) and coordinate the certification process so as to avoid duplication or unnecessary paperwork.”

(b) WETLAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM INELIGIBILITY.—Section 1221 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3821) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), and (e) as subsections (d), (e), and (f), respectively; and

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

“(c) INELIGIBILITY FOR CROP INSURANCE PREMIUM ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If a person is determined to have committed a violation under subsection (a) or (d) during a crop year, the person shall be ineligible to receive any payment of any portion of premium paid by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for a plan or policy of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) pursuant to this subsection.

“(B) APPLICABILITY.—Ineligibility under this subsection shall—

“(i) only apply to reinsurance years subsequent to the date of a final determination of a violation, including all administrative appeals; and

“(ii) not apply to the existing reinsurance year or any reinsurance year prior to the date of the final determination.

“(2) CONVERSIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), ineligibility for crop insurance premium assistance shall apply in accordance with this paragraph.

“(B) NEW CONVERSIONS.—In the case of a wetland that the Secretary determines was converted after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014—

“(i) the person shall be ineligible to receive crop insurance premium subsidies in subsequent reinsurance years unless the Secretary determines that an exemption pursuant to section 1222 applies; or

“(ii) for any violation that the Secretary determines impacts less than 5 acres of an entire farm, the person may pay a contribution in an amount equal to 150 percent of the cost of mitigation, as determined by the Secretary, to the fund described in section 1241(f) for wetland restoration in lieu of ineligibility to receive crop insurance premium assistance.

“(C) PRIOR CONVERSIONS.—In the case of a wetland that the Secretary determines was converted prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, ineligibility under this subsection shall not apply.

“(D) CONVERSIONS AND NEW POLICIES OR PLANS OF INSURANCE.—In the case of an agri-

cultural commodity for which an individual policy or plan of insurance is available for the first time to the person after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014—

“(i) ineligibility shall apply only to conversions that take place after the date on which the policy or plan of insurance first becomes available to the person; and

“(ii) the person shall take such steps as the Secretary determines appropriate to mitigate any prior conversion in a timely manner but not to exceed 2 reinsurance years.

“(3) LIMITATIONS.—

“(A) MITIGATION REQUIRED.—Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, a person subject to a final determination, including all administrative appeals, of a violation described in subsection (d) shall have 1 reinsurance year to initiate a mitigation plan to remedy the violation, as determined by the Secretary, before becoming ineligible under this subsection in the following reinsurance year to receive any payment of any portion of the premium paid by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

“(B) PERSONS COVERED FOR THE FIRST TIME.—Notwithstanding the requirements of paragraph (1), in the case of a person that is subject to this subsection for the first time solely due to the amendment made by section 2611(b) of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the person shall have 2 reinsurance years after the reinsurance year in which a final determination is made, including all administrative appeals, of a violation described in this subsection to take such steps as the Secretary determines appropriate to remedy or mitigate the violation in accordance with this subsection.

“(C) GOOD FAITH.—If the Secretary determines that a person subject to a final determination, including all administrative appeals, of a violation described in this subsection acted in good faith and without intent to commit a violation described in this subsection as described in section 1222(h), the person shall have 2 reinsurance years to take such steps as the Secretary determines appropriate to remedy or mitigate the violation in accordance with this subsection.

“(D) TENANT RELIEF.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If a tenant is determined to be ineligible for payments and other benefits under this subsection, the Secretary may limit the ineligibility only to the farm that is the basis for the ineligibility determination if the tenant has established, to the satisfaction of the Secretary that—

“(I) the tenant has made a good faith effort to meet the requirements of this section, including enlisting the assistance of the Secretary to obtain a reasonable plan for restoration or mitigation for the farm;

“(II) the landlord on the farm refuses to comply with the plan on the farm; and

“(III) the Secretary determines that the lack of compliance is not a part of a scheme or device to avoid the compliance.

“(ii) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate an annual report concerning the ineligibility determinations limited during the previous 12-month period under this subparagraph.

“(E) CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning with the first full reinsurance year immediately following the date of enactment of this paragraph, all persons seeking eligibility for the payment of a portion of the premium paid by the Fed-

eral Crop Insurance Corporation for a policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) shall provide certification of compliance with this section as determined by the Secretary.

“(ii) TIMELY EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall evaluate the certification in a timely manner and—

“(I) a person who has properly complied with certification shall be held harmless with regard to eligibility during the period of evaluation; and

“(II) if the Secretary fails to evaluate the certification in a timely manner and the person is subsequently found to be in violation of this subsection, ineligibility shall not apply to the person for that violation.

“(iii) EQUITABLE CONTRIBUTION.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—If a person fails to notify the Secretary as required and is subsequently found to be in violation of this subsection, the Secretary shall—

“(aa) determine the amount of an equitable contribution to conservation by the person for the violation; and

“(bb) deposit the contribution in the fund described in section 1241(f).

“(II) LIMITATION.—The contribution shall not exceed the total of the portion of the premium paid by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation for a policy or plan of insurance for all years the person is determined to have been in violation subsequent to the date on which certification was first required under this subparagraph.

“(4) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall use existing processes and procedures for certifying compliance.

“(B) RESPONSIBILITY.—The Secretary, acting through the agencies of the Department of Agriculture, shall be solely responsible for determining whether a producer is eligible to receive crop insurance premium subsidies in accordance with this subsection.

“(C) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that no agent, approved insurance provider, or employee or contractor of an agency or approved insurance provider, bears responsibility or liability for the eligibility of an insured producer under this subsection, other than in cases of misrepresentation, fraud, or scheme and device.”

Subtitle H—Repeal of Superseded Program Authorities and Transitional Provisions; Technical Amendments

SEC. 2701. COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

Section 1230 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3830) is repealed.

SEC. 2702. EMERGENCY FORESTRY CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), section 1231A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831a) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract or agreement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 1231A of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831a) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract or agreement.

(2) FUNDING.—The Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the conservation reserve program under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.) to continue to carry out contracts or agreements referred to in paragraph (1) using the

provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts or agreements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2703. WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3837 et seq.) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EASEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract, agreement, or easement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3837 et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract, agreement, or easement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of subchapter C of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3837 et seq.), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the wetlands reserve program under that subchapter for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out contracts, agreements, or easements referred to in paragraph (1) that were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance), provided that no such contract, agreement, or easement is modified so as to increase the amount of the payment received.

(B) OTHER.—The Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2301, to continue to carry out contracts, agreements, and easements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts, agreements, and easements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2704. FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM AND FARM VIABILITY PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), subchapter C of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838h et seq.) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING AGREEMENTS AND EASEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any agreement or easement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under subchapter C of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838h et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the agreement or easement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of subchapter C of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838h et seq.), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the farmland protection program under that subchapter for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out agreements and easements referred to in paragraph (1) that were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance).

(B) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds made available under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2301, to continue to carry out agreements and easements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such agreements and easements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2705. GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), subchapter D of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838n et seq.) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EASEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract, agreement, or easement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under subchapter D of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838n et seq.) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract, agreement, or easement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of subchapter D of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838n et seq.), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the grassland reserve program under that subchapter for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out contracts, agreements, or easements referred to in paragraph (1) that were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance), provided that no such contract, agreement, or easement is modified so as to increase the amount of the payment received.

(B) OTHER.—The Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2301, to continue to carry out contracts, agreements, and easements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts, agreements, and easements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2706. AGRICULTURAL WATER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), section 1240I of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-9) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract or agreement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 1240I of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-9) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract or agreement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of section 1240I of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa-9), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the

agricultural water enhancement program under that section for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out contracts and agreements referred to in paragraph (1) that were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance).

(B) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds made available under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the regional conservation partnership program under subtitle I of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2401, to continue to carry out contracts and agreements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts and agreements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2707. WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), section 1240N of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-1) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract or agreement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 1240N of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-1) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract or agreement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of section 1240N of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-1), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the wildlife habitat incentive program under that section for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out contracts or agreements referred to in paragraph (1) which were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance).

(B) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds made available under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the environmental quality incentives program under chapter 4 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa et seq.) to continue to carry out contracts or agreements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts or agreements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2708. GREAT LAKES BASIN PROGRAM.

Section 1240P of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-3) is repealed.

SEC. 2709. CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), section 1240Q of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-4) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EASEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract, agreement, or easement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 1240Q of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-4) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required

to be made in connection with the contract, agreement, or easement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of section 1240Q of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb-4), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the Chesapeake Bay watershed program under that section for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out contracts, agreements, and easements referred to in paragraph (1) that were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance).

(B) OTHER.—The Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the regional conservation partnership program under subtitle I of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2401, to continue to carry out contracts, agreements, and easements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts, agreements, and easements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2710. COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE.

(a) REPEAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3843) is repealed.

(b) TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) EFFECT ON EXISTING CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS.—The amendment made by this section shall not affect the validity or terms of any contract or agreement entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3843) before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, or any payments required to be made in connection with the contract or agreement.

(2) FUNDING.—

(A) USE OF PRIOR YEAR FUNDS.—Notwithstanding the repeal of section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3843), any funds made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the cooperative conservation partnership initiative under that section for fiscal years 2009 through 2013 shall be made available to carry out contracts and agreements referred to in paragraph (1) that were entered into prior to the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (including the provision of technical assistance).

(B) OTHER.—On exhaustion of funds made available under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use funds made available to carry out the regional conservation partnership program under subtitle I of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2401, to continue to carry out contracts and agreements referred to in paragraph (1) using the provisions of law and regulation applicable to such contracts and agreements as in existence on the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

SEC. 2711. ENVIRONMENTAL EASEMENT PROGRAM.

Chapter 3 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839 et seq.) is repealed.

SEC. 2712. TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATION OF CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.

(a) APPLICABILITY.—This section is applicable to activities under—

(1) the wetlands reserve program, the farmland protection program, and the farm viability program being merged into the agricultural conservation easement program under the amendment made by section 2301;

(2) the wildlife habitat incentive program being merged into the environmental quality incentives program under the amendments made by subtitle C;

(3) the agricultural water enhancement program, the Chesapeake Bay watershed program, the cooperative conservation partnership initiative, and the Great Lakes basin program being merged into the regional conservation partnership program under the amendment made by section 2401; and

(4) the grassland reserve program being merged into the conservation reserve program under the amendments made by subtitle A and into the agricultural conservation easement program under the amendment made by section 2301.

(b) INTERIM ADMINISTRATION.—Subject to subsection (d), with respect to the implementation of the agricultural conservation easement program under subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2301, the amendments to the environmental quality incentives program made by subtitle C, the regional conservation partnership program under subtitle I of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as added by section 2401, and the amendments to the conservation reserve program made by subtitle A, the Secretary shall use the regulations in existence as of the day before the date of enactment of this Act that are applicable to the wetlands reserve program, the grassland reserve program, the farmland protection program, the farm viability program, the wildlife habitat incentive program, the agricultural water enhancement program, the Chesapeake Bay watershed program, the cooperative conservation partnership initiative, and the Great Lakes basin program repealed by this subtitle, to the extent that the terms and conditions of such regulations are consistent with—

(1) the provisions of the agricultural conservation easement program and the regional conservation partnership program; and

(2) the amendments to the environmental quality incentives program and the conservation reserve program made by this title.

(c) FUNDING.—The Secretary may only use funds authorized in this title or in the amendments made by this title for the specific programs listed in subsection (b), including any restrictions on the use of those funds, for the purposes identified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b).

(d) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to carry out subsection (b) shall terminate on the date that is 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) PERMANENT ADMINISTRATION.—Effective beginning on the termination date described in subsection (d), the Secretary shall provide technical assistance, financial assistance, and easement enrollment in accordance with any final regulations that the Secretary considers necessary to carry out this title and the amendments made by this title.

SEC. 2713. TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 1201(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801(a)) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “E” and inserting “I”.

(b) PROGRAM INELIGIBILITY.—Section 1211(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811(a)) is amended by striking “predominate” each place it appears and inserting “predominant”.

(c) SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCERS.—Section 1242(i) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3842(i)) is amended in the header by

striking “SPECIALITY” and inserting “SPECIALTY”.

TITLE III—TRADE

Subtitle A—Food for Peace Act

SEC. 3001. GENERAL AUTHORITY.

Section 201 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1721) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “(to be implemented by the Administrator)” after “under this title”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (7) and the second sentence and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(7) build resilience to mitigate and prevent food crises and reduce the future need for emergency aid.”.

SEC. 3002. SET-ASIDE FOR SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH WHICH NON-EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED.

Section 202(e) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1722(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “13 percent” and inserting “20 percent”;

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “new” and inserting “and enhancing”;

(C) by striking subparagraph (B);

(D) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D); and

(E) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraphs:

“(B) meeting specific administrative, management, personnel, transportation, storage, and distribution costs for carrying out programs in foreign countries under this title;

“(C) implementing income-generating, community development, health, nutrition, cooperative development, agricultural, and other developmental activities within 1 or more recipient countries or within 1 or more countries in the same region; and”;

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

“(4) INVESTMENT AUTHORITY.—An eligible organization that receives funds made available under paragraph (1) may invest the funds pending the eligible organization’s use of the funds. Any interest earned on such investment may be used for the purposes for which the assistance was provided to the eligible organization without further appropriation by Congress.”.

SEC. 3003. FOOD AID QUALITY.

Section 202(h) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1722(h)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall use funds made available for fiscal year 2014 and subsequent fiscal years to carry out this title—

“(A) to assess the types and quality of agricultural commodities and products donated for food aid;

“(B) to adjust products and formulations, including potential introduction of new fortificants and products, as necessary to cost-effectively meet nutrient needs of target populations;

“(C) to test prototypes;

“(D) to adopt new specifications or improve existing specifications for micronutrient fortified food aid products, based on the latest developments in food and nutrition science, and in coordination with other international partners;

“(E) to develop new program guidance to facilitate improved matching of products to purposes having nutritional intent, in coordination with other international partners;

“(F) to develop improved guidance for implementing partners on how to address nutritional deficiencies that emerge among recipients for whom food assistance is the sole source of diet in emergency programs that extend beyond 1 year, in coordination with other international partners; and

“(G) to evaluate, in appropriate settings and as necessary, the performance and cost-effectiveness of new or modified specialized food products and program approaches designed to meet the nutritional needs of the most vulnerable groups, such as pregnant and lactating mothers, and children under the age of 5.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “fiscal years 2009 through 2011” and inserting “fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 3004. MINIMUM LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE.

Section 204(a) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1724(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3005. FOOD AID CONSULTATIVE GROUP.

(a) MEMBERSHIP.—Section 205(b) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1725(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (6);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (7) as paragraph (8); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following new paragraph:

“(7) representatives from the United States agricultural processing sector involved in providing agricultural commodities for programs under this Act; and”.

(b) CONSULTATION.—Section 205(d) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1725(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking the first sentence and inserting the following:

“(1) CONSULTATION IN ADVANCE OF ISSUANCE OF IMPLEMENTATION REGULATIONS, HANDBOOKS, AND GUIDELINES.—Not later than 45 days before a proposed regulation, handbook, or guideline implementing this title, or a proposed significant revision to a regulation, handbook, or guideline implementing this title, becomes final, the Administrator shall provide the proposal to the Group for review and comment.”; and

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

“(2) CONSULTATION REGARDING FOOD AID QUALITY EFFORTS.—The Administrator shall seek input from and consult with the Group on the implementation of section 202(h).”.

(c) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 205(f) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1725(f)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3006. OVERSIGHT, MONITORING, AND EVALUATION.

(a) REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE.—Section 207(c) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1726a(c)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by inserting “AND GUIDANCE” after “REGULATIONS”; and

(2) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following new sentence: “Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Administrator shall issue all regulations and revisions to agency guidance necessary to implement the amendments made to this title by such Act.”; and

(3) in paragraph (2), by inserting “and guidance” after “develop regulations”.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 207(f) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1726a(f)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(F), by striking “upgraded” and inserting “maintenance of”; and

(2) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4); and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(4) in paragraph (4) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “\$22,000,000” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “\$17,000,000 of the funds made available under this title for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, except for paragraph (2)(F), for which not more than \$500,000 shall be made available for each of the fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B)(i), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Agency for International Development shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committees on Agriculture and Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report describing—

(1) the implementation of section 207(c) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1726a(c));

(2) the surveys, studies, monitoring, reporting, and audit requirements for programs conducted under title II of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1721 et seq.) by an eligible organization that is a nongovernmental organization (as such term is defined in section 402 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 1732)); and

(3) the surveys, studies, monitoring, reporting, and audit requirements for such programs by an eligible organization that is an intergovernmental organization, such as the World Food Program or other multilateral organization.

SEC. 3007. ASSISTANCE FOR STOCKPILING AND RAPID TRANSPORTATION, DELIVERY, AND DISTRIBUTION OF SHELF-STABLE PREPACKAGED FOODS.

Section 208(f) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1726b(f)) is amended by striking “\$8,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2012” and inserting “\$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 3008. IMPACT ON LOCAL FARMERS AND ECONOMY AND REPORT ON USE OF FUNDS.

(a) IMPACT ON LOCAL FARMERS AND ECONOMY.—Section 403(b) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1733(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The Secretary or the Administrator, as appropriate, shall seek information, as part of the regular proposal and submission process, from implementing agencies on the potential costs and benefits to the local economy of sales of agricultural commodities within the recipient country.”.

(b) REPORT ON USE OF FUNDS.—Section 403 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1733) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(m) REPORT ON USE OF FUNDS.—

“(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report that—

“(A) specifies the amount of funds (including funds for administrative costs, indirect cost recovery, internal transportation, storage, and handling, and associated distribution costs) provided to each eligible organization that received assistance under this Act in the previous fiscal year;

“(B) describes how those funds were used by the eligible organization;

“(C) describes the actual rate of return for each commodity made available under this Act, including—

“(i) factors that influenced the rate of return; and

“(ii) for the commodity, the costs of bagging or further processing, ocean transportation, inland transportation in the recipient country, storage costs, and any other information that the Administrator determines to be necessary; and

“(D) for each instance in which a commodity was made available under this Act at a rate of return less than 70 percent, describes the reasons for the rate of return realized.

“(2) RATE OF RETURN DESCRIBED.—For purposes of applying paragraph (1)(C), the rate of return for a commodity shall be equal to the proportion that—

“(A) the proceeds the implementing partners generate through monetization; bears to

“(B) the cost to the Federal Government to procure and ship the commodity to a recipient country for monetization.”.

SEC. 3009. PREPOSITIONING OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES.

Section 407(c)(4) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736a(c)(4)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(B) by striking “for each such fiscal year not more than \$10,000,000 of such funds” and inserting “for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2013 not more than \$10,000,000 of such funds and for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 not more than \$15,000,000 of such funds”; and

(2) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

“(B) ADDITIONAL PREPOSITIONING SITES.—The Administrator may establish additional sites for prepositioning in foreign countries or change the location of current sites for prepositioning in foreign countries after conducting, and based on the results of, assessments of need, the availability of appropriate technology for long-term storage, feasibility, and cost.”.

SEC. 3010. ANNUAL REPORT REGARDING FOOD AID PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

Section 407(f)(1) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736a(f)(1)) is amended—

(1) in the paragraph heading, by striking “AGRICULTURAL TRADE” and inserting “FOOD AID”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: “and the total number of beneficiaries of the project and the activities carried out through such project”; and

(3) in subparagraph (B)(iii)—

(A) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by inserting “, and the total number of beneficiaries in,” after “commodities made available to”;

(B) by striking “and” at the end of subclause (I);

(C) by inserting “and” at the end of subclause (II); and

(D) by inserting after subclause (II) the following new subclause:

“(III) the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program established by section 3107 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1736o-1);”.

SEC. 3011. DEADLINE FOR AGREEMENTS TO FINANCE SALES OR TO PROVIDE OTHER ASSISTANCE.

Section 408 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736b) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3012. MINIMUM LEVEL OF NONEMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE.

Subsection (e) of section 412 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736f) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) MINIMUM LEVEL OF NONEMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), of the amounts made available to carry out emergency and nonemergency food assistance programs under title II, not less than 20 nor more than 30 percent for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 shall be expended for nonemergency food assistance programs under title II.

“(2) MINIMUM LEVEL.—The amount made available to carry out nonemergency food assistance programs under title II shall not be less than \$350,000,000 for any fiscal year.”.

SEC. 3013. MICRONUTRIENT FORTIFICATION PROGRAMS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF OBSOLETE REFERENCE TO STUDY.—Section 415(a)(2)(B) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736g–2(a)(2)(B)) is amended by striking “, using recommendations” and all that follows through “quality enhancements”.

(b) EXTENSION.—Section 415(c) of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736g–2(c)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3014. JOHN OGWONSKI AND DOUG BEREUTER FARMER-TO-FARMER PROGRAM.

(a) FUNDING AND REAUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM.—Section 501 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1737) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2013, and not less than the greater of \$15,000,000 or 0.6 percent of the amounts made available for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018,”; and

(2) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that contains—

(1) a review of the John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program authorized by section 501 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1737); and

(2) recommendations relating to actions that the Comptroller General determines to be necessary to improve the monitoring and evaluation of assistance provided under such program.

SEC. 3015. COORDINATION OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS REPORT.

Section 413 of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1736g) is amended—

(1) by striking “(a) IN GENERAL.—To the maximum” and inserting “To the maximum”; and

(2) by striking subsection (b).

Subtitle B—Agricultural Trade Act of 1978

SEC. 3101. EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEE PROGRAM.

(a) SHORT-TERM CREDIT GUARANTEES.—Section 202 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5622) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “3-year” and inserting “24-month”;

(2) in subsection (d), by striking “country” and inserting “obligor”;

(3) by striking subsection (i);

(4) by redesignating subsections (j) and (k) as subsections (i) and (j), respectively; and

(5) in subsection (j)(2) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B);

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) through (E) as subparagraphs (A) through (C), respectively;

(C) in subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated), by striking “and” at the end;

(D) in subparagraph (C) (as so redesignated)—

(i) by striking “, but do not exceed,”; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) notwithstanding any other provision of this section, administer and carry out (only after consulting with the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry of the Senate) the program pursuant to such terms as may be agreed between the parties to address the World Trade Organization dispute WTO/DS267 to the extent not superseded by any applicable international undertakings on officially supported export credits to which the United States is a party.”.

(b) FUNDING.—Subsection (b) of section 211 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5641) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEE PROGRAM.—The Commodity Credit Corporation shall make available for each fiscal year \$5,500,000,000 of credit guarantees under section 202(a).”.

SEC. 3102. FUNDING FOR MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM.

Section 211(c)(1)(A) of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5641(c)(1)(A)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3103. FOREIGN MARKET DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATOR PROGRAM.

Section 703(a) of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5723(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

Subtitle C—Other Agricultural Trade Laws

SEC. 3201. FOOD FOR PROGRESS ACT OF 1985.

(a) EXTENSION.—The Food for Progress Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1736o) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f)(3), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(2) in subsection (g), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(3) in subsection (k), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(4) in subsection (l)(1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) REPEAL OF COMPLETED PROJECT.—Subsection (f) of the Food for Progress Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1736o) is amended by striking paragraph (6).

SEC. 3202. BILL EMERSON HUMANITARIAN TRUST ACT.

Section 302 of the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust Act (7 U.S.C. 1736f–1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)(B)(i), by striking “2012” both places it appears and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in subsection (h), by striking “2012” both places it appears and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3203. PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO EMERGING MARKETS.

(a) DIRECT CREDITS OR EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEES.—Section 1542(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–624; 7 U.S.C. 5622 note) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS.—Section 1542(d)(1)(A)(i) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (Public Law 101–624; 7 U.S.C. 5622 note) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 3204. MCGOVERN-DOLE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM.

(a) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 3107(1)(2) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1736o–1(1)(2)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 3107(d) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1736o–1(d)) is amended by striking “to” in the matter preceding paragraph (1).

SEC. 3205. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SPECIALTY CROPS.

(a) PURPOSE.—Section 3205(b) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 5680(b)) is amended by striking “related barriers to trade” and inserting “technical barriers to trade”.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 3205(e)(2) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 5680(e)(2)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “and” at the end of subparagraph (C); and

(2) by striking subparagraphs (D) and (E) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

“(D) \$9,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2018.”.

(c) U.S. ATLANTIC SPINY DOGFISH STUDY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall conduct an economic study on the existing market in the United States for U.S. Atlantic Spiny Dogfish.

SEC. 3206. GLOBAL CROP DIVERSITY TRUST.

Section 3202(c) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 22 U.S.C. 2220a note) is amended by striking “2008 through 2012” and inserting “2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 3207. LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD AID PROCUREMENT PROJECTS.

Section 3206 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 1726c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “(b) STUDY; FIELD-BASED PROJECTS.—” and all that follows through “(2) FIELD-BASED PROJECTS.—” and inserting the following:

“(b) FIELD-BASED PROJECTS.—”;

(B) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(C) in paragraph (1) (as so redesignated), by striking “subparagraph (B)” and inserting “paragraph (2)”;

(D) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated), by striking “subparagraph (A)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”;

(2) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “subsection (b)(2)” and inserting “subsection (b)”;

(3) by striking subsections (d), (f), and (g);

(4) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (d);

(5) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(ii) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) by striking “(A) APPLICATION.—” and all that follows through “To be eligible” in clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible”;

(II) by redesignating clause (ii) as subparagraph (B) and indenting appropriately; and

(III) in subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated), by striking “clause (i)” and inserting “subparagraph (A)”;

(B) by striking paragraph (4); and

(6) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) FUNDING.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$80,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(2) PREFERENCE.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary may give a preference to eligible organizations that have, or are

working toward, projects under the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program established under section 3107 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 17360-1).

“(3) REPORTING.—Each year, the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that describes the use of funds under this section, including—

“(A) the impact of procurements and projects on—

“(i) local and regional agricultural producers; and

“(ii) markets and consumers, including low-income consumers; and

“(B) implementation time frames and costs.”.

SEC. 3208. UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR TRADE AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL AFFAIRS.

(a) DEFINITION OF AGRICULTURE COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES.—In this section, the term “agriculture committees and subcommittees” means—

(1) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

(2) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate; and

(3) the subcommittees on agriculture, rural development, food and drug administration, and related agencies of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

(b) PROPOSAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the agriculture committees and subcommittees, shall propose a reorganization of international trade functions for imports and exports of the Department of Agriculture.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In producing the proposal under this section, the Secretary shall—

(A) in recognition of the importance of agricultural exports to the farm economy and the economy as a whole, include a plan for the establishment of an Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs;

(B) take into consideration how the Under Secretary described in subparagraph (A) would serve as a multiagency coordinator of sanitary and phytosanitary issues and nontariff trade barriers in agriculture with respect to imports and exports of agricultural products; and

(C) take into consideration all implications of a reorganization described in paragraph (1) on domestic programs and operations of the Department of Agriculture.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act and before the reorganization described in paragraph (1) can take effect, the Secretary shall submit to the agriculture committees and subcommittees a report that—

(A) includes the results of the proposal under this section; and

(B) provides a notice of the reorganization plan.

(4) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the submission of the report under paragraph (3), the Secretary shall implement a reorganization of international trade functions for imports and exports of the Department of Agriculture, including the establishment of an Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs.

(c) CONFIRMATION REQUIRED.—The position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs established under subsection (b)(2)(A) shall be appointed

by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

TITLE IV—NUTRITION
Subtitle A—Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SEC. 4001. PREVENTING PAYMENT OF CASH TO RECIPIENTS OF SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE BENEFITS FOR THE RETURN OF EMPTY BOTTLES AND CANS USED TO CONTAIN FOOD PURCHASED WITH BENEFITS PROVIDED UNDER THE PROGRAM.

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

(1) by striking “and hot foods” and inserting “hot foods”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “and any deposit fee in excess of the amount of the State fee reimbursement (if any) required to purchase any food or food product contained in a returnable bottle or can, regardless of whether the fee is included in the shelf price posted for the food or food product.”.

SEC. 4002. RETAIL FOOD STORES.

(a) DEFINITION OF RETAIL FOOD STORE.—Section 3(p)(1)(A) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(p)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “at least 7” after “a variety of”; and

(2) by striking “at least 2” and inserting “at least 3”.

(b) ALTERNATIVE BENEFIT DELIVERY.—Section 7(f) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(f)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) IMPOSITION OF COSTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall require participating retail food stores (including restaurants participating in a State option restaurant program intended to serve the elderly, disabled, and homeless) to pay 100 percent of the costs of acquiring, and arrange for the implementation of, electronic benefit transfer point-of-sale equipment and supplies, including related services.

“(B) EXEMPTIONS.—The Secretary may exempt from subparagraph (A)—

“(i) farmers’ markets and other direct-to-consumer markets, military commissaries, nonprofit food buying cooperatives, and establishments, organizations, programs, or group living arrangements described in paragraphs (5), (7), and (8) of section 3(k); and

“(ii) establishments described in paragraphs (3), (4), and (9) of section 3(k), other than restaurants participating in a State option restaurant program.

“(C) INTERCHANGE FEES.—Nothing in this paragraph permits the charging of fees relating to the redemption of supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, in accordance with subsection (h)(13).”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) TERMINATION OF MANUAL VOUCHERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Effective beginning on the date of enactment of this paragraph, except as provided in subparagraph (B), no State shall issue manual vouchers to a household that receives supplemental nutrition assistance under this Act or allow retail food stores to accept manual vouchers as payment, unless the Secretary determines that the manual vouchers are necessary, such as in the event of an electronic benefit transfer system failure or a disaster situation.

“(B) EXEMPTIONS.—The Secretary may exempt categories of retail food stores or individual retail food stores from subparagraph (A) based on criteria established by the Secretary.

“(5) UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER REQUIRED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—To enhance the anti-fraud protections of the program, the Secretary shall require all parties providing electronic benefit transfer services to provide for and maintain unique terminal identification number information through the supplemental nutrition assistance program electronic benefit transfer transaction routing system.

“(B) REGULATIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Not earlier than 2 years after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary shall issue proposed regulations to carry out this paragraph.

“(ii) COMMERCIAL PRACTICES.—In issuing regulations to carry out this paragraph, the Secretary shall consider existing commercial practices for other point-of-sale debit transactions.”.

(c) ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER AUDITABILITY.—Section 7(h)(2)(C) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(h)(2)(C)) is amended by striking clause (ii) and inserting the following:

“(ii) unless determined by the Secretary to be located in an area with significantly limited access to food, measures that require an electronic benefit transfer system—

“(I) to set and enforce sales restrictions based on benefit transfer payment eligibility by using scanning or product lookup entry; and

“(II) to deny benefit tenders for manually entered sales of ineligible items.”.

(d) ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFERS.—Section 7(h)(3)(B) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(h)(3)(B)) is amended by striking “is operational—” and all that follows through “(ii) in the case of other participating stores,” and inserting “is operational”.

(e) APPROVAL OF RETAIL FOOD STORES AND WHOLESALE FOOD CONCERNS.—Section 9 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2018) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), in the second sentence, by striking “; and (C)” and inserting “; (C) whether the applicant is located in an area with significantly limited access to food; and (D)”;

(2) in subsection (c), in the first sentence, by inserting “purchase invoices, or program-related records,” after “irrelevant income and sales tax filing documents,”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(g) EBT SERVICE REQUIREMENT.—An approved retail food store shall provide adequate EBT service as described in section 7(h)(3)(B).”.

SEC. 4003. ENHANCING SERVICES TO ELDERLY AND DISABLED SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.

(a) ENHANCING SERVICES TO ELDERLY AND DISABLED PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.—Section 3(p) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(p)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5) a governmental or private nonprofit food purchasing and delivery service that—

“(A) purchases food for, and delivers the food to, individuals who are—

“(i) unable to shop for food; and

“(ii) (I) not less than 60 years of age; or

“(II) physically or mentally handicapped or otherwise disabled;

“(B) clearly notifies the participating household at the time the household places a food order—

“(i) of any delivery fee associated with the food purchase and delivery provided to the household by the service; and

“(ii) that a delivery fee cannot be paid with benefits provided under supplemental nutrition assistance program; and

“(C) sells food purchased for the household at the price paid by the service for the food and without any additional cost markup.”.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) ISSUANCE OF RULES.—The Secretary shall issue regulations that—

(A) establish criteria to identify a food purchasing and delivery service referred to in section 3(p)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(p)(5)); and

(B) establish procedures to ensure that the service—

(i) does not charge more for a food item than the price paid by the service for the food item;

(ii) offers food delivery service at no or low cost to households under that Act;

(iii) ensures that benefits provided under the supplemental nutrition assistance program are used only to purchase food (as defined in section 3 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2012));

(iv) limits the purchase of food, and the delivery of the food, to households eligible to receive services described in section 3(p)(5) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2012(p)(5));

(v) has established adequate safeguards against fraudulent activities, including unauthorized use of electronic benefit cards issued under that Act; and

(vi) meets such other requirements as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(2) LIMITATION.—Before the issuance of rules under paragraph (1), the Secretary may not approve more than 20 food purchasing and delivery services referred to in section 3(p)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(p)(5)) to participate as retail food stores under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

SEC. 4004. FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(b)(6)(F) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2013(b)(6)(F)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) FEASIBILITY STUDY, REPORT, AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) INDIAN; INDIAN TRIBE.—The terms “Indian” and “Indian tribe” have the meaning given the terms in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(B) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “tribal organization” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(2) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a study to determine the feasibility of tribal administration of Federal food assistance programs, services, functions, and activities (or portions thereof), in lieu of State agencies or other administering entities.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that—

(A) contains a list of programs, services, functions, and activities with respect to which it would be feasible to be administered by a tribal organization;

(B) a description of whether that administration would necessitate a statutory or regulatory change; and

(C) such other issues that may be determined by the Secretary and developed through consultation pursuant to paragraph (4).

(4) CONSULTATION WITH INDIAN TRIBES.—In developing the report required by paragraph (3), the Secretary shall consult with tribal organizations.

(5) FUNDING.—Out of any funds made available under section 18 for fiscal year 2014, the Secretary shall make available to carry out the study and report described in paragraphs (2) and (3) \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended.

(6) TRADITIONAL AND LOCAL FOODS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall pilot a demonstration project by awarding a grant to 1 or more tribal organizations authorized to administer the food distribution program on Indian reservations under section 4(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2013(b)) for the purpose of purchasing nutritious and traditional foods, and when practicable, foods produced locally by Indian producers, for distribution to recipients of foods distributed under that program.

(B) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary may award a grant on a noncompetitive basis to 1 or more tribal organizations that have the administrative and financial capability to conduct a demonstration project, as determined by the Secretary.

(C) CONSULTATION, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND TRAINING.—During the implementation phase of the demonstration project, the Secretary shall consult with Indian tribes and provide outreach to Indian farmers, ranchers, and producers regarding the training and capacity to participate in the demonstration project.

(D) FUNDING.—

(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

(ii) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.—The funds and authorities provided under this subparagraph are in addition to any other funds or authorities the Secretary may have to carry out activities described in this paragraph.

SEC. 4005. EXCLUSION OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA FROM EXCESS MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION.

Section 5(e)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)(5)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) EXCLUSION OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA.—The Secretary shall promulgate rules to ensure that medical marijuana is not treated as a medical expense for purposes of this paragraph.”.

SEC. 4006. STANDARD UTILITY ALLOWANCES BASED ON THE RECEIPT OF ENERGY ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) STANDARD UTILITY ALLOWANCES IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—Section 5(e)(6)(C) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)(6)(C)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by inserting “, subject to clause (iv)” after “Secretary”; and

(2) in clause (iv), by striking subclause (I) and inserting the following:

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), if a State agency elects to use a standard utility allowance that reflects heating and cooling costs, the standard utility allowance shall be made available to households that

received a payment, or on behalf of which a payment was made, under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.) or other similar energy assistance program, if in the current month or in the immediately preceding 12 months, the household either received such a payment, or such a payment was made on behalf of the household, that was greater than \$20 annually, as determined by the Secretary.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 2605(f)(2)(A) of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624(f)(2)(A)) is amended by inserting before the semicolon the following: “, except that, for purposes of the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), such payments or allowances were greater than \$20 annually, consistent with section 5(e)(6)(C)(iv)(I) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2014(e)(6)(C)(iv)(I)), as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture”.

(c) APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), this section and the amendments made by this section shall—

(A) take effect 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) apply with respect to certification periods that begin after that date.

(2) STATE OPTION TO DELAY IMPLEMENTATION FOR CURRENT RECIPIENTS.—A State may, at the option of the State, implement a policy that eliminates or reduces the effect of the amendments made by this section on households that received a standard utility allowance as of the date of enactment of this Act, for not more than a 5-month period beginning on the date on which the amendments would otherwise apply to the respective household.

SEC. 4007. ELIGIBILITY DISQUALIFICATIONS.

Section 6(e)(3)(B) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(e)(3)(B)) is amended by striking “section;” and inserting the following:

“section, subject to the condition that the course or program of study—

“(i) is part of a program of career and technical education (as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302)) that may be completed in not more than 4 years at an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)); or

“(ii) is limited to remedial courses, basic adult education, literacy, or English as a second language;”.

SEC. 4008. ELIGIBILITY DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR CERTAIN CONVICTED FELONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(r) DISQUALIFICATION FOR CERTAIN CONVICTED FELONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual shall not be eligible for benefits under this Act if—

“(A) the individual is convicted of—

“(i) aggravated sexual abuse under section 2241 of title 18, United States Code;

“(ii) murder under section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

“(iii) an offense under chapter 110 of title 18, United States Code;

“(iv) a Federal or State offense involving sexual assault, as defined in 40002(a) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13925(a)); or

“(v) an offense under State law determined by the Attorney General to be substantially similar to an offense described in clause (i), (ii), or (iii); and

“(B) the individual is not in compliance with the terms of the sentence of the individual or the restrictions under subsection (k).

“(2) EFFECTS ON ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS FOR OTHERS.—The amount of benefits otherwise required to be provided to an eligible household under this Act shall be determined by considering the individual to whom paragraph (1) applies not to be a member of the household, except that the income and resources of the individual shall be considered to be income and resources of the household.

“(3) ENFORCEMENT.—Each State shall require each individual applying for benefits under this Act to attest to whether the individual, or any member of the household of the individual, has been convicted of a crime described in paragraph (1).”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 5(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(a)) is amended in the second sentence by striking “sections 6(b), 6(d)(2), and 6(g)” and inserting “subsections (b), (d)(2), (g), and (r) of section 6”.

(c) INAPPLICABILITY TO CONVICTIONS OCCURRING ON OR BEFORE ENACTMENT.—The amendments made by this section shall not apply to a conviction if the conviction is for conduct occurring on or before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4009. ENDING SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS FOR LOTTERY OR GAMBLING WINNERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015) (as amended by section 4008) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(s) INELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS DUE TO RECEIPT OF SUBSTANTIAL LOTTERY OR GAMBLING WINNINGS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any household in which a member receives substantial lottery or gambling winnings, as determined by the Secretary, shall lose eligibility for benefits immediately upon receipt of the winnings.

“(2) DURATION OF INELIGIBILITY.—A household described in paragraph (1) shall remain ineligible for participation until the household meets the allowable financial resources and income eligibility requirements under subsections (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (i), (k), (l), (m), and (n) of section 5.

“(3) AGREEMENTS.—As determined by the Secretary, each State agency, to the maximum extent practicable, shall establish agreements with entities responsible for the regulation or sponsorship of gaming in the State to determine whether individuals participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program have received substantial lottery or gambling winnings.”

SEC. 4010. IMPROVING SECURITY OF FOOD ASSISTANCE.

Section 7(h)(8) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(h)(8)) is amended—

(1) in the paragraph heading, by striking “CARD FEE” and inserting “OF CARDS”;

(2) by striking “A State” and inserting the following:

“(A) FEES.—A State”; and

(3) by adding after subparagraph (A) (as so designated) the following:

“(B) PURPOSEFUL LOSS OF CARDS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to terms and conditions established by the Secretary in accordance with clause (ii), if a household makes excessive requests for replacement of the electronic benefit transfer card of the household, the Secretary may require a State agency to decline to issue a replacement card to the household unless the household, upon request of the State agency, provides an explanation for the loss of the card.

“(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The terms and conditions established by the Secretary shall provide that—

“(I) the household be given the opportunity to provide the requested explanation and meet the requirements under this paragraph promptly;

“(II) after an excessive number of lost cards, the head of the household shall be required to review program rights and responsibilities with State agency personnel authorized to make determinations under section 5(a); and

“(III) any action taken, including actions required under section 6(b)(2), other than the withholding of the electronic benefit transfer card until an explanation described in subclause (I) is provided, shall be consistent with the due process protections under section 6(b) or 11(e)(10), as appropriate.

“(C) PROTECTING VULNERABLE PERSONS.—In implementing this paragraph, a State agency shall act to protect homeless persons, persons with disabilities, victims of crimes, and other vulnerable persons who lose electronic benefit transfer cards but are not intentionally committing fraud.

“(D) EFFECT ON ELIGIBILITY.—While a State may decline to issue an electronic benefits transfer card until a household satisfies the requirements under this paragraph, nothing in this paragraph shall be considered a denial of, or limitation on, the eligibility for benefits under section 5.”

SEC. 4011. TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION FOR RETAIL FOOD STORES.

(a) MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES.—Section 7(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(h)) (as amended by section 4030(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(14) MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall approve retail food stores to redeem benefits through electronic means other than wired point of sale devices for electronic benefit transfer transactions, if the retail food stores—

“(i) establish recipient protections regarding privacy, ease of use, access, and support similar to the protections provided for transactions made in retail food stores;

“(ii) bear the costs of obtaining, installing, and maintaining mobile technologies, including mechanisms needed to process EBT cards and transaction fees;

“(iii) demonstrate the foods purchased with benefits issued under this section through mobile technologies are purchased at a price not higher than the price of the same food purchased by other methods used by the retail food store, as determined by the Secretary;

“(iv) provide adequate documentation for each authorized transaction, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(v) meet other criteria as established by the Secretary.

“(B) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT ON ACCEPTANCE OF BENEFITS OF MOBILE TRANSACTIONS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Before authorizing implementation of subparagraph (A) in all States, the Secretary shall pilot the use of mobile technologies determined by the Secretary to be appropriate to test the feasibility and implications for program integrity, by allowing retail food stores to accept benefits from recipients of supplemental nutrition assistance through mobile transactions.

“(ii) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—To be eligible to participate in a demonstration project under clause (i), a retail food store shall submit to the Secretary for approval a plan that includes—

“(I) a description of the technology;

“(II) the manner by which the retail food store will provide proof of the transaction to households;

“(III) the provision of data to the Secretary, consistent with requirements established by the Secretary, in a manner that allows the Secretary to evaluate the impact of the demonstration on participant access, ease of use, and program integrity; and

“(IV) such other criteria as the Secretary may require.

“(iii) DATE OF COMPLETION.—The demonstration projects under this subparagraph shall be completed and final reports submitted to the Secretary by not later than July 1, 2016.

“(C) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall—

“(i) by not later than January 1, 2017, authorize implementation of subparagraph (A) in all States, unless the Secretary makes a finding, based on the data provided under subparagraph (B), that implementation in all States is not in the best interest of the supplemental nutrition assistance program; and

“(ii) if the determination made in clause (i) is not to implement subparagraph (A) in all States, submit a report to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate that includes the basis of the finding.”

(b) ACCEPTANCE OF BENEFITS THROUGH ON-LINE TRANSACTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 7 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(k) OPTION TO ACCEPT PROGRAM BENEFITS THROUGH ON-LINE TRANSACTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (4), the Secretary shall approve retail food stores to accept benefits from recipients of supplemental nutrition assistance through on-line transactions.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS TO ACCEPT BENEFITS.—A retail food store seeking to accept benefits from recipients of supplemental nutrition assistance through on-line transactions shall—

“(A) establish recipient protections regarding privacy, ease of use, access, and support similar to the protections provided for transactions made in retail food stores;

“(B) ensure benefits are not used to pay delivery, ordering, convenience, or other fees or charges;

“(C) clearly notify participating households at the time a food order is placed—

“(i) of any delivery, ordering, convenience, or other fee or charge associated with the food purchase; and

“(ii) that any such fee cannot be paid with benefits provided under this Act;

“(D) ensure the security of on-line transactions by using the most effective technology available that the Secretary considers appropriate and cost-effective and that is comparable to the security of transactions at retail food stores; and

“(E) meet other criteria as established by the Secretary.

“(3) STATE AGENCY ACTION.—Each State agency shall ensure that recipients of supplemental nutrition assistance can use benefits on-line as described in this subsection as appropriate.

“(4) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT ON ACCEPTANCE OF BENEFITS THROUGH ON-LINE TRANSACTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Before the Secretary authorizes implementation of paragraph (1) in all States, the Secretary shall carry out a

number of demonstration projects as determined by the Secretary to test the feasibility of allowing retail food stores to accept benefits through on-line transactions.

“(B) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—To be eligible to participate in a demonstration project under subparagraph (A), a retail food store shall submit to the Secretary for approval a plan that includes—

“(i) a method of ensuring that benefits may be used to purchase only eligible items under this Act;

“(ii) a description of the method of educating participant households about the availability and operation of on-line purchasing;

“(iii) adequate testing of the on-line purchasing option prior to implementation;

“(iv) the provision of data as requested by the Secretary for purposes of analyzing the impact of the project on participant access, ease of use, and program integrity;

“(v) reports on progress, challenges, and results, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(vi) such other criteria, including security criteria, as established by the Secretary.

“(C) DATE OF COMPLETION.—The demonstration projects under this paragraph shall be completed and final reports submitted to the Secretary by not later than July 1, 2016.

“(5) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall—

“(A) by not later than January 1, 2017, authorize implementation of paragraph (1) in all States, unless the Secretary makes a finding, based on the data provided under paragraph (4), that implementation in all States is not in the best interest of the supplemental nutrition assistance program; and

“(B) if the determination made in subparagraph (A) is not to implement in all States, submit a report to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate that includes the basis of the finding.”

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 7(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(b)) is amended by striking “purchase food in retail food stores” and inserting “purchase food from retail food stores”.

(B) Section 10 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2019) is amended in the first sentence by inserting “retail food stores authorized to accept and redeem benefits through on-line transactions shall be authorized to accept benefits prior to the delivery of food if the delivery occurs within a reasonable time of the purchase, as determined by the Secretary,” after “food so purchased.”

(C) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section or an amendment made by this section alters any requirements of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) unless specifically authorized in this section or an amendment made by this section.

SEC. 4012. USE OF BENEFITS FOR PURCHASE OF COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE SHARE.

Subsection (o)(4) of section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012) (as redesignated by section 4030(a)(4)) is amended by inserting “, or agricultural producers who market agricultural products directly to consumers” after “such food”.

SEC. 4013. IMPROVED WAGE VERIFICATION USING THE NATIONAL DIRECTORY OF NEW HIRES.

Section 11(e) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by inserting “and after compliance with the requirement specified in

paragraph (24)” after “section 16(e) of this Act”;

(2) in paragraph (22), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (23)(C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(24) that the State agency shall request wage data directly from the National Directory of New Hires established under section 453(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653(i)) relevant to determining eligibility to receive supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits and determining the correct amount of those benefits at the time of certification.”

SEC. 4014. RESTAURANT MEALS PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 11(e) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020(e)) (as amended by section 4013) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (23)(C), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (24), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(25) if the State elects to carry out a program to contract with private establishments to offer meals at concessional prices, as described in paragraphs (3), (4), and (9) of section 3(k)—

“(A) the plans of the State agency for operating the program, including—

“(i) documentation of a need that eligible homeless, elderly, and disabled clients are underserved in a particular geographic area;

“(ii) the manner by which the State agency will limit participation to only those private establishments that the State determines necessary to meet the need identified in clause (i); and

“(iii) any other conditions the Secretary may prescribe, such as the level of security necessary to ensure that only eligible recipients participate in the program; and

“(B) a report by the State agency to the Secretary annually, the schedule of which shall be established by the Secretary, that includes—

“(i) the number of households and individual recipients authorized to participate in the program, including any information on whether the individual recipient is elderly, disabled, or homeless; and

“(ii) an assessment of whether the program is meeting an established need, as documented under subparagraph (A)(i).”

(b) APPROVAL OF RETAIL FOOD STORES AND WHOLESALE FOOD CONCERNS.—Section 9 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2018) (as amended by section 4002(d)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) PRIVATE ESTABLISHMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), no private establishment that contracts with a State agency to offer meals at concessional prices as described in paragraphs (3), (4), and (9) of section 3(k) may be authorized to accept and redeem benefits unless the Secretary determines that the participation of the private establishment is required to meet a documented need in accordance with section 11(e)(25).

“(2) EXISTING CONTRACTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If, on the day before the date of enactment of this subsection, a State has entered into a contract with a private establishment described in paragraph (1) and the Secretary has not determined that the participation of the private establishment is necessary to meet a documented need in accordance with section 11(e)(25), the Secretary shall allow the operation of the private establishment to continue without that determination of need for a period not to exceed

180 days from the date on which the Secretary establishes determination criteria, by regulation, under section 11(e)(25).

“(B) JUSTIFICATION.—If the Secretary determines to terminate a contract with a private establishment that is in effect on the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall provide justification to the State in which the private establishment is located for that termination.

“(3) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after September 30, 2014, and 90 days after the last day of each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the effectiveness of a program under this subsection using any information received from States under section 11(e)(25) as well as any other information the Secretary may have relating to the manner in which benefits are used.”

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 3(k) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(k)) is amended by inserting “subject to section 9(h)” after “concessional prices” each place it appears.

SEC. 4015. MANDATING STATE IMMIGRATION VERIFICATION.

Section 11 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020) is amended by striking subsection (p) and inserting the following:

“(p) STATE VERIFICATION OPTION.—In carrying out the supplemental nutrition assistance program, a State agency shall be required to use an immigration status verification system established under section 1137 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-7), and an income and eligibility verification system, in accordance with standards set by the Secretary.”

SEC. 4016. DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDIZATION FOR IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY.

(a) DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDIZATION.—Section 11 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2020) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(v) DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS FOR IMPROVED INTEROPERABILITY.—

“(1) DESIGNATION.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with an interagency work group established by the Office of Management and Budget, and considering State government perspectives, designate data exchange standards to govern, under this Act—

“(A) necessary categories of information that State agencies operating related programs are required under applicable law to electronically exchange with another State agency; and

“(B) Federal reporting and data exchange required under applicable law.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The data exchange standards required by paragraph (1) shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(A) incorporate a widely accepted, non-proprietary, searchable, computer-readable format, such as the eXtensible Markup Language;

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

“(C) incorporate interoperable standards developed and maintained by Federal entities with authority over contracting and financial assistance;

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

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

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

“(3) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection requires a change to existing data exchange standards for Federal reporting found to be effective and efficient.”.

(b) APPLICATION DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue a proposed rule to carry out the amendments made by this section.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The rule shall—

(A) identify federally required data exchanges;

(B) include specification and timing of exchanges to be standardized;

(C) address the factors used in determining whether and when to standardize data exchanges;

(D) specify State implementation options; and

(E) describe future milestones.

SEC. 4017. PILOT PROJECTS TO IMPROVE FEDERAL-STATE COOPERATION IN IDENTIFYING AND REDUCING FRAUD IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 12 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2021) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(i) PILOT PROJECTS TO IMPROVE FEDERAL-STATE COOPERATION IN IDENTIFYING AND REDUCING FRAUD IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—

“(1) PILOT PROJECTS REQUIRED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out, under such terms and conditions as are determined by the Secretary, pilot projects to test innovative Federal-State partnerships to identify, investigate, and reduce fraud by retail food stores and wholesale food concerns in the supplemental nutrition assistance program, including allowing States to operate programs to investigate that fraud.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—At least 1 pilot project described in subparagraph (A) shall be carried out in an urban area that is among the 10 largest urban areas in the United States (based on population), if—

“(i) the supplemental nutrition assistance program is separately administered in the area; and

“(ii) if the administration of the supplemental nutrition assistance program in the area complies with the other applicable requirements of the program.

“(2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—Pilot projects shall be selected based on criteria the Secretary establishes, which shall include—

“(A) enhancing existing efforts by the Secretary to reduce fraud described in paragraph (1)(A);

“(B) requiring participant States to maintain the overall level of effort of the States at addressing recipient fraud, as determined by the Secretary, prior to participation in the pilot project;

“(C) collaborating with other law enforcement authorities as necessary to carry out an effective pilot project;

“(D) commitment of the participant State agency to follow Federal rules and procedures with respect to investigations described in paragraph (1)(A); and

“(E) the extent to which a State has committed resources to recipient fraud and the relative success of those efforts.

“(3) EVALUATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall evaluate the pilot projects selected under this subsection to measure the impact of the pilot projects.

“(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The evaluation shall include—

“(i) the impact of each pilot project on increasing the capacity of the Secretary to address fraud described in paragraph (1)(A);

“(ii) the effectiveness of the pilot projects in identifying, preventing and reducing fraud described in paragraph (1)(A); and

“(iii) the cost effectiveness of the pilot projects.

“(4) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2017, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, a report that includes a description of the results of each pilot project, including—

“(A) an evaluation of the impact of the pilot project on fraud described in paragraph (1)(A); and

“(B) the costs associated with the pilot project.

“(5) FUNDING.—Any costs incurred by a State to operate pilot projects under this subsection that are in excess of the amount expended under this Act to identify, investigate, and reduce fraud described in paragraph (1)(A) in the respective State in the previous fiscal year shall not be eligible for Federal reimbursement under this Act.”.

SEC. 4018. PROHIBITING GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) ADMINISTRATIVE COST-SHARING AND QUALITY CONTROL.—Section 16(a)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(a)(4)) is amended by inserting after “recruitment activities” the following: “designed to persuade an individual to apply for program benefits or that promote the program through television, radio, or billboard advertisements”.

(b) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS AUTHORIZED TO BE APPROPRIATED UNDER ACT.—Section 18 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) BAN ON RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no funds authorized to be appropriated under this Act shall be used by the Secretary for—

“(A) recruitment activities designed to persuade an individual to apply for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits;

“(B) television, radio, or billboard advertisements that are designed to promote supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits and enrollment; or

“(C) any agreements with foreign governments designed to promote supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits and enrollment.

“(2) LIMITATION.—Paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to programmatic activities undertaken with respect to benefits made under section 5(h).”.

(c) BAN ON RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES BY ENTITIES THAT RECEIVE FUNDS.—Section 18 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027) (as amended by subsection (b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) BAN ON RECRUITMENT BY ENTITIES THAT RECEIVE FUNDS.—The Secretary shall issue regulations that prohibit entities that receive funds under this Act to compensate any person for conducting outreach activities relating to participation in, or for recruiting individuals to apply to receive benefits under, the supplemental nutrition assistance program, if the amount of the compensation would be based on the number of individuals who apply to receive the benefits.”.

SEC. 4019. TOLERANCE LEVEL FOR EXCLUDING SMALL ERRORS.

Section 16(c)(1)(A) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(c)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “In carrying” and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In carrying”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) TOLERANCE LEVEL FOR EXCLUDING SMALL ERRORS.—The Secretary shall set the tolerance level for excluding small errors for the purposes of this subsection—

“(I) for fiscal year 2014, at an amount not greater than \$37; and

“(II) for each fiscal year thereafter, the amount specified in subclause (I) adjusted by the percentage by which the thrifty food plan is adjusted under section 3(u)(4) between June 30, 2013, and June 30 of the immediately preceding fiscal year.”.

SEC. 4020. QUALITY CONTROL STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 16(c)(1)(D)(i) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(c)(1)(D)(i)) is amended by striking subclause (I).

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 13(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2022(a)(1)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “section 16(c)(1)(D)(i)(III)” and inserting “section 16(c)(1)(D)(i)(II)”.

(2) Section 16(c)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(c)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (D)—

(i) in clause (i)—

(I) by redesignating subclauses (II) through (IV) as subclauses (I) through (III), respectively; and

(II) in subclause (III) (as so redesignated), by striking “through (III)” and inserting “and (II)”; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking “waiver amount or”;

(B) in subparagraph (E)(i), by striking “(D)(i)(III)” and inserting “(D)(i)(II)”; and

(C) in subparagraph (F), by striking “(D)(i)(II)” each place it appears and inserting “(D)(i)(I)”.

SEC. 4021. PERFORMANCE BONUS PAYMENTS.

Section 16(d) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) USE OF PERFORMANCE BONUS PAYMENTS.—A State agency may use a performance bonus payment received under this subsection only to carry out the program established under this Act, including investments in—

“(A) technology;

“(B) improvements in administration and distribution; and

“(C) actions to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.”.

SEC. 4022. PILOT PROJECTS TO REDUCE DEPENDENCY AND INCREASE WORK REQUIREMENTS AND WORK EFFORT UNDER SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 16(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “15 months” and inserting “24 months”; and

(ii) by striking “, except that for fiscal year 2013 and fiscal year 2014, the amount shall be \$79,000,000”;

(B) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking “If a State” and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If a State”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) **TIMING.**—The Secretary shall collect such information as the Secretary determines to be necessary about the expenditures and anticipated expenditures by the State agencies of the funds initially allocated to the State agencies under subparagraph (A) to make reallocations of unexpended funds under clause (i) within a time-frame that allows each State agency to which funds are reallocated at least 270 days to expend the reallocated funds.

“(iii) **OPPORTUNITY.**—The Secretary shall ensure that all State agencies have an opportunity to obtain reallocated funds.”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) **PILOT PROJECTS TO REDUCE DEPENDENCY AND INCREASE WORK REQUIREMENTS AND WORK EFFORT UNDER SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**—

“(i) **PILOT PROJECTS REQUIRED.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall carry out pilot projects under which State agencies shall enter into cooperative agreements with the Secretary to develop and test methods, including operating work programs with certain features comparable to the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), for employment and training programs and services to raise the number of work registrants under section 6(d) of this Act who obtain unsubsidized employment, increase the earned income of the registrants, and reduce the reliance of the registrants on public assistance, so as to reduce the need for supplemental nutrition assistance benefits.

“(II) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Pilot projects shall—

“(aa) meet such terms and conditions as the Secretary considers to be appropriate; and

“(bb) except as otherwise provided in this subparagraph, be in accordance with the requirements of sections 6(d) and 20.

“(ii) **SELECTION CRITERIA.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall select pilot projects under this subparagraph in accordance with the criteria established under this clause and additional criteria established by the Secretary.

“(II) **QUALIFYING CRITERIA.**—To be eligible to participate in a pilot project, a State agency shall—

“(aa) agree to participate in the evaluation described in clause (vii), including providing evidence that the State has a robust data collection system for program administration and cooperating to make available State data on the employment activities and post-participation employment, earnings, and public benefit receipt of participants to ensure proper and timely evaluation;

“(bb) commit to collaborate with the State workforce board and other job training programs in the State and local area; and

“(cc) commit to maintain at least the amount of State funding for employment and training programs and services under paragraphs (2) and (3) and under section 20 as the State expended for fiscal year 2013.

“(III) **SELECTION CRITERIA.**—In selecting pilot projects, the Secretary shall—

“(aa) consider the degree to which the pilot project would enhance existing employment and training programs in the State;

“(bb) consider the degree to which the pilot project would enhance the employment and earnings of program participants;

“(cc) consider whether there is evidence that the pilot project could be replicated easily by other States or political subdivisions;

“(dd) consider whether the State agency has a demonstrated capacity to operate high quality employment and training programs; and

“(ee) ensure the pilot projects, when considered as a group, test a range of strategies, including strategies that—

“(AA) target individuals with low skills or limited work experience, individuals subject to the requirements under section 6(o), and individuals who are working;

“(BB) are located in a range of geographic areas and States, including rural and urban areas;

“(CC) emphasize education and training, rehabilitative services for individuals with barriers to employment, rapid attachment to employment, and mixed strategies; and

“(DD) test programs that assign work registrants to mandatory and voluntary participation in employment and training activities.

“(iii) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall establish and implement a process to terminate a pilot project for which the State has failed to meet the criteria described in clause (ii) or other criteria established by the Secretary.

“(II) **TIMING.**—The process shall include a reasonable time period, not to exceed 180 days, for State agencies found noncompliant to correct the noncompliance.

“(iv) **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.**—Allowable programs and services carried out under this subparagraph shall include those programs and services authorized under this Act and employment and training activities authorized under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), including:

“(I) Employment in the public or private sector that is not subsidized by any public program.

“(II) Employment in the private sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from public funds to offset all or a part of the wages and costs of employing an adult.

“(III) Employment in the public sector for which the employer receives a subsidy from public funds to offset all or a part of the wages and costs of employing an adult.

“(IV) A work activity that—

“(aa) is performed in return for public benefits;

“(bb) provides an adult with an opportunity to acquire the general skills, knowledge, and work habits necessary to obtain employment;

“(cc) is designed to improve the employability of those who cannot find unsubsidized employment; and

“(dd) is supervised by an employer, work site sponsor, or other responsible party on an ongoing basis.

“(V) Training in the public or private sector that—

“(aa) is given to a paid employee while the employee is engaged in productive work; and

“(bb) provides knowledge and skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job.

“(VI) Job search, obtaining employment, or preparation to seek or obtain employment, including—

“(aa) life skills training;

“(bb) substance abuse treatment or mental health treatment, determined to be necessary and documented by a qualified medical, substance abuse, or mental health professional; and

“(cc) rehabilitation activities, supervised by a public agency or other responsible party on an ongoing basis.

“(VII) Structured programs and embedded activities—

“(aa) in which adults perform work for the direct benefit of the community under the auspices of public or nonprofit organizations;

“(bb) that are limited to projects that serve useful community purposes in fields such as health, social service, environmental protection, education, urban and rural redevelopment, welfare, recreation, public facilities, public safety, and child care;

“(cc) that are designed to improve the employability of adults not otherwise able to obtain unsubsidized employment;

“(dd) that are supervised on an ongoing basis; and

“(ee) with respect to which a State agency takes into account, to the maximum extent practicable, the prior training, experience, and skills of a recipient in making appropriate community service assignments.

“(VIII) Career and technical training programs that are—

“(aa) directly related to the preparation of adults for employment in current or emerging occupations; and

“(bb) supervised on an ongoing basis.

“(IX) Training or education for job skills that are—

“(aa) required by an employer to provide an adult with the ability to obtain employment or to advance or adapt to the changing demands of the workplace; and

“(bb) supervised on an ongoing basis.

“(X) Education that is—

“(aa) related to a specific occupation, job, or job offer; and

“(bb) supervised on an ongoing basis.

“(XI) In the case of an adult who has not completed secondary school or received a certificate of general equivalence, regular attendance that is—

“(aa) in accordance with the requirements of the secondary school or course of study, at a secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence; and

“(bb) supervised on an ongoing basis.

“(XII) Providing child care to enable another recipient of public benefits to participate in a community service program that—

“(aa) does not provide compensation for the community service;

“(bb) is a structured program designed to improve the employability of adults who participate in the program; and

“(cc) is supervised on an ongoing basis.

“(v) **SANCTIONS.**—Subject to clause (vi), no work registrant shall be eligible to participate in the supplemental nutrition assistance program if the individual refuses without good cause to participate in an employment and training program under this subparagraph, to the extent required by the State agency.

“(vi) **STANDARDS.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—Employment and training activities under this subparagraph shall be considered to be carried out under section 6(d), including for the purpose of satisfying any conditions of participation and duration of ineligibility.

“(II) **STANDARDS FOR CERTAIN EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary shall establish standards for employment activities described in subclauses (I), (II), and (III) of clause (iv) that ensure that failure to work for reasons beyond the control of an individual, such as involuntary reduction in hours of employment, shall not result in ineligibility.

“(III) PARTICIPATION IN OTHER PROGRAMS.—Before assigning a work registrant to mandatory employment and training activities, a State agency shall—

“(aa) assess whether the work registrant is participating in substantial employment and training activities outside of the pilot project that are expected to result in the work registrant gaining increased skills, training, work, or experience consistent with the objectives of the pilot project; and

“(bb) if determined to be acceptable, count hours engaged in the activities toward any minimum participation requirement.

“(vii) EVALUATION AND REPORTING.—

“(I) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—

“(aa) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, under such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, conduct for each State agency that enters into a cooperative agreement under clause (i) an independent longitudinal evaluation of each pilot project of the State agency under this subparagraph, with results reported not less frequently than in consecutive 12-month increments.

“(bb) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the independent evaluation shall be to measure the impact of employment and training programs and services provided by each State agency under the pilot projects on the ability of adults in each pilot project target population to find and retain employment that leads to increased household income and reduced reliance on public assistance, as well as other measures of household well-being, compared to what would have occurred in the absence of the pilot project.

“(cc) METHODOLOGY.—The independent evaluation shall use valid statistical methods that can determine, for each pilot project, the difference, if any, between supplemental nutrition assistance and other public benefit receipt expenditures, employment, earnings and other impacts as determined by the Secretary—

“(AA) as a result of the employment and training programs and services provided by the State agency under the pilot project; as compared to

“(BB) a control group that is not subject to the employment and training programs and services provided by the State agency under the pilot project.

“(II) REPORTING.—Not later than December 31, 2015, and each December 31 thereafter until the completion of the last evaluation under subclause (I), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and share broadly, including by posting on the Internet website of the Department of Agriculture, a report that includes a description of—

“(aa) the status of each pilot project carried out under this subparagraph;

“(bb) the results of the evaluation completed during the previous fiscal year;

“(cc) to the maximum extent practicable, baseline information relevant to the stated goals and desired outcomes of the pilot project;

“(dd) the employment and training programs and services each State tested under the pilot, including—

“(AA) the system of the State for assessing the ability of work registrants to participate in and meet the requirements of employment and training activities and assigning work registrants to appropriate activities; and

“(BB) the employment and training activities and services provided under the pilot;

“(ee) the impact of the employment and training programs and services on appro-

priate employment, income, and public benefit receipt as well as other outcomes among households participating in the pilot project, relative to households not participating; and

“(ff) the steps and funding necessary to incorporate into State employment and training programs and services the components of the pilot projects that demonstrate increased employment and earnings.

“(viii) FUNDING.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclause (II), from amounts made available under section 18(a)(1), the Secretary shall use to carry out this subparagraph—

“(aa) for fiscal year 2014, \$10,000,000; and

“(bb) for fiscal year 2015, \$190,000,000.

“(II) LIMITATIONS.—

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall not fund more than 10 pilot projects under this subparagraph.

“(bb) DURATION.—Each pilot project shall be in effect for not more than 3 years.

“(III) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Funds made available under subclause (I) shall remain available through September 30, 2018.

“(ix) USE OF FUNDS.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Funds made available under this subparagraph for pilot projects shall be used only for—

“(aa) pilot projects that comply with this Act;

“(bb) the program and administrative costs of carrying out the pilot projects;

“(cc) the costs incurred in developing systems and providing information and data for the independent evaluations under clause (vii); and

“(dd) the costs of the evaluations under clause (vii).

“(II) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—Funds made available under this subparagraph shall be used only to supplement, not to supplant, non-Federal funds used for existing employment and training activities or services.

“(III) OTHER FUNDS.—In carrying out pilot projects, States may contribute additional funds obtained from other sources, including Federal, State, or private funds, on the condition that the use of the contributions is permissible under Federal law.”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

“(5) MONITORING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall monitor the employment and training programs carried out by State agencies under section 6(d)(4) and assess the effectiveness of the programs in—

“(i) preparing members of households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program for employment, including the acquisition of basic skills necessary for employment; and

“(ii) increasing the number of household members who obtain and retain employment subsequent to participation in the employment and training programs.

“(B) REPORTING MEASURES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, shall develop State reporting measures that identify improvements in the skills, training, education, or work experience of members of households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

“(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—Measures shall—

“(I) be based on common measures of performance for Federal workforce training programs; and

“(II) include additional indicators that reflect the challenges facing the types of members of households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program who

participate in a specific employment and training component.

“(iii) STATE REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall require that each State employment and training plan submitted under section 11(e)(19) identifies appropriate reporting measures for each proposed component that serves a threshold number of participants determined by the Secretary of at least 100 people a year.

“(iv) INCLUSIONS.—Reporting measures described in clause (iii) may include—

“(I) the percentage and number of program participants who received employment and training services and are in unsubsidized employment subsequent to the receipt of those services;

“(II) the percentage and number of program participants who obtain a recognized credential, including a registered apprenticeship, or a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, while participating in, or within 1 year after receiving, employment and training services;

“(III) the percentage and number of program participants who are in an education or training program that is intended to lead to a recognized credential, including a registered apprenticeship or on-the-job training program, a regular secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or unsubsidized employment;

“(IV) subject to terms and conditions established by the Secretary, measures developed by each State agency to assess the skills acquisition of employment and training program participants that reflect the goals of the specific employment and training program components of the State agency, which may include, at a minimum—

“(aa) the percentage and number of program participants who are meeting program requirements in each component of the education and training program of the State agency;

“(bb) the percentage and number of program participants who are gaining skills likely to lead to employment as measured through testing, quantitative or qualitative assessment, or other method; and

“(cc) the percentage and number of program participants who do not comply with employment and training requirements and who are ineligible under section 6(b); and

“(V) other indicators approved by the Secretary.

“(C) OVERSIGHT OF STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall assess State employment and training programs on a periodic basis to ensure—

“(i) compliance with Federal employment and training program rules and regulations;

“(ii) that program activities are appropriate to meet the needs of the individuals referred by the State agency to an employment and training program component;

“(iii) that reporting measures are appropriate to identify improvements in skills, training, work and experience for participants in an employment and training program component; and

“(iv) for States receiving additional allocations under paragraph (1)(E), any information the Secretary may require to evaluate the compliance of the State agency with paragraph (1), which may include—

“(I) a report for each fiscal year of the number of individuals in the State who meet the conditions of paragraph (1)(E)(ii), the number of individuals the State agency offers a position in a program described in subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 6(o)(2), and the number who participate in such a program;

“(II) a description of the types of employment and training programs the State agency uses to comply with paragraph (1)(E) and the availability of those programs throughout the State; and

“(III) any additional information the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(D) STATE REPORT.—Each State agency shall annually prepare and submit to the Secretary a report on the State employment and training program that includes, using measures identified under subparagraph (B), the numbers of supplemental nutrition assistance program participants who have gained skills, training, work, or experience that will increase the ability of the participants to obtain regular employment.

“(E) MODIFICATIONS TO THE STATE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PLAN.—Subject to terms and conditions established by the Secretary, if the Secretary determines that the performance of a State agency with respect to employment and training outcomes is inadequate, the Secretary may require the State agency to make modifications to the State employment and training plan to improve the outcomes.

“(F) PERIODIC EVALUATION.—Subject to terms and conditions established by the Secretary, not later than October 1, 2016, and not less frequently than once every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall conduct a study to review existing practice and research to identify employment and training program components and practices that—

“(i) effectively assist members of households participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program in gaining skills, training, work, or experience that will increase the ability of the participants to obtain regular employment; and

“(ii) are best integrated with statewide workforce development systems.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

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

(A) in subsection (d)(14), by inserting “or a pilot project under section 16(h)(1)(F)” after “6(d)(4)(I)”;

(B) in subsection (e)(3)(B)(iii), by inserting “or a pilot project under section 16(h)(1)(F)” after “6(d)(4)”;

(C) in subsection (g)(3), in the first sentence, by inserting “or a pilot project under section 16(h)(1)(F)” after “6(d)”.

(2) Section 16(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(h)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3), by inserting “or a pilot project under paragraph (1)(F)” after “6(d)(4)”; and

(B) in paragraph (4), by inserting “or a pilot project under paragraph (1)(F)” after “6(d)(4)”.

(3) Section 17(b)(1)(B)(iv)(III)(hh) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2026(b)(1)(B)(iv)(III)(hh)) is amended by inserting “(h)(1)(F),” after “(g),”.

(c) APPLICATION DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section (other than the amendments made by subsection (a)(2)) shall apply beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) PROCESS FOR SELECTING PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(i) develop and publish the process for selecting pilot projects under section 16(h)(1)(F) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (as added by subsection (a)(1)(C)); and

(ii) issue such request for proposals for the independent evaluation as is determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(B) APPLICATION.—The Secretary shall begin considering proposals not earlier than 90 days after the date on which the Secretary completes the actions described in subparagraph (A).

(C) SELECTION.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary completes the actions described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall select pilot projects from the applications submitted in response to the request for proposals issued under subparagraph (A).

(3) MONITORING OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue interim final regulations implementing the amendments made by subsection (a)(2).

(B) STATE ACTION.—States shall include reporting measures required under section 16(h)(5) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (as amended by subsection (a)(2)) in the employment and training plans of the States for the first full fiscal year that begins not earlier than 180 days after the date that the regulations described in subparagraph (A) are published.

SEC. 4023. COOPERATION WITH PROGRAM RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.

Section 17 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2026) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(1) COOPERATION WITH PROGRAM RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—Subject to the requirements of this Act, including protections under section 11(e)(8), States, State agencies, local agencies, institutions, facilities such as data consortiums, and contractors participating in programs authorized under this Act shall—

“(1) cooperate with officials and contractors acting on behalf of the Secretary in the conduct of evaluations and studies under this Act; and

“(2) submit information at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require.”.

SEC. 4024. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 18(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027(a)(1)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 4025. REVIEW, REPORT, AND REGULATION OF CASH NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS PROVIDED IN PUERTO RICO.

Section 19 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2028) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) REVIEW, REPORT, AND REGULATION OF CASH NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS PROVIDED IN PUERTO RICO.—

“(1) REVIEW.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall carry out a review of the provision of nutrition assistance in Puerto Rico in the form of cash benefits under this section that shall include—

“(A) an examination of the history of and purpose for distribution of a portion of monthly benefits in the form of cash;

“(B) an examination of current barriers to the redemption of non-cash benefits by current program participants and retailers;

“(C) an examination of current usage of cash benefits for the purchase of non-food and other prohibited items;

“(D) an identification and assessment of potential adverse effects of the discontinuation of a portion of benefits in the form of cash for program participants and retailers; and

“(E) an examination of such other factors as the Secretary determines to be relevant.

“(2) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, a report that describes the results of the review conducted under this subsection.

“(3) REGULATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), and notwithstanding the second sentence of subsection (b)(1)(B)(i), the Secretary shall disapprove any plan submitted pursuant to subsection (b)(1)(A)—

“(i) for fiscal year 2017 that provides for the distribution of more than 20 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash;

“(ii) for fiscal year 2018 that provides for the distribution of more than 15 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash;

“(iii) for fiscal year 2019 that provides for the distribution of more than 10 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash;

“(iv) for fiscal year 2020 that provides for the distribution of more than 5 percent of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash; and

“(v) for fiscal year 2021 that provides for the distribution of any portion of the nutrition assistance benefit of a participant in the form of cash.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary, informed by the report required under paragraph (2), may approve a plan that exempts participants or categories of participants if the Secretary determines that discontinuation of benefits in the form of cash is likely to have significant adverse effects.

“(4) FUNDING.—Out of any funds made available under section 18 for fiscal year 2014, the Secretary shall make available to carry out the review and report described in paragraphs (1) and (2) \$1,000,000, to remain available until expended.”.

SEC. 4026. ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS.

Section 25 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2034) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) in clause (i)—

(I) in subclause (I), by inserting after “individuals” the following: “through food distribution, community outreach to assist in participation in Federally assisted nutrition programs, or improving access to food as part of a comprehensive service;”; and

(II) in subclause (III), by inserting “food access,” after “food;”; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking subclause (I) and inserting the following:

“(I) equipment necessary for the efficient operation of a project;”; and

(B) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following:

“(2) GLEANER.—The term ‘gleaner’ means an entity that—

“(A) collects edible, surplus food that would be thrown away and distributes the food to agencies or nonprofit organizations that feed the hungry; or

“(B) harvests for free distribution to the needy, or for donation to agencies or nonprofit organizations for ultimate distribution to the needy, an agricultural crop that has been donated by the owner of the crop.

“(3) HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITIES GOAL.—The term ‘hunger-free communities goal’ means any of the 14 goals described in House Concurrent Resolution 302, 102nd Congress, agreed to October 5, 1992.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—
(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “fiscal year 2008 and each fiscal year thereafter.” and inserting the following: “each of fiscal years 2008 through 2014; and

“(C) \$9,000,000 for fiscal year 2015 and each fiscal year thereafter.”;

(3) in subsection (c)—
(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “private nonprofit entity” and inserting “public food program service provider, a tribal organization, or a private nonprofit entity, including gleaners.”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—
(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or” after the semicolon at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “or” after the semicolon at the end; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:
“(C) efforts to reduce food insecurity in the community, including food distribution, improving access to services, or coordinating services and programs.”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(D) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(E) by adding at the end the following:
“(4) collaborate with 1 or more local partner organizations to achieve at least 1 hunger-free communities goal.”;

(4) in subsection (d)—
(A) in paragraph (3), by striking “or” after the semicolon at the end;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(C) by adding at the end the following:
“(5) develop new resources and strategies to help reduce food insecurity in the community and prevent food insecurity in the future by—
“(A) developing creative food resources;
“(B) coordinating food services with park and recreation programs and other community-based outlets to reduce barriers to access; or
“(C) creating nutrition education programs for at-risk populations to enhance food-purchasing and food-preparation skills and to heighten awareness of the connection between diet and health.”;

(5) in subsection (f)(2), by striking “3 years” and inserting “5 years”;

(6) by striking subsections (h) and (i) and inserting the following:

“(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2014, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes each grant made under this section, including—
“(1) a description of any activity funded;
“(2) the degree of success of each activity funded in achieving hunger-free community goals; and
“(3) the degree of success in improving the long-term capacity of a community to address food and agriculture problems related to hunger or access to healthy food.”.

(7) by striking subsections (h) and (i) and inserting the following:

“(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2014, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes each grant made under this section, including—
“(1) a description of any activity funded;
“(2) the degree of success of each activity funded in achieving hunger-free community goals; and
“(3) the degree of success in improving the long-term capacity of a community to address food and agriculture problems related to hunger or access to healthy food.”.

(8) by striking subsections (h) and (i) and inserting the following:

“(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2014, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes each grant made under this section, including—
“(1) a description of any activity funded;
“(2) the degree of success of each activity funded in achieving hunger-free community goals; and
“(3) the degree of success in improving the long-term capacity of a community to address food and agriculture problems related to hunger or access to healthy food.”.

SEC. 4027. EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE.

(a) PURCHASE OF COMMODITIES.—Section 27(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2036(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “2008 through 2012” and inserting “2014 through 2018”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—
(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C)—
(i) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:
“(D) for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2018, the sum obtained by adding the total dollar amount of commodities specified in subparagraph (C) and—
“(i) for fiscal year 2015, \$50,000,000;
“(ii) for fiscal year 2016, \$40,000,000;
“(iii) for fiscal year 2017, \$20,000,000; and
“(iv) for fiscal year 2018, \$15,000,000; and
“(E) for fiscal year 2019 and each subsequent fiscal year, the total dollar amount of commodities specified in subparagraph (D)(iv) adjusted by the percentage by which the thrifty food plan has been adjusted under section 3(u)(4) to reflect changes between June 30, 2017, and June 30 of the immediately preceding fiscal year.”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:
“(3) FUNDS AVAILABILITY.—For purposes of the funds described in this subsection, the Secretary shall—

“(A) make the funds available for 2 fiscal years; and

“(B) allow States to carry over unexpended balances to the next fiscal year pursuant to such terms and conditions as are determined by the Secretary.”.

(b) EMERGENCY FOOD PROGRAM INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS.—Section 209(d) of the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7511a(d)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 4028. NUTRITION EDUCATION.

Section 28(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2036a(b)) is amended by inserting “and physical activity” after “healthy food choices”.

SEC. 4029. RETAIL FOOD STORE AND RECIPIENT TRAFFICKING.

The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:
“**SEC. 29. RETAIL FOOD STORE AND RECIPIENT TRAFFICKING.**
“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide the Department of Agriculture with additional resources to prevent trafficking in violation of this Act by strengthening recipient and retail food store program integrity.
“(b) USE OF FUNDS.—
“(1) IN GENERAL.—Additional funds are provided under this section to supplement the retail food store and recipient integrity activities of the Department.
“(2) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.—The Secretary shall use an appropriate amount of the funds provided under this section to employ information technologies known as data mining and data warehousing and other available information technologies to administer the supplemental nutrition assistance program and enforce regulations promulgated under section 4(c).
“(c) FUNDING.—
“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.
“(2) MANDATORY FUNDING.—
“(A) IN GENERAL.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary to carry out this section not less than \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended.
“(B) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this section the funds transferred under subparagraph (A), without further appropriation.
“(C) MAINTENANCE OF FUNDING.—The funding provided under subparagraph (A) shall supplement (and not supplant) other Federal

funding for programs carried out under this Act.”.

SEC. 4030. TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

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

(1) in subsection (g), by striking “coupon,” the last place it appears and inserting “coupon”;

(2) in subsection (k)(7), by striking “or are” and inserting “and”;

(3) by striking subsection (l);

(4) by redesignating subsections (m) through (t) as subsections (l) through (s), respectively; and

(5) by inserting after subsection (s) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(t) ‘Supplemental nutrition assistance program’ means the program operated pursuant to this Act.”.

(b) Section 4(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2013(a)) is amended in the last sentence by striking “benefits” and inserting “Benefits”.

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

(1) in the last sentence of subsection (i)(2)(D), by striking “section 13(b)(2)” and inserting “section 13(b)”;

(2) in subsection (k)(4)(A), by striking “paragraph (2)(H)” and inserting “paragraph (2)(G)”.

(d) Section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)) is amended in subparagraphs (B)(vii) and (F)(iii) by indenting both clauses appropriately.

(e) Section 7(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016(h)) is amended by redesignating the second paragraph (12) (relating to interchange fees) as paragraph (13).

(f) Section 9(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2018(a)) is amended by indenting paragraph (3) appropriately.

(g) Section 12 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2021) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(3)(C), by striking “civil money penalties” and inserting “civil penalties”;

(2) in subsection (g)(1), by striking “(7 U.S.C. 1786)” and inserting “(42 U.S.C. 1786)”.

(h) Section 15(b)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2024(b)(1)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “an benefit” both places it appears and inserting “a benefit”.

(i) Section 16(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(a)) is amended in the proviso following paragraph (8) by striking “as amended.”.

(j) Section 18(e) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027(e)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “sections 7(f)” and inserting “section 7(f)”.

(k) Section 22(b)(10)(B)(i) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2031(b)(10)(B)(i)) is amended in the last sentence by striking “Food benefits” and inserting “Benefits”.

(l) Section 26(f)(3)(C) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2035(f)(3)(C)) is amended by striking “subsection” and inserting “subsections”.

(m) Section 27(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2036(a)(1)) is amended by striking “(Public Law 98-8; 7 U.S.C. 612c note)” and inserting “(7 U.S.C. 7515)”.

(n) Section 115 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (21 U.S.C. 862a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), by striking “food stamp program (as defined in section 3(1) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977) or any State program carried out under the Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “supplemental nutrition assistance program (as defined in section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008

(7 U.S.C. 2012)) or any State program carried out under that Act”;

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking “THE FOOD STAMP ACT OF 1977” and inserting “THE FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008”; and

(B) by striking “food stamp program (as defined in section 3(l) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977), or any State program carried out under the Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “supplemental nutrition assistance program (as defined in section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012)), or any State program carried out under that Act”; and

(3) in subsection (e)(2), by striking “section 3(s) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, when referring to the food stamp program (as defined in section 3(l) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977) or any State program carried out under the Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), when referring to the supplemental nutrition assistance program (as defined in that section) or any State program carried out under that Act”.

(o) Section 3803(c)(2)(C)(vii) of title 31 of the United States Code is amended by striking “section 3(l)” and inserting “section 3”.

(p) Section 453(j)(10) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 653(j)(10)) is amended in the paragraph heading by striking “FOOD STAMP PROGRAMS” and inserting “SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS”.

(q) Section 1137 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-7)—

(1) in subsection (a)(5)(B), by striking “food stamp” and inserting “supplemental nutrition assistance”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(4), by striking “food stamp program under the Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.)”.

(r) Section 1631(n) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1383) is amended in the subsection heading by striking “FOOD STAMP” and inserting “SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE”.

(s) Section 509 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056g) is amended in the section heading by striking “FOOD STAMP PROGRAMS” and inserting “SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS”.

(t) Section 4(a) of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 93-86) is amended by striking “Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “Food and Nutrition Act of 2008”.

(u) Section 5 of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 93-86) is amended—

(1) in subsection (h)(1), by striking “food stamps” and inserting “the supplemental nutrition assistance program”; and

(2) in subsection (i)(1), by striking “food stamps provided under the Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “supplemental nutrition assistance benefits provided under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008”; and

(3) in subsection (l)(2)(B), by striking “Food Stamp Act of 1977” and inserting “Food and Nutrition Act of 2008”.

(v) Section 4115(c)(2)(H) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 1871) is amended by striking “531” and inserting “454”.

SEC. 4031. COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Prior to establishing the pilot program under subsection (b), the Secretary shall conduct a study to be completed

not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act to assess—

(A) the capabilities of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to operate the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) in a similar manner as the program is operated in the States (as defined in section 3 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2012)); and

(B) alternative models of the supplemental nutrition assistance program operation and benefit delivery that best meet the nutrition assistance needs of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(2) SCOPE.—The study conducted under paragraph (1)(A) shall assess the capability of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to fulfill the responsibilities of a State agency (as defined in section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012)), including—

(A) extending and limiting participation to eligible households, as required by sections 5 and 6 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2014, 2015);

(B) issuing benefits through EBT cards, as required by section 7 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2016);

(C) maintaining the integrity of the program, including operation of a quality control system, as required by section 16(c) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2025(c));

(D) implementing work requirements, including operating an employment and training program, as required by section 6(d) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)); and

(E) paying a share of administrative costs with non-Federal funds, as required by section 16(a) of that Act (7 U.S.C. 2016(a)).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—If the Secretary determines that a pilot program is feasible, the Secretary shall establish a pilot program for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to operate the supplemental nutrition assistance program in the same manner in which the program is operated in the States.

(c) SCOPE.—The Secretary shall use the information obtained from the study conducted under subsection (a) to establish the scope of the pilot program established under subsection (b).

(d) REPORT.—Not later than June 30, 2019, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the pilot program carried out under this section, including an analysis of the feasibility of operating the supplemental nutrition assistance program in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the same manner in which the program is operated in the States.

(e) FUNDING.—

(1) STUDY.—Of the funds made available under section 18(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027(a)(1)), the Secretary may use to conduct the study described in subsection (a) not more than \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015.

(2) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), of the funds made available under section 18(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027(a)(1)), the Secretary may use to establish and carry out the pilot program under subsection (b), including the Federal costs for providing technical assistance to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, authorizing and monitoring retail food stores, and assessing pilot operations, not more than—

(i) \$13,500,000 for fiscal year 2016; and

(ii) \$8,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

(B) EXCEPTION.—If the Secretary determines that a pilot program described in subsection (b) is not feasible, the Secretary shall provide to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands any unspent funds described in subparagraph (A), which shall—

(i) be made available for obligation under the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands nutrition assistance program block grant in addition to any other funds made available for that grant; and

(ii) remain available until expended.

SEC. 4032. ANNUAL STATE REPORT ON VERIFICATION OF SNAP PARTICIPATION.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date specified by the Secretary during the 180-day period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, each State agency that carries out the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) shall submit to the Secretary a report containing sufficient information for the Secretary to determine whether the State agency has, for the most recently concluded fiscal year preceding that annual date, verified that the State agency in that fiscal year—

(1) did not issue benefits to a deceased individual; and

(2) did not issue benefits to an individual who had been permanently disqualified from receiving benefits.

(b) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—For any fiscal year for which a State agency fails to comply with subsection (a), the Secretary shall impose a penalty that includes a reduction of up to 50 percent of the amount that would be otherwise payable to the State agency under section 16(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2025(a)) with respect to that fiscal year.

(c) REPORT OF PILOT PROGRAM TO TEST PREVENTION OF DUPLICATE PARTICIPATION.—Not later than 90 days after the completion in multiple States of a temporary pilot program to test the detection and prevention of duplicate participation by beneficiaries of the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report assessing the feasibility, effectiveness, and cost for the expansion of the pilot program nationwide.

SEC. 4033. SERVICE OF TRADITIONAL FOODS IN PUBLIC FACILITIES.

(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

(1) to provide access to traditional foods in food service programs;

(2) to encourage increased consumption of traditional foods to decrease health disparities among Indians, particularly Alaska Natives; and

(3) to provide alternative food options for food service programs.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ALASKA NATIVE.—The term “Alaska Native” means a person who is a member of any Native village, Village Corporation, or Regional Corporation (as those terms are defined in section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602)).

(2) COMMISSIONER.—The term “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

(3) **FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM.**—The term “food service program” includes—

(A) food service at residential child care facilities that have a license from an appropriate State agency;

(B) any child nutrition program (as that term is defined in section 25(b) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769f(b));

(C) food service at hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities; and

(D) senior meal programs.

(4) **INDIAN; INDIAN TRIBE.**—The terms “Indian” and “Indian tribe” have the meanings given those terms in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(5) **TRADITIONAL FOOD.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “traditional food” means food that has traditionally been prepared and consumed by an Indian tribe.

(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term “traditional food” includes—

(i) wild game meat;

(ii) fish;

(iii) seafood;

(iv) marine mammals;

(v) plants; and

(vi) berries.

(6) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.**—The term “tribal organization” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(c) **PROGRAM.**—The Secretary and the Commissioner shall allow the donation to and serving of traditional food through food service programs at public facilities and non-profit facilities, including facilities operated by Indian tribes and facilities operated by tribal organizations, that primarily serve Indians if the operator of the food service program—

(1) ensures that the food is received whole, gutted, gilled, as quarters, or as a roast, without further processing;

(2) makes a reasonable determination that—

(A) the animal was not diseased;

(B) the food was butchered, dressed, transported, and stored to prevent contamination, undesirable microbial growth, or deterioration; and

(C) the food will not cause a significant health hazard or potential for human illness;

(3) carries out any further preparation or processing of the food at a different time or in a different space from the preparation or processing of other food for the applicable program to prevent cross-contamination;

(4) cleans and sanitizes food-contact surfaces of equipment and utensils after processing the traditional food;

(5) labels donated traditional food with the name of the food;

(6) stores the traditional food separately from other food for the applicable program, including through storage in a separate freezer or refrigerator or in a separate compartment or shelf in the freezer or refrigerator;

(7) follows Federal, State, local, county, tribal, or other non-Federal law regarding the safe preparation and service of food in public or nonprofit facilities; and

(8) follows other such criteria as established by the Secretary and Commissioner.

(d) **LIABILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The United States, an Indian tribe, and a tribal organization shall not be liable in any civil action for any damage, injury, or death caused to any person by the donation to or serving of traditional foods through food service programs.

(2) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in paragraph (1) alters any liability or other obligation of the United States under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 1450 et seq.).

Subtitle B—Commodity Distribution Programs

SEC. 4101. COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM.

Section 4(a) of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 93-86) is amended in the first sentence by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 4102. COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM.

Section 5 of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 93-86) is amended—

(1) in paragraphs (1) and (2)(B) of subsection (a), by striking “2012” each place it appears and inserting “2018”;

(2) in the first sentence of subsection (d)(2), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(3) by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following:

“(g) **ELIGIBILITY.**—Except as provided in subsection (m), the States shall only provide assistance under the commodity supplemental food program to low-income persons aged 60 and older.”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(m) **PHASE-OUT.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an individual who receives assistance under the commodity supplemental food program on the day before the date of enactment of this subsection shall continue to receive that assistance until the date on which the individual is no longer eligible for assistance under the eligibility requirements for the program in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this subsection.”.

SEC. 4103. DISTRIBUTION OF SURPLUS COMMODITIES TO SPECIAL NUTRITION PROJECTS.

Section 1114(a)(2)(A) of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (7 U.S.C. 1431e(2)(A)) is amended in the first sentence by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 4104. PROCESSING OF COMMODITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 17 of the Commodity Distribution Reform Act and WIC Amendments of 1987 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 100-237) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “**AND PROCESSING**” after “**DONATIONS**”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **PROCESSING.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For any program included under subsection (b), the Secretary may, notwithstanding any other provision of Federal or State law relating to the procurement of goods and services—

“(A) retain title to commodities delivered to a processor, on behalf of a State (including a State distributing agency and a recipient agency), until such time as end products containing the commodities, or similar commodities as approved by the Secretary, are delivered to a State distributing agency or to a recipient agency; and

“(B) promulgate regulations to ensure accountability for commodities provided to a processor for processing into end products, and to facilitate processing of commodities into end products for use by recipient agencies.

“(2) **REGULATIONS.**—The regulations described in paragraph (1)(B) may provide that—

“(A) a processor that receives commodities for processing into end products, or provides a service with respect to the commodities or

end products, in accordance with the agreement of the processor with a State distributing agency or a recipient agency, provide to the Secretary a bond or other means of financial assurance to protect the value of the commodities; and

“(B) in the event a processor fails to deliver to a State distributing agency or a recipient agency an end product in conformance with the processing agreement entered into under this Act, the Secretary—

“(i) take action with respect to the bond or other means of financial assurance pursuant to regulations promulgated under this subsection; and

“(ii) distribute any proceeds obtained by the Secretary to 1 or more State distributing agencies and recipient agencies, as determined appropriate by the Secretary.”.

(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 18 of the Commodity Distribution Reform Act and WIC Amendments of 1987 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 100-237) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

“(1) **COMMODITIES.**—The term ‘commodities’ means agricultural commodities and their products that are donated by the Secretary for use by recipient agencies.

“(2) **END PRODUCT.**—The term ‘end product’ means a food product that contains processed commodities.”.

(c) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3 of the Commodity Distribution Reform Act and WIC Amendments of 1987 (7 U.S.C. 612c note; Public Law 100-237) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

“(B) the program established under section 4(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2013(b));”; and

(B) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “the Committee on Education and Labor” and inserting “the Committee on Education and the Workforce”;

(2) in subsection (b)(1)(A)(ii), by striking “section 32 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)” and inserting “section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c)”;

(3) in subsection (e)(1)(D)(iii), by striking subclause (II) and inserting the following:

“(II) the program established under section 4(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2013(b));”; and

(4) in subsection (k), by striking “the Committee on Education and Labor” and inserting “the Committee on Education and the Workforce”.

Subtitle C—Miscellaneous

SEC. 4201. PURCHASE OF FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FOR DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS AND SERVICE INSTITUTIONS.

Section 10603(b) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 612c-4(b)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 4202. PILOT PROJECT FOR PROCUREMENT OF UNPROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

Section 6 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1755) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) **PILOT PROJECT FOR PROCUREMENT OF UNPROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall conduct a pilot project under which the Secretary shall facilitate the procurement of unprocessed fruits and vegetables in not more than 8 States receiving funds under this Act.

“(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the pilot project required by this subsection is to provide selected States flexibility for the procurement of unprocessed fruits and vegetables by permitting each State—

“(A) to utilize multiple suppliers and products established and qualified by the Secretary; and

“(B) to allow geographic preference, if desired, in the procurement of the products under the pilot project.

“(3) SELECTION AND PARTICIPATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall select States for participation in the pilot project in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary and terms and conditions established for participation.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary shall ensure that at least 1 project is located in a State in each of—

“(i) the Pacific Northwest Region;

“(ii) the Northeast Region;

“(iii) the Western Region;

“(iv) the Midwest Region; and

“(v) the Southern Region.

“(4) PRIORITY.—In selecting States for participation in the pilot project, the Secretary shall prioritize applications based on—

“(A) the quantity and variety of growers of local fruits and vegetables in the States on a per capita basis;

“(B) the demonstrated commitment of the States to farm-to-school efforts, as evidenced by prior efforts to increase and promote farm-to-school programs in the States; and

“(C) whether the States contain a sufficient quantity of local educational agencies, various population sizes, and geographical locations.

“(5) RECORDKEEPING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENT.—States selected to participate in the pilot project, and participating school food authorities within those States, shall keep records of the fruits and vegetables received under the pilot project in such manner and form as requested by the Secretary.

“(B) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Each participating State shall submit to the Secretary a report on the success of the pilot project in the State, including information on—

“(i) the quantity and cost of each type of fruit and vegetable received by the State under the pilot project; and

“(ii) the benefit provided by those procurements in conducting school food service in the State, including meeting school meal requirements.”

SEC. 4203. SENIORS FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4402(a) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3007(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) takes effect on October 1, 2013.

SEC. 4204. DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS.

Section 301(a) of the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5341(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) PREGNANT WOMEN AND YOUNG CHILDREN.—Not later than the 2020 report and in each report thereafter, the Secretaries shall include national nutritional and dietary information and guidelines for pregnant women and children from birth until the age of 2.”

SEC. 4205. MULTIAGENCY TASK FORCE.

Subtitle D of title II of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6951 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 242. MULTIAGENCY TASK FORCE.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish, in the office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services, a multiagency task force for the purpose of providing coordination and direction for commodity programs.

“(b) COMPOSITION.—The Task Force shall be composed of at least 4 members, including—

“(1) a representative from the Food Distribution Division of the Food and Nutrition Service, who shall—

“(A) be appointed by the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services; and

“(B) serve as Chairperson of the Task Force;

“(2) at least 1 representative from the Agricultural Marketing Service, who shall be appointed by the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs;

“(3) at least 1 representative from the Farm Services Agency, who shall be appointed by the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services; and

“(4) at least 1 representative from the Food Safety and Inspection Service, who shall be appointed by the Under Secretary for Food Safety.

“(c) DUTIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Task Force shall be responsible for evaluation and monitoring of the commodity programs to ensure that the commodity programs meet the mission of the Department—

“(A) to support the United States farm sector; and

“(B) to contribute to the health and well-being of individuals in the United States through the distribution of domestic agricultural products through commodity programs.

“(2) SPECIFIC DUTIES.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Task Force shall—

“(A) review and make recommendations regarding the specifications used for the procurement of food commodities;

“(B) review and make recommendations regarding the efficient and effective distribution of food commodities; and

“(C) review and make recommendations regarding the degree to which the quantity, quality, and specifications of procured food commodities align the needs of producers and the preferences of recipient agencies.

“(d) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that describes, for the period covered by the report—

“(1) the findings and recommendations of the Task Force; and

“(2) policies implemented for the improvement of commodity procurement programs.”

SEC. 4206. HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING INITIATIVE.

Subtitle D of title II of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6951 et seq.) (as amended by section 4205) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 243. HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING INITIATIVE.

“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to enhance the authorities of the Secretary to support efforts to provide access to healthy food by establishing an initiative to

improve access to healthy foods in underserved areas, to create and preserve quality jobs, and to revitalize low-income communities by providing loans and grants to eligible fresh, healthy food retailers to overcome the higher costs and initial barriers to entry in underserved areas.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term ‘community development financial institution’ has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Community Development Banking and Financial Institutions Act of 1994 (12 U.S.C. 4702).

“(2) INITIATIVE.—The term ‘Initiative’ means the Healthy Food Financing Initiative established under subsection (c)(1).

“(3) NATIONAL FUND MANAGER.—The term ‘national fund manager’ means a community development financial institution that is—

“(A) in existence on the date of enactment of this section; and

“(B) certified by the Community Development Financial Institution Fund of the Department of Treasury to manage the Initiative for purposes of—

“(i) raising private capital;

“(ii) providing financial and technical assistance to partnerships; and

“(iii) funding eligible projects to attract fresh, healthy food retailers to underserved areas, in accordance with this section.

“(4) PARTNERSHIP.—The term ‘partnership’ means a regional, State, or local public-private partnership that—

“(A) is organized to improve access to fresh, healthy foods;

“(B) provides financial and technical assistance to eligible projects; and

“(C) meets such other criteria as the Secretary may establish.

“(5) PERISHABLE FOOD.—The term ‘perishable food’ means a staple food that is fresh, refrigerated, or frozen.

“(6) QUALITY JOB.—The term ‘quality job’ means a job that provides wages and other benefits comparable to, or better than, similar positions in existing businesses of similar size in similar local economies.

“(7) STAPLE FOOD.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘staple food’ means food that is a basic dietary item.

“(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘staple food’ includes—

“(i) bread or cereal;

“(ii) flour;

“(iii) fruits;

“(iv) vegetables;

“(v) meat; and

“(vi) dairy products.

“(c) INITIATIVE.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish an initiative to achieve the purpose described in subsection (a) in accordance with this subsection.

“(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary shall provide funding to entities with eligible projects, as described in subparagraph (B), subject to the priorities described in subparagraph (C).

“(ii) USE OF FUNDS.—Funds provided to an entity pursuant to clause (i) shall be used—

“(I) to create revolving loan pools of capital or other products to provide loans to finance eligible projects or partnerships;

“(II) to provide grants for eligible projects or partnerships;

“(III) to provide technical assistance to funded projects and entities seeking Initiative funding; and

“(IV) to cover administrative expenses of the national fund manager in an amount not

to exceed 10 percent of the Federal funds provided.

“(B) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—Subject to the approval of the Secretary, the national fund manager shall establish eligibility criteria for projects under the Initiative, which shall include the existence or planned execution of agreements—

“(i) to expand or preserve the availability of staple foods in underserved areas with moderate- and low-income populations by maintaining or increasing the number of retail outlets that offer an assortment of perishable food and staple food items, as determined by the Secretary, in those areas; and
“(ii) to accept benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

“(C) PRIORITIES.—In carrying out the Initiative, priority shall be given to projects that—

“(i) are located in severely distressed low-income communities, as defined by the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund of the Department of Treasury; and

“(ii) include 1 or more of the following characteristics:

“(I) The project will create or retain quality jobs for low-income residents in the community.

“(II) The project supports regional food systems and locally grown foods, to the maximum extent practicable.

“(III) In areas served by public transit, the project is accessible by public transit.

“(IV) The project involves women- or minority-owned businesses.

“(V) The project receives funding from other sources, including other Federal agencies.

“(VI) The project otherwise advances the purpose of this section, as determined by the Secretary.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$125,000,000, to remain available until expended.”

SEC. 4207. PURCHASE OF HALAL AND KOSHER FOOD FOR EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 202 of the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7502) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) KOSHER AND HALAL FOOD.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall finalize and implement a plan—

“(1) to increase the purchase of Kosher and Halal food from food manufacturers with a Kosher or Halal certification to carry out the program established under this Act if the Kosher and Halal food purchased is cost neutral as compared to food that is not from food manufacturers with a Kosher or Halal certification; and
“(2) to modify the labeling of the commodities listed used to carry out the program in a manner that enables Kosher and Halal distribution entities to identify which commodities to obtain from local food banks.”

SEC. 4208. FOOD INSECURITY NUTRITION INCENTIVE.

Section 4405 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7517) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 4405. FOOD INSECURITY NUTRITION INCENTIVE.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In this section:

“(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—
“(A) a nonprofit organization (including an emergency feeding organization);

“(B) an agricultural cooperative;
“(C) a producer network or association;
“(D) a community health organization;
“(E) a public benefit corporation;
“(F) an economic development corporation;

“(G) a farmers’ market;
“(H) a community-supported agriculture program;

“(I) a buying club;
“(J) a retail food store participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program;

“(K) a State, local, or tribal agency; and
“(L) any other entity the Secretary designates.

“(2) EMERGENCY FEEDING ORGANIZATION.—The term ‘emergency feeding organization’ has the meaning given the term in section 201A of the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7501).

“(3) SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The term ‘supplemental nutrition assistance program’ means the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

“(b) FOOD INSECURITY NUTRITION INCENTIVE GRANTS.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION.—
“(A) IN GENERAL.—In each of the years specified in subsection (c), the Secretary shall make grants to eligible entities in accordance with paragraph (2).

“(B) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of carrying out an activity under this subsection shall not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the activity.

“(C) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—
“(i) IN GENERAL.—The non-Federal share of the cost of an activity under this subsection may be provided—

“(I) in cash or in-kind contributions as determined by the Secretary, including facilities, equipment, or services; and
“(II) by a State or local government or a private source.

“(ii) LIMITATION.—In the case of a for-profit entity, the non-Federal share described in clause (i) shall not include services of an employee, including salaries paid or expenses covered by the employer.

“(2) CRITERIA.—
“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, an eligible entity is a governmental agency or nonprofit organization that—

“(i) meets the application criteria set forth by the Secretary; and
“(ii) proposes a project that, at a minimum—

“(I) has the support of the State agency;
“(II) would increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by low-income consumers participating in the supplemental nutrition assistance program by providing incentives at the point of purchase;

“(III) agrees to participate in the evaluation described in paragraph (4);

“(IV) ensures that the same terms and conditions apply to purchases made by individuals with benefits issued under this Act and incentives provided for in this subsection as apply to purchases made by individuals who are not members of households receiving benefits, such as provided for in section 278.2(b) of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation); and
“(V) includes effective and efficient technologies for benefit redemption systems that may be replicated in other States and communities.

“(B) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that—

“(i) maximize the share of funds used for direct incentives to participants;

“(ii) use direct-to-consumer sales marketing;

“(iii) demonstrate a track record of designing and implementing successful nutrition incentive programs that connect low-income consumers and agricultural producers;

“(iv) provide locally or regionally produced fruits and vegetables;

“(v) are located in underserved communities; or

“(vi) address other criteria as established by the Secretary.

“(3) APPLICABILITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The value of any benefit provided to a participant in any activity funded under this subsection shall be treated as supplemental nutrition benefits under section 8(b) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2017(b)).

“(B) PROHIBITION ON COLLECTION OF SALES TAXES.—Each State shall ensure that no State or local tax is collected on a purchase of food under this subsection.

“(C) NO LIMITATION ON BENEFITS.—A grant made available under this subsection shall not be used to carry out any project that limits the use of benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) or any other Federal nutrition law.

“(D) HOUSEHOLD ALLOTMENT.—Assistance provided under this subsection to households receiving benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program shall not—

“(i) be considered part of the supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits of the household; or

“(ii) be used in the collection or disposition of claims under section 13 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2022).

“(4) EVALUATION.—

“(A) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall provide for an independent evaluation of projects selected under this subsection that measures the impact of each project on—

“(i) improving the nutrition and health status of participating households receiving incentives under this subsection; and

“(ii) increasing fruit and vegetable purchases in participating households.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—The independent evaluation under subparagraph (A) shall use rigorous methodologies capable of producing scientifically valid information regarding the effectiveness of a project.

“(C) COSTS.—The Secretary may use funds not to exceed 10 percent of the funding provided to carry out this section to pay costs associated with administering, monitoring, and evaluating each project.

“(c) FUNDING.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out subsection (b) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(2) MANDATORY FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out subsection (b)—

“(A) \$35,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2014 and 2015;
“(B) \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 and 2017; and
“(C) \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2018.”

SEC. 4209. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM.

Title IV of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7630 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 413. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations under subsection

(e), the Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and working in consultation with other appropriate Federal agencies that oversee national service programs, shall administer a competitively awarded food and agriculture service learning grant program (referred to in this section as the "Program") to increase knowledge of agriculture and improve the nutritional health of children.

"(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Program are—

"(1) to increase capacity for food, garden, and nutrition education within host organizations or entities and school cafeterias and in the classroom;

"(2) to complement and build on the efforts of the farm to school programs implemented under section 18(g) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769(g));

"(3) to complement efforts by the Department and school food authorities to implement the school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) and the school breakfast program established by section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773);

"(4) to carry out activities that advance the nutritional health of children and nutrition education in elementary schools and secondary schools (as those terms are defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)); and

"(5) to foster higher levels of community engagement and support the expansion of national service and volunteer opportunities.

"(c) GRANTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Program, the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture shall make competitive grants to eligible entities that carry out the purposes described in paragraphs (1) through (5) of subsection (b).

"(2) PRIORITIES.—In making grants under this section, the Secretary may consider projects that are carried out by entities that—

"(A) have a proven track record in carrying out the purposes described in subsection (b);

"(B) work in underserved rural and urban communities;

"(C) teach and engage children in experiential learning about agriculture, gardening, nutrition, cooking, and where food comes from; and

"(D) facilitate a connection between elementary schools and secondary schools and agricultural producers in the local and regional area.

"(d) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may require a partner organization or other qualified entity to collect and report any data on the activities carried out under the Program, as determined by the Secretary.

"(2) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall—

"(A) conduct regular evaluations of the activities carried out under the Program; and

"(B) submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that includes a description of the results of each evaluation conducted under subparagraph (A).

"(e) FUNDING.—

"(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the Program \$25,000,000, to remain available until expended.

"(2) ADMINISTRATION.—Paragraphs (4), (7), (8), and (11)(B) of subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)) shall apply with respect to the making of a competitive grant under this section.

"(3) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—Funds made available under paragraph (1) shall be used only to supplement, not to supplant, the amount of Federal funding otherwise expended for nutrition, research, and extension programs of the Department."

SEC. 4210. NUTRITION INFORMATION AND AWARENESS PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 4403 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3171 note; Public Law 107-171) is repealed.

SEC. 4211. TERMINATION OF EXISTING AGREEMENT.

Effective beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the memorandum of understanding entered into on July 22, 2004, by the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Mexico and known as the "Partnership for Nutrition Assistance Initiative" is null and void.

SEC. 4212. REVIEW OF SOLE-SOURCE CONTRACTS IN FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of sole-source contracts in Federal nutrition programs carried out by the Secretary, and the effect the contracts have on program participation, program goals, nonprogram consumers, retailers, and free market dynamics.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the findings of the review conducted under subsection (a).

SEC. 4213. PULSE CROP PRODUCTS.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to encourage greater awareness and interest in the number and variety of pulse crop products available to schoolchildren, as recommended by the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans published under section 301 of the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5341).

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE PULSE CROP.—The term "eligible pulse crop" means dry beans, dry peas, lentils, and chickpeas.

(2) PULSE CROP PRODUCT.—The term "pulse crop product" means a food product derived in whole or in part from an eligible pulse crop.

(c) PURCHASE OF PULSE CROPS AND PULSE CROP PRODUCTS.—In addition to the commodities delivered under section 6 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1755), subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall purchase eligible pulse crops and pulse crop products for use in—

(1) the school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.); and

(2) the school breakfast program established by section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773).

(d) EVALUATION.—Not later than September 30, 2016, the Secretary shall conduct an evaluation of the activities conducted under subsection (c), including—

(1) an evaluation of whether children participating in the school lunch and breakfast programs described in subsection (c) in-

creased overall consumption of eligible pulse crops as a result of the activities;

(2) an evaluation of which eligible pulse crops and pulse crop products are most acceptable for use in the school lunch and breakfast programs;

(3) any recommendations of the Secretary regarding the integration of the use of pulse crop products in carrying out the school lunch and breakfast programs;

(4) an evaluation of any change in the nutrient composition in the school lunch and breakfast programs due to the activities; and

(5) an evaluation of any other outcomes determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

(e) REPORT.—As soon as practicable after the completion of the evaluation under subsection (d), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representative a report describing the results of the evaluation.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 4214. PILOT PROJECT FOR CANNED, FROZEN, OR DRIED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), in the 2014-2015 school year, the Secretary shall carry out a pilot project in schools participating in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program under section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769a) (referred to in this section as the "Program"), in not less than 5 States, to evaluate the impact of allowing schools to offer canned, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables as part of the Program.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish criteria for the conditions under which canned, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables may be offered, which shall be in accordance with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans published under section 301 of the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5341).

(c) EVALUATION.—With respect to the pilot project, the Secretary shall evaluate—

(1) the impacts on fruit and vegetable consumption at the schools participating in the pilot project;

(2) the impacts of the pilot project on school participation in the Program and operation of the Program;

(3) the implementation strategies used by the schools participating in the pilot project;

(4) the acceptance of the pilot project by key stakeholders; and

(5) such other outcomes as are determined by the Secretary.

(d) REPORTS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than January 1, 2015, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Education and Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the evaluation under subsection (c).

(2) FINAL REPORT.—On completion of the pilot project, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Education and Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the evaluation under subsection (c).

(e) NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY.—As soon as practicable after the date on which the Secretary establishes the criteria for the pilot

project under subsection (b), the Secretary shall notify potentially eligible schools of the potential eligibility of the schools for participation in the pilot project.

(f) RELATIONSHIP TO FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM.—Nothing in this section permits a school that is not a part of the pilot project to offer anything other than fresh fruits and vegetables through the Program.

(g) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall use \$5,000,000 of amounts otherwise made available to the Secretary to carry out this section.

TITLE V—CREDIT

Subtitle A—Farm Ownership Loans

SEC. 5001. ELIGIBILITY FOR FARM OWNERSHIP LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 302(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1922(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(a) IN GENERAL.—The” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—The”;
(2) in the first sentence, by striking “and limited liability companies” and inserting “limited liability companies, and such other legal entities as the Secretary considers appropriate.”;

(3) in the second sentence, by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (4) as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively;

(4) in each of the second and third sentences, by striking “and limited liability companies” each place it appears and inserting “limited liability companies, and such other legal entities”;

(5) in the third sentence—

(A) by striking “clause (3)” and inserting “subparagraph (C)”;

(B) by striking “clause (4)” and inserting “subparagraph (D)”;

(6) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(A) ELIGIBILITY OF CERTAIN OPERATING-ONLY ENTITIES.—An entity that is or will become only the operator of a family farm shall be considered to meet the owner-operator requirements of paragraph (1) if the individuals that are the owners of the family farm own more than 50 percent (or such other percentage as the Secretary determines is appropriate) of the entity.

“(B) ELIGIBILITY OF CERTAIN EMBEDDED ENTITIES.—An entity that is an owner-operator described in paragraph (1), or an operator described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph that is owned, in whole or in part, by other entities, shall be considered to meet the direct ownership requirement imposed under paragraph (1) if at least 75 percent of the ownership interests of each embedded entity of the entity is owned directly or indirectly by the individuals that own the family farm.”.

(b) DIRECT FARM OWNERSHIP EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT.—Section 302(b)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1922(b)(1)) is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by inserting “or has other acceptable experience for a period of time, as determined by the Secretary,” after “3 years”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 304(c)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1924(c)(2)) by striking “paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 302(a)” and inserting “subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 302(a)(1)”.

(2) Section 310D(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1934(a)) is amended in the second sentence—

(A) by inserting after “partnership” the following: “, or such other legal entities as the Secretary considers appropriate.”; and

(B) by striking “or partners” each place it appears and inserting “partners, or owners”.

SEC. 5002. CONSERVATION LOAN AND LOAN GUARANTEE PROGRAM.

(a) ELIGIBILITY.—Section 304(c) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1924(c)) is amended by striking “or limited liability companies” and inserting “limited liability companies, or such other legal entities as the Secretary considers appropriate”.

(b) LIMITATIONS APPLICABLE TO LOAN GUARANTEES.—Section 304(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1924(e)) is amended by striking “shall be 75 percent of the principal amount of the loan.” and inserting “shall be—

“(1) 80 percent of the principal amount of the loan; or

“(2) in the case of a producer that is a qualified socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher or a beginning farmer or rancher, 90 percent of the principal amount of the loan.”.

(c) EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.—Section 304 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1924) is amended by striking subsection (h) and inserting the following:

“(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 5003. JOINT FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS.

Section 307(a)(3) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1927(a)(3)) is amended by striking subparagraph (D) and inserting the following:

“(D) JOINT FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS.—If a direct farm ownership loan is made under this subtitle as part of a joint financing arrangement and the amount of the direct farm ownership loan does not exceed 50 percent of the total principal amount financed under the arrangement, the interest rate on the direct farm ownership loan shall be a rate equal to the greater of—

“(i) the difference between—

“(I) 2 percent; and

“(II) the interest rate for farm ownership loans under this subtitle; or

“(ii) 2.5 percent.”.

SEC. 5004. ELIMINATION OF MINERAL RIGHTS APPRAISAL REQUIREMENT.

Section 307 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1927) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (d); and

(2) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (d).

SEC. 5005. DOWN PAYMENT LOAN PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 310E(b)(1)(C) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1935(b)(1)(C)) is amended by striking “\$500,000” and inserting “\$667,000”.

(b) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 310E(b) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1935(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) (as added by section 7(a) of Public Law 102-554; 106 Stat. 4145).

Subtitle B—Operating Loans

SEC. 5101. ELIGIBILITY FOR FARM OPERATING LOANS.

Section 311(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1941(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(a) IN GENERAL.—The” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—The”;

(2) in the first sentence, by striking “and limited liability companies” and inserting “limited liability companies, and such other legal entities as the Secretary considers appropriate.”;

(3) in the second sentence, by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (4) as subparagraphs (A) through (D), respectively;

(4) in each of the second and third sentences, by striking “and limited liability companies” each place it appears and inserting “limited liability companies, and such other legal entities”;

(5) in the third sentence—

(A) by striking “clause (3)” and inserting “subparagraph (C)”;

(B) by striking “clause (4)” and inserting “subparagraph (D)”;

(6) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) SPECIAL RULE.—An entity that is an operator described in paragraph (1) that is owned, in whole or in part, by other entities, shall be considered to meet the direct ownership requirement imposed under paragraph (1) if at least 75 percent of the ownership interests of each embedded entity of the entity is owned directly or indirectly by the individuals that own the family farm.”.

SEC. 5102. ELIMINATION OF RURAL RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT FOR OPERATING LOANS TO YOUTH.

Section 311(b)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1941(b)(1)) is amended by striking “who are rural residents”.

SEC. 5103. DEFAULTS BY YOUTH LOAN BORROWERS.

Section 311(b) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1941(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) EQUITABLE CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEFAULT.—

“(A) DEBT FORGIVENESS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, on a case-by-case basis, provide debt forgiveness to a borrower for a loan made under this subsection if the borrower was unable to timely repay the loan due to circumstances beyond the control of the borrower, as determined by the Secretary, including any natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster that results in an inordinate level of damage or disruption severely affecting the borrower.

“(ii) ELIGIBILITY FOR FUTURE LOANS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, debt forgiveness provided under this subparagraph shall not be used by any Federal agency in determining the eligibility of the borrower for any loan made or guaranteed by the agency.

“(B) EDUCATION LOANS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a borrower becomes delinquent or is provided with debt forgiveness with respect to a youth loan made under this subsection, the borrower shall not become ineligible, as a result of the delinquency or debt forgiveness, to receive loans and loan guarantees from the Federal Government to pay for education expenses of the borrower.”.

SEC. 5104. TERM LIMITS ON DIRECT OPERATING LOANS.

Section 311(c) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1941(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) ANNUAL REPORT ON TERM LIMITS ON DIRECT OPERATING LOANS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prepare a report annually that describes—

“(i) the status of the direct operating loan program of the Department of Agriculture; and

“(ii) the impact of term limits on direct loan borrowers.

“(B) DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The report shall provide a demographic breakdown, on a State-by-State basis, of—

“(I) all direct loan borrowers; and

“(II) borrowers that have reached the eligibility limit for direct lending programs during the previous calendar year.

“(ii) DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.—The available demographic information shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of race or ethnicity, gender, age, type of farm or ranch, financial classification, number of years of indebtedness, veteran status, and other similar information, as determined by the Secretary.

“(C) ADDITIONAL CONTENT.—In addition to information described in subparagraph (B), the report shall provide—

“(i) a demographic analysis of the borrowers impacted by term limits;

“(ii) information on the conditions impacting the direct lending portfolio of the Department of Agriculture, including impacts by region and agriculture sector, and credit availability within those regions and sectors;

“(iii) to the maximum extent practicable, information on the status of borrower operations impacted by term limits; and

“(iv) recommendations, if appropriate, to address any identifiable unmet credit needs.

“(D) SUBMISSION.—The Secretary shall—

“(i) annually submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a copy of the report; and

“(ii) make the report available to the public, including posting the report on the website of the Department of Agriculture.”.

SEC. 5105. VALUATION OF LOCAL OR REGIONAL CROPS.

Section 312 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1942) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) VALUATION OF LOCAL OR REGIONAL CROPS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop ways to determine unit prices (or other appropriate forms of valuation) for crops and other agricultural products, the end use of which is intended to be in locally or regionally produced agricultural food products, to facilitate lending to local and regional food producers.

“(2) PRICE HISTORY.—The Secretary shall implement a mechanism for local and regional food producers to establish price history for the crops and other agricultural products produced by local and regional food producers.”.

SEC. 5106. MICROLOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 313 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1943) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) MICROLOANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may establish a program to make or guarantee microloans.

“(2) LIMITATIONS.—The Secretary shall not make or guarantee a microloan under this subsection that would cause the total principal indebtedness outstanding at any 1 time for microloans made under this title to any 1 borrower to exceed \$50,000.

“(3) APPLICATIONS.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall limit the administrative burdens and streamline

the application and approval process for microloans under this subsection.

“(4) COOPERATIVE LENDING PILOT PROJECTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), during each of the 2014 through 2018 fiscal years, the Secretary may carry out a pilot project to make loans to community development financial institutions, as the Secretary determines appropriate—

“(i) to make or guarantee microloans consistent with the terms provided under this subsection; and

“(ii) to provide business, financial, marketing, and credit management services to microloan borrowers.

“(B) REQUIREMENTS.—Prior to making a loan to an institution described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

“(i) review and approve—

“(I) the loan loss reserve fund for microloans established by the institution; and

“(II) the underwriting standards for microloans of the institution; and

“(ii) establish such other requirements for making a loan to the institution as the Secretary determines necessary.

“(C) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for a loan under subparagraph (A), an institution described in subparagraph (A) shall, as determined by the Secretary—

“(i) have the legal authority necessary to carry out the actions described in subparagraph (A);

“(ii) have a proven track record of successfully assisting agricultural borrowers; and

“(iii) have the services of a staff with appropriate loan making and servicing expertise.

“(D) OVERSIGHT.—Not less often than annually, on a date determined by the Secretary, an institution that has a loan under this paragraph shall provide to the Secretary such information as the Secretary may require to ensure that the services provided by the institution are serving the purposes of this subsection.

“(E) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not make more than \$10,000,000 in loans under this paragraph in any fiscal year.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 311(c) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1941(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) DEFINITION OF DIRECT OPERATING LOAN.—In this subsection, the term ‘direct operating loan’ does not include—

“(A) a loan made to a youth under subsection (b); or

“(B) a microloan made to a beginning farmer or rancher or a veteran farmer or rancher (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e))).”.

(2) Section 312(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1942(a)) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by inserting “(including a microloan, as defined by the Secretary)” after “A direct loan”.

(3) Section 316(a)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1946(a)(2)) is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by inserting “a microloan to a beginning farmer or rancher or veteran farmer or rancher (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)), or” after “The interest rate on”.

SEC. 5107. TERM LIMITS ON GUARANTEED OPERATING LOANS.

Section 319 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1949) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “(a) GRADUATION PLAN.—”; and

(2) by striking subsection (b).

Subtitle C—Emergency Loans

SEC. 5201. ELIGIBILITY FOR EMERGENCY LOANS.

Section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1961(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “owner-operators (in the case of loans for a purpose under subtitle A) or operators (in the case of loans for a purpose under subtitle B)” each place it appears and inserting “(in the case of farm ownership loans in accordance with subtitle A) owner-operators or operators, or (in the case of loans for a purpose under subtitle B) operators”;

(2) in the first sentence—

(A) by inserting “, or such other legal entities as the Secretary considers appropriate” after “limited liability companies” the first place it appears;

(B) by inserting “, or other legal entities” after “limited liability companies” the second place it appears; and

(C) by striking “and limited liability companies,” and inserting “limited liability companies, and such other legal entities”;

(3) in the second sentence, by striking “ownership and operator” and inserting “ownership or operator”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following: “An entity that is an owner-operator or operator described in this subsection shall be considered to meet the direct ownership requirement imposed under this subsection if at least 75 percent of the ownership interests of each embedded entity of the entity is owned directly or indirectly by the individuals that own the family farm.”.

Subtitle D—Administrative Provisions

SEC. 5301. BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 333B(h) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1983b(h)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 5302. FARMER LOAN PILOT PROJECTS.

Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act is amended by inserting after section 333C (7 U.S.C. 1983c) the following:

“SEC. 333D. FARMER LOAN PILOT PROJECTS.

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

“(b) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall—

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

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

SEC. 5303. DEFINITION OF QUALIFIED BEGINNING FARMER OR RANCHER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 343(a)(11) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development

Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(11)) is amended in subparagraphs (C) and (D)—

(1) by striking “or joint operation,” each place it appears and inserting “joint operation, or such other legal entity as the Secretary considers appropriate,”;

(2) by striking “or joint operators,” each place it appears and inserting “joint operators, or owners,”; and

(3) in subparagraph (D), by striking “corporation, has stockholders,” each place it appears in clauses (i)(II)(bb) and (ii)(II)(bb) and inserting “cooperative, corporation, partnership, joint operation, or other such legal entity as the Secretary considers appropriate, has members, stockholders, partners, or joint operators.”.

(b) MODIFICATION OF ACREAGE OWNERSHIP LIMITATION.—Section 343(a)(11)(F) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(11)(F)) is amended by striking “median acreage” and inserting “average acreage”.

SEC. 5304. LOAN AUTHORIZATION LEVELS.

Section 346(b)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1994(b)(1)) is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 5305. LOAN FUND SET-ASIDES.

Section 346(b)(2)(A)(ii)(III) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1994(b)(2)(A)(ii)(III)) is amended—

(1) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) by striking “of the total amount”.

SEC. 5306. BORROWER TRAINING.

Section 359(c)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2006a(c)(2)) is amended by striking “section 302(a)(2) or 311(a)(2)” and inserting “section 302(a)(1)(B) or 311(a)(1)(B)”.

Subtitle E—Miscellaneous

SEC. 5401. STATE AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAMS.

Section 506 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 (7 U.S.C. 5106) is amended by striking “2015” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 5402. LOANS TO PURCHASERS OF HIGHLY FRACTIONATED LAND.

The first section of Public Law 91-229 (25 U.S.C. 488) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), in the first sentence, by striking “loans from” and all that follows through “1929)” and inserting “direct loans in a manner consistent with direct loans pursuant to subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1981 et seq.)”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) by striking “pursuant to section 205(c) of the Indian Land Consolidation Act (25 U.S.C. 2204(c))”; and

(B) by inserting “or to intermediaries in order to establish revolving loan funds for the purchase of highly fractionated land under that section” before the period at the end.

SEC. 5403. REMOVAL OF DUPLICATIVE APPRAISALS.

Notwithstanding any other law (including regulations), in making loans under the first section of Public Law 91-229 (25 U.S.C. 488), borrowers who are Indian tribes, members of Indian tribes, or tribal corporations shall only be required to obtain 1 appraisal under an appraisal standard recognized as of the date of enactment of this Act by the Secretary or the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 5404. COMPENSATION DISCLOSURE BY FARM CREDIT SYSTEM INSTITUTIONS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that —

(1) the reasonable disclosure to stockholders by Farm Credit System institutions regarding the compensation of Farm Credit System institution senior officers is beneficial to stockholders’ understanding of the operation of their institutions;

(2) transparency regarding compensation practices reinforces the cooperative nature of Farm Credit System institutions;

(3) the unique cooperative structure of the Farm Credit System should be considered when promulgating rules;

(4) the participation of stockholders in the election of the boards of directors of Farm Credit System institutions provides stockholders the opportunity to participate in the management of their institutions;

(5) as representatives of stockholders, the boards of directors of Farm Credit System institutions importantly establish and oversee the compensation practices of Farm Credit System institutions to ensure the safe and sound operation of those institutions; and

(6) any regulation should strengthen and not hinder the ability of Farm Credit System boards of directors to oversee compensation practices.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Farm Credit Administration shall review its rules to reflect Congressional intent that a primary responsibility of the boards of directors of Farm Credit System institutions, as elected representatives of their stockholders, is to oversee compensation practices.

TITLE VI—RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Subtitle A—Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act

SEC. 6001. WATER, WASTE DISPOSAL, AND WASTEWATER FACILITY GRANTS.

Section 306(a)(2)(B)(vii) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(2)(B)(vii)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6002. ELIMINATION OF RESERVATION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS.

Section 306(a)(19) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(19)) is amended by striking subparagraph (C).

SEC. 6003. RURAL WATER AND WASTEWATER CIRCUIT RIDER PROGRAM.

Section 306(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (22) and inserting the following:

“(22) RURAL WATER AND WASTEWATER CIRCUIT RIDER PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall continue a national rural water and wastewater circuit rider program that—

“(i) is consistent with the activities and results of the program conducted before the date of enactment of this clause, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(ii) receives funding from the Secretary, acting through the Rural Utilities Service.

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this paragraph \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter.”.

SEC. 6004. USE OF LOAN GUARANTEES FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

Section 306(a)(24) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(24)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) USE OF LOAN GUARANTEES FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES.—The Secretary shall consider the benefits to communities that result

from using loan guarantees in carrying out the community facilities program and, to the maximum extent practicable, use guarantees to enhance community involvement.”.

SEC. 6005. TRIBAL COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

Section 306(a)(25)(C) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(25)(C)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6006. ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.

Section 306(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(26) ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations (such as States, counties, cities, townships, and incorporated towns and villages, boroughs, authorities, districts, and Indian tribes on Federal and State reservations) that will serve rural areas for the purpose of enabling the public bodies and private nonprofit corporations to provide to associations described in paragraph (1) technical assistance and training, with respect to essential community facilities programs authorized under this subsection—

“(i) to assist communities in identifying and planning for community facility needs;

“(ii) to identify public and private resources to finance community facility needs;

“(iii) to prepare reports and surveys necessary to request financial assistance to develop community facilities;

“(iv) to prepare applications for financial assistance;

“(v) to improve the management, including financial management, related to the operation of community facilities; or

“(vi) to assist with other areas of need identified by the Secretary.

“(B) SELECTION PRIORITY.—In selecting recipients of grants under this paragraph, the Secretary shall give priority to private, nonprofit, or public organizations that have experience in providing technical assistance and training to rural entities.

“(C) FUNDING.—Not less than 3 nor more than 5 percent of any funds appropriated to carry out each of the essential community facilities grant, loan and loan guarantee programs as authorized under this subsection for a fiscal year shall be reserved for grants under this paragraph.”.

SEC. 6007. EMERGENCY AND IMMINENT COMMUNITY WATER ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 306A(i)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926a(i)(2)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6008. WATER SYSTEMS FOR RURAL AND NATIVE VILLAGES IN ALASKA.

Section 306D(d)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926d(d)(1)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6009. HOUSEHOLD WATER WELL SYSTEMS.

Section 306E(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926e(d)) is amended by striking “\$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012” and inserting “\$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 6010. RURAL BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY LOAN PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 310B(a)(2)(A) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(a)(2)(A)) is amended by inserting “(including through the financing of working capital)” after “employment”.

(b) GREATER FLEXIBILITY FOR ADEQUATE COLLATERAL THROUGH ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE.—Section 310B(g)(7) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(g)(7)) is amended—

(1) by striking “In determining” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In determining”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE.—In the discretion of the Secretary, if the Secretary determines that the action would not create or otherwise contribute to an unreasonable risk of default or loss to the Federal Government, the Secretary may take accounts receivable as security for the obligations entered into in connection with loans and a borrower may use accounts receivable as collateral to secure a loan made or guaranteed under this subsection.”.

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to implement the amendments made by this section.

SEC. 6011. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GRANTS.

Section 310B(b) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “The Secretary” and by inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 6012. RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 310B of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932) is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) RURAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants under this subsection to eligible entities described in paragraph (2) in rural areas that primarily serve rural areas for purposes described in paragraph (3).

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—The Secretary may make grants under this subsection to—

“(A) governmental entities;

“(B) Indian tribes; and

“(C) nonprofit entities.

“(3) ELIGIBLE PURPOSES FOR GRANTS.—Eligible entities that receive grants under this subsection may use the grant funds for—

“(A) business opportunity projects that—

“(i) identify and analyze business opportunities;

“(ii) identify, train, and provide technical assistance to existing or prospective rural entrepreneurs and managers;

“(iii) assist in the establishment of new rural businesses and the maintenance of existing businesses, including through business support centers;

“(iv) conduct regional, community, and local economic development planning and coordination, and leadership development; and

“(v) establish centers for training, technology, and trade that will provide training to rural businesses in the use of interactive communications technologies to develop

international trade opportunities and markets; and

“(B) projects that support the development of business enterprises that finance or facilitate—

“(i) the development of small and emerging private business enterprise;

“(ii) the establishment, expansion, and operation of rural distance learning networks;

“(iii) the development of rural learning programs that provide educational instruction or job training instruction related to potential employment or job advancement to adult students; and

“(iv) the provision of technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation services or facilities.

“(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this subsection \$65,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended.

“(B) ALLOCATION.—Of the funds made available under subparagraph (A) for a fiscal year, not more than 10 percent shall be used for the purposes described in paragraph (3)(A).”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 306(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)) is amended by striking paragraph (1).

SEC. 6013. RURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.

Section 310B(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(e)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (13);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

“(12) INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall coordinate and chair an interagency working group to foster cooperative development and ensure coordination with Federal agencies and national and local cooperative organizations that have cooperative programs and interests.”; and

(3) in paragraph (13) (as so redesignated), by striking “\$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012” and inserting “\$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 6014. LOCALLY OR REGIONALLY PRODUCED AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS.

Section 310B(g)(9)(B)(v)(I) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(g)(9)(B)(v)(I)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6015. APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR RURAL AREAS PROGRAM.

Section 310B(i)(4) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(i)(4)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6016. RURAL ECONOMIC AREA PARTNER-SHIP ZONES.

Section 310B(j) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(j)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6017. INTERMEDIARY RELENDING PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1922 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 310H. INTERMEDIARY RELENDING PROGRAM.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make or guarantee loans to eligible entities

described in subsection (b) so that the eligible entities may relend the funds to individuals and entities for the purposes described in subsection (c).

“(b) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Entities eligible for loans and loan guarantees described in subsection (a) are—

“(1) public agencies;

“(2) Indian tribes;

“(3) cooperatives; and

“(4) nonprofit corporations.

“(c) ELIGIBLE PURPOSES.—The proceeds from loans made or guaranteed by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) may be relent by eligible entities for projects that—

“(1) predominately serve communities in rural areas; and

“(2) as determined by the Secretary—

“(A) promote community development;

“(B) establish new businesses;

“(C) establish and support microlending programs; and

“(D) create or retain employment opportunities.

“(d) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall not make loans under section 623(a) of the Community Economic Development Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 9812(a)).

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1323(b)(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (Public Law 99-198; 7 U.S.C. 1932 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by adding “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (C).

SEC. 6018. RURAL COLLEGE COORDINATED STRATEGY.

Section 331 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1981) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) RURAL COLLEGE COORDINATED STRATEGY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop a coordinated strategy across the relevant programs within the Rural Development mission areas to serve the specific, local needs of rural communities when making investments in rural community colleges and technical colleges through other authorities in effect on the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(2) CONSULTATION.—In developing a coordinated strategy, the Secretary shall consult with groups representing rural-serving community colleges and technical colleges to coordinate critical investments in rural community colleges and technical colleges involved in workforce training.

“(3) ADMINISTRATION.—Nothing in this subsection provides a priority for funding under authorities in effect on the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(4) USE.—The Secretary shall use the coordinated strategy and information developed for the strategy to more effectively serve rural communities with respect to investments in community colleges and technical colleges.”.

SEC. 6019. RURAL WATER AND WASTE DISPOSAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

Section 333 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1983) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “require”;

(2) in paragraph (1), by inserting “require” after “(1)”;

(3) in paragraph (2), by inserting “, require” after “314”;

(4) in paragraph (3), by inserting “require” after “loans.”;

(5) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by inserting “require” after “(4)”;

(B) by striking “and” after the semicolon;

(6) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by inserting “require” after “(5)”;

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(7) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) in the case of water and waste disposal direct and guaranteed loans provided under section 306, encourage, to the maximum extent practicable, private or cooperative lenders to finance rural water and waste disposal facilities by—

“(A) maximizing the use of loan guarantees to finance eligible projects in rural communities in which the population exceeds 5,500;

“(B) maximizing the use of direct loans to finance eligible projects in rural communities if the impact on ratepayers will be material when compared to financing with a loan guarantee;

“(C) establishing and applying a materiality standard when determining the difference in impact on ratepayers between a direct loan and a loan guarantee;

“(D) in the case of projects that require interim financing in excess of \$500,000, requiring that the projects initially seek the financing from private or cooperative lenders; and

“(E) determining if an existing direct loan borrower can refinance with a private or cooperative lender, including with a loan guarantee, prior to providing a new direct loan.”.

SEC. 6020. SIMPLIFIED APPLICATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 333A of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1983a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) SIMPLIFIED APPLICATION FORMS.—Except as provided in subsection (g)(2), the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, develop a simplified application process, including a single page application if practicable, for grants and relending authorized under sections 306, 306C, 306D, 306E, 310B(b), 310B(c), 310B(e), 310B(f), 310H, 379B, and 379E.”.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that contains an evaluation of the implementation of the amendment made by subsection (a).

SEC. 6021. NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP.

Section 378 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008m) is amended—

(1) in subsection (g)(1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(2) in subsection (h), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6022. GRANTS FOR NOAA WEATHER RADIO TRANSMITTERS.

Section 379B(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008p(d)) is amended by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 6023. RURAL MICROENTREPRENEUR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 379E(d) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008s(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6024. HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

Section 379G(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008u(e)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6025. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

Subtitle D of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1981 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 379H. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any rural development program described in subsection (d)(2), the Secretary may give priority to an application for a project that, as determined and approved by the Secretary—

“(1) meets the applicable eligibility requirements of this title;

“(2) will be carried out solely in a rural area; and

“(3) supports strategic community and economic development plans on a multijurisdictional basis.

“(b) RURAL AREA.—For purposes of subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall consider an application to be for a project that will be carried out solely in a rural area only if—

“(1) in the case of an application for a project in the rural community facilities category described in subsection (d)(2)(A), the project will be carried out in a rural area described in section 343(a)(13)(C);

“(2) in the case of an application for a project in the rural utilities category described in subsection (d)(2)(B), the project will be carried out in a rural area described in section 343(a)(13)(B); and

“(3) in the case of an application for a project in the rural business and cooperative development category described in subsection (d)(2)(C), the project will be carried out in a rural area described in section 343(a)(13)(A).

“(c) EVALUATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In evaluating strategic applications, the Secretary shall give a higher priority to strategic applications for a plan described in subsection (a) that demonstrates to the Secretary—

“(A) the plan was developed through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders in the service area of the plan, including the participation of combinations of stakeholders such as State, local, and tribal governments, nonprofit institutions, institutions of higher education, and private entities;

“(B) an understanding of the applicable regional resources that could support the plan, including natural resources, human resources, infrastructure, and financial resources;

“(C) investment from other Federal agencies;

“(D) investment from philanthropic organizations; and

“(E) clear objectives for the plan and the ability to establish measurable performance measures and to track progress toward meeting the objectives.

“(2) CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS.—Applications involving State, county, municipal, or tribal governments shall include an indica-

tion of consistency with an adopted regional economic or community development plan.

“(d) FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (3) and subsection (e), the Secretary may reserve for projects that support multijurisdictional strategic community and economic development plans described in subsection (a) an amount that does not exceed 10 percent of the funds made available for a fiscal year for a functional category described in paragraph (2).

“(2) FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES.—The functional categories described in this subsection are the following:

“(A) RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES CATEGORY.—The rural community facilities category consists of all amounts made available for community facility grants and direct and guaranteed loans under paragraph (1), (19), (20), (21), (24), or (25) of section 306(a).

“(B) RURAL UTILITIES CATEGORY.—The rural utilities category consists of all amounts made available for—

“(i) water or waste disposal grants or direct or guaranteed loans under paragraph (1), (2), or (24) of section 306(a);

“(ii) rural water or wastewater technical assistance and training grants under section 306(a)(14);

“(iii) emergency community water assistance grants under section 306A; or

“(iv) solid waste management grants under section 310B(b).

“(C) RURAL BUSINESS AND COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT CATEGORY.—The rural business and cooperative development category consists of all amounts made available for—

“(i) business and industry direct and guaranteed loans under section 310B(a)(2)(A); or

“(ii) rural business development grants under section 310B(c).

“(3) PERIOD.—The reservation of funds described in paragraph (2) may only extend through June 30 of the fiscal year in which the funds were first made available.

“(e) APPROVED APPLICATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any applicant who submitted a rural development application that was approved before the date of enactment of this section may amend the application to qualify for the funds reserved under subsection (d)(1).

“(2) RURAL UTILITIES.—Any rural development application authorized under section 306(a)(2), 306(a)(14), 306(a)(24), 306A, or 310B(b) and approved by the Secretary before the date of enactment of this section shall be eligible for the funds reserved under subsection (d)(1) on the same basis as the applications submitted under this section until September 30, 2016.”.

SEC. 6026. DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 382M(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa-12(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—Section 382N of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009aa-13) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6027. NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS REGIONAL AUTHORITY.

(a) AUDIT.—Section 383L(c) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-10(c)) is amended by inserting “for any fiscal year for which funds are appropriated” after “annual basis”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 383N(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-12(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(c) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—Section 3830 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009bb-13) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6028. RURAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PROGRAM.

Section 384S of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2009cc-18) is amended by striking “\$50,000,000 for the period of fiscal years 2008 through 2012” and inserting “\$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

Subtitle B—Rural Electrification Act of 1936
SEC. 6101. FEES FOR CERTAIN LOAN GUARANTEES.

The Rural Electrification Act of 1936 is amended by inserting after section 4 (7 U.S.C. 904) the following:

“SEC. 5. FEES FOR CERTAIN LOAN GUARANTEES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For electrification base-load generation loan guarantees, the Secretary shall, at the request of the borrower, charge an upfront fee to cover the costs of the loan guarantee.

“(b) FEE.—The fee described in subsection (a) for a loan guarantee shall be equal to the costs of the loan guarantee (within the meaning of section 502(5)(C) of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661a(5)(C))).

“(c) LIMITATION.—Funds received from a borrower to pay the fee described in this section shall not be derived from a loan or other debt obligation that is made or guaranteed by the Federal Government.”.

SEC. 6102. GUARANTEES FOR BONDS AND NOTES ISSUED FOR ELECTRIFICATION OR TELEPHONE PURPOSES.

Section 313A(f) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 940c-1(f)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6103. EXPANSION OF 911 ACCESS.

Section 315(d) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 940e(d)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6104. ACCESS TO BROADBAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 601 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) PRIORITY.—In making loans or loan guarantees under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

“(A) establish not less than 2 evaluation periods for each fiscal year to compare loan and loan guarantee applications and to prioritize loans and loan guarantees to all or part of rural communities that do not have residential broadband service that meets the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e);

“(B) give the highest priority to applicants that offer to provide broadband service to the greatest proportion of unserved households or households that do not have residential broadband service that meets the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e), as—

“(i) certified by the affected community, city, county, or designee; or

“(ii) demonstrated on—

“(I) the broadband map of the affected State if the map contains address-level data; or

“(II) the National Broadband Map if address-level data is unavailable; and

“(C) provide equal consideration to all qualified applicants, including applicants that have not previously received loans or loan guarantees under paragraph (1); and

“(D) give priority to applicants that offer in the applications of the applicants to provide broadband service not predominantly for business service, if at least 25 percent of the customers in the proposed service territory are commercial interests.”;

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) demonstrate the ability to furnish, improve in order to meet the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e), or extend broadband service to all or part of an unserved rural area or an area below the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e);”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) not less than 15 percent of the households in the proposed service territory are unserved or have service levels below the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e); and”;

(ii) in the heading of subparagraph (B), by striking “25”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) in the subparagraph heading, by striking “3 OR MORE”; and

(II) by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), subparagraph (A)(ii) shall not apply to an incumbent service provider in the portion of a proposed service territory in which the provider is upgrading broadband service to meet the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e) for the existing territory of the incumbent service provider.”;

(C) in paragraph (3)(B), by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) INFORMATION.—Information submitted under this subparagraph shall be—

“(I) certified by the affected community, city, county, or designee; or

“(II) demonstrated on—

“(aa) the broadband map of the affected State if the map contains address-level data; or

“(bb) the National Broadband Map if address-level data is unavailable.”;

(D) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

“(5) NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall promptly provide a fully searchable database on the website of the Rural Utilities Service that contains, at a minimum—

“(A) notice of each application for a loan or loan guarantee under this section describing the application, including—

“(i) the identity of the applicant;

“(ii) a description of each application, including—

“(I) each area proposed to be served by the applicant; and

“(II) the amount and type of support requested by each applicant;

“(iii) the status of each application;

“(iv) the estimated number and proportion relative to the service territory of households without terrestrial-based broadband service in those areas; and

“(v) a list of the census block groups or proposed service territory, in a manner specified by the Secretary, that the applicant proposes to service;

“(B) notice of each entity receiving assistance under this section, including—

“(i) the name of the entity;

“(ii) the type of assistance being received;

“(iii) the purpose for which the entity is receiving the assistance;

“(iv) each semiannual report submitted under paragraph (8)(A) (redacted to protect any proprietary information in the report); and

“(C) such other information as is sufficient to allow the public to understand assistance provided under this section.”;

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) REPORTING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall require any entity receiving assistance under this section to submit a semiannual report for 3 years after completion of the project, in a format specified by the Secretary, that describes—

“(i) the use by the entity of the assistance, including new equipment and capacity enhancements that support high-speed broadband access for educational institutions, health care providers, and public safety service providers (including the estimated number of end users who are currently using or forecasted to use the new or upgraded infrastructure); and

“(ii) the progress towards fulfilling the objectives for which the assistance was granted, including—

“(I) the number and location of residences and businesses that will receive new broadband service, existing network service improvements, and facility upgrades resulting from the Federal assistance;

“(II) the speed of broadband service;

“(III) the average price of broadband service in a proposed service area;

“(IV) any changes in broadband service adoption rates, including new subscribers generated from demand-side projects; and

“(V) any metrics the Secretary determines to be appropriate;

“(B) ADDITIONAL REPORTING.—The Secretary may require any additional reporting and information by any recipient of any assistance under this section so as to ensure compliance with this section.

“(9) DEFAULT AND DEOBLIGATION.—In addition to other authority under applicable law, the Secretary shall establish written procedures for all broadband programs administered by the Rural Utilities Service under this or any other Act that, to the maximum extent practicable—

“(A) recover funds from loan defaults;

“(B) deobligate any awards, less allowable costs that demonstrate an insufficient level of performance (including metrics determined by the Secretary) or fraudulent spending, to the extent funds with respect to the award are available in the account relating to the program established by this section;

“(C) award those funds, on a competitive basis, to new or existing applicants consistent with this section; and

“(D) minimize overlap among the programs.

“(10) SERVICE AREA ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary shall, with respect to an application for assistance under this section—

“(A) provide not less than 15 days for broadband service providers to voluntarily submit information concerning the broadband services that the providers offer in the census block groups or tracts described in paragraph (5)(A)(v) so that the Secretary may assess whether the applications submitted meet the eligibility requirements under this section; and

“(B) if no broadband service provider submits information under subparagraph (A), consider the number of providers in the census block group or tract to be established by using—

“(i) the most current National Broadband Map of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration; or

“(ii) any other data regarding the availability of broadband service that the Secretary may collect or obtain through reasonable efforts.”;

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(B) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), for purposes of this section, the minimum acceptable level of broadband service for a rural area shall be at least—

“(A) a 4-Mbps downstream transmission capacity; and

“(B) a 1-Mbps upstream transmission capacity.

“(2) ADJUSTMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—At least once every 2 years, the Secretary shall review, and may adjust through notice published in the Federal Register, the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under paragraph (1) to ensure that high quality, cost-effective broadband service is provided to rural areas over time.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making an adjustment to the minimum acceptable level of broadband service under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may consider establishing different transmission rates for fixed broadband service and mobile broadband service.”;

(4) in subsection (g), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) TERMS.—In determining the term and conditions of a loan or loan guarantee, the Secretary may—

“(A) consider whether the recipient is or would be serving an area that is unserved or has service levels below the minimum acceptable level of broadband service established under subsection (e); and

“(B) if the Secretary makes a determination in the affirmative under subparagraph (A), establish a limited initial deferral period or comparable terms necessary to achieve the financial feasibility and long-term sustainability of the project.”;

(5) in subsection (j)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, including any loan terms or conditions for which the Secretary provided additional assistance to unserved areas” before the semicolon at the end;

(B) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(C) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) the overall progress towards fulfilling the goal of improving the quality of rural life by expanding rural broadband access, as demonstrated by metrics, including—

“(A) the number of residences and businesses receiving new broadband services;

“(B) network improvements, including facility upgrades and equipment purchases;

“(C) average broadband speeds and prices on a local and statewide basis;

“(D) any changes in broadband adoption rates; and

“(E) any specific activities that increased high speed broadband access for educational institutions, health care providers, and public safety service providers.”;

(6) in subsections (k)(1) and (l), by striking “2012” each place it appears and inserting “2018”.

(b) STUDY ON PROVIDING EFFECTIVE DATA FOR NATIONAL BROADBAND MAP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce and the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, shall conduct a study

of the ways that data collected under the broadband programs of the Secretary of Agriculture could be most effectively shared with the Commission to support the development and maintenance of the National Broadband Map by the Commission.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The study shall include a consideration of the circumstances under which address-level data could be collected by the Secretary and appropriately shared with the Commission.

(3) COMPLETION.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete the study required under this subsection.

(4) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of completion of the study, the Secretary shall submit a report describing the results of the study to—

(A) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

(B) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(C) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate; and

(D) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

SEC. 6105. RURAL GIGABIT NETWORK PILOT PROGRAM.

Title VI of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 603. RURAL GIGABIT NETWORK PILOT PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITION OF ULTRA-HIGH SPEED SERVICE.—In this section, the term ‘ultra-high speed service’ means broadband service operating at a 1 gigabit per second downstream transmission capacity.

“(b) PILOT PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall establish a pilot program to be known as the ‘Rural Gigabit Network Pilot Program’, under which the Secretary may, at the discretion of the Secretary, provide grants, loans, or loan guarantees to eligible entities.

“(c) ELIGIBILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to obtain assistance under this section, an entity shall—

“(A) demonstrate to the Secretary the ability to furnish or extend ultra-high speed service to a rural area;

“(B) submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require;

“(C) not already provide ultra-high speed service to a rural area within any State in the proposed service territory; and

“(D) agree to complete buildout of ultra-high speed service by not later than 3 years after the initial date on which assistance under this section is made available.

“(2) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—Assistance under this section may only be used to carry out a project in a proposed service territory if—

“(A) the proposed service territory is a rural area; and

“(B) ultra-high speed service is not provided in any part of the proposed service territory.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

Subtitle C—Miscellaneous

SEC. 6201. DISTANCE LEARNING AND TELEMEDICINE.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 2335A of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 950aaa-5) is amended by striking “\$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1996 through 2012” and inserting “\$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1(b) of Public Law 102-551 (7 U.S.C. 950aaa note) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6202. AGRICULTURAL TRANSPORTATION.

Section 203(j) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1622(j)) is amended by striking “the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Maritime Commission,” and inserting “the Surface Transportation Board, the Federal Maritime Commission.”.

SEC. 6203. VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT MARKET DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.

Section 231(b) of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 1632a(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (6) and inserting the following:

“(6) PRIORITY.—

“(A) ELIGIBLE INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS OF VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.—In awarding grants under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall give priority to—

“(i) operators of small- and medium-sized farms and ranches that are structured as family farms;

“(ii) beginning farmers or ranchers;

“(iii) socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers; and

“(iv) veteran farmers or ranchers (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e))).

“(B) ELIGIBLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER GROUPS, FARMER OR RANCHER COOPERATIVES, AND MAJORITY-CONTROLLED PRODUCER-BASED BUSINESS VENTURE.—In awarding grants under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall give priority to projects (including farmer or rancher cooperative projects) that best contribute to creating or increasing marketing opportunities for operators, farmers, and ranchers described in subparagraph (A).”; and

(2) in paragraph (7)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking “On October 1, 2008,” and inserting “On the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014,”; and

(ii) by striking “\$15,000,000” and inserting “\$63,000,000”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 6204. AGRICULTURE INNOVATION CENTER DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.

Section 6402(i) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 1632b(i)) is amended by striking “\$6,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012” and inserting “\$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 6205. RURAL ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM.

Subtitle E of title VI of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171; 116 Stat. 424) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 6407. RURAL ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM.

“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to help rural families and small businesses achieve cost savings by providing loans to qualified consumers to implement durable cost-effective energy efficiency measures.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(A) any public power district, public utility district, or similar entity, or any electric cooperative described in section 501(c)(12) or 1381(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, that borrowed and repaid, prepaid, or is paying an electric loan made or guaranteed by the Rural Utilities Service (or any predecessor agency);

“(B) any entity primarily owned or controlled by 1 or more entities described in subparagraph (A); or

“(C) any other entity that is an eligible borrower of the Rural Utilities Service, as determined under section 1710.101 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation).

“(2) ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES.—The term ‘energy efficiency measures’ means, for or at property served by an eligible entity, structural improvements and investments in cost-effective, commercial technologies to increase energy efficiency.

“(3) QUALIFIED CONSUMER.—The term ‘qualified consumer’ means a consumer served by an eligible entity that has the ability to repay a loan made under subsection (d), as determined by the eligible entity.

“(4) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service.

“(c) LOANS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall make loans to eligible entities that agree to use the loan funds to make loans to qualified consumers for the purpose of implementing energy efficiency measures.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of receiving a loan under this subsection, an eligible entity shall—

“(i) establish a list of energy efficiency measures that is expected to decrease energy use or costs of qualified consumers;

“(ii) prepare an implementation plan for use of the loan funds, including use of any interest to be received pursuant to subsection (d)(1)(A);

“(iii) provide for appropriate measurement and verification to ensure—

“(I) the effectiveness of the energy efficiency loans made by the eligible entity; and

“(II) that there is no conflict of interest in carrying out this section; and

“(iv) demonstrate expertise in effective use of energy efficiency measures at an appropriate scale.

“(B) REVISION OF LIST OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES.—Subject to the approval of the Secretary, an eligible entity may update the list required under subparagraph (A)(i) to account for newly available efficiency technologies.

“(C) EXISTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS.—An eligible entity that, at any time before the date that is 60 days after the date of enactment of this section, has established an energy efficiency program for qualified consumers may use an existing list of energy efficiency measures, implementation plan, or measurement and verification system of that program to satisfy the requirements of subparagraph (A) if the Secretary determines the list, plan, or systems are consistent with the purposes of this section.

“(3) NO INTEREST.—A loan under this subsection shall bear no interest.

“(4) REPAYMENT.—With respect to a loan under paragraph (1)—

“(A) the term shall not exceed 20 years from the date on which the loan is closed; and

“(B) except as provided in paragraph (6), the repayment of each advance shall be amortized for a period not to exceed 10 years.

“(5) AMOUNT OF ADVANCES.—Any advance of loan funds to an eligible entity in any single year shall not exceed 50 percent of the approved loan amount.

“(6) SPECIAL ADVANCE FOR START-UP ACTIVITIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to assist an eligible entity in defraying the appropriate start-up costs (as determined by the Secretary) of establishing new programs or modifying existing programs to carry out subsection (d), the Secretary shall allow an eligible entity to request a special advance.

“(B) AMOUNT.—No eligible entity may receive a special advance under this paragraph for an amount that is greater than 4 percent of the loan amount received by the eligible entity under paragraph (1).

“(C) REPAYMENT.—Repayment of the special advance—

“(i) shall be required during the 10-year period beginning on the date on which the special advance is made; and

“(ii) at the election of the eligible entity, may be deferred to the end of the 10-year period.

“(7) LIMITATION.—All special advances shall be made under a loan described in paragraph (1) during the first 10 years of the term of the loan.

“(d) LOANS TO QUALIFIED CONSUMERS.—

“(1) TERMS OF LOANS.—Loans made by an eligible entity to qualified consumers using loan funds provided by the Secretary under subsection (c)—

“(A) may bear interest, not to exceed 3 percent, to be used for purposes that include—

“(i) to establish a loan loss reserve; and

“(ii) to offset personnel and program costs of eligible entities to provide the loans;

“(B) shall finance energy efficiency measures for the purpose of decreasing energy usage or costs of the qualified consumer by an amount that ensures, to the maximum extent practicable, that a loan term of not more than 10 years will not pose an undue financial burden on the qualified consumer, as determined by the eligible entity;

“(C) shall not be used to fund purchases of, or modifications to, personal property unless the personal property is or becomes attached to real property (including a manufactured home) as a fixture;

“(D) shall be repaid through charges added to the electric bill for the property for, or at which, energy efficiency measures are or will be implemented, on the condition that this requirement does not prohibit—

“(i) the voluntary prepayment of a loan by the owner of the property; or

“(ii) the use of any additional repayment mechanisms that are—

“(I) demonstrated to have appropriate risk mitigation features, as determined by the eligible entity; or

“(II) required if the qualified consumer is no longer a customer of the eligible entity; and

“(E) shall require an energy audit by an eligible entity to determine the impact of proposed energy efficiency measures on the energy costs and consumption of the qualified consumer.

“(2) CONTRACTORS.—In addition to any other qualified general contractor, eligible entities may serve as general contractors.

“(e) CONTRACT FOR MEASUREMENT AND VERIFICATION, TRAINING, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary—

“(A) shall establish a plan for measurement and verification, training, and technical assistance of the program; and

“(B) may enter into 1 or more contracts with a qualified entity for the purposes of—

“(i) providing measurement and verification activities; and

“(ii) developing a program to provide technical assistance and training to the employ-

ees of eligible entities to carry out this section.

“(2) USE OF SUBCONTRACTORS AUTHORIZED.—A qualified entity that enters into a contract under paragraph (1) may use subcontractors to assist the qualified entity in carrying out the contract.

“(f) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The authority provided in this section is in addition to any other authority of the Secretary to offer loans under any other law.

“(g) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—Subject to the availability of funds and except as otherwise provided in this section, the loans and other expenditures required to be made under this section shall be available until expended, with the Secretary authorized to make new loans as loans are repaid.

“(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”

SEC. 6206. STUDY OF RURAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Transportation shall publish an updated version of the study described in section 6206 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (as amended by subsection (b)).

(b) ADDITION TO STUDY.—Section 6206(b) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 1971) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) the sufficiency of infrastructure along waterways in the United States and the impact of the infrastructure on the movement of agricultural goods in terms of safety, efficiency and speed, as well as the benefits derived through upgrades and repairs to locks and dams.”

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Transportation shall submit to Congress the updated version of the study required by subsection (a).

SEC. 6207. REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.

Section 15751 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “Not more than” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), not more than”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) LIMITED FUNDING.—In a case in which less than \$10,000,000 is made available to a Commission for a fiscal year under this section, paragraph (1) shall not apply.”

SEC. 6208. DEFINITION OF RURAL AREA FOR PURPOSES OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1949.

The second sentence of section 520 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1490) is amended—

(1) by striking “1990 or 2000 decennial census shall continue to be so classified until the receipt of data from the decennial census in the year 2010” and inserting “1990, 2000, or 2010 decennial census, and any area deemed to be a ‘rural area’ for purposes of this title under any other provision of law at any time during the period beginning January 1, 2000, and ending December 31, 2010, shall continue to be so classified until the receipt of data

from the decennial census in the year 2020"; and

(2) by striking "25,000" and inserting "35,000".

SEC. 6209. PROGRAM METRICS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall collect data regarding economic activities created through grants and loans, including any technical assistance provided as a component of the grant or loan program, and measure the short- and long-term viability of award recipients and any entities to whom those recipients provide assistance using award funds, under—

(1) section 231 of the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 1632a);

(2) section 313(b)(2) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 (7 U.S.C. 940c(b)(2)); or

(3) section 310B(c), 310B(e), 310B(g), 310H, or 379E, or subtitle E, of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(c), 1932(e), 1932(g), 2008s, 2009 et seq.).

(b) DATA.—The data collected under subsection (a) shall include information collected from recipients both during the award period and for a period of time, as determined by the Secretary, which is not less than 2 years after the award period ends.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that contains the data described in subsection (a).

(2) DETAILED INFORMATION.—The report shall include detailed information regarding—

(A) actions taken by the Secretary to use the data;

(B) the percentage increase of employees;

(C) the number of business starts and clients served;

(D) any benefit, such as an increase in revenue or customer base; and

(E) such other information as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 6210. FUNDING OF PENDING RURAL DEVELOPMENT LOAN AND GRANT APPLICATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use funds made available under subsection (b) to provide funds for applications that are pending on the date of enactment of this Act in accordance with the terms and conditions of section 6029 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 1955).

(b) FUNDING.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning in fiscal year 2014, of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$150,000,000, to remain available until expended.

TITLE VII—RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND RELATED MATTERS

Subtitle A—National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977

SEC. 7101. OPTION TO BE INCLUDED AS NON-LAND-GRANT COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE.

Section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(5) COOPERATING FORESTRY SCHOOL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘cooperating forestry school’ means an institution—

“(i) that is eligible to receive funds under Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act; 16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.); and

“(ii) with respect to which the Secretary has not received a declaration of the intent of that institution to not be considered a cooperating forestry school.

“(B) TERMINATION OF DECLARATION.—A declaration of the intent of an institution to not be considered a cooperating forestry school submitted to the Secretary shall be in effect until September 30, 2018.”;

(2) in paragraph (10)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “that”;

(ii) in clause (i)—

(I) by inserting “that” before “qualify”; and

(II) by striking “and” at the end;

(iii) in clause (ii)—

(I) by inserting “that” before “offer”; and

(II) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) with respect to which the Secretary has not received a declaration of the intent of a college or university to not be considered a Hispanic-serving agricultural college or university.”;

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

“(C) TERMINATION OF DECLARATION OF INTENT.—A declaration of the intent of a college or university to not be considered a Hispanic-serving agricultural college or university submitted to the Secretary shall be in effect until September 30, 2018.”;

(3) in paragraph (14)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “agriculture or forestry” and inserting “food and agricultural sciences”;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph:

“(B) DESIGNATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall establish an ongoing process through which public colleges or universities may apply for designation as an NLGCA Institution.”.

SEC. 7102. NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) EXTENSION OF TERMINATION DATE.—Section 1408(h) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123(h)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) DUTIES OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS ADVISORY BOARD.—Section 1408(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “Committee on Appropriations of the Senate” and all that follows through the semi-colon and inserting “Committee on Appropriations of the Senate on—”; and

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

“(A) long-term and short-term national policies and priorities consistent with the purposes specified in section 1402 for agricultural research, extension, education, and economics; and

“(B) the annual establishment of priorities that—

“(i) are in accordance with the purposes specified in a provision of a covered law (as defined in subsection (d) of section 1492) under which competitive grants (described in subsection (c) of such section) are awarded; and

“(ii) the Board determines are national priorities.”;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “the national research policies and priorities set forth in” inserting “national research policies and priorities that are consistent with the purposes specified in”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

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

“(5) consult with industry groups on agricultural research, extension, education, and economics, and make recommendations to the Secretary based on that consultation.”.

SEC. 7103. SPECIALTY CROP COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEE.—Section 1408(a) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “Not later than” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than”; and

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

“(2) CITRUS DISEASE SUBCOMMITTEE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall establish within the specialty crops committee, and appoint the initial members of, a citrus disease subcommittee to carry out the responsibilities of the subcommittee described in subsection (g) in accordance with subsection (j)(3) of section 412 of the Agricultural Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632).

“(B) COMPOSITION.—The citrus disease subcommittee shall be composed of 9 members, each of whom is a domestic producer of citrus in a State, represented as follows:

“(i) Three of such members shall represent Arizona or California.

“(ii) Five of such members shall represent Florida.

“(iii) One of such members shall represent Texas.

“(C) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary may appoint individuals who are not members of the specialty crops committee or the Advisory Board established under section 1408 as members of the citrus disease subcommittee

“(D) TERMINATION.—The subcommittee established under subparagraph (A) shall terminate on September 30, 2018.

“(E) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The subcommittee established under subparagraph (A) shall be covered by the exemption to section 9(c) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) applicable to the Advisory Board under section 1408(f).”.

(b) MEMBERS.—Section 1408A(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “Individuals” and inserting the following:

“(1) ELIGIBILITY.—Individuals”;

(2) by striking “Members” and inserting the following:

“(2) SERVICE.—Members”; and

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

“(3) DIVERSITY.—Membership of the specialty crops committee shall reflect diversity in the specialty crops represented.”.

(c) ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT.—Section 1408A(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “Measures” and inserting “Programs”;

(2) by striking paragraph (2);

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), respectively;

(4) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “Programs that would” and inserting “Research, extension, and teaching programs designed to improve competitiveness in the specialty crop industry, including programs that would”;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by inserting “, including improving the quality and taste of processed specialty crops” before the semicolon; and

(C) in subparagraph (G), by inserting “the remote sensing and the” before “mechanization”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) Analysis of the alignment of specialty crops committee recommendations with grants awarded through the specialty crop research initiative established under section 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632).”

(d) CONSULTATION WITH SPECIALTY CROP INDUSTRY.—Section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively;

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

“(d) CONSULTATION WITH SPECIALTY CROP INDUSTRY.—In studying the scope and effectiveness of programs under subsection (a), the specialty crops committee shall consult on an ongoing basis with diverse sectors of the specialty crop industry.”; and

(3) in subsection (f) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)), by striking “subsection (d)” and inserting “subsection (e)”.

(e) DUTIES OF CITRUS DISEASE SUBCOMMITTEE.—Section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a), as amended by subsection (d), is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) CITRUS DISEASE SUBCOMMITTEE DUTIES.—For the purposes of subsection (j) of section 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632), the citrus disease subcommittee shall—

“(1) advise the Secretary on citrus research, extension, and development needs;

“(2) propose, by a favorable vote of two-thirds of the members of the subcommittee, a research and extension agenda and annual budgets for the funds made available to carry out such subsection;

“(3) evaluate and review ongoing research and extension funded under the emergency citrus disease research and extension program (as defined in such subsection);

“(4) establish, by a favorable vote of two-thirds of the members of the subcommittee, annual priorities for the award of grants under such subsection;

“(5) provide the Secretary any comments on grants awarded under such subsection during the previous fiscal year; and

“(6) engage in regular consultation and collaboration with the Department and other institutional, governmental, and private persons conducting scientific research on, and extension activities related to, the causes or treatments of citrus diseases and pests, both domestic and invasive, for purposes of—

“(A) maximizing the effectiveness of research and extension projects funded under

the citrus disease research and extension program;

“(B) hastening the development of useful treatments;

“(C) avoiding duplicative and wasteful expenditures; and

“(D) providing the Secretary with such information and advice as the Secretary may request.”.

SEC. 7104. VETERINARY SERVICES GRANT PROGRAM.

The National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 is amended by inserting after section 1415A (7 U.S.C. 3151a) the following new section:

“SEC. 1415B. VETERINARY SERVICES GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) QUALIFIED ENTITY.—The term ‘qualified entity’ means—

“(A) a for-profit or nonprofit entity located in the United States that, or an individual who, operates a veterinary clinic providing veterinary services—

“(i) in a rural area, as defined in section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)); and

“(ii) in a veterinarian shortage situation;

“(B) a State, national, allied, or regional veterinary organization or specialty board recognized by the American Veterinary Medical Association;

“(C) a college or school of veterinary medicine accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association;

“(D) a university research foundation or veterinary medical foundation;

“(E) a department of veterinary science or department of comparative medicine accredited by the Department of Education;

“(F) a State agricultural experiment station; or

“(G) a State, local, or tribal government agency.

“(2) VETERINARIAN SHORTAGE SITUATION.—The term ‘veterinarian shortage situation’ means a veterinarian shortage situation as determined by the Secretary under section 1415A.

“(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

“(1) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to make competitive grants to qualified entities that carry out programs or activities described in paragraph (2) for the purpose of developing, implementing, and sustaining veterinary services.

“(2) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—A qualified entity shall be eligible to receive a grant described in paragraph (1) if the entity carries out programs or activities that the Secretary determines will—

“(A) substantially relieve veterinarian shortage situations;

“(B) support or facilitate private veterinary practices engaged in public health activities; or

“(C) support or facilitate the practices of veterinarians who are providing or have completed providing services under an agreement entered into with the Secretary under section 1415A(a)(2).

“(c) AWARD PROCESSES AND PREFERENCES.—

“(1) APPLICATION, EVALUATION, AND INPUT PROCESSES.—In administering the grant program established under this section, the Secretary shall—

“(A) use an appropriate application and evaluation process, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(B) seek the input of interested persons.

“(2) COORDINATION PREFERENCE.—In selecting recipients of grants to be used for any of

the purposes described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary shall give a preference to qualified entities that provide documentation of coordination with other qualified entities, with respect to any such purpose.

“(3) CONSIDERATION OF AVAILABLE FUNDS.—In selecting recipients of grants to be used for any of the purposes described in subsection (d), the Secretary shall take into consideration the amount of funds available for grants and the purposes for which the grant funds will be used.

“(4) NATURE OF GRANTS.—A grant awarded under this section shall be considered to be a competitive research, extension, or education grant.

“(d) USE OF GRANTS TO RELIEVE VETERINARIAN SHORTAGE SITUATIONS AND SUPPORT VETERINARY SERVICES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a qualified entity may use funds provided by a grant awarded under this section to relieve veterinarian shortage situations and support veterinary services for any of the following purposes:

“(A) To promote recruitment (including for programs in secondary schools), placement, and retention of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, students of veterinary medicine, and students of veterinary technology.

“(B) To allow veterinary students, veterinary interns, externs, fellows, and residents, and veterinary technician students to cover expenses (other than the types of expenses described in section 1415A(c)(5)) to attend training programs in food safety or food animal medicine.

“(C) To establish or expand accredited veterinary education programs (including faculty recruitment and retention), veterinary residency and fellowship programs, or veterinary internship and externship programs carried out in coordination with accredited colleges of veterinary medicine.

“(D) To provide continuing education and extension, including veterinary telemedicine and other distance-based education, for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other health professionals needed to strengthen veterinary programs and enhance food safety.

“(E) To provide technical assistance for the preparation of applications submitted to the Secretary for designation as a veterinarian shortage situation under this section or section 1415A.

“(2) QUALIFIED ENTITIES OPERATING VETERINARY CLINICS.—A qualified entity described in subsection (a)(1)(A) may only use funds provided by a grant awarded under this section to establish or expand veterinary practices, including—

“(A) equipping veterinary offices;

“(B) sharing in the reasonable overhead costs of such veterinary practices, as determined by the Secretary; or

“(C) establishing mobile veterinary facilities in which a portion of the facilities will address education or extension needs.

“(e) SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN GRANTS.—

“(1) TERMS OF SERVICE REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Funds provided through a grant made under this section to a qualified entity described in subsection (a)(1)(A) and used by such entity under subsection (d)(2) shall be subject to an agreement between the Secretary and such entity that includes a required term of service for such entity (including a qualified entity operating as an individual), as established by the Secretary.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing a term of service under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consider only—

- “(i) the amount of the grant awarded; and
- “(ii) the specific purpose of the grant.

“(2) BREACH REMEDIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An agreement under paragraph (1) shall provide remedies for any breach of the agreement by the qualified entity referred to in paragraph (1)(A), including repayment or partial repayment of the grant funds, with interest.

“(B) WAIVER.—The Secretary may grant a waiver of the repayment obligation for breach of contract if the Secretary determines that such qualified entity demonstrates extreme hardship or extreme need.

“(C) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS RECOVERED.—Funds recovered under this paragraph shall—

- “(i) be credited to the account available to carry out this section; and
- “(ii) remain available until expended without further appropriation.

“(f) PROHIBITION ON USE OF GRANT FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION.—Except as provided in subsection (d)(2), funds made available for grants under this section may not be used—

- “(1) to construct a new building or facility; or

“(2) to acquire, expand, remodel, or alter an existing building or facility, including site grading and improvement and architect fees.

“(g) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations to carry out this section.

“(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this section \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter, to remain available until expended.”

SEC. 7105. GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SCIENCES EDUCATION.

Section 1417(m) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3152(m)) is amended by striking “section \$60,000,000” and all that follows and inserting the following: “section—

- “(1) \$60,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1990 through 2013; and
- “(2) \$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”

SEC. 7106. AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD POLICY RESEARCH CENTERS.

Section 1419A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3155) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “**AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD**” before “**POLICY**”;

(2) in subsection (a), in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “Secretary may” and inserting “Secretary shall, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist,”; and

(B) by striking “make grants, competitive grants, and special research grants to, and enter into cooperative agreements and other contracting instruments with,” and inserting “make competitive grants to, or enter into cooperative agreements with,”;

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

“(b) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—An entity eligible to apply for funding under subsection (a) is a State agricultural experiment station, college or university, or other public research institution or organization that has a history of providing—

- “(1) unbiased, nonpartisan economic analysis to Congress on the areas specified in

paragraphs (1) through (4) of subsection (a); or

“(2) objective, scientific information to Federal agencies and the public to support and enhance efficient, accurate implementation of Federal drought preparedness and drought response programs, including inter-agency thresholds used to determine eligibility for mitigation or emergency assistance.”;

(4) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(5) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

“(c) PREFERENCE.—In making awards under this section, the Secretary shall give a preference to policy research centers that have—

- “(1) extensive databases, models, and demonstrated experience in providing Congress with agricultural market projections, rural development analysis, agricultural policy analysis, and baseline projections at the farm, multiregional, national, and international levels; or
- “(2) information, analysis, and research relating to drought mitigation.”;

(6) in subsection (d)(2) (as redesignated by paragraph (4)), by inserting “applied” after “theoretical and”; and

(7) by striking subsection (e) (as redesignated by paragraph (4)) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”

SEC. 7107. EDUCATION GRANTS TO ALASKA NATIVE SERVING INSTITUTIONS AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN SERVING INSTITUTIONS.

Section 1419B of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3156) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—
(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “(or grants without regard to any requirement for competition)”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—
(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “(or grants without regard to any requirement for competition)”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7108. REPEAL OF HUMAN NUTRITION INTERVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION RESEARCH PROGRAM.

Section 1424 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3174) is repealed.

SEC. 7109. REPEAL OF PILOT RESEARCH PROGRAM TO COMBINE MEDICAL AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH.

Section 1424A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3174a) is repealed.

SEC. 7110. NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Section 1425(f) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3175(f)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7111. CONTINUING ANIMAL HEALTH AND DISEASE RESEARCH PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1433 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3195) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 1433. CONTINUING ANIMAL HEALTH AND DISEASE, FOOD SECURITY, AND STEWARDSHIP RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION PROGRAMS.

“(a) CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In each State with one or more accredited colleges of veterinary medicine, the deans of the accredited college or colleges and the director of the State agricultural experiment station shall develop a comprehensive animal health and disease research program for the State based on the animal health research capacity of each eligible institution in the State, which shall be submitted to the Secretary for approval and shall be used for the allocation of funds available to the State under this section.

“(2) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution allocated funds to carry out animal health and disease research under this section may only use such funds—

“(A) to meet the expenses of conducting animal health and disease research, publishing and disseminating the results of such research, and contributing to the retirement of employees subject to the Act of March 4, 1940 (7 U.S.C. 331);

“(B) for administrative planning and direction; and

“(C) to purchase equipment and supplies necessary for conducting research described in subparagraph (A).

“(3) COOPERATION AMONG ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS.—The Secretary, to the maximum extent practicable, shall encourage eligible institutions to cooperate in setting research priorities under this section through conducting regular regional and national meetings.

“(b) COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, for purposes of addressing the critical needs of animal agriculture, shall award competitive grants to eligible entities under which such eligible entities—

“(A) conduct research—

“(i) to promote food security, such as by—

“(I) improving feed efficiency;

“(II) improving energetic efficiency;

“(III) connecting genomics, proteomics, metabolomics and related phenomena to animal production;

“(IV) improving reproductive efficiency; and

“(V) enhancing pre- and post-harvest food safety systems; and

“(ii) on the relationship between animal and human health, such as by—

“(I) exploring new approaches for vaccine development;

“(II) understanding and controlling zoonosis, including its impact on food safety;

“(III) improving animal health through feed; and

“(IV) enhancing product quality and nutritive value; and

“(B) develop and disseminate to the public tools and information based on the research conducted under subparagraph (A) and sound science.

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—An entity eligible to receive a grant under this subsection is any of the following:

“(A) A State cooperative institution.

“(B) An NLCGA Institution.

“(3) ADMINISTRATION.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall establish procedures—

“(A) to seek and accept proposals for grants;

“(B) to review and determine the relevance and merit of proposals, in consultation with representatives of the animal agriculture industry;

“(C) to provide a scientific peer review of each proposal conducted by a panel of subject matter experts from Federal agencies, academic institutions, State animal health agencies, and the animal agriculture industry; and

“(D) to award competitive grants on the basis of merit, quality, and relevance.

“(C) FUNDING.—

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(2) RESERVATION OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall reserve not less than \$5,000,000 of the funds made available under paragraph (1) to carry out the capacity and infrastructure program under subsection (a).

“(3) INITIAL APPORTIONMENT.—The amounts made available under paragraph (1) that are remaining after the reservation of funds under paragraph (2), shall be apportioned as follows:

“(A) 15 percent of such amounts shall be used to carry out the capacity and infrastructure program under subsection (a).

“(B) 85 percent of such funds shall be used to carry out the competitive grant program under subsection (b).

“(4) ADDITIONAL APPORTIONMENT.—The funds reserved under paragraph (2) and apportioned under paragraph (3)(A) to carry out the capacity and infrastructure program under subsection (a) shall be apportioned as follows:

“(A) Four percent shall be retained by the Department of Agriculture for administration, program assistance to the eligible institutions, and program coordination.

“(B) 48 percent shall be distributed among the several States in the proportion that the value of and income to producers from domestic livestock, poultry, and commercial aquaculture species in each State bears to the total value of and income to producers from domestic livestock, poultry, and commercial aquaculture species in all the States and the proportionate value of and income from domestic livestock, poultry, and commercial aquaculture species for each State, based on the most current inventory of all cattle, sheep, swine, horses, poultry, and commercial aquaculture species published by the Department of Agriculture.

“(C) 48 percent shall be distributed among the several States in the proportion that the animal health research capacity of the eligible institutions in each State bears to the total animal health research capacity in all the States. The Secretary shall determine the animal health research capacity of the eligible institutions.

“(5) SPECIAL RULES FOR APPORTIONMENT OF CERTAIN FUNDS.—With respect to funds reserved under paragraph (2) and apportioned under paragraph (3)(A) to carry out the capacity and infrastructure program under subsection (a), the following shall apply:

“(A) When the amount available under this section for allotment to any State on the basis of domestic livestock, poultry, and commercial aquaculture species values and incomes exceeds the amount for which the eligible institution or institutions in the State are eligible on the basis of animal health research capacity, the excess may be used, at the discretion of the Secretary, for remodeling of facilities, construction of new facilities, or increase in staffing, proportionate to the need for added research capacity.

“(B) Whenever a new college of veterinary medicine is established in a State and is accredited, the Secretary, after consultation with the dean of such college and the director of the State agricultural experiment sta-

tion and where applicable, deans of other accredited colleges in the State, shall provide for the reallocation of funds available to the State pursuant to paragraph (4) between the new college and other eligible institutions in the State, based on the animal health research capacity of each eligible institution.

“(C) Whenever two or more States jointly establish an accredited regional college of veterinary medicine or jointly support an accredited college of veterinary medicine serving the States involved, the Secretary is authorized to make funds which are available to such States pursuant to paragraph (4) available for such college in such amount that reflects the combined relative value of, and income from, domestic livestock, poultry, and commercial aquaculture species in the cooperating States, such amount to be adjusted, as necessary, pursuant to subsection (a)(1) and subparagraph (B).”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) DEFINITION OF STATE COOPERATIVE INSTITUTION.—Section 1404(18) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(18)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (F), by striking “subtitles E, G,” and inserting “subtitles G,”;

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (G); and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph:

“(F) section 1430; and”.

(2) DEFINITION OF CAPACITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM.—Section 251(f)(1)(C)(vi) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6971(f)(1)(C)(vi)) is amended by inserting “except for the competitive grant program under section 1433(b)” before the period at the end.

(3) SUBTITLE E OF THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND TEACHING POLICY ACT OF 1977.—Subtitle E of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 is amended—

(A) in section 1431(a) (7 U.S.C. 3193(a)), by inserting “under sections 1433(a) and 1434” after “eligible institutions”;

(B) in section 1435 (7 U.S.C. 3197), by striking “for allocation under the terms of this subtitle” and inserting “to carry out sections 1433(a) and 1434”;

(C) in section 1436 (7 U.S.C. 3198), in the first sentence, by striking “section 1433 of this title” and inserting “subsection (c) of section 1433 to carry out subsection (a) of such section”;

(D) in section 1437 (7 U.S.C. 3199), in the first sentence, by striking “States under section 1433 of this title” and inserting “States under subsection (c) of section 1433 to carry out subsection (a) of such section”;

(E) in section 1438 (7 U.S.C. 3200), in the first sentence by striking “under this subtitle” and inserting “under subsection (c) of section 1433 to carry out subsection (a) of such section”; and

(F) in section 1439 (7 U.S.C. 3201), by striking “under this subtitle” and inserting “under subsection (c) of section 1433 to carry out subsection (a) of such section or section 1434, as applicable.”.

(4) AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS FOR EXISTING AND CERTAIN NEW AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PROGRAMS.—Section 1463(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3311(c)) is amended by striking “sections 1433 and 1434” and inserting “sections 1433(a) and 1434”.

SEC. 7112. GRANTS TO UPGRADE AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SCIENCES FACILITIES AT 1890 LAND-GRANT COLLEGES, INCLUDING TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY.

Section 1447(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3222b(b)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7113. GRANTS TO UPGRADE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SCIENCE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT AT INSULAR AREA LAND-GRANT INSTITUTIONS.

(a) SUPPORTING TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1447B(a) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3222b-2(a)) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) PURPOSE.—It is the intent of Congress to assist the land-grant colleges and universities in the insular areas in efforts to—

“(1) acquire, alter, or repair facilities or relevant equipment necessary for conducting agricultural research; and

“(2) support tropical and subtropical agricultural research, including pest and disease research.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1447B of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3222b-2) is amended in the heading—

(A) by inserting “AND SUPPORT TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH” after “EQUIPMENT”; and

(B) by striking “INSTITUTIONS” and inserting “COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES”.

(b) EXTENSION.—Section 1447B(d) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3222b-2(d)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7114. REPEAL OF NATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING VIRTUAL CENTERS.

Section 1448 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3222c) is repealed.

SEC. 7115. HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS.

Section 1455(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3241(c)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7116. COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM FOR HISPANIC AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND YOUTH.

Section 1456(e)(1) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3243(e)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a competitive grants program—

“(A) to fund fundamental and applied research and extension at Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities in agriculture, human nutrition, food science, bioenergy, and environmental science; and

“(B) to award competitive grants to Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities to provide for training in the food and agricultural sciences of Hispanic agricultural workers and Hispanic youth working in the food and agricultural sciences.”.

SEC. 7117. COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

Section 1459A(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3292b(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(C) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2013; and

“(2) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7118. REPEAL OF RESEARCH EQUIPMENT GRANTS.

Section 1462A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3310a) is repealed.

SEC. 7119. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH.

Section 1463 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3311) is amended by striking “2012” each place it appears in subsections (a) and (b) and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7120. EXTENSION SERVICE.

Section 1464 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3312) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7121. AUDITING, REPORTING, BOOK-KEEPING, AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS.

Section 1469 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3315) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (b), (c), and (d) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection:

“(b) AGREEMENTS WITH FORMER AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary, for purposes of supporting ongoing research and information dissemination activities, including supporting research and those activities through co-locating scientists and other technical personnel, sharing of laboratory and field equipment, and providing financial support, shall enter into grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, or other legal instruments with former Department of Agriculture agricultural research facilities.”.

SEC. 7122. SUPPLEMENTAL AND ALTERNATIVE CROPS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS AND TERMINATION.—Section 1473D of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3319d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2013; and

“(2) \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

(b) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—Section 1473D(c)(1) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3319d(c)(1)) is amended by striking “use such research funding, special or competitive grants, or other means, as the Secretary determines,” and inserting “make competitive grants”.

SEC. 7123. CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS FOR NLGCA INSTITUTIONS.

Section 1473F(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3319i(b)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7124. AQUACULTURE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—Section 1475(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3322(b)) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “competitive” before “grants”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 1477 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act

of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3324) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 1477. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subtitle—

“(1) \$7,500,000 for each of fiscal years 1991 through 2013; and

“(2) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(b) PROHIBITION ON USE.—Funds made available under this section may not be used to acquire or construct a building.”.

SEC. 7125. RANGELAND RESEARCH PROGRAMS.

Section 1483(a) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3336(a)) is amended by striking “subtitle” and all that follows and inserting the following: “subtitle—

“(1) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1991 through 2013; and

“(2) \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7126. SPECIAL AUTHORIZATION FOR BIOSECURITY PLANNING AND RESPONSE.

Section 1484(a) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3351(a)) is amended by striking “response such sums as are necessary” and all that follows and inserting the following: “response—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2013; and

“(2) \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7127. DISTANCE EDUCATION AND RESIDENT INSTRUCTION GRANTS PROGRAM FOR INSULAR AREA INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) DISTANCE EDUCATION GRANTS FOR INSULAR AREAS.—

(1) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—Section 1490(a) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3362(a)) is amended by striking “or noncompetitive”.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 1490(f) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3362(f)) is amended by striking “section” and all that follows and inserting the following: “section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2013; and

“(2) \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

(b) RESIDENT INSTRUCTION GRANTS FOR INSULAR AREAS.—Section 1491(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3363(c)) is amended by striking “such sums as are necessary” and all that follows and inserting the following: “to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2002 through 2013; and

“(2) \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7128. MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new subtitle:

“Subtitle P—General Provisions

“SEC. 1492. MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The recipient of a competitive grant that is awarded by the Secretary under a covered law shall provide funds, in-kind contributions, or a combination of both, from sources other than funds provided through such grant in an amount that is at least equal to the amount of such grant.

“(b) EXCEPTION.—The matching funds requirement under subsection (a) shall not apply to grants awarded—

“(1) to a research agency of the Department of Agriculture; or

“(2) to an entity eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program (as defined in section 251(f)(1)(C) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6971(f)(1)(C))), including a partner of such entity.

“(c) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the matching funds requirement under subsection (a) for a year with respect to a competitive grant that involves research or extension activities that are consistent with the priorities established by the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board under section 1408(c)(1)(B) for the year involved.

“(d) COVERED LAW.—In this section, the term ‘covered law’ means each of the following provisions of law:

“(1) This title.

“(2) Title XVI of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5801 et seq.).

“(3) The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601 et seq.).

“(4) Part III of subtitle E of title VII of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

“(5) The Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i).”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND TEACHING POLICY ACT OF 1977.—The National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 is amended—

(A) in section 1415(a) (7 U.S.C. 3151(a)), by striking the second sentence;

(B) in section 1475(b) (7 U.S.C. 3322(b)), in the matter following paragraph (4), by striking “Except in the case of” and all that follows; and

(C) in section 1480 (7 U.S.C. 3333)—

(i) by striking subsection (b); and

(ii) by striking “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary” and inserting “The Secretary”.

(2) FOOD, AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION, AND TRADE ACT OF 1990.—The Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 is amended—

(A) in section 1623(d)(2) (7 U.S.C. 5813(d)(2)), by adding at the end the following: “The matching funds requirement under section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 shall not apply to grants awarded under this section.”;

(B) in section 1671 (7 U.S.C. 5924)—

(i) by striking subsection (c); and

(ii) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (e);

(C) in section 1672 (7 U.S.C. 5925)—

(i) by striking subsection (c); and

(ii) by redesignating subsections (d) through (j) as subsections (c) through (i), respectively; and

(D) in section 1672B (7 U.S.C. 5925b)—

(i) by striking subsection (c); and

(ii) by redesignating subsections (d), (e), and (f) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively.

(3) AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 1998.—The Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 is amended—

(A) in section 406 (7 U.S.C. 7626)—

(i) by striking subsection (d); and

(ii) by redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(B) in section 412(e) (7 U.S.C. 7632(e))—

(i) by striking paragraph (3); and
(ii) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (3).

(4) **COMPETITIVE, SPECIAL, AND FACILITIES RESEARCH GRANT ACT.**—Subsection (b)(9) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(9)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) **EXEMPTION.**—The matching funds requirement under section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 shall not apply in the case of a grant made under paragraph (6)(A).”; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B).

(5) **SUN GRANT PROGRAM.**—Section 7526(c)(1)(D)(iv) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8114(c)(1)(D)(iv)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(IV) **RELATION TO OTHER MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENT.**—The matching funds requirement under section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 shall not apply in the case of a grant provided by a sun grant center or subcenter under this paragraph.”.

(c) **APPLICATION TO AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **NEW GRANTS.**—Section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to grants described in such section awarded after October 1, 2014, unless the provision of a covered law under which such grants are awarded specifically exempts such grants from the matching funds requirement under such section.

(2) **GRANTS AWARDED ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2014.**—Notwithstanding the amendments made by subsection (b), a matching funds requirement in effect on or before the date of the enactment of this section under a provision of a covered law shall continue to apply to a grant awarded under such provision on or before October 1, 2014.

SEC. 7129. DESIGNATION OF CENTRAL STATE UNIVERSITY AS 1890 INSTITUTION.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—Any provision of a Federal law relating to colleges and universities eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.), including Tuskegee University, shall apply to Central State University.

(b) **FUNDING RESTRICTION.**—Notwithstanding the designation under subsection (a), for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, Central State University shall not be eligible to receive formula funds under—

(1) section 1444 or 1445 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222);

(2) section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343(d)) to carry out the national education program established under section 1425 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3175);

(3) the Renewable Resources Extension Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1671 et seq.); or

(4) Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act; 16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.).

Subtitle B—Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990

SEC. 7201. BEST UTILIZATION OF BIOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS.

Section 1624 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5814) is amended in the first sentence—

(1) by striking “\$40,000,000 for each fiscal year”; and

(2) by inserting “\$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2018” after “chapter”.

SEC. 7202. INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.

Section 1627(d) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5821(d)) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7203. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER PROGRAM.

Section 1628(f) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5831(f)) is amended to read as follows:

“(f) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2013; and

“(2) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7204. NATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM.

Section 1629(i) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5832(i)) is amended to read as follows:

“(i) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the National Training Program \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2013 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7205. NATIONAL GENETICS RESOURCES PROGRAM.

Section 1635(b) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5844(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “such funds as may be necessary”; and

(2) by striking “subtitle” and all that follows and inserting the following: “subtitle—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 1991 through 2013; and

“(2) \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7206. NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL WEATHER INFORMATION SYSTEM.

Section 1641(c) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5855(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “\$5,000,000 to carry out this subtitle” and inserting “to carry out this subtitle \$5,000,000”; and

(2) by inserting “and \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018” before the period at the end.

SEC. 7207. REPEAL OF RURAL ELECTRONIC COMMERCE EXTENSION PROGRAM.

Section 1670 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5923) is repealed.

SEC. 7208. AGRICULTURAL GENOME INITIATIVE.

Section 1671(c) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5924(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **CONSORTIA.**—The Secretary shall encourage awards under this section to consortia of eligible entities.”.

SEC. 7209. HIGH-PRIORITY RESEARCH AND EXTENSION INITIATIVES.

Section 1672 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of subsection (a), by striking “subsections (e) through (i)” and inserting “subsections (d) through (g)”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(2), in the first sentence, by striking “subsections (e) through (i)” and inserting “subsections (d) through (g)”; and

(3) by striking subsection (h) (as redesignated by section 7128(b)(2)(C)(ii));

(4) by redesignating subsection (i) (as redesignated by such section) as subsection (h);
(5) in subsection (d) (as redesignated by such section)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) through (5), (7), (8), (11) through (43), (47), (48), (51), and (52);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (6), (9), (10), (44), (45), (46), (49), and (50) as paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(9) **COFFEE PLANT HEALTH INITIATIVE.**—Research and extension grants may be made under this section for the purposes of—

“(A) developing and disseminating science-based tools and treatments to combat the coffee berry borer (*Hypothenemus hampei*); and

“(B) establishing an areawide integrated pest management program in areas affected by, or areas at risk of, being affected by the coffee berry borer.

“(10) **CORN, SOYBEAN MEAL, CEREAL GRAINS, AND GRAIN BYPRODUCTS RESEARCH AND EXTENSION.**—Research and extension grants may be made under this section for the purpose of carrying out or enhancing research to improve the digestibility, nutritional value, and efficiency of the use of corn, soybean meal, cereal grains, and grain byproducts for the poultry and food animal production industries.”;

(6) by striking subsection (e) (as redesignated by such section) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(e) **PULSE CROP HEALTH INITIATIVE.**—

“(1) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection:

“(A) **INITIATIVE.**—The term ‘initiative’ means the pulse crop health initiative established by paragraph (2).

“(B) **PULSE CROP.**—The term ‘pulse crop’ means dry beans, dry peas, lentils, and chickpeas.

“(2) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary shall carry out a pulse crop health competitive research and extension initiative to address the critical needs of the pulse crop industry by developing and disseminating science-based tools and information, including—

“(A) research conducted with respect to pulse crops in the areas of health and nutrition, such as—

“(i) pulse crop diets and the ability of such diets to reduce obesity and associated chronic disease; and

“(ii) the underlying mechanisms of the health benefits of pulse crop consumption;

“(B) research related to the functionality of pulse crops, such as—

“(i) improving the functional properties of pulse crops and pulse crop fractions; and

“(ii) developing new and innovative technologies to improve pulse crops as an ingredient in food products;

“(C) research conducted with respect to pulse crops for purposes of enhancing sustainability and global food security, such as—

“(i) improving pulse crop productivity, nutrient density, and phytonutrient content using plant breeding, genetics, and genomics;

“(ii) improving pest and disease management, including resistance to pests and diseases; and

“(iii) improving nitrogen fixation and water use efficiency to reduce the carbon and energy footprint of agriculture;

“(D) the optimization of systems used in producing pulse crops to reduce water usage; and

“(E) education and technical assistance programs with respect to pulse crops, such as programs—

“(i) providing technical expertise to help food companies include pulse crops in innovative and healthy food; and

“(ii) establishing an educational program to encourage pulse crop consumption in the United States.

“(3) ADMINISTRATION.—Paragraphs (4), (7), (8), and (11)(B) of subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)) shall apply with respect to the making of a competitive grant under this subsection.

“(4) PRIORITIES.—In making competitive grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall provide a higher priority to projects that—

“(A) are multistate, multiinstitutional, and multidisciplinary; and

“(B) include explicit mechanisms to communicate results to the pulse crop industry and the public.

“(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”;

(7) by striking subsection (f) (as redesignated by such section) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(f) TRAINING COORDINATION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE PROTECTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make a competitive grant to, or enter into a contract or a cooperative agreement with, an eligible entity (described in paragraph (2)) for purposes of establishing an internationally integrated training system to enhance the protection of the food supply in the United States, to be known as the ‘Comprehensive Food Safety Training Network’ (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Network’).

“(2) ELIGIBILITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, an eligible entity is a multiinstitutional consortium that includes—

“(i) a nonprofit institution that provides food safety protection training; and

“(ii) one or more training centers in institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that have demonstrated expertise in developing and delivering community-based training in food supply and agricultural safety and defense.

“(B) COLLECTIVE CONSIDERATION.—The Secretary may consider such consortium collectively and not on an institution-by-institution basis.

“(3) DUTIES OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—As a condition of receiving a competitive grant or entering into a contract or a cooperative agreement with the Secretary under this subsection, the eligible entity, in cooperation with the Secretary, shall establish and maintain the Network, including by—

“(A) providing basic, technical, management, and leadership training (including by developing curricula) to regulatory and public health officials, producers, processors, and other agribusinesses;

“(B) serving as the hub for the administration of the Network;

“(C) implementing a standardized national curriculum to ensure the consistent delivery of quality training throughout the United States;

“(D) building and overseeing a nationally recognized instructor cadre to ensure the availability of highly qualified instructors;

“(E) reviewing training proposed through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture and other relevant Federal agencies that report to the Secretary on the quality and content of proposed and existing courses;

“(F) assisting Federal agencies in the implementation of food safety protection training requirements including requirements under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.), the Agricultural Act of 2014, and any provision of law amended by such Act; and

“(G) performing evaluation and outcome-based studies to provide to the Secretary information on the effectiveness and impact of training and metrics on jurisdictions and sectors within the food safety system.

“(4) MEMBERSHIP.—An eligible entity may alter the consortium membership to meet specific training expertise needs.

“(5) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended.”;

(8) in subsection (g) (as redesignated by such section)—

(A) by striking “2012” each place it appears in paragraphs (1)(B), (2)(B), and (3) and inserting “2018”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “PEST AND PATHOGEN”;

(ii) by striking “pest and pathogen surveillance” and inserting “pest, pathogen, health, and population status surveillance”;

(C) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5);

(D) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

“(4) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall publish guidance on enhancing pollinator health and the long-term viability of populations of pollinators, including recommendations related to—

“(A) allowing for managed honey bees to forage on National Forest System lands where compatible with other natural resource management priorities; and

“(B) planting and maintaining managed honey bee and native pollinator foraging on National Forest System lands where compatible with other natural resource management priorities.”; and

(E) in paragraph (5) (as redesignated by subparagraph (C))—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and moving the margins of such subparagraphs two ems to the right;

(ii) by striking “annual report describing” and inserting the following: “annual report—

“(A) describing”;

(iii) in clause (i) (as redesignated by clause (i) of this subparagraph)—

(I) by inserting “and honey bee health disorders” after “collapse”;

(II) by striking “and” at the end;

(iv) in clause (ii) (as redesignated by clause (i) of this subparagraph)—

(I) by inserting “, including best management practices” after “strategies”;

(II) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(v) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) addressing the decline of managed honey bees and native pollinators.”; and

(vi) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(B) assessing Federal efforts to mitigate pollinator losses and threats to the United States commercial beekeeping industry; and

“(C) providing recommendations to Congress regarding how to better coordinate Federal agency efforts to address the decline of managed honey bees and native pollinators.”; and

(9) in subsection (h) (as redesignated by paragraph (4)), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7210. REPEAL OF NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT RESEARCH AND EXTENSION INITIATIVE.

Section 1672A of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925a) is repealed.

SEC. 7211. ORGANIC AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION INITIATIVE.

Section 1672B of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “, education,” after “support research”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and improvement” after “development”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking “to producers and processors who use organic methods” and inserting “of organic agricultural production and methods to producers, processors, and rural communities”;

(D) in paragraph (6), by striking “and marketing and to socioeconomic conditions” and inserting “, marketing, food safety, socioeconomic conditions, and farm business management”;

(2) in subsection (e) (as redesignated by section 7128(b)(2)(D)(ii))—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “FOR FISCAL YEARS 2009 THROUGH 2012”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “2009 THROUGH 2012” and inserting “2014 THROUGH 2018”;

(ii) by striking “2009 through 2012” and inserting “2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 7212. REPEAL OF AGRICULTURAL BIOENERGY FEEDSTOCK AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY RESEARCH AND EXTENSION INITIATIVE.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 1672C of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925e) is repealed.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 251(f)(1)(D) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6971(f)(1)(D)) is amended—

(1) by striking clause (xi); and

(2) by redesignating clauses (xii) and (xiii) as clauses (xi) and (xii), respectively.

SEC. 7213. FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT.

Section 1672D(d) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925f(d)) is amended by striking “such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.” and inserting the following: “to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2013; and

“(2) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7214. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 is amended by inserting after section 1672D (7 U.S.C. 5925f) the following new section:

“SEC. 1673. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.

“(a) FUNDING PRIORITIES.—The Secretary shall prioritize centers of excellence established for purposes of carrying out research, extension, and education activities relating

to the food and agricultural sciences (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)) for the receipt of funding for any competitive research or extension program administered by the Secretary.

“(b) COMPOSITION.—A center of excellence is composed of 1 or more of the eligible entities specified in subsection (b)(7) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(7)) that provide financial or in-kind support to the center of excellence.

“(c) CRITERIA FOR CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.—

“(1) REQUIRED EFFORTS.—The criteria for recognition as a center of excellence shall include efforts—

“(A) to ensure coordination and cost effectiveness by reducing unnecessarily duplicative efforts regarding research, teaching, and extension;

“(B) to leverage available resources by using public-private partnerships among agricultural industry groups, institutions of higher education, and the Federal Government;

“(C) to implement teaching initiatives to increase awareness and effectively disseminate solutions to target audiences through extension activities; and

“(D) to increase the economic returns to rural communities by identifying, attracting, and directing funds to high-priority agricultural issues.

“(2) ADDITIONAL EFFORTS.—Where practicable, the criteria for recognition as a center of excellence shall include efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and universities (including land-grant colleges and universities, cooperating forestry schools, NLGCA Institutions (as those terms are defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)), and schools of veterinary medicine).”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2014.

SEC. 7215. REPEAL OF RED MEAT SAFETY RESEARCH CENTER.

Section 1676 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5929) is repealed.

SEC. 7216. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR FARMERS WITH DISABILITIES.

Section 1680(c)(1) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5933(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) by striking “is” and inserting “are”;

and

(2) by striking “section” and all that follows and inserting the following: “section—

“(A) \$6,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2013; and

“(B) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7217. NATIONAL RURAL INFORMATION CENTER CLEARINGHOUSE.

Section 2381(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 3125b(e)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

Subtitle C—Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998

SEC. 7301. RELEVANCE AND MERIT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION FUNDED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

Section 103(a)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the heading by striking “MERIT REVIEW OF EXTENSION” and inserting “REL-

EVANCE AND MERIT REVIEW OF RESEARCH, EXTENSION.”;

(2) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by inserting “relevance and” before “merit”; and

(B) by striking “extension or education” and inserting “research, extension, or education”; and

(3) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “on a continuous basis” after “procedures”.

SEC. 7302. INTEGRATED RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM.

Subsection (e) of section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7626) (as redesignated by section 7128(b)(3)(A)(ii)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7303. SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH REGARDING DISEASES OF WHEAT, TRITICALE, AND BARLEY CAUSED BY FUSARIUM GRAMINEARUM OR BY TILLETIA INDICA.

Section 408(e) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7628(e)) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2013; and

“(2) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7304. REPEAL OF BOVINE JOHNE'S DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAM.

Section 409 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7629) is repealed.

SEC. 7305. GRANTS FOR YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS.

Section 410(d) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7630(d)) is amended by striking “section such sums as are necessary” and all that follows and inserting the following: “section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(2) \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7306. SPECIALTY CROP RESEARCH INITIATIVE.

Section 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated), the following new paragraph:

“(1) CITRUS DISEASE SUBCOMMITTEE.—The term ‘citrus disease subcommittee’ means the subcommittee established under section 1408A(a)(2) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977.”; and

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

“(4) SPECIALTY CROPS COMMITTEE.—The term ‘specialty crops committee’ means the committee established under section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a).”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and genomics” and inserting “genomics, and other methods”; and

(B) in paragraph (3), by inserting “handling and processing,” after “production efficiency.”;

(3) in subsection (c), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “the Initiative” and inserting “this section”;

(4) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(d) REVIEW OF PROPOSALS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall award competitive grants on the basis of—

“(1) a scientific peer review conducted by a panel of subject matter experts from Federal agencies, non-Federal entities, and the specialty crop industry; and

“(2) a review and ranking for merit, relevance, and impact conducted by a panel of specialty crop industry representatives for the specific specialty crop.”;

(5) by redesignating subsections (e) (as amended by section 7128(b)(3)(B)), (f), (g), and (h) as subsections (g), (h), (i), and (k), respectively;

(6) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsections:

“(e) CONSULTATION.—Each fiscal year, before conducting the scientific peer review described in paragraph (1) of subsection (d) and the merit and relevancy review described in paragraph (2) of such subsection, the Secretary shall consult with the specialty crops committee regarding such reviews. The committee shall provide the Secretary—

“(1) in the first fiscal year in which that consultation occurs, any recommendations for conducting such reviews in such fiscal year; and

“(2) in any subsequent fiscal year in which such consultation occurs—

“(A) an assessment of the procedures and objectives used by the Secretary for such reviews in the previous fiscal year;

“(B) any recommendations for such reviews for the current fiscal year; and

“(C) any comments on grants awarded under subsection (d) during the previous fiscal year.

“(f) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on—

“(1) the results of the consultations with the specialty crops committee (and subcommittees thereof) conducted under subsection (e) of this section and subsection (g) of section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a);

“(2) the specialty crops committee’s (and subcommittees thereof) recommendations, if any, provided to the Secretary during such consultations; and

“(3) the specialty crops committee’s (and subcommittees thereof) review of the grants awarded under subsection (d) and (j), as applicable, in the previous fiscal year.”;

(7) in subsection (g) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to grants awarded under this section, the Secretary shall seek and accept proposals for grants.”; and

(B) in paragraph (3) (as redesignated by section 7128(b)(3)(B)), by striking “this section” and inserting “the Initiative”;

(8) in subsection (h) (as so redesignated), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “this section” and inserting “the Initiative”;

(9) in subsection (k) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “(1) MANDATORY FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEARS 2008 THROUGH 2012.—Of the funds” and inserting the following:

“(1) MANDATORY FUNDING.—

“(A) FISCAL YEARS 2008 THROUGH 2012.—Of the funds”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) **SUBSEQUENT FUNDING.**—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall make available to carry out this section \$80,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter.

“(C) **RESERVATION.**—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, the Secretary shall reserve not less than \$25,000,000 of the funds made available under subparagraph (B) to carry out the program established under subsection (j).

“(D) **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.**—Funds reserved under subparagraph (C) shall remain available and reserved for the purpose described in such subparagraph until expended.”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “2008 THROUGH 2012” and inserting “2014 THROUGH 2018”; and

(ii) by striking “2008 through 2012” and inserting “2014 through 2018”; and

(10) by inserting after subsection (i) the following new subsection:

“(j) **EMERGENCY CITRUS DISEASE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PROGRAM.**—

“(1) **ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.**—The Secretary shall establish a competitive research and extension grant program to combat diseases of citrus under which the Secretary awards competitive grants to eligible entities—

“(A) to conduct scientific research and extension activities, technical assistance, and development activities to combat citrus diseases and pests, both domestic and invasive, which pose imminent harm to the United States citrus production and threaten the future viability of the citrus industry, including *huanglongbing* and the Asian Citrus Psyllid; and

“(B) to provide support for the dissemination and commercialization of relevant information, techniques, and technologies discovered pursuant to research and extension activities funded through—

“(i) the emergency citrus disease research and extension program; or

“(ii) other research and extension projects intended to solve problems caused by citrus production diseases and invasive pests.

“(2) **PRIORITY.**—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to grants that address the research and extension priorities established pursuant to subsection (g)(4) of section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a).

“(3) **COORDINATION.**—When developing the proposed research and extension agenda and budget under subsection (g)(2) of section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123a) for the funds made available under this subsection for a fiscal year, the citrus disease subcommittee shall—

“(A) seek input from Federal and State agencies and other entities involved in citrus disease response; and

“(B) take into account other public and private citrus-related research and extension projects and the funding for such projects.

“(4) **NONDUPLICATION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that funds made available to carry out the emergency citrus disease research and extension activities under this subsection shall be in addition to and not supplant funds made available to carry out other citrus disease activities carried out by the Department of Agriculture in consultation with State agencies.

“(5) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—In addition to the amounts reserved under subsection (k)(1)(C), there are authorized to be

appropriated to carry out this subsection, \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(6) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subsection:

“(A) **CITRUS.**—The term ‘citrus’ means edible fruit of the family Rutaceae, including any hybrid of such fruits and products of such hybrids that are produced for commercial purposes in the United States.

“(B) **CITRUS PRODUCER.**—The term ‘citrus producer’ means any person that is engaged in the domestic production and commercial sale of citrus in the United States.

“(C) **EMERGENCY CITRUS DISEASE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PROGRAM.**—The term ‘emergency citrus disease research and extension program’ means the emergency citrus research and extension grant program established under this subsection.”.

SEC. 7307. [H7308] FOOD ANIMAL RESIDUE AVOIDANCE DATABASE PROGRAM.

Section 604(e) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7642(e)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7308. REPEAL OF NATIONAL SWINE RESEARCH CENTER.

Section 612 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-185; 112 Stat. 605) is repealed.

SEC. 7309. OFFICE OF PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY.

Section 614(f) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7653(f)) is amended—

(1) by striking “such sums as are necessary”; and

(2) by striking “section” and all that follows and inserting the following: “section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 1999 through 2013; and

“(2) \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7310. FORESTRY PRODUCTS ADVANCED UTILIZATION RESEARCH.

Subtitle B of title VI of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7651 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 616 (7 U.S.C. 7655) the following new section:

“SEC. 617. FORESTRY PRODUCTS ADVANCED UTILIZATION RESEARCH.

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary shall establish a forestry and forestry products research and extension initiative to develop and disseminate science-based tools that address the needs of the forestry sector and their respective regions, forest and timberland owners and managers, and forestry products engineering, manufacturing, and related interests.

“(b) **ACTIVITIES.**—The initiative described in subsection (a) shall include the following activities:

“(1) Research conducted for purposes of—

“(A) wood quality improvement with respect to lumber strength and grade yield;

“(B) the development of novel engineered lumber products and renewable energy from wood; and

“(C) enhancing the longevity, sustainability, and profitability of timberland through sound management and utilization.

“(2) Demonstration activities and technology transfer to demonstrate the beneficial characteristics of wood as a green building material, including investments in life cycle assessment for wood products.

“(3) Projects designed to improve—

“(A) forestry products, lumber, and evaluation standards and valuation techniques;

“(B) lumber quality and value-based, on-forest management techniques; and

“(C) forestry products conversion and manufacturing efficiency, productivity, and prof-

itability over the long term (including forestry product marketing).

“(c) **GRANTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall make competitive grants to carry out the activities described in subsection (b).

“(2) **PRIORITIES.**—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall give higher priority to activities that are carried out by entities that—

“(A) are multistate, multiinstitutional, or multidisciplinary;

“(B) have explicit mechanisms to communicate results to producers, forestry industry stakeholders, policymakers, and the public; and

“(C) have—

“(i) extensive history and demonstrated experience in forestry and forestry products research;

“(ii) existing capacity in forestry products research and dissemination; and

“(iii) a demonstrated means of evaluating and responding to the needs of the related commercial sector.

“(3) **ADMINISTRATION.**—In making grants under this section, the Secretary shall follow the requirements of paragraphs (4), (7), (8), and (11)(B) of subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i).

“(4) **TERM.**—The term of a grant made under this section may not exceed 10 years.

“(d) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that any activities carried out under this section are carried out in coordination with the Forest Service, including the Forest Products Laboratory, and other appropriate agencies of the Department.

“(e) **REPORT.**—The Secretary shall submit an annual report to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate describing, for the period covered by the report—

“(1) the research that has been conducted under paragraph (2) of subsection (b);

“(2) the number of buildings the Forest Service has built with wood as the primary structural material; and

“(3) the investments made by the Forest Service in green building and wood promotion.

“(f) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(2) **MATCHING FUNDS.**—To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall match any funds made available under paragraph (1) with funds made available under section 7 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C.1646).”.

SEC. 7311. REPEAL OF STUDIES OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION.

Subtitle C of title VI of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7671 et seq.) is repealed.

Subtitle D—Other Laws

SEC. 7401. CRITICAL AGRICULTURAL MATERIALS ACT.

Section 16(a) of the Critical Agricultural Materials Act (7 U.S.C. 178n(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “such sums as are necessary”; and

(2) by striking “Act” and all that follows and inserting the following: “Act—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 1991 through 2013; and

“(2) \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7402. EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL LAND-GRANT STATUS ACT OF 1994.

(a) DEFINITION OF 1994 INSTITUTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 532. DEFINITION OF 1994 INSTITUTION.

“In this part, the term ‘1994 Institution’ means any of the following colleges:

- “(1) Aaniiih Nakoda College.
- “(2) Bay Mills Community College.
- “(3) Blackfeet Community College.
- “(4) Cankdeska Cikana Community College.
- “(5) Chief Dull Knife College.
- “(6) College of Menominee Nation.
- “(7) College of the Muscogee Nation.
- “(8) D-Q University.
- “(9) Dine College.
- “(10) Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College.
- “(11) Fort Berthold Community College.
- “(12) Fort Peck Community College.
- “(13) Haskell Indian Nations University.
- “(14) Ilisagvik College.
- “(15) Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development.
- “(16) Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College.
- “(17) Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College.
- “(18) Leech Lake Tribal College.
- “(19) Little Big Horn College.
- “(20) Little Priest Tribal College.
- “(21) Navajo Technical College.
- “(22) Nebraska Indian Community College.
- “(23) Northwest Indian College.
- “(24) Oglala Lakota College.
- “(25) Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College.
- “(26) Salish Kootenai College.
- “(27) Sinte Gleska University.
- “(28) Sisseton Wahpeton College.
- “(29) Sitting Bull College.
- “(30) Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute.
- “(31) Stone Child College.
- “(32) Tohono O’odham Community College.
- “(33) Turtle Mountain Community College.
- “(34) United Tribes Technical College.
- “(35) White Earth Tribal and Community College.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on October 1, 2014.

(b) ENDOWMENT FOR 1994 INSTITUTIONS.—Section 533(b) of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382) is amended in the first sentence by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(c) INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS.—Section 535 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382) is amended by striking “2012” each place it appears in subsections (b)(1) and (c) and inserting “2018”.

(d) RESEARCH GRANTS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 536(c) of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382) is amended in the first sentence by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(2) RESEARCH GRANT REQUIREMENTS.—Section 536(b) of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382) is amended by striking “with at least 1 other land-grant college or university” and all that follows and inserting the following: “with—

“(1) the Agricultural Research Service of the Department of Agriculture; or

“(2) at least 1—

“(A) other land-grant college or university (exclusive of another 1994 Institution);

“(B) non-land-grant college of agriculture (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)); or

“(C) cooperating forestry school (as defined in that section).”.

SEC. 7403. RESEARCH FACILITIES ACT.

Section 6(a) of the Research Facilities Act (7 U.S.C. 390d(a)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7404. COMPETITIVE, SPECIAL, AND FACILITIES RESEARCH GRANT ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Subsection (b)(11)(A) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(11)(A)) is amended, in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) PRIORITY AREAS.—Subsection (b)(2) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (vii), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (viii), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new clauses:

“(ix) the research and development of surveillance methods, vaccines, vaccination delivery systems, or diagnostic tests for pests and diseases, including—

“(I) epizootic diseases in domestic livestock (including deer, elk, bison, and other animals of the family Cervidae); and

“(II) zoonotic diseases (including bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis) in domestic livestock or wildlife reservoirs that present a potential concern to public health; and

“(x) the identification of animal drug needs and the generation and dissemination of data for safe and effective therapeutic applications of animal drugs for minor species and minor uses of such drugs in major species.”;

(2) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “RENEWABLE ENERGY” and inserting “BIOENERGY”;

(B) by redesignating clauses (iv), (v), and (vi) as clauses (v), (vi), and (vii), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after clause (iii) the following new clause:

“(iv) the effectiveness of conservation practices and technologies designed to address nutrient losses and improve water quality;”;

(3) in subparagraph (F)—

(A) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “economics,” after “trade;”;

(B) by redesignating clauses (v) and (vi) as clauses (vi) and (vii), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after clause (iv) the following new clause:

“(v) the economic costs, benefits, and viability of producers adopting conservation practices and technologies designed to improve water quality;”.

(c) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.—Subsection (b)(4) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(4)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) establish procedures, including timelines, under which an entity established

under a commodity promotion law (as such term is defined under section 501(a) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7401(a))) or a State commodity board (or other equivalent State entity) may directly submit to the Secretary for consideration proposals for requests for applications that specifically address particular issues related to the priority areas specified in paragraph (2).”.

(d) SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS.—Subsection (b)(6) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(6)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) to eligible entities to carry out the specific proposals submitted under procedures established under paragraph (4)(F) only if such specific proposals are consistent with a priority area specified in paragraph (2).”.

(e) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Subsection (b)(7)(G) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(7)(G)) is amended by striking “or corporations” and inserting “, foundations, or corporations”.

(f) SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN GRANTS.—Subsection (b)(9) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(9)) (as amended by section 7128(b)(4)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT FOR COMMODITY PROMOTION GRANTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clauses (ii) and (iii), as a condition of funding a grant under paragraph (6)(E), the Secretary shall require that the grant be matched with an equal contribution of funds from the entities described in paragraph (4)(F) submitting proposals under procedures established under such paragraph.

“(ii) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Contributions required by clause (i) shall be available to the Secretary for obligation and remain available until expended for the purpose of making grants under paragraph (6)(E).

“(II) ADMINISTRATION.—Of amounts contributed to the Secretary under clause (i), not more than 4 percent may be retained by the Secretary to pay administrative costs incurred by the Secretary in carrying out this subsection.

“(III) RESTRICTION.—Funds contributed to the Secretary by an entity under clause (i) in connection with a proposal submitted by that entity under procedures established under paragraph (4)(F) may only be used to fund grants in connection with that proposal.

“(IV) REMAINING FUNDS.—Funds contributed to the Secretary by an entity under clause (i) that remain unobligated at the time of grant closeout shall be returned to that entity.

“(V) INDIRECT COSTS.—The indirect cost rate applicable to appropriated funds for a grant funded under paragraph (6)(E) shall apply to amounts contributed by an entity under clause (i).

“(iii) OTHER MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENTS.—The contribution requirement under clause (i) shall be in addition to any matching funds requirement for grant recipients required by section 1492 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977.”.

(g) INTER-REGIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT NUMBER 4.—Subsection (e) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “minor use pesticides” and inserting “pesticides for minor agricultural use and for use on specialty crops (as defined in section 3 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note))”; and

(2) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and for use on specialty crops” after “minor agricultural use”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (G); and

(D) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraphs:

“(C) prioritize potential pest management technology for minor agricultural use and for use on specialty crops;

“(D) conduct research to develop the data necessary to facilitate pesticide registrations, reregistrations, and associated tolerances;

“(E) assist in removing trade barriers caused by residues of pesticides registered for minor agricultural use and for use on domestically grown specialty crops;

“(F) assist in the registration and reregistration of pest management technologies for minor agricultural use and for use on specialty crops; and”.

SEC. 7405. RENEWABLE RESOURCES EXTENSION ACT OF 1978.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 6 of the Renewable Resources Extension Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1675) is amended in the first sentence by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) TERMINATION DATE.—Section 8 of the Renewable Resources Extension Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1671 note; Public Law 95-306) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7406. NATIONAL AQUACULTURE ACT OF 1980.

Section 10 of the National Aquaculture Act of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 2809) is amended by striking “2012” each place it appears and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 7407. REPEAL OF USE OF REMOTE SENSING DATA.

Section 892 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 5935) is repealed.

SEC. 7408. REPEAL OF REPORTS UNDER FARM SECURITY AND RURAL INVESTMENT ACT OF 2002.

(a) REPEAL OF REPORT ON PRODUCERS AND HANDLERS FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTS.—Section 7409 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 5925b note; Public Law 107-171) is repealed.

(b) REPEAL OF REPORT ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED PEST-PROTECTED PLANTS.—Section 7410 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171; 116 Stat. 462) is repealed.

(c) REPEAL OF STUDY ON NUTRIENT BANKING.—Section 7411 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 5925a note; Public Law 107-171) is repealed.

SEC. 7409. BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Section 7405 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3319f) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking subparagraphs (A) through (R) and inserting the following new subparagraphs:

“(A) basic livestock, forest management, and crop farming practices;

“(B) innovative farm, ranch, and private, nonindustrial forest land transfer strategies;

“(C) entrepreneurship and business training;

“(D) financial and risk management training (including the acquisition and management of agricultural credit);

“(E) natural resource management and planning;

“(F) diversification and marketing strategies;

“(G) curriculum development;

“(H) mentoring, apprenticeships, and internships;

“(I) resources and referral;

“(J) farm financial benchmarking;

“(K) assisting beginning farmers or ranchers in acquiring land from retiring farmers and ranchers;

“(L) agricultural rehabilitation and vocational training for veterans;

“(M) farm safety and awareness; and

“(N) other similar subject areas of use to beginning farmers or ranchers.”;

(B) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking “and nongovernmental organization” and inserting “or nongovernmental organization”;

(C) in paragraph (7), by striking “and community-based organizations” and inserting “, community-based organizations, and school-based agricultural educational organizations”;

(D) by striking paragraph (8) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(8) SET-ASIDES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less than 5 percent of the funds used to carry out this subsection for a fiscal year shall be used to support programs and services that address the needs of—

“(i) limited resource beginning farmers or ranchers (as defined by the Secretary);

“(ii) socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers (as defined in section 355(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2003(e)) who are beginning farmers or ranchers; and

“(iii) farmworkers desiring to become farmers or ranchers.

“(B) VETERAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS.—Not less than 5 percent of the funds used to carry out this subsection for a fiscal year shall be used to support programs and services that address the needs of veteran farmers and ranchers (as defined in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e))). ”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(11) LIMITATION ON INDIRECT COSTS.—A recipient of a grant under this subsection may not use more than 10 percent of the funds provided by the grant for the indirect costs of carrying out the initiatives described in paragraph (1).

“(12) COORDINATION PERMITTED.—A recipient of a grant under this subsection using the grant as described in paragraph (8)(B) may coordinate with a recipient of a grant under section 1680 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5933) in addressing the needs of veteran farmers and ranchers with disabilities.”;

(2) in subsection (h)(1)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended.”; and

(3) in subsection (h)(2)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking “2008 THROUGH 2012” and inserting “2014 THROUGH 2018”; and

(B) by striking “2008 through 2012” and inserting “2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 7410. NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND TEACHING POLICY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1985.

Section 1431 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act Amendments of 1985 (Public Law 99-198; 99 Stat. 1556) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

Subtitle E—Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008

PART I—AGRICULTURAL SECURITY

SEC. 7501. AGRICULTURAL BIOSECURITY COMMUNICATION CENTER.

Section 14112(c) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8912(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(2) \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7502. ASSISTANCE TO BUILD LOCAL CAPACITY IN AGRICULTURAL BIOSECURITY PLANNING, PREPARATION, AND RESPONSE.

Section 14113 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8913) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) by striking “such sums as may be necessary”; and

(B) by striking “subsection” and all that follows and inserting the following: “subsection—

“(A) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(B) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection” and all that follows and inserting the following: “are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection—

“(A) \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(B) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7503. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COUNTERMEASURES.

Section 14121(b) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8921(b)) is amended by striking “is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section” and all that follows and inserting the following: “are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(2) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7504. AGRICULTURAL BIOSECURITY GRANT PROGRAM.

Section 14122(e) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8922(e)) is amended—

(1) by striking “sums as are necessary”; and

(2) by striking “section” and all that follows and inserting the following: “section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013, to remain available until expended; and

“(2) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended.”.

PART II—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**SEC. 7511. ENHANCED USE LEASE AUTHORITY PILOT PROGRAM.**

Section 308 of the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 3125a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(6)(A), by striking “5 years” and inserting “10 years”; and

(2) in subsection (d)(2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “1, 3, and 5 years” and inserting “6, 8, and 10 years”.

SEC. 7512. GRAZINGLANDS RESEARCH LABORATORY.

Section 7502 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 122 Stat. 2019) is amended by striking “5-year period” and inserting “10-year period”.

SEC. 7513. BUDGET SUBMISSION AND FUNDING.

Section 7506 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7614c) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COVERED PROGRAM.—The term ‘covered program’ means—

“(A) each research program carried out by the Agricultural Research Service or the Economic Research Service for which annual appropriations are requested in the annual budget submission of the President; and

“(B) each competitive program carried out by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for which annual appropriations are requested in the annual budget submission of the President.

“(2) REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS.—The term ‘request for applications’ means a funding announcement published by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture that provides detailed information on funding opportunities at the Institute, including the purpose, eligibility, restriction, focus areas, evaluation criteria, regulatory information, and instructions on how to apply for such opportunities.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(e) ADDITIONAL PRESIDENTIAL BUDGET SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each year, the President shall submit to Congress for each funding request for a covered program—

“(A) in the case of the information described in paragraph (2), such information together with the annual budget submission of the President; and

“(B) in the case of any additional information described in paragraph (3), such additional information within a reasonable period that begins after the date of the annual budget submission of the President.

“(2) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The information described in this paragraph includes—

“(A) baseline information, including with respect to each covered program—

“(i) the funding level for the program for the fiscal year preceding the year for which the annual budget submission of the President is submitted;

“(ii) the funding level requested in the annual budget submission of the President, including any increase or decrease in the funding level; and

“(iii) an explanation justifying any change from the funding level specified in clause (i) to the level specified in clause (ii);

“(B) with respect to each covered program that is carried out by the Economic Research Service or the Agricultural Research Service, the location and staff years of the program;

“(C) the proposed funding levels to be allocated to, and the expected publication date, scope, and allocation level for, each request for applications to be published under or associated with—

“(i) each priority area specified in subsection (b)(2) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)(2));

“(ii) each research and extension project carried out under section 1621(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5811(a));

“(iii) each grant awarded under section 1672B(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925b(a));

“(iv) each grant awarded under section 412(d) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632(d)); and

“(v) each grant awarded under section 7405(c)(1) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3319f(c)(1)); and

“(D) any other information the Secretary determines will increase congressional oversight with respect to covered programs.

“(3) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The additional information described in this paragraph is information that the Secretary, after consulting with the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate, and the Subcommittees on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate, determines is a necessary revision or clarification to the information described in paragraph (2).

“(4) PROHIBITION.—Unless the President submits the information described in paragraph (2)(C) for a fiscal year, the President may not carry out any program during that fiscal year that is authorized under—

“(A) subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b));

“(B) section 1621 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5811);

“(C) section 1672B of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925b);

“(D) section 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7632); or

“(E) section 7405 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3319f).

“(f) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE.—Each year on a date that is not later than the date on which the President submits the annual budget, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing a description of the agricultural research, extension, and education activities carried out by the Federal Government during the fiscal year that immediately precedes the year for which the report is submitted, including—

“(1) a review of the extent to which those activities—

“(A) are duplicative or overlap within the Department of Agriculture; or

“(B) are similar to activities carried out by—

“(i) other Federal agencies;

“(ii) the States (including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and other territories or possessions of the United States);

“(iii) institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)); or

“(iv) the private sector; and

“(2) for each report submitted under this section on or after January 1, 2014, a 5-year projection of national priorities with respect to agricultural research, extension, and education, taking into account domestic needs.

“(g) INTERCHANGEABILITY OF FUNDS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to limit the authority of the Secretary under section 702(b) of the Department of Agriculture Organic Act of 1944 (7 U.S.C. 2257(b)), with respect to the reprogramming or transfer of funds.”.

SEC. 7514. REPEAL OF SEED DISTRIBUTION.

Section 7523 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 415–1) is repealed.

SEC. 7515. NATURAL PRODUCTS RESEARCH PROGRAM.

Section 7525(e) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 5937(e)) is amended to read as follows:

“(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$7,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 7516. SUN GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7526 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8114) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(4)(B), by striking “the Department of Energy” and inserting “other appropriate Federal agencies (as determined by the Secretary)”;

(2) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “at South Dakota State University”;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville”;

(C) in subparagraph (C), by striking “at Oklahoma State University”;

(D) in subparagraph (D), by striking “at Oregon State University”;

(E) in subparagraph (E), by striking “at Cornell University”; and

(F) in subparagraph (F), by striking “at the University of Hawaii”;

(3) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “multistate” and all that follows through “technology implementation” and inserting “integrated, multistate research, extension, and education programs on technology development and technology implementation”;

(B) by striking subparagraph (C); and

(C) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (C);

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “in accordance with paragraph (2)”;

(ii) by striking “gasification” and inserting “bioproducts”; and

(iii) by striking “the Department of Energy” and inserting “other appropriate Federal agencies”;

(B) by striking paragraph (2); and

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(5) in subsection (g), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 7526(f)(1) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8114(f)) is amended by striking “subsection (c)(1)(D)(i)” and inserting “subsection (c)(1)(C)(i)”.

SEC. 7517. REPEAL OF STUDY AND REPORT ON FOOD DESERTS.

Section 7527 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–246; 122 Stat. 2039) is repealed.

SEC. 7518. REPEAL OF AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.

Section 7529 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 5938) is repealed.

Subtitle F—Miscellaneous Provisions

SEC. 7601. FOUNDATION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE RESEARCH.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the Board of Directors described in subsection (e).

(2) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of Agriculture.

(3) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation” means the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research established under subsection (b).

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

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a nonprofit corporation to be known as the “Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research”.

(2) STATUS.—The Foundation shall not be an agency or instrumentality of the United States Government.

(c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Foundation shall be—

(1) to advance the research mission of the Department by supporting agricultural research activities focused on addressing key problems of national and international significance including—

(A) plant health, production, and plant products;

(B) animal health, production, and products;

(C) food safety, nutrition, and health;

(D) renewable energy, natural resources, and the environment;

(E) agricultural and food security;

(F) agriculture systems and technology; and

(G) agriculture economics and rural communities; and

(2) to foster collaboration with agricultural researchers from the Federal Government, State (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)) governments, institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), industry, and nonprofit organizations.

(d) DUTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Foundation shall—

(A) award grants to, or enter into contracts, memoranda of understanding, or cooperative agreements with, scientists and entities, which may include agricultural research agencies in the Department, university consortia, public-private partnerships, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and industry, to efficiently and effectively advance the goals and priorities of the Foundation;

(B) in consultation with the Secretary—

(i) identify existing and proposed Federal intramural and extramural research and development programs relating to the purposes of the Foundation described in subsection (c); and

(ii) coordinate Foundation activities with those programs so as to minimize duplication of existing efforts and to avoid conflicts;

(C) identify unmet and emerging agricultural research needs after reviewing the roadmap for agricultural research, education, and extension authorized by section 7504 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7614a);

(D) facilitate technology transfer and release of information and data gathered from

the activities of the Foundation to the agricultural research community;

(E) promote and encourage the development of the next generation of agricultural research scientists; and

(F) carry out such other activities as the Board determines to be consistent with the purposes of the Foundation.

(2) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ACTIVITIES.—The activities described in paragraph (1) shall be supplemental to any other activities at the Department and shall not preempt any authority or responsibility of the Department under another provision of law.

(e) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Foundation shall be governed by a Board of Directors.

(2) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall be composed of appointed and ex-officio, nonvoting members.

(B) EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The ex-officio members of the Board shall be the following individuals or designees of such individuals:

(i) The Secretary.

(ii) The Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics.

(iii) The Administrator of the Agricultural Research Service.

(iv) The Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

(v) The Director of the National Science Foundation.

(C) APPOINTED MEMBERS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The ex-officio members of the Board (as specified in subparagraph (B)) shall, by majority vote, appoint to the Board 15 individuals, of whom—

(I) 8 shall be selected from a list of candidates to be provided by the National Academy of Sciences; and

(II) 7 shall be selected from lists of candidates provided by industry.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—

(I) EXPERTISE.—The ex-officio members shall ensure that a majority of the appointed members of the Board have actual experience in agricultural research and, to the extent practicable, represent diverse sectors of agriculture.

(II) LIMITATION.—No employee of the Federal Government may serve as an appointed member of the Board under this subparagraph.

(III) NOT FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.—Appointment to the Board under this subparagraph shall not constitute Federal employment.

(iii) AUTHORITY.—All appointed members of the Board shall be voting members.

(D) CHAIR.—The Board shall, from among the members of the Board, designate an individual to serve as Chair of the Board.

(3) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the ex-officio members of the Board—

(A) to incorporate the Foundation; and

(B) to appoint the members of the Board in accordance with paragraph (2)(C)(i).

(4) DUTIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall—

(i) establish bylaws for the Foundation that, at a minimum, include—

(I) policies for the selection of future Board members, officers, employees, agents, and contractors of the Foundation;

(II) policies, including ethical standards, for—

(aa) the acceptance, solicitation, and disposition of donations and grants to the Foundation; and

(bb) the disposition of assets of the Foundation, including appropriate limits on the ability of donors to designate, by stipulation

or restriction, the use or recipient of donated funds;

(III) policies that would subject all employees, fellows, trainees, and other agents of the Foundation (including members of the Board) to conflict of interest standards in the same manner as Federal employees are subject to the conflict of interest standards under section 208 of title 18, United States Code;

(IV) policies for writing, editing, printing, publishing, and vending of books and other materials;

(V) policies for the conduct of the general operations of the Foundation, including a cap on administrative expenses for recipients of a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement from the Foundation; and

(VI) specific duties for the Executive Director;

(ii) prioritize and provide overall direction for the activities of the Foundation;

(iii) evaluate the performance of the Executive Director; and

(iv) carry out any other necessary activities regarding the Foundation.

(B) ESTABLISHMENT OF BYLAWS.—In establishing bylaws under subparagraph (A)(i), the Board shall ensure that the bylaws do not—

(i) reflect unfavorably on the ability of the Foundation to carry out the duties of the Foundation in a fair and objective manner; or

(ii) compromise, or appear to compromise, the integrity of any governmental agency or program, or any officer or employee employed by, or involved in, a governmental agency or program.

(5) TERMS AND VACANCIES.—

(A) TERMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The term of each member of the Board appointed under paragraph (2)(C) shall be 5 years, except that of the members initially appointed, 8 of the members shall each be appointed for a term of 3 years and 7 of the members shall each be appointed for a term of 2 years.

(ii) PARTIAL TERMS.—If a member of the Board does not serve the full term applicable under clause (i), the individual appointed to fill the resulting vacancy shall be appointed for the remainder of the term of the predecessor of the individual.

(iii) TRANSITION.—A member of the Board may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of the member until a successor is appointed.

(B) VACANCIES.—After the initial appointment of the members of the Board under paragraph (2)(C), any vacancy in the membership of the Board shall be filled as provided in the bylaws established under paragraph (4)(A)(i).

(6) COMPENSATION.—Members of the Board may not receive compensation for service on the Board but may be reimbursed for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of the Board.

(7) MEETINGS AND QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for purposes of conducting the business of the Board.

(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall hire an Executive Director who shall carry out such duties and responsibilities as the Board may prescribe.

(B) SERVICE.—The Executive Director shall serve at the pleasure of the Board.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE POWERS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section, the Board, acting through the Executive Director, may—

(i) adopt, alter, and use a corporate seal, which shall be judicially noticed;

(ii) hire, promote, compensate, and discharge 1 or more officers, employees, and agents, as may be necessary, and define the duties of the officers, employees, and agents;

(iii) solicit and accept any funds, gifts, grants, devises, or bequests of real or personal property made to the Foundation, including such support from private entities;

(iv) prescribe the manner in which—

(I) real or personal property of the Foundation is acquired, held, and transferred;

(II) general operations of the Foundation are to be conducted; and

(III) the privileges granted to the Board by law are exercised and enjoyed;

(v) with the consent of the applicable executive department or independent agency, use the information, services, and facilities of the department or agency in carrying out this section on a reimbursable basis;

(vi) enter into contracts with public and private organizations for the writing, editing, printing, and publishing of books and other material;

(vii) hold, administer, invest, and spend any funds, gifts, grant, devise, or bequest of real or personal property made to the Foundation;

(viii) enter into such contracts, leases, cooperative agreements, and other transactions as the Board considers appropriate to conduct the activities of the Foundation;

(ix) modify or consent to the modification of any contract or agreement to which the Foundation is a party or in which the Foundation has an interest;

(x) take such action as may be necessary to obtain and maintain patents for and to license inventions (as defined in section 201 of title 35, United States Code) developed by the Foundation, employees of the Foundation, or derived from the collaborative efforts of the Foundation;

(xi) sue and be sued in the corporate name of the Foundation, and complain and defend in courts of competent jurisdiction;

(xii) appoint other groups of advisors as may be determined necessary to carry out the functions of the Foundation; and

(xiii) exercise such other incidental powers as are necessary to carry out the duties and functions of the Foundation in accordance with this section.

(B) LIMITATION.—No appointed member of the Board or officer or employee of the Foundation or of any program established by the Foundation (other than ex-officio members of the Board) shall exercise administrative control over any Federal employee.

(3) RECORDS.—

(A) AUDITS.—The Foundation shall—

(i) provide for annual audits of the financial condition of the Foundation; and

(ii) make the audits, and all other records, documents, and other papers of the Foundation, available to the Secretary and the Comptroller General of the United States for examination or audit.

(B) REPORTS.—

(I) ANNUAL REPORT ON FOUNDATION.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 months following the end of each fiscal year, the Foundation shall publish a report for the preceding fiscal year that includes—

(aa) a description of Foundation activities, including accomplishments; and

(bb) a comprehensive statement of the operations and financial condition of the Foundation.

(II) FINANCIAL CONDITION.—Each report under subclause (I) shall include a description of all gifts, grants, devises, or bequests

to the Foundation of real or personal property or money, which shall include—

(aa) the source of the gifts, grants, devises, or bequests; and

(bb) any restrictions on the purposes for which the gift, grant, devise, or bequest may be used.

(III) AVAILABILITY.—The Foundation shall—

(aa) make copies of each report submitted under subclause (I) available for public inspection; and

(bb) on request, provide a copy of the report to any individual.

(IV) PUBLIC MEETING.—The Board shall hold an annual public meeting to summarize the activities of the Foundation.

(ii) GRANT REPORTING.—Any recipient of a grant under subsection (d)(1)(A) shall provide the Foundation with a report at the conclusion of any research or studies conducted that describes the results of the research or studies, including any data generated.

(4) INTEGRITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—To ensure integrity in the operations of the Foundation, the Board shall develop and enforce procedures relating to standards of conduct, financial disclosure statements, conflicts of interest (including recusal and waiver rules), audits, and any other matters determined appropriate by the Board.

(B) FINANCIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—Any individual who is an officer, employee, or member of the Board is prohibited from any participation in deliberations by the Foundation of a matter that would directly or predictably affect any financial interest of—

(i) the individual;

(ii) a relative (as defined in section 109 of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)) of that individual; or

(iii) a business organization or other entity in which the individual has an interest, including an organization or other entity with which the individual is negotiating employment.

(5) INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.—The Board shall adopt written standards to govern the ownership and licensing of any intellectual property rights derived from the collaborative efforts of the Foundation.

(6) LIABILITY.—The United States shall not be liable for any debts, defaults, acts, or omissions of the Foundation nor shall the full faith and credit of the United States extend to any obligations of the Foundation.

(g) FUNDS.—

(1) MANDATORY FUNDING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—On the date of the enactment of this Act, of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall transfer to the Foundation to carry out this section \$200,000,000, to remain available until expended under the conditions described in subparagraph (B).

(B) CONDITIONS ON EXPENDITURE.—The Foundation may use the funds made available under subparagraph (A) to carry out the purposes of the Foundation only to the extent that the Foundation secures an equal amount of non-Federal matching funds for each expenditure.

(C) PROHIBITION ON CONSTRUCTION.—None of the funds made available under subparagraph (A) may be used for construction.

(2) SEPARATION OF FUNDS.—The Executive Director shall ensure that any funds received under paragraph (1) are held in separate accounts from funds received from nongovernmental entities as described in subsection (f)(2)(A)(iii).

SEC. 7602. CONCESSIONS AND AGREEMENTS WITH NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS FOR NATIONAL ARBORETUM.

Section 6 of the Act of March 4, 1927 (20 U.S.C. 196), is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(1) negotiate concessions and agreements for the National Arboretum with nonprofit scientific or educational organizations, the interests of which are complementary to the mission of the National Arboretum, or nonprofit organizations that support the purpose of the National Arboretum, except that the net proceeds of the organizations from the concessions or agreements, as applicable, shall be used exclusively for—

“(A) the research and educational work for the benefit of the National Arboretum; and

“(B) the operation and maintenance of the facilities of the National Arboretum, including enhancements, upgrades, restoration, and conservation.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) RECOGNITION OF DONORS.—A nonprofit organization that entered into a concession or agreement under subsection (a)(1) may recognize donors if that recognition is approved in advance by the Secretary of Agriculture. In considering whether to approve such recognition, the Secretary shall broadly exercise the discretion of the Secretary to the fullest extent allowed under Federal law.”.

SEC. 7603. AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD LAW RESEARCH, LEGAL TOOLS, AND INFORMATION.

(a) PARTNERSHIPS.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the National Agricultural Library, shall support the dissemination of objective, scholarly, and authoritative agricultural and food law research, legal tools, and information by entering into cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) that on the date of enactment of this Act are carrying out objective programs for research, legal tools, and information in agricultural and food law.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter.

SEC. 7604. COTTON DISEASE RESEARCH REPORT.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *vasinfectum* race 4 (referred to in this section as “FOV Race 4”) and the impact of such fungus on cotton, including—

(1) an overview of the threat FOV Race 4 poses to the cotton industry in the United States;

(2) the status and progress of Federal research initiatives to detect, contain, or eradicate FOV Race 4, including current FOV Race 4-specific research projects; and

(3) a comprehensive strategy to combat FOV Race 4 that establishes—

(A) detection and identification goals;

(B) containment goals;

(C) eradication goals; and

(D) a plan to partner with the cotton industry in the United States to maximize resources, information sharing, and research responsiveness and effectiveness.

SEC. 7605. MISCELLANEOUS TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

Sections 7408 and 7409 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public

Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 2013) are both amended by striking “Title III of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994” and inserting “Title III of the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994”.

SEC. 7606. LEGITIMACY OF INDUSTRIAL HEMP RESEARCH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.), the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (20 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), chapter 81 of title 41, United States Code, or any other Federal law, an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) or a State department of agriculture may grow or cultivate industrial hemp if—

(1) the industrial hemp is grown or cultivated for purposes of research conducted under an agricultural pilot program or other agricultural or academic research; and

(2) the growing or cultivating of industrial hemp is allowed under the laws of the State in which such institution of higher education or State department of agriculture is located and such research occurs.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGRICULTURAL PILOT PROGRAM.—The term “agricultural pilot program” means a pilot program to study the growth, cultivation, or marketing of industrial hemp—

(A) in States that permit the growth or cultivation of industrial hemp under the laws of the State; and

(B) in a manner that—

(i) ensures that only institutions of higher education and State departments of agriculture are used to grow or cultivate industrial hemp;

(ii) requires that sites used for growing or cultivating industrial hemp in a State be certified by, and registered with, the State department of agriculture; and

(iii) authorizes State departments of agriculture to promulgate regulations to carry out the pilot program in the States in accordance with the purposes of this section.

(2) INDUSTRIAL HEMP.—The term “industrial hemp” means the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of such plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.

(3) STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—The term “State department of agriculture” means the agency, commission, or department of a State government responsible for agriculture within the State.

TITLE VIII—FORESTRY

Subtitle A—Repeal of Certain Forestry Programs

SEC. 8001. FOREST LAND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 4 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2103) is repealed.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 8002 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171; 16 U.S.C. 2103 note) is amended by striking subsection (a).

SEC. 8002. WATERSHED FORESTRY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 6 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2103b) is repealed.

SEC. 8003. EXPIRED COOPERATIVE NATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS MARKETING PROGRAM.

Section 18 of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2112) is repealed.

SEC. 8004. HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION AGRICULTURAL LAND NATIONAL RESOURCES LEADERSHIP PROGRAM.

Section 8402 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (16 U.S.C. 1649a) is repealed.

SEC. 8005. TRIBAL WATERSHED FORESTRY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 303 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6542) is repealed.

SEC. 8006. SEPARATE FOREST SERVICE DECISIONMAKING AND APPEALS PROCESS.

(a) REPEAL.—Section 322 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1612 note; Public Law 102-381) is repealed.

(b) FOREST SERVICE PRE-DECISIONAL OBJECTION PROCESS.—Section 428 of division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (16 U.S.C. 6515 note; Public Law 112-74) shall not apply to any project or activity implementing a land and resource management plan developed under section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604) that is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

Subtitle B—Reauthorization of Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 Programs

SEC. 8101. STATE-WIDE ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGIES FOR FOREST RESOURCES.

Section 2A of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (4), by striking “and”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(5) as feasible, appropriate military installations where the voluntary participation and management of private or State-owned or other public forestland is able to support, promote, and contribute to the missions of such installations; and”;

(2) in subsection (f)(1), by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

Subtitle C—Reauthorization of Other Forestry-related Laws

SEC. 8201. RURAL REVITALIZATION TECHNOLOGIES.

Section 2371(d)(2) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6601(d)(2)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 8202. OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY.

Section 2405(d) of the Global Climate Change Prevention Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6704(d)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 8203. HEALTHY FORESTS RESERVE PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF ACREAGE OWNED BY INDIAN TRIBES.—Section 502(e)(3) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 6572(e)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “subparagraphs (A) and (B)” and inserting “clauses (i) and (ii)”;

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (C) as clauses (i) through (iii), respectively, and indenting appropriately; and

(3) by striking “In the case of” and inserting the following:

“(A) DEFINITION OF ACREAGE OWNED BY INDIAN TRIBES.—In this paragraph, the term ‘acreage owned by Indian tribes’ includes—

“(i) land that is held in trust by the United States for Indian tribes or individual Indians;

“(ii) land, the title to which is held by Indian tribes or individual Indians subject to Federal restrictions against alienation or encumbrance;

“(iii) land that is subject to rights of use, occupancy, and benefit of certain Indian tribes;

“(iv) land that is held in fee title by an Indian tribe; or

“(v) land that is owned by a native corporation formed under section 17 of the Act of June 18, 1934 (commonly known as the ‘Indian Reorganization Act’) (25 U.S.C. 477) or section 8 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1607); or

“(vi) a combination of 1 or more types of land described in clauses (i) through (v).

“(B) ENROLLMENT OF ACREAGE.—In the case of”.

(b) CHANGE IN FUNDING SOURCE FOR HEALTHY FORESTS RESERVE PROGRAM.—Section 508 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6578) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “IN GENERAL” and inserting “FISCAL YEARS 2009 THROUGH 2013”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (d); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

“(b) FISCAL YEARS 2014 THROUGH 2018.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out this section \$12,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(c) ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF FUNDS.—In addition to funds appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in subsection (b) for a fiscal year, the Secretary may use such amount of the funds appropriated for that fiscal year to carry out the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S.C. 590a et seq.) as the Secretary determines necessary to cover the cost of technical assistance, management, and enforcement responsibilities for land enrolled in the healthy forests reserve program pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of section 504.”

SEC. 8204. INSECT AND DISEASE INFESTATION.

Title VI of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following: “SEC. 602. DESIGNATION OF TREATMENT AREAS.

“(a) DEFINITION OF DECLINING FOREST HEALTH.—In this section, the term ‘declining forest health’ means a forest that is experiencing—

“(1) substantially increased tree mortality due to insect or disease infestation; or

“(2) dieback due to infestation or defoliation by insects or disease.

“(b) DESIGNATION OF TREATMENT AREAS.—

“(1) INITIAL AREAS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall, if requested by the Governor of the State, designate as part of an insect and disease treatment program 1 or more landscape-scale areas, such as subwatersheds (sixth-level hydrologic units, according to the System of Hydrologic Unit Codes of the United States Geological Survey), in at least 1 national forest in each State that is experiencing an insect or disease epidemic.

“(2) ADDITIONAL AREAS.—After the end of the 60-day period described in paragraph (1), the Secretary may designate additional landscape-scale areas under this section as needed to address insect or disease threats.

“(c) REQUIREMENTS.—To be designated a landscape-scale area under subsection (b), the area shall be—

“(1) experiencing declining forest health, based on annual forest health surveys conducted by the Secretary;

“(2) at risk of experiencing substantially increased tree mortality over the next 15 years due to insect or disease infestation, based on the most recent National Insect and Disease Risk Map published by the Forest Service; or

“(3) in an area in which the risk of hazard trees poses an imminent risk to public infrastructure, health, or safety.

“(d) TREATMENT OF AREAS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may carry out priority projects on Federal land in the areas designated under subsection (b) to reduce the risk or extent of, or increase the resilience to, insect or disease infestation in the areas.

“(2) AUTHORITY.—Any project under paragraph (1) for which a public notice to initiate scoping is issued on or before September 30, 2018, may be carried out in accordance with subsections (b), (c), and (d) of section 102, and sections 104, 105, and 106.

“(3) EFFECT.—Projects carried out under this subsection shall be considered authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects for purposes of the authorities described in paragraph (2).

“(4) REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with the schedule described in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall issue 2 reports on actions taken to carry out this subsection, including—

“(i) an evaluation of the progress towards project goals; and

“(ii) recommendations for modifications to the projects and management treatments.

“(B) SCHEDULE.—The Secretary shall—

“(i) not earlier than September 30, 2018, issue the initial report under subparagraph (A); and

“(ii) not earlier than September 30, 2024, issue the second report under that subparagraph.

“(e) TREE RETENTION.—The Secretary shall carry out projects under subsection (d) in a manner that maximizes the retention of old-growth and large trees, as appropriate for the forest type, to the extent that the trees promote stands that are resilient to insects and disease.

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$200,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2024.

“SEC. 603. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (d), a project described in subsection (b) that is conducted in accordance with section 602(d) may be—

“(1) considered an action categorically excluded from the requirements of Public Law 91-190 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

“(2) exempt from the special administrative review process under section 105.

“(b) COLLABORATIVE RESTORATION PROJECT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A project referred to in subsection (a) is a project to carry out forest restoration treatments that—

“(A) maximizes the retention of old-growth and large trees, as appropriate for the forest type, to the extent that the trees promote stands that are resilient to insects and disease;

“(B) considers the best available scientific information to maintain or restore the ecological integrity, including maintaining or restoring structure, function, composition, and connectivity; and

“(C) is developed and implemented through a collaborative process that—

“(i) includes multiple interested persons representing diverse interests; and

“(ii)(I) is transparent and nonexclusive; or

“(II) meets the requirements for a resource advisory committee under subsections (c) through (f) of section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7125).

“(2) INCLUSION.—A project under this subsection may carry out part of a proposal that complies with the eligibility requirements of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program under section 4003(b) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303(b)).

“(c) LIMITATIONS.—

“(1) PROJECT SIZE.—A project under this section may not exceed 3000 acres.

“(2) LOCATION.—A project under this section shall be limited to areas—

“(A) in the wildland-urban interface; or

“(B) Condition Classes 2 or 3 in Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III, outside the wildland-urban interface.

“(3) ROADS.—

“(A) PERMANENT ROADS.—

“(i) PROHIBITION ON ESTABLISHMENT.—A project under this section shall not include the establishment of permanent roads.

“(ii) EXISTING ROADS.—The Secretary may carry out necessary maintenance and repairs on existing permanent roads for the purposes of this section.

“(B) TEMPORARY ROADS.—The Secretary shall decommission any temporary road constructed under a project under this section not later than 3 years after the date on which the project is completed.

“(d) EXCLUSIONS.—This section does not apply to—

“(1) a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System;

“(2) any Federal land on which, by Act of Congress or Presidential proclamation, the removal of vegetation is restricted or prohibited;

“(3) a congressionally designated wilderness study area; or

“(4) an area in which activities under subsection (a) would be inconsistent with the applicable land and resource management plan.

“(e) FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS.—All projects and activities carried out under this section shall be consistent with the land and resource management plan established under section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604) for the unit of the National Forest System containing the projects and activities.

“(f) PUBLIC NOTICE AND SCOPING.—The Secretary shall conduct public notice and scoping for any project or action proposed in accordance with this section.

“(g) ACCOUNTABILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prepare an annual report on the use of categorical exclusions under this section that includes a description of all acres (or other appropriate unit) treated through projects carried out under this section.

“(2) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit the reports required under paragraph (1) to—

“(A) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

“(B) the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate;

“(C) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

“(D) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

“(E) the Government Accountability Office.”.

SEC. 8205. STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING PROJECTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VI of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591) (as amended by section 8204) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 604. STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING PROJECTS.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CHIEF.—The term ‘Chief’ means the Chief of the Forest Service.

“(2) DIRECTOR.—The term ‘Director’ means the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

“(b) PROJECTS.—The Chief and the Director, via agreement or contract as appropriate, may enter into stewardship contracting projects with private persons or other public or private entities to perform services to achieve land management goals for the national forests and the public lands that meet local and rural community needs.

“(c) LAND MANAGEMENT GOALS.—The land management goals of a project under subsection (b) may include any of the following:

“(1) Road and trail maintenance or obliteration to restore or maintain water quality.

“(2) Soil productivity, habitat for wildlife and fisheries, or other resource values.

“(3) Setting of prescribed fires to improve the composition, structure, condition, and health of stands or to improve wildlife habitat.

“(4) Removing vegetation or other activities to promote healthy forest stands, reduce fire hazards, or achieve other land management objectives.

“(5) Watershed restoration and maintenance.

“(6) Restoration and maintenance of wildlife and fish.

“(7) Control of noxious and exotic weeds and reestablishing native plant species.

“(d) AGREEMENTS OR CONTRACTS.—

“(1) PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE.—A source for performance of an agreement or contract under subsection (b) shall be selected on a best-value basis, including consideration of source under other public and private agreements or contracts.

“(2) CONTRACT FOR SALE OF PROPERTY.—A contract entered into under this section may, at the discretion of the Secretary of Agriculture, be considered a contract for the sale of property under such terms as the Secretary may prescribe without regard to any other provision of law.

“(3) TERM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Chief and the Director may enter into a contract under subsection (b) in accordance with section 3903 of title 41, United States Code.

“(B) MAXIMUM.—The period of the contract under subsection (b) may exceed 5 years but may not exceed 10 years.

“(4) OFFSETS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may apply the value of timber or other forest products removed as an offset against the cost of services received under the agreement or contract described in subsection (b).

“(B) METHODS OF APPRAISAL.—The value of timber or other forest products used as an offset under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall be determined using appropriate methods of appraisal commensurate with the quantity of products to be removed; and

“(ii) may—

“(I) be determined using a unit of measure appropriate to the contracts; and

“(II) may include valuing products on a per-acre basis.

“(5) RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.—Notwithstanding subsections (d) and (g) of section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a), the Chief may enter into an agreement or contract under subsection (b).

“(6) CONTRACTING OFFICER.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary or the Secretary of the Interior may determine the appropriate contracting officer to enter into and administer an agreement or contract under subsection (b).

“(7) FIRE LIABILITY PROVISIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Chief and the Director shall issue for use in all contracts and agreements under this section fire liability provisions that are in substantially the same form as the fire liability provisions contained in—

“(A) integrated resource timber contracts, as described in the Forest Service contract numbered 2400-13, part H, section H.4; and

“(B) timber sale contracts conducted pursuant to section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a).

“(e) RECEIPTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may collect monies from an agreement or contract under subsection (b) if the collection is a secondary objective of negotiating the contract that will best achieve the purposes of this section.

“(2) USE.—Monies from an agreement or contract under subsection (b)—

“(A) may be retained by the Chief and the Director; and

“(B) shall be available for expenditure without further appropriation at the project site from which the monies are collected or at another project site.

“(3) RELATION TO OTHER LAWS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the value of services received by the Chief or the Director under a stewardship contract project conducted under this section, and any payments made or resources provided by the contractor, Chief, or Director shall not be considered monies received from the National Forest System or the public lands.

“(B) KNUTSON-VANDERBERG ACT.—The Act of June 9, 1930 (commonly known as the ‘Knutson-Vanderberg Act’) (16 U.S.C. 576 et seq.) shall not apply to any agreement or contract under subsection (b).

“(f) COSTS OF REMOVAL.—Notwithstanding the fact that a contractor did not harvest the timber, the Chief may collect deposits from a contractor covering the costs of removal of timber or other forest products under—

“(1) the Act of August 11, 1916 (16 U.S.C. 490); and

“(2) the Act of June 30, 1914 (16 U.S.C. 498).

“(g) PERFORMANCE AND PAYMENT GUARANTEES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may require performance and payment bonds under sections 28.103-2 and 28.103-3 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation, in an amount that the contracting officer considers sufficient to protect the investment in receipts by the Federal Government generated by the contractor from the estimated value of the forest products to be removed under a contract under subsection (b).

“(2) EXCESS OFFSET VALUE.—If the offset value of the forest products exceeds the value of the resource improvement treatments, the Chief and the Director may—

“(A) collect any residual receipts under the Act of June 9, 1930 (commonly known as the ‘Knutson-Vanderberg Act’) (16 U.S.C. 576 et seq.); and

“(B) apply the excess to other authorized stewardship projects.

“(h) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director shall establish a multiparty monitoring and evaluation process that accesses the stewardship contracting projects conducted under this section.

“(2) PARTICIPANTS.—Other than the Chief and Director, participants in the process described in paragraph (1) may include—

“(A) any cooperating governmental agencies, including tribal governments; and

“(B) any other interested groups or individuals.

“(i) REPORTING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and annually thereafter, the Chief and the Director shall report to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives on—

“(1) the status of development, execution, and administration of agreements or contracts under subsection (b);

“(2) the specific accomplishments that have resulted; and

“(3) the role of local communities in the development of agreements or contract plans.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 347 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 (16 U.S.C. 2104 note; Public Law 105-277) is repealed.

SEC. 8206. GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AUTHORIZED RESTORATION SERVICES.—The term “authorized restoration services” means similar and complementary forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration services carried out—

(A) on Federal land and non-Federal land; and

(B) by either the Secretary or a Governor pursuant to a good neighbor agreement.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “Federal land” means land that is—

(i) National Forest System land; or

(ii) public land (as defined in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702)).

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “Federal land” does not include—

(i) a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System;

(ii) Federal land on which the removal of vegetation is prohibited or restricted by Act of Congress or Presidential proclamation (including the applicable implementation plan); or

(iii) a wilderness study area.

(3) FOREST, RANGELAND, AND WATERSHED RESTORATION SERVICES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration services” means—

(i) activities to treat insect- and disease-infected trees;

(ii) activities to reduce hazardous fuels; and

(iii) any other activities to restore or improve forest, rangeland, and watershed health, including fish and wildlife habitat.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration services” does not include—

(i) construction, reconstruction, repair, or restoration of paved or permanent roads or parking areas; or

(ii) construction, alteration, repair or replacement of public buildings or works.

(4) GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENT.—The term “good neighbor agreement” means a cooper-

ative agreement or contract (including a sole source contract) entered into between the Secretary and a Governor to carry out authorized restoration services under this section.

(5) GOVERNOR.—The term “Governor” means the Governor or any other appropriate executive official of an affected State or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(6) ROAD.—The term “road” has the meaning given the term in section 212.1 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act).

(7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary means—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System land; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to Bureau of Land Management land.

(b) GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENTS.—

(1) GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into a good neighbor agreement with a Governor to carry out authorized restoration services in accordance with this section.

(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall make each good neighbor agreement available to the public.

(2) TIMBER SALES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subsections (d) and (g) of section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(d) and (g)) shall not apply to services performed under a cooperative agreement or contract entered into under subsection (a).

(B) APPROVAL OF SILVICULTURE PRESCRIPTIONS AND MARKING GUIDES.—The Secretary shall provide or approve all silviculture prescriptions and marking guides to be applied on Federal land in all timber sale projects conducted under this section.

(3) RETENTION OF NEPA RESPONSIBILITIES.—Any decision required to be made under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) with respect to any authorized restoration services to be provided under this section on Federal land shall not be delegated to a Governor.

Subtitle D—Miscellaneous Provisions

SEC. 8301. REVISION OF STRATEGIC PLAN FOR FOREST INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS.

(a) REVISION REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall revise the strategic plan for forest inventory and analysis initially prepared pursuant to section 3(e) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1642(e)) to address the requirements imposed by subsection (b).

(b) ELEMENTS OF REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN.—In revising the strategic plan, the Secretary shall describe in detail the organization, procedures, and funding needed to achieve each of the following:

(1) Complete the transition to a fully annualized forest inventory program and include inventory and analysis of interior Alaska.

(2) Implement an annualized inventory of trees in urban settings, including the status and trends of trees and forests, and assessments of their ecosystem services, values, health, and risk to pests and diseases.

(3) Report information on renewable biomass supplies and carbon stocks at the local, State, regional, and national level, including by ownership type.

(4) Engage State foresters and other users of information from the forest inventory and analysis in reevaluating the list of core data variables collected on forest inventory and analysis plots with an emphasis on demonstrated need.

(5) Improve the timeliness of the timber product output program and accessibility of the annualized information on that database.

(6) Foster greater cooperation among the forest inventory and analysis program, research station leaders, and State foresters and other users of information from the forest inventory and analysis.

(7) Promote availability of and access to non-Federal resources to improve information analysis and information management.

(8) Collaborate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and United States Geological Survey to integrate remote sensing, spatial analysis techniques, and other new technologies in the forest inventory and analysis program.

(9) Understand and report on changes in land cover and use.

(10) Expand existing programs to promote sustainable forest stewardship through increased understanding, in partnership with other Federal agencies, of the over 10,000,000 family forest owners, their demographics, and the barriers to forest stewardship.

(11) Implement procedures to improve the statistical precision of estimates at the sub-State level.

(c) **SUBMISSION OF REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN.**—The Secretary shall submit the revised strategic plan to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

SEC. 8302. FOREST SERVICE PARTICIPATION IN ACES PROGRAM.

The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, may use funds derived from conservation-related programs executed on National Forest System land to utilize the Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services Program established pursuant to section 1252 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3851) to provide technical services for conservation-related programs and authorities carried out by the Secretary on National Forest System land.

SEC. 8303. EXTENSION OF STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS AUTHORITY REGARDING USE OF DESIGNATION BY PRESCRIPTION TO ALL THINNING SALES UNDER NATIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976.

Section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a) is amended by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following:

“(g) **DESIGNATION AND SUPERVISION OF HARVESTING.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Designation, including marking when necessary, designation by description, or designation by prescription, and supervision of harvesting of trees, portions of trees, or forest products shall be conducted by persons employed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

“(2) **REQUIREMENT.**—Persons employed by the Secretary of Agriculture under paragraph (1)—

“(A) shall have no personal interest in the purchase or harvest of the products; and

“(B) shall not be directly or indirectly in the employment of the purchaser of the products.

“(3) **METHODS FOR DESIGNATION.**—Designation by prescription and designation by description shall be considered valid methods for designation, and may be supervised by use of post-harvest cruise, sample weight scaling, or other methods determined by the Secretary of Agriculture to be appropriate.”

SEC. 8304. REIMBURSEMENT OF FIRE FUNDS.

(a) **DEFINITION OF STATE.**—In this section, the term “State” means—

(1) a State; and

(2) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—If a State seeks reimbursement for amounts expended for resources and services provided to another State for the management and suppression of a wildfire, the Secretary, subject to subsections (c) and (d)—

(1) may accept the reimbursement amounts from the other State; and

(2) shall pay those amounts to the State seeking reimbursement.

(c) **MUTUAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT.**—As a condition of seeking and providing reimbursement under subsection (b), the State seeking reimbursement and the State providing reimbursement must each have a mutual assistance agreement with the Forest Service or another Federal agency for providing and receiving wildfire management and suppression resources and services.

(d) **TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—The Secretary may prescribe the terms and conditions determined to be necessary to carry out subsection (b).

(e) **EFFECT ON PRIOR REIMBURSEMENTS.**—Any acceptance of funds or reimbursements made by the Secretary before the date of enactment of this Act that otherwise would have been authorized under this section shall be considered to have been made in accordance with this section.

(f) **AMENDMENT.**—Section 5(b) of the Act of May 27, 1955 (42 U.S.C. 1856d(b)) is amended in the first sentence by inserting “or Department of Agriculture” after “Department of Defense”.

SEC. 8305. FOREST SERVICE LARGE AIRTANKER AND AERIAL ASSET FIREFIGHTING RECAPITALIZATION PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, may establish a large airtanker and aerial asset lease program in accordance with this section.

(b) **AIRCRAFT REQUIREMENTS.**—In carrying out the program described in subsection (a), the Secretary may enter into a multiyear lease contract for up to 5 aircraft that meet the criteria—

(1) described in the Forest Service document entitled “Large Airtanker Modernization Strategy” and dated February 10, 2012, for large airtankers; and

(2) determined by the Secretary, for other aerial assets.

(c) **LEASE TERMS.**—The term of any individual lease agreement into which the Secretary enters under this section shall be—

(1) up to 5 years, inclusive of any options to renew or extend the initial lease term; and

(2) in accordance with section 3903 of title 41, United States Code.

(d) **PROHIBITION.**—No lease entered into under this section shall provide for the purchase of the aircraft by, or the transfer of ownership to, the Forest Service.

SEC. 8306. LAND CONVEYANCE, JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST IN WISE COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ASSOCIATION.**—The term “Association” means the Mullins and Sturgill Cemetery Association of Pound, Virginia.

(2) **MAP.**—The term “map” means the map titled “Mullins and Sturgill Cemetery” dated March 1, 2013.

(b) **CONVEYANCE REQUIRED.**—Upon payment by the Association of the consideration under subsection (c) and the costs under subsection (e), the Secretary shall, subject to valid existing rights, convey to the Associa-

tion all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of National Forest System land in the Jefferson National Forest in Wise County, Virginia, consisting of approximately 0.70 acres and containing the Mullins and Sturgill Cemetery and an easement to provide access to the parcel, as generally depicted on the map.

(c) **CONSIDERATION.**—

(1) **FAIR MARKET VALUE.**—As consideration for the land conveyed under subsection (b), the Association shall pay to the Secretary cash in an amount equal to the market value of the land, as determined by an appraisal approved by the Secretary and conducted in conformity with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions and section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716).

(2) **DEPOSIT.**—The consideration received by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall be deposited into the general fund of the Treasury of the United States for the purposes of deficit reduction.

(d) **DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.**—The exact acreage and legal description of the land to be conveyed under subsection (b) shall be determined by a survey satisfactory to the Secretary.

(e) **COSTS.**—The Association shall pay to the Secretary at closing the reasonable costs of the survey, the appraisal, and any administrative and environmental analyses required by law.

(f) **ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (b) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

TITLE IX—ENERGY

SEC. 9001. DEFINITIONS.

Section 9001 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8101) is amended by—

(1) redesignating paragraphs (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), and (14) as paragraphs (10), (11), (12), (13), (15), and (17);

(2) inserting after paragraph (8), the following new paragraph:

“(9) **FOREST PRODUCT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘forest product’ means a product made from materials derived from the practice of forestry or the management of growing timber.

“(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term ‘forest product’ includes—

“(i) pulp, paper, paperboard, pellets, lumber, and other wood products; and

“(ii) any recycled products derived from forest materials.”;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (13) (as redesignated by paragraph (1) of this section) the following:

“(14) **RENEWABLE CHEMICAL.**—The term ‘renewable chemical’ means a monomer, polymer, plastic, formulated product, or chemical substance produced from renewable biomass.”; and

(4) inserting after paragraph (15) (as so redesignated), the following new paragraph:

“(16) **RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEM.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subparagraph (B), the term ‘renewable energy system’ means a system that—

“(i) produces usable energy from a renewable energy source; and

“(ii) may include distribution components necessary to move energy produced by such system to the initial point of sale.

“(B) **LIMITATION.**—A system described in subparagraph (A) may not include a mechanism for dispensing energy at retail.”

SEC. 9002. BIOBASED MARKETS PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 9002 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8102) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—
(A) in paragraph (2)(A)(i)—
(i) in subclause (I), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in subclause (II)(bb), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and
(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(III) establish a targeted biobased-only procurement requirement under which the procuring agency shall issue a certain number of biobased-only contracts when the procuring agency is purchasing products, or purchasing services that include the use of products, that are included in a biobased product category designated by the Secretary.”; and
(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (B)—
(I) in clause (v), by inserting “as determined to be necessary by the Secretary based on the availability of data,” before “provide information”;

(II) by redesignating clauses (v) and (vi) as clauses (vii) and (viii), respectively; and

(III) by inserting after clause (iv) the following:

“(v) require reporting of quantities and types of biobased products purchased by procuring agencies;

“(vi) promote biobased products, including forest products, that apply an innovative approach to growing, harvesting, sourcing, procuring, processing, manufacturing, or application of biobased products regardless of the date of entry into the marketplace.”; and
(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(F) REQUIRED DESIGNATIONS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall begin to designate intermediate ingredients or feedstocks and assembled and finished biobased products in the guidelines issued under this paragraph.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (3)—
(i) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”; and
(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) AUDITING AND COMPLIANCE.—The Secretary may carry out such auditing and compliance activities as the Secretary determines to be necessary to ensure compliance with subparagraph (A).”; and
(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) ASSEMBLED AND FINISHED PRODUCTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary shall begin issuing criteria for determining which assembled and finished products may qualify to receive the label under paragraph (1).”;
(3) in subsection (g)—
(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking “The report” and inserting “Each report under paragraph (1)”;
(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and
(iv) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) the progress made by other Federal agencies in compliance with the biobased procurement requirements, including the quantity of purchases made.”; and
(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY AND REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a study to assess the economic impact of the biobased products industry, includ-

“(i) the quantity of biobased products sold;

“(ii) the value of the biobased products;

“(iii) the quantity of jobs created;

“(iv) the quantity of petroleum displaced;

“(v) other environmental benefits; and

“(vi) areas in which the use or manufacturing of biobased products could be more effectively used, including identifying any technical and economic obstacles and recommending how those obstacles can be overcome.”

“(B) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report describing the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).”;
(4) by redesignating subsections (g) and (h) as subsections (h) and (i), respectively;

(5) by inserting after subsection (f) the following new subsection:

“(g) FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY COORDINATION.—In determining whether products are eligible for the ‘USDA Certified Biobased Product’ label, the Secretary (acting through the Forest Products Laboratory) shall provide appropriate technical and other assistance to the program and applicants for forest products.”; and
(6) in subsection (i) (as redesignated by paragraph (4)), by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(1) MANDATORY FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.
(2) DISCRETIONARY FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and
(7) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) BIOBASED PRODUCT INCLUSION.—In this section, the term ‘biobased product’ (as defined in section 9001) includes, with respect to forestry materials, forest products that meet biobased content requirements, notwithstanding the market share the product holds, the age of the product, or whether the market for the product is new or emerging.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 944(c)(2)(A) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16253(c)(2)(A)) is amended by striking “section 9002(h)(1)” and inserting “section 9002(b)”.

SEC. 9003. BIOREFINERY ASSISTANCE.

(a) PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS.—Section 9003 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8103) is amended—
(1) in the section heading, by inserting “, RENEWABLE CHEMICAL, AND BIOBASED PRODUCT MANUFACTURING” after “BIOREFINERY”;

(2) in subsection (a), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “renewable chemicals, and biobased product manufacturing” after “advanced biofuels.”;

(3) in subsection (b)—
(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and
(B) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(1) BIOBASED PRODUCT MANUFACTURING.—The term ‘biobased product manufacturing’ means development, construction, and retrofitting of technologically new commercial-scale processing and manufacturing equipment and required facilities that will be used to convert renewable chemicals and other biobased outputs of biorefineries into end-user products on a commercial scale.”;

(4) in subsection (c), by striking “to eligible entities” and all that follows through “guarantees for loans” and inserting “to eligible entities guarantees for loans”;

(5) by striking subsection (d);

(6) by redesignating subsections (e), (f), (g), and (h) as subsections (d), (e), (f), and (g), respectively; and

(7) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated)—
(A) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) PROJECT DIVERSITY.—In approving loan guarantee applications, the Secretary shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, there is diversity in the types of projects approved for loan guarantees to ensure that as wide a range as possible of technologies, products, and approaches are assisted.”.

(B) by striking “subsection (c)(2)” each place it appears and inserting “subsection (c)”;

(C) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking “subsection (h)” and inserting “subsection (g)”.

(b) FUNDING.—Subsection (g) of section 9003 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8103) (as redesignated by paragraph (6)) is amended—
(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) MANDATORY FUNDING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use for the cost of loan guarantees under this section, to remain available until expended—
“(i) \$100,000,000 for fiscal year 2014; and
“(ii) \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 and 2016.”

“(B) BIOBASED PRODUCT MANUFACTURING.—Of the total amount of funds made available for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may use for the cost of loan guarantees under this section not more than 15 percent of such funds to promote biobased product manufacturing.”; and
(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$150,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013” and inserting “\$75,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 9004. REPOURING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 9004(d) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8104(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “\$35,000,000 for fiscal year 2009” and inserting “\$12,000,000 for fiscal year 2014”; and
(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013” and inserting “\$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 9005. BIOENERGY PROGRAM FOR ADVANCED BIOFUELS.

Section 9005(g) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8105(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—
(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and
(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and
(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013” and inserting “\$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 9006. BIODIESEL FUEL EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Section 9006(d) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8106(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—
(A) in the heading, by striking “FISCAL YEARS 2009 THROUGH 2012” and inserting “MANDATORY FUNDING”; and
(B) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS” and inserting “DISCRETIONARY FUNDING”; and

(B) by striking “fiscal year 2013” and inserting “each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 9007. RURAL ENERGY FOR AMERICA PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM ADJUSTMENTS.—Section 9007 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8107) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) a council (as defined in section 1528 of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (16 U.S.C. 3451)); and”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking paragraph (3);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (3); and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) TIERED APPLICATION PROCESS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In providing loan guarantees and grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall use a 3-tiered application process that reflects the size of proposed projects in accordance with this paragraph.

“(B) TIER 1.—The Secretary shall establish a separate application process for projects for which the cost of the activity funded under this subsection is not more than \$80,000.

“(C) TIER 2.—The Secretary shall establish a separate application process for projects for which the cost of the activity funded under this subsection is greater than \$80,000 but less than \$200,000.

“(D) TIER 3.—The Secretary shall establish a separate application process for projects for which the cost of the activity funded under this subsection is equal to or greater than \$200,000.

“(E) APPLICATION PROCESS.—The Secretary shall establish an application, evaluation, and oversight process that is the most simplified for tier I projects and more comprehensive for each subsequent tier.”

(b) FUNDING.—Section 9007(g) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8107(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter.”; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “\$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013” and inserting “\$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 9008. BIOMASS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Section 9008(h) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8108(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017.”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “\$35,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013”

and inserting “\$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018”.

SEC. 9009. FEEDSTOCK FLEXIBILITY PROGRAM FOR BIOENERGY PRODUCERS.

Section 9010(b) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8110(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “2013” and inserting “2018”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking “2013” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 9010. BIOMASS CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 9011 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8111) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 9011. BIOMASS CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) BCAP.—The term ‘BCAP’ means the Biomass Crop Assistance Program established under this section.

“(2) BCAP PROJECT AREA.—The term ‘BCAP project area’ means an area that—

“(A) has specified boundaries that are submitted to the Secretary by the project sponsor and subsequently approved by the Secretary;

“(B) includes producers with contract acreage that will supply a portion of the renewable biomass needed by a biomass conversion facility; and

“(C) is physically located within an economically practicable distance from the biomass conversion facility.

“(3) CONTRACT ACREAGE.—The term ‘contract acreage’ means eligible land that is covered by a BCAP contract entered into with the Secretary.

“(4) ELIGIBLE CROP.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible crop’ means a crop of renewable biomass.

“(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible crop’ does not include—

“(i) any crop that is eligible to receive payments under title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 or an amendment made by that title; or

“(ii) any plant that is invasive or noxious or species or varieties of plants that credible risk assessment tools or other credible sources determine are potentially invasive, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with other appropriate Federal or State departments and agencies.

“(5) ELIGIBLE LAND.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible land’ includes—

“(i) agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands (as defined in section 5(c) of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2103a(c))); and

“(ii) land enrolled in the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter I of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.), or the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program established under subtitle H of title XII of that Act, under a contract that will expire at the end of the current fiscal year.

“(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible land’ does not include—

“(i) Federal- or State-owned land;

“(ii) land that is native sod, as of the date of enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.);

“(iii) land enrolled in the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.), other than land described in subparagraph (A)(ii); or

“(iv) land enrolled in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program established

under subtitle H of title XII of that Act, other than land described in subparagraph (A)(ii).

“(6) ELIGIBLE MATERIAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible material’ means renewable biomass harvested directly from the land, including crop residue from any crop that is eligible to receive payments under title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 or an amendment made by that title.

“(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible material’ shall only include—

“(i) eligible material that is collected or harvested by the eligible material owner—

“(I) directly from—

“(aa) National Forest System;

“(bb) Bureau of Land Management land;

“(cc) non-Federal land; or

“(dd) land owned by an individual Indian or Indian tribe that is held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the individual Indian or Indian tribe or subject to a restriction against alienation imposed by the United States;

“(II) in a manner that is consistent with—

“(aa) a conservation plan;

“(bb) a forest stewardship plan; or

“(cc) a plan that the Secretary determines is equivalent to a plan described in item (aa) or (bb) and consistent with Executive Order 13112 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to invasive species);

“(ii) if woody eligible material, woody eligible material that is produced on land other than contract acreage that—

“(I) is a byproduct of a preventative treatment that is removed to reduce hazardous fuel or to reduce or contain disease or insect infestation; and

“(II) if harvested from Federal land, is harvested in accordance with section 102(e) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6512(e)); and

“(iii) eligible material that is delivered to a qualified biomass conversion facility to be used for heat, power, biobased products, research, or advanced biofuels.

“(C) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ‘eligible material’ does not include—

“(i) material that is whole grain from any crop that is eligible to receive payments under title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 or an amendment made by that title, including—

“(I) barley, corn, grain sorghum, oats, rice, or wheat;

“(II) honey;

“(III) mohair;

“(IV) oilseeds, including canola, crambe, flaxseed, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower seed, soybeans, sesame seed, and sunflower seed;

“(V) peanuts;

“(VI) pulse;

“(VII) chickpeas, lentils, and dry peas;

“(VIII) dairy products;

“(IX) sugar; and

“(X) wool and cotton boll fiber;

“(ii) animal waste and byproducts, including fat, oil, grease, and manure;

“(iii) food waste and yard waste;

“(iv) algae;

“(v) woody eligible material that—

“(I) is removed outside contract acreage; and

“(II) is not a byproduct of a preventative treatment to reduce hazardous fuel or to reduce or contain disease or insect infestation;

“(vi) any woody eligible material collected or harvested outside contract acreage that would otherwise be used for existing market products; or

“(vii) bagasse.

“(7) PRODUCER.—The term ‘producer’ means an owner or operator of contract acreage that is physically located within a BCAP project area.

“(8) PROJECT SPONSOR.—The term ‘project sponsor’ means—

“(A) a group of producers; or

“(B) a biomass conversion facility.

“(9) SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMER OR RANCHER.—The term ‘socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher’ has the meaning given the term in section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)).

“(b) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—The Secretary shall establish and administer a Biomass Crop Assistance Program to—

“(1) support the establishment and production of eligible crops for conversion to bioenergy in selected BCAP project areas; and

“(2) assist agricultural and forest land owners and operators with the collection, harvest, storage, and transportation of eligible material for use in a biomass conversion facility.

“(c) BCAP PROJECT AREA.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide financial assistance to a producer of an eligible crop in a BCAP project area.

“(2) SELECTION OF PROJECT AREAS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—To be considered for selection as a BCAP project area, a project sponsor shall submit to the Secretary a proposal that, at a minimum, includes—

“(i) a description of the eligible land and eligible crops of each producer that will participate in the proposed BCAP project area;

“(ii) a letter of commitment from a biomass conversion facility that the facility will use the eligible crops intended to be produced in the proposed BCAP project area;

“(iii) evidence that the biomass conversion facility has sufficient equity available, as determined by the Secretary, if the biomass conversion facility is not operational at the time the proposal is submitted to the Secretary; and

“(iv) any other information about the biomass conversion facility or proposed biomass conversion facility that the Secretary determines necessary for the Secretary to be reasonably assured that the plant will be in operation by the date on which the eligible crops are ready for harvest.

“(B) BCAP PROJECT AREA SELECTION CRITERIA.—In selecting BCAP project areas, the Secretary shall consider—

“(i) the volume of the eligible crops proposed to be produced in the proposed BCAP project area and the probability that those crops will be used for the purposes of the BCAP;

“(ii) the volume of renewable biomass projected to be available from sources other than the eligible crops grown on contract acres;

“(iii) the anticipated economic impact in the proposed BCAP project area;

“(iv) the opportunity for producers and local investors to participate in the ownership of the biomass conversion facility in the proposed BCAP project area;

“(v) the participation rate by—

“(I) beginning farmers or ranchers (as defined in accordance with section 343(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1991(a))); or

“(II) socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers;

“(vi) the impact on soil, water, and related resources;

“(vii) the variety in biomass production approaches within a project area, including (as appropriate)—

“(I) agronomic conditions;

“(II) harvest and postharvest practices; and

“(III) monoculture and polyculture crop mixes;

“(viii) the range of eligible crops among project areas;

“(ix) existing project areas that have received funding under this section and the continuation of funding of such project areas to advance the maturity of such project areas; and

“(x) any additional information that the Secretary determines to be necessary.

“(3) CONTRACT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—On approval of a BCAP project area by the Secretary, each producer in the BCAP project area shall enter into a contract directly with the Secretary.

“(B) MINIMUM TERMS.—At a minimum, a contract under this subsection shall include terms that cover—

“(i) an agreement to make available to the Secretary, or to an institution of higher education or other entity designated by the Secretary, such information as the Secretary considers to be appropriate to promote the production of eligible crops and the development of biomass conversion technology;

“(ii) compliance with the highly erodible land conservation requirements of subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.) and the wetland conservation requirements of subtitle C of title XII of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3821 et seq.);

“(iii) the implementation of (as determined by the Secretary)—

“(I) a conservation plan;

“(II) a forest stewardship plan; or

“(III) a plan that is equivalent to a conservation or forest stewardship plan; and

“(iv) any additional requirements that Secretary determines to be necessary.

“(C) DURATION.—A contract under this subsection shall have a term of not more than—

“(i) 5 years for annual and perennial crops; or

“(ii) 15 years for woody biomass.

“(4) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROGRAMS.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall provide for the preservation of cropland base and yield history applicable to the land enrolled in a BCAP contract.

“(5) PAYMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make establishment and annual payments directly to producers to support the establishment and production of eligible crops on contract acreage.

“(B) AMOUNT OF ESTABLISHMENT PAYMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), the amount of an establishment payment under this subsection shall be not more than 50 percent of the costs of establishing an eligible perennial crop covered by the contract but not to exceed \$500 per acre, including—

“(I) the cost of seeds and stock for perennials;

“(II) the cost of planting the perennial crop, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(III) in the case of nonindustrial private forestland, the costs of site preparation and tree planting.

“(ii) SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS OR RANCHERS.—In the case of socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, the costs of establishment may not exceed \$750 per acre.

“(C) AMOUNT OF ANNUAL PAYMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), the amount of an annual payment under this subsection shall be determined by the Secretary.

“(ii) REDUCTION.—The Secretary shall reduce an annual payment by an amount de-

termined to be appropriate by the Secretary, if—

“(I) an eligible crop is used for purposes other than the production of energy at the biomass conversion facility;

“(II) an eligible crop is delivered to the biomass conversion facility;

“(III) the producer receives a payment under subsection (d);

“(IV) the producer violates a term of the contract; or

“(V) the Secretary determines a reduction is necessary to carry out this section.

“(D) EXCLUSION.—The Secretary shall not make any BCAP payments on land for which payments are received under the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.) or the agricultural conservation easement program established under subtitle H of title XII of that Act.

“(d) ASSISTANCE WITH COLLECTION, HARVEST, STORAGE, AND TRANSPORTATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make a payment for the delivery of eligible material to a biomass conversion facility to—

“(A) a producer of an eligible crop that is produced on BCAP contract acreage; or

“(B) a person with the right to collect or harvest eligible material, regardless of whether the eligible material is produced on contract acreage.

“(2) PAYMENTS.—

“(A) COSTS COVERED.—A payment under this subsection shall be in an amount described in subparagraph (B) for—

“(i) collection;

“(ii) harvest;

“(iii) storage; and

“(iv) transportation to a biomass conversion facility.

“(B) AMOUNT.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may provide matching payments at a rate of up to \$1 for each \$1 per ton provided by the biomass conversion facility, in an amount not to exceed \$20 per dry ton for a period of 2 years.

“(3) LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE FOR BCAP CONTRACT ACREAGE.—As a condition of the receipt of an annual payment under subsection (c), a producer receiving a payment under this subsection for collection, harvest, storage, or transportation of an eligible crop produced on BCAP acreage shall agree to a reduction in the annual payment.

“(e) REPORT.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the dissemination by the Secretary of the best practice data and information gathered from participants receiving assistance under this section.

“(f) FUNDING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(2) COLLECTION, HARVEST, STORAGE, AND TRANSPORTATION PAYMENTS.—Of the amount made available under paragraph (1) for each fiscal year, the Secretary shall use not less than 10 percent, nor more than 50 percent, of the amount to make collection, harvest, transportation, and storage payments under subsection (d)(2).

“(3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Effective for fiscal year 2014 and each subsequent fiscal year, funds made available under this subsection shall

be available for the provision of technical assistance with respect to activities authorized under this section.

“(B) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS.—To the extent funds obligated or expended under subparagraph (A) include funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, such funds shall not be considered an allotment or fund transfer from the Commodity Credit Corporation for purposes of the limit on expenditures for technical assistance imposed by section 11 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714i).”.

SEC. 9011. REPEAL OF FOREST BIOMASS FOR ENERGY.

Section 9012 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8112) is repealed.

SEC. 9012. COMMUNITY WOOD ENERGY PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITION OF BIOMASS CONSUMER COOPERATIVE.—Section 9013(a) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8113(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(1) BIOMASS CONSUMER COOPERATIVE.—The term ‘biomass consumer cooperative’ means a consumer membership organization the purpose of which is to provide members with services or discounts relating to the purchase of biomass heating products or biomass heating systems.”.

(b) GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 9013(b)(1) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8113(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) grants of up to \$50,000 to biomass consumer cooperatives for the purpose of establishing or expanding biomass consumer cooperatives that will provide consumers with services or discounts relating to—

“(i) the purchase of biomass heating systems;

“(ii) biomass heating products, including wood chips, wood pellets, and advanced biofuels; or

“(iii) the delivery and storage of biomass of heating products.”.

(c) MATCHING FUNDS.—Section 9013(d) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8113(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking “A State or local government that receives a grant under subsection (b)” and inserting the following:

“(1) STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—A State or local government that receives a grant under subparagraph (A) or (B) of subsection (b)(1)”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) BIOMASS CONSUMER COOPERATIVES.—A biomass consumer cooperative that receives a grant under subsection (b)(1)(C) shall contribute an amount of non-Federal funds (which may include State, local, and non-profit funds and membership dues) toward the establishment or expansion of a biomass consumer cooperative that is at least equal to 50 percent of the amount of Federal funds received for that purpose.”.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 9013(e) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 8113(e)) is amended by striking “2013” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 9013. REPEAL OF BIOFUELS INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY.

Section 9002 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 2095) is repealed.

SEC. 9014. REPEAL OF RENEWABLE FERTILIZER STUDY.

Section 9003 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 2096) is repealed.

SEC. 9015. ENERGY EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR USDA FACILITIES.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on energy use and energy efficiency projects at the Washington, District of Columbia, headquarters and the major regional facilities of the Department of Agriculture.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An analysis of energy use by the Department of Agriculture headquarters and major regional facilities.

(2) A list of energy audits that have been conducted at such facilities.

(3) A list of energy efficiency projects that have been conducted at such facilities.

(4) A list of energy savings projects that could be achieved with enacting a consistent, timely, and proper mechanical insulation maintenance program and upgrading mechanical insulation at such facilities.

TITLE X—HORTICULTURE

SEC. 10001. SPECIALTY CROPS MARKET NEWS ALLOCATION.

Section 10107(b) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 1622b(b)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 10002. REPEAL OF GRANT PROGRAM TO IMPROVE MOVEMENT OF SPECIALTY CROPS.

Effective October 1, 2013, section 10403 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 1622c) is repealed.

SEC. 10003. FARMERS’ MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM.

Section 6 of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976 (7 U.S.C. 3005) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “AND LOCAL FOOD” after “FARMERS’ MARKET”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “and Local Food” after “Farmers’ Market”;

(B) by striking “farmers’ markets and to promote”;

(C) by striking the period and inserting “and assist in the development of local food business enterprises.”;

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

“(b) PROGRAM PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Program are to increase domestic consumption of and access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets, by developing, improving, expanding, and providing outreach, training, and technical assistance to, or assisting in the development, improvement and expansion of—

“(1) domestic farmers’ markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities; and

“(2) local and regional food business enterprises (including those that are not direct

producer-to-consumer markets) that process, distribute, aggregate, or store locally or regionally produced food products.”;

(4) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) by inserting “or other agricultural business entity” after “cooperative”; and

(B) by inserting “, including a community supported agriculture network or association” after “association”;

(5) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (g);

(6) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

“(e) PRIORITIES.—In providing grants under the Program, priority shall be given to applications that include projects that benefit underserved communities, including communities that—

“(1) are located in areas of concentrated poverty with limited access to fresh locally or regionally grown foods; and

“(2) have not received benefits from the Program in the recent past.

“(f) FUNDS REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—

“(1) MATCHING FUNDS.—An entity receiving a grant under this section for a project to carry out a purpose described in subsection (b)(2) shall provide matching funds in the form of cash or an in-kind contribution in an amount equal to 25 percent of the total cost of the project.

“(2) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity may not use a grant or other assistance provided under this section for the purchase, construction, or rehabilitation of a building or structure.”;

(7) in subsection (g) (as redesignated by paragraph (5))—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by striking “FISCAL YEARS 2008 THROUGH 2012” and inserting “MANDATORY FUNDING”;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”;

(B) by striking paragraphs (3) and (5);

(C) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (6); and

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

“(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(4) USE OF FUNDS.—Of the funds made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year—

“(A) 50 percent of the funds shall be used for the purposes described in subsection (b)(1); and

“(B) 50 percent of the funds shall be used for the purposes described in subsection (b)(2).

“(5) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 4 percent of the total amount made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year may be used for administrative expenses.”.

SEC. 10004. ORGANIC AGRICULTURE.

(a) ORGANIC PRODUCTION AND MARKET DATA INITIATIVES.—Section 7407 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 5925c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “and annually thereafter” after “this subsection”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

(C) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(D) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) describes how data collection agencies (such as the Agricultural Marketing Service and the National Agricultural Statistics Service) are coordinating with data user agencies (such as the Risk Management Agency) to ensure that data collected under this section can be used by data user agencies, including by the Risk Management Agency to offer price elections for all organic crops; and”; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking paragraph (3);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) MANDATORY FUNDING.—In addition to any funds made available under paragraph (1), of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$5,000,000, to remain available until expended.”; and

(D) in paragraph (3) (as redesignated by subparagraph (B))—

(i) in the paragraph heading, by striking “FOR FISCAL YEARS 2008 THROUGH 2012”;

(ii) by striking “paragraph (1)” and inserting “paragraphs (1) and (2)”;

(iii) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

(b) MODERNIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE FOR NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM.—Section 2123 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6522) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following:

“(6) \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018; and”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) MODERNIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE FOR NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall modernize database and technology systems of the national organic program.

“(2) FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation and in addition to any other funds made available for that purpose, the Secretary shall make available to carry out this subsection \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended.”.

(c) NATIONAL ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST-SHARE PROGRAM.—Section 10606(d) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 6523(d)) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) MANDATORY FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEARS 2014 THROUGH 2018.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall make available to carry out this section \$11,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended.”.

(d) EXEMPTION OF CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTS FROM PROMOTION ORDER ASSESSMENTS.—Section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7401) is amended by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e) EXEMPTION OF CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTS FROM PROMOTION ORDER ASSESSMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of a commodity promotion law, a person that produces, handles, markets, or

imports organic products may be exempt from the payment of an assessment under a commodity promotion law with respect to any agricultural commodity that is certified as ‘organic’ or ‘100 percent organic’ (as defined in part 205 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)).

“(2) SPLIT OPERATIONS.—The exemption described in paragraph (1) shall apply to the certified ‘organic’ or ‘100 percent organic’ (as defined in part 205 of title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)) products of a producer, handler, or marketer regardless of whether the agricultural commodity subject to the exemption is produced, handled, or marketed by a person that also produces, handles, or markets conventional or nonorganic agricultural products, including conventional or nonorganic agricultural products of the same agricultural commodity as that for which the exemption is claimed.

“(3) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall approve the exemption of a person under this subsection if the person maintains a valid organic certificate issued under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).

“(4) TERMINATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—This subsection shall be effective until the date on which the Secretary issues an organic commodity promotion order in accordance with subsection (f).

“(5) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations concerning eligibility and compliance for an exemption under paragraph (1).”.

(e) ORGANIC COMMODITY PROMOTION ORDER.—Section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7401) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) ORGANIC COMMODITY PROMOTION ORDER.—

“(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) CERTIFIED ORGANIC FARM.—The term ‘certified organic farm’ has the meaning given the term in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502).

“(B) COVERED PERSON.—The term ‘covered person’ means a producer, handler, marketer, or importer of an organic agricultural commodity.

“(C) DUAL-COVERED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—The term ‘dual-covered agricultural commodity’ means an agricultural commodity that—

“(i) is produced on a certified organic farm; and

“(ii) is covered under both—

“(I) an organic commodity promotion order issued pursuant to paragraph (2); and

“(II) any other agricultural commodity promotion order issued under section 514.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may issue an organic commodity promotion order under section 514 that includes any agricultural commodity that—

“(A) is produced or handled (as defined in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502)) and that is certified to be sold or labeled as ‘organic’ or ‘100 percent organic’ (as defined in part 205 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)); or

“(B) is imported with a valid organic certificate (as defined in that part).

“(3) ELECTION.—If the Secretary issues an organic commodity promotion order described in paragraph (2), a covered person may elect, for applicable dual-covered agricultural commodities and in the sole discretion of the covered person, whether to be assessed under the organic commodity pro-

motion order or another applicable agricultural commodity promotion order.

“(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations concerning eligibility and compliance for an exemption under paragraph (1).”.

(f) DEFINITION OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—Section 513(1) of the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7412(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (E) and (F) as subparagraphs (F) and (G), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following:

“(E) products, as a class, that are—

“(i) produced on a certified organic farm (as defined in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502)); and

“(ii) certified to be sold or labeled as ‘organic’ or ‘100 percent organic’ (as defined in part 205 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation));”.

SEC. 10005. INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE ORGANIC FOODS PRODUCTION ACT OF 1990.

(a) RECORDKEEPING BY CERTIFIED OPERATIONS.—Section 2112 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6511) is amended by striking subsection (d).

(b) RECORDKEEPING BY CERTIFYING AGENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2116 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6515) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (c);

(B) by redesignating subsections (d) through (j) as subsections (c) through (i), respectively; and

(C) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “subsection (d)” and inserting “subsection (c)”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 2107(a)(8) of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6506(a)(8)) is amended by striking “section 2116(h)” and inserting “section 2116(g)”.

(c) RECORDKEEPING, INVESTIGATIONS, AND ENFORCEMENT.—Section 2120 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6519) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 2120. RECORDKEEPING, INVESTIGATIONS, AND ENFORCEMENT.

“(a) RECORDKEEPING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this title, each person who sells, labels, or represents any agricultural product as having been produced or handled using organic methods shall make available to the Secretary or the applicable governing State official, on request by the Secretary or official, all records associated with the agricultural product.

“(2) CERTIFIED OPERATIONS.—Each producer that operates a certified organic farm or certified organic handling operation under this title shall maintain, for a period of not less than 5 years, all records concerning the production or handling of any agricultural product sold or labeled as organically produced under this title, including—

“(A) a detailed history of substances applied to fields or agricultural products;

“(B) the name and address of each person who applied such a substance; and

“(C) the date, rate, and method of application of each such substance.

“(3) CERTIFYING AGENTS.—

“(A) MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS.—A certifying agent shall maintain all records concerning the activities of the certifying agent under this title for a period of not less than 10 years.

“(B) ACCESS FOR SECRETARY.—A certifying agent shall provide to the Secretary and the applicable governing State official (or a representative) access to all records concerning the activities of the certifying agent under this title.

“(C) TRANSFERENCE OF RECORDS.—If a private person that was certified under this title is dissolved or loses accreditation, all records and copies of records concerning the activities of the person under this title shall be—

“(i) transferred to the Secretary; and

“(ii) made available to the applicable governing State official.

“(4) UNLAWFUL ACT.—It shall be unlawful and a violation of this title for any person covered by this title to fail or refuse to provide accurate information (including a delay in the timely delivery of such information) required by the Secretary under this title.

“(5) CONFIDENTIALITY.—Except as provided in section 2107(a)(9), or as otherwise directed by the Secretary or the Attorney General for enforcement purposes, no officer, employee, or agent of the United States shall make available to the public any information, statistical, or document obtained from, or made available by, any person under this title, other than in a manner that ensures that confidentiality is preserved regarding—

“(A) the identity of all relevant persons (including parties to a contract); and

“(B) proprietary business information.

“(b) INVESTIGATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may take such investigative actions as the Secretary considers to be necessary—

“(A) to verify the accuracy of any information reported or made available under this title; and

“(B) to determine whether a person covered by this title has committed a violation of any provision of this title, including an order or regulation promulgated by the Secretary pursuant to this title.

“(2) SPECIFIC INVESTIGATIVE POWERS.—In carrying out this title, the Secretary may—

“(A) administer oaths and affirmations;

“(B) subpoena witnesses;

“(C) compel attendance of witnesses;

“(D) take evidence; and

“(E) require the production of any records required to be maintained under this title that are relevant to an investigation.

“(c) VIOLATIONS OF TITLE.—

“(1) MISUSE OF LABEL.—Any person who knowingly sells or labels a product as organic, except in accordance with this title, shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000.

“(2) FALSE STATEMENT.—Any person who makes a false statement under this title to the Secretary, a governing State official, or a certifying agent shall be punished in accordance with section 1001 of title 18, United States Code.

“(3) INELIGIBILITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), any person that carries out an activity described in subparagraph (B), after notice and an opportunity to be heard, shall not be eligible, for the 5-year period beginning on the date of the occurrence, to receive a certification under this title with respect to any farm or handling operation in which the person has an interest.

“(B) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES.—An activity referred to in subparagraph (A) is—

“(i) making a false statement;

“(ii) attempting to have a label indicating that an agricultural product is organically produced affixed to an agricultural product that a person knows, or should have reason

to know, to have been produced or handled in a manner that is not in accordance with this title; or

“(iii) otherwise violating the purposes of the applicable organic certification program, as determined by the Secretary.

“(C) WAIVER.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary may modify or waive a period of ineligibility under this paragraph if the Secretary determines that the modification or waiver is in the best interests of the applicable organic certification program established under this title.

“(4) REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS.—A certifying agent shall immediately report any violation of this title to the Secretary or the applicable governing State official.

“(5) VIOLATIONS BY CERTIFYING AGENT.—A certifying agent that is a private person that violates the provisions of this title or falsely or negligently certifies any farming or handling operation that does not meet the terms and conditions of the applicable organic certification program as an organic operation, as determined by the Secretary or the applicable governing State official shall, after notice and an opportunity to be heard—

“(A) lose accreditation as a certifying agent under this title; and

“(B) be ineligible to be accredited as a certifying agent under this title for a period of not less than 3 years, beginning on the date of the determination.

“(6) EFFECT ON OTHER LAW.—Nothing in this title alters—

“(A) the authority of the Secretary concerning meat, poultry and egg products under—

“(i) the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

“(ii) the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 451 et seq.); or

“(iii) the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031 et seq.);

“(B) the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

“(C) the authority of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.).”

SEC. 10006. FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION INITIATIVES.

Section 10105(c) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7655a(c)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 10007. CONSOLIDATION OF PLANT PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER PREVENTION PROGRAMS.

(a) RELOCATION OF LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE RELATING TO NATIONAL CLEAN PLANT NETWORK.—Section 420 of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7721) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

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

“(e) NATIONAL CLEAN PLANT NETWORK.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program to be known as the ‘National Clean Plant Network’ (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Program’).

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Under the Program, the Secretary shall establish a network of clean plant centers for diagnostic and pathogen elimination services—

“(A) to produce clean propagative plant material; and

“(B) to maintain blocks of pathogen-tested plant material in sites located throughout the United States.

“(3) AVAILABILITY OF CLEAN PLANT SOURCE MATERIAL.—Clean plant source material may be made available to—

“(A) a State for a certified plant program of the State; and

“(B) private nurseries and producers.

“(4) CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall—

“(A) consult with—

“(i) State departments of agriculture; and

“(ii) land-grant colleges and universities and NLGCA Institutions (as those terms are defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)); and

“(B) to the extent practicable and with input from the appropriate State officials and industry representatives, use existing Federal or State facilities to serve as clean plant centers.

“(5) FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out the Program \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2013.”

(b) FUNDING.—Subsection (f) of section 420 of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7721) (as so redesignated) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “and each fiscal year thereafter.” and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) \$62,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017; and

“(6) \$75,000,000 for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter.”

(c) REPEAL OF EXISTING PROVISION.—Section 10202 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 7761) is repealed.

(d) USE OF FUNDS FOR CLEAN PLANT NETWORK.—Section 420 of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7721) (as amended by subsection (a)), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) USE OF FUNDS FOR CLEAN PLANT NETWORK.—Of the funds made available under subsection (f) to carry out this section for a fiscal year, not less than \$5,000,000 shall be available to carry out the National Clean Plant Network under subsection (e).

“(h) LIMITATION ON INDIRECT COSTS FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF PLANT PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER PREVENTION PROGRAMS.—Indirect costs charged against a cooperative agreement under this section shall not exceed the lesser of—

“(1) 15 percent of the total Federal funds provided under the cooperative agreement, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(2) the indirect cost rate applicable to the recipient as otherwise established by law.”

SEC. 10008. IMPORTATION OF SEED.

Section 17(c) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136o(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) IMPORTATION OF SEED.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to notify the Administrator of the arrival of a plant-incorporated protectant (as defined in section 174.3 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation)) that is contained in a seed, if—

“(A) that plant-incorporated protectant is registered under section 3;

“(B) the Administrator has issued an experimental use permit for that plant-incorporated protectant under section 5; or

“(C) the seed is covered by a permit (as defined in part 340 of title 7, Code of Federal

Regulations (or any successor regulation)) or a notification.

“(3) COOPERATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In response to a request from the Administrator, the Secretary of Agriculture shall provide to the Administrator a list of seed containing plant-incorporated protectants (as defined in section 174.3 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation)) if the importation of that seed into the United States has been approved under a permit or notification referred to in paragraph (2).

“(B) CONTENTS.—The list under subparagraph (A) shall be provided in a form and at such intervals as may be agreed to by the Secretary and the Administrator.

“(4) APPLICABILITY.—Nothing in this subsection precludes or limits the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture with respect to the importation or movement of plants, plant products, or seeds under—

“(A) the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.); and

“(B) the Federal Seed Act (7 U.S.C. 1551 et seq.).”

SEC. 10009. BULK SHIPMENTS OF APPLES TO CANADA.

(a) BULK SHIPMENT OF APPLES TO CANADA.—Section 4 of the Export Apple Act (7 U.S.C. 584) is amended—

(1) by striking “SEC. 4. Apples in” and inserting the following:

“SEC. 4. EXEMPTIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Apples in”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) BULK CONTAINERS.—Apples may be shipped to Canada in bulk containers without complying with the provisions of this Act.”

(b) DEFINITION OF BULK CONTAINER.—Section 9 of the Export Apple Act (7 U.S.C. 589) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) The term ‘bulk container’ means a container that contains a quantity of apples weighing more than 100 pounds.”

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall issue regulations to carry out the amendments made by this section.

SEC. 10010. SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANTS.

Section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law 108-465) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “subsection (j)” and inserting “subsection (1)”; and

(B) by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) GRANTS BASED ON VALUE AND ACREAGE.—Subject to subsection (c), for each State whose application for a grant for a fiscal year that is accepted by the Secretary under subsection (f), the amount of the grant for that fiscal year to the State under this section shall bear the same ratio to the total amount made available under subsection (1)(1) for that fiscal year as—

“(1) the average of the most recent available value of specialty crop production in the State and the acreage of specialty crop production in the State, as demonstrated in the most recent Census of Agriculture data; bears to

“(2) the average of the most recent available value of specialty crop production in all States and the acreage of specialty crop production in all States, as demonstrated in the most recent Census of Agriculture data.”;

(3) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (1);

(4) by inserting after subsection (i) the following:

“(j) MULTISTATE PROJECTS.—Not later than 180 days after the effective date of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary of Agriculture shall issue guidance for the purpose of making grants to multistate projects under this section for projects involving—

“(1) food safety;

“(2) plant pests and disease;

“(3) research;

“(4) crop-specific projects addressing common issues; and

“(5) any other area that furthers the purposes of this section, as determined by the Secretary.

“(k) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) DEPARTMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture may not use more than 3 percent of the funds made available to carry out this section for a fiscal year for administrative expenses.

“(2) STATES.—A State receiving a grant under this section may not use more than 8 percent of the funds received under the grant for a fiscal year for administrative expenses.”; and

(5) in subsection (1) (as redesignated by paragraph (3))—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) by striking “Of the funds” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds”;

(C) in paragraph (1) (as so designated)—

(i) in subparagraph (B) (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (C) (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) \$72,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017; and

“(E) \$85,000,000 for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter.”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) MULTISTATE PROJECTS.—Of the funds made available under paragraph (1), the Secretary may use to carry out subsection (j), to remain available until expended—

“(A) \$1,000,000 for fiscal year 2014;

“(B) \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2015;

“(C) \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 2016;

“(D) \$4,000,000 for fiscal year 2017; and

“(E) \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2018.”

SEC. 10011. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE CONSULTATION REGARDING ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN LABOR LAW PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of Labor regarding the restraining of shipments of agricultural commodities, or the confiscation of agricultural commodities, by the Department of Labor for actual or suspected labor law violations in order to consider—

(1) the perishable nature of the commodities;

(2) the impact of the restraining or confiscation on the economic viability of farming operations; and

(3) the competitiveness of specialty crops through grants awarded to States under section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law 108-465).

(b) REPORT.—The Secretary of Labor shall submit to the Committees on Agriculture and Education and Workforce of the House of Representative and the Committees on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report that describes the number of instances during the period of fiscal years 2008

through 2013 that the Department of Labor has contacted a purchaser of perishable agricultural commodities to notify that purchaser of an investigation or pending enforcement action against a producer from whom the purchaser has purchased perishable agricultural commodities.

SEC. 10012. REPORT ON HONEY.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with persons affected by the potential establishment of a Federal standard for the identity of honey, shall submit to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs a report describing how an appropriate Federal standard for the identity of honey would be in the interest of consumers, the honey industry, and United States agriculture.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In preparing the report required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall take into consideration the March 2006, Standard of Identity citizens petition filed with the Food and Drug Administration, including any current industry amendments or clarifications necessary to update that petition.

SEC. 10013. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days and 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and Secretaries of Commerce, Agriculture and the Interior shall submit to the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Environment and Public Works of the Senate, 2 reports that describe approaches and actions taken by the Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service—

(1) to implement recommendations, including an analysis of how any identified delays to implementation will be overcome, of the 2013 Expert Report authored by the National Research Council of the National Academies entitled “Assessing Risks to Endangered and Threatened Species from Pesticides”;

(2) to otherwise minimize delays in integrating—

(A) the pesticide registration and registration review requirements of sections 3 and 33 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136a, 136w-8); and

(B) the species and habitat protection processes described in sections 7 and 10 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536, 1539); and

(3) to ensure public participation and transparency during the development, implementation, and evaluation of the approaches to implement the recommendations contained in the report described in paragraph (1).

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR FINAL REPORT.—In addition to the requirements of subsection (a), the final report submitted to Congress under that subsection shall—

(1) inform Congress of specific actions that have been and will be taken to address the recommendations identified in subsection (a)(1), including an evaluation to establish that—

(A) the approaches utilize the best available science;

(B) reasonable and prudent alternatives within biological opinions are technologically and economically feasible;

(C) reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate; and

(D) the agencies ensure public participation and transparency in the development of reasonable and prudent alternatives and reasonable and prudent measures; and

(2) update the study and report required by subsections (b) and (c) of section 1010 of Public Law 100-478 (7 U.S.C. 136a note).

SEC. 10014. STAY OF REGULATIONS.

Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall lift the administrative stay imposed under the rule of the Secretary entitled “Christmas Tree Promotion, Research, and Information Order; Stay of Regulations” and published by the Department of Agriculture on November 17, 2011 (76 Fed. Reg. 71241), on the regulations in subpart A of part 1214 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, establishing an industry-funded promotion, research, and information program for fresh-cut Christmas trees.

SEC. 10015. REGULATION OF SULFURYL FLUORIDE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall exclude nonpesticidal sources of fluoride from any aggregate exposure assessment required under section 408 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 346a) when assessing tolerances associated with residues from the pesticide.

SEC. 10016. LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND PROGRAM EVALUATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

(1) collect data on—

(A) the production and marketing of locally or regionally produced agricultural food products; and

(B) direct and indirect regulatory compliance costs affecting the production and marketing of locally or regionally produced agricultural food products;

(2) facilitate interagency collaboration and data sharing on programs relating to local and regional food systems;

(3) monitor—

(A) the effectiveness of programs designed to expand or facilitate local food systems; and

(B) barriers to local and regional market access due to Federal regulation of small-scale production; and

(4) evaluate the manner in which local food systems—

(A) contribute to improving community food security; and

(B) assist populations with limited access to healthy food.

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

(1) collect and distribute comprehensive reporting of prices and volume of locally or regionally produced agricultural food products;

(2) conduct surveys and analysis and publish reports relating to the production, handling, distribution, retail sales, and trend studies (including consumer purchasing patterns) of or on locally or regionally produced agricultural food products;

(3) evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs in growing local and regional food systems, including—

(A) the impact of local food systems on job creation and economic development;

(B) the level of participation in the Farmers’ Market and Local Food Promotion Program established under section 6 of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976 (7 U.S.C. 3005), including the percentage of projects funded in comparison to applicants and the types of eligible entities receiving funds;

(C) the ability of participants to leverage private capital and a synopsis of the places from which non-Federal funds are derived; and

(D) any additional resources required to aid in the development or expansion of local and regional food systems;

(4) evaluate the impact that Federal regulation of small commercial producers of agricultural food products intended for local and regional consumption may have on—

(A) local job creation and economic development;

(B) access to local and regional fruit and vegetable markets, including for new and beginning small commercial producers; and

(C) participation in—

(i) supplier networks;

(ii) high volume distribution systems; and

(iii) retail sales outlets;

(5) expand the Agricultural Resource Management Survey of the Department to include questions on locally or regionally produced agricultural food products; and

(6) seek to establish or expand private-public partnerships to facilitate, to the maximum extent practicable, the collection of data on locally or regionally produced agricultural food products, including the development of a nationally coordinated and regionally balanced evaluation of the redevelopment of locally or regionally produced food systems.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report describing the progress that has been made in implementing this section and identifying any additional needs and barriers related to developing local and regional food systems.

SEC. 10017. CLARIFICATION OF USE OF FUNDS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

In the case of each program established or amended by this title that is authorized or required to be carried out using funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the use of those funds to provide technical assistance shall not be considered an allotment or fund transfer from the Commodity Credit Corporation for purposes of the limit on expenditures for technical assistance imposed by section 11 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714i).

TITLE XI—CROP INSURANCE

SEC. 11001. INFORMATION SHARING.

Section 502(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1502(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) INFORMATION.—

“(A) REQUEST.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Farm Service Agency shall, in a timely manner, provide to an agent or an approved insurance provider authorized by the producer any information (including Farm Service Agency Form 578s (or any successor form)) or maps (or any corrections to those forms or maps) that may assist the agent or approved insurance provider in insuring the producer under a policy or plan of insurance under this subtitle.

“(B) PRIVACY.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), an agent or approved insurance provider that receives the information of a producer pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall treat the information in accordance with paragraph (1).

“(C) SHARING.—Nothing in this section prohibits the sharing of the information of a producer pursuant to subparagraph (A) between the agent and the approved insurance provider of the producer.”.

SEC. 11002. PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON VIOLATIONS OF PROHIBITION ON PREMIUM ADJUSTMENTS.

Section 508(a)(9) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(a)(9)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) PUBLICATION OF VIOLATIONS.—

“(i) PUBLICATION REQUIRED.—Subject to clause (ii), the Corporation shall publish in a timely manner on the website of the Risk Management Agency information regarding each violation of this paragraph, including any sanctions imposed in response to the violation, in sufficient detail so that the information may serve as effective guidance to approved insurance providers, agents, and producers.

“(ii) PROTECTION OF PRIVACY.—In providing information under clause (i) regarding violations of this paragraph, the Corporation shall redact the identity of the persons and entities committing the violations in order to protect the privacy of those persons and entities.”.

SEC. 11003. SUPPLEMENTAL COVERAGE OPTION.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLEMENTAL COVERAGE OPTION.—Section 508(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) YIELD AND LOSS BASIS OPTIONS.—A producer shall have the option of purchasing additional coverage based on—

“(A)(i) an individual yield and loss basis; or

“(ii) an area yield and loss basis; or

“(B) an individual yield and loss basis, supplemented with coverage based on an area yield and loss basis to cover a part of the deductible under the individual yield and loss policy, as described in paragraph (4)(C).”.

(b) LEVEL OF COVERAGE.—Section 508(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(c)) is amended by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) LEVEL OF COVERAGE.—

“(A) DOLLAR DENOMINATION AND PERCENTAGE OF YIELD.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), the level of coverage—

“(i) shall be dollar denominated; and

“(ii) may be purchased at any level not to exceed 85 percent of the individual yield or 95 percent of the area yield (as determined by the Corporation).

“(B) INFORMATION.—The Corporation shall provide producers with information on catastrophic risk and additional coverage in terms of dollar coverage (within the allowable limits of coverage provided in this paragraph).

“(C) SUPPLEMENTAL COVERAGE OPTION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), in the case of the supplemental coverage option described in paragraph (3)(B), the Corporation shall offer producers the opportunity to purchase coverage in combination with a policy or plan of insurance offered under this subtitle that would allow indemnities to be paid to a producer equal to a part of the deductible under the policy or plan of insurance—

“(I) at a county-wide level to the fullest extent practicable; or

“(II) in counties that lack sufficient data, on the basis of such larger geographical area as the Corporation determines to provide sufficient data for purposes of providing the coverage.

“(ii) TRIGGER.—Coverage offered under paragraph (3)(B) and clause (i) shall be triggered only if the losses in the area exceed 14 percent of normal levels (as determined by the Corporation).

“(iii) COVERAGE.—Subject to the trigger described in clause (ii), coverage offered

under paragraph (3)(B) and clause (i) shall not exceed the difference between—

“(I) 86 percent; and

“(II) the coverage level selected by the producer for the underlying policy or plan of insurance.

“(iv) INELIGIBLE CROPS AND ACRES.—Crops for which the producer has elected under section 1116 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 to receive agriculture risk coverage and acres that are enrolled in the stacked income protection plan under section 508B shall not be eligible for supplemental coverage under this subparagraph.

“(v) CALCULATION OF PREMIUM.—Notwithstanding subsection (d), the premium for coverage offered under paragraph (3)(B) and clause (i) shall—

“(I) be sufficient to cover anticipated losses and a reasonable reserve; and

“(II) include an amount for operating and administrative expenses established in accordance with subsection (k)(4)(F).”

(c) PAYMENT OF PORTION OF PREMIUM BY CORPORATION.—Section 508(e)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(e)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(H) In the case of the supplemental coverage option authorized in subsection (c)(4)(C), the amount shall be equal to the sum of—

“(i) 65 percent of the additional premium associated with the coverage; and

“(ii) the amount determined under subsection (c)(4)(C)(v)(II), subject to subsection (k)(4)(F), for the coverage to cover operating and administrative expenses.”

(d) APPLICATION DATE.—The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation shall begin to provide additional coverage based on an individual yield and loss basis, supplemented with coverage based on an area yield and loss basis, as described in the amendments made by this section, not later than for the 2015 crop year.

SEC. 11004. CROP MARGIN COVERAGE OPTION.

Section 508(c)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(c)(3)) (as amended by section 11003) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking “or” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) a margin basis alone or in combination with the coverages available under subparagraph (A) or (B).”

SEC. 11005. PREMIUM AMOUNTS FOR CATASTROPHIC RISK PROTECTION.

Section 508(d)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(d)(2)) is amended by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

“(A) In the case of catastrophic risk protection, the amount of the premium established by the Corporation for each crop for which catastrophic risk protection is available shall be reduced by the percentage equal to the difference between the average loss ratio for the crop and 100 percent, plus a reasonable reserve, as determined by the Corporation.”

SEC. 11006. PERMANENT ENTERPRISE UNIT SUBSIDY.

Section 508(e)(5) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(e)(5)) is amended by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation may pay a portion of the premiums for plans or policies of insurance for which the insurable unit is defined on a whole farm or enterprise unit basis that is higher than would otherwise be paid in accordance with paragraph (2).”

SEC. 11007. ENTERPRISE UNITS FOR IRRIGATED AND NONIRRIGATED CROPS.

Section 508(e)(5) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(e)(5)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D) NONIRRIGATED CROPS.—Beginning with the 2015 crop year, the Corporation shall make available separate enterprise units for irrigated and nonirrigated acreage of crops in counties.”

SEC. 11008. DATA COLLECTION.

Section 508(g)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(g)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(E) SOURCES OF YIELD DATA.—To determine yields under this paragraph, the Corporation—

“(i) shall use county data collected by the Risk Management Agency, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, or both; or

“(ii) if sufficient county data is not available, may use other data considered appropriate by the Secretary.”

SEC. 11009. ADJUSTMENT IN ACTUAL PRODUCTION HISTORY TO ESTABLISH INSURABLE YIELDS.

Section 508(g) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(g)) (as amended by section 11008) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting “and paragraph (4)(C)” after “(B)”; and

(2) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D);

(B) in subparagraph (D) (as so redesignated), by inserting “or (C)” after “(B)”; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

“(C) ELECTION TO EXCLUDE CERTAIN HISTORY.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (2), with respect to 1 or more of the crop years used to establish the actual production history of an agricultural commodity of the producer, the producer may elect to exclude any recorded or appraised yield for any crop year in which the per planted acre yield of the agricultural commodity in the county of the producer was at least 50 percent below the simple average of the per planted acre yield of the agricultural commodity in the county during the previous 10 consecutive crop years.

“(ii) CONTIGUOUS COUNTIES.—In any crop year that a producer in a county is eligible to make an election to exclude a yield under clause (i), a producer in a contiguous county is eligible to make such an election.

“(iii) IRRIGATION PRACTICE.—For purposes of determining whether the per planted acre yield of the agricultural commodity in the county of the producer was at least 50 percent below the simple average of the per planted acre yield of the agricultural commodity in the county during the previous 10 consecutive crop years, the Corporation shall make a separate determination for irrigated and nonirrigated acreage.”

SEC. 11010. SUBMISSION OF POLICIES AND BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 508(h) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(h)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately;

(B) by striking “(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition” and inserting the following:

“(1) AUTHORITY TO SUBMIT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) REVIEW AND SUBMISSION BY CORPORATION.—The Corporation shall review any pol-

icy developed under section 522(c) or any pilot program developed under section 523 and submit the policy or program to the Board under this subsection if the Corporation, at the sole discretion of the Corporation, finds that the policy or program—

“(i) will likely result in a viable and marketable policy consistent with this subsection;

“(ii) would provide crop insurance coverage in a significantly improved form; and

“(iii) adequately protects the interests of producers.”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE BOARD.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A policy, plan of insurance, or other material submitted to the Board under this subsection shall be reviewed by the Board and shall be approved by the Board for reinsurance and for sale by approved insurance providers to producers at actuarially appropriate rates and under appropriate terms and conditions if the Board determines that—

“(i) the interests of producers are adequately protected;

“(ii) the proposed policy or plan of insurance will—

“(I) provide a new kind of coverage that is likely to be viable and marketable;

“(II) provide crop insurance coverage in a manner that addresses a clear and identifiable flaw or problem in an existing policy; or

“(III) provide a new kind of coverage for a commodity that previously had no available crop insurance, or has demonstrated a low level of participation or coverage level under existing coverage; and

“(iii) the proposed policy or plan of insurance will not have a significant adverse impact on the crop insurance delivery system.

(B) CONSIDERATION.—In approving policies or plans of insurance, the Board shall in a timely manner—

“(i) first, consider policies or plans of insurance that address underserved commodities, including commodities for which there is no insurance;

“(ii) second, consider existing policies or plans of insurance for which there is inadequate coverage or there exists low levels of participation; and

“(iii) last, consider all policies or plans of insurance submitted to the Board that do not meet the criteria described in clause (i) or (ii).

(C) SPECIFIED REVIEW AND APPROVAL PRIORITIES.—In reviewing policies and other materials submitted to the Board under this subsection for approval, the Board—

“(i) shall make the development and approval of a revenue policy for peanut producers a priority so that a revenue policy is available to peanut producers in time for the 2015 crop year;

“(ii) shall make the development and approval of a margin coverage policy for rice producers a priority so that a margin coverage policy is available to rice producers in time for the 2015 crop year; and

“(iii) may approve a submission that is made pursuant to this subsection that would, beginning with the 2015 crop year, allow producers that purchase policies in accordance with subsection (e)(5)(A) to separate enterprise units by risk rating for acreage of crops in counties.”

(b) APPROVAL OF COSTS FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Section 522(b)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(b)(2)) is amended by striking subparagraph (E) and inserting the following:

“(E) APPROVAL.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Board may approve up to 50 percent of the projected total research and development costs to be paid in advance to an applicant, in accordance with the procedures developed by the Board for the making of the payments, if, after consideration of the reviewer reports described in subparagraph (D) and such other information as the Board determines appropriate, the Board determines that—

“(I) the concept, in good faith, will likely result in a viable and marketable policy consistent with section 508(h);

“(II) at the sole discretion of the Board, the concept, if developed into a policy and approved by the Board, would provide crop insurance coverage—

“(aa) in a significantly improved form;

“(bb) to a crop or region not traditionally served by the Federal crop insurance program; or

“(cc) in a form that addresses a recognized flaw or problem in the program;

“(III) the applicant agrees to provide such reports as the Corporation determines are necessary to monitor the development effort;

“(IV) the proposed budget and timetable are reasonable, as determined by the Board; and

“(V) the concept proposal meets any other requirements that the Board determines appropriate.

“(ii) WAIVER.—The Board may waive the 50-percent limitation and, upon request of the submitter after the submitter has begun research and development activities, the Board may approve an additional 25 percent advance payment to the submitter for research and development costs, if, at the sole discretion of the Board, the Board determines that—

“(I) the intended policy or plan of insurance developed by the submitter will provide coverage for a region or crop that is underserved by the Federal crop insurance program, including specialty crops; and

“(II) the submitter is making satisfactory progress towards developing a viable and marketable policy or plan of insurance consistent with section 508(h).”

SEC. 11011. CONSULTATION.

Section 508(h)(4) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(h)(4)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(E) CONSULTATION.—

“(i) REQUIREMENT.—As part of the feasibility and research associated with the development of a policy or other material for fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops (including floriculture), the submitter prior to making a submission under this subsection shall consult with groups representing producers of those agricultural commodities in all major producing areas for the commodities to be served or potentially impacted, either directly or indirectly.

“(ii) SUBMISSION TO THE BOARD.—Any submission made to the Board under this subsection shall contain a summary and analysis of the feasibility and research findings from the impacted groups described in clause (i), including a summary assessment of the support for or against development of the policy and an assessment on the impact of the proposed policy to the general marketing and production of the crop from both a regional and national perspective.

“(iii) EVALUATION BY THE BOARD.—In evaluating whether the interests of producers are adequately protected pursuant to paragraph (3) with respect to a submission made under this subsection, the Board shall review the information provided pursuant to clause (ii)

to determine if the submission will create adverse market distortions with respect to the production of commodities that are the subject of the submission.”

SEC. 11012. BUDGET LIMITATIONS ON RENEGOTIATION OF THE STANDARD REINSURANCE AGREEMENT.

Section 508(k)(8) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(k)(8)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(F) BUDGET.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall ensure that any Standard Reinsurance Agreement negotiated under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall—

“(I) to the maximum extent practicable, be estimated as budget neutral with respect to the total amount of payments described in paragraph (9) as compared to the total amount of such payments estimated to be made under the immediately preceding Standard Reinsurance Agreement if that Agreement were extended over the same period of time;

“(II) comply with the applicable provisions of this Act establishing the rates of reimbursement for administrative and operating costs for approved insurance providers and agents, except that, to the maximum extent practicable, the estimated total amount of reimbursement for those costs shall not be less than the total amount of the payments to be made under the immediately preceding Standard Reinsurance Agreement if that Agreement were extended over the same period of time, as estimated on the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014; and

“(III) in no event significantly depart from budget neutrality unless otherwise required by this Act.

“(ii) USE OF SAVINGS.—To the extent that any budget savings are realized in the renegotiation of a Standard Reinsurance Agreement under subparagraph (A)(ii), and the savings are determined not to be a significant departure from budget neutrality under clause (i), the savings shall be used to increase reimbursements or payments described under paragraphs (4) and (9).”

SEC. 11013. TEST WEIGHT FOR CORN.

Section 508(m) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(m)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(6) TEST WEIGHT FOR CORN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall establish procedures to allow insured producers not more than 120 days to settle claims, in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary, involving corn that is determined to have low test weight.

“(B) IMPLEMENTATION.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Corporation shall implement subparagraph (A) on a regional basis based on market conditions and the interests of producers.

“(C) TERMINATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—The authority provided by this paragraph terminates effective on the date that is 5 years after the date on which subparagraph (A) is implemented.”

SEC. 11014. CROP PRODUCTION ON NATIVE SOD.

(a) FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE.—Section 508(o) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(o)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “, or the producer cannot substantiate that the ground has ever been tilled,” after “tilled”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking “INELIGIBILITY FOR” and inserting “REDUCTION IN”;

(B) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—During the first 4 crop years of planting, as determined by the Sec-

retary, native sod acreage that has been tilled for the production of an annual crop after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 shall be subject to a reduction in benefits under this subtitle as described in this paragraph.”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(C) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(i) REDUCTION.—For purposes of the reduction in benefits for the acreage described in subparagraph (A)—

“(I) the crop insurance guarantee shall be determined by using a yield equal to 65 percent of the transitional yield of the producer; and

“(II) the crop insurance premium subsidy provided for the producer under this subtitle, except for coverage authorized pursuant to subsection (b)(1), shall be 50 percentage points less than the premium subsidy that would otherwise apply.

“(ii) YIELD SUBSTITUTION.—During the period native sod acreage is covered by this subsection, a producer may not substitute yields for the native sod.”;

(3) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) APPLICATION.—This subsection shall only apply to native sod acreage in the States of Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Nebraska.”.

(b) NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—Section 196(a)(4) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333(a)(4)) is amended—

(1) in the paragraph heading, by striking “INELIGIBILITY” and inserting “REDUCTION IN BENEFITS”;

(2) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by inserting “, or the producer cannot substantiate that the ground has ever been tilled,” after “tilled”;

(3) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in the subparagraph heading, by striking “INELIGIBILITY FOR” and inserting “REDUCTION IN”;

(B) by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—During the first 4 crop years of planting, as determined by the Secretary, native sod acreage that has been tilled for the production of an annual crop after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014 shall be subject to a reduction in benefits under this section as described in this subparagraph.”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) REDUCTION.—For purposes of the reduction in benefits for the acreage described in clause (i)—

“(I) the approved yield shall be determined by using a yield equal to 65 percent of the transitional yield of the producer; and

“(II) the service fees or premiums for crops planted on native sod shall be equal to 200 percent of the amount determined in subsections (l)(2) or (k), as applicable, but in no case shall exceed the amount determined in subsection (f)(2)(B)(ii).”;

(4) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) APPLICATION.—This paragraph shall only apply to native sod acreage in the States of Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Nebraska.”.

(c) CROPLAND REPORT.—

(1) BASELINE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the cropland acreage in each applicable county and State, and the change in cropland acreage from the preceding year

in each applicable county and State, beginning with calendar year 2000 and including that information for the most recent year for which that information is available.

(2) ANNUAL UPDATES.—Not later than January 1, 2015, and each January 1 thereafter through January 1, 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes—

(A) the cropland acreage in each applicable county and State as of the date of submission of the report; and

(B) the change in cropland acreage from the preceding year in each applicable county and State.

SEC. 11015. COVERAGE LEVELS BY PRACTICE.

Section 508 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(p) COVERAGE LEVELS BY PRACTICE.—Beginning with the 2015 crop year, a producer that produces an agricultural commodity on both dry land and irrigated land may elect a different coverage level for each production practice.”

SEC. 11016. BEGINNING FARMER AND RANCHER PROVISIONS.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 502(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1502(b)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (9) as paragraphs (4) through (10), respectively; and

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

“(3) BEGINNING FARMER OR RANCHER.—The term ‘beginning farmer or rancher’ means a farmer or rancher who has not actively operated and managed a farm or ranch with a bona fide insurable interest in a crop or livestock as an owner-operator, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper for more than 5 crop years, as determined by the Secretary.”

(b) PREMIUM ADJUSTMENTS.—Section 508 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(5)(E), by inserting “and beginning farmers or ranchers” after “limited resource farmers”;

(2) in subsection (e), by adding at the end the following:

“(8) PREMIUM FOR BEGINNING FARMERS OR RANCHERS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection regarding payment of a portion of premiums, a beginning farmer or rancher shall receive premium assistance that is 10 percentage points greater than premium assistance that would otherwise be available under paragraphs (2) (except for subparagraph (A) of that paragraph), (5), (6), and (7) for the applicable policy, plan of insurance, and coverage level selected by the beginning farmer or rancher.”; and

(3) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (2)(B)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking “or” at the end;

(ii) in clause (ii)(III), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) if the producer is a beginning farmer or rancher who was previously involved in a farming or ranching operation, including involvement in the decisionmaking or physical involvement in the production of the crop or livestock on the farm, for any acreage obtained by the beginning farmer or rancher, a yield that is the higher of—

“(I) the actual production history of the previous producer of the crop or livestock on the acreage determined under subparagraph (A); or

“(II) a yield of the producer, as determined in clause (i).”;

(B) in paragraph (4)(B)(ii)—

(i) by inserting “(I)” after “(ii)”;

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(II) in the case of beginning farmers or ranchers, replace each excluded yield with a yield equal to 80 percent of the applicable transitional yield.”

SEC. 11017. STACKED INCOME PROTECTION PLAN FOR PRODUCERS OF UPLAND COTTON.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF STACKED INCOME PROTECTION PLAN FOR PRODUCERS OF UPLAND COTTON.—The Federal Crop Insurance Act is amended by inserting after section 508A (7 U.S.C. 1508a) the following:

“SEC. 508B. STACKED INCOME PROTECTION PLAN FOR PRODUCERS OF UPLAND COTTON.

“(a) AVAILABILITY.—Beginning not later than the 2015 crop of upland cotton, the Corporation shall make available to producers of upland cotton an additional policy (to be known as the ‘Stacked Income Protection Plan’), which shall provide coverage consistent with the Group Risk Income Protection Plan (and the associated Harvest Revenue Option Endorsement) offered by the Corporation for the 2011 crop year.

“(b) REQUIRED TERMS.—The Corporation may modify the Stacked Income Protection Plan on a program-wide basis, except that the Stacked Income Protection Plan shall comply with the following requirements:

“(1) Provide coverage for revenue loss of not less than 10 percent and not more than 30 percent of expected county revenue, specified in increments of 5 percent. The deductible shall be the minimum percent of revenue loss at which indemnities are triggered under the plan, not to be less than 10 percent of the expected county revenue.

“(2) Be offered to producers of upland cotton in all counties with upland cotton production—

“(A) at a county-wide level to the fullest extent practicable; or

“(B) in counties that lack sufficient data, on the basis of such larger geographical area as the Corporation determines to provide sufficient data for purposes of providing the coverage.

“(3) Be purchased in addition to any other individual or area coverage in effect on the producer’s acreage or as a stand-alone policy, except that if a producer has an individual or area coverage for the same acreage, the maximum coverage available under the Stacked Income Protection Plan shall not exceed the deductible for the individual or area coverage.

“(4) Establish coverage based on—

“(A) the expected price established under existing Group Risk Income Protection or area wide policy offered by the Corporation for the applicable county (or area) and crop year; and

“(B) an expected county yield that is the higher of—

“(i) the expected county yield established for the existing area-wide plans offered by the Corporation for the applicable county (or area) and crop year (or, in geographic areas where area-wide plans are not offered, an expected yield determined in a manner consistent with those of area-wide plans); or

“(ii) the average of the applicable yield data for the county (or area) for the most recent 5 years, excluding the highest and lowest observations, from the Risk Management Agency or the National Agricultural Statis-

tics Service (or both) or, if sufficient county data is not available, such other data considered appropriate by the Secretary.

“(5) Use a multiplier factor to establish maximum protection per acre (referred to as a ‘protection factor’) of not less than the higher of the level established on a program wide basis or 120 percent.

“(6) Pay an indemnity based on the amount that the expected county revenue exceeds the actual county revenue, as applied to the individual coverage of the producer. Indemnities under the Stacked Income Protection Plan shall not include or overlap the amount of the deductible selected under paragraph (1).

“(7) In all counties for which data are available, establish separate coverage levels for irrigated and nonirrigated practices.

“(c) PREMIUM.—Notwithstanding section 508(d), the premium for the Stacked Income Protection Plan shall—

“(1) be sufficient to cover anticipated losses and a reasonable reserve; and

“(2) include an amount for operating and administrative expenses established in accordance with section 508(k)(4)(F).

“(d) PAYMENT OF PORTION OF PREMIUM BY CORPORATION.—Subject to section 508(e)(4), the amount of premium paid by the Corporation for all qualifying coverage levels of the Stacked Income Protection Plan shall be—

“(1) 80 percent of the amount of the premium established under subsection (c) for the coverage level selected; and

“(2) the amount determined under subsection (c)(2), subject to section 508(k)(4)(F), for the coverage to cover administrative and operating expenses.

“(e) RELATION TO OTHER COVERAGES.—The Stacked Income Protection Plan is in addition to all other coverages available to producers of upland cotton.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 508(k)(4)(F) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(k)(4)(F)) is amended by inserting “or authorized under subsection (c)(4)(C) or section 508B” after “of this subparagraph”.

SEC. 11018. PEANUT REVENUE CROP INSURANCE.

The Federal Crop Insurance Act is amended by inserting after section 508B (as added by section 11017), the following:

“SEC. 508C. PEANUT REVENUE CROP INSURANCE.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective beginning with the 2015 crop year, the Risk Management Agency and the Corporation shall make available to producers of peanuts a revenue crop insurance program for peanuts.

“(b) EFFECTIVE PRICE.—Subject to subsection (c), for purposes of the revenue crop insurance program and the multiperil crop insurance program under this Act, the effective price for peanuts shall be equal to the Rotterdam price index for peanuts or other appropriate price as determined by the Secretary, as adjusted to reflect the farmer stock price of peanuts in the United States.

“(c) ADJUSTMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The effective price for peanuts established under subsection (b) may be adjusted by the Risk Management Agency and the Corporation to correct distortions.

“(2) ADMINISTRATION.—If an adjustment is made under paragraph (1), the Risk Management Agency and the Corporation shall—

“(A) make the adjustment in an open and transparent manner; and

“(B) submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the reasons for the adjustment.”

SEC. 11019. AUTHORITY TO CORRECT ERRORS.

Section 515(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1515(c)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”;

(2) in the second sentence, by striking “Beginning with” and inserting the following:

“(2) FREQUENCY.—Beginning with”;

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) CORRECTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the corrections permitted by the Corporation as of the day before the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Corporation shall establish procedures that allow an agent or an approved insurance provider, subject to subparagraph (B)—

“(i) within a reasonable amount of time following the applicable sales closing date, to correct errors in information that is provided by a producer for the purpose of obtaining coverage under any policy or plan of insurance made available under this subtitle to ensure that the eligibility information is correct and consistent with information reported by the producer for other programs administered by the Secretary;

“(ii) within a reasonable amount of time following—

“(I) the acreage reporting date, to reconcile errors in the information reported by the producer with correct information determined from any other program administered by the Secretary; or

“(II) the date of any subsequent correction of data by the Farm Service Agency made as a result of the verification of information, to make conforming corrections; and

“(iii) at any time, to correct electronic transmission errors that were made by an agent or approved insurance provider, or such errors made by the Farm Service Agency or any other agency of the Department of Agriculture in transmitting the information provided by the producer for purposes of other programs of the Department to the extent an agent or approved insurance provider relied upon the erroneous information for crop insurance purposes.

“(B) LIMITATION.—In accordance with the procedures of the Corporation, correction to the information described in clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) may only be made if the corrections do not allow the producer—

“(i) to avoid ineligibility requirements for insurance or obtain a disproportionate benefit under the crop insurance program or any related program administered by the Secretary;

“(ii) to obtain, enhance, or increase an insurance guarantee or indemnity if a cause of loss exists or has occurred before any correction has been made, or avoid premium owed if no loss is likely to occur; or

“(iii) to avoid an obligation or requirement under any Federal or State law.

“(C) EXCEPTION TO LATE FILING SANCTIONS.—Any corrections made within a reasonable amount of time, in accordance with established procedures, pursuant to this paragraph shall not be subject to any late filing sanctions authorized in the reinsurance agreement with the Corporation.

“(D) LATE PAYMENT OF DEBT.—In the case of a producer that has inadvertently failed to pay a debt due as specified by regulations of the Corporation and has been determined to be ineligible for crop insurance pursuant to the terms of the policy as a result of that failure, the Corporation may determine to allow the producer to pay the debt and purchase the crop insurance after the sales closing date, in accordance with procedures and limitations established by the Corporation.”.

SEC. 11020. IMPLEMENTATION.

Section 515 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1515) is amended—

(1) in subsection (j), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) SYSTEMS MAINTENANCE AND UPGRADES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain and upgrade the information management systems of the Corporation used in the administration and enforcement of this subtitle.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In maintaining and upgrading the systems, the Secretary shall ensure that new hardware and software are compatible with the hardware and software used by other agencies of the Department to maximize data sharing and promote the purposes of this section.

“(ii) ACREAGE REPORT STREAMLINING INITIATIVE PROJECT.—As soon as practicable, the Secretary shall develop and implement an acreage report streamlining initiative project to allow producers to report acreage and other information directly to the Department.”; and

(2) in subsection (k), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (j)(1), the Corporation may use, from amounts made available from the insurance fund established under section 516(c), not more than—

“(i) (I) for fiscal year 2014, \$14,000,000; and

“(II) for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2018, \$9,000,000; or

“(ii) if the Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI) project is substantially completed by September 30, 2015, not more than \$14,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2015 through 2018.

“(B) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall notify the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate of the substantial completion of the Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI) project not later than July 1, 2015.”.

SEC. 11021. CROP INSURANCE FRAUD.

Section 516(b)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1516(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) REVIEWS, COMPLIANCE, AND INTEGRITY.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For each of the 2014 and subsequent reinsurance years, the Corporation may use the insurance fund established under subsection (c), but not to exceed \$9,000,000 for each fiscal year, to pay costs—

“(I) to reimburse expenses incurred for the operations and review of policies, plans of insurance, and related materials (including actuarial and related information); and

“(II) to assist the Corporation in maintaining program actuarial soundness and financial integrity.

“(ii) SECRETARIAL ACTION.—For the purposes described in clause (i), the Secretary may, without further appropriation—

“(I) merge some or all of the funds made available under this subparagraph into the accounts of the Risk Management Agency; and

“(II) obligate those funds.

“(iii) MAINTENANCE OF FUNDING.—Funds made available under this subparagraph shall be in addition to other funds made available for costs incurred by the Corporation or the Risk Management Agency.”.

SEC. 11022. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.

(a) AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, PRIORITIES.—Section 522(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(c)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “CONTRACTING”;

(2) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “may enter into contracts to carry out research and development to” and inserting “may conduct activities or enter into contracts to carry out research and development to maintain or improve existing policies or develop new policies to”;

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “conduct research and development or” after “The Corporation may”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “conducting research and development or” after “Before”;

(4) in paragraph (5), by inserting “after expert review in accordance with section 505(e)” after “approved by the Board”;

(5) in paragraph (6), by striking “a pasture, range, and forage program” and inserting “policies that increase participation by producers of underserved agricultural commodities, including sweet sorghum, biomass sorghum, rice, peanuts, sugarcane, alfalfa, pennycress, dedicated energy crops, and specialty crops”;

(6) by redesignating paragraph (17) as paragraph (25); and

(7) by inserting after paragraph (16), the following:

“(17) MARGIN COVERAGE FOR CATFISH.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall offer to enter into a contract with a qualified entity to conduct research and development regarding a policy to insure producers against reduction in the margin between the market value of catfish and selected costs incurred in the production of catfish.

“(B) ELIGIBILITY.—Eligibility for the policy described in subparagraph (A) shall be limited to freshwater species of catfish that are propagated and reared in controlled or selected environments.

“(C) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Board shall review the policy described in subparagraph (B) under section 508(h) and approve the policy if the Board finds that the policy—

“(i) will likely result in a viable and marketable policy consistent with this subsection;

“(ii) would provide crop insurance coverage in a significantly improved form;

“(iii) adequately protects the interests of producers; and

“(iv) meets other requirements of this subtitle determined appropriate by the Board.

“(18) BIOMASS AND SWEET SORGHUM ENERGY CROP INSURANCE POLICIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall offer to enter into 1 or more contracts with qualified entities to carry out research and development regarding—

“(i) a policy to insure biomass sorghum that is grown expressly for the purpose of producing a feedstock for renewable biofuel, renewable electricity, or biobased products; and

“(ii) a policy to insure sweet sorghum that is grown for a purpose described in clause (i).

“(B) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Research and development with respect to each of the policies required in subparagraph (A) shall evaluate the effectiveness of risk management tools for the production of biomass sorghum or sweet sorghum, including policies and plans of insurance that—

“(i) are based on market prices and yields;

“(ii) to the extent that insufficient data exist to develop a policy based on market prices and yields, evaluate the policies and plans of insurance based on the use of weather indices, including excessive or inadequate rainfall, to protect the interest of crop producers; and

“(iii) provide protection for production or revenue losses, or both.

“(19) STUDY ON SWINE CATASTROPHIC DISEASE PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall contract with 1 or more qualified entities to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of insuring swine producers for a catastrophic event.

“(B) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Corporation shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).

“(20) WHOLE FARM DIVERSIFIED RISK MANAGEMENT INSURANCE PLAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Unless the Corporation approves a whole farm insurance plan, similar to the plan described in this paragraph, to be available to producers for the 2016 reinsurance year, the Corporation shall conduct activities or enter into contracts to carry out research and development to develop a whole farm risk management insurance plan, with a liability limitation of \$1,500,000, that allows a diversified crop or livestock producer the option to qualify for an indemnity if actual gross farm revenue is below 85 percent of the average gross farm revenue or the expected gross farm revenue that can reasonably be expected of the producer, as determined by the Corporation.

“(B) ELIGIBLE PRODUCERS.—The Corporation shall permit producers (including direct-to-consumer marketers and producers servicing local and regional and farm identity-preserved markets) who produce multiple agricultural commodities, including specialty crops, industrial crops, livestock, and aquaculture products, to participate in the plan developed under subparagraph (A) in lieu of any other plan under this subtitle.

“(C) DIVERSIFICATION.—The Corporation may provide diversification-based additional coverage payment rates, premium discounts, or other enhanced benefits in recognition of the risk management benefits of crop and livestock diversification strategies for producers that—

“(i) grow multiple crops; or

“(ii) may have income from the production of livestock that uses a crop grown on the farm.

“(D) MARKET READINESS.—The Corporation may include coverage for the value of any packing, packaging, or any other similar on-farm activity the Corporation determines to be the minimum required in order to remove the commodity from the field.

“(21) STUDY ON POULTRY CATASTROPHIC DISEASE PROGRAM.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall contract with a qualified person to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of insuring poultry producers for a catastrophic event.

“(B) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Corporation shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).

“(22) POULTRY BUSINESS INTERRUPTION INSURANCE POLICY.—

“(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph, the terms ‘poultry’ and ‘poultry grower’ have the meanings given those terms in section 2(a) of the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921 (7 U.S.C. 182(a)).

“(B) AUTHORITY.—The Corporation shall offer to enter into a contract or cooperative agreement with an institution of higher education or other legal entity to carry out research and development regarding a policy to insure the commercial production of poultry against business interruptions caused by integrator bankruptcy.

“(C) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—As part of the research and development conducted pursuant to a contract or cooperative agreement entered into under subparagraph (B), the entity shall—

“(i) evaluate the market place for business interruption insurance that is available to poultry growers;

“(ii) determine what statutory authority would be necessary to implement a business interruption insurance through the Corporation;

“(iii) assess the feasibility of a policy or plan of insurance offered under this subtitle to insure against a portion of losses due to business interruption or to the bankruptcy of an business integrator; and

“(iv) analyze the costs to the Federal Government of a Federal business interruption insurance program for poultry growers or producers.

“(D) DEADLINE FOR CONTRACT OR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Corporation shall offer to enter into the contract or cooperative agreement required by subparagraph (B).

“(E) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Corporation shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the research and development conducted pursuant to the contract or cooperative agreement entered into under subparagraph (B).]

“(23) STUDY OF FOOD SAFETY INSURANCE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall offer to enter into a contract with 1 or more qualified entities to conduct a study to determine whether offering policies that provide coverage for specialty crops from food safety and contamination issues would benefit agricultural producers.

“(B) SUBJECT.—The study described in subparagraph (A) shall evaluate policies and plans of insurance coverage that provide protection for production or revenue impacted by food safety concerns including, at a minimum, government, retail, or national consumer group announcements of a health advisory, removal, or recall related to a contamination concern.

“(C) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Corporation shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).”.

“(24) ALFALFA CROP INSURANCE POLICY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall offer to enter into 1 or more contracts with qualified entities to carry out research and development regarding a policy to insure alfalfa.

“(B) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the

Corporation shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that describes the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A).”.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 522(e) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(e)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) in the subparagraph heading, by striking “AUTHORITY.—” and inserting “CONDUCTING AND CONTRACTING FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—”; and

(ii) by inserting “conduct research and development and” after “the Corporation may use to”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by inserting “conduct research and development and” after “for the fiscal year to”;

(2) in paragraph (3), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “to provide either reimbursement payments or contract payments”; and

(3) by striking paragraph (4).

SEC. 11023. CROP INSURANCE FOR ORGANIC CROPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 508(c)(6) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(c)(6)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D) ORGANIC CROPS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—As soon as possible, but not later than the 2015 reinsurance year, the Corporation shall offer producers of organic crops price elections for all organic crops produced in compliance with standards issued by the Department of Agriculture under the national organic program established under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) that reflect the actual retail or wholesale prices, as appropriate, received by producers for organic crops, as determined by the Secretary using all relevant sources of information.

“(ii) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Corporation shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate an annual report on progress made in developing and improving Federal crop insurance for organic crops, including—

“(I) the numbers and varieties of organic crops insured;

“(II) the progress of implementing the price elections required under this subparagraph, including the rate at which additional price elections are adopted for organic crops;

“(III) the development of new insurance approaches relevant to organic producers; and

“(IV) any recommendations the Corporation considers appropriate to improve Federal crop insurance coverage for organic crops.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 522(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(c)) (as amended by section 11022) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (10); and

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (11) through (25) as paragraphs (10) through (24), respectively.

SEC. 11024. PROGRAM COMPLIANCE PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 522(d) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(d)) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subsection is to authorize the Corporation to enter into partnerships with public and private entities for the purpose of either—

“(A) increasing the availability of loss mitigation, financial, and other risk management tools for producers, with a priority given to risk management tools for producers of agricultural commodities covered by section 196 of the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7333), specialty crops, and underserved agricultural commodities; or

“(B) improving analysis tools and technology regarding compliance or identifying and using innovative compliance strategies.”.

(b) OBJECTIVES.—Section 522(d)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(d)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (F), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (G) as subparagraph (H); and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following:

“(G) to improve analysis tools and technology regarding compliance or identifying and using innovative compliance strategies; and”.

SEC. 11025. PILOT PROGRAMS.

Section 523(a) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1523(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “, at the sole discretion of the Corporation,” after “may”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (5).

SEC. 11026. INDEX-BASED WEATHER INSURANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 523 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1523) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(i) UNDERSERVED CROPS AND REGIONS PILOT PROGRAMS.—

“(1) DEFINITION OF LIVESTOCK COMMODITY.—In this subsection, the term ‘livestock commodity’ includes cattle, sheep, swine, goats, and poultry, including pasture, rangeland, and forage as a source of feed for that livestock.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a)(2), the Corporation may conduct 2 or more pilot programs to provide producers of underserved specialty crops and livestock commodities with index-based weather insurance, subject to the requirements of this section.

“(3) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF SUBMISSIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall approve 2 or more proposed policies or plans of insurance from approved insurance providers if the Board determines that the policies or plans provide coverage as specified in paragraph (2), and meet the conditions described in this paragraph

“(B) REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible for approval under this subsection, the approved insurance provider shall have—

“(i) adequate experience underwriting and administering policies or plans of insurance that are comparable to the proposed policy or plan of insurance;

“(ii) sufficient assets or reinsurance to satisfy the underwriting obligations of the approved insurance provider, and possess a sufficient insurance credit rating from an appropriate credit rating bureau, in accordance with Board procedures; and

“(iii) applicable authority and approval from each State in which the approved insurance provider intends to sell the insurance product.

“(C) REVIEW REQUIREMENTS.—In reviewing applications under this subsection, the Board shall conduct the review in a manner consistent with the standards, rules, and procedures for policies or plans of insurance sub-

mitted under section 508(h) and the actuarial soundness requirements applied to other policies and plans of insurance made available under this subtitle.

“(D) PRIORITIZATION.—The Board shall prioritize applications that provide a new kind of coverage for specialty crops and livestock commodities that previously had no available crop insurance, or has demonstrated a low level of participation under existing coverage.

“(4) PAYMENT OF PREMIUM SUPPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Corporation shall pay a portion of the premium for producers that purchase a policy or plan of insurance approved pursuant to this subsection.

“(B) AMOUNT.—The premium subsidy shall provide a similar dollar amount of premium subsidy per acre that the Corporation pays for comparable policies or plans of insurance reinsured under this subtitle, except that in no case shall the premium subsidy exceed 60 percent of total premium, as determined by the Corporation.

“(C) CALCULATION.—The premium subsidy, as determined by the Corporation, shall be calculated as—

“(i) a percentage of premium;

“(ii) a percentage of expected loss determined pursuant to a reasonable actuarial methodology; or

“(iii) a fixed dollar amount per acre.

“(D) PAYMENT.—Subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), the premium subsidy under this subsection shall be paid by the Corporation in the same manner and under the same terms and conditions as premium subsidy for other policies and plans of insurance.

“(E) OPERATING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE PAYMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), operating and administrative expense payments may be made for policies and plans of insurance approved under this subsection in an amount that is commensurate with similar policies and plans of insurance reinsured under this subtitle, on the condition that the operating and administrative expenses are not included in premiums.

“(ii) LIMITATION.—Subject to subparagraph (F)(i), Federal reinsurance, research and development costs, other reimbursements, or maintenance fees shall not be provided or collected for policies and plans of insurance approved under this subsection.

“(F) APPROVED INSURANCE PROVIDERS.—Any policy or plan of insurance approved under this subsection may be sold only by the approved insurance provider that submits the application and by any additional approved insurance provider that—

“(i) agrees to pay maintenance fees or other payments to the approved insurance provider that submitted the application in an amount agreed to by the applicant and the additional approved insurance provider, on the condition that the fees or payments shall be reasonable and appropriate to ensure that the policies or plans of insurance may be made available by additional approved insurance providers; and

“(ii) meets the eligibility criteria of paragraph (3)(B), as determined by the Board.

“(G) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROVISIONS.—The requirements of this paragraph shall apply notwithstanding paragraph (6).

“(5) OVERSIGHT.—The Corporation shall develop and publish procedures to administer policies or plans of insurance approved under this subsection that—

“(A) require each approved insurance provider to report sales, acreage and claim data, and any other data that the Corporation determines to be appropriate, to allow the Cor-

poration to evaluate sales and performance of the product; and

“(B) contain such other requirements as the Corporation determines necessary to ensure that the products—

“(i) do not have a significant adverse impact on the crop insurance delivery system;

“(ii) are in the best interests of producers; and

“(iii) do not result in a reduction of program integrity.

“(6) CONFIDENTIALITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—All reports required under paragraph (5) and all other proprietary information and data generated or derived from applicants under this subsection shall be considered to be confidential commercial or financial information for the purposes of section 552(b)(4) of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) STANDARD.—If information concerning a proposal could be withheld by the Secretary under the standard for privileged or confidential information pertaining to trade secrets and commercial or financial information under section 552(b)(4) of title 5, United States Code, the information shall not be released to the public.

“(7) INELIGIBLE PURPOSES.—In no case shall a policy or plan of insurance made available under this subsection provide coverage substantially similar to privately available hail insurance.

“(8) FUNDING.—

“(A) LIMITATION ON EXPENDITURES.—Notwithstanding any other provision in this subsection, of the funds of the Corporation, the Corporation shall use to carry out this section not more than \$12,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2018, to remain available until expended.

“(B) RELATION TO OTHER PROGRAMS.—The amount of funds made available under this section shall be in addition to amounts made available under other provisions of this subtitle, including amounts made available under subsection (b).”.

SEC. 11027. ENHANCING PRODUCER SELF-HELP THROUGH FARM FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING.

(a) DEFINITION.—Section 502(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1502(b)) (as amended by section 11016(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (10) as paragraphs (8) through (11), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (6) the following:

“(7) FARM FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING.—The term ‘farm financial benchmarking’ means—

“(A) the process of comparing the performance of an agricultural enterprise against the performance of other similar enterprises, through the use of comparable and reliable data, in order to identify business management strengths, weaknesses, and steps necessary to improve management performance and business profitability; and

“(B) benchmarking of the type conducted by farm management and producer associations consistent with the activities described in or funded pursuant to section 1672D of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5925f).”.

(b) PARTNERSHIPS FOR RISK MANAGEMENT FOR PRODUCERS OF SPECIALTY CROPS AND UNDERSERVED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES.—Section 522(d)(3)(F) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(d)(3)(F)) is amended by inserting “farm financial benchmarking,” after “management.”.

(c) CROP INSURANCE EDUCATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE.—Section 524(a) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1524(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A), by inserting “farm financial benchmarking,” after “risk reduction.”; and

(2) in paragraph (4), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “(including farm financial benchmarking)” after “management strategies”.

SEC. 11028. TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) Section 508 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraph (7); and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (8) through (11) as paragraphs (7) through (10), respectively;

(2) in subsection (e)(2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “paragraph (3)” and inserting “paragraphs (3), (6), and (7)”;

(3) in subsection (k)(8)(C), by striking “subparagraph (A)(iii)” and inserting “subparagraph (A)(ii)”.

(b) Section 522 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(4)(A), by striking “paragraphs (1)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”;

(2) in subsection (e)(1), by adding a period at the end.

(c) Section 531(d)(3)(A) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1531(d)(3)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(A) ELIGIBLE LOSSES.—” and all that follows through “An eligible” in clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(A) ELIGIBLE LOSSES.—An eligible”;

(2) by striking clause (ii); and

(3) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately.

(d) Section 901(d)(3)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2497(d)(3)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(A) ELIGIBLE LOSSES.—” and all that follows through “An eligible” in clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(A) ELIGIBLE LOSSES.—An eligible”;

(2) by striking clause (ii); and

(3) by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting appropriately.

TITLE XII—MISCELLANEOUS

Subtitle A—Livestock

SEC. 12101. TRICHINAE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.

(a) ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall amend the rule made under paragraph (2) of section 11010(a) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8304(a)) to implement the voluntary trichinae certification program established under paragraph (1) of such section, to include a requirement to establish an alternative trichinae certification process based on surveillance or other methods consistent with international standards for categorizing compartments as having negligible risk for trichinae.

(b) FINAL REGULATIONS.—Not later than one year after the date on which the international standards referred to in subsection (a) are adopted, the Secretary shall finalize the rule amended under such subsection.

(c) REAUTHORIZATION.—Section 10405(d)(1) of the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8304(d)(1)) is amended in subparagraphs (A) and (B) by striking “2012” each place it appears and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 12102. SHEEP PRODUCTION AND MARKETING GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 209. SHEEP PRODUCTION AND MARKETING GRANT PROGRAM.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service, shall establish a competitive grant program for the purposes of strengthening and enhancing the production and marketing of sheep and sheep products in the United States, including through—

“(1) the improvement of—

“(A) infrastructure;

“(B) business; and

“(C) resource development; and

“(2) the development of innovative approaches to solve long-term needs.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary shall make grants under this section to at least one national entity, the mission of which is consistent with the purpose of the grant program.

“(c) FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to carry out this section \$1,500,000 for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 375 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2008j) (as in existence on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act) is—

(1) amended in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “3 percent” and inserting “10 percent”;

(B) by striking paragraph (6);

(2) redesignated as section 210 of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946; and

(3) moved so as to appear at the end of subtitle A of that Act (as amended by subsection (a)).

SEC. 12103. NATIONAL AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH PLAN.

Section 11013(d) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8322(d)) is amended by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 12104. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING.

(a) ECONOMIC ANALYSIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist, shall conduct an economic analysis of the final rule entitled “Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling of Beef, Pork, Lamb, Chicken, Goat Meat, Wild and Farm-raised Fish and Shellfish, Perishable Agricultural Commodities, Peanuts, Pecans, Ginseng and Macadamia Nuts” published by the Department of Agriculture on May 24, 2013 (78 Fed. Reg. 31367) that makes certain amendments to parts 60 and 65 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) CONTENTS.—The economic analysis described in subsection (a) shall include, with respect to the labeling of beef, pork, and chicken, an analysis of the impact on consumers, producers, and packers in the United States of—

(A) the implementation of subtitle D of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1638 et seq.); and

(B) the final rule referred to in subsection (a).

(b) APPLYING COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING REQUIREMENTS TO VENISON.—

(1) DEFINITION OF COVERED COMMODITY.—Section 281(2)(A) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1638(2)(A)) is amended—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “and pork” and inserting “pork, and venison”;

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “and ground pork” and inserting “ground pork, and ground venison”.

(2) NOTICE OF COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.—Section 282(a)(2) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1638a(a)(2)) is amended—

(A) in the heading, by striking “AND GOAT” and inserting “GOAT, AND VENISON”;

(B) by striking “or goat” and inserting “goat, or venison” each place it appears in subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), and (D); and

(C) in subparagraph (E)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “AND GOAT” and inserting “GOAT, AND VENISON”;

(ii) by striking “or ground goat” each place it appears and inserting “ground goat, or ground venison”.

SEC. 12105. NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK.

The Animal Health Protection Act is amended by inserting after section 10409 (7 U.S.C. 8308) the following new section:

“SEC. 10409A. NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK.

“(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE LABORATORY.—In this section, the term ‘eligible laboratory’ means a diagnostic laboratory that meets specific criteria developed by the Secretary, in consultation with State animal health officials, State veterinary diagnostic laboratories, and veterinary diagnostic laboratories at institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

“(b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with State veterinarians, shall offer to enter into contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, or other legal instruments with eligible laboratories for any of the following purposes:

“(1) To enhance the capability of the Secretary to respond in a timely manner to emerging or existing bioterrorist threats to animal health.

“(2) To provide the capacity and capability for standardized—

“(A) test procedures, reference materials, and equipment;

“(B) laboratory biosafety and biosecurity levels;

“(C) quality management system requirements;

“(D) interconnected electronic reporting and transmission of data; and

“(E) evaluation for emergency preparedness.

“(3) To coordinate the development, implementation, and enhancement of national veterinary diagnostic laboratory capabilities, with special emphasis on surveillance planning and vulnerability analysis, technology development and validation, training, and outreach.

“(c) PRIORITY.—To the extent practicable and to the extent capacity and specialized expertise may be necessary, the Secretary shall give priority to existing Federal facilities, State facilities, and facilities at institutions of higher education.

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 12106. FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION.

(a) INSPECTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1(w) of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601(w)) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) all fish of the order Siluriformes; and”.

(2) CONDITIONS.—Section 6 of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 606) is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) CERTAIN FISH.—In the case of an examination and inspection under subsection (a)

of a meat food product derived from any fish described in section 1(w)(2), the Secretary shall take into account the conditions under which the fish is raised and transported to a processing establishment.”

(3) **INAPPLICABILITY.**—Section 25 of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 625) is amended by striking “not apply” and all that follows and inserting “not apply to any fish described in section 1(w)(2).”

(4) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 203(n) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1622(n)) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) all fish of the order Siluriformes; and”

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall—

(A) not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, issue final regulations to carry out the amendments made by section 11016(b)(1) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 2130), as further clarified by the amendments made by this section; and

(B) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, implement the amendments described in subparagraph (A).

(2) **NOTIFICATION.**—Beginning 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act and every 30 days thereafter until the date of full implementation of the amendments described in paragraph (1)(A), the Secretary shall submit a report describing the status of implementation to—

(A) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

(B) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry of the Senate;

(C) the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(3) **PROCEDURE.**—Section 1601(c)(2) applies to the promulgation of the regulations and administration of this section and the amendments made by this section.

(4) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 11016(b) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 2130) is amended by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

“(A) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary, in consultation with the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, shall issue final regulations to carry out the amendments made by paragraph (1) and section 12106 of that Act in a manner that ensures that there is no duplication in inspection activities.

“(B) **INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Secretary shall execute a memorandum of understanding with the Commissioner of Food and Drugs for the following purposes:

“(i) To improve interagency cooperation on food safety and fraud prevention, building upon any other prior agreements, including provisions, performance metrics, and timelines as appropriate.

“(ii) To maximize the effectiveness of limited personnel and resources by ensuring that—

“(I) inspections conducted by the Department satisfy requirements under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.);

“(II) inspections of shipments and processing facilities for fish of the order Siluriformes by the Department and the Food and Drug Administration are not duplicative; and

“(III) any information resulting from examination, testing, and inspections conducted is considered in making risk-based determinations, including the establishment of inspection priorities.”

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect as if enacted as part of section 11016(b) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 2130).

SEC. 12107. NATIONAL POULTRY IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall ensure that the Department of Agriculture continues to administer the diagnostic surveillance program for H5/H7 low pathogenic avian influenza with respect to commercial poultry under section 146.14 of title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), without amending the regulations in section 147.43 of title 9, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act), with respect to the governance of the General Conference Committee established under such section. The Secretary of Agriculture shall maintain—

(1) the operations of the General Conference Committee—

(A) in the physical location at which the Committee was located on the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) with the organizational structure within the Department of Agriculture in effect as of such date; and

(2) the funding levels for the National Poultry Improvement Plan for Commercial Poultry (established under part 146 of title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, or a successor regulation) at the fiscal year 2013 funding levels for the Plan.

SEC. 12108. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING FERAL SWINE ERADICATION.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the Secretary of Agriculture should recognize the threat feral swine pose to the domestic swine population and the entire agriculture industry; and

(2) feral swine eradication is a high priority that the Secretary should carry out under the authorities of the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 et seq.).

Subtitle B—Socially Disadvantaged Producers and Limited Resource Producers

SEC. 12201. OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS AND VETERAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS.

(a) **OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS AND VETERAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS.**—Section 2501 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “**AND VETERAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS**” after “**RANCHERS**”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “and veteran farmers or ranchers” after “ranchers”;

(B) in paragraph (2)(B)(i), by inserting “and veteran farmers or ranchers” after “ranchers”; and

(C) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in the subparagraph heading, by striking “2012” and inserting “2018”;

(II) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(III) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iii) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”;

(3) in subsection (b)(2), by inserting “or veteran farmers and ranchers” after “socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers”;

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “veteran farmers or ranchers and” before “members”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(A), by inserting “veteran farmers or ranchers and” before “members”; and

(5) in subsection (e)(5)(A)—

(A) in clause (i), by inserting “and veteran farmers or ranchers” after “ranchers”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by inserting “and veteran farmers or ranchers” after “ranchers”.

(b) **DEFINITION OF VETERAN FARMER OR RANCHER.**—Section 2501(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) **VETERAN FARMER OR RANCHER.**—The term ‘veteran farmer or rancher’ means a farmer or rancher who has served in the Armed Forces (as defined in section 101(10) of title 38 United States Code) and who—

“(A) has not operated a farm or ranch; or

“(B) has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years.”.

SEC. 12202. OFFICE OF ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH.

Paragraph (3) of section 226B(f) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6934(f)) is amended to read as follows:

“(3) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection—

“(A) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013; and

“(B) \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 12203. SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS POLICY RESEARCH CENTER.

Section 2501 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279), as amended by section 12201, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) **SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS POLICY RESEARCH CENTER.**—The Secretary shall award a grant to a college or university eligible to receive funds under the Act of August 30, 1890 (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.), including Tuskegee University, to establish a policy research center to be known as the ‘Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center’ for the purpose of developing policy recommendations for the protection and promotion of the interests of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.”.

SEC. 12204. RECEIPT FOR SERVICE OR DENIAL OF SERVICE FROM CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGENCIES.

Section 2501A(e) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279-1(e)) is amended by striking “and, at the time of the request, also requests a receipt”.

Subtitle C—Other Miscellaneous Provisions

SEC. 12301. GRANTS TO IMPROVE SUPPLY, STABILITY, SAFETY, AND TRAINING OF AGRICULTURAL LABOR FORCE.

Subsection (d) of section 14204 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2008q-1) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

“(1) such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2013; and

“(2) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 12302. PROGRAM BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY STATUS FOR PARTICIPANTS IN HIGH PLAINS WATER STUDY.

Section 2901 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246; 122 Stat. 1818) is amended by striking “this Act or an amendment made by this Act” and inserting “this Act, an amendment made by this Act, the Agricultural Act of 2014, or an amendment made by the Agricultural Act of 2014”.

SEC. 12303. OFFICE OF TRIBAL RELATIONS.

Title III of the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 is amended by adding after section 308 (7 U.S.C. 3125a note; Public Law 103-354) the following new section:

“SEC. 309. OFFICE OF TRIBAL RELATIONS.

“The Secretary shall maintain in the Office of the Secretary an Office of Tribal Relations, which shall advise the Secretary on policies related to Indian tribes and carry out such other functions as the Secretary considers appropriate.”.

SEC. 12304. MILITARY VETERANS AGRICULTURAL LIAISON.

Subtitle A of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 is amended by inserting after section 218 (7 U.S.C. 6918) the following new section:

“SEC. 219. MILITARY VETERANS AGRICULTURAL LIAISON.

“(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary shall establish in the Department the position of Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison.

“(b) DUTIES.—The Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison shall—

“(1) provide information to returning veterans about, and connect returning veterans with, beginning farmer training and agricultural vocational and rehabilitation programs appropriate to the needs and interests of returning veterans, including assisting veterans in using Federal veterans educational benefits for purposes relating to beginning a farming or ranching career;

“(2) provide information to veterans concerning the availability of, and eligibility requirements for, participation in agricultural programs, with particular emphasis on beginning farmer and rancher programs;

“(3) serve as a resource for assisting veteran farmers and ranchers, and potential farmers and ranchers, in applying for participation in agricultural programs; and

“(4) advocate on behalf of veterans in interactions with employees of the Department.

“(c) CONTRACTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—For purposes of carrying out the duties under subsection (b), the Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison may enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with the research centers of the Agricultural Research Service, institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), or nonprofit organizations for—

“(1) the conduct of regional research on the profitability of small farms;

“(2) the development of educational materials;

“(3) the conduct of workshops, courses, and certified vocational training;

“(4) the conduct of mentoring activities; or

“(5) the provision of internship opportunities.”.

SEC. 12305. NONINSURED CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7333) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—

“(A) COVERAGES.—In the case of an eligible crop described in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Agriculture shall operate a non-insured crop disaster assistance program to provide coverages based on individual yields (other than for value-loss crops) equivalent to—

“(i) catastrophic risk protection available under section 508(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)); or

“(ii) except in the case of crops and grasses used for grazing, additional coverage available under subsections (c) and (h) of section 508 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) that does not exceed 65 percent, as described in subsection (1).

“(B) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall carry out this section through the Farm Service Agency (referred to in this section as the ‘Agency’).”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) in clause (i), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

(II) by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii); and

(III) by inserting after clause (i) the following:

“(ii) for which additional coverage under subsections (c) and (h) of section 508 of that Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) is not available; and”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and industrial crops” and inserting “sweet sorghum, biomass sorghum, and industrial crops (including those grown expressly for the purpose of producing a feedstock for renewable biofuel, renewable electricity, or biobased products)”;

(2) in subsection (i)(2), by striking “\$100,000” and inserting “\$125,000”;

(3) in subsection (k)(2), by striking “limited resource farmer” and inserting “limited resource, beginning, or socially disadvantaged farmer”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(1) PAYMENT EQUIVALENT TO ADDITIONAL COVERAGE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make available noninsured assistance under this subsection (other than for crops and grasses used for grazing) at a payment amount that is equivalent to an indemnity for additional coverage under subsections (c) and (h) of section 508 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) and equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

“(A) the amount that—

“(i) the additional coverage yield, which shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

“(I) an amount not less than 50 percent nor more than 65 percent, as elected by the producer and specified in 5-percent increments; and

“(II) the approved yield for the crop, as determined by the Secretary; exceeds

“(ii) the actual yield;

“(B) 100 percent of the average market price for the crop, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(C) a payment rate for the type of crop, as determined by the Secretary, that reflects—

“(i) in the case of a crop that is produced with a significant and variable harvesting expense, the decreasing cost incurred in the production cycle for the crop that is, as applicable—

“(I) harvested;

“(II) planted but not harvested; or

“(III) prevented from being planted because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary; or

“(ii) in the case of a crop that is produced without a significant and variable harvesting expense, such rate as shall be determined by the Secretary.

“(2) SERVICE FEE AND PREMIUM.—To be eligible to receive a payment under this subsection, a producer shall pay—

“(A) the service fee required by subsection (k); and

“(B) the lesser of—

“(i) the sum of the premiums for each eligible crop, with the premium for each eligible crop obtained by multiplying—

“(I) the number of acres devoted to the eligible crop;

“(II) the yield, as determined by the Secretary under subsection (e);

“(III) the coverage level elected by the producer;

“(IV) the average market price, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(V) a 5.25-percent premium fee; or

“(ii) the product obtained by multiplying—

“(I) a 5.25-percent premium fee; and

“(II) the applicable payment limit.

“(3) ADDITIONAL AVAILABILITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after October 1, 2013, the Secretary shall make assistance available to producers of an otherwise eligible crop described in subsection (a)(2) that suffered losses—

“(i) to a 2012 annual fruit crop grown on a bush or tree; and

“(ii) in a county covered by a declaration by the Secretary of a natural disaster for production losses due to a freeze or frost.

“(B) ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall make assistance available under subparagraph (A) in an amount equivalent to assistance available under paragraph (1), less any fees not previously paid under paragraph (2).

“(4) LIMITED RESOURCE, BEGINNING, AND SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS.—The coverage made available under this subsection shall be available to limited resource, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers, as determined by the Secretary, in exchange for a premium that is 50 percent of the premium determined under paragraph (2).

“(5) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Except as provided in paragraph (3)(A), additional coverage under this subsection shall be available for each of the 2015 through 2018 crop years.”.

(b) PROHIBITION ON CATASTROPHIC RISK PROTECTION.—Section 508(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) COVERAGE AVAILABILITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Corporation shall offer a catastrophic risk protection plan to indemnify producers for crop loss due to loss of yield or prevented planting, if provided by the Corporation, when the producer is unable, because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster (as determined by the Secretary), to plant other crops for harvest on the acreage for the crop year.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—Coverage described in subparagraph (A) shall not be available for crops and grasses used for grazing.”

SEC. 12306. ACER ACCESS AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Agriculture may make competitive grants to States, tribal governments, and research institutions to support the efforts of such States, tribal governments, and research institutions to promote the domestic maple syrup industry through the following activities:

(1) Promotion of research and education related to maple syrup production.

(2) Promotion of natural resource sustainability in the maple syrup industry.

(3) Market promotion for maple syrup and maple-sap products.

(4) Encouragement of owners and operators of privately held land containing species of trees in the genus *Acer*—

(A) to initiate or expand maple-sugaring activities on the land; or

(B) to voluntarily make the land available, including by lease or other means, for access by the public for maple-sugaring activities.

(b) APPLICATION.—In submitting an application for a competitive grant under this section, a State, tribal government, or research institution shall include—

(1) a description of the activities to be supported using the grant funds;

(2) a description of the benefits that the State, tribal government, or research institution intends to achieve as a result of engaging in such activities; and

(3) an estimate of the increase in maple-sugaring activities or maple syrup production that the State, tribal government, or research institution anticipates will occur as a result of engaging in such activities.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to preempt a State or tribal government law, including a State or tribal government liability law.

(d) DEFINITION OF MAPLE-SUGARING.—In this section, the term “maple-sugaring” means the collection of sap from any species of tree in the genus *Acer* for the purpose of boiling to produce food.

(e) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

SEC. 12307. SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD.

Section 8 of the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 4365) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e) COMMITTEES.—

“(1) MEMBER COMMITTEES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board is authorized to establish such member committees and investigative panels as the Administrator and the Board determine to be necessary to carry out this section.

“(B) CHAIRMANSHIP.—Each member committee or investigative panel established under this subsection shall be chaired by a member of the Board.

“(2) AGRICULTURE-RELATED COMMITTEES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator and the Board—

“(i) shall establish a standing agriculture-related committee; and

“(ii) may establish such additional agriculture-related committees and investigative panels as the Administrator and the

Board determines to be necessary to carry out the duties under subparagraph (C).

“(B) MEMBERSHIP.—The standing committee and each agriculture-related committee or investigative panel established under subparagraph (A) shall be—

“(i) composed of—

“(I) such quantity of members as the Administrator and the Board determines to be necessary; and

“(II) individuals who are not members of the Board on the date of appointment to the committee or investigative panel; and

“(ii) appointed by the Administrator and the Board, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture.

“(C) DUTIES.—The agriculture-related standing committee and each additional committee and investigative panel established under subparagraph (A) shall provide scientific and technical advice to the Board relating to matters referred to the Board that the Administrator and the Board determines, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, to have a significant direct impact on enterprises that are engaged in the business of the production of food and fiber, ranching and raising livestock, aquaculture, and all other farming- and agriculture-related industries.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(h) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND TRANSPARENCY.—The Board shall make every effort, consistent with applicable law, including section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Freedom of Information Act’) and section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Privacy Act’), to maximize public participation and transparency, including making the scientific and technical advice of the Board and any committees or investigative panels of the Board publically available in electronic form on the website of the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(i) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall annually report to the Committees on Environment and Public Works and Agriculture of the Senate and the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy and Commerce, and Agriculture of the House of Representatives regarding the membership and activities of the standing agriculture-related committee established pursuant to subsection (e)(2)(A)(i).”

SEC. 12308. AMENDMENTS TO ANIMAL WELFARE ACT.

(a) LICENSING OF DEALERS AND EXHIBITORS.—

(1) DEFINITION.—Section 2 of the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2132) is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding subsection (a), by striking “When used in this Act—” and inserting “In this Act:”;

(B) in subsection (f), by striking “(2) any dog for hunting, security, or breeding purposes” and all that follows through the semicolon at the end and inserting “(2) any dog for hunting, security, or breeding purposes. Such term does not include a retail pet store (other than a retail pet store which sells any animals to a research facility, an exhibitor, or another dealer).”;

(C) in each of subsections (a), (b), (d), (e), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), and (m), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period; and

(D) in subsection (n), by striking “; and” at the end and inserting a period.

(2) LICENSING.—Section 3 of the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2133) is amended by striking “: Provided, however, That any retail pet store” and all that follows through “under this Act.” and inserting the following

“: Provided, however, That a dealer or exhibitor shall not be required to obtain a license as a dealer or exhibitor under this Act if the size of the business is determined by the Secretary to be de minimis.”.

(b) PROHIBITION ON ATTENDING AN ANIMAL FIGHT OR CAUSING AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS NOT ATTAINED THE AGE OF 16 TO ATTEND AN ANIMAL FIGHT; ENFORCEMENT OF ANIMAL FIGHTING PROVISIONS.—

(1) PROHIBITION ON ATTENDING AN ANIMAL FIGHT OR CAUSING AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS NOT ATTAINED THE AGE OF 16 TO ATTEND AN ANIMAL FIGHT.—Section 26(a) of the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2156(a)) is amended—

(A) in the heading, by striking “SPONSORING OR EXHIBITING AN ANIMAL IN” and inserting “SPONSORING OR EXHIBITING AN ANIMAL IN, ATTENDING, OR CAUSING AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS NOT ATTAINED THE AGE OF 16 TO ATTEND.”; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “IN GENERAL” and inserting “SPONSORING OR EXHIBITING”;

(ii) by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”;

(iii) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(iv) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) ATTENDING OR CAUSING AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS NOT ATTAINED THE AGE OF 16 TO ATTEND.—It shall be unlawful for any person to—

“(A) knowingly attend an animal fighting venture; or

“(B) knowingly cause an individual who has not attained the age of 16 to attend an animal fighting venture.”.

(2) ENFORCEMENT OF ANIMAL FIGHTING PROHIBITIONS.—Section 49 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking “Whoever” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—Whoever”;

(B) in subsection (a), as designated by subparagraph (A), by striking “subsection (a),” and inserting “subsection (a)(1).”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) ATTENDING AN ANIMAL FIGHTING VENTURE.—Whoever violates subsection (a)(2)(A) of section 26 of the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. 2156) shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more than 1 year, or both, for each violation.

“(c) CAUSING AN INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS NOT ATTAINED THE AGE OF 16 TO ATTEND AN ANIMAL FIGHTING VENTURE.—Whoever violates subsection (a)(2)(B) of section 26 (7 U.S.C. 2156) of the Animal Welfare Act shall be fined under this title, imprisoned for not more than 3 years, or both, for each violation.”.

SEC. 12309. PRODUCE REPRESENTED AS GROWN IN THE UNITED STATES WHEN IT IS NOT IN FACT GROWN IN THE UNITED STATES.

(a) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CBP.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall make available to U.S. Customs and Border Protection technical assistance related to the identification of produce represented as grown in the United States when it is not in fact grown in the United States.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on produce represented as grown in the United States when it is not in fact grown in the United States.

SEC. 12310. REPORT ON WATER SHARING.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually

thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit to Congress a report on efforts by Mexico to meet its treaty deliveries of water to the Rio Grande in accordance with the Treaty between the United States and Mexico Respecting Utilization of waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande (done at Washington, February 3, 1944).

SEC. 12311. SCIENTIFIC AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE FDA FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—When publishing a final rule with respect to “Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption” published by the Department of Health and Human Services on January 16, 2013 (78 Fed. Reg. 3504), the Secretary of Health and Human Services (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall ensure that the final rule (referred to in this section as the “final rule”) includes the following information:

(1) An analysis of the scientific information used to promulgate the final rule, taking into consideration any information about farming and ranching operations of a variety of sizes, with regional differences, and that have a diversity of production practices and methods.

(2) An analysis of the economic impact of the final rule.

(3) A plan to systematically—

(A) evaluate the impact of the final rule on farming and ranching operations; and

(B) develop an ongoing process to evaluate and respond to business concerns.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the Secretary promulgates the final rule referred to in subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Health, Education, and Labor of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report on the effectiveness of the ongoing evaluation and response process referred to in subsection (a)(3)(B). Not later than one year after the date on which such report is submitted, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to such committees an updated report on such process.

SEC. 12312. PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES.

Section 6906 of title 31, United States Code, is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “2013” and inserting “2014”.

SEC. 12313. SILVICULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

Section 402(1) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) SILVICULTURAL ACTIVITIES.—

“(A) NPDES PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR SILVICULTURAL ACTIVITIES.—The Administrator shall not require a permit under this section nor directly or indirectly require any State to require a permit under this section for a discharge from runoff resulting from the conduct of the following silviculture activities conducted in accordance with standard industry practice: nursery operations, site preparation, reforestation and subsequent cultural treatment, thinning, prescribed burning, pest and fire control, harvesting operations, surface drainage, or road construction and maintenance.

“(B) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this paragraph exempts a discharge from silvicultural activity from any permitting requirement under section 404, existing permitting requirements under section 402, or from any other federal law.

“(C) The authorization provided in Section 505(a) does not apply to any non-permitting program established under 402(p)(6) for the silviculture activities listed in 402(1)(3)(A), or to any other limitations that might be deemed to apply to the silviculture activities listed in 402(1)(3)(A).”.

SEC. 12314. PIMA AGRICULTURE COTTON TRUST FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUST FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a trust fund to be known as the “Pima Agriculture Cotton Trust Fund” (in this section referred to as the “Trust Fund”), consisting of such amounts as may be transferred to the Trust Fund pursuant to subsection (h), and to be used for the purpose of reducing the injury to domestic manufacturers resulting from tariffs on cotton fabric that are higher than tariffs on certain apparel articles made of cotton fabric.

(b) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—From amounts in the Trust Fund, the Secretary shall make payments annually beginning in calendar year 2014 for calendar years 2014 through 2018 as follows:

(1) Twenty-five percent of the amounts in the Trust Fund shall be paid to one or more nationally recognized associations established for the promotion of pima cotton for use in textile and apparel goods.

(2) Twenty-five percent of the amounts in the Trust Fund shall be paid to yarn spinners of pima cotton that produce ring spun cotton yarns in the United States, to be allocated to each spinner in an amount that bears the same ratio as—

(A) the spinner’s production of ring spun cotton yarns, measuring less than 83.33 decitex (exceeding 120 metric number) from pima cotton in single and plied form during calendar year 2013 (as evidenced by an affidavit provided by the spinner that meets the requirements of subsection (c)), bears to—

(B) the production of the yarns described in subparagraph (A) during calendar year 2013 for all spinners who qualify under this paragraph.

(3) Fifty percent of the amounts in the Trust Fund shall be paid to manufacturers who cut and sew cotton shirts in the United States who certify that they used imported cotton fabric during calendar year 2013, to be allocated to each such manufacturer in an amount that bears the same ratio as—

(A) the dollar value (excluding duty, shipping, and related costs) of imported woven cotton shirting fabric of 80s or higher count and 2-ply in warp purchased by the manufacturer during calendar year 2013 (as evidenced by an affidavit provided by the manufacturer that meets the requirements of subsection (d)) used in the manufacturing of men’s and boys’ cotton shirts, bears to—

(B) the dollar value (excluding duty, shipping, and related costs) of the fabric described in subparagraph (A) purchased during calendar year 2013 by all manufacturers who qualify under this paragraph.

(c) AFFIDAVIT OF YARN SPINNERS.—The affidavit required by subsection (b)(2)(A) is a notarized affidavit provided annually by an officer of a producer of ring spun yarns that affirms—

(1) that the producer used pima cotton during the year in which the affidavit is filed and during calendar year 2013 to produce ring spun cotton yarns in the United States, measuring less than 83.33 decitex (exceeding 120 metric number), in single and plied form;

(2) the quantity, measured in pounds, of ring spun cotton yarns, measuring less than 83.33 decitex (exceeding 120 metric number), in single and plied form during calendar year 2013; and

(3) that the producer maintains supporting documentation showing the quantity of such yarns produced, and evidencing the yarns as ring spun cotton yarns, measuring less than 83.33 decitex (exceeding 120 metric number), in single and plied form during calendar year 2013.

(d) AFFIDAVIT OF SHIRTING MANUFACTURERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The affidavit required by subsection (b)(3)(A) is a notarized affidavit provided annually by an officer of a manufacturer of men’s and boys’ shirts that affirms—

(A) that the manufacturer used imported cotton fabric during the year in which the affidavit is filed and during calendar year 2013, to cut and sew men’s and boys’ woven cotton shirts in the United States;

(B) the dollar value of imported woven cotton shirting fabric of 80s or higher count and 2-ply in warp purchased by the manufacturer during calendar year 2013;

(C) that the manufacturer maintains invoices along with other supporting documentation (such as price lists and other technical descriptions of the fabric qualities) showing the dollar value of such fabric purchased, the date of purchase, and evidencing the fabric as woven cotton fabric of 80s or higher count and 2-ply in warp; and

(D) that the fabric was suitable for use in the manufacturing of men’s and boys’ cotton shirts.

(2) DATE OF PURCHASE.—For purposes of the affidavit under paragraph (1), the date of purchase shall be the invoice date, and the dollar value shall be determined excluding duty, shipping, and related costs.

(e) FILING DEADLINE FOR AFFIDAVITS.—Any person required to provide an affidavit under this section shall file the affidavit with the Secretary or as directed by the Secretary—

(1) in the case of an affidavit required for calendar year 2014, not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) in the case of an affidavit required for any of calendar years 2015 through 2018, not later than March 15 of that calendar year.

(f) TIMING OF DISTRIBUTIONS.—The Secretary shall make a payment under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (b)—

(1) for calendar year 2014—

(A) not later than the date that is 30 days after the filing of the affidavit required with respect to that payment; or

(B) if the Secretary is unable to make the payment by the date described in subparagraph (A), as soon as practicable thereafter; and

(2) for calendar years 2015 through 2018, not later than the date that is 30 days after the filing of the affidavit required with respect to that payment.

(g) MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Secretary and the Commissioner responsible for U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall, as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, negotiate a memorandum of understanding to establish procedures pursuant to which the Commissioner will assist the Secretary in carrying out the provisions of this section.

(h) FUNDING.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall transfer to the Trust Fund \$16,000,000 for each of calendar years 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended.

SEC. 12315. AGRICULTURE WOOL APPAREL MANUFACTURERS TRUST FUND.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUST FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a trust fund to be known as the “Agriculture Wool Apparel Manufacturers Trust

Fund” (in this section referred to as the “Trust Fund”), consisting of such amounts as may be transferred to the Trust Fund pursuant to subsection (f), and to be used for the purpose of reducing the injury to domestic manufacturers resulting from tariffs on wool fabric that are higher than tariffs on certain apparel articles made of wool fabric.

(b) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts in the Trust Fund, the Secretary may make payments annually beginning in calendar year 2014 for calendar years 2010 through 2019 as follows:

(A) To each eligible manufacturer under paragraph (3) of section 4002(c) of the Wool Suit and Textile Trade Extension Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-429; 118 Stat. 2600), as amended by section 1633(c) of the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-280; 120 Stat. 1166) and section 325(b) of the Tax Extenders and Alternative Minimum Tax Relief Act of 2008 (division C of Public Law 110-343; 122 Stat. 3875), and any successor-in-interest to such a manufacturer as provided for under paragraph (4) of such section 4002(c), that submits an affidavit in accordance with paragraph (2) for the year of the payment—

(i) for calendar years 2010 through 2015, payments that, when added to any other payments made to the manufacturer or successor-in-interest under paragraph (3) of such section 4002(c) in such calendar years, equal the total amount of payments authorized to be provided to the manufacturer or successor-in-interest under that paragraph, or the provisions of this section, in such calendar years; and

(ii) for calendar years 2016 through 2019, payments in amounts authorized under that paragraph.

(B) To each eligible manufacturer under paragraph (6) of such section 4002(c)—

(i) for calendar years 2010 through 2014, payments that, when added to any other payments made to eligible manufacturers under that paragraph in such calendar years, equal the total amount of payments authorized to be provided to the manufacturer under that paragraph, or the provisions of this section, in such calendar years; and

(ii) for calendar years 2015 through 2019, payments in amounts authorized under that paragraph.

(2) SUBMISSION OF AFFIDAVITS.—An affidavit required by paragraph (1)(A) shall be submitted—

(A) in each of calendar years 2010 through 2015, to the Commissioner responsible for U.S. Customs and Border Protection not later than April 15; and

(B) in each of calendar years 2016 through 2019, to the Secretary, or as directed by the Secretary, and not later than March 1.

(c) PAYMENT OF AMOUNTS.—The Secretary shall make payments to eligible manufacturers and successors-in-interest described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b)—

(1) for calendar years 2010 through 2014, not later than 30 days after the transfer of amounts from the Commodity Credit Corporation to the Trust Fund under subsection (f); and

(2) for calendar years 2015 through 2019, not later than April 15 of the year of the payment.

(d) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Secretary shall, as soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, negotiate memoranda of understanding with the Commissioner responsible for U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Secretary of Commerce to establish procedures pursuant

to which the Commissioner and the Secretary of Commerce will assist in carrying out the provisions of this section.

(e) INCREASE IN PAYMENTS IN THE EVENT OF EXPIRATION OF DUTY SUSPENSIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In any calendar year in which the suspension of duty on wool fabrics provided for under headings 9902.51.11, 9902.51.13, 9902.51.14, 9902.51.15, and 9902.51.16 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States are not in effect, the amount of any payment described in subsection (b)(1) to a manufacturer or successor-in-interest shall be increased by an amount the Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, determines is equal to the amount the manufacturer or successor-in-interest would have saved during the calendar year of the payment if the suspension of duty on wool fabrics were in effect.

(2) NO APPEAL OF DETERMINATIONS.—A determination of the Secretary under this subsection shall be final and not subject to appeal or protest.

(f) FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall transfer to the Trust Fund for each of calendar years 2014 through 2019 an amount equal to the lesser of—

(A) the amount the Secretary determines to be necessary to make payments required by this section in that calendar year; or

(B) \$30,000,000.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts transferred to the Trust Fund under paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.

SEC. 12316. WOOL RESEARCH AND PROMOTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall use to provide grants described in section 506(d) of the Trade and Development Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 7101 note) \$2,250,000 for each of calendar years 2015 through 2019, to remain available until expended.

(b) AUTHORIZATION TO DISTRIBUTE UNEXPENDED BALANCE.—In addition to funds made available under subsection (a) and notwithstanding subsection (f) of section 506 of the Trade and Development Act of 2000 (7 U.S.C. 7101 note), the Secretary may use any unexpended balances remaining in the Wool Research, Development, and Promotion Trust Fund established under that section as of December 31, 2014, to provide grants described in subsection (d) of that section.

Subtitle D—Oilheat Efficiency, Renewable Fuel Research and Jobs Training

SEC. 12401. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Oilheat Efficiency, Renewable Fuel Research and Jobs Training Act of 2014”.

SEC. 12402. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

Section 702 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” after the semicolon at the end;

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

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) consumers of oilheat fuel are provided service by thousands of small businesses that are unable to individually develop training programs to facilitate the entry of new and qualified workers into the oilheat fuel industry;

“(7) small businesses and trained employees are in an ideal position—

“(A) to provide information to consumers about the benefits of improved efficiency; and

“(B) to encourage consumers to value efficiency in energy choices and assist individuals in conserving energy;

“(8) additional research is necessary—

“(A) to improve oilheat fuel equipment; and

“(B) to develop domestic renewable resources that can be used to safely and affordably heat homes;

“(9) since there are no Federal resources available to assist the oilheat fuel industry, it is necessary and appropriate to develop a self-funded program dedicated—

“(A) to improving efficiency in customer homes;

“(B) to assist individuals to gain employment in the oilheat fuel industry; and

“(C) to develop domestic renewable resources;

“(10) both consumers of oilheat fuel and retailers would benefit from the self-funded program; and

“(11) the oilheat fuel industry is committed to providing appropriate funding necessary to carry out the purposes of this title without passing additional costs on to residential consumers.”.

SEC. 12403. DEFINITIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 703 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (15) as paragraphs (4) through (16), respectively;

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

“(3) COST-EFFECTIVE.—The term ‘cost-effective’, with respect to a program or activity carried out under section 707(f)(4), means that the program or activity meets a total resource cost test under which—

“(A) the net present value of economic benefits over the life of the program or activity, including avoided supply and delivery costs and deferred or avoided investments; is greater than

“(B) the net present value of the economic costs over the life of the program or activity, including program costs and incremental costs borne by the energy consumer.”; and

(3) by striking paragraph (8) (as redesignated in paragraph (1)) and inserting the following:

“(8) OILHEAT FUEL.—The term ‘oilheat fuel’ means fuel that—

“(A) is—

“(i) No. 1 distillate;

“(ii) No. 2 dyed distillate;

“(iii) a liquid blended with No. 1 distillate or No. 2 dyed distillate; or

“(iv) a biobased liquid; and

“(B) is used as a fuel for nonindustrial commercial or residential space or hot water heating.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by striking “oilheat” each place it appears and inserting “oilheat fuel”.

(2) Section 704(d) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended in the subsection heading by striking “OILHEAT” and inserting “OILHEAT FUEL”.

(3) Section 706(c)(2) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended in the paragraph heading by striking “OILHEAT” and inserting “OILHEAT FUEL”.

(4) Section 707(c) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended in the subsection heading by striking “OILHEAT” and inserting “OILHEAT FUEL”.

SEC. 12404. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) **SELECTION.**—Section 705 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) **SELECTION.**—

“(1) **LIST.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Alliance shall provide to the Secretary a list of qualified nominees for membership in the Alliance.

“(B) **REQUIREMENT.**—Except as provided in subsection (c)(1)(C), members of the Alliance shall be representatives of the oilheat fuel industry in a State, selected from a list of nominees submitted by the qualified State association in the State.

“(2) **VACANCIES.**—A vacancy in the Alliance shall be filled in the same manner as the original selection.

“(3) **SECRETARIAL ACTION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall have 60 days to review nominees provided under paragraph (1).

“(B) **FAILURE TO ACT.**—If the Secretary takes no action during the 60-day period described in subparagraph (A), the nominees shall be considered to be members of the Alliance.”.

(b) **REPRESENTATION.**—Section 705(b) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking “qualified industry organization” and inserting “Alliance”.

(c) **NUMBER OF MEMBERS.**—Section 705(c) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Alliance shall be composed of the following members:

“(A) 1 member representing each State participating in the Alliance.

“(B) 5 representatives of retail marketers, of whom 1 shall be selected by each of the qualified State associations of the 5 States with the highest volume of annual oilheat fuel sales.

“(C) 5 additional representatives of retail marketers.

“(D) 21 representatives of wholesale distributors.

“(E) 6 public members, who shall be representatives of significant users of oilheat fuel, the oilheat fuel research community, State energy officials, or other groups with expertise in oilheat fuel, including consumer and low-income advocacy groups.”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “the qualified industry organization or”.

SEC. 12405. FUNCTIONS.

(a) **RENEWABLE FUEL RESEARCH.**—Section 706(a)(3)(B)(i)(I) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: “, including research to develop renewable fuels and to examine the compatibility of different renewable fuels with oilheat fuel utilization equipment, with priority given to research on the development and use of advanced biofuels”.

(b) **BIENNIAL BUDGETS.**—Section 706(e) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) **PUBLICATION OF PROPOSED BUDGET.**—Not later than August 1, 2014, and every 2 years thereafter, the Alliance shall, in consultation with the Secretary, develop and

publish for public review and comment a proposed biennial budget for the next 2 calendar years, including the probable operating and planning costs of all programs, projects, and contracts and other agreements.”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Alliance shall not implement a proposed budget until the expiration of 60 days after submitting the proposed budget to the Secretary.

“(B) **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES BY SECRETARY.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may recommend to the Alliance changes to the budget programs and activities of the Alliance that the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(ii) **RESPONSE BY ALLIANCE.**—Not later than 30 days after the receipt of any recommendations made under clause (i), the Alliance shall submit to the Secretary a final budget for the next 2 calendar years that incorporates or includes a description of the response of the Alliance to any changes recommended under clause (i).”.

SEC. 12406. ASSESSMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 707 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

“(a) **RATE.**—The assessment rate shall be equal to 2/10 of 1 cent per gallon of oilheat fuel.”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

“(8) **PROHIBITION ON PASS THROUGH.**—None of the assessments collected under this title may be passed through or otherwise required to be paid by residential consumers of oilheat fuel.”.

(b) **FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE TO QUALIFIED STATE ASSOCIATIONS.**—Section 707(e)(2) of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(B) **SEPARATE ACCOUNTS.**—As a condition of receipt of funds made available to a qualified State association under this title, the qualified State association shall deposit the funds in an account that is separate from other funds of the qualified State association.”.

(c) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Section 707 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f) **USE OF ASSESSMENTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, the Secretary and the Alliance shall ensure that assessments collected for each calendar year under this title are allocated and used in accordance with this subsection.

“(2) **RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND DEMONSTRATION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Alliance shall ensure that not less than 30 percent of the assessments collected for each calendar year under this title are used by qualified State associations or the Alliance to conduct research, development, and demonstration activities relating to oilheat fuel, including the development of energy-efficient heating and the transition and facilitation of the entry of energy efficient heating systems into the marketplace.

“(B) **COORDINATION.**—The Alliance shall coordinate with the Secretary to develop priorities for the use of assessments under this paragraph.

“(C) **PLAN.**—The Alliance shall develop a coordinated research plan to carry out research programs and activities under this section.

“(D) **REPORT.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—No later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Alliance shall prepare a report on the use of biofuels in oilheat fuel utilization equipment.

“(ii) **CONTENTS.**—The report required under clause (i) shall—

“(I) provide information on the environmental benefits, economic benefits, and any technical limitations on the use of biofuels in oilheat fuel utilization equipment; and

“(II) describe market acceptance of the fuel, and information on State and local governments that are encouraging the use of biofuels in oilheat fuel utilization equipment.

“(iii) **COPIES.**—The Alliance shall submit a copy of the report required under clause (i) to—

“(I) Congress;

“(II) the Governor of each State, and other appropriate State leaders, in which the Alliance is operating; and

“(III) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(E) **CONSUMER EDUCATION MATERIALS.**—The Alliance, in conjunction with an institution or organization engaged in biofuels research, shall develop consumer education materials describing the benefits of using biofuels as or in oilheat fuel based on the technical information developed in the report required under subparagraph (D) and other information generally available.

“(3) **COST SHARING.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out a research, development, demonstration, or commercial application program or activity that is commenced after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Alliance shall require cost-sharing in accordance with this section.

“(B) **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in clauses (ii) and (iii), the Alliance shall require that not less than 20 percent of the cost of a research or development program or activity described in subparagraph (A) to be provided by a source other than the Alliance.

“(ii) **EXCLUSION.**—Clause (i) shall not apply to a research or development program or activity described in subparagraph (A) that is of a basic or fundamental nature, as determined by the Alliance.

“(iii) **REDUCTION.**—The Alliance may reduce or eliminate the requirement of clause (i) for a research and development program or activity of an applied nature if the Alliance determines that the reduction is necessary and appropriate.

“(C) **DEMONSTRATION AND COMMERCIAL APPLICATION.**—The Alliance shall require that not less than 50 percent of the cost of a demonstration or commercial application program or activity described in subparagraph (A) to be provided by a source other than the Alliance.

“(4) **HEATING OIL EFFICIENCY AND UPGRADE PROGRAM.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Alliance shall ensure that not less than 15 percent of the assessments collected for each calendar year under this title are used by qualified State associations or the Alliance to carry out programs to assist consumers—

“(i) to make cost-effective upgrades to more fuel efficient heating oil systems or otherwise make cost-effective modifications to an existing heating system to improve the efficiency of the system;

“(ii) to improve energy efficiency or reduce energy consumption through cost-effective energy efficiency programs for consumers; or

“(iii) to improve the safe operation of a heating system.

“(B) PLAN.—The Alliance shall, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate, develop, and implement the programs and activities of the Alliance in conjunction with existing State energy efficiency program administrators.

“(C) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this paragraph, the Alliance shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure that heating system conversion assistance is coordinated with, and developed after consultation with, persons or organizations responsible for administering—

“(I) the low-income home energy assistance program established under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.);

“(II) the Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Persons established under part A of title IV of the Energy Conservation and Production Act (42 U.S.C. 6861 et seq.); or

“(III) other energy efficiency programs administered by the State or other parties in the State.

“(ii) DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—The Alliance shall ensure that funds distributed to carry out this paragraph are—

“(I) distributed equitably to States based on the proportional contributions of the States through collected assessments;

“(II) used to supplement (and not supplant) State or alternative sources of funding for energy efficiency programs; and

“(III) used only to carry out this paragraph.

“(5) CONSUMER EDUCATION, SAFETY, AND TRAINING.—The Alliance shall ensure that not more than 30 percent of the assessments collected for each calendar year under this title are used—

“(A) to conduct consumer education activities relating to oilheat fuel, including providing information to consumers on—

“(i) energy conservation strategies;

“(ii) safety;

“(iii) new technologies that reduce consumption or improve safety and comfort;

“(iv) the use of biofuels blends; and

“(v) Federal, State, and local programs designed to assist oilheat fuel consumers;

“(B) to conduct worker safety and training activities relating to oilheat fuel, including energy efficiency training (including classes to obtain Building Performance Institute or Residential Energy Services Network certification);

“(C) to carry out other activities recommended by the Secretary; or

“(D) to the maximum extent practicable, a data collection process established, in collaboration with the Secretary or other appropriate Federal agencies, to track equipment, service, and related safety issues and to develop measures to improve safety.

“(6) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Alliance shall ensure that not more than 5 percent of the assessments collected for each calendar year under this title are used for—

“(i) administrative costs; or

“(ii) indirect costs incurred in carrying out paragraphs (1) through (5).

“(B) ADMINISTRATION.—Activities under this section shall be documented pursuant to a transparent process and procedures developed in coordination with the Secretary.

“(7) REPORTS.—

“(A) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Each qualified State association or the Alliance shall prepare an annual report describing the development and administration of this section, and yearly expenditures under this section.

“(ii) CONTENTS.—Each report required under clause (i) shall include a description of the use of proceeds under this section, including a description of—

“(I) advancements made in energy-efficient heating systems and biofuel heating oil blends; and

“(II) heating system upgrades and modifications and energy efficiency programs funded under this section.

“(iii) VERIFICATION.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—The Alliance shall ensure that an independent third-party reviews each report described in clause (i) and verifies the accuracy of the report.

“(II) COUNCILS.—If a State has a stakeholder efficiency oversight council, the council shall be the entity that reviews and verifies the report of the State association or Alliance for the State under clause (i).

“(B) REPORTS ON HEATING OIL EFFICIENCY AND UPGRADE PROGRAM.—At least once every 3 years, the Alliance shall prepare a detailed report describing the consumer savings, cost-effectiveness of, and the lifetime and annual energy savings achieved by heating system upgrades and modifications and energy efficiency programs funded under paragraph (4).

“(C) AVAILABILITY.—Each report, and any subsequent changes to the report, described in this paragraph shall be made publically available, with notice of availability provided to the Secretary, and posted on the website of the Alliance.”.

SEC. 12407. MARKET SURVEY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION.

Section 708 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is repealed.

SEC. 12408. LOBBYING RESTRICTIONS.

Section 710 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended—

(1) by striking “No funds” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—No funds”;

(2) by inserting “or to lobby” after “elections”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) ASSESSMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), no funds derived from assessments collected by the Alliance under section 707 shall be used, directly or indirectly, to influence Federal, State, or local legislation or elections, or the manner of administering of a law.

“(2) INFORMATION.—The Alliance may use funds described in paragraph (1) to provide information requested by a Member of Congress, or an official of any Federal, State, or local agency, in the course of the official business of the Member or official.”.

SEC. 12409. NONCOMPLIANCE.

Section 712 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201 note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) NONCOMPLIANCE.—If the Alliance, a qualified State association, or any other entity or person violates this title, the Secretary shall—

“(1) notify Congress of the noncompliance; and

“(2) provide notice of the noncompliance on the Alliance website.”.

SEC. 12410. SUNSET.

Section 713 of the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 6201

note; Public Law 106-469) is amended by striking “9 years” and inserting “18 years”.

And the Senate agree to the same.

From the Committee on Agriculture, for consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

FRANK D. LUCAS,
RANDY NEUGEBAUER,
MIKE ROGERS of Alabama,
MICHAEL K. CONAWAY,
GLENN THOMPSON of
Pennsylvania,
AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia,
ERIC A. “RICK” CRAWFORD,
MARTHA ROBY,
KRISTI L. NOEM,
JEFF DENHAM,
RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois,
COLLIN C. PETERSON,
MIKE MCINTYRE,
JIM COSTA,
TIMOTHY J. WALZ,
KURT SCHRADER,
SUZAN K. DELBENE,
GLORIA NEGRETE MCLEOD,
FILEMON VELA,

From the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for consideration of title III of the House amendment, and title III of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
TOM MARINO,
ELIOT L. ENGEL,

From the Committee on Ways and Means, for consideration of secs. 1207 and 1301, of the House amendment, and secs. 1301, 1412, 1435 and 4204 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

DAVE CAMP,
SAM JOHNSON of Texas,

For consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

STEVE SOUTHERLAND II,
MARCIA L. FUDGE,

Managers on the Part of the House.

DEBBIE STABENOW,
PATRICK J. LEAHY,
TOM HARKIN,
MAX BAUCUS,
SHERROD BROWN,
AMY KLOBUCHAR,
MICHAEL F. BENNET,
THAD COCHRAN,
SAXBY CHAMBLISS,
JOHN BOOZMAN,
JOHN HOEVEN,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

JOINT EXPLANATORY STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE

The managers on the part of the House and the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642), to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, submit the following joint statement to the House and the Senate in explanation of the effect of the action agreed upon by the managers and recommended in the accompanying conference report:

The Senate amendment struck all of the House bill after the enacting clause and inserted a substitute text.

The House amendment struck out that matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment and inserted a substitute text.

The House recedes from its amendment to the amendment of the Senate and agrees to

the same with an amendment that is a substitute for the House amendment and the Senate amendment. The difference between the House amendment, the Senate amendment, and the substitute agreed to in conference are noted below, except for clerical corrections, conforming changes made necessary by agreements reached by the conferees, and minor drafting and clarifying changes.

TITLE I—COMMODITIES

(1) *Repeal of Direct Payments*

Section 1101 of the House bill repeals direct payments effective with the 2014 crop year. The section continues direct payments for the 2013 crop year for all covered commodities and peanuts, consistent with the extension of the 2008 Farm Bill. The section continues direct payments for the 2014 and 2015 crop years for upland cotton only except that the term “payment acres” is amended to mean the following: (1) for crop year 2014, 70 percent of the base acres of upland cotton on a farm on which direct payments are made; and (2) for crop year 2015, 60 percent of the base acres of upland cotton on a farm on which direct payments are made. (Section 1101)

The Senate amendment, in section 1101, repeals direct payments effective with the 2014 crop year. The section continues direct payments for the 2013 crop year for all covered commodities (except pulse crops) and peanuts. (Section 1101)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to delete the continued application for the 2014 and 2015 crop years. (Section 1101)

Transition assistance for producers of upland cotton

The House bill, in section 1101, continued application of direct payments to producers of upland cotton as a transition to STAX, including on 70 percent of base acres in the 2014 crop year and on 60 percent of base acres in the 2015 crop year.

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision allowing for a transition payment but not through a continuation of the Direct Payment or any portion thereof. The section provides transition payments to producers of upland cotton in light of the repeal of direct payments, the ineligibility of cotton producers for PLC or ARC, and the delayed implementation of STAX. The section provides that transition payments will be made with respect to the 2014 crop year to upland cotton producers with cotton base in the 2013 crop year, and with respect to the 2015 crop year to upland cotton producers with base in the 2013 crop year and who are located in counties where STAX is not available for that crop year. The transition assistance rate is equal to the product obtained when multiplying the June 12, 2013 midpoint estimate for the marketing year average price of upland cotton for the marketing year beginning August 1, 2013 less the December 10, 2013 midpoint estimate for the marketing year average price of upland cotton for the marketing year beginning August 1, 2013 as contained in the applicable WASDE report published by USDA and the national program yield for upland cotton of 597 pounds per acre. The section provides that the amount of transition assistance shall be equal to the product obtained when multiplying, for the 2014 crop year, 60 percent, and for the 2015 crop year, 36.5 percent, of the cotton base acres in effect for crop year 2013; the transition assistance rate in effect for

the particular crop year and the payment yield for upland cotton under section 1103(c)(3) of the 2008 Farm Bill divided by the national program yield of 597 pounds per acre. The section requires transition payments to be made on October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. The section applies the same pay limits to this transition assistance as was applied to section 1103 of the 2008 Farm Bill. The section provides that the pay limits provided for under the 2014 Farm Bill do not apply to transition payments and transition payments received under this section shall not count toward pay limits under the 2014 Farm Bill limits. (Section 1119)

(2) *Definitions*

The House bill defines terms necessary for implementation of this Act: actual county revenue, base acres, county revenue loss coverage trigger, covered commodity, effective price, extra long staple cotton, farm base acres, medium grain rice, midseason price, other oilseed, payment acres, payment yield, price loss coverage, producer, pulse crop, reference price, revenue loss coverage, Secretary, state, temperate Japonica rice, transitional yield, United States, and United States premium factor. (Section 1104)

The Senate amendment defines terms necessary for implementation of this Act: actual crop revenue, adverse market payment, agriculture risk coverage guarantee, agriculture risk coverage payment, average individual yield, base acres, county coverage, covered commodity, eligible acres, extra long staple cotton, individual coverage, medium grain rice, other oilseed, payment acres, payment yield, producer, pulse crop, state, reference price, transitional yield, United States, and United States premium factor. (Section 1104)

The Conference substitute defines the terms necessary for implementation of this Act: actual crop revenue, agriculture risk coverage, agriculture risk coverage guarantee, base acres, county coverage, covered commodity, effective price, extra long staple cotton, generic base acres, individual coverage, medium grain rice, other oilseed, payment acres, payment yield, price loss coverage, producer, pulse crop, reference price, Secretary, state, temperate Japonica rice, transitional yield, United States, and United States premium factor. (Section 1111)

The Managers intend that, for purposes of the reallocation of base acres under section 1112; the establishment of a reference price (as required under section 1116(g)) and an effective price pursuant to section 1116; and the determination of the actual crop revenue and agriculture risk coverage guarantee pursuant to section 1117, medium and short grain rice produced in California shall be deemed Temperate Japonica Rice. For all other purposes, the Managers intend that Temperate Japonica Rice be treated as medium grain rice.

Payment Acres

The House bill, in the definitions section, provides that payment acres for price loss coverage and revenue loss coverage means 85 percent of total acres planted for the year to each covered commodity on a farm and 30 percent of total acres approved as prevented from being planted, except that the total of payment acres may not exceed farm base acres. The provision requires the Secretary to reduce payment acres applicable to each crop proportionately. The provision excludes from the term payment acres any crop subsequently planted during the same crop year on the same land for which the first crop is eligible for payments unless the crop was approved for double cropping. (Section 1104)

The Senate bill, in the definitions section, provides that payment acres means 85 percent of the base acres for a covered commodity on a farm on which adverse market payments are made. (Section 1104)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with modifications. The section establishes payment acres for both price loss coverage and agriculture risk coverage for each covered commodity on a farm at 85 percent of the sum of the total base acres for each covered commodity on the farm and any generic base acres on the farm planted to the covered commodity for the crop year. The section establishes payment acres for individual coverage under agriculture risk coverage at 65 percent of the sum of total base acres and any generic base acres planted to a covered commodity for the crop year. The section provides that price loss coverage and agriculture risk coverage payments are made only with respect to generic base acres planted to a covered commodity for the crop year. The section provides that if a single covered commodity is planted on generic base acres and the total acreage exceeds that generic base, the generic base acres are attributed to that covered commodity in an amount equal to the total number of generic base acres. The section provides that if multiple covered commodities are planted to generic base acres and the total number of acres planted exceeds generic base, the generic base acres are attributed to each of the covered commodities on a pro rata basis to reflect the ratio of the acreage planted to a covered commodity on the farm to the total acreage planted to all covered commodities on the farm. The section provides that if the total number of acres planted to all covered commodities does not exceed the generic base acres then the number of acres planted to a covered commodity is attributed to that covered commodity. The section provides that when generic base acres are planted to a covered commodity or acreage planted to a covered commodity is attributed to generic base, the generic base acres are in addition to other base acres on the farm. The section further provides that the quantity of payment acres may not include any crop subsequently planted during the same crop year on the same land for which the first crop is eligible for price loss coverage or agriculture risk coverage unless the crop was approved for double cropping. The section prohibits price loss coverage or agriculture risk coverage payments to a producer on a farm if base acres are 10 acres or less, except in the case of socially disadvantaged or limited resource farmers and ranchers. The section requires that for purposes of calculating payment acres, base acres must be reduced in any crop year when fruits, vegetables (other than mung beans and pulse crops), or wild rice are planted on base acres. In the case of price loss coverage payments and agriculture risk coverage payments using county coverage, the reduction will be equal to the acreage planted to fruits, vegetables (with the two exceptions), or wild rice in excess of 15 percent of base acres; 35 percent of base acres in the case of individual level agriculture risk coverage payments. No such reduction is required under the section where the crops are grown solely for conservation purposes and not for use or sale, in any region in which there is a history of double cropping these crops with covered commodities and the crops were double cropped on base acres, or where the crops were planted on generic base acres. (Section 1114)

(3) Base Acres

The House bill, in section 1105(a), requires the Secretary to provide for appropriate adjustments to base acres for covered commodities and cotton when a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract expires or is voluntarily terminated, when cropland is released from coverage under a conservation reserve contract, or when the producer has eligible oilseed acreage as the result of the Secretary designating additional oilseeds which must be determined in the same manner as under the 2008 Farm Bill. Section 1105(a) further requires that, for the crop year in which an adjustment in base is made, an owner of a farm elect price loss coverage or revenue loss coverage with respect to acreage added to the farm under an adjustment in base acres or a prorated payment under the conservation reserve contract, but not both. Section 1105(b) requires the Secretary to reduce the base acres for 1 or more covered commodities or cotton so the sum of base acres does not exceed the actual crop acreage of the farm. For purposes of carrying out any required reduction, the provision requires the Secretary to include any acreage enrolled in CRP or WRP, or successor programs, any other acreage enrolled in a federal conservation program for which payments are made in exchange for not producing a crop, or any eligible oilseed acreage if the Secretary designates additional oilseeds. The section requires the Secretary to allow the owner of the farm to select base acres against which any reduction is to be made. The section requires an exception to be made in regard to any required reduction in the case of double cropping. Section 1105(c) authorizes an owner on a farm to reduce base acres at any time and the reduction will be permanent. Finally, the section requires the Secretary to proportionately reduce base acres on a farm for land that has been subdivided and developed for multiple residential units or non-farming uses if the land is unlikely to return to agriculture uses unless the producers on the farm demonstrate that the land remains devoted to agricultural production or is likely to be returned to previous agriculture use. The Secretary is required to establish procedures to identify such lands. (Section 1105)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision except the section refers to covered commodities rather than covered commodities and cotton. The provision also allows an adjustment in base acres if a conservation reserve contract was terminated or expired, or if cropland is released from a conservation reserve contract, between October 1, 2012 and the date of enactment of the 2014 Farm Bill; if the producer has eligible pulse crop acreage determined in the same manner as eligible oilseed acreage under section 1101(a)(2) of the 2002 Farm Bill; or when the producer has eligible oilseed acreage as the result of the Secretary designating additional oilseeds which must be determined in the same manner as under the 2002 Farm Bill. The section includes the same special conservation reserve acreage payment rules as the House provision except it is with respect to a producer rather than owner of a farm. The section provides peanut producers with a one-time opportunity to adjust peanut base acres. The section, in regard to prevention of excess base acres, is the same as the House provision except the section refers to covered commodities rather than covered commodities and cotton relative to required reductions to base. With regard to other acreage to be included as part of any required reduction, the section refers to the

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program instead of WRP or successor programs; includes any eligible pulse crop acreage which must be determined in the same manner as eligible oilseed acreage under section 1101(a)(2) of the 2002 Farm Bill; and includes any eligible oilseeds if the Secretary designates additional oilseeds determined under section 1101(a)(2) of the 2002 Farm Bill rather than subsection (a)(1)(c) of the 2014 Farm Bill. The section allows the producer to decide what base acres to reduce if any reduction is required rather than the owner of the farm. Similarly, the section allows the farmer to elect to reduce base acres at any time, rather than allowing the owner of the farm to do so. The section requiring the Secretary to proportionally reduce base acres for land not in agricultural use refers to covered commodities rather than covered commodities and cotton. The section also requires a report to Congress that only farmers received Farm Bill payments. (Section 1105)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to allow owners of a farm to retain base acres, including generic base acres, or to reallocate all base acres, other than generic base. The section provides notice requirements concerning the option to retain or reallocate base and provides that failure to make an election results in the retention of existing base acres. The section provides that an election to retain the number of acres established sections 1001 and 1301 of the 2008 Farm Bill, as adjusted pursuant to sections 1101, 1108, and 1302 of the 2008 Farm Bill in effect as of September 30, 2013. The section provides that generic base is automatically retained. The section authorizes an owner of a farm to reallocate all of the base acres for covered commodities among those covered commodities planted on the farm at any time during the 2009 through 2012 crop years. The section requires that the reallocation of base acres be in proportion to the ratio of the 4-year average of the acreage planted on the farm to each covered commodity for harvest, grazing, haying, silage, or other similar purposes for the 2009 through 2012 crop years and any acreage that the producers were prevented from planting during the same years because of drought, flood, natural disasters, or other condition beyond the control of producers as determined by the Secretary, to the 4-year average of the acreage planted on the farm to all covered commodities for harvest, grazing, haying, silage or other similar purposes for the crop years and any acreage on the farm that the producers were prevented from planting during the crop years to covered commodities for the same reasons prescribed above. The section requires that generic base is retained and may not be reallocated. The section prohibits the Secretary from excluding any year in which a covered commodity was not planted for purposes of determining the 4-year average. The section provides that if acreage that was planted or prevented from being planted was devoted to another covered commodity in the same crop year (other than under an established practice of double cropping), the owner may elect the commodity to be used for that crop year in determining the 4-year average but may not include both the initial commodity and the subsequent commodity. The section requires that the reallocation of base acres may not result in a total number of base acres (including generic base) for the farm that exceed the number of base acres in effect on the farm on September 30, 2013. The section requires that the election made by an owner on a farm or deemed to be made applies to

all covered commodities on the farm. With respect to provisions concerning the adjustment of base acres, prevention of excess base acres, and reduction in base acres, reference is made to generic base instead of cotton. (Section 1112)

(4) Payment yields

The House bill maintains the provisions of section 1102 of the 2008 Farm Bill except it drops the directive that the Secretary establish yields for eligible pulse crops and directs the Secretary to establish yields for designated oilseeds not established under section 1102 of the 2008 Farm Bill rather than the 2002 Farm Bill. The section requires that if no payment yield is otherwise established the Secretary must establish an appropriate payment yield. In establishing appropriate payment yields, the Secretary is required to take into consideration payment yields applicable to the covered commodity for similarly situated farms. The section authorizes owners to update yields on a commodity-by-commodity basis for purposes of price loss coverage payments. Owners must make an election to update yields to be in effect beginning with the 2014 crop year. The section requires that payment yields under any updated yield would be 90 percent of the average of the yield per planted acre for the 2008 through 2012 crop years, as determined by the Secretary, excluding crop years in which the acreage planted to the commodity was zero. The section provides that if the yield per planted acre for any of the 2008 through 2012 crop years was less than 75 percent of the average of the 2008 through 2012 county yields, the Secretary must assign a yield for the crop year equal to 75 percent of the average of the 2008 through 2012 county yield for purposes of determining the average yield under an update. The section requires that, in the case of a yield update, if no payment yield is otherwise established the Secretary must establish an appropriate payment yield. In establishing appropriate payment yields in the case of an update, the Secretary is required to take into consideration payment yields applicable to the covered commodity for similarly situated farms. (Section 1106)

The Senate amendment contains similar provisions relative to yields for designated oilseeds but adds eligible pulse crops and refers to section 1102 of the 2002 Farm Bill rather than section 1102 of the 2008 Farm Bill. The provision also allows a yield update for rice and a yield update for peanuts if the producer elected to update base. (Section 1106)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that the Secretary shall provide for the establishment of a yield for any designated oilseed for which a payment yield was not established under the 2008 Farm Bill for purposes of price loss coverage only; the substitute omits the requirement that in the case of establishing yields for designated oilseeds, if historic yield data is not available, the Secretary must use a specified ratio for dry peas; and the language clarifies that the payment yield update opportunity is with respect to each covered commodity, and that the election to update yields would take effect beginning with the 2014 crop year. (Section 1113)

For those producers with no payment yield, the Managers intend that, with respect to the yield update offered under section 1113, the Secretary will assign the producer a payment yield using similarly situated farms prior to offering the opportunity to update their yield.

(5) Farm Risk Management Election

The House bill requires the Secretary to make required payments under Price Loss Coverage (PLC) or Revenue Loss Coverage (RLC) with respect to covered commodities of producers on a farm except that PLC or RLC payments may not be made on farms with 10 acres or less of planted acres of a covered commodity unless in the case of socially disadvantaged or limited resource farmers or ranchers. In the case of PLC, for the 2014 and subsequent crop years the Secretary is required to make payments on a covered commodity when the effective price for the crop year is less than the reference price, with the effective price being the higher of the midseason price or the national average loan rate for the covered commodity. The section provides a payment rate equal to the difference between the reference price and the effective price and that the payment amount is to be equal to the product when multiplying the payment rate, the payment yield, and the payment acres. The section requires that payments be made on October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. The Secretary is required to use an all-barley price when determining the effective price for barley, and a reference price for Temperate Japonica Rice that is 115 percent of the reference price for long grain and medium grain rice. Reference prices, provided in the definitions section, are: wheat, \$5.50 per bushel; corn, \$3.70 per bushel; grain sorghum, \$3.95 per bushel; barley, \$4.95 per bushel; oats, \$2.40 per bushel; long grain rice, \$14.00 per cwt.; medium grain rice, \$14.00 per cwt.; soybeans, \$8.40 per bushel; other oilseeds, \$20.15 per cwt.; peanuts \$535.00 per ton; dry peas, \$11.00 per cwt.; lentils, \$19.97 per cwt.; small chickpeas, \$19.04 per cwt.; large chickpeas, \$21.54 per cwt. The section offers RLC as an alternative to PLC that owners on the farm have a one-time, irrevocable election to make on a covered commodity-by-covered commodity basis. The section provides that if any owners of the farm make different elections with respect to the same covered commodity, all owners of the farm will be deemed to have not elected RLC. The section requires the Secretary to make an RLC payment for the 2014 and subsequent crop years when the actual county revenue for a covered commodity in a crop year is less than the county revenue loss trigger for the commodity for the crop year. The section requires that RLC payments be made on October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. The section provides that actual county revenue is the product of multiplying the actual county yield for each planted acre of the covered commodity in a crop year by the higher of the midseason price or the national average loan rate for the covered commodity. The section provides that the county RLC trigger is equal to 85 percent of the benchmark county revenue which is the product of multiplying the average historical county yield for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding the high and the low, by the average national marketing year average price for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding the high and the low. The section provides a yield plug of 70 percent of the transitional yield where historical county yield is less than 70 percent of that transitional yield, and a price plug, the reference price for the covered commodity, where the national marketing year average price is lower than the reference price. The section provides that the payment rate for RLC is equal to the lesser of 10 percent of the benchmark county revenue for the covered commodity for the crop year, or the difference between the

county RLC trigger and the actual county revenue. The section provides a payment amount equal to the product of the payment rate multiplied by the payment acres of the covered commodity. The section imposes duties on the Secretary to ensure that producers on the farm do not reconstitute the farm to void or change the election made between PLC and RLC; use all available information and analysis to check for anomalies in RLC payments; to provide separate county RLC trigger and actual county revenue for covered commodities by irrigation practice; assign a benchmark yield on the basis of yield history of representative farms in a state, region, or crop reporting district where the Secretary cannot establish the benchmark county yield in a county or the yield otherwise determined is unrepresentative of the average yield for the county; and ensure that producers on the farm suffered an actual loss when receiving an RLC payment. The section requires a report to Congress on the cost of PLC and RLC and their effect on planting, production, price, and exports. The section also imposes a cap on total cost of PLC and RLC. (Section 1107)

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to make Adverse Market Payments (AMP) to eligible producers for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years. The section requires a payment any time that the actual price for a covered commodity is less than the reference price. The section establishes the actual price at a level equal to the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year or the national average loan rate. The actual price for rice is determined in the same way except separately for long grain rice and medium grain rice. The section establishes reference prices at 55 percent of the average national marketing year average price for the most recent 5 crop years, dropping the high and the low except that for long grain rice and medium grain rice the reference price will be \$13.30 per hundredweight and for peanuts the reference price will be \$523.77 per ton. The section provides that the payment rate will be the difference by which the reference price exceeds the actual price, and that the payment amount is calculated by multiplying the payment rate by the payment acres and payment yield. The section requires the Secretary to determine actual price and reference price by type or class for sunflowers; barley, using malting values; and wheat. The section provides that payments must be made by October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. (Section 1107)

The Senate amendment also authorizes Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) payments for the 2014 through 2018 crop years. The section requires producers to make a one time, irrevocable election to receive individual coverage or county coverage where there is sufficient county data. The election would bind the producer with respect to all acres under the operational control of the producer, including acres brought under the control of the producer after the election is made. Acres no longer under the producer's operational control after an election are not subject to the producer's election but the election of the subsequent producer. The section requires the Secretary to ensure that producers do not take actions to alter or reverse their elections. An ARC payment is required whenever the actual crop revenue for the covered commodity is less than the ARC guarantee. The section provides that payments are to be made on October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. The section provides that actual crop revenue is the product

of the multiplication of the actual average individual yield (for individual coverage) or the actual average yield for the county (for county coverage) and the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year or, if applicable, the reference price established for the covered commodity under section 1107. The section provides that the ARC guarantee is equal to 88 percent of the benchmark revenue. The section requires that the benchmark revenue be the product of multiplying the average individual yield for the most recent 5 crop years, dropping the high and the low (for individual coverage) or the average county yield for the most recent 5 crop years, dropping the high and the low (for county coverage) by the average national marketing year average price for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding the high and the low. The section provides a 60 percent yield plug for the 2013 and prior crop years and a 65 percent yield plug for the 2014 and subsequent crop years. The section establishes a payment rate equal to the lesser of the amount that the ARC guarantee exceeds the actual crop revenue or 10 percent of the benchmark revenue for the covered commodity. The section established a payment amount at an amount equal to the product obtained by multiplying the payment rate by 65 percent of the planted eligible acres and 45 percent of the eligible acres that were prevented from being planted (for individual coverage) and by 80 percent and 45 percent, respectively (for county coverage). The section imposes duties on the Secretary including using all available information and analysis to check for anomalies in ARC payments; to calculate separate actual crop revenue and ARC guarantees by irrigation practice; differentiate by type or class the national average price for sunflowers; barley, using malting barley values; and wheat; and assign yields on the basis of yield history of representative farms in the state, region, or crop reporting districts if the Secretary cannot establish a county yield if the yield otherwise determined is unrepresentative of an average yield for the covered commodity. (Section 1108)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendments. The substitute creates a new section, section 1115, establishing rules for a producer election between PLC and ARC. For the 2014 through 2018 crop years the substitute requires all of the producers on a farm to make a 1-time, irrevocable election to receive price loss coverage on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis or agriculture risk coverage. The substitute requires that producers on a farm that elect ARC must unanimously select whether to receive county coverage on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis or individual coverage applicable to all of the covered commodities on the farm. The substitute provides that if all the producers on a farm fail to make a unanimous election for the 2014 crop year, the Secretary may not make any ARC or PLC payments with respect to the farm for the 2014 crop year and the producers on the farm will be deemed to have elected PLC for all covered commodities on the farm for the 2015 through 2018 crop years. The substitute provides that if all the producers on a farm select ARC county coverage for a covered commodity, the Secretary may not make PLC payments to the producers on the farm for that covered commodity. The substitute provides that if all the producers on a farm select individual ARC coverage, the Secretary must consider for purposes of making specified calculations

the producer's share of all farms in the same State in which the producer has an interest and for which individual coverage has been selected. Finally, the substitute requires the Secretary to ensure that producers on a farm do not reconstitute the farm to void or change an election or selection made.

The Conference substitute provides, in section 1116, that if all of the producers on a farm make an election to receive PLC for a covered commodity or are deemed to have made such an election, then the Secretary shall make PLC payments to producers on the farm on a covered commodity-by-covered-commodity basis if the Secretary determines that, for any of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the effective price for a covered commodity is less than the reference price in a crop year. The section establishes that the effective price for a covered commodity is the higher of the national average market price during the 12-month marketing year or the national average loan rate. The section provides that the payment rate is equal to the difference between the reference price and the effective price. The section further provides that the payment amount shall be the product of multiplying the payment rate, the payment yield, and the payment acres and that payments are to be made by October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. The section requires that the all-barley price is to be used when determining the effective price for barley, and that the reference price for Temperate Japonica Rice is 115 percent of the reference price for long grain or medium grain rice. Reference prices are the same as provided in the House bill.

The Conference substitute, in section 1117, also includes the ARC that closely mirrors the Senate provision with some modifications. The substitute provides that if all producers on a farm make an election to receive ARC, then ARC payments are required to be made to producers on the farm when the Secretary determines that, for any of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, actual crop revenue is less than the ARC guarantee for a crop year. The section provides that actual crop revenue for a county is equal to the product obtained when multiplying the actual average county yield per planted acre for the covered commodity and the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year or the national average loan rate. The section provides that in the case of individual ARC, the actual crop revenue for a producer for a crop is based on the producer's share of all covered commodities planted on all farms in which the producer has an interest and for which individual coverage has been selected, to be determined by the Secretary as follows: for each covered commodity, by obtaining the product of multiplying the total production of the covered commodity on the farm by the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year or the national average loan rate; by then determining the sum of the amounts determined, above, for all covered commodities on the farm; and then arriving at the quotient obtained when dividing the amount, immediately above, by the total planted acres of all covered commodities on the farms. The section provides that the ARC guarantee for a covered commodity in a crop year is 86 percent of the benchmark revenue, which for county coverage is the product obtained by multiplying the average historical yield for the most recent 5 crop years, excluding the high and the low, by the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year for the most

recent 5 crop years, dropping the high and the low. The section provides that benchmark revenue for individual coverage is based on the producer's share of all covered commodities planted on all farms which the producer has an interest and for which individual coverage has been selected to be determined by the Secretary as follows: for each covered commodity for each of the most recent 5 years, the product obtained by multiplying the yield per planted acre for the covered commodity on the farm by the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year; for each covered commodity, the average of the revenues determined above for the most recent 5 crops, dropping the high and the low; for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years, the sum of the amounts determined immediately above for all covered commodities on the farms, but adjusted to reflect the ratio between the total number of acres planted on the farms to a covered commodity and the total acres of all covered commodities planted on the farms. The section provides a yield plug of 70 percent of the transitional yield when the yield per planted acre or historical county yield for any of the 5 most recent crop years is less than 70 percent of the transitional yield, and a price plug equal to the reference price for the covered commodity when the national average market price received by producers during the 12-month marketing year for any of the 5 most recent crop years is lower than the reference price. The section establishes that the payment rate is equal to the lesser of the amount that the ARC guarantee exceeds the actual crop revenue or 10 percent of the benchmark revenue. The section further provides that the payment amount is to be determined by multiplying the payment rate by the payment acres determined under section 1114, and that payments are required to be made by October 1 or as soon as practicable thereafter. The section imposes duties on the Secretary to use all available information and analysis to check for anomalies in ARC payments; to provide separate actual crop revenue and ARC guarantees for a covered commodity by irrigation practice; assign an individual yield for a farm on the basis of the yield history of representative farms in the state, region, or crop reporting district if the farm has planted acreage in a quantity that is insufficient to calculate a representative average yield for the farm; and assign a benchmark county yield for each planted acre on the basis of the yield history of representative farms in the state, region, or crop reporting district where the Secretary cannot establish the actual or benchmark county yield or the yield calculated is an unrepresentative average yield. (Sections 1115, 1116, and 1117)

The Managers recognize that all producers on the farm have a one-time opportunity to elect either PLC or ARC for each crop on the farm on a commodity-by-commodity basis, with the exception that if a producer elects individual-level ARC, the producer must elect individual-level ARC for all crops on the farm. However, the Managers intend for USDA to have an annual signup to participate in the program for the applicable year based on the producer election that was made. The Managers stress that FSA has always had an annual signup into available programs, which is simply a decision to participate in a given year. Absent an annual signup, producers may well fail to notify FSA of ownership changes, complete AGI certifications, and other information required to be provided by the producer to

FSA. The signup period is the one time each year where producers are certain to complete all of the necessary records and forms.

(6) *Producer Agreements*

The House bill, in section 1108, retains a producer agreement requirement from the 2008 Farm Bill except that benefits under this subtitle are referred to rather than 2008 subtitle programs and planting flexibility, agricultural and conserving use, and production report requirements are dropped, as is a provision that prohibits any benefit penalties against a producer for an inaccurate acreage or production report unless the producer knowingly and willfully falsified the reports.

The Senate amendment is similar except agricultural and conserving uses and production reports requirements and prohibition on penalties are not dropped as compared to the 2008 Farm Bill. The section includes a data reporting requirement that the Secretary must use data reported by the producer to meet crop insurance requirements to meet acreage reporting and production reporting requirements, and the section clarifies that producers are required to meet the noxious weed control requirement if the agriculture or conserving use involves non-cultivation of any portion of land referenced in the agriculture and conserving use requirement provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except agricultural and conserving use requirements under the 2008 Farm Bill are retained and certain production reports are required. (Section 1118)

(7) *Senate Amendment*

The Senate amendment provides that Sections 1104 (Definitions) through 1109 (Producer Agreements) shall be effective beginning with the 2014 crop year of each covered commodity through the 2018 crop year. (Section 1110)

The House bill provides no comparable provision and instead indicates in each section that the provision applies for the 2014 and each subsequent crop year.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate effective period for sections 1111 (Definitions) through 1118 (producer agreements).

(8) *Availability of marketing assistance loans*

The House bill extends the 2008 Farm Bill's provision requiring the availability of non-recourse marketing assistance loans for loan commodities for the 2014 and succeeding crop years except that peanuts are included in the definition of loan commodity rather than there being a separate section of the law providing loan assistance for peanuts. The special rules for peanuts authorized under the 2008 Farm Bill are also carried over into this section. (Section 1201)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill except that the provision is reauthorized through 2018 and requires producers to agree to use the land on the farm for an agriculture or conserving use, and to effectively control noxious weeds and maintain the land in accordance with sound agricultural practices if it involves the noncultivation of any portion of the land. The Secretary is required under the provision to issue rules necessary to enforce compliance. The section also authorizes the Secretary to modify the requirements of this section if the modification is consistent with the purposes of this subsection. (Section 1201)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that the provision of loans is required for the 2014 through 2018 crop years. (Section 1201)

The Managers intend that Subtitle B, including but not limited to the Marketing Assistance Loan Program, the Economic Adjustment Assistance Program, and the ELS Competitiveness Program, will be administered in the same manner as under the 2008 Farm Bill.

(9) Loan Rates for Nonrecourse Marketing Assistance Loans

The House bill extends the 2008 Farm Bill's provision establishing loan rates for non-recourse marketing assistance loans for the 2014 and succeeding crop years except the loan rate for upland cotton is established at the simple average of the adjusted prevailing world price for the two immediately preceding marketing years, as determined by the Secretary and announced October 1 preceding the next domestic plantings but in no case may the loan rate be less than 47 cents per pound or more than 52 cents per pound. The section also includes an extension of the 2008 Farm Bill's loan rate for peanuts. (Section 1202)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision except that the loan rates are extended through the 2018 crop year and the minimum loan rate for upland cotton is established at 45 cents per pound. (Section 1202)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 1202)

The Managers stress that the loan rate reduction authority granted under this section is intended to address the cotton domestic support elements of Brazil's dispute with the United States (WT/DS 267) before the World Trade Organization. This authority is in addition to other reforms to U.S. cotton policy made by the 2014 Farm Bill, including repeal of the suite of commodity policies made available to cotton producers under the 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills, the ineligibility of cotton producers to participate in successor policies contained in the 2014 Farm Bill, the authorization of expenditure of funds in connection with certain research and development activities on behalf of Brazilian cotton, and other reforms, including with respect to the export credit guarantee elements of the dispute, statutory reforms to the GSM 102 Export Credit Guarantee Program. The Managers intend that these reforms lead to a negotiated resolution of the dispute.

(10) Repayment of Loans

The House bill generally extends the repayment of loan provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill for the 2014 and succeeding crop years except the section incorporates peanuts consistent with repayment provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill for that crop, and provides for a 10 percent reduction in cotton storage payment rates as compared to the rates in effect for the 2006 crop year. (Section 1204)

The Senate bill is similar to the House Bill provisions except that the provision is authorized for the 2014 through 2018 crop years and cotton storage payment rates are reduced by 20 percent as compared to the rates in effect for the 2006 crop year. (Section 1204)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that the provision is reauthorized for the 2014 through 2018 crop years. (Section 1204)

(11) Loan Deficiency Payments

The House bill extends the provision in the 2008 Farm Bill requiring loan deficiency payments for the 2014 crop year and each succeeding crop year. (Section 1205)

The Senate bill is similar to the House bill except loan deficiency payments are authorized for the 2014 through 2018 crop years. (Section 1205)

The Conference Substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 1205)

(12) Payments in Lieu of LDPs for Grazed Acreage

The House bill extends such provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill for the 2014 and succeeding crop years but used the payment yield under price loss coverage rather than the direct payment for purposes of calculating payment quantity. (Section 1206)

The Senate amendment is similar except the provision applies to the 2014 through 2018 crop years and uses the payment yield for the agriculture risk coverage program as well as the payment yield for the 2008 Farm Bill in the case of a farm without a payment yield for wheat. (Section 1206)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except the payments are required for the 2014 through 2018 crop years. (Section 1206)

(13) Special Marketing Loan Provisions for Upland Cotton

The House bill extends the provision of the 2008 Farm Bill authorizing the President to carry out a special import quota starting August 1, 2014 and a limited global import quota. The section authorizes the use of official data of USDA if available or estimates of the Secretary in carrying out the section. The section also provides for economic adjustment assistance to users of upland cotton at 3 cents per pound beginning August 1, 2013. (Section 1207)

The Senate provision provides for economic adjustment assistance similar to the House except the 3 cents per pound amount begins August 1, 2012. (Section 1207)

Conference substitute adopts the House provision except the starting date of the special import quota is August 1, 2014 and the 3 cent per pound economic adjustment assistance begins August 1, 2013. (Section 1207)

(14) Special Competitive Provisions for Extra Long Staple Cotton

The House bill permanently extends current law in this regard. (Section 1208)

The Senate amendment extends current law through July 31, 2019, beginning on the date of enactment of this Act. (Section 1208)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that the program is authorized beginning on the date of enactment through July 31, 2019. (Section 1208)

(15) Availability of Recourse Loans for High Moisture Feed Grains and Seed Cotton

The House bill extends the provision of the 2008 Farm Bill providing recourse loans for the 2014 and each succeeding crop year except for purposes of calculating the quantity of corn or grain sorghum, the lower of the farm program payment yield used to make payments under the new Farm Bill or the actual yield is used instead of the lower of the countercyclical payment yield under the 2008 Farm Bill or the actual yield. (Section 1209)

The Senate amendment is similar except recourse loans are extended for the 2014 through 2018 crop years and the calculation is based on the lower of the actual average yield used to make payments under the new Farm Bill or the actual yield. (Section 1209)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that the recourse loans are required for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.

(16) Adjustments of Loans

The House bill is the same as current law except any adjustments must be made so the average loan level for the commodity will be equal to the level of support determined in accordance with this subtitle and subtitle C

and revisions to quality adjustments for upland cotton provision is deleted. (Section 1210)

The Senate amendment is similar except the average loan level must be equal to the level of support determined under this subtitle and subtitles C through E, revisions to quality adjustment for upland cotton provision is retained, and authority is provided to revise or revoke any actions taken pursuant to that revision authority. (Section 1210)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(17) Sugar Policy

The House bill permanently extends current sugar policy for the 2012 crop year and each succeeding crop year. (Section 1301)

The Senate amendment extends current sugar policy for each of the 2014 through 2018 crop years. (Section 1301)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision, extending current sugar policy for the 2012 through 2018 crop years.

(18) Definitions for the Dairy Producer Margin Insurance Program

The House bill defines the new terms and establishes the Dairy Producer Margin program in the new section 1511(a) of the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment is similar and gives the definitions for the "Dairy Margin Protection Program" and the "Dairy Market Stabilization Program". (Section 1401)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment replaces the term "Dairy Producer" with "Dairy Operation"; the "Margin Insurance Program" is instead referred to as the "Margin Protection Program"; and definitions are included for "Margin Protection Program Payment" and "Secretary". (Section 1401)

(19) Calculation of Average Feed and Actual Dairy Production

The House bill establishes the calculation for the average feed cost and actual dairy producer margins. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision but it includes provisions unique to the stabilization program. (Section 1402)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to include Senate language related to the time for calculation. (Section 1402)

(20) Establishment of Dairy Producer Margin Insurance Program

The House bill establishes the Dairy Producer Margin Insurance Program to be effective October 1, 2013. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment similarly establishes the Dairy Product Margin Protection Program, but requires the program be effective not later than 120 days after the effective date of this subtitle. (Section 1411)

The Conference substitute directs the Secretary to establish a margin protection program for dairy producers not later than September 1, 2014. (Section 1403)

(21) Eligibility and Registration of Dairy Producers for Margin Insurance Program

The House bill requires that all dairy producers in the United States shall be eligible to participate in the margin insurance program. It sets out an annual registration process and provides for retroactivity of the program. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision but does not provide for retroactivity of the program. It instead provides for a transition period from MILC to

the Production Margin Protection Program and describes rules and restrictions for producers during this period. It establishes an annual administrative fee schedule for producers to participate in the Production Margin Protection Program. It also establishes a fund for the use of fees collected and authorizes a range of uses for this fund. It prohibits a producer from participating in both the Livestock Margin Program and the Production Margin Protection Program. (Section 1412)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment eliminates the tiered fee structure and waiver and instead requires that all participating producers pay a single annual fee of \$100. The Secretary is authorized to specify the manner and form in which producers may register. (Section 1404)

(22) *Production History of Participating Dairy Producers*

The House bill requires the Secretary to determine the production history of each producer in the margin insurance program and allows for annual updates. Annual updates are based on the producer's highest annual milk marketings during any of the 3 immediately preceding calendar years. It provides a mechanism for the Secretary to determine production history of producers in operation for less than one year. It lists the required information a participating dairy producer must submit to the Secretary for establishing production history. It details how production history is transferred by sale or by lease. It prohibits the producer to whom the production history is transferred from choosing a different coverage level. It prohibits the Secretary from transferring production history established for a new entrant to another person. It allows the production history of a producer to move to a new location with the producer. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment is specific to basic margin protection which has a one-time registration without opportunity for annual updating of the producer's production history. It requires the Secretary to determine the actual production history of a producer who purchases supplemental production coverage. It sets out a new producer's options to determine basic production history. Similar to the House bill, it lists the required information a participating dairy producer must submit to the Secretary for establishing production history. It requires the Secretary to specify how production history is to be transferred. Similar to the House bill, it prohibits the producer to whom the production history is transferred from choosing a different coverage level and also extends the prohibition to transfers within the supplemental production margin protection program. It allows the basic and annual production history of a producer to move to a new location with the producer. (Section 1413) It allows a participating dairy operation to purchase supplemental production margin protection. (Section 1415)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. It sets production history equal to the highest annual milk marketings from the 2011, 2012, or 2013 calendar years. The Secretary shall adjust the production history to reflect any increase in the national average milk production. New dairy operations shall elect one of two methods to establish production history: (1) the volume of actual milk marketings for the months the dairy operation has been in operation extrapolated to a yearly amount; or (2) an estimate of the actual milk mar-

ketings based on herd size relative to the national herd average data published by the Secretary. (Section 1405)

(23) *Margin Insurance*

The House bill allows a participating dairy producer to annually purchase margin insurance. The producer shall elect a coverage level between \$4 and \$8. It requires a producer to select a coverage percentage between 25 percent and 80 percent of production history. It sets the margin insurance payment for a consecutive 2-month period equal to the product of the shortfall in actual margins below a chosen threshold, the coverage percentage selected by the producer, and the lesser of the producer's actual marketings or actual production history. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to make a payment whenever the margin for a 2-month period is less than \$4 per cwt. It sets the basic margin production payment amount equal to the product of multiplying the difference between the average actual product margin and \$4 by the lesser of: 80% of production history, divided by 6; or the actual quantity of milk marketed by the dairy operation during the 2 month period. (Section 1414)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment allows for coverage percentages between 25 percent and 90 percent. (Section 1406)

(24) *Producer Premiums*

The House bill requires a participating producer to pay an annual premium. It sets the premium schedule for the first 4 million pounds of milk. It also sets the premium schedule for production in excess of 4 million pounds. It establishes a schedule for the timing of premium payments including options for subsequent years, single annual payments, and semi-annual payments. It sets out the producer premium obligations including a pro-ration of the first year obligations, and a legal obligation to pay the premium except in the case of death and retirement. It requires that a producer shall receive a margin insurance payment whenever the average actual producer margin is less than the coverage threshold selected by the producer. It requires the Secretary to make margin insurance payments when the average actual production for a consecutive two-month period is less than the coverage level threshold selected by the dairy producer. It allows the Secretary to use the funds of the CCC to carry out this section. It establishes that the program start date is October 1, 2013. (Section 1401)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House bill, but contains slight differences in premiums. It requires the Secretary to provide for more than one method by which a dairy operation can pay premiums. Unlike the House bill, it allows the Secretary to waive the legal obligation to pay the premium in case of death, retirement, or other circumstances as the Secretary considers appropriate. It establishes the payment threshold and calculation method for Supplemental Production Margin Payments. (Section 1415)

The Conference substitute includes premium schedules for the first 4 million pounds of production and for production in excess of 4 million pounds. The premiums for the first 4 million pounds are reduced by 25 percent for calendar years 2014 and 2015. (Section 1407)

(25) *Establishment of the Dairy Market Stabilization Program*

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to establish and administer a dairy

market stabilization program applicable to participating dairy operations for the purpose of assisting in balancing the supply of milk with demand. (Section 1431)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(26) *Threshold for Implementation and Reduction in Dairy Payments*

The Senate amendment provides that the Secretary shall announce that the stabilization program is in effect and order reduced payments by handlers to participating dairy operations that exceed the applicable percentage of the participating dairy operation's stabilization program base under certain circumstances. (Section 1432)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(27) *Milk Marketings Information*

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to establish a process to collect from participating dairy operations and handlers such information that the Secretary considers necessary for each month during which the stabilization program is in effect. (Section 1433)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position (but see Section 1405(c)).

(28) *Calculation and Collection of Reduced Dairy Operation Payments*

The Senate amendment requires each handler, during any month in which payment reductions are in effect under the stabilization program, to reduce payments to each participating dairy operation from whom the handler receives milk. (Section 1435)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(29) *Remitting Funds to the Secretary and Use of Funds*

The Senate amendment requires, as soon as practicable after the end of each month during which payment reductions are in effect under the stabilization program, each handler to remit to the Secretary an amount equal to the amount by which payments to participating dairy operations are reduced by the handler under section 1434. (Section 1435)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(30) *Suspension of Reduced Payment Requirement*

The Senate amendment requires reduced payments to be suspended under certain circumstances. (Section 1436)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(31) *Enforcement*

The Senate amendment makes it unlawful and a violation of this subpart for any person subject to the stabilization program to willfully fail, refuse to provide, or delay the timely reporting of accurate information and remittance of funds to the Secretary. (Section 1437)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(32) Audit Requirements

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to conduct audits to ensure compliance by participating dairy operations and handlers with the stabilization program. (Section 1438)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(33) Study; Report

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist, to conduct a study of the impacts of the program established under section 1431(a). (Section 1451)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(34) Duration

The Senate amendment terminates the production margin protection program and the stabilization program on December 31, 2018. (Section 1439)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 1409)

(35) Rulemaking

The House bill requires the promulgation of regulations for the initiation of the margin insurance program. It also requires administration of the margin insurance program to comply with the Administrative Procedure Act, but does not require compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act. It repeals the deadline for the Secretary to consider the state of California's reentry into the federal milk marketing order system. (Section 1402)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to promulgate regulations to address administrative and enforcement issues involved in carrying out the production margin protection, supplemental production margin protection, and market stabilization programs. It also requires regulations for an appeals process. (Section 1452)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment requires the Secretary to promulgate regulations to address administrative and enforcement issues and prohibit reconstitution of a dairy operation for the purpose of the dairy producer receiving margin protection payments. (Section 1410)

The Managers intend for the Secretary to conduct a hearing prior to the issuance of an order designating the State of California as a Federal milk marketing order. The provision provides the Secretary of Agriculture with the discretion, if a California Federal milk marketing order is requested, to recognize the longstanding California quota system, established under state marketing regulations, in whatever manner is appropriate on the basis of a rulemaking hearing record.

Section 1504 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 amended the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c) to establish timeframes for the hearing process for amending federal milk marketing orders. The Managers expect the Secretary to adhere to such timeframes, to the maximum extent practicable, for the process of designating California as a Federal milk marketing order.

(36) Dairy Product Mandatory Reporting

The Senate amendment changes the dairy product mandatory reporting process so that each manufacturer has to report to the Sec-

retary, more frequently than once per month, information concerning the price, quantity, and moisture content of dairy products sold by the manufacturer. (Section 1461)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(37) Federal Milk Marketing Order Program Pre-Hearing Procedure for Class III pricing

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to use the pre-hearing procedure described in this section to consider alternative formulas for Class III milk product pricing under section 8c of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937. (Section 1462)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

The Managers have heard concerns from various dairy stakeholders in regards to the Class III and Class IV milk product pricing systems. The Managers recognize that the Secretary has the authority and ability to conduct a pre-hearing procedure to consider alternative pricing formulas for Class III and Class IV milk products. If petitioned by industry, the Secretary is encouraged to engage in public, pre-hearing information sessions that allow the opportunity for interested parties to discuss alternative price formula proposals. The Managers believe that through review of proposals from interested parties, this process will help address concerns from industry, assist with the stabilization of the price of milk and provide greater certainty for dairy producers. It is the Managers understanding that the Dairy Industry Advisory Committee has recommended that the Secretary take such action and review interested party proposals to address Class III and Class IV pricing formula changes in this participatory and transparent manner.

(38) Repeal of Dairy product Support and MILC programs

The House bill repeals both sections of current law that establish the dairy product support and MILC programs. (Section 1411)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House bill but continues MILC payments at the 45% payment rate through June 30, 2014. MILC is repealed effective July 1, 2014. It repeals the Dairy Export Incentive Program, and extends the Dairy Forward Pricing Program, the Dairy Indemnity Program, and the Dairy Promotion and Research Program. (Sections 1471–1475)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provisions. (Section 1422)

(39) Repeal of the Federal Milk Marketing Order Review Commission

The House bill repeals section 1509 of the Food, Conservation Act of 2008. (Section 1416)

The Senate amendment extends the order review commission. (Section 1476)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 1427)

(40) Federal Milk Marketing Orders

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to provide an analysis on the effects of amending each Federal milk marketing order issued under section 8c of the Agricultural Adjustment Act. (Section 1481)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(41) Supplemental Agriculture Disaster Assistance

The House bill provides definitions as necessary to carry out the Livestock Indemnity Program. The provision requires Livestock Indemnity Payments to be made to eligible producers from funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) for fiscal year 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year with respect to livestock losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather or attacks by federally reintroduced animals, including wolves or avian predators. The provision provides for an indemnity rate of 75% of the market value of the applicable livestock. The provision provides definitions as necessary to carry out the Livestock Forage Program. The provision requires that, for the 2012 and each succeeding fiscal year, the Livestock Forage Program must provide compensation from the funds of the CCC for losses to eligible livestock producers due to grazing losses on account of prescribed drought conditions or fire. The provision provides that an eligible producer may receive assistance only for grazing losses for covered livestock on land that is native or improved pastureland with permanent vegetative cover or is planted to a crop for the purpose of providing grazing for covered livestock. The provision excludes assistance for grazing losses on land used for haying or grazing under a CRP contract. The provision establishes that in the case of drought, a payment rate for a single month is to be equal to 60 percent of the lesser of the monthly feed cost for covered livestock, owned or leased, or the monthly feed cost calculated by using the normal carrying capacity of the eligible grazing land. The provision requires a payment rate of 80 percent of the aforementioned payment rate in the case of an eligible livestock producer that sold or disposed of livestock due to drought in one or both of the two production years preceding the current production year. The provision also prescribes the means by which monthly feed costs, feed grain equivalents, and corn price per pound are determined. The provision requires the Secretary to determine normal carrying capacity and normal grazing period in the county served by the applicable committee and prohibits any change in the determination without the request of the State and county FSA committees. The provision establishes a schedule of payments to be made to producers in D2, D3, and D4 drought conditions as follows: D2 for at least 8 consecutive weeks, 1 monthly payment; D3 for any period, 3 monthly payments; D3 for at least 4 weeks or D4 any time, 4 monthly payments; D4 for at least 4 weeks, 5 monthly payments. The provision establishes assistance for eligible livestock producers that sustain grazing losses on federal lands when a federal agency prohibits grazing on the federal lands due to fire at a rate equal to 50 percent of the monthly feed cost. The provision further establishes that such producers are eligible for assistance beginning on the date they are denied grazing on federal lands until such time that their lease expires. The provision prohibits duplicative drought and fire payments covering the same losses. The provision requires the Secretary to use not more than \$20 million of CCC funds for each of the 2012 and succeeding fiscal years to provide emergency relief to eligible producers of livestock, honey bees, and farm raised fish to help in the reduction of losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions not covered under Livestock Indemnity Payments or the Livestock Forage Disaster Program. The provision requires that funds be used to reduce losses

due to feed or water shortages, disease, or other factors determined by the Secretary and that the funds be available until expended. The provision contains definitions as necessary to carry out the Tree Assistance Program. The provision requires the Secretary to use CCC funds for each of the 2012 and subsequent fiscal years to provide assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers that planted and lost trees intended for commercial purposes due to natural disaster, and orchardists and nursery tree growers that have a production history for commercial purposes but lost trees due to natural disaster. The provision requires a tree mortality loss in excess of 15 percent to qualify for assistance with assistance consisting of 65 percent of the cost of replanting trees lost in excess of 15 percent or, at the Secretary's discretion, sufficient seedling to reestablish a stand, and 50 percent of the cost of pruning, removal, and other costs incurred to salvage existing trees or to prepare land to replant trees, in excess of 15 percent. The provision establishes a \$125,000 payment limit under the Tree Assistance Program, with a 500 acre cap as well. The provision also provides for a \$125,000 payment limit on assistance provided under section 1501, with direct attribution requirements. The provision omits the minimum risk management purchase requirement and does not reauthorize the SURE program of the 2008 Farm Bill. (Section 1501)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision, except that definitions vary; programs required under subtitle E are authorized for the 2014 through 2018 fiscal years; payment rates under the Livestock Indemnity Program are established at 65 percent of the market value; the functions of other programs are folded into the Livestock Forage Program, including the noninsured crop disaster program, the emergency assistance for livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish program, and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program; Livestock Forage Disaster Program assistance is not excluded on CRP contract acreage if the land is grassland eligible; the monthly payment rate under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program is 50 percent; the calculation for determining the corn price per pound is based on a different corn price; the normal grazing period under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program may not exceed 240 days; the drought intensity payment schedule is distinguished from the House bill as follows: D3 at any time, 2 monthly payments, and D3 for 4 weeks or D4 at any time, 3 monthly payments; authorizes annual payments based on drought determined by means other than the drought monitor and assistance for eligible forage losses due to other than drought or fire; up to \$15 million for each fiscal year is authorized under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish; the payment limits imposed on the Tree Assistance Program is \$100,000 and the limit under the section is also \$100,000; and the timing of payments is prescribed. (Section 1501)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 1501)

The Managers intend that, with respect to any livestock program signup for 2012, 2013, or 2014, the Secretary be flexible in establishing signup deadlines. In past years, when livestock programs have had a firm signup date for one year and another signup begins for the following year soon thereafter, it is easy for producers to confuse the years for which an application has been filed and those that have not. Limited county office budgets

for mailings exacerbate this problem. The Managers also recognize that in many cases producers will have to compile records on livestock inventories by type and weight along with the number of livestock purchased and sold, for example, for much of the past three years. As such, the Managers intend that, with regard to 2012 and 2013, the Secretary take into consideration that the compilation of records by the producer can be extremely difficult or even impossible and to exercise flexibility when determining what constitutes an acceptable record.

(42) *National Drought Council and National Drought Policy Action Plan*

The House bill establishes in the Office of the Secretary a "National Drought Council." (Section 1502)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the House provision.

Significant droughts have occurred in the United States more than a dozen times since 1900. The 2012 drought, while serious, was not unprecedented. The U.S. has faced similar or worse conditions in the 1930's, 1950's and 1988. However, the period from 2000–2013 was the worst consecutive period of drought since the 1930's, surpassing that of the 1950's. The drought conditions throughout the United States in 2012 had an estimated cost of \$30 billion to the agriculture sector alone. Impacts were also felt by communities through losses due to reduced water and energy resources, reduced recreation revenue, increased wildfires, and dust-borne diseases, among others. These impacts highlight the need to better align Federal, state and local drought policies.

The Managers understand that a National Drought Resilience Partnership was established in November of 2013 to promote strong partnerships between the Federal agencies and to make it easier for communities to access Federal drought resources. The Managers expect the Secretary to make local, state, and tribal stakeholders an integral part of constructing national drought preparedness and response policy. As part of that process, the Secretary should provide clear and easy opportunities for those stakeholders to have a role in the Partnership, including creating a plan to coordinate federal policies with state and local policies and establishing robust outreach with communities.

(43) *Administration Generally*

The House bill requires the Secretary to use the funds, facilities, and authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to carry out this title and provides that determinations made by the Secretary under this title are final and conclusive. The section further requires that except as otherwise required in this subsection, the Secretary and the CCC must promulgate necessary regulations to implement this title and amendments made by this title within 90 days of enactment of this Act. The section requires that regulations and administration of this title and amendments made by this title as well as sections 10003 and 10016 (supplemental coverage option and stacked income protection for producers of upland cotton) of this Act are made in compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) but without regard to the Paperwork Reduction Act or the Statement of Policy of the Secretary of Agriculture. The section also carries over adjustment authority relating to trade agreement compliance from the 2008 Farm Bill. (Section 1601)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House except that the regulations and administration of the title are not subject to the APA and the Congressional review of agency rulemaking provision from the 2008 Farm Bill is carried over. (Section 1601)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 1601)

(44) *Repeal of Permanent Price Support Authority*

The House bill repeals specific sections of the Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1938 and the Agriculture Act of 1949 historically suspended under previous Farm Bills during their effective period except section 377 of the 1938 Act which is suspended during the period of the new Farm Bill as it relates to cotton. (Section 1602)

The Senate amendment is the same as current law except the suspensions are applicable to the 2014 through 2018 crop years and through December 31, 2018, in the case of dairy. (Section 1602)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 1602)

The Managers note that, along with the suspension of other authorities, the general permanent price support authority provided under 7 U.S.C. 1446(a) must be suspended by the 2014 Farm Bill, as it has been under previous Farm Bills, since section 1446(a) would otherwise require USDA to make available price support for the commodities specified in subsection (a) in a manner that is in accordance or consistent (i.e., not incompatible or in conflict) with the support required to be provided to other commodities under Title II (7 U.S.C. 1446 et. seq.), including as prescribed or previously carried out under 7 U.S.C. 1446(b), (c), or (f), or in any combination of these approaches. In sum, 7 U.S.C. 1446(a) provides broad authority to offer the required price support in a manner that is consistent with the tenor of price support provided elsewhere in Title II, and must be suspended for the effective period of the 2014 Farm Bill. Finally, the Managers would observe that there are also additional authorities, including under the other titles of 7 U.S.C. 1421 et. seq., that apply to certain commodities specified in 7 U.S.C. 1446(a). Therefore, the additional authorities provided under 7 U.S.C. 1421 et. seq., as they relate to certain commodities under 7 U.S.C. 1446(a), must also be suspended for the effective period of the 2014 Farm Bill. This section accomplishes these objectives.

(45) *Payment Limitations*

The House bill defines legal entity, excluding general partnerships or joint ventures. The section imposes a limit on the amount of payments indirectly or directly received by a person or legal entity for covered commodities and peanuts under Title I to not more than \$125,000, with not more than \$75,000 consisting of marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments and not more than \$50,000 consisting of other payments made with respect to covered commodities and peanuts under Title I. The section also sets forth spousal equity rules for pay limit purposes, limiting the amount a person and spouse may jointly receive to double the enumerated limits; provides for conforming amendments; and makes the limits effective in time for the 2014 crop year. (Section 1603)

The Senate amendment limits the total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (except a joint venture or general partnership) for any crop year under subtitle A of title I of the Act to \$50,000 for peanuts and \$50,000 for 1 or more other covered commodities. The

section provides that the total amount of marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments received for peanuts may not exceed \$75,000 and for 1 or more other loan commodities may not exceed \$75,000. The section provides for conforming amendments and that the section is to be effective in time for the 2014 crop year. (Section 1603)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision, except that the House definition of legal entity is dropped, a separate payment limit for peanuts is maintained, limitations within the overall payment limit of \$125,000 are omitted, and the proposed change to the spousal rule is also dropped. (Section 1603)

The Managers note that the 2008 Farm Bill provided for a \$65,000 payment limitation for Countercyclical Payments and ACRE; a \$40,000 payment limitation for Direct Payments; unlimited marketing loan gains (MLGs) and loan deficiency payments (LDPs); as well as \$100,000 under the SURE program for a combined total of \$205,000, not including marketing loan gains and LDPs. The payment limitations provided for the suite of policies in this section that are intended to replace the 2008 Farm Bill provisions in terms of risks covered are \$80,000 less and the cap on payments includes MLGs and LDPs. Specifically, this section provides for one cap of \$125,000 under which all PLC, ARC, MLGs, and LDPs must fit. The Managers would particularly stress that this amount does not include any benefit derived by the producer from forfeitures. The Managers fully intend that the marketing assistance loan continue to operate as a non-recourse loan. The Managers intend that nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the right of a producer to forfeit the crop which the producer has pledged as collateral in full satisfaction of the loan.

(46) *Payment Limited to Active Farmers*

The House bill qualifies how farm managers can qualify as actively engaged in the farming operation. (Section 1603A)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House bill except with respect to the Farm Managers provision. (Section 1604)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision, except that amendments made to the Food Security Act of 1985 are dropped and instead a new regulation is required to be promulgated within a specified period of time and with opportunity for notice and comment. The substitute requires the regulation to define significant contribution of active personal management for purposes of carrying out the applicable statute. The substitute further provides that the regulations may, where appropriate, include limits on the number of individuals who may be considered actively engaged when a significant contribution of active personal management is the basis used by an individual or entity to meet actively engaged requirements under the law. The regulation is required to take into account the size, nature, and management requirements of farming operations, the changing nature of active personal management due to advancement of farming operations, and the degree to which the impact of the regulation would adversely impact the long-term viability of the farm. The substitute provides that the regulation does not apply to individuals or entities comprised solely of family members. The substitute requires that the regulation include a plan for monitoring the status of compliance reviews, and prohibits the imposition of any additional paperwork burdens associated with the new regulation on those not subject to the new regulation. Finally,

the substitute clarifies that the provision is not to be construed as authorizing broader regulations, and requires that the regulation promulgated apply beginning with the 2015 crop year. (Section 1604)

The Managers note that the purpose of this rulemaking is to strengthen the verification process for members of a farming operation claiming to be actively engaged under section 1001A of the Food Security Act of 1985 on the basis of a significant contribution of active personal management. From that definition, the Managers intend that the Secretary will develop clear and objective standards that can be easily measured and accounted for by members of the farming operation. The Managers would also stress that this section in no way changes any aspect of current applicable law, referring in this Act to the breadth of title 7 of the United States Code. Rather, the Managers intend that the section only authorizes a rulemaking to modify current regulations to add clarity and objectivity where this section specifically requires in order to better enforce existing law.

The Managers recognize with the inclusion of subsection (c) that family farming operations are an important part of American agriculture. The Managers do not intend the regulations promulgated pursuant to this subsection to adversely affect the manner in which such family farms allocate responsibilities among the members of their family. However, the Managers also do not intend for subsection (c) to overly restrict the Secretary's authority to implement the reforms under this section, and intend for the term entity to include the entity ultimately receiving the payment.

The Managers further intend that the Secretary will develop standards that are fair, equitable, and will enhance program integrity. The Managers are aware that under current rules the agency has had difficulty in determining the significance of a management contribution. The Managers also understand that this difficulty is often exacerbated when the person considered to be actively engaged lives a significant distance from the farming operation or does not visit the farming operation on a regular basis.

The Managers intend that the Secretary take into account the size and complexity of farming operations across different regions of the country. Further, the Managers intend that the Secretary will look carefully at certain activities or services that a person may perform which have a significant impact on the long-term viability of the farming operation. In particular, the Managers expect that the Secretary will give careful consideration to the following activities: labor contracting; decisions made to achieve regulatory compliance; marketing, including hedging and forward contracting; financing, including securing production loans; land utilization management, including conservation planning; decisions made regarding risk management and legal liability, including insurance coverage; decisions made regarding cropping choices; input purchasing; and decisions made regarding equipment, including purchases, financing, and maintenance. The Managers also intend for the Secretary to take into account the changing nature of active personal management due to technological and economic advancements of farming operations, including crop genetics, farming practices such as no-till and minimal-till farming, and telecommuting.

The Managers intend that any additional paperwork required by these new requirements be focused solely on the individuals

and entities subject to the new requirements. Finally, the Managers urge the Secretary to be mindful that stable, predictable and equitable farm policy is essential to the continued viability of commercial farming operations that need access to financing for annual production costs, equipment, and land. Lastly, the Managers stress that accessibility to a strong farm safety net is important to continued prosperity in rural America, particularly in small towns where agriculture is at the center of the local economy.

(47) *Adjusted Gross Income Limitation*

The House bill makes changes to Section 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985. The section replaces the two income limitation tests (farm and non-farm incomes) with a single \$950,000 adjusted gross income limitation for certain commodity programs as well as conservation programs. The section applies the new limit to payments under the Farm Risk Management Election, marketing loan gains or loan deficiency payments, payments from Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs, payments from conservation programs, the Agriculture Management Assistance program authorized in the Federal Crop Insurance Act, and payments from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. The section requires that payment limits in effect on the day before the enactment of this Act apply to the 2103 crop, fiscal or program year. (Section 1604)

The Senate amendment makes changes to Section 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985. The section replaces the two income limitation tests (farm and nonfarm incomes) with a single \$750,000 adjusted gross income limitation for commodity programs if the average adjusted gross income over the last 3 taxable years is in excess of \$750,000. The section applies the new limit to payments under the Adverse Market Program and the Agriculture Risk Coverage program, marketing loan gains or loan deficiency payments, payments from Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance Programs, and payments from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. (Section 1605)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that the AGI limitation is established at \$900,000.

(48) *Geographically Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers*

The House bill is the same as current law except authorizes payments for fiscal year 2009 and each succeeding fiscal year. (Section 1605)

The Senate amendment extends current law through fiscal year 2018. (Section 1606)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 1605)

(49) *Appeals*

The Senate amendment amends the current appeals process by clarifying, among other things, that the Director of the National Appeals Division shall be free from the direction and control of any person other than the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. (Section 1609)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 1610)

(50) *Technical Corrections*

The House bill includes technical corrections. (Section 1608)

The Senate amendment includes technical corrections. (Section 1610)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with a technical change.

(51) Implementation

The House bill requires the Secretary to seek to reduce administrative burdens and costs to producers by streamlining and reducing paperwork, forms, and other administrative requirements; improve coordination, information sharing, and administrative work with the Risk Management Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and take advantage of new technologies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of program delivery to producers. The section also requires the Secretary to maintain records on base acres and payment yields from the 2008 Farm Bill. The section also requires the Secretary to maintain records for the separate base acres of long grain rice and medium grain rice subject to the total base under the 2008 Farm Bill and any adjustment. The section requires the Secretary to make \$100 million available to the Farm Service Agency to carry out this title. (Section 1612)

The Senate amendment has similar streamlining requirements but does not require maintenance of base acres and payment yields. The section also requires the Secretary to maintain a record of farms with upland cotton base acres in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act and to make \$97 million available to the Farm Service Agency to carry out this title. (Section 1614)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision but adds the requirement that the Acreage Crop Reporting and Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI) be implemented and that the ACRSI ensure that a producer, or an agent of the producer acting on the producer's behalf, may report information (including geospatial information) to USDA either electronically or conventionally; that upon the request of the producer or the agent of the producer, USDA must electronically share with the producer or the agent of the producer, in real time and without cost, common land unit data, related farm level data, and other information of the producer; that this reporting and sharing of information must comply with existing privacy requirements. The substitute also provides an additional \$10 million to the Farm Service Agency on October 1, 2014 if the Secretary notifies the Agriculture Committees of Congress by September 30, 2014 that substantial progress has been made in implementing ACRSI and the reporting and sharing requirements of this section. An additional \$10 million is also provided to FSA if by September 30, 2015 the Secretary reports to the Agriculture Committees that these requirements have been fully implemented and the Committees concur, with the added funding available on the later of the date of concurrence or October 1, 2015. The substitute further provides that of the base amount of implementation dollars provided to FSA under this section, \$3 million is to be provided by the Secretary to state extension services or equivalent agencies for producer education concerning subtitles A, D, and E of this title and under section 196 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996. The substitute also requires the Secretary to engage one or more qualified universities to develop web-based decision aids to assist producers in understanding available options under subtitle A, with the FSA required to obligate funds for this purpose within 30 days of enactment of the Farm Bill and web-based decision aids to be made available to producers via the internet within 45 days, and with \$3 million provided for this purpose. Finally, the substitute pro-

vides loan implementation requirements. (Section 1613)

The Managers intend by this section and the implementation section within the Crop Insurance Title of this Act for the Secretary to undertake the streamlining efforts prescribed. As part of the implementation of ACRSI, the Managers intend for the Secretary to provide for an expedited means for the reporting and sharing of information as required under this section. The Managers would particularly note that this information is the private and proprietary information of the producer and, as such, is strictly protected by statute from disclosure, with very limited and specifically prescribed exceptions, including disclosures made upon the consent of the agricultural producer or owner of the agricultural land. The Managers intend that an agent of the producer evidence the consent of the producer when acting on the producer's behalf in the reporting and sharing of information in a manner that complies with the requirements of section 1619 of the 2008 Farm Bill and without unnecessarily encumbering or delaying the reporting and sharing.

The Managers also intend that regulations be quickly finalized to allow a Farm Storage Facility Loan of up to \$100,000 with no additional security. The Managers recognize that the Farm Service Agency had properly implemented the program in this manner, consistent with Congressional intent, from August of 2012 to February of 2013 before the program reverted back to \$50,000 with no additional security. The Managers commend FSA for the agency's work to fulfill Congressional intent and intend that regulations to allow a Farm Storage Facility Loan of \$100,000 with no additional security be finalized and implemented without further delay.

The Managers intend, with respect to loan implementation, that the Secretary would use the authority provided to carry out loans described in subsection (d) in a manner where the loans to producers would be administered as though an order described in that subsection had not been issued for that crop year. The Managers intend that the administration of this subsection not result in the disruption or delay in the orderly marketing of commodities under loans. The Managers intend that a producer that repays a loan under subtitles B or C at an amount equal to the loan rate for the applicable commodity plus interest must repay the amount that is provided pursuant to subsection (d). The Managers do not intend that the amount provided pursuant to subsection (d) be repaid in the case of a producer receiving a loan deficiency payment, a marketing loan gain benefit, or a benefit derived from the forfeiture of a commodity.

(52) Protection of Producer Information

The House bill prohibits the Secretary of Agriculture or officials or employees of other federal agencies from releasing certain information given to the government pursuant to Title I or Title II of this Act or other information provided by a producer or owner of agricultural land in order to participate in USDA or other federal agency programs. The section provides for limited exceptions to the rule and a requirement that disclosures made under these exceptions be reported to the Agriculture Committees. (Section 1613)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the House provision.

Title II—Conservation

SUBTITLE A—CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

(1) Extension and Enrollment Requirements

The House bill amends the maximum acres as follows: 27,500,000 acres in fiscal year 2014; 26,000,000 acres in fiscal year 2015; 25,000,000 acres in fiscal year 2016; 24,000,000 acres in fiscal year 2017; and 24,000,000 acres in fiscal year 2018. Additionally, the House bill caps grassland enrollment at 2,000,000 acres at any one time. (Section 2001)

The Senate amendment amends the maximum acres as follows: 30,000,000 acres in fiscal year 2014; 27,500,000 acres in fiscal year 2015; 26,500,000 acres in fiscal year 2016; 25,500,000 acres in fiscal year 2017; and 25,000,000 acres in fiscal year 2018. Additionally, the Senate amendment caps grassland enrollment at 1,500,000 acres at any one time. (Section 2001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 2001)

The Managers agreed to an overall reduction in the maximum acres that could be enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), however, this should not serve as an indicator of declining support for CRP. The Managers intend for CRP to be implemented at authorized levels, using the statutory flexibility, and for the program to continue as one of USDA's key conservation programs in concert with working lands conservation efforts.

Within the overall acreage cap, the Conference substitute provides for grasslands to be enrolled in CRP and authorizes the Secretary to grant priority to lands expiring from current CRP contracts that will retain grass cover. This modification accommodates acreage that previously would have been eligible for short-term rental contracts under the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) for working grasslands.

The specific priority designations for the Chesapeake Bay Region, the Great Lakes Region, and the Long Island Sound Region are removed. The authority for the Secretary to designate conservation priority areas is retained, recognizing the importance of the program for addressing regional and State-identified areas of special environmental sensitivity.

(2) Farmable Wetland Program

The House bill decreases the overall cap to 750,000 acres. (Section 2002)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable amendments and maintains the current law cap of 1,000,000. (Section 2002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to include a clerical amendment from the Senate language. (Section 2002)

(3) Duties of the Secretary

The House bill amends current law by striking "allotment history" and by moving out certain activities from section 1232(a)(8). Additionally, the House bill permits certain activities in case of drought or other emergency caused by a natural disaster where the activity may occur without a reduction in the rental rate. The bill includes a reduction of not less than 25 percent of the rental rate and establishes the frequency during which managed harvesting may be conducted as not more than once every three years. The bill also establishes the frequency during which routine grazing may occur at not more than once every two years and adds a new subsection that requires the Secretary to permit certain haying and grazing practices on grasslands specifically. Lastly, it includes a provision for individuals with expiring contracts to initiate conservation and

land improvement practices in the final year of contract. To comply, an owner or operator must develop and implement a conservation plan for these activities. Re-enrollment of such lands is prohibited for five years. (Section 2004)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House. However, it specifies flooding as an emergency for the purposes of carrying out certain activities without a reduction in the rental rate payment. Such other emergencies do not need to be a result of a natural disaster. Additionally, the Senate amendment allows for limited grazing by a beginning farmer or rancher without any reduction in the rental rate and includes habitat during the *primary* nesting season for *critical* birds. The Senate amendment establishes a frequency during which managed harvesting may be conducted at least once every five but not more than once every three years and allows for prescribed grazing for the control of invasive species to occur annually. The frequency for routine grazing is similar to the House bill. However, the Senate amendment specifies that the Secretary must take into account the presence of threatened or endangered wildlife and wildlife habitat and requires conservation and land improvement practices in the last year of the contract to maintain the protection of highly erodible land. Lastly, it states that the annual payment amount shall be reduced by an amount commensurate with any income or compensation received as a result of these activities. (Section 2004)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision by eliminating “allotment history.” The substitute adopts the Senate language including flooding or other emergencies as an emergency not a result of a natural disaster and adds limited grazing by livestock of a beginning farmer or rancher without a reduction in rental rate.

The Conference substitute did not specify the range of situations under which CRP could be used to mitigate the impacts on agricultural producers resulting from adverse and extreme weather events or conditions. While these acres can provide additional forage when they are located within the disaster footprint, these forages also could assist in meeting livestock forage needs when near to the affected area, or when CRP contract holders are willing to make their forage available to those affected by the emergency, or when flooding displaces grazing livestock. The Managers expect the Secretary to make this forage available in response to disasters that affect other producers without regard to the location of the enrolled lands. This section establishes the frequency of harvesting and routine grazing on acres enrolled in CRP contracts, consistent with a conservation plan, and provides for the incidental use of buffers adjacent to agricultural lands.

Authorized activities for newly eligible grasslands include grazing, haying, mowing, or harvesting for seed production. The Secretary shall permit activities such as fire pre-suppression, rehabilitation and construction of fire breaks, fencing, livestock watering, and necessary cultural practices. These uses of the land are consistent with those allowed for existing GRP rental contracts and are carried over here to align with the authorized activities for those grasslands to be enrolled in the conservation reserve.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on primary nesting season with an amendment to change critical birds to birds in the local area that are in significant decline.

The substitute adopts the Senate language on managed harvesting frequency, prescribed

grazing for invasive species, and installation of wind turbines.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on land improvement and practices in the last year of the contract with an amendment. The amendment limits applicability to enrolled land and clarifies that the land can be used for economic use. (Section 2004) Provisions are added to allow conservation and land improvement practices in the final year of a contract, with a commensurate reduction in rental value only when the participant derives economic benefit from use of the forage. Re-enrollment of lands modified through this provision is prohibited for at least five years.

The Managers intend that the intensity of all specified activities permitted by the revisions to Section 1233(b) of current law be conducted in accordance with the parameters outlined in the statute. The Conference substitute also requires that specified activities are carried out in accordance with soil, water quality, and wildlife habitat conservation plans to control invasive species while also maintaining the health and viability of the established cover. The Secretary should not require management activities at the specified frequency when it is determined to be technically unnecessary for the cover because drought, fire, or other factors have reduced the need for such cover management action. Additionally, the Secretary, with advice from State Technical Committees, shall ensure that the frequency and duration of all specified activities permitted are reflected in associated conservation plans appropriate for the local climatic conditions, precipitation, soils, and other necessary factors in order to meet the purposes of the program.

The revisions made to section 1233(b)(2) of the current statute clarify the intent of the Managers to expand some uses of the conservation reserve when the activities are consistent with and/or beneficial to the health and viability of the established cover. In doing so, the Managers focused on grasslands-related activities since grasslands are the predominant cover for the program. The Managers intend for this to be sufficient authority to allow such activities to occur when doing so would be a similar benefit to the health and vigor of the cover. For example, the pre-commercial thinning of pine plantings, or the harvesting of pine straw may be allowed with commensurate reduction of rental rates if these activities would be a technically accepted activity for improving the health and viability of the stand, as reflected in the conservation plan. The Managers encourage the Secretary to utilize options other than burning for the disposal of residue removed from CRP lands, as well as lands enrolled in a conservation easement, for contract management and maintenance. The Managers suggest the Secretary coordinate with state government officials to donate this residue to Indian tribes, small and disadvantaged farmers or other similar persons or entities.

(4) Payments

The House bill amends the payment section of CRP by eliminating in-kind payments. (Section 2005)

The Senate amendment allows for incentive payments for thinning activities and allows for the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) survey of dryland cash rental rates to be used as a factor in determining rental rates, as determined by the Secretary. In addition to eliminating in-kind payments, the Senate amendment adds requirements that payments be made using funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment strikes the Commodity Credit Corporation payment requirement. (Section 2005) The Managers recommend that the new authority provided under section 1234(c) is used by the Secretary to incentivize owners and operators to conduct practices and utilize management tools that would promote forest management, enhance the overall health of tree stands, improve the condition of resources, or provide valuable habitat for wildlife. Such practices and management tools should be used to encourage landowners to promote pine savannah habitat or other beneficial resource wildlife habitat practices such as tree thinning, disk, and prescribed burning. Further, the Managers intend for the Secretary to determine any other appropriate practices and management tools that could be employed to achieve the objective of the provision. The Managers acknowledge that similar authority was provided by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, but it did not achieve the goal of incentivizing owners and operators to conduct the necessary practices that section 1234(c) is intended to remedy. Under some situations, local market conditions will greatly affect the cost of implementing the appropriate forest management practices making them costly and difficult to implement. The Managers expect USDA to use the authority under section 1234(c) to provide incentive payments in an amount that will overcome any disincentive for owners and operators to implement these practices in order to improve the condition of the resources, promote forest management or the enhance the wildlife habitat on the land.

The Managers intend that CRP continue as one of USDA’s key conservation programs. The Managers remain concerned, however, that USDA does not offer annual payments to producers commensurate with local prevailing rental rates to ensure that enrollment is competitive with other land uses. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized the use of NASS surveys of cropland values; even so, the Managers are aware that in some parts of the country, CRP rental rates continue to trail—in some cases by a large margin—local prevailing rental rates. The Managers intend for USDA to use NASS survey data and other local data on cash rental rates and farmland prices, developed through land grant universities or other sources. The Managers expect USDA to review this data at least annually, and update CRP rental rates to reflect local prevailing rental rates.

(5) Contract Requirements

The House bill updates the early termination provisions to allow for an early termination option in fiscal year 2015 only of a contract that has been in effect for five years and expands the list of land that is eligible for early termination. Additionally, the House bill makes adjustments to the transition option provisions language to allow a retired farmer or rancher to transfer land to a beginning farmer or rancher to prepare such land to plant an agricultural crop. (Section 2006)

The Senate amendment adds “veteran farmer or rancher”. (Section 2006)

The Conference substitute adopts both the House and Senate provisions with amendment changing the year for offering early termination to fiscal year 2015. (Section 2006)

The Managers are concerned that USDA has not been fully utilizing CRP technical assistance authorities and funding enacted in the 2008 Farm Bill for agency infrastructure, including outreach, training, and other

technical services. The Managers expect USDA to better utilize this authority for internal support and to support outreach and partnerships with non-governmental organizations and other qualified entities to ensure that producers and landowners are fully aware of their options under the program.

The Managers also encourage USDA to continue to make their staff available to attend meetings of agricultural producers at the local, State and national level to educate and inform producers of the programs available to meet natural resource needs on their operations.

The Managers direct the Secretary to, within one year of enactment, report to Congress on the quality of land currently enrolled in CRP based on the land capability classification system, the erodibility index, other eligible lands criteria, and natural resource benefits. The report should include justification for using the prescribed environmental benefits index threshold for any acres enrolled into the program after enactment. The Secretary shall complete such a report five years thereafter and include the same information on land quality and decisions to enroll types of acres based on the environmental benefits index. If the decision is made to use a different environmental benefits index threshold or methodology for making decisions to enroll program contracts, reasons for the decision should be included in the report.

Additionally the Managers direct the Secretary, within two years of enactment, to complete a comprehensive economic impact study that specifically evaluates the impact the CRP has had on rural communities. The report should include the average county rental rates and rental rates paid for CRP land.

The Managers support ongoing USDA efforts to target the CRP through enrollment of highly-desirable practices such as buffers, filter strips, riparian buffers, acreage of importance to States and local communities, certain wetlands, duck and upland bird habitat buffers, highly erodible land, longleaf pine, and pollinator habitat. This widely-supported targeting effort ensures that critical acreage is protected and productive land remains available for production. The Managers intend that USDA accelerate this evolution of targeted practices to include important natural resource priorities. Examples of such priorities include: water quality and quantity, wildlife habitat, and recreation purposes. The Managers encourage the Secretary to include the use of potentially larger tracts than have previously been awarded a contract in order to continue meeting wildlife habitat needs.

In addition to the Managers' intention that USDA expand the use of continuous and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) practices, the Managers understand that there are concerns in regard to the Department's operation of certain continuous practices, including State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement or so-called "SAFE" acres. The Managers encourage the Secretary to continue efforts to meet the demand for these practices, which have proved popular in some states. The Managers also expect the Secretary to utilize these acres to meet demand for acreage that will impact threatened or endangered species or species of economic significance in a state or region.

The Managers also intend that the provisions in section 2602 regarding availability of Commodity Credit Corporation funding for farm bill conservation programs will ensure the Department has adequate acreage avail-

able to meet the demand for the various continuous practices.

SUBTITLE B—CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

(6) *Conservation Stewardship Program*

The House bill amends the definitions section to strike the definition of "conservation measurement tool" and thereby conform with later amendments; relocates the definition of "eligible land" and "agricultural operation" to the definitions section; adds pasture land to the list of eligible land; and expands other eligible agricultural areas to land capable of being used for livestock production. Additionally, it reauthorized the program for FY 2014 through 2018. It states that to be eligible for CSP, a producer must demonstrate that, at the time of the contract offer, the producer meets or exceeds the stewardship threshold for at least two priority resource concerns. The House bill also states that in order to renew the contract, the producer must demonstrate compliance with the initial contract, agree to adopt and continue to integrate conservation activities, and at a minimum meet or exceed the threshold of at least two additional priority resource concerns or exceed the threshold for two existing priority resource concerns. Also, the House bill provides an annual enrollment limitation of 8,695,000 acres for FY 2014 through 2021 and provides for additional payments to producers that agree to adopt or improve resource conserving crop rotations. (Section 2101)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House bill, but does not include "capable of being used" for the production of livestock; adds improving and conserving the quality and condition of natural resources on purpose; and states that to be eligible for a payment under the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), a producer must demonstrate that, at the time of the contract offer, the producer is meeting the stewardship threshold for at least two priority resource concerns. Also, the amendment requires producers to agree to, at a minimum, meet or exceed the stewardship threshold for at least two additional priority resource concerns. Additionally, the Senate amendment provides an annual enrollment limitation of 10,348,000 acres for FY 2012 through 2022. (Section 2101)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision to include land capable of being used for livestock production in the definition of other eligible land. Section 1238D in the Conference substitute streamlines and consolidates key definitions for the program. The meaning of agricultural operation is consistent with current law. Conservation activities involve conservation systems, practices, and management measures. The term has an inclusive plain language meaning to encompass, for example, conservation planning. The Managers recognize that in developing a conservation plan, a producer incurs significant costs in time, labor, management, and foregone income. The specific mention in the statute of inclusions does not exclude conservation activities that are otherwise within the definition. The definition of conservation stewardship plan makes it clear the plan is to inventory and identify priority resource concerns and to contain the additional specified elements encompassing new as well as existing conservation activities. Eligible land is defined to mean private and tribal land on which agricultural commodities, livestock, or forest-related products are produced plus associated land on which priority resource concerns could be addressed through a contract under the program.

A priority resource concern is defined to mean a natural resource concern or problem that is identified at the national, state, or local level as a priority for a particular area, and that represents a significant concern in a state or region that is likely to be addressed successfully through implementing conservation activities. The Managers understand that the process of identifying priority resource concerns should involve consultation at the state and local levels to the maximum extent practicable, such as with State Technical Committees and local work groups. The stewardship threshold is the level of management required to conserve and improve the quality and condition of a natural resource. The stewardship threshold for a natural resource is a science-based standard at an advanced level of conservation providing for the long-term continued productivity, use, and quality of the resource.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision that includes improving and conserving the quality and condition of natural resources as a program purpose.

The substitute adopts the House provision relating to the requirement that the producer meet or exceed the stewardship threshold of at least two priority resource concerns. It further adopts the House provision on the contract renewal requirement that the producer meet at least two additional resource concerns or exceed two existing resource concerns. The Managers encourage the Secretary to place emphasis on adopting new practices; with new contracts addressing at least one additional priority resource concern and renewing contracts that address at least two priority resource concerns.

The substitute also adopts the House provision which allows eligible producers to receive supplemental payments for making improvements to resource-conserving crop rotations. The Managers intend for the supplemental payment to encourage producers to adopt new or additional beneficial crop rotations that provide significant conservation benefits. The payments are to be available to producers across the country and should not be limited to a particular crop, cropping system, or region of the country. In the Southeast, peanuts are an example of a crop that responds well to increased rotation lengths, which help peanut producers, conserve water, more effectively control disease, and reduce inputs to control disease and increase productivity. Alfalfa is another important rotation crop in many parts of the country and plays a role in adding value to a producer's operation as well as providing natural resource benefits. The Managers recognize the very significant contributions that sorghum has made to resource conservation as a water-conserving crop and expects the Secretary to include sorghum in any supplemental payments for resource conserving crop rotations made available under the CSP.

The substitute lists six criteria for ranking contract offers, prohibits giving a higher ranking to a contract offer based on the applicant's willingness to accept a reduced payment, and allows the development and use of additional criteria to ensure national, state, and local priority resource concerns are addressed effectively. Such additional criteria, should they be developed and used, are not to supersede or be more heavily weighted than the six statutory ranking criteria. The language includes as one of six ranking factors "the number of applicable priority resource concerns proposed to be treated to meet or exceed the stewardship

threshold by the end of the contract.” The Managers expect that, in using this factor to rank applications, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will verify not only the number of priority resource concerns proposed to be treated at the initial application ranking stage, but also the extent to which the conservation activity proposed for the priority resource concern will meet or exceed the stewardship threshold for that priority resource concern at the expiration of the contract.

The substitute includes an annual enrollment cap of 10,000,000 acres at \$18/acre for the program for the remainder of fiscal year 2014 through fiscal year 2022. (Section 2101)

The Secretary shall prioritize for enrollment in the program lands that are expiring from the CRP in an effort to protect the taxpayer’s conservation investment by continuing conservation benefits on those lands and enabling the transition from CRP to a sustainable grass-based or other type of agricultural operation where many of the conservation benefits will continue. The Managers encourage the Secretary to conduct outreach to producers and to facilitate enrollment of such land into the CSP in order to maintain and improve conservation values, such as through grass-based production systems. The subsection also updates the provision excluding land recently converted to cropland.

The Managers believe conservation programs as implemented by USDA should recognize the use of innovative technology such as enhanced efficiency fertilizers. Enhanced efficiency fertilizers, which reduce nitrate losses to the environment, help protect water quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, include slow- and controlled-release fertilizers (absorbed, coated, occluded or reacted) and stabilized nitrogen fertilizers (nitrification inhibitors and nitrogen stabilizers). These tools are recognized in USDA’s conservation standards and specifications for nutrient management and related practices and by State regulators of fertilizers.

The Managers recognize the changing nature of agriculture including technological advances, weather-related factors, and markets under which producers must operate their business. During the term of a 5-year agreement, an agriculture operation may make adjustments in production systems in response to the changing markets, weather-related causes, or other necessary actions essential to the continuing their operation. The Managers expect that the Secretary will ensure producers have the opportunity to adjust their operations while maintaining comparable or enhanced conservation performance of the enrolled acreage and still continuing their contracts.

Subtitle C—Environmental Quality Incentives Program

(7) Establishment and Administration

The House bill states that not more than 50 percent of a payment under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) may be made in advance for the purpose of purchasing materials or contracting. Funds not expended in 90 days shall be returned. Additionally, the bill maintains the 60 percent allocation for livestock production and adds a 7.5 percent allocation targeted towards practices benefiting wildlife habitat. The House bill also provides a clerical amendment using the term “Indian Tribes”. The bill includes payments to producers for practices that support the restoration, development, protection, and improvement of wildlife habitat as well as recurring practices for the term of the contract. It also

adds a new provision for alternative funding arrangements with eligible irrigation associations. (Section 2202)

The Senate amendment changes the practices for forgone income payment and gives greater significance to addressing resource concerns such as: soil health; water quality and quantity improvement; nutrient management; pest management; air quality improvement; wildlife habitat development, including pollinator habitat; invasive species management; or other resource issues of regional or national significance. Additionally, the amendment maintains and consolidates the authority for the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) within EQIP. The amendment also maintains the 60 percent allocation for livestock production, provides at least a 5 percent allocation targeted towards practices benefiting wildlife habitat, and strikes the subsection providing for alternative funding arrangements for Native American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations. Additionally, the alternative funding arrangement provision is expanded to include CSP. The Senate amendment does not include recurring practices for the term of the contract and requires the Secretary to consult at least once a year with the State Technical Committees when determining practices eligible for wildlife habitat incentive payments. The Secretary may make wildlife habitat incentive payments to a state or local government to enroll land that is riparian to or submerged under a water body or wetland. (Section 2202)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision updating the list of practices the Secretary may give special significance to in determining income forgone with an amendment. The list is revised to better reflect natural resource objectives.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with amendment regarding the revision of the practice list the Secretary may give special significance to when determining income forgone. The Managers intend for the revision to better reflect natural resource objectives and to clarify that conservation practices with a longer lifespan may include more than one year of income forgone when it is necessary to encourage full adoption and maintenance of the practice.

The substitute adopts the House provision that increases the percentage of an EQIP payment that may be made in advance for the purposes of purchasing materials and contracting from 30 percent to 50 percent.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision that maintains the 60 percent allocation for livestock production and further provides for an allocation of at least 5 percent for targeted practices benefiting wildlife habitat. It further adopts the Senate provision striking alternative funding arrangements for Indian Tribes as a conforming amendment to [section 2606] which moves the alternative funding arrangement for EQIP, while adding CSP, to section 1244(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended. The Managers recognize the broad and significant role of the EQIP program in promoting environmental stewardship among livestock and poultry producers around the country and maintains that 60% of the funding allocation go to these producers. Within six months of enactment, USDA is directed to report to the House Committee on Agriculture and Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry on funds spent over the duration of the last Farm Bill and on whether NRCS has met its statutory obligations.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on payments to producers for practices that

support the restoration, development, protection, and improvement of wildlife habitat. The Managers acknowledge the need to consolidate and streamline conservation programs which is why WHIP was merged with EQIP with the primary goal to provide farmers and ranchers with assistance to improve wildlife habitat on working lands.

The substitute deletes the House provision for alternative funding arrangements with eligible irrigation associations.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision requiring the Secretary to consult at least once a year with the State Technical Committees when determining eligible practices for wildlife habitat incentive payments. The Managers intend that under section 1240B(g)(2) regarding funding of wildlife habitat practices, the Secretary should prioritize fish and wildlife species identified in State, regional, or national wildlife plans and initiatives. However, the Managers did not include the Senate provision that would allow for wildlife habitat incentive payments to a state or local government to enroll land that is riparian to or submerged under a water body or wetland. (Section 2203)

(8) Limitations on Payments

The House bill provides for a payment limitation of \$450,000 to a person or legal entity for all EQIP contracts entered during FY 2014 through FY 2018. (Section 2205)

The Senate amendment maintains the \$300,000 payment limitation but strikes the six year period timeframe and inserts FY 2014 through FY 2018. The amendment also maintains the waiver authority “for not more than \$450,000” in current law. (Section 2205)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 2206)

(9) Conservation Innovation Grants

The House bill adds facilitating on-farm research and demonstration activities and facilitating pilot testing of new technologies or innovative conservation practices to the types of project the Secretary may fund with Conservation Innovation Grants. Additionally, the bill eliminates payments to producers who implement practices to address air quality concerns. (Section 2206)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to include payments to producers who implement practices to address air quality concerns at a reduced funding level of \$25 million. (Section 2207) The Managers intend for there to be increased transparency by USDA in the area of innovative conservation projects and monitoring that these innovative conservation approaches are later incorporated into common conservation practices.

(10) Definitions

The Senate amendment combines the definitions of “National Organic Program” and “Organic System Plan” for simplification purposes. (Section 2202)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2202)

Section 1240B of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, provides the Secretary the option to accept financial assistance from other sources. The Secretary should not create additional burdens on the participant, state or private organization in an effort to account for non-Federal resources provided in support of conservation practices installed under the program by this authority.

The Managers intend that conservation programs should recognize the use of innovative technology, such as enhanced efficiency

fertilizers (e.g., slow and controlled-release fertilizers, stabilized nitrogen fertilizers). This innovative technology can help producers to protect water quality and reduce greenhouse emissions, and are recognized by State regulators of fertilizers. In the case of EQIP applications involving manure-to-energy projects, the Managers encourage the Secretary to consider whether the projects include an integrative approach to addressing nutrient management and water quality issues.

Additionally, the Managers encourage NRCS to evaluate its education program and make sure that it is providing all potential users within each state an opportunity to become educated about the EQIP program and how each farmer can incorporate EQIP into their farm stewardship management plans. There is concern that not all producers may be fully aware of all of the services, practices, components, and other information needed to participate fully in farm bill conservation programs. The state NRCS offices shall notify producers, in a readily accessible and understandable form, the practices available that may be applicable to various livestock species and crops. These notifications shall also include the payment levels available and the period in which payment for a particular practice is available. The Managers also request a breakdown of livestock and poultry operation practices available by state, and what practices were funded in each state to be included in the report. Finally, the Managers encourage USDA to continue to make their staff available to attend meetings of agricultural producers at the local, State and national level to educate and inform producers of the programs available to meet natural resource and energy efficiency needs on their operations.

Subtitle D—Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

(11) *Agricultural Conservation Easement Program*

The House bill states the definition of “agricultural land easement” for the purposes of the new Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). The House bill includes land that is conveyed for the purpose of protecting natural resources and the agriculture nature of the land. It also provides the definition of “eligible land” in the case of an agricultural land easement. It includes agricultural land that the protection of which will further a State or local policy consistent with the purposes of the program. Additionally, there is a definition of “eligible land” in the case of a wetland easement. The bill provides that eligible land includes cropland or grassland that was used for agricultural production prior to the natural overflow of a closed basin lake and adjacent land dependent on it, if the State or other entity is willing to provide 50 percent cost-share. It provides for an exception for grasslands of special environmental significance by allowing the Secretary to pay up to 75 percent of the fair market value as the Federal cost-share of the easement. It authorizes an eligible entity to use its own terms and conditions for an agricultural land easement as long as the Secretary determines such terms and conditions meet several requirements, and establishes the use of permanent easements or easements for the maximum duration allowed under State law for agricultural land easements. The bill establishes the method of enrollment for wetland easements and deems 30-year contracts to be considered 30-year easements for the purposes of the wetlands easements and establishes a land ownership requirement of 24 months. It also pro-

vides that, among other things, an owner entering into a wetland easement shall agree to permanently retire any existing base history. The bill states a wetland easement must include, among other things, a term or condition that provides for the efficient and effective establishment of wildlife functions and values, and the bill allows the Secretary to delegate any easement management, monitoring, and enforcement responsibilities to Federal or State agencies that have the appropriate authority, expertise and resources. It adds authority for the Secretary to delegate any easement management responsibilities to other conservation organizations determined by the Secretary. Lastly, it allocates funding for agricultural land easement at no less than 40 percent in FY 2014 through 2017 and no less than 50 percent in fiscal year 2018, and amends the acreage limitation to include the repealed Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) acres when calculating the 25 percent country acreage cap in addition to CRP and the new wetland easements. (Section 2301)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House but adds the purpose of promoting agriculture viability for future generations, adds agricultural land the protection of which could conserve grassland or agricultural landscapes of significant ecological value, incorporates “reserve” into the definition of a wetland reserve easement, and does not include the 50 percent cost-share included in the House for closed basin lakes. The Senate amendment includes the same exception as the House but also authorizes the Secretary to waive any portion of the eligible entity cash contribution requirement for projects of special significance, subject to an increase of private landowner voluntary donation equal to the amount of the waiver. It includes a requirement that the terms and conditions are permanent or for the maximum duration allowed under State law. It does not provide that 30-year contracts should be considered as 30-year easements for wetlands purposes. The amendment establishes a land ownership requirement of 12 months and it also agrees to retire allotment history as included in comparable provision of current law. In the amendment, the term or condition must provide for the efficient and effective establishment of wetland functions and values. The amendment also allows the Secretary to delegate any easement management, monitoring, and enforcement responsibilities to Federal or State agencies that have the appropriate authority, expertise and resources or to other conservation organizations as determined by the Secretary. It includes a limitation that the Secretary shall not delegate monitoring or enforcement to conservation organizations. Finally, land enrolled in WRP, GRP, and Farm-land Protection Program (FPP) are considered enrolled in the ACEP program, and the amendment adds to the current law exclusion for shelterbelts and windbreaks; wetland and saturated soils, not subjecting such cropland with subclass w in the land capability classes IV through VII. (Section 2301)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision on promoting agriculture viability for future generations with an amendment. The amendment includes a reference to agricultural future viability in the Establishment and Purposes section while striking viability for future generations from the definition of agricultural land easement (ALE). The amendment also adopts the Senate provision incorporating “reserve” in the definition of a wetland reserve easement.

The substitute adopts the House definition of eligible land in the case of an agricultural

land easement with an amendment. The amendment uses the Senate’s concept of better incorporating grasslands into the definition.

The substitute also adopts the House definition of eligible land in the case of a wetland reserve easement. The Managers do not intend for these slight modifications or adjustments to significantly alter the way NRCS has evaluated, ranked, enrolled and protected wetlands.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on the waiver of any portion of the cash contribution requirement for projects of special significance with an amendment. The amendment limits the land to property that is in active agricultural production. To ensure the purpose of the GRP is appropriately included in ALE, the term “grassland of special significance” is included as eligible lands for ALE. The term encompasses grasslands with high biodiversity values; large intact natural grassland areas; rare or threatened ecosystems; grasslands with critical ecosystem importance; and grasslands that meet any one or more of these values that are of importance to local communities and working agriculture land preservation efforts.

The substitute deletes the House provision that deems 30-year contracts as easements with an amendment. The amendment includes language in the definition of wetland reserve easement that gives the Secretary discretion to enter into 30-year contracts with Indian Tribes where relevant.

The substitute adopts the House provision establishing a land ownership requirement of 24 months and the House provision that strikes allotment history. The substitute adopts the Senate language on the administrative delegation of easements. The Managers are aware that NRCS enters into cooperative agreements and Memorandums of Understanding with conservation groups and this provision does not prohibit NRCS from continuing these types of agreements under section 1242(d) of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, to help administer and implement easements.

The substitute adopts the Senate language on land considered enrolled in ACEP with an amendment to clarify that this language is consistent with the transition language for the repealed programs.

The substitute deletes the House provision on allocating ACEP funding between the two easements. The Managers expect NRCS to administer the ACEP funding, to the extent practicable, in a manner that allows for State flexibility to prioritize their easement needs while making sure that NRCS distributes funding to address the multiple purposes of the new consolidated program.

The Managers further intend for the Secretary to have the flexibility to make adjustments to this allocation based upon the Department’s stewardship responsibilities for lands already enrolled as the easement portfolio increases over time.

The substitute further adopts the House provision amending the acreage limitation to include the cropland acreage currently enrolled under the WRP when calculating the 25 percent country acreage cap in addition to CRP and the new wetland easements.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision adding to the current law exclusion for shelterbelts and windbreaks, wetland and saturated soils, not subjecting such cropland with subclass w in the land capability classes IV through VII to statutory acreage limitations. (Section 2301)

SUBTITLE E—REGIONAL CONSERVATION
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

(12) *Regional Conservation Partnership Program*

The House bill provides the definition of “eligible activity” for the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCCP), which includes air quality improvement. It also provides the definition of “eligible land” and the definition of “eligible partner” for the new RCCP program, which includes a water district, irrigation district, rural water district or association, or other organization with specific water delivery authority to producers on agricultural land. The bill establishes the duties of partners under RCCP including conducting outreach to producers for potential participation, and allows the Secretary to give priority to certain applications. It gives the Secretary discretion to adjust program rules for a covered program, and it allows the Secretary to make payments to producers participating in a project that addresses water quantity concerns for five years in an amount sufficient to encourage conversion from irrigation to dryland farming. The bill provides \$100 million in mandatory funding during FY 2014 through 2018, reserves 6 percent of funds and acres made available under the covered programs as additional funding to carry out RCCP, and requires the Secretary to allocate, from all funds and acres of the program, 25 percent to projects based on a State competitive process, 50 percent based on a national competitive process, and 25 percent for critical conservation areas. Additionally, the bill requires a report to Congress on December 31, 2014, and every two years thereafter. It states that the Secretary shall designate eight geographical areas as critical conservation areas under RCCP. Lastly, the bill also makes available to the Secretary the authorities under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention program (except the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program) to carry out projects in a designated critical conservation area. (Section 2401)

The Senate amendment is similar to House except that it does not include air quality improvement or water district language. It does include forest restoration, specifies the conversion of irrigated cropland to the production of less water-intensive agricultural commodities or dryland farming under water quality restoration or enhancement projects, includes a municipal water or wastewater treatment entity, and includes education along with outreach to producers for potential participation as a duty of partners under RCCP. The amendment requires the Secretary to give priority to certain applications and allows the Secretary to give priority to others, and priority for providing innovation in the improvement and delivery of water quality or water quantity. Additionally, the amendment provides operational guidance and requirements for a covered program and non-statutory, regulatory rules or provisions. Further, it includes a provision prohibiting the Secretary from limiting eligibility on the basis of irrigation history for States where irrigation has not been significantly used for agricultural purposes. It requires the Secretary to enter into at least 10 but no more than 20 alternative funding arrangements with multi-state water resource agencies or authorities. It also adds producers participating in projects that address water quality concerns in an amount sufficient to encourage adoption of practices that improve nutrient management, and provides \$110 million of mandatory funding during FY 2014 through 2018. The amendment reserves 8

percent of funds and acres made available under the covered programs as additional funding to carry out RCCP. It requires the Secretary to allocate, from all funds and acres of the program, 25 percent to projects based on a State competitive process, 40 percent based on a national competitive process, and 35 percent for critical conservation areas, and also requires that a description of how the funds are being administered be included in the report. The Secretary shall designate six geographical areas as critical conservation areas under RCCP. The critical conservation area designation expires after five years, subject to redesignation. The Secretary may withdraw from such area. (Section 2401)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision on the definition of eligible activity with an amendment. The amendment narrows the language and adds forest restoration as an eligible activity.

The substitute adopts the House definition of eligible land. It further adopts the House definition of an eligible partner with an amendment. The amendment adds the Senate’s inclusion of water or wastewater treatment entity as an eligible partner.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision that includes education along with outreach as a duty of an eligible partner.

The substitute adopts the House provision on priority to certain applications.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on operational guidance and requirements for a covered program and non-statutory, regulatory rules or provisions with clarifying amendments. It further adopts the Senate provision prohibiting the Secretary from limiting eligibility on the basis of irrigation history for States where irrigation has not been significantly used for agricultural purposes.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision that provides for alternative funding arrangements with an amendment. The amendment allows the Secretary to enter into no more than 20 alternative funding arrangements with multi-state water resource agencies but eliminates the requirement that the Secretary enter into at least 10 of the arrangements.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on payments to producers for projects that address both water quantity and water quality.

The substitute adopts the House mandatory funding level of \$100 million and sets the percentage of acres reserved for the program at 7 percent.

The substitute adopts the Senate provision on the allocation of the percentage of the funds going to the states, the Department and reserved for critical conservation areas. It further adopts the Senate provision on reporting by the Department on how funds are being administered.

The substitute adopts the House provision on the number of critical conservation areas with an amendment. The amendment includes the Senate provisions on expiration of and withdrawal from designation of the critical conservation area.

The substitute includes the House provision on including authorities under P.L. 566 in the Regional program. (Section 2401)

The Managers encourage the Secretary to distribute funding equitably across the nation and to not ignore different natural resource concerns that may be unique to each region. The substitute includes provisions from the Senate amendment regarding education and outreach duties for partners, which the Managers view as a vital compo-

nent due to the important role those duties will have in the success of the program and in achieving large-scale conservation benefits on the ground. The Managers recognize the existing capabilities of the land grant institutions in each state, including the Cooperative Extension Service system, which have a proven track record of effectively working with producers providing outreach and education, and encourage the Secretary and potential partners to seek ways to utilize these existing resources and systems.

The Managers intend that projects not be limited solely to geographic areas but that regional and non-contiguous multi-state areas be considered as well, provided that all program requirements are met.

The Managers expect the contribution of the partner to be a significant portion of the overall costs. The Managers urge the Secretary to resist defining this as a set percentage of the cost as a minimum standard to be applied to all applications. The Secretary should evaluate the overall merits of each proposal and the significance of the partner’s contribution to the potential successful implementation. There is concern that a set percentage might preclude proposals from partners that require high financial assistance from USDA to the producer while the partner’s support is from a smaller, but essential technical assistance contribution.

SUBTITLE F—OTHER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

(13) *Conservation on Private Land*

The House bill reauthorizes the Conservation on Private Grazing Land program at previous levels of \$60 million per year through FY 2018. (Section 2501)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes the Conservation on Private Grazing Land program at reduced level of \$30 million per year through FY 2018. (Section 2501)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 2501)

(14) *Grassroots Source Water Protection Program*

The House bill reauthorizes the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program at previous levels of \$20 million per year through FY 2018. Additionally, it authorizes a one-time \$5 million in mandatory money to remain available until expended. (Section 2502)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes the Grassroots Source Water Protection Program at reduced appropriated levels of \$15 million per year through FY 2018. (Section 2502)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 2502)

(15) *Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program*

The House bill reauthorizes the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program at a reduced level of \$30 million in mandatory money per year from FY 2014 through FY 2018. (Section 2503)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program at a reduced level of \$40 million in mandatory money per year from FY 2014 through FY 2018. Amendments become effective October 1, 2013. (Section 2503)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2503)

(16) *Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program*

The House bill reauthorizes the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program at previous appropriated levels of \$85 million per year through FY 2018 and authorizes \$250 million in mandatory money for FY 2014, to remain available until expended. (Section 2505)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Program at previous appropriated levels of \$85 million per year through FY 2018. No mandatory money.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 2505)

(17) Agricultural Management Assistance Program

The House bill eliminates tree plantings and soil erosion control from the list of approved uses, and permanently authorizes the Agricultural Management Assistance Program at \$10 million in mandatory money each fiscal year. It sets aside 30 percent to NRCS for conservation, 10 percent to the Agricultural Marketing Service for organic certification, and 60 percent to the Risk Management Agency for risk management. (Section 2506)

The Senate amendment eliminates the specific state designations and tree planting authorities. It adds to the authority for organic certification, risk management education and outreach, and management assistance grants for conservation practices and risk mitigation. It provides for \$23 million in funding to be distributed at levels of: 50 percent for organic certification; 26 percent for risk management; and 24 percent for conservation and mitigation. (Section 11034)

The Conference substitute deletes both the House and the Senate provisions.

(18) Emergency Watershed Protection Program

The House bill adds a priority for projects that mitigate risks and remediate the effects of catastrophic wildfires on land that is the source of drinking water for landowners and land users. (Section 2507)

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to modify and terminate floodplain easements provided the current landowner agrees, and the modification or termination addresses a compelling public need where there is no practical alternative and it is in the public interest. (Section 2506)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2506)

The substitute provides the Secretary limited authority to modify or terminate a floodplain easement which is similar authority under other conservation programs. The Managers intend for the Secretary to enter into compensatory agreements with third parties to allow for flexibility to modify or terminate the floodplain easements.

(19) Terminal Lakes Assistance

The Senate amendment strikes and replaces current law with a Terminal Lakes Assistance program. It adds a definition for eligible land and terminal lake. Additionally, it adds a new voluntary land purchase grant program with a \$25 million authorization of appropriations, to remain available until expended. The bill includes a transfer of \$150 million in mandatory funds to the Bureau of Reclamation. (Section 2507)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2507)

(20) Soil and Water Resources Conservation

The Senate amendment adds Indian tribes as eligible to cooperate with and participate in the soil and water conservation program. (Section 2509)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2508)

SUBTITLE G—FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION

(21) Funding

The House bill provides mandatory funding to carry out CRP including \$25 million for

FY 2014 through 2018 to facilitate transfer of land from retired or retiring owners and operators to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. Additionally, the bill provides mandatory funding for ACEP at the following levels: \$425 million in FY 2014; \$450 million in FY 2015; \$475 million in FY 2016; \$500 million in FY 2017; \$200 million in FY 2018. It also provides mandatory funding for EQIP at \$1.75 billion each year for FY 2014 through 2018 and eliminates Regional Equity. (Section 2601)

The Senate amendment provides mandatory funding to carry out CRP including \$10 million to provide cost-share payments for thinning activities and \$50 million to facilitate transfer of land from retired or retiring owners and operators to beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. It also provides mandatory funding for ACEP at the following levels: \$450 million in FY 2014; \$475 million in FY 2015; \$500 million in FY 2016; \$525 million in FY 2017; \$250 million in FY 2018. The amendment also provides mandatory funding for EQIP at the following levels: \$1.5 billion for FY 2014; \$1.6 billion for FY 2015; \$1.65 billion for FY 2016 through 2018. The Senate amendment also retains regional equity, amends current law by eliminating the \$15 million annual requirement, and allows states in the first quarter of the fiscal year to establish that they can use a total of 0.6 percent of certain conservation funds, in which case they may receive such funds exclusive of the CRP funding. (Section 2603)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision on mandatory funding for CRP with an amendment. The amendment includes the funding level for transition payments at \$33 million.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision for mandatory funding for ACEP with an amendment. Funding levels are: \$400 million in FY 2014; \$425 million in FY 2015; \$450 million in FY 2016; \$500 million in FY 2017; \$250 million in FY 2018.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision for EQIP with an amendment. The amendment provides mandatory funding for EQIP at the following levels: \$1.35 billion for FY 2014; \$1.6 billion for FY 2015; \$1.65 billion for FY 2016; \$1.65 billion for FY 2017; and \$1.75 billion in FY 2018. (Section 2602)

The Conference adopts the Senate provisions for Regional Equity. (Section 2603)

(22) Technical Assistance

The House bill continues to make mandatory money for conservation programs available for technical assistance and requires a report from the Secretary not later than December 31, 2013, on the amount of funds requested and apportioned. (Section 2602)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House but requires the apportionment for technical assistance be at the sole discretion of the Secretary. Further, the Senate amendment requires the Secretary to give priority to producers who request technical assistance to comply with subtitles B and C for the first time and submit a report not later than 270 days after enactment on the extent to which conservation compliance requirements affect specialty crop growers. The Secretary must also submit, not later than November 1 of each year, a report on highly erodible lands/wetland conservation determinations. (Section 2642)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2602)

(23) Reservation of Funds to Provide Assistance to Certain Farmers or Ranchers for Conservation Access

The House bill reauthorizes the EQIP and CSP set-aside through FY 2018. It also pro-

vides a preference for veteran farmers or ranchers eligible under the provision. Amendments take effect on October 1, 2013. (Section 2603)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House, but has no effective date. (Section 2604)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2604)

(24) Annual Report on Program Enrollment and Assistance

The House bill amends the reporting requirement to reflect the repeal of the relevant programs. The amendments take effect on October 1, 2013. (Section 2604)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House, but adds reporting requirements for CSP payments and waivers for grasslands under ACEP. It does not include an effective date. (Section 2605)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2605)

(25) Review of Conservation Practice Standards

The House bill requires the Secretary to review the conservation practice standards in effect on the date of enactment of the Farm Bill. (Section 2605)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate amendment making no change to current law.

(26) Administrative Requirements Applicable to All Conservation Programs

The House bill makes veteran farmers or ranchers eligible for incentives. Additionally, it makes other clarifying and conforming amendments. The amendments take effect October 1, 2013. (Section 2606)

The Senate amendment allows for flexible funding arrangements for Indian Tribes and includes EQIP and CSP as applicable programs. It does not include an effective date. (Section 2606)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 2606)

The Conference substitute combines language on improved administrative efficiency and streamlining from individual programs and places it in a central location to apply to all conservation programs. It expands and clarifies requirements for developing a streamlined conservation application process. It clarifies that any payment received under Title II is in addition to and does not affect total payments that an owner or operator is otherwise eligible to receive. The Managers encourage the Secretary to significantly increase the use of computer-based conservation practice planning tools that incorporate Light Detection and Ranging elevation data to modernize and simplify conservation planning, improve efficiency of technical assistance, and improve service to private landowners.

Further, the Managers encourage the Secretary, in delivering conservation programs, to give priority within the tallgrass prairie region to the use of appropriate tallgrass prairie species for watershed management, flood mitigation/prevention, reduction of soil erosion and nutrient loss, biomass crop production, and other conservation measures.

The Managers recognize the unique challenges facing producers whose operations contain muck soils and encourage the Secretary to continue to work with these farmers to allow them to utilize this productive type of ground.

The conferees direct NRCS to ensure agency staff, partners, and producers are aware of new and interim conservation practice standards and conservation activity plans to

address herbicide-resistant weeds. The agency is also to make certain there is awareness that financial assistance is available through certain conservation programs to assist producers in their efforts to control these weeds.

The Managers expect that the principles and guidelines developed pursuant to section 103 of the Water Resources Planning Act, or revised pursuant to section 2031 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, and any guidelines developed thereunder, shall not apply and require no new administrative process, rulemaking, or administrative procedures for programs administered by NRCS, the Forest Service, RMA, Farm Service Agency (FSA), or Rural Development. With respect to USDA programs, section 103 of the Water Resources Planning Act is intended to only focus on large scale water infrastructure projects, not individual farm based water conservation, water quality, or assistance to rural communities for drinking water.

As NRCS is the agency responsible for helping farmers and ranchers implement voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices that are all locally-led, the federal objective of the principles and guidelines is already being met. Furthermore, the Forest Service, RMA, FSA and Rural Development all play important roles in helping farmers, ranchers, and rural communities with finding critical solutions to problems that are unique to farming, ranching and rural America, and should not face unnecessary burden in complying with this administrative requirement.

The Managers are concerned by reports that Federal agencies other than USDA, as well as State and local governments, are seeking to impose more stringent and larger buffer requirements on land being enrolled in USDA conservation programs. The Managers expect NRCS to continue to utilize their own Field Office Technical Guide and conservation planning tools to determine what is reasonable and needed to accomplish the natural resource concerns to be addressed.

(27) Wetlands Mitigation

The House bill eliminates the requirement to provide equivalent functions and values when more acreage is needed in wetland conversion mitigation than a 1-for-1 acreage basis. (Section 2609)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to conduct a wetland mitigation study no later than 180 days after enactment to assess the use of wetland mitigation to determine certain impacts on wildlife. The study also should include recommendations for improving wetland mitigation procedures and increasing use of the wetland mitigation process by producers. Lastly, the Senate amendment requires the Secretary to submit a report of its findings to Congress no later than two years after the date of enactment. (Section 2508)

The Conference substitute adopts neither the House nor Senate provisions but provides \$10 million in mandatory funding for mitigation banking efforts. (Section 2609) The Managers recognize that the use of wetlands mitigation is an important tool for wetland habitat development and agriculture crop production. The Managers encourage the Secretary to use mitigation with the conversion of a natural wetland and equivalent wetlands functions at a ratio not to exceed a ratio of 1-to-1 acreage.

(28) Lesser Prairie Chicken Conservation Report

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit a report to Congress no later than 90

days after enactment which considers all USDA administered programs that benefit the lesser prairie-chicken. (Section 2610)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendment. The amendment includes the addition of State plans to the list of programs pertaining to the conservation of the lesser prairie-chicken. (Section 2610)

(29) Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation for Crop Insurance

The Senate amendment requires conservation compliance for eligibility to receive premium assistance on crop insurance, creates new provisions for determinations, administration, and penalties unique to crop insurance, and gives technical assistance priority to producers that need to come under compliance. (Section 2609)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with amendment. (Section 2611) The amendment clarifies that for compliance on highly erodible lands ineligibility for premium assistance can only apply for reinsurance years after the year in which there has been a final determination of a violation and cannot apply to the reinsurance year in which the final determination was made nor any reinsurance year prior to the year the final determination was made. A determination is not final until after the producer has exhausted all administrative appeal rights. The substitute revises the application to existing operations with prior violations so that the date for compliance is the date of enactment of this Act. This means that if a person is found to be out of compliance and would have been out of compliance since that date, had they participated in any programs requiring compliance, then they have two reinsurance years to develop and comply with a conservation plan.

The substitute also provides for the coordination of certification processes so that the procedures and paperwork that are required by this section for eligibility based on wetlands compliance are also used for determining eligibility based on highly erodible lands compliance. The amendment clarifies the provisions for compliance with wetlands conservation placing all of the components of compliance for crop insurance premium assistance in a separate subsection. The substitute also makes clear that ineligibility only applies to premium assistance in reinsurance years after the year in which a final determination is made and not to the reinsurance year in which the final determination is made nor to any year prior to that year.

The substitute revises the categories for the application based on the conversion of a wetland. If the wetland is converted at any time after the date of enactment of this Act, the person becomes ineligible for premium assistance in the reinsurance year after final determination, unless an exemption applies or if the wetland converted constitutes less than five acres of the person's entire farm in which case the person can choose to make a contribution to conservation equal to 150 percent of the cost of mitigation. If, however, the wetland was converted at any time prior to the date of enactment of this Act, the person cannot be found in violation and thus ineligible for premium assistance based on that conversion.

Finally, if a new policy or plan of insurance becomes available after the date of enactment, ineligibility for premium assist-

ance can only apply to conversions that take place after the date the new policy or plan of insurance first becomes available to the person. In this case the person has two reinsurance years to mitigate the conversion before ineligibility can apply to the subsequent reinsurance year. The substitute also clarifies that a person who becomes subject to wetlands compliance solely because of the enactment of this Act has two reinsurance years after the year in which a final determination is made to mitigate the conversion, and that a person who is found to have converted a wetland in good faith is also given two reinsurance years to mitigate the conversion. The Managers do not intend for this language to cause any change in current law or USDA policy relating to third-party or landowner/tenant determinations of compliance, violations, or attribution.

With regard to the provisions for equitable contribution, the Managers expect that the Secretary will determine the period of violation to be the date on which the violation occurred, then adjust for the later of the following: 1) the first certification period for crop insurance assistance following date of enactment, or 2) the first date for which the individual was eligible for and made application for a crop insurance premium subsidy following the date of violation. The maximum amount will include the equivalent of the insurance subsidy provided in the year of the improper certification and all subsequent years through the date of final determination. Payment of the equitable contribution does not remove or limit their responsibility to comply with the soil erosion requirements or wetland conservation, restoration or mitigation requirements within the prescribed timeframes to retain the benefits of premium assistance in subsequent years. (Section 2611)

(30) Adjusted Gross Income Limitation for Conservation Programs

The House bill replaces the two income limitation test (farm and nonfarm income) with a single \$950,000 adjusted gross income limitation for commodity and conservation programs. (Section 1604)

The Senate amendment eliminates the Secretary's waiver authority to protect environmentally sensitive land of special significance. (Section 2610)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment sets the cap to \$900,000. (Section 1605)

SUBTITLE H—REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED PROGRAM AUTHORITIES AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS; TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS

(31) Wetlands Reserve Program

The House bill repeals WRP with transition language for current contracts and easements. It allows the Secretary to use ACEP funds and becomes effective October 1, 2013. (Section 2704)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. (Section 2704)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments providing authority for the Secretary to continue the necessary administrative actions and utilize prior year funding to fulfill the commitment and obligations of agreements, contracts, and easements entered into prior to date of enactment. (Section 2703)

The Managers expect USDA to exhaust available prior year funding to address any costs associated with fully implementing

prior year wetland reserve program easement enrollments, including closing, restoration, management, and maintenance of wetland easements in an effort to protect, restore, and enhance wetland functions and values.

Section 2712 of the Conference Report is added to address the variety of effective dates distributed through the conservation title in the House bill and the Senate amendment. By including this language the Managers stress to USDA the importance of continuing program services and providing certainty to farmers and ranchers amid the passage of this bill. Therefore, the Managers intend for USDA to continue to operate the existing conservation programs as necessary through the current fiscal year using existing regulations while the Department works to expediently develop the regulations needed to implement the amendments made by this Title. The Managers further intend for existing regulations to be used for the interim administration of EQIP and CSP while the revisions to these programs are being implemented.

(32) Farmland Protection and Farm Viability Program

The House bill repeals FPP with transition language for current contracts and easements. The bill also allows the Secretary to use ACEP funds. It includes an effective date of October 1, 2013. (Section 2704)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year CCC funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. It does not allow the use of ACEP funds. No conforming amendment for heading. (Section 2704)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments providing authority for the Secretary to continue the necessary administrative actions and utilize prior year funding to fulfill the commitment and obligations of agreements, contracts, and easements entered into prior to date of enactment. (Section 2704)

(33) Grassland Reserve Program

The House bill repeals GRP with transition language for current contracts, agreements and easements. (Section 2705)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year CCC funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. (Section 2705)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments providing authority for the Secretary to continue the necessary administrative actions and utilize prior year funding to fulfill the commitment and obligations of agreements, contracts, and easements entered into prior to date of enactment. (Section 2705)

(34) Agricultural Water Enhancement Program

The House bill repeals the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) with transition language for current contracts and agreements. (Section 2706)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year CCC funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. (Section 2706)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments providing the authority for the Secretary to continue the necessary administrative actions and utilize prior year funding to fulfill the commitment and obligations of agreements, contracts, and easements entered into prior to date of enactment. (Section 2706)

With the continuation and consolidation of AWEP authorities in the RCPP, the Managers intend the Secretary to continue as-

sistance to agricultural producers that address irrigation and water management challenges across various regions of the country. The Managers urge NRCS to continue to give priority to cost-sharing proposals which incorporate irrigation management systems that involve water metering, soil moisture monitoring, proven irrigation delivery systems, and telemetry to ensure accurate water use measurement and management. The Managers urge NRCS to consider multiple producer applications or applications submitted on behalf of entities representing a group of producers to encourage greater participation in the program and maximize the benefits of water management.

(35) Wildlife Incentive Program

The House bill repeals WHIP with transition language for current contracts. It allows use of EQIP funds. (Section 2707)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year CCC funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. EQIP funds may be used but only after prior year funding is exhausted. (Section 2707)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments providing authority for the Secretary to continue the necessary administrative actions and utilize prior year funding to fulfill the commitment and obligations of agreements, contracts, and easements entered into prior to date of enactment. (Section 2707)

(36) Great Lakes Basin Program

The House bill repeals the Great Lakes Basin Program with an effective date of October 1, 2013. (Section 2708)

The Senate amendment includes the same provision. (Section 2708)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment of the effective date.

The Managers recognize that the Great Lakes Basin Program has been an important and successful program for 22 years that has implemented over 400 projects that have reduced soil erosion and improved water quality in Great Lakes watersheds. Since 2008, the program has supported implementation of both the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC) and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) by directing resources to priority watersheds. The Managers intend the program to continue serving this purpose for the duration of the GLRI. (Section 2708)

(37) Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program

The House bill repeals the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program with transition language for current contracts, agreements, and easements. The bill allows use of RCPP funds. (Section 2709)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year CCC funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. (Section 2709)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments. (Section 2709)

The Managers recognize that the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program established in 2008 complemented other conservation programs by enhancing their reach and effectiveness within the tributary watersheds. Since 2008, the program has supported farm level implementation of conservation practices benefiting water quality by improving nutrient management, reducing sedimentation, and restoring riparian areas. With the consolidation of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program into the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, the Managers intend the RCPP to continue assistance to agricultural producers consistent with the pur-

poses of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Program.

(38) Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

The House bill repeals the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative with transition language for current contracts and agreements. It allows the use of RCPP funds. (Section 2710)

The Senate amendment allows the use of prior year CCC funds for contracts entered into before October 1, 2012. (Section 2710)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with technical and clarifying amendments. (Section 2710)

The Managers recognize that the CCPI established in 2008 was built on successful partnership approaches in previous Farm Bills and encouraged the Secretary to work with specific priority regions across the country. As such, the Managers expect the Secretary to build from those lessons learned when and where those projects were most successful.

TITLE III—TRADE

(1) General authority

The House bill clarifies that Title II emergency and nonemergency assistance is to be implemented by the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The objectives of Title II programs are modified to include building resilience to mitigate food crises and reducing the need for future emergency aid. (Section 3001)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 3001)

The Managers modified the general authorities in Title II of the Food for Peace Act to place a greater emphasis on projects which focus on building resiliency in the recipient population where food shortfalls and droughts are common. This change is intended to prompt USAID to require measurable outcomes in multiyear projects in order to reduce dependency on foreign aid.

(2) Support for eligible organizations

The House bill amends section 202(e)(1) of the Food for Peace Act by reducing the maximum allowable cash assistance available for administrative costs in non-emergency programs from 13% to 11% of the total funds made available for the program. (Section 3002)

The Senate amendment amends Section 202(e)(1) to increase the maximum allowable cash assistance available for administrative costs in non-emergency programs from 13% to 15% of the total funds made available for the program. It also allows funds to be used for activities that "enhance" food aid projects. (Section 3001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment increases the maximum allowable cash assistance available for administrative costs to 20% of the total funds made available for the program. The amendment also revises the list of purposes for which the cash assistance may be used. (Section 3002)

The Managers expect that additional funds made available under this provision will provide increased flexibility to USAID. The Managers understand that an array of programs and tools are needed to balance the diverse and complex food aid demands of various countries and regions. As such, the Managers sought to provide additional cash assistance to accompany current monetization policy. The increased flexibility gained by additional cash assistance will allow USAID to better respond and prioritize food aid needs in real time and is intended to assist in the transition of programs from emergency interventions to programs which build

resiliency in instances of protracted humanitarian crises.

(3) Food aid quality

The House bill amends section 202(h) of the Food for Peace Act by requiring the Administrator to consult with the Secretary in performing the requirements of this subsection related to food aid quality by establishing a mechanism for USDA and USAID to evaluate food aid commodities and implement appropriate changes; by instructing the agencies to update program guidance on the use of new commodities; and by limiting the available funding for these purposes to \$1 million. (Section 3003)

The Senate amendment replaces and expands Section 202(h)(1) to require that the Administrator use funds available to carry out Title II to assess types and quality of agricultural commodities donated as food aid; adjust products and formulation as necessary to meet nutrient needs of target populations; test prototypes; adopt new specifications or improve existing specifications for micronutrient food aid products based on the latest development in food and nutrition science; develop new program guidance for eligible organizations to facilitate improved matching of products to purposes; develop improved guidance on how to address nutritional efficiencies among long-term recipients of food aid; and evaluate the performance and cost-effectiveness of new/modified food products and program approaches to meet nutritional needs of vulnerable groups. It also extends authority to fund this section for fiscal years 2014 through FY2018. (Section 3002)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 3003)

In May 2011, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) completed a report which cites deficiencies in the nutrition and quality controls of U.S. food aid commodities. Included in that report are recommendations that USAID review food aid packaging, track food aid quality throughout the supply chain, and ensure that available food aid commodities meet the nutritional needs of recipients. The Managers expect USAID to set verifiable goals and to maximize strong public-private partnerships with food manufacturers and other stakeholders to more quickly address the deficiencies highlighted in the May 2011 report by using currently available studies on food aid quality and nutrition. The Managers encourage USAID to establish multi-year approaches to the procurement of high-value products. Longer term procurement, to the extent practicable, is expected to encourage investment of specialized equipment needed to deliver critical products in a timely and cost-effective manner. In recognition of the importance associated with close collaboration between USDA and USAID on approving new products, the Managers expect both agencies to adopt clear guidelines to facilitate the swift adoption of new products in order to quickly capture the benefits of the research and testing under this section.

(4) Food Aid Consultative Group

The House bill amends Section 205 of the Food for Peace Act by reauthorizing the Food Aid Consultative Group (the "Group") through December 31, 2018. Section 205 is also amended by adding representatives from the processing sector to the Group. The provision further requires the Administrator to consult with the Group on the implementation of food aid quality provisions and requires the Administrator to provide the Group at least 45 days for review and com-

ment before a proposed regulation handbook or guideline, or revision thereof, becomes final. (Section 3005)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes FACG through December 31, 2018. (Section 3004)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 3005)

The Managers note that while USAID places significant burdens for the success of programs upon implementing partners and other stakeholders, feedback from these groups through the Food Aid Consultative Group (FACG) is not adequately incorporated into program guidelines. Before new guidance is finalized, the Managers expect USAID to give sufficient notice to stakeholders when changes are made to the Food for Peace Guidelines and require new guidance to be promulgated in a timely manner after any changes to the Food for Peace Act.

(5) Oversight, monitoring, and evaluation

The House bill amends Section 207 (c) by requiring that all regulations and revisions to agency guidance necessary for implementation of the Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act be issued within 270 days of enactment.

The provision removes authority for purchasing new computer systems, removes obsolete reporting requirements, and provides \$10 million per year for monitoring and evaluation. Further, the provision requires a report on the extent of monitoring and evaluation required by eligible organizations participating in Food for Peace programs. (Section 3006)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides \$17 million per year for monitoring and evaluation for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, and permits up to \$500,000 of those funds in each fiscal year to be used for maintaining information technology systems. (Section 3006)

The Managers understand that monitoring is essential to ensuring that USAID's food aid programs in developing countries are implemented as intended. As such, the Managers want to convey their strong support for the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS Net). FEWS Net is an integral component of our nation's ability to effectively and efficiently respond to crisis situations worldwide.

The Managers also expect USAID to complete development of IT systems without additional Food for Peace resources. Funding is continued for additional monitoring and evaluation of programs at a level which reflects resources available for Food for Peace programs. The Managers note that in 2009 the GAO concluded that monitoring of programs was inconsistent and that program management was not modified to reflect information gained from the monitoring and evaluation conducted by or for USAID. The Managers expect USAID to make improvements in program guidance based on the monitoring and evaluation conducted.

(6) General monetization provisions

The House bill amends section 403 of the Food for Peace Act by requiring USDA and USAID to seek information on the potential benefits of monetization to local economies. The provision clarifies that implementing partners should sell monetized commodities at "fair market value." The Secretary and the Administrator are also instructed to coordinate assessments which guide the use of monetization to ensure consistency across programs. The provision requires USAID to

issue a report detailing the use of funds made available for implementing partners, including funds for administrative and indirect costs. (Section 3008)

The Senate amendment amends Section 403 of the Food for Peace Act to require that the rate of return for a commodity monetized (sold in recipient countries) be at least 70 percent. The "rate of return" is defined as equal to the proportion that the proceeds the implementing partners generate through monetization bears to the cost to the federal government to procure and ship the commodities to a recipient country for monetization. (Section 3007)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment strikes the clarification regarding monetizing commodities at fair market value and the provision requiring that the Secretary and Administrator coordinate assessments. The amendment revises the report on use of funds to require that the Administrator report on the amount of funds spent on each project; how the funds were used; the rate of return on monetized commodities; and for rates of return less than 70 percent, the reason for such rate of return. (Section 3008)

In June 2011, GAO reported on inefficiencies and adverse impacts of monetization. The Managers agree that both USDA and USAID should have consistent policies governing both agencies' monetization activities. The Managers expect USAID to consider the full impact of monetization when considering a proposal under Food for Peace. The Managers note existing requirements for USDA and USAID to approve only those sales which will not disrupt the usual marketing and processing of commodities in the recipient country. The Managers support the use of a variety of food assistance modalities in responding to emergency and non-emergency food aid needs, including the use of monetized in-kind commodities. However, the Managers are aware of concerns with lack of accountability and efficiency, including low rates of return realized on monetized commodities. As such, the report requested in this Act seeks to enhance transparency and increase accountability while ensuring rates of return which reflect reasonable market prices on monetized commodities. This is a part of the Managers' larger effort to provide greater flexibility to USAID and USDA so the agencies have the ability to use the most effective food assistance tool in each situation.

(7) Additional prepositioning sites and testing

The House bill allows the Administrator discretion to establish additional prepositioning sites based on the results of assessments of need, technology, feasibility, and cost. Funding for prepositioning is increased to \$15,000,000 per year. (Section 3009)

The Senate amendment allows funds to be used for the testing of food aid shipments. (Section 3009)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 3009)

The Managers note the rapid response which was possible due to prepositioned commodities when USAID responded to a natural disaster in 2013 in the Philippines. The Conference substitute clarifies existing authority for USAID to consider additional prepositioning sites, and the Managers expect that additional funds ensure USAID will be able to effectively deploy and manage critical commodities ahead of any future crisis. The Managers also note USAID's efforts to field additional food aid products and expect prepositioning these products will be

useful in responding quickly to acute humanitarian needs.

(8) Annual report on food aid programs and activities

The House bill amends section 407(f) of the Food for Peace Act by requiring the annual report regarding food aid programs and activities to include information on the actual beneficiaries of the programs and by specifying the report include the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. (Section 3010)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 3010)

(9) Funding

The House bill amends section 412 of the Food for Peace Act by reducing the authorization for appropriations from \$2.5 to \$2 billion per year. (Section 3012)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(10) Safebox funding

The House bill requires a minimum of \$400 million be expended for nonemergency assistance in each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 3012)

The Senate amendment repeals Section 412(e) and requires that of funds made available under the Food for Peace Act, not less than 20% nor more than 30% shall be expended for nonemergency food aid under Title II. Further, the amount made available to carry out nonemergency food aid programs under Title II shall not be less than \$275 million for any fiscal year. (Section 3011)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment sets the minimum level of non-emergency assistance at \$350,000,000. (Section 3012)

The Managers affirm the importance of maintaining strong development programs in support of building 030 resilient communities and reducing dependency on foreign assistance. The Managers expect this flexibility to help USAID efficiently and effectively allocate funds in a timely manner. By including a percentage structure to be applied to annual appropriations, the managers intend to provide USAID the flexibility to respond to urgent situations when needed or to allocate additional funds for development in years without significant emergency needs.

(11) Farmer-to-Farmer program

The House bill provides for the Farmer-to-Farmer program not less than the greater of \$15,000,000 or 0.5 percent of the funds made available to carry out the Act. (Section 3014)

The Senate amendment provides for the Farmer-to-Farmer program not less than the greater of \$10,000,000 or 0.6 percent of the funds made available to carry out the Act. (Section 3014)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides not less than the greater of \$15,000,000 or 0.6% of the funds made available to carry out this Act for the Farmer-to-Farmer program. The amendment adds a GAO report to review the program and provide recommendations to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the program. (Section 3014)

(12) Flexibility of CCC funds

The Senate amendment revises Section 406 of the Food for Peace Act to permit the use of funds available under the Act to pay costs

of up to 20% of activities conducted in recipient countries by nonprofit voluntary organizations, cooperative, or intergovernmental organizations. (Section 3008)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(13) Coordination of foreign assistance programs report

The Senate amendment strikes the language requiring a report on improved procurement planning. (Section 3012)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 3015)

(14) Prohibition on assistance for North Korea

The Senate amendment states that Title II funds cannot be used to provide assistance to North Korea. The President can waive this funding prohibition if the President determines and certifies to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the waiver is in the national interest of the United States. (Section 3015)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(15) Export Credit Guarantee programs

The House bill amends section 211 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 by reauthorizing funding for the Export Credit Guarantee Program through 2018. (Section 3101)

The Senate amendment extends funding through fiscal year 2018 and reduces the amount of allowable credit guarantees to \$4.5 billion. (Section 3101)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment removes outdated language applicable to previous fiscal years and allows the Secretary to implement the program in a manner consistent with WTO obligations by including language authorizing the Secretary to adjust the program; reducing the maximum tenor for loan guarantees made available under the program to 24 months; striking a provision requiring that the Secretary maximize the amount of credit guarantees made available each fiscal year; and by striking a provision restricting the Secretary's ability to adjust program fees. (Section 3101)

The Managers affirm the importance of export programs that yield mutual benefits for both American agriculture and international trading partners. The Managers are aware of outstanding questions generated by the World Trade Organization dispute WTO/DS267, and the Conference substitute includes reforms to improve existing programs. It is the Managers' strong intent that any discretion provided to the Administration with regard to dispute WTO/DS267 be used to reach a negotiated solution to the dispute.

(16) Food for Progress

The Senate amendment permits use of funds available under the Food for Peace Act to pay costs of up to 20% of activities conducted in recipient countries by nonprofit voluntary organizations, cooperative, or intergovernmental organizations. It requires that the rate of return for a commodity monetized (sold in recipient countries) be at least 70%. The "rate of return" is defined as equal to the proportion that the proceeds the implementing partners generate through

monetization bears to the cost to the federal government to procure and ship the commodities to a recipient country for monetization. (Section 3201)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

(17) Spiny Dogfish study

The House bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study on the market for the U.S. Atlantic Spiny Dogfish. (Section 3205)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 3205)

(18) Global Crop Diversity Trust

The House bill amends section 3202(c) of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 by reauthorizing USAID to make a contribution of up to \$50 million over 5 years to the Global Crop Diversity Trust. (Section 3206)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes U.S. contribution to the Global Crop Diversity Trust for fiscal years 2014-2018 at current levels. (Section 3206)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 3206)

(19) Undersecretary for Foreign Agricultural Services

The House bill amends Subtitle B of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 by adding a new section allowing USDA to establish the position of Under Secretary for Foreign Agricultural Services, which would be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. (Section 3207)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary, in consultation with the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and House and Senate Appropriations Committees to propose a plan for reorganization of the trade functions of USDA, including the establishment of an Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs. The Secretary is required to report on the plan 180 days after the farm bill's enactment, and within one year of submission of the report, the Secretary shall implement the reorganization plan including establishment of the Under Secretary position. (Section 3209)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 3208)

The Managers recognize that international trade is critically important to the economic vitality of the U.S. agriculture and food industry and a major engine of U.S. economic growth. Trade currently accounts for more than 25 percent of U.S. farm receipts, and the production from one out of every three acres planted is exported. Our vast and efficient export system, including handling, processing and distribution of our food and agricultural products, creates millions of U.S. jobs and helps feed hundreds of millions all over the globe. Our \$32 billion net trade balance in agriculture and food products in 2012 represented the single largest contribution to our balance of payments.

The trade organizational structure at USDA has remained unchanged since it was last reorganized in 1978. Over this period, the value and nature of U.S. agriculture exports has changed dramatically. In 1978, U.S. agriculture exports totaled \$29 billion, whereas in 2012 they reached \$136 billion. Meanwhile, over the last 30 years the challenges that U.S. agriculture faces in global markets have increased and markedly changed from primarily tariff barriers to phytosanitary and other non-tariff trade barriers.

The Managers agree that an Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs will provide a singular focus on trade and foster more effective coordination of transparent, rules-based trade policies in other USDA agencies. Such a position will bring unified, high level representation to key trade negotiations with senior, foreign officials and within the Executive Branch. Furthermore, the creation of this Under Secretary position will help streamline management, create greater efficiencies and enhance emphasis in the Office of the Under Secretary responsible for key domestic programs.

Given the importance of this provision, the Managers expect USDA to keep Congress regularly informed as to the progress on the preparation of the reorganization report and, once completed, its efforts to implement the reorganization plan within the statutory deadlines.

(20) *USDA certificates of origin*

The House bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to seek to ensure that USDA certificates of origin are accepted by any country with which the United States has entered into a Free Trade Agreement providing preferential duty treatment. (Section 3208)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(21) *Local and regional food aid procurement projects*

The Senate amendment establishes a local and regional procurement program with appropriations of \$60 million authorized for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Preference in carrying out this program may be given to eligible organizations that have, or are working toward, projects under the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. (Section 3207)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes appropriations of \$80,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 3207)

The Managers further note that the Local and Regional Procurement (LRP) pilot program authorized by Section 3206 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 was completed, with 23 field-based projects carried out in 2009–2011 by the UN World Food Program and PVOs. A study of the projects was undertaken by a consortium of PVOs participating in the pilot and economists at Cornell University, as well as an independent study conducted as required in the legislation. The statutorily required study found that in the majority of circumstances, food aid commodities procured locally or regionally were both less costly for some commodities and delivered more quickly than comparable commodities sourced in the United States and shipped to the study countries. However, the Managers note the absence of any comparison to prepositioned commodities when reviewing timeliness of deliveries. The Managers further note on page 1 of the study, that “LRP may pose risks for local markets and vulnerable households”, indicating care should be taken in pursuing the most appropriate areas in which to implement LRP projects. In support of the broader emphasis on building resiliency, the Managers expect USDA to give priority to projects with the greatest long-term developmental benefits.

Section 3207 extends the LRP pilot program into an authorized program to improve U.S. international food assistance, by providing a new, more flexible programming tool. The Managers intend for the new program to complement existing food aid programs, especially the McGovern-Dole program, and to fill in nutritional gaps for targeted populations or food availability gaps generated by unexpected emergencies. To be eligible for this program, such gaps should be readily addressable by procurement from local or regional food supplies. In order to facilitate meeting the latter objective, some portion of available funds should be reserved for dispersal during the second half of each fiscal year, to be available to address emergencies occurring after program proposal deadlines expire. If, as certified by the Administrator, no such emergencies occur, the conference substitute provides authority for the Secretary to award reserved funds to augment projects approved earlier in the fiscal year.

(22) *Donald Payne Horn of Africa Food Resilience Program*

The Senate amendment establishes a pilot program to effectively integrate all U.S.-funded emergency and long-term development activities that aim to improve food security in the Horn of Africa. It authorizes \$10 million to carry out the pilot project, subject to appropriations, and also requires the USAID Administrator to report to appropriate committees of Congress on the outcomes of the project. (Section 3208)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

TITLE IV—NUTRITION

(1) *Preventing payment of cash to recipients of supplemental nutrition assistance benefits for the return of empty bottles and cans used to contain food purchased with benefits provided under the program*

The House bill prevents the use of benefits to pay for substantial bottle deposits that can be returned for a cash refund. (Section 4001)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4001)

(2) *Retail food stores*

The House bill requires retailers to provide perishable items in at least three of the staple food categories. (Section 4002(a)) The House bill requires that retailers will be responsible for purchasing and paying for point-of-sale equipment and supplies and terminates the use of manual vouchers except in cases of disasters or other similar situations and requires parties providing electronic benefit transfer services to maintain unique terminal identification numbers throughout the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) routing system. Retailers are also required to maintain a unique business identification number. (Section 4002(b)) The House bill amends section 7 of the Act by removing outdated language related to the use of coupons (Section 4002(c)), and amends section 9 of the Act by allowing the Secretary to consider the location of applicants in areas with significantly limited access to food when approving retailers. The House bill also adds and strengthens requirements about the adequacy of the store's Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) service. (Section 4002(d))

The Senate amendment requires that retailers will be responsible for purchasing and

paying for point-of-sale equipment and supplies and terminates the use of manual vouchers except in cases of disasters or other similar situations. The Senate amendment requires parties providing electronic benefit transfer services to maintain unique terminal identification numbers throughout the SNAP routing system. The Senate amendment removes outdated language related to the use of coupons and allows the Secretary to consider the location of applicants in areas with significantly limited access to food when approving retailers. The Senate amendment gives USDA authority to consider a store's depth of stock, variety of staple food items, and the sale of excepted items when approving a retailer. (Section 4006(b))

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment strikes the language providing USDA authority to consider a store's depth of stock, variety of staple food items, and the sale of excepted items when approving a retailer. The amendment requires that retailers offer for sale on a continuous basis a variety of at least seven foods in each of the four categories of staple foods categories. The amendment requires that point of sale systems set and enforce sales restrictions based on item eligibility through scanning or product lookup entry and deny benefit tenders for manually entered sales of ineligible items. The amendment also requires that retailer purchase invoices and other program-related records be made available for auditing. (Section 4002)

The conference substitute reduces fraud at retail stores by requiring a more rigorous standard for stores to become eligible to process SNAP benefits. Section 4002 requires participating retailers to stock perishable items in at least three of the four staple food categories: dairy products; meat, poultry, or fish; fruits or vegetables; and bread or cereals. Currently, a store stocking as few as twelve food items, many of which have limited nutritional value, could be eligible to be a SNAP retailer. To address this, the conference substitute requires retailers to stock, at a minimum, seven food items in each of the staple food categories to be eligible. The Managers intend for this requirement to serve as a minimum requirement and do not intend in any way to discourage or prevent more robust depth of stock. The Managers remain concerned with retailers that meet the minimum of the existing regulations as a way to gain entry into SNAP for the sole purpose of expanding sales of excepted items, including liquor and tobacco, which is decidedly contrary to the intent of the program.

To further combat fraud, this section places additional preventative control requirements on EBT systems and provides USDA the authority to inspect additional invoice and other program-related records. The Managers intend for these measures to be implemented in a way that reduces fraud without reducing access, stigmatizing SNAP participants, or requiring overly burdensome recordkeeping. Specifically regarding the new EBT system requirements, the Managers expect that USDA will work to ensure that these changes will not result in a considerable increase in transaction errors, will not prevent split transactions, will not increase delays in check-out lines, and will not otherwise increase instances in which SNAP participants are differentiated from other retail customers. Regarding purchase invoices and other program-related records, the Managers believe that retention for not longer than 36

months is an appropriate requirement, and is consistent with requirements in other federal nutrition assistance programs.

This section also requires SNAP retailers to pay 100 percent of the cost of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) machines, with some exemptions, and restricts states from issuing manual vouchers for SNAP unless the Secretary deems it necessary for emergency purposes. By including this provision, the Managers are targeting fraud within the program, and do not intend for credit card companies, banks, or others to impose any additional fees in regard to the acceptance of SNAP EBT benefits. Additionally, the Managers expect the Secretary to work with retailers and relevant stakeholders in developing regulations to implement a unique terminal identification system. Credit card associations are considering implementation of this practice across the entire retail industry in the near future, and it is imperative that the Secretary work with SNAP-approved retailers to ensure there are no additional costs or burdens that are duplicative or inconsistent with common commercial practices. The Managers acknowledge that many small businesses and direct-to-consumer retailers continue to face challenges related to the cost of utilizing EBT and advanced technologies.

Having placed new requirements on retailers, the Managers are concerned by the unpredictable and growing variation in the timeline for retailer application approvals. The Managers encourage the Secretary to work with retailers in the licensing approval process in a timely manner.

The Managers recognize that current SNAP EBT transactions running on the QUEST network do so efficiently and at minimal or no cost to the retailer. The Managers encourage USDA to continue to work with the states to ensure that all retailers maintain the ability to use the QUEST network and do so without being assessed new or added fees for its use.

Recognizing that issuance of SNAP benefits to all participants on the same date within a month creates many challenges both for suppliers and retailers, the Managers encourage the Secretary to work with states to stagger the monthly issuance of SNAP benefits across an entire month.

The Managers support preserving food access in food shortage areas and encourage the Secretary to give broad consideration to the impacts additional requirements will have on food access in food deserts or other areas with limited food access.

The Managers also encourage the Secretary to continue to identify innovative ways in which to assist stores that do provide critical food access to SNAP recipients in improving inventory standards and stocking a robust supply of staple food items.

The Managers also recognize that, in remote communities in non-contiguous states, it is not unusual for there to be only one retail food store in operation. These retail stores are typically located in communities that are connected neither to the rest of the state's road network nor to a major electrical grid. Food is typically transported to the community via small aircraft, and diesel generators generally provide electrical power to such communities, posing challenges for such stores to operate adequate refrigeration and freezing equipment to store perishable foods. The Managers intend for the Secretary to consider all of the aforementioned unique criteria when evaluating applications by retail food stores located in remote communities in non-contiguous

states that are either applying to participate in the SNAP program or currently participate in the program.

(3) *Food distribution program on Indian reservations*

The House bill reauthorizes the Traditional and Locally-Grown Food Fund in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPPIR). (Section 4004) The House bill requires USDA to study the feasibility of a demonstration project for Tribes administering nutrition assistance programs in lieu of states. (Section 4041)

The Senate amendment requires USDA to study the feasibility of a demonstration project for Tribes to administer nutrition assistance programs in lieu of states. The Senate amendment allows Tribes to substitute local, tribal foods for up to five percent of their FDPPIR entitlement commodities. (Section 4002)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment.

The amendment provides \$1,000,000 to conduct the study. The amendment strikes the provision stating that up to five percent of entitlement commodities may be used for purchasing local and tribal foods and directs the Secretary to carry out a demonstration project for the purchase of traditional and local foods. (Section 4004)

The Managers recognize that federal regulations and certification requirements can often be burdensome for small producers, especially those on reservations. Often located in remote locations, producers on reservations may not be close to the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) inspectors necessary for certification needed to provide fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural commodities to federal nutrition programs. Costs, including payments for inspector travel time, make certification unachievable for many producers on reservations. As a result, federal nutrition program recipients lose access to locally-produced, fresh commodities, and producers lose access to a local market that would assist economic development on reservations. To address this issue, the Managers encourage the Secretary to work with Tribal Organizations to enable the use of accredited third party certifiers; existing infrastructure on reservations, such as extension agents; or properly trained and certified Tribal employees or officers to certify producers on reservations.

(4) *Updating program eligibility*

The House bill restricts categorical eligibility for SNAP to only those households receiving cash assistance through other low-income assistance programs. (Section 4005)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(5) *Exclusion of medical marijuana from excess medical expense deduction*

The House bill prohibits medical marijuana from being treated as a medical expense for purposes of income deductions. (Section 4006)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4005)

Currently, eighteen States have state statutory provisions that allow for the prescription of medicinal marijuana to patients in limited circumstances. Five states had previously allowed for the deduction of medicinal marijuana as an allowable medical expense when calculating SNAP benefits. In July 2012, USDA issued guidance to states,

reaffirming its long-standing policy that households may not receive a medical deduction for medicinal marijuana. Because the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq) currently classifies marijuana as a Schedule I controlled substance that has no currently accepted medical use and cannot be prescribed for medicinal purposes, the Managers expect that the Secretary will continue to administer this provision in accordance with current practice and procedures for illegal substances under federal law.

(6) *Standard Utility allowances based on the receipt of energy assistance payments*

The House bill provides that only Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) payments above \$20 would trigger a standard utility allowance ("SUA") deduction. (Section 4007)

The Senate amendment provides that only LIHEAP payments above \$10 would trigger a SUA deduction. (Section 4003)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4006)

(7) *Repeal of work program waiver authority*

The House bill requires all able-bodied adults to meet applicable work requirements by eliminating the ability of the Secretary to grant waivers for states in areas of high unemployment. The House bill maintains states' ability to provide an exemption from the work requirements for 15 percent of their Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) population. (Section 4009)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(8) *Technology modernization for retail food stores*

The House bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to implement a pilot program to test the feasibility of allowing retailers to accept SNAP benefits through mobile transactions. (Section 4012)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct demonstration projects to authorize redemption of SNAP benefits online and with mobile technologies. By 2016, the Secretary shall allow redemption by these processes in all states unless the results of the demonstrations indicate these activities will not be beneficial to the program. (Section 4008)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4011)

(9) *Mandating State immigration verification*

The House bill requires states to use an electronic immigration status verification system to verify applicants' immigration status. (Section 4015)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4015)

(10) *Data exchange standardization for improved interoperability*

The House bill establishes requirements, consistent with other means tested programs, for the electronic content and format of data used in the administration of SNAP. (Section 4016)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4016)

The Conference substitute expands upon the bipartisan work begun by the Committee on Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee to allow data both within and across key federal assistance programs to operate more efficiently. These standardization

activities promote transparency, flexibility, and consistency so data can be shared across the various information technology platforms established by federal and state agencies, increasing administrative efficiency and reducing improper payments. This provision is not intended to provide additional authority to standardize data but to drive the process to occur across multiple federal agencies. As identity theft and manipulation based fraud is on the rise in the United States, the Managers direct the Secretary to carefully analyze the possibility of identity theft and manipulation-based fraud on SNAP participants and to ensure that the Secretary is taking necessary steps to protect program beneficiaries' personally identifiable information against unauthorized disclosure.

(11) *Pilot projects to improve Federal-State cooperation in identifying and reducing fraud in the supplemental nutrition assistance program*

The House bill requires USDA to implement a pilot program to allow states to operate EBT retailer fraud investigation programs. (Section 4017)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4017)

(12) *Prohibiting government-sponsored recruitment activities.*

The House bill prevents USDA from conducting recruitment activities, advertising the SNAP program through television, radio and billboard advertisements and from entering into agreements with foreign governments to promote SNAP benefits. The section further prevents states from being reimbursed for similar activities. (Section 4018)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4018)

The Managers do not intend to prohibit activities that provide basic program information including rights, program rules, client responsibilities, and benefits. The Managers acknowledge that certain vulnerable populations such as elderly, homeless, or disabled individuals may require additional assistance in applying for SNAP. The Managers do not intend to preclude any specialized services for these populations.

(13) *Performance bonus payments*

The House bill eliminates the performance bonuses provided to states for effectively administering SNAP. (Section 4019)

The Senate amendment requires states to reinvest bonus payments to prevent fraud and abuse and improve the administration of the SNAP program. (Section 4012)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4021)

(14) *Funding of employment and training programs*

The House bill reduces the formula-funded allocation to state agencies to carry out employment and training programs from \$90 million to \$79 million per year. (Section 4020)

The Senate amendment provides \$90 million in mandatory funds in FY2014, FY2015, FY2016, and FY2017. The Senate amendment reduces mandatory funding to \$80 million for 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter. (Section 4013)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment provides \$90 million per year in mandatory funds. (Section 4022)

(15) *Monitoring employment and training programs*

The House bill requires that the Secretary of Agriculture implement monitoring and performance measures for state employment and training programs. The section requires that the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, develop reporting measures for participants in employment and training programs and that states report annually on such measures. The section further provides that if a state agency's performance is inadequate, the Secretary of Agriculture may require the state agency to modify its employment and training plan. (Section 4021)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4022)

(16) *Cooperation with program research and evaluation*

The House bill requires entities that participate in SNAP to cooperate with the Department of Agriculture and its agents in conducting evaluations and studies authorized under the Act. (Section 4022)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4023)

(17) *Pilot projects to reduce dependency and increase work requirements and work effort under supplemental nutrition assistance program*

The House bill requires USDA to conduct a pilot project to identify best practices for employment and training programs to raise the number of work registrants who obtain unsubsidized employment, increase their earned income, and reduce their dependence on public assistance. (Section 4023)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment incorporates certain provisions of the House language into the pilot project described in (32), below. (Section 4022)

(18) *Authorization of appropriations*

The House bill reauthorizes appropriations for SNAP and related programs through FY2016. (Section 4024)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes appropriations for SNAP and related programs through FY2018. (Section 4014)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4024)

(19) *Review, report, and regulation of cash nutrition assistance program benefits provided to Puerto Rico*

The House bill ensures that no funds made available to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may be used to provide nutrition assistance in the form of cash. (Section 4025)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment directs the Secretary to conduct a review of, and report on, the provision of nutrition assistance in the form of cash in Puerto Rico. The Secretary is directed to phase out the provision of cash assistance by FY 2021. Notwithstanding the phase-out, the Secretary may approve a plan that provides cash to certain categories of participants if the Secretary determines that discontinuation of cash benefits will cause significant adverse effects. (Section 4025)

Since 1982, Puerto Rico has operated the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) from

federal funds received as a block grant instead of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Under the terms of the block grant, Puerto Rico has had broad authority in its administration of these funds, and currently permits up to 25 percent of benefits to be issued in the form of cash. Permission to issue benefits in cash was granted in 2001, intended to alleviate concerns regarding lack of EBT access in Puerto Rico.

With advancement in technologies and the institution of a Commonwealth-wide sales tax in 2006, the vast majority of food retailers in Puerto Rico now accept EBT unless they choose not to. With this change in EBT capability and the Managers' ongoing interest in ensuring that each dollar of nutrition funding be used to reduce food insecurity, rigorous review and phase out of the use of cash benefits is necessary.

However, as noted in the 2010 study conducted by Insight Policy research on behalf of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Puerto Rico: A Feasibility Study, "It is difficult to determine what the full impact of a completely non-cash allotment would be on Puerto Rico retailers and participants." Recognizing this and that there are factors in Puerto Rico that complicate the ability of program participants to access nutrition through EBT redemption, the Managers have directed the Secretary to review the situation. The Managers expect the Secretary to consider all relevant factors in exercising the discretion provided in exempting program participants or categories of participants that may be harmed by the discontinuation of cash benefits.

(20) *Assistance for community food projects*

The House bill provides an additional \$10 million per fiscal year for Community Food Projects and directs that \$5 million be used for incentives. (Section 4026)

The Senate amendment continues support for Community Food Projects while incorporating an increased food insecurity focus, along with hunger-free communities goals. Grants under this program are subject to a 50 percent matching requirement and periodic effectiveness reports. The Senate amendment eliminates the Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development Center and Innovative Programs for Addressing Common Community Problems provisions. Funding remains at \$5 million in annual mandatory funds. (Section 4015)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment provides \$9 million in annual mandatory funds. (Section 4026)

(21) *Emergency food assistance*

The House bill provides an additional \$70 million in FY2014 and FY2015 and an additional \$20 million per fiscal year thereafter for Emergency Food Assistance. Inflation adjustments remain in place. (Section 4027)

The Senate amendment increases funding by \$54 million over 10 years. Entitlement commodity funding increases are in the first five years of the budget window: +\$22 million for FY2014, +\$18 million for FY2015, +\$10 million for FY2016, +\$4 million for FY2017. Inflation adjustment between years remains in place. (Section 4016)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides an increase in funding of \$50 million for fiscal year 2015, \$40,000,000 for fiscal year 2016, \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2017, and \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2018. Funding for fiscal year 2019 and each fiscal year

thereafter will be indexed from the fiscal year 2018 funding level. (Section 4027)

The Managers strongly encourage the Secretary to review potential bonus and surplus removal purchases on a real-time basis and adjust the timing of mandatory food purchases and deliveries to address periods when bonus and specialty crop deliveries are expected to be low. Having a more balanced delivery of both mandatory and bonus food purchases will enable emergency feeding organizations to better serve those in need.

The Managers also intend for the Secretary to consider the cost of regulatory changes on the operation of emergency feeding operations in order to prevent such regulatory changes from adversely affecting the services provided by the emergency feeding organizations. The Managers encourage the Secretary to work with emergency feeding organizations to address these concerns.

Recognizing that some food banks also provide Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) commodities, the Managers understand the importance of CSFP as a critical nutrition program. Currently, CSFP provides nutritious food, often in the forms of food boxes for home delivery, that are designed to meet the dietary needs of seniors, women and children in 39 states, two Indian tribal organizations, and the District of Columbia. In fiscal year 2013, 97 percent of the recipients were elderly individuals with an annual income at or below \$14,937. CSFP serves a unique niche by providing nutritious commodities to homebound seniors who are at severe risk for hunger.

The Managers fully support the continued operation of the program and recognize the need for expansion of the CSFP to reach additional elderly Americans at severe risk for hunger. The Managers note that there are six states that have currently been approved by USDA for entry into CSFP, subject to the availability of appropriations. Provided that sufficient funds are appropriated by Congress, the Managers encourage the Secretary to approve all remaining states for participation and to take action to reach all seniors at severe risk for hunger in all participating states and other jurisdictions.

(22) Nutrition education

The House bill adds “promoting physical activity” as an allowable use of funding. (Section 4028)

The House bill reduces funding for FY2014 from \$401 million to \$372 million and then adjusts for inflation in subsequent years.

The Senate amendment adds “promoting physical activity” as an allowable use of funding. (Section 4017)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4028)

(23) Retail food store and recipient trafficking

The House bill provides USDA \$5 million annually in additional mandatory funding to track and prevent SNAP trafficking. (Section 4029)

The Senate amendment provides USDA \$5 million in FY2014 in additional mandatory funding to track and prevent SNAP trafficking using data mining technologies. The Senate amendment also authorizes \$12 million subject to appropriations for each year FY2014–FY2018. (Section 4018)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment provides one-time mandatory funding of \$15 million in FY 2014 to remain available until expended, and an authorization of \$5 million per year. (Section 4029)

(24) Tolerance level for excluding small errors

The House bill prevents the Secretary from excluding payment errors greater than \$25

from improper payments calculations. (Section 4031)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment sets the tolerance level for excluding payment errors from improper payment calculations at \$37 and indexes the level to the thrifty food plan. (Section 4019)

(25) Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands pilot program

The House bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study to assess the capabilities of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to operate the SNAP program in the same manner it is operated in the states. The section requires that if, following the study, the Secretary of Agriculture determines that it is feasible for the CNMI to operate the SNAP program in the same manner it is operated by the states, the Secretary of Agriculture shall establish a pilot program in CNMI for such purposes. (Section 4032)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides that if the Secretary does not conduct a pilot with the funds provided in this section, the funds shall be used for program administration within CNMI. (Section 4031)

(26) Annual State report on verification of SNAP participation

The House bill requires states to submit an annual report to the Secretary sufficient to show that the state is verifying that its SNAP recipients are not receiving benefits in more than one state, no benefits are being paid to deceased individuals, and no benefits are being paid to previously disqualified individuals. (Section 4033)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment sets the penalty for failure to comply at up to 50 percent of the state's administrative match. The amendment provides that the Secretary is to complete a study on methods to prevent payment of benefits to recipients in multiple states and report to Congress on how to implement the results of the study. (Section 4032)

(27) Termination of existing agreement

The House bill terminates the existing agreement for SNAP Outreach between USDA FNS and the Mexican government. (Section 4034)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4211)

(28) Service of traditional foods in public facilities

The House bill grants the Secretary of Agriculture authority to permit the donation, preparation and consumption of traditional Native food in public facilities primarily serving Alaska Natives and American Indians. (Section 4035)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment makes technical and clarifying revisions, including ensuring that food safety laws apply to the donation, preparation, and consumption of foods provided under this section. (Section 4033)

(29) Testing applicants for unlawful use of controlled substances

The House bill allows states to conduct drug testing on SNAP applicants at state expense as a condition for receiving benefits. (Section 4036)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(30) Eligibility disqualifications for certain convicted felons

The Senate amendment bars individuals convicted of specified federal crimes (including murder, rape, certain crimes against children), and state offenses determined by the Attorney General to be substantially similar, from receiving SNAP. The Senate amendment still allows the disqualified offender's household members to apply for and potentially receive benefits. The Senate amendment requires the state agency to collect, in writing, information on SNAP applicants' convictions. (Section 4020)

The House bill is similar to the Senate amendment but specifies that restrictions will only apply to individuals with convictions after the date of enactment. (Section 4037)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides that the restrictions only apply to an individual convicted of the stated crimes if the individual is not in compliance with the terms of their sentence. (Section 4008)

(31) Expungement of unused SNAP benefits

The House bill requires a state agency to expunge SNAP benefits that have not been accessed by a household after a period of 60 days. (Section 4038)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(32) Pilot projects to promote work and increase State accountability in SNAP

The House bill creates a pilot program to allow states to engage able-bodied parents in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)-type work and job training as part of receiving SNAP benefits. The House bill provides that employment and training (E&T) cost share funds are only available to states that adopt the work provisions within this section. (Section 4039)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment directs the Secretary to carry out a pilot program in up to ten states to develop and test methods, including operating work programs that engage able-bodied adults in TANF-type work and job training requirements, for employment and training programs and services to raise the number of work registrants who obtain unsubsidized employment, increase the earned income of the registrants, and reduce the reliance of the registrants on public assistance. \$200 million in mandatory funds are provided to operate the pilots.

States must commit to participate in the evaluation described in this section, collaborate with the state workforce board, and not supplant existing employment and training funds. The Secretary is required to select a range of pilot projects in various geographic areas, including projects that require mandatory participation and voluntary participation, as well as projects that target groups of individuals with varying skills and work experience.

States that require mandatory participation in work activities are provided specific authority to sanction individuals for failure to participate. The Secretary is required to establish standards for certain employment activities to ensure that failure to work for reasons beyond an individual's control shall not result in ineligibility. Various protections currently provided in SNAP E&T law are incorporated into the program, including ensuring that individuals subject to mandatory work requirements be offered a corresponding work or training activity, individuals be provided adequate transportation and childcare, and that elderly, disabled and those responsible for the care of children under the age of six are exempt from work requirements. (Section 4022)

The Managers recognize the need for better data and outcomes from current E&T programs. To further improve the accountability of the SNAP E&T program, the conference substitute demands outcomes by requiring states to set performance goals relating to enhancement of skills, training, work, or experience that leads to work, for SNAP participants. In addition, states must report annually on these goals.

The Managers also recognize that the best way to improve the lives of beneficiaries is through sustainable employment and increased income. Therefore, the Managers direct the Secretary to operate up to ten pilot projects to develop and improve innovative approaches to raise the number of beneficiaries who obtain unsubsidized employment and decrease the need for nutrition assistance. The Managers intend that all state expenses, including for wrap-around services, related to the pilot projects may be reimbursed out of the funds provided under section 16(h)(1)(F)(viii).

The Managers expect the Secretary to approve pilot projects that test a range of strategies to ensure Congress is provided data on the effectiveness of various employment and training programs. This range should include those that require mandatory participation in a program and are subject to sanctions for non-participation, and those that allow individuals to volunteer to participate in the programs. All pilots shall be subject to the protections and conditions of participation and duration of ineligibility provided under section 6(d) of the Food and Nutrition Act (including household ineligibility provided under paragraph (B)).

The Managers recognize that a number of states are currently operating innovative and effective employment and training programs and expect the Secretary to test the ability to expand and replicate such programs. The Managers also recognize that some states have developed effective employment and training programs through the TANF Program and encourage the Secretary to test similar mandatory employment and training programs that transition beneficiaries to stable employment.

(33) Improved wage verification using the National Directory of New Hires

The House bill requires all states to data-match with the National Directory of New Hires. (Section 4040)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment clarifies that states are only required to data-match at the time of certification. (Section 4013)

(34) Farmers' market nutrition program

The House bill expands the program purposes to allow additional at-risk populations

to be served and by requiring the Secretary to specify terms and conditions to encourage expanding the participation of small scale farmers in federal nutrition programs. The House bill requires that 50 percent of the funds be reserved for seniors. (Section 4046)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes and continues to provide Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) mandatory funding of \$20.6 million annually through FY2018. (Section 4202)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4203)

(35) Pilot project for canned, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables

The House bill expands the forms of fruits and vegetables made available to students through the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to include canned, frozen, and dried. (Section 4048)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program without revision. The amendment adds a new section creating a pilot project in schools participating in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in not less than five states to evaluate the impact of allowing schools to offer all forms of fruits and vegetables as part of the Program. \$5 million in mandatory funding is provided to carry out the pilot project. (Section 4214)

The Managers recognize that the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) has been highly effective in increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables among low income students. Studies have shown that children participating in FFVP have a statistically significant (15 percent) increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables. The Managers do not intend to minimize the effectiveness of the current FFVP by establishing pilots for all forms. The Managers expect USDA to determine interested schools in an efficient manner and to implement the pilot at the start of the 2014 school year. The Managers expect USDA to quickly inform schools of the ability to participate in the pilot and to develop criteria based on recent school nutrition regulations and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Recognizing that food packaging technologies include processes such as shelf-stable cups and pouches that allow for safe handling while maximizing quality and nutrient retention, the Secretary should ensure that this program does not exclude these additional packaging methods. The Managers encourage USDA to work closely with participating schools to gather information on the types of schools that participate, identify how the pilot program is implemented in those schools, determine continued interest in participating in such a program, and learn from students and teachers about students' attitudes and actual behavior during the pilot program. The Managers intend for USDA to conduct a robust evaluation of the outcomes of these pilots, and the Secretary shall provide periodic updates to the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture on the implementation, operation, and evaluation of this pilot.

(36) Additional authority for purchase of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other specialty food crops/encouraging locally and regionally grown and raised food

The House bill includes a pilot program that would allow five states to use the fresh fruit and vegetable funding for their own local sourcing of produce. (Section 4049) The House bill allows USDA to permit school

food authorities with low annual commodity entitlement values to substitute local foods entirely or partially for USDA provided foods. The House bill gives USDA discretion to establish cost-neutral farm-to-school demonstration projects. (Section 4050)

The Senate amendment continues the "DoD Fresh Program" through FY2018. (Section 4201) The Senate amendment requires USDA to conduct demonstration projects "to facilitate the purchase of unprocessed and minimally processed locally grown and locally raised agricultural products" for schools that participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast program. (Section 4208)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment directs the Secretary to carry out a pilot project in not more than eight states that provides the selected states flexibility in procuring unprocessed fruits and vegetables by allowing the states to use multiple suppliers and products and by allowing geographic preference. (Sections 4201 and 4202)

The Managers acknowledge that USDA is already conducting pilot projects in two states for the purpose of developing new methods for local procurement. The Conference substitute pilots are intended to complement these efforts. The Managers expect the Secretary to select states with a variety of in-state agricultural economies, noting that states, such as Vermont, Oregon, and New York, have demonstrated an assortment of local procurement practices. The Managers expect the Secretary to work with the selected states in order to maximize flexibility for geographic preferences, including allowing schools to specifically request local products as long as competition is maintained, during procurement. Further, the Managers expect the Secretary to tailor the pilots to state specific needs regarding the size and structure of school systems and enactment of reporting requirements.

(37) Review of public health benefits of white potatoes

The House bill requires the Secretary to conduct a review of the economic and public health benefits of white potatoes on low-income families at nutritional risk. (Section 4051)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate position.

(38) Review of sole-source contracts in Federal nutrition programs

The House bill directs USDA to conduct a study on sole-source contracting in federal nutrition programs to evaluate the effects such contracts have on program participation, program goals, non-program consumers, retailers and free market dynamics. (Section 4053)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4212)

(39) Purchase of Halal and Kosher food for emergency food assistance program

The House bill requires USDA to facilitate purchases of Kosher and Halal foods within the Emergency Food Assistance Program. (Section 4054)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 4207)

(40) Quality control standards

The Senate amendment strikes the Secretary's authority to waive quality control (QC) penalties. (Section 4011)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4020)

(41) Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive

The Senate amendment amends the hunger-free community grants to establish “incentive grants” for projects that incentivize SNAP participants to buy fruits and vegetables. The Senate amendment limits federal cost share to 50 percent and provides \$100 million in mandatory funding over five years. The Senate amendment provides discretionary authority of \$5 million per year. (Section 4204)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment renames the program the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive. (Section 4208)

The Managers intend for these grants to improve access to and reduce the cost of fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients. The Managers intend for the grants to test new methods and technologies that facilitate the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables by SNAP recipients from a variety of sources, including direct to consumer markets. The Managers encourage the Secretary to consult with non-profit organizations with experience conducting similar programs on the design and implementation of the incentive grants.

(42) Pulse crop products

The Senate amendment creates a pilot project to purchase pulse crops (dry beans, dry peas, lentils, and chick peas) and pulse crop products for schools. The Senate amendment authorizes up to \$10 million in discretionary appropriations. (Section 4206)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4213)

(43) Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Senate amendment requires that the guidelines include specifications for pregnant women and children under the age of two years, by no later than the 2020 edition. (Section 4207)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4204)

(44) Multiagency task force

The Senate amendment requires USDA to establish a multiagency task force to provide guidance to the commodity distribution programs. The task force must be composed of at least four members, representing FNS's Food Distribution Division, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). The task force is to report to Congress not later than one year after convening. (Section 4209)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 4205)

(45) Food and agriculture service learning program

The Senate amendment creates a Food and Agriculture Service Learning Program with statutory purposes that include: increasing capacity for food, garden, and nutrition education; complementing the work of the federal farm-to-school grants; and coordinating with the related National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) work. USDA is to evaluate the program regularly and report

the results to congressional committees of jurisdiction. \$25 million is authorized to be appropriated and is to remain available until expended. 20 percent of funds are set aside for NIFA for particular purposes, and funding is to “supplement not supplant” current efforts. (Section 4210)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment places the program under the jurisdiction of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and structures it as a competitive grant program. Further, the amendment deletes the “Definitions” subsection and removes the 20 percent funding set-aside previously designated to NIFA for housing, training, and overseeing participants. (Section 4209)

TITLE V—CREDIT

(1) Persons Eligible for Real Estate Loans

The House bill adds “and such other legal entities as the Secretary deems appropriate”. It also requires that an owner-operator own at least 75 percent of an embedded entity and gives the Secretary authority to set the appropriate ownership level. It also gives authority to the Secretary to define the acceptable experience necessary to qualify for direct farm ownership loans. (Section 5001)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision but does not require 75 percent ownership of an embedded entity, and does not explicitly require that a farmer prove “sufficient” credit is obtainable elsewhere. (Section 3101)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(2) Conservation Loan and Loan Guarantee Program

The House bill gives USDA discretion to allow alternative legal entities to qualify for conservation loans and increases the maximum conservation loan guarantee to 90 percent. It additionally authorizes the conservation loan program through FY 2018. (Section 5002)

The Senate amendment gives USDA similar discretion, by reference. (Section 3103)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment increases the amount of the conservation loan guarantee from 75 percent to 80 percent. For socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers and beginning farmers and ranchers, the conservation loan guarantee is increased to 90 percent. The program is authorized to be appropriated \$150,000,000 through fiscal year 2018. (Section 5002)

(3) Down payment loan program

The House bill increases the maximum down payment loan to 45 percent of \$667,000. (Section 5003)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill. (Section 3107)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5005)

(4) Mineral rights

The House bill eliminates the requirement that mineral rights be appraised. (Section 5004)

The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3105)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5004)

(5) Operating loans, Persons who are eligible

The House bill gives USDA discretion to allow alternative legal entities to qualify for farm operating loans and allows an embedded entity of a borrower to be deemed eligi-

ble for an operating loan if the entity borrower owns at least 75 percent of the embedded entity. (Section 5101)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill. (Section 3201)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5101)

(5.1) Term Limits on Direct Loans

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Senate amendment extends direct loan term limits to ten years and allows borrowers to earn back eligibility, one year in the program for every year out. (Section 3201)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment maintains current law but requires the Secretary of Agriculture to submit an annual report to Congress that details the status of the Department's direct farm operation loan program, and the impact of term limits on direct loan borrowers. (Section 5104)

(5.2) Term Limits on Guaranteed Loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment removes the provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5107)

(6) Operating loans, rural residency requirements

The House bill eliminates the rural residency requirement for youth loans. (Section 5102)

The Senate amendment is the same as current law.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5102)

(7) Personal liability of youth loan borrower

The House bill gives USDA the option to waive personal liability for youth loans if default is due to circumstances beyond the borrower's control. (Section 5103)

The Senate amendment allows a borrower who defaults on a youth loan to still qualify for educational loans. (Section 3201)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to, on a case by case basis, provide debt forgiveness of a youth loan if the borrower was unable to repay the loan due to circumstances beyond the control of the borrower. The debt forgiveness provided by this section shall not be used by other Federal agencies in determining eligibility of the borrower for any loan made or guaranteed by that agency. In no case shall a delinquent borrower or a borrower provided debt forgiveness be denied a loan or loan guarantee from the Federal government to pay for educational expenses of the borrower. (Section 5103)

(8) Microloans

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to make operating loans of \$35,000 to eligible borrowers with a total microloan indebtedness of \$70,000 to any borrower. It also authorizes intermediary lending projects and exempts microloans from counting toward direct loan limits. The bill applies limited resource loan rates to beginning and veteran farmers or ranchers. (Section 5104)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment sets the total indebtedness level at \$50,000. It also authorizes the Secretary to conduct a pilot project to contract with community development financial institutions to make or guarantee microloans and to provide business, financial and marketing services to borrowers. The Secretary is limited

to \$10 million worth of loans through the new pilot project in any fiscal year. (Section 5106)

To further clarify, the Conference substitute authorizes the Department of Agriculture to establish cooperative lending pilot projects to aid administration of microloans. The Managers believe that the Farm Service Agency should maintain its mission focus on direct lending, and consider the agency's existing staffing and expertise when determining how to operate a pilot. The Managers expect the Secretary to carefully review intermediaries' loan loss reserve funds, underwriting standards, and other factors that preserve program integrity. Therefore, the Conference substitute provides that when carrying out this pilot program, the Department should utilize community financial institutions that have been approved by the Department of the Treasury in order to maximize the effectiveness of U.S. government resources.

(9) *Emergency loans eligibility*

The House bill gives USDA discretion to allow alternative legal entities to qualify for an emergency loan. Additionally, it allows an embedded entity of a borrower to be deemed eligible for an operating loan if the entity borrower owns at least 75 percent of the embedded entity. (Section 5201)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill. (Section 3301)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5201)

(10) *Beginning Farmer and Rancher individual development pilot program*

The House bill authorizes current law through 2018. (Section 5301)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill. (Section 3428)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5301)

(11) *Eligible Beginning Farmers and Ranchers*

The House bill expands the definition of a qualified beginning farmer or rancher to include "or other such legal entity". It also changes the acreage ownership limitation from 30 percent of the median acreage of farms in the county to 30 percent of the average acreage of farms in the county. (Section 5302)

The Senate amendment replaces "median" with "average" in the definition and has the same 30 percent limitation, but does not give USDA discretion to allow alternative legal entities to qualify as a beginning farmer or rancher. (Section 3002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment includes language that will ensure that any legal entity included in the definition of beginning farmer or rancher for purposes of qualifying for USDA loans (including cooperatives, corporations, partnerships, joint operations, or other such legal entities as the Secretary considers appropriate), will have members, stockholders, partners, or joint operators who all qualify individually as beginning farmers. This provision is meant to ensure that any priorities given to beginning farmers or ranchers are restricted to individual beginning farmers or ranchers or entities comprised entirely of beginning farmers or ranchers. (Section 5303)

(12) *Loan Authorization Levels*

The House bill reauthorizes the Secretary's ability to make loans under each subtitle through 2018. (Section 5303)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill. (Section 3431)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5304)

(13) *Beginning Farmer and Rancher, priorities*

The House bill adds a new priority for beginning farmer and rancher direct loans to those applicants who apply under the down payment loan program or with joint financing arrangements. (Section 5304)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment establishes a floating interest rate with a floor of 2.5 percent for joint financing arrangements (arrangements where the direct farm ownership loan does not exceed 50 percent of any total loan). (Section 5003)

The Managers intend for modifications to the interest rates for joint financing arrangements (in Sec. 307(a)(3)(D) of the Con Act) to encourage Beginning Farmer and Rancher borrowers to first rely on the down payment loan program (in Sec. 310E of the Con Act) for their ownership credit needs. They should then look to joint financing arrangements, and lastly, to the Direct Farm Ownership Loan programs. This will help maximize the number of borrowers served by prioritizing programs that incorporate public-private partnerships or personal investments

(14) *Loan Fund Set-Asides*

The House bill reauthorizes the loan fund set asides through 2018. (Section 5305)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House bill. (Section 3431)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5304)

(15) *Conforming amendment*

The House bill strikes "section 302 (a)(2) or 311 (a)(2)" and inserts "section 302 (a)(1)(B) or 311 (a)(1)(B)". (Section 5306)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5306)

(16) *Agricultural Mediation programs*

The House bill reauthorizes the state agricultural mediation programs through 2018. (Section 5401)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House. (Section 5101)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5401)

(17) *Loans to Purchasers of Highly Fractionated Land*

The House bill authorizes the use of a revolving loan fund for purchasers of highly fractionated land. (Section 5501)

The Senate amendment includes the House language, updates references to other laws, and requires interagency consultation between USDA and the Department of the Interior. Additionally, it simplifies appraisals for purchasers of highly fractionated land by requesting only one appraisal recognized by USDA or the Department of the Interior. (Section 5102 and Section 5103)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment strikes the requirement that USDA consult with the Department of Interior. (Sections 5402 and 5403)

It is the intent of the Managers that the Department should consult with the Secretary of the Interior when determining regulations and procedures to define eligible purchasers of highly fractionated land relevant to provisions (Sections 5402 and 5403) in this Title.

(18) *Compensation disclosure by farm credit system institutions*

The Senate amendment requires the Farm Credit Administration to review rules re-

garding compensation packages of senior officers in order to improve compensation disclosure. (Section 5104)

The House bill contains no comparable provisions.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5404)

The Managers support reasonable transparency practices at Farm Credit System (FCS) institutions that support stockholders' understanding of the operation of those institutions. The Managers also recognize that the Farm Credit Act clearly authorizes the Farm Credit Administration (FCA) to require appropriate disclosure from FCS institutions, including disclosures describing compensation practices. The Farm Credit Act does not explicitly contemplate stockholder voting on specific issues such as compensation, and the Managers are concerned such actions could interfere with the explicit responsibility and duty of the board. Therefore, the Agency should take this into consideration as it reviews its regulation.

(19) *Emergency loan, equine farmers*

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Senate amendment does not mention equine farmers and ranchers (nor in Sec. 3301). (Section 3002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 5201)

(20) *Repayment Requirements for Farm Ownership Loans*

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law. (Section 3105)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(21) *Limited-Resource Loans*

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3106)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(22) *Beginning Farmer and Socially Disadvantaged Farmer Contract Land Sales Program*

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3108)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(23) *Loans to gleaners*

The Senate amendment creates a pilot program to support Healthy Foods for the Hungry. It authorizes individual loans of between \$500 and \$5,000 to gleaners and other regular farm operating loan borrowers for the purpose of assisting the borrowers in providing food for the hungry. The program is funded from within the farm operating loan program, up to a maximum total of \$500,000 for the entire program. (Section 3201)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute amends and moves this section to Title IV. (Section 4026)

(24) *Direct loans, locally produced agriculture products*

The Senate amendment adds the assistance of a farmer in the production of a locally or regionally produced agricultural food product as a new purpose for direct loans. (Section 3202 (a)(11))

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

Pertaining to (24), (25), (25.1), and (25.2) of this conference report, the Managers affirm the Department's authority to directly lend to and guarantee loans for producers of local/

regional foods. Congress expects the Department to incorporate information on local/regional markets and food production into its loan officer training and into any borrower or potential borrower outreach. The Managers also intend that valuations of local/regional food under Section 5105 will be incorporated into this training and outreach. Given the potential for price premiums paid for local/regional food, the valuation is an important part of understanding the markets for local/regional foods. The Managers expect the Secretary to develop a publically available and defensible methodology for assessing and factoring local food price premiums into loan decisions made by the Department.

(25) Loan officers, training for loans to local/regional farmers

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to train loan officers in pricing of local and regional food production. (Section 3202(e)(1))

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(25.1) Valuation for local/regional crops for purposes of lending

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to develop valuation methods for local/regional food for purposes of lending to local/regional food producers. (Section 3202(e)(2))

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5105)

(25.2) Outreach for lending to local/regional food producers

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to develop an outreach strategy to provide loans to local/regional food producers. (Section 3302(e)(3))

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(26) Emergency loans, commercial fishermen

The Senate amendment adds commercial fishermen to the list of eligible borrowers for emergency loans. (Section 3301(a))

The House amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(27) Hazard insurance, poultry farmers exception

The Senate amendment omits any exception for poultry farmers in the hazard insurance requirement. (Section 3301(d))

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(28) Basic Terms for Loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include section 307(a)(5)(B).

The Conference substitute adopts the House position.

The Managers of the House Agriculture Committee and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry believe it is important to periodically review and update statutory language such as the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act and will do so as time allows.

(29) Guaranteed Farmer Loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law though it eliminates

coordination with the state in (i). (Section 3402)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(30) Administrative Provisions

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 309 (b)–(g) (the Federal Credit reform Act of 1990 rendered these provisions—no longer a revolving fund). Also does not include section 309(i).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(31) Soil Conservation District Loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 314.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(32) Interest rate, term of loan, and line of credit

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include section 316(b) except for the first two sentences that provide the operating loan at seven years. (Section 3411)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(32.1) Line of Credit Loans, Qualifying Commodities

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 316 (c)(5)(B) which made line of credit loans available to commodities eligible for price support programs before the 1996 Farm Bill.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(33) Purpose for emergency loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 321(b)(3).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(34) Considerations for making emergency loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 322(a) nor 322(b).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(35) Emergency Credit Revolving Fund

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 326.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(36) Liquidation of loans become part of the Emergency Credit Revolving Fund

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 327.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(37) General Powers all loan programs

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 331(a), but see “Section 3403” below. The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(38) Timing for the processing of farm loan applications

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 333A(d)–(e), but instead includes Section 3403 as follows:

“Section 3403. Provision of information to borrowers.

“Approval Notification—The Secretary shall approve or disapprove an application for a loan or loan guarantee made under this

subtitle, and notify the applicant of such action, not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary has received a complete application for the loan or loan guarantee.

“(b) List of Lenders.—The Secretary shall make available to any farmer, on request, a list of lenders in the area that participate in guaranteed farmer program loan programs established under this subtitle, and other lenders in the area that express a desire to participate in the programs and that request inclusion on the list.

“(c) Other Information.—

“(1) In general.—On the request of a borrower, the Secretary shall make available to the borrower—

“(A) a copy of each document signed by the borrower;”

“(B) a copy of each appraisal performed with respect to the loan; and

“(C) any document that the Secretary is required to provide to the borrower under any law in effect on the date of the request.

(2) Rule of construction.—Paragraph (1) shall not supersede any duty imposed on the Secretary by a law in effect on January 5, 1988, unless the duty directly conflicts with a duty under paragraph (1).”

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(39) Rules and Regulations for Debt Service and Margin Requirements

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 339(b) or Section 339(e).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(40) Notice of Loan Service Programs

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3404)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(41) Planting and Production History Guidelines

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3405)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(42) Special Conditions and Limitations on Loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is similar to current law though it deletes the word “sufficient”. It also combines the provisions of Section 333 and 333A in current law. (Section 3406)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(43) Graduation of Borrowers

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3407)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(44) Debt Adjustment and Credit Counseling

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3408)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(45) Security Servicing

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law. (Section 3409)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(46) Contracts on Loan Security Properties

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law. (Section 3410)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(47) Debt Restructuring and Loan Servicing

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law. (Section 3411)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(48) Relief for Mobilized military Reservists from Certain Agricultural loan obligations

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3412)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(49) Interest Rate Reduction Program

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law though it restricts the program to loans under this "subtitle". (Section 3413)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(50) Rules and Regulations for Debt Service and Margin Requirements

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 339(b) or 339(e).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(51) Homestead Property

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3414)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(52) Transfer of Inventory Land

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3415)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(53) Target Participation Rates

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3416)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(54) Compromise or adjustment of debts or claims by guaranteed lender

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3417)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(55) Waiver of Mediation Rights by Borrowers

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3418)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(56) Borrower Training

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is substantially similar to current law. It eliminates the "(as determined by the appropriate county committee)". (Section 3419)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(57) Loan Assessments

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3420)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(58) Supervised Credit

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3421)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(59) Market Placement

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3422)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(60) Recordkeeping of Loans by Gender of Borrower

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3423)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(61) Crop Insurance Requirement

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3424)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(62) Loan and Loan Servicing Limitations

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3425)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(63) Short Form Certification of Farm Program Borrower Compliance

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3426)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(64) Underwriting Forms and Standards

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3427)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(65) Farmer Loan Pilot Projects

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to conduct pilot projects of limited scope and duration to evaluate processes and techniques that may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs carried out by this subtitle. (Section 3429)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 5302)

(66) Prohibition on use of Loans for Certain Purposes

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law. (Section 3430)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(67) Repeal of the application of the Bankhead Jones Act

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment outlines an AGRICULTURAL CREDIT INSURANCE FUND. The fund established pursuant to section 11(a) of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (60 Stat. 1075, chapter 964) shall be known as the Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund (referred to in this section as the "Fund", unless the context otherwise requires) for the discharge of the obligations of the Secretary under agreements insuring loans under this subtitle and loans and mortgages insured under prior authority. (Section 3401)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(68) Definitions

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment contains the definition of the terms "farmer", "beginning

farmer or rancher", "United States", "direct loan", "farmer program loan", "qualified beginning farmer", "debt forgiveness", "rural area", "borrower", "loan service program", and "primary loan servicing program". Additionally, it does not include the definitions of the terms "owner-operator", "insured", "contract of insurance", "joint operation", and "preservation loan servicing program". (Section 3002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(69) Limitations for insured loans and guaranteed loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 344.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(70) Maximum amounts for loans authorized, long-term cost projections

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 346(a).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(71) Other Federal agencies provisions of technical assistance to farmer with loans

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 347.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(72) Debt for nature

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment defines the terms "highly erodible land" and "wildlife" in Section 3002, but does not include definitions for the terms "governmental entity" and "recreational purposes". (Section 3002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(73) Purposes of farm loan programs

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 350.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(74) Debt restructuring and loan servicing

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 353(f) or (h).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(75) Rural Development and Farm Loan Program Activities

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment is the same as current law—included in (Section 3913).

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(76) Payment of Interest as a condition of loan servicing for borrowers

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 372.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(77) Making and Servicing of Loans by Personnel of State, County or Area Committees

The House bill is the same as current law. The Senate amendment does not include Section 376.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(78) Eligibility of Employees of State, County, or Area Committee for loans and loan Guarantees

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Senate amendment does not include Section 377.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

TITLE VI—RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(1) *Water, Waste Disposal, and Wastewater Facility Grants*

The House bill reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6001)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6001)

(2) *Rural Business Opportunity Grants*

The House bill reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6002)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$65,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 and combines the Rural Business Enterprise Grant and RBOG programs. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment strikes Sections 310B(c) and 306(a)(11) in the Con Act and replaces them with the Rural Business Development Grant authority, allocating not more than 10 percent of amounts appropriated for the purposes previously authorized under the Rural Business Opportunity Grant authority. (Section 6012)

The Managers made an effort to streamline and consolidate programs whenever possible. The conference substitute combines two existing programs, the Rural Business Opportunity Grants program and the Rural Business Enterprise Grants program, into a single program to be known as the Rural Business Development Grants program. The Managers intend for this new program to function in a manner similar to its predecessors and to award competitive grants to public agencies and non-profit community development organizations for business development, planning, technical assistance, or job training in rural areas.

(3) *Elimination of Reservation of Community Facilities Grant Program Funds*

The House bill repeals the reservation of funds. (Section 6003)

The Senate amendment does not include the reservation of funds. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6002)

(4) *Utilization of Loan Guarantees for Community Facilities*

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to utilize loan guarantees for community facilities to the maximum extent possible. (Section 6004)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6004)

(5) *Rural Water and Wastewater Circuit Rider Program*

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to continue a national rural water and wastewater circuit rider program. Additionally, the bill authorizes appropriations of \$20,000,000 for each fiscal year. (Section 6005)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$25,000,000 for each fiscal year.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6003)

(6) *Tribal College and University Essential Community Facilities*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$5,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6006)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Additionally, the amendment authorizes the Secretary to establish the maximum percentage of the cost of the project covered by this grant and limits the amount of non-Federal support to no more than 5 percent of the total cost of the project. The amendment also establishes grant priorities, the maximum grant amount, grant rate and local share requirements applicable to these grants. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations through 2018. (Section 6005)

(7) *Essential Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training*

The House bill authorizes technical assistance and training for essential community facilities. Additionally, the bill reserves not less than 3 nor more than 5 percent of any funds appropriated to carry out each of the community facilities programs authorized under subsection 306(a). (Section 6007)

The Senate amendment authorizes technical assistance to applicants and participants for community facilities programs. Additionally, under the amendment, the Secretary may not use more than 3 percent of the amount of funds made available to participants for a fiscal year for a community facilities program to provide technical assistance. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6006)

The Managers understand that rural communities, primarily due to limited staffing, often need technical assistance when developing funding applications. The conference substitute authorizes as much as 5 percent of the funding available through the Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program for technical assistance to help smaller communities in the development of their applications to the program.

(8) *Emergency Imminent Community Water Assistance Grant Program*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$27,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6008)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$35,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations through 2018. (Section 6007)

(9) *Household Water Well Systems*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$5,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6009)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6009)

(10) *Rural Business and Industry Loan Program*

The House bill amends subsection 310B(a) to include working capital as a loan purpose. Additionally, paragraph 310B(g)(7) is amended to authorize the Secretary, when determining whether a cooperative organization is eligible for a guaranteed business and industry loan, to take accounts receivable as security for obligations, and a borrower may use accounts receivable as collateral to secure a loan. (Section 6010)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The

amendment clarifies that the additional loan purpose is the financing of working capital. (Section 6010)

The Managers recognize the importance of “Main Street” businesses to rural communities, and that the recent economic downturn has reduced the affordability of credit in rural areas, putting considerable strain on these small businesses. The Conference substitute addresses this issue through changes to the Business & Industry (B&I) Loan Program intended to ensure working capital is an eligible use of funds.

The Conference substitute also provides flexibility for the Secretary to consider accounts receivable for the purposes of collateral to allow lenders to help meet the capital needs of small businesses in rural areas. The Managers encourage USDA to examine additional ways to guarantee lending to small brick-and-mortar, community-owned businesses, such as an increased loan guarantee percentage for smaller loans, a streamlined process for making B&I loans of less than \$250,000, and making operating lines of credit eligible as a program use.

Additionally, the Managers encourage USDA to better coordinate with the Small Business Administration on outreach to rural lenders related to the B&I loan guarantee program.

(11) *Rural Cooperative Development Grants*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$40,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6011)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$50,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 and an interagency working group to foster cooperative development and ensure coordination with Federal agencies and cooperative organizations.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes appropriations of \$40,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018 and an interagency working group to foster cooperative development and ensure coordination with Federal agencies and cooperative organizations. (Section 6013)

(12) *Locally or Regionally Produced Agricultural Food Products*

The House bill authorizes a reservation of funds through fiscal year 2018 of not less than 5 percent and not more than 7 percent of the funds made available to carry out subsection (g), business and industry direct and guaranteed loans. (Section 6012)

The Senate amendment authorizes a reservation of funds for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, not less than 5 percent of the total amount of funds made available to carry out subsection (e), loans to private business enterprises and business and industry direct and guaranteed loans. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the reservation of funds through 2018. (Section 6014)

(13) *Intermediary Relending Program*

The House bill moves the authorization of the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) to the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Con Act). Additionally, it authorizes \$10,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6013)

The Senate amendment moves authorization of IRP to the Con Act. Additionally, it authorizes \$50,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment prohibits the Secretary from

making IRP loans under another authority, authorizes appropriations of \$25,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018, and eliminates another authority for the program. (Section 6017)

(14) Rural College Coordinated Strategy

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to develop a rural community college coordinated strategy across the Rural Development mission area. (Section 6014)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6018)

The Managers recognize the contributions that rural community and technical colleges make in the development of a well-trained workforce in rural communities. These institutions serve over 3.5 million students, and train sixty-percent of first responders and allied health care providers in rural communities. The Managers expect the Secretary to work closely with the rural community and technical colleges to create a coordinated strategy which would guide the investments USDA already makes through rural development programs. Noting that a number of programs have varying eligibility criteria and purposes, the Managers expect the Secretary to look across the entire suite of rural development programs when creating a coordinated strategy to help deploy the most appropriate resources for each of the needs identified in consultation with representatives from the rural community and technical colleges. These investments should continue to utilize appropriate authorities under both the Rural Electrification Act and the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, including investments in technology and facilities, to better serve rural students.

(15) Rural Water and Waste Disposal Infrastructure

The House bill authorizes the Secretary, with respect to water and waste disposal direct and guaranteed loans, to encourage to the maximum extent practicable, private or cooperative lenders to finance rural water and waste disposal facilities by maximizing the use of loan guarantees in communities where the population exceeds 5,500, maximizing the use of direct loans where the impact on rate payers will be material when compared to a loan guarantee, in the case of projects that require interim financing above \$500,000 requiring those projects to initially seek such financing from a private or cooperative lender and determining if existing direct borrowers can refinance with a private or cooperative lender prior to providing a new direct loan. (Section 6015)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6019)

The Managers note that there is over \$3 billion in pending applications for water and wastewater projects throughout rural America. Reauthorization of water infrastructure programs is a vital component to rural economic development. Access to water systems promotes the health of rural communities and attracts businesses to invest in communities which are well supported by critical infrastructure. To address the current backlog, the Conference substitute directs USDA to maximize the use of guarantees through private or cooperative lenders for projects for larger communities. The Managers expect these provisions to leverage available funds to serve more communities than might otherwise be served solely through direct loans.

(16) Simplified Applications

The House bill requires the Secretary, to the maximum extent practicable, to develop a simplified application process for covered programs authorized by the Con Act. It also requires a report to Congress on implementation of the simplified applications. (Section 6016)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to expedite the process of creating user-friendly and accessible application forms and procedures prioritizing programs and applications at the individual level. It also requires the Secretary to offer a simplified application form and process for project proposals requesting less than \$50,000 for VAPG. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6020)

(17) Grants for NOAA Weather Radio Transmitters

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$1,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6017)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6022)

(18) Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$20,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6018)

The Senate amendment allots the CCC \$3,000,000 funds for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to be available until expended. Additionally, the amendment defines Microenterprise Development Organization to include an organization that is a collaboration of rural nonprofit entities serving a region or State, if one lead nonprofit entity is the sole underwriter of all loans and is responsible for associated risks. The amendment defines the term "training" to mean teaching broad business principles or general business skills in a group or public setting and the term "technical assistance" to mean working with a business client in a one-to-one manner. The amendment requires 15 percent matching funds, the form of which can be community development block grants. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes of funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation \$3,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018 and reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations through 2018. (Section 6023)

(19) Delta Regional Authority

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$12,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. It also extends the termination of authority until October 1, 2018. (Section 6019)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$30,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. The termination extension is the same as the House. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the Authority through 2018 and the authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6026)

(20) Northern Great Plains Regional Authority

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$2,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 and extends the termination of authority. (Section 6020)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$30,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, has a similar termination of

authority provision as the House, and amends the annual audit requirement. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authority through 2018 and the authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, as well as requires an annual audit only if funds are appropriated to the subtitle. (Section 6027)

(21) Rural Business Investment Program

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$20,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6021)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$25,000,000 through fiscal year 2018 and requires each rural business investment company to meet capital requirements as provided by the Secretary. (Section 6001)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6028)

(22) Definitions, "Section 3002", apply to both Credit and RD in rewrite

The Senate amendment rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. (Section 6001)

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(23) Water and Waste Disposal Loans, Loan Guarantees, and Grants

The Senate amendment rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. (Section 6001)

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(24) Water and Waste Facility Loans and Grants to Alleviate Health Risks and Alaska Water

The Senate amendment authorizes water and waste facility loans and grants to alleviate health risks and give the Secretary the authority to give priority to applications from eligible entities that provide services to colonias, the residents of Indian reservations, rural or native villages in Alaska and Native Hawaiian Home Lands. The amendment authorizes appropriations for grants at \$60,000,000 for each fiscal year and for loans at \$60,000,000 for each fiscal year. In addition to the match requirement from the State of Alaska for grants awarded to its rural or native villages, grants to native tribal health consortiums and public agencies shall require a match from the State in which the project shall occur. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations through 2018. (Section 6008)

(25) Solid Waste Management Grants

The Senate amendment authorizes solid waste management grants and authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6011)

(26-31) Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act

The Senate amendments rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. (Section 6001)

The House bill is the same as current law. The Conference substitute adopts the House provisions.

(32) Delta Health

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$3,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6024)

(33) Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grants

The Senate amendment allows the Secretary to award grants and gives independent producers direction regarding grant-ee strategies. The amendment states that priority is given to projects that contribute to increasing opportunities for operators of small and medium sized farms. Priority is given to projects at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of the recipients of which are beginning farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers. The Secretary shall provide substantial weight to these priorities. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(34) Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas Program

The Senate amendment authorizes the Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas program, and authorizes appropriations of \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6015)

(35) B&I Loans

The Senate amendment rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

The House bill is the same as current law. The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(36) General Provisions for Loans and Grants

The Senate amendment rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

The House bill is the same as current law. The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(37) Regional Authority

The Senate amendment authorizes a regional priority, including a reservation of funds from funding available for functional categories, for projects that are part of a multijurisdictional development plan. (Section 6001)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes a priority for specific rural development programs only if an eligible application is carried out solely in a rural area (as described for its functional category) and also supports development plans on a multijurisdictional basis. A higher priority shall be awarded to applications that support multijurisdictional development plans with particular attributes. A ten percent reservation of funds is made avail-

able from funding available for functional categories. Any approved application may be amended to qualify for the reservation of funds. All funding, including the reservation of funds, is available to certain approved applications. (Section 6025)

The Managers expect rural entities to utilize Rural Development programs in a manner that supports projects and initiatives that develop long-term community and economic growth strategies. Traditionally, rural development programs have been used to meet an immediate need. The Managers recognize that it is essential that versatile programs such as the Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program are available to rural residents to address pressing needs and concerns, and the Managers want to ensure that the programs authorized in this title continue to provide that type of assistance. The Managers also understand that regional plans cannot always address every need, and expect USDA will only devote funds specifically to regional projects beyond the funds set aside for this purpose if such can be done without preventing the funding of otherwise eligible projects in areas where regional plans have not been developed or the applicant does not feel it is in their best interest to pursue a regional approach.

To the extent possible, the Managers encourage USDA to work with rural communities to consider how they might use Rural Development resources to address multi-jurisdictional needs, by leveraging federal, state, local or private funding, or otherwise capitalize upon the unique strengths of the rural area to support successful community and economic development. The Managers recognize the work conducted by the national network of 540 multi-jurisdictional regional planning and development organizations to develop such plans and expect that, where possible, USDA will ensure any priority given to applications under this section to rely on these plans. Further, the Managers expect that priority will be given only to proposals that are consistent with an adopted regional economic or community development plan.

The Managers believe that projects that reflect the characteristics described above can help to maximize the impact of resources available at all levels of government and ultimately help rural communities reach their full potential. For these reasons, the conference substitute has provided the Secretary with the discretion to prioritize applications for funding that reflect an applicant's efforts to maximize resources and support strategic community and economic development and reserved funding within select programs for this purpose.

(38) Rural Development Insurance Fund

The Senate amendment rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act.

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(39) Rural Economic Area Partnership Zones

The Senate authorizes the Secretary to carry out rural economic area partnership zones in effect on the date of enactment of this Act. It also authorizes the Secretary to designate additional rural economic area partnership zones. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to carry out rural economic area partnership

zones in effect on the date of enactment of this Act. (Section 6016)

(40) Rural Development Partnership

The Senate amendment authorizes the State Rural Development Partnership. It does not include the Coordinating Committee in the Partnership. It outlines that the purposes of the Partnership are to be accomplished in a manner that maximizes collaborative public-and-private-sector cooperation and minimizes regulatory redundancy. The Coordinating Panel includes representatives from State rural development councils and shall facilitate effective communication among members of the Partnership. It also authorizes Federal agencies to enter into cooperative agreements with and provide grants and other assistance to State rural development councils and authorizes State rural development councils, but does not include a duty to work with the Coordinating Committee on strategies. It authorizes an annual plan and report to the Secretary and authorizes appropriations of \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. Federal agencies are authorized to enter into several types of agreements with State rural development councils and terminates such authority on Sept. 30, 2018. (Section 6001)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the National Rural Development Partnership through 2018. (Section 6021)

(41-76) Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act

The Senate amendment rewrote and reorganized portions of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. (Section 6001)

The House bill is the same as current law.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provisions.

(77) Energy Efficiency

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to make loans to borrowers for the purpose of relending to ultimate consumers for energy efficiency. It also authorizes the Secretary, acting through the Rural Utilities Service, to make loans and grants from the Cushion Credit subaccount. (Section 6101)

The Senate amendment authorizes a Rural Energy Savings Program to create jobs, promote rural development, and help rural families and small businesses achieve cost savings by providing loans to qualified consumers to implement durable cost-effective energy efficiency measures. The program provides 0% interest rate loans to eligible Rural Utilities Service borrowers to fund loans to qualified consumers to implement energy efficiency measures. (Section 6203)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes a Rural Energy Savings Program to create jobs, promote rural development, and help rural families and small businesses achieve cost savings by providing loans to qualified consumers to implement durable cost-effective energy efficiency measures. The program provides 0% interest rate loans to eligible Rural Utilities Service borrowers to fund loans to qualified consumers. The amendment strikes the authority for Fast Start Demonstration projects and rulemaking requirements as well as authorizes appropriations of \$75,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6205)

The Managers have authorized this new authority as an addition to any other authority the Secretary may have to offer loans.

(78) Fees for Certain Loan Guarantees

The House bill authorizes the Secretary, at the request of the borrower, to charge an upfront fee to cover the cost of an electrification base load generation loan guarantee equal to the cost of the loan guarantee. (Section 6102)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6101)

(79) Rural Utilities Service Contracting Authority

The House bill amends current law to update its reference to the "Rural Utilities Service", reflect the current authorization of cooperative agreements and not allow a contract funded by a borrower to be considered a public contract within the meaning of title 41 of the U.S. Code. (Section 6103)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(80) Access to Broadband Telecommunications Services in Rural Areas

The House bill amends paragraph (c)(2) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 to provide the highest priority to applicants that offer to provide broadband service to the greatest proportion of households that would otherwise not have a service provider. It authorizes a priority to applicants where the application is not predominantly for business service only, but offers to provide broadband service to at least 25 percent of customers that are commercial interests. Additionally, it amends paragraph (d)(5) to require the Secretary to publish a notice for each application describing the application including the amount and type of support requested and a list of the census block groups or tracts proposed to be so served. It amends subsection (d) to require the Secretary to establish a process where an incumbent service provider who provides broadband service to a remote rural area may submit to the Secretary information regarding the broadband services that a provider offers in a proposed service territory so that the Secretary may assess whether the application is an eligible project. The bill also amends subsection (e) to require the Secretary, when considering the technology needs of customers in a proposed service territory, to take into consideration the upgrade or replacement cost for the construction or acquisition of facilities and equipment in the territory. Lastly, the House bill reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations and the termination of authority through fiscal year 2018. (Section 6106)

The Senate amendment amends paragraph (c)(2) to provide the highest priority to applicants that offer to provide broadband service to the greatest proportion of households that would otherwise not have broadband service that meets a minimum acceptable level. It authorizes a priority to projects that serve rural communities with a population of less than 20,000, experiencing outmigration, with a high percentage of low-income residents and which are isolated. It also authorizes evaluation periods each fiscal year to compare applications and prioritize awards to rural communities that do not have residential broadband service that meets a minimum acceptable level. Paragraph (d)(8) requires the Secretary to post on the RUS website information that identifies an applicant, the amount and type of support requested by each applicant and a list of the census block groups or proposed service ter-

ritory. It amends paragraph (d)(5) to require the Secretary to publish a notice of each application describing the estimated number and proportion relative to the service territory of households without terrestrial-based broadband service. Paragraph (d)(8) requires the Secretary to allow broadband service providers to submit information about the broadband services that the providers offer in the groups or tracts in the list of the census block groups or proposed service territory so that the Secretary may assess whether the application is an eligible project. It authorizes appropriations for \$50,000,000 through fiscal year 2018 and program authority through fiscal year 2018.

Additionally, the amendment amends subsection (l) (as redesignated) to authorize from amounts made available for each fiscal year a set aside of at least 1 percent for oversight and implementing accountability measures.

It also amends Section 601 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 by authorizing a grant program for facilities and equipment for broadband service in rural areas, and amends paragraph (b)(3) to define "rural area" as any area described in section 3002 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. It amends subsection (b) to define the term "ultra-high speed service".

It also amends clause (d)(1)(A)(i) to require an eligible entity to demonstrate the ability to furnish, improve in order to meet a minimum acceptable level of broadband service, or extend service to all or part of an unserved rural area or an area below a minimum acceptable level of broadband service or to demonstrate the ability to carry out a project under a pilot program that provides a proposed service territory with ultra-high speed service. Clause (d)(2)(A)(i) is amended to authorize assistance only if not less than 25 percent of the households in the proposed service territory are unserved or have service levels below a minimum acceptable level. Clause (d)(2)(A)(ii) is amended to authorize assistance only if broadband service is not provided in any part of the proposed service territory by 2 or more incumbent service providers. Subparagraph (d)(2)(B) is amended to authorize an increase or decrease to the 25 percent requirement under certain circumstances. Clause (d)(2)(C)(i) is amended to provide an exception to the 3 or more incumbent service provider requirement if the incumbent service provider is upgrading broadband service to a minimum acceptable level of service. Clause (d)(2)(C)(ii) is amended to not apply the exception to the 3 or more incumbent service provider requirement if the project is being carried out under a pilot program to provide a proposed service territory with ultra-high speed service, unless an incumbent is providing ultra-high speed service. Subparagraph (d)(2)(C) is amended to require a market survey be certified by an affected community and demonstrated on a broadband map. Paragraph (d)(4) is amended to authorize pilot programs to address areas that are unserved or have service levels below a minimum acceptable level of service, or provide a proposed service territory with ultra-high speed service.

It amends subsection (d) to authorize certain reporting requirements by the entity receiving assistance to the Secretary including the use by the entity of the assistance and the progress towards fulfilling the objective of the assistance. The Secretary is required to maintain a fully searchable database accessible on the Internet and at no cost to the public that contains information regarding applicants and data regarding entities receiving

assistance. The Secretary must also establish written procedures for all broadband programs administered by the Secretary. The Secretary may also establish additional report and information requirements for recipients to ensure compliance. The Secretary is also authorized, if no broadband service provider submits information in regard to whether an application submitted meets the eligibility requirements in the program, to consider the number of providers in the group or tract to be established.

Subsection (e) is amended to define the minimum acceptable level of broadband service as at least 4-Mbps downstream transmission capacity and a 1-Mbps upstream transmission capacity. The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to adjust the minimum acceptable level of service and consider whether the broadband service is fixed or mobile. Paragraph (g)(2) is amended to authorize the Secretary to establish a limited initial deferral period or comparable terms necessary to achieve the financial feasibility and long-term sustainability of the project. Subsection (j) is amended to require the Administrator to report on the number of loans applied for and provided, including any loan terms or conditions for which the Secretary provided additional assistance to unserved areas and the overall progress towards fulfilling the goal of improving the quality of rural life by expanding rural broadband access, as demonstrated by metrics. It amends Section 601 by authorizing the Secretary to require address-level broadband buildout data.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment requires the Secretary to establish at least 2 evaluation periods each year to compare applications to the program and prioritize applications for all or part of rural communities that do not have residential service that meets the minimum acceptable level of broadband service defined as at least 4-Mbps downstream and 1-Mbps upstream transmission capacity, as reviewed and adjusted by the Secretary. Priority is also authorized for applicants that offer to provide service, not predominantly for businesses, where at least 25 percent of the customers would be commercial interests. The highest priority shall be given to applicants that offer to provide broadband service to the greatest proportion of unserved households or households that do not have service that meets the minimum acceptable level of service as defined. The Secretary is directed to give equal consideration to all qualified applicants, whether or not they are a previous USDA borrower in the program.

The amendment requires eligible entities to demonstrate the ability to furnish, improve in order to meet the minimum acceptable level of broadband service as defined or extend service to an unserved rural area or an area below the minimum acceptable level of broadband service as defined. An eligible project, in general, requires not less than 15 percent of the households in the proposed service territory to be unserved or have service levels below the minimum acceptable level of broadband service as defined. The incumbent service provider requirement for project eligibility will not apply if an incumbent service provider is upgrading broadband service for an existing service territory to meet the minimum acceptable level of broadband service as defined. Information submitted for the market survey requirement must be certified or demonstrated with address-level data or the National Broadband Map.

The amendment requires the Secretary to promptly provide a fully searchable database on the RUS website that contains certain information regarding applications received and entities receiving assistance. The Secretary will require any entity receiving assistance to submit a semiannual report for 3 years after completion of the project including certain information. The Secretary is also directed, to the maximum extent practicable, to establish written procedures for all broadband programs administered by the RUS to recover funds from loan defaults, deobligate any awards, re-award funds and minimize overlap among programs. The Secretary is directed to allow broadband service providers to submit information concerning the service that they offer in relation to applications received and information posted on the RUS website in order to assess whether the application is eligible and, if no information is received, to consider the number of providers by using the most current National Broadband Map or other data. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to consider whether the recipient is or would be serving an unserved area or one with service levels below the minimum acceptable level of broadband service as defined when determining the terms and conditions of a loan or loan guarantee, and if such determination is made, the Secretary may establish a limited initial deferral period. The Secretary is also required to submit in his annual report information that includes any loan terms or conditions for which the Secretary provided additional assistance to unserved areas, as well as overall progress towards expanding rural broadband access as demonstrated by metrics. The amendment authorizes a study of the ways that data collected under USDA broadband programs could be shared with the FCC to support the national Broadband Map. The amendment reauthorizes the program and authorization of appropriations through 2018.

It also authorizes the Rural Gigabit Network Pilot Program to provide grants, loans or loan guarantees to furnish or extend ultra-high speed service to rural areas, with an authorization of appropriations of \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Sections 6104 and 6105)

Through the Broadband Program, USDA provides funds for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide broadband service in rural communities. The conference substitute directs the program to target funds to rural communities currently unserved or without a minimum acceptable level of broadband service.

The conference substitute provides that equal consideration should be given to all qualified applicants, including those that have not previously received loans or loan guarantees. The Managers expect this provision not to be interpreted in a manner that would compel the agency to make loans, regardless of the technology utilized, to provide broadband service in geographic areas in which it has an outstanding telecom or broadband loan. Further, the Managers also expect the agency to have in place processes that ensure that all incumbent service providers, particularly those with existing agency loans, are made aware of all applications in their service areas along with a mechanism for these companies to provide the agency with relevant information on the impact of the proposal. Finally, the managers intend that the provision in subsection (c)(2)(C) be interpreted by the Secretary as not reducing the priority of applications for

loans or loan guarantees from applicants with an existing loan or loan guarantee under this program to the extent that the application for additional financing is designed to ensure the financial viability of the project and reduce the risk of loss for the Secretary and taxpayers with respect to the existing loan or loan guarantee.

The Managers expect the Secretary, when reviewing the minimum broadband speed, to provide updates in the Federal Register through a notice only, and not through a formal rulemaking process.

The Managers are aware of concerns about network security and data surety, especially as broadband networks expand in part due to efforts supported by this program to promote wider broadband coverage throughout the country. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence has released an investigative report on network security issues in recent months, and the Managers encourage the Department to take reports such as this one into consideration as it administers this program.

The Conference substitute adopts provisions which encourage USDA to consider the number of business subscribers in a potential project. With economic development at the core of the broadband loan program, the Managers expect USDA to consider the benefits to the community of projects which will provide sufficient levels of service for business connections, both in main-street establishments and those businesses which are operated out of the owner's residence.

The conference substitute also makes the application process more transparent and strengthens the reporting requirements for successful applicants to ensure the public can access information as to how program funding is utilized.

(81) *Definition of Rural Area*

The Senate amendment amends current law to define the term "rural area" as any area described in clause 3002(28)(A)(i) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, as amended by Section 6001. That clause defines "rural" and "rural area" to mean any area other than a city or town that has a population of greater than 50,000 inhabitants. (Section 6101)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(82) *Distance Learning and Telemedicine*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$65,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6201)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$100,000,000 through fiscal year 2018. (Section 6201)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes appropriations of \$75,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 6201)

(83) *Value-Added Agricultural Market Development Program Grants*

The House bill authorizes \$50,000,000 of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation and reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018. (Section 6202)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2017. It also amends section 231(b)(6) to authorize priority for projects that contribute to increasing opportunities for veteran farmers or ranchers. (Section 6207)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes a priority to opera-

tors of small and medium sized farms and ranches, beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers and veteran farmers or ranchers when awarding grants to eligible independent producers. The amendment also authorizes a priority to projects that create or increase marketing opportunities for those same groups when awarding grants to eligible agricultural producer groups, cooperatives and majority-controlled producer-based ventures. The amendment also authorizes \$63,000,000 in mandatory funding on the date of enactment of this Act and reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations through 2018. (Section 6203)

The conference substitute includes \$63 million in mandatory funding for the Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grant Program. The Managers are aware of the increasing interest of local and regional supply chains and food hubs in securing assistance through the program. Mid-tier value chains that include independent producers or farm cooperatives and businesses controlled by producers as full partners in marketing and pricing strategy decisions already have funds reserved for them under the program. The Managers encourage the Department to define those eligible for the mid-tier value chain reserved fund to include food distribution networks and centers that coordinate agricultural production and the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, or marketing of locally or regionally produced agricultural products, provided that such entities and networks are otherwise eligible.

The Managers recognize the importance of ensuring a diverse portfolio of projects which help to build markets for farmers and farmer cooperatives. While the conference substitute maintains set-asides established in the 2008 Farm Bill designed to encourage the participation of selected groups, the Managers are cognizant of concerns expressed by some stakeholders that program funds have been too narrowly targeted. The Managers urge USDA to ensure the program funds a range of projects. In particular, the Managers recognize that farmer cooperatives efficiently spread the benefits of the VAPG among a large number of producers in the aggregate. Cooperatives by their nature bring many producers together who individually do not have the size, expertise and resources to take advantage of the value chain beyond the farm gate, and they give them the opportunity to profit from those downstream activities. Therefore, funds invested and the benefits of projects generated by cooperatives through the VAPG are distributed to a wide number of producers. Likewise, by investing in initiatives of cooperatives, such projects lower the overall costs to the government in program administration per individual farmer that benefits. Therefore, the Managers encourage USDA to view cooperatives as a priority in administering the VAPG.

(84) *Agriculture Innovation Center Demonstration Program*

The House bill allots \$1,000,000 authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 6203)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6204)

(85) *Program Metrics*

The House bill requires the Secretary to collect data regarding economic activities created through grants and loans, including any technical assistance provided as a component of the grant or loan, and measure the

short and long term viability of award recipients and any entities to whom those recipients provide assistance using award funds under certain covered programs. It also requires the Secretary to submit a periodic report to Congress. (Section 6204)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment requires the Secretary to collect data regarding economic activities created through grants and loans, including technical assistance, and measure the short and long term viability of award recipients and any entities to whom those recipients provide assistance using award funds under certain covered programs. The amendment requires the Secretary to submit a periodic report to Congress with information including the percentage increase of employees and the number of business starts and clients served. (Section 6209)

In recognition of GAO recommendations to measure the effectiveness of rural development programs, the Managers expect the Secretary to collect data regarding economic activity created through the loans and grants provided to rural communities. The Managers expect these efforts will create a harmonized baseline of information for effective use by USDA and Congress. It is the intent of the Managers that this collected information be integrated with program changes and rulemaking. Through implementation of this section, the Managers expect USDA to create a universal form or appropriate type of notice to ensure applicants are aware of the reporting requirements and will be prepared to provide the information in a timely manner.

(86) Study of Rural Transportation Issues

The House bill authorizes an updated version of the study described in Section 6206 to be reported to Congress. It also amends the study to include the sufficiency of infrastructure along waterways of the U.S. and the impact on the movement of agricultural goods, as well as the benefits derived through upgrades and repairs to locks and dams. (Section 6205)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes the study in Section 6206 to be reported to Congress. It also requires a triennial update of the study. (Section 6205)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 6206)

The Managers agree that collecting information to determine the status of critical river infrastructure is an important component of updating the study, but expect USDA to seek available information from the Army Corps of Engineers, or any other appropriate Federal entity, to the greatest extent practicable in order to expedite the collection of data and to minimize the time and cost of implementing this section.

(87) Certain Federal Actions not to be Considered Major

The House bill states that an action by the Secretary that does not involve the provision of Federal dollars or a Federal loan guarantee shall not be considered a major Federal action in the case of a loan, loan guarantee, or grant program in the rural development mission area of USDA. (Section 6206)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

The Managers intend for the Secretary, acting through the Rural Utilities Service,

to act in accordance with 7 C.F.R. 1794.3 as finalized in 1998, consistent with applicable law.

(88) Telemedicine and Distance Learning Services in Rural Areas

The House bill amends subsection 2333 (d) to authorize a priority based on whether the applicant is located in a designated health professional shortage area. (Section 6207)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(89) Definition of Rural Area for Purposes of the Housing Act of 1949

The Senate amendment amends section 520 of the Housing Act of 1949 so that any area with a population of less than 35,000 that has been deemed to be a "rural area" for purposes of this title any time prior to or after October 1, 1990, and any time during the period between January 1, 2000, and ending on December 31, 2010, shall continue to be so deemed until the 2020 Census data is received by USDA. (Section 6202)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 6208)

(90) Funding of Pending Rural Development Loan and Grant Applications

The Senate amendment funds pending rural development loan and grant applications according to the terms and conditions in Section 6029 from Commodity Credit Corporation funds in the amount of \$150,000,000, to remain available until expended. (Section 6204)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 6210)

(91) Agriculture Transportation Policy

The Senate amendment amends Section 203 of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to direct the Secretary to participate in all proceedings of the Surface Transportation Board that may establish freight rail transportation policy affecting agriculture and rural America. (Section 6206)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to make complaint to or petition the Surface Transportation Board. (Section 6202)

TITLE VII—RESEARCH

SUBTITLE A—NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND TEACHING POLICY ACT OF 1977

(1) Option to be included as Non-Land-Grant College of Agriculture

The House bill authorizes a Hispanic-serving Agricultural College and University and any institution eligible to receive funds under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act of 1962 to opt out of their respective designation in order to qualify as a Non-Land-Grant College of Agriculture. (Section 7101)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment allows a Hispanic-serving agricultural college and university and any institution eligible to receive funds under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act to opt out of their respective designation in order to qualify as a Non-Land-Grant College

of Agriculture. The amendment also requires a NLGCA institution to offer a baccalaureate or higher degrees in the study of food and agricultural sciences and the Secretary to establish a process for NLGCA designation. (Section 7101)

The Managers do not take a position on how an institution should be designated, but have provided the Hispanic Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities, as well as institutions eligible to receive funding under the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program, with the option to choose whether to be designated as such or to opt out of their designation for purposes of access to program funding eligibility. The Managers believe institutions with degree programs in the agricultural sciences that may automatically qualify as a Hispanic Serving Institution or as a McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research institution should not be precluded from being able to opt out of those programs in favor of qualifying as a Non-Land-Grant College of Agriculture.

(2) Specialty Crop Committee

The House bill authorizes the current annual report to include recommendations regarding the improvement of quality and taste of processed specialty crops and programs that would improve remote sensing. (Section 7103)

The Senate amendment authorizes the current annual report to include an analysis of alignment of Specialty Crop Committee recommendations with specialty crop research initiative grants, requires membership on the Specialty Crop Committee to reflect diversity in the specialty crops represented and that the Specialty Crop Committee to consult on an ongoing basis with diverse sectors of the specialty crop industry. (Section 7102)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision, including Section 12212, with an amendment. The amendment requires that the Specialty Crop Committee membership reflect diversity in the specialty crops represented, that the annual report include recommendations regarding the improvement of quality and taste of processed specialty crops, programs that would improve remote sensing, and an analysis of alignment of committee recommendations with specialty crop research grants and that the specialty crops committee to consult with diverse sectors of the specialty crop industry. The amendment also establishes a Citrus Disease Subcommittee and its duties. (Section 7103)

The Managers intend the NAREEEAB and Specialty Crop Committee to consult with industry groups on agricultural research, extension, education, and economics, and to make recommendations to the Secretary and Congress based on that consultation.

In creating the NAREEEAB and Specialty Crop Committee, Congress intended for these entities to recommend policies, to identify short and long-term national priorities for REE programs, and to evaluate program results and effectiveness among other assigned duties. Congress has since added multiple duties and consultative functions to the Board's mandate. In doing so, the Managers are aware that the work load and learning curve of the volunteer members is high. It has become apparent to the Managers that it can take several years for new board members to become comfortable not only with the diverse subject matter under review, but likewise the law and administrative functions they are required to evaluate. While the statute defines the length of a board

member's individual term, Congress has never intended for board members to be subject to a limit on the number of terms they can serve. Unfortunately, the Managers have become aware that USDA has instituted an arbitrary term limit policy on advisory board members that inhibits the individual members and the advisory board's effectiveness. The Managers strongly encourage the Secretary to reverse this policy.

The Managers recognize the interest in growing agricultural commodities in less traditional production areas. As such, the Managers encourage the Secretary in consultation with the NAREEEAB, in both the intramural research carried out by the Agricultural Research Service and in the competitive grants programs carried out through AFRI and other authorities, to carry out and fund research into the unique situations facing producers in urban areas. These unique situations may include reclaiming land previously used for industrial purposes or neglected residential areas, and addressing needs such as the remediation of soils to make them capable of producing agricultural commodities for human consumption.

(3) *Veterinary Services Grant program*

The House authorizes a Veterinary Services Grant program to award competitive grants to develop, implement and sustain veterinary services. (Section 7104)

The Senate amendment authorizes a Veterinary Service Grant program to award competitive grants to develop, implement and sustain veterinary services. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to develop additional grant preferences and requires a 25 percent match requirement unless waived by the Secretary. (Section 7103)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7104)

Our veterinary workforce is responsible for ensuring that the food we eat is safe, but the nation faces a critical shortage in the public, private, industrial and academic sectors. Our nation's large-animal veterinarians are truly on the front lines of food safety, public health, animal health and national security. The demand for large-animal veterinarians is increasing, and the lack of these specialists in many areas of the country will continue to put our agricultural economy and the safety of our food supply at risk.

Since the fall of 2000, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees have worked on ways of resolving the serious veterinary shortage problem confronting many rural communities. With the passage of the National Veterinary Medical Service Act in December of 2003, a program was authorized to incentivize large animal veterinarians to practice in communities that USDA designated as veterinarian shortage areas. With this program in place, large animal veterinarians are able to apply on a competitive basis for educational loan repayment assistance in exchange for their commitment to practice in shortage areas.

To the extent that the loan program is successful, it is important to consider that this was just the first step. While this assistance will be very helpful in attracting veterinarians to these communities, gaps remain in veterinarian recruitment, attracting and training technical support staff, and simply meeting the long-term costs of operating veterinarian practices in these communities.

The Veterinarian Services Investment Act is meant to address these secondary needs and is designed to complement the loan repayment program to help large animal veterinarians become established in these rural communities.

The Conference substitute recognizes and addresses a real problem in rural America by authorizing grants to address workforce shortages based on the needs of underserved areas. For example, grants could be used to recruit veterinarians and veterinary technicians in shortage areas and communities, expanding and establishing practices in high-need areas. The program could also establish mobile portable clinics and televet services and establish education programs, including continuing education, distance education, and increase recruitment in veterinary science.

(4) *Policy Research Centers*

The House bill requires the Secretary, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist, to make competitive grants to or enter into cooperative agreements with eligible recipients that possess a history of providing unbiased, nonpartisan economic analysis to Congress. The provision authorizes other public research institutions and organizations as eligible recipients. The Secretary is directed to give a preference to policy research centers that have extensive databases, models and demonstrated experience in providing Congress with agricultural market projections, rural development and agricultural policy analysis and baseline projections at the farm, multiregional, national, and international levels. The bill also authorizes appropriations of \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7106)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist, to enter into agreements with eligible recipients that possess a history of providing unbiased, nonpartisan economic analysis to Congress. The amendment authorizes other public research institutions and organizations as eligible recipients. The Secretary is directed to give a preference to policy research centers that have extensive databases, models and demonstrated experience in providing Congress with agricultural market projections, rural development and agricultural policy analysis and baseline projections at the farm, multiregional, national, and international levels, including information, analysis and research relating to drought mitigation. The amendment also authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for fiscal year 2013 and each fiscal year thereafter and authorizes funding for activities including developing theoretical applied and research methods. (Section 7015)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment requires the Secretary, acting through the Office of the Chief Economist, to make competitive grants or cooperative agreements with eligible recipients and to award a preference to policy research centers with extensive databases, models and demonstrated experience in providing Congress with various types of information or drought mitigation information, analysis and research. The amendment also authorizes funding for applied research methods and authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7106)

The Managers recognize the invaluable role that the Drought Monitor, produced at the National Drought Mitigation Center, in coordination with USDA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, plays on several fronts. The conference substitute includes the provision of information, analysis and research relating to drought mitigation as one of the preferences for funding under this section. The Managers expect that the Drought Monitor will continue to be available for use in determining eligibility

for Federal disaster response programs, as well as providing invaluable information for other segments of government, agricultural producers and the sectors that support agricultural production.

(5) *Human Nutrition Intervention and Health Promotion Research program*

The House bill repeals section 1424. (Section 7107)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7108)

The Conference substitute builds upon the efforts from 2008, either repealing or allowing unfunded and unused program authorities to expire with fiscal year 2013, and combining, consolidating and streamlining authorities to make a more concentrated and effective use of limited funding. The remaining authorities are extended through fiscal year 2018 with few changes.

(6) *Pilot research program to combine medical and agricultural research*

The House bill repeals section 1424A. (Section 7108)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7109)

(7) *Continuing animal health and disease research programs*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$15,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7110)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018. (Section 7108)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes and allocates the authorization of appropriations through 2018 between the capacity program in current law and the newly authorized competitive grant program. (Section 7111)

The Managers have heard concerns from stakeholders that there has been a lack of emphasis on animal science by USDA. Additional focus needs to be placed on critical issues facing animal agriculture. Advancements in animal science will play an important role in meeting a growing global demand for food while making efficient use of natural resources, strengthening the competitiveness of American agriculture and addressing critical animal health issues. The expansion of Section 1433 includes a competitive mechanism that will enable the Department to better focus resources on key animal science priorities.

The Managers appreciate the efforts brought forward by the Farm Animal Integrated Research 2012 (FAIR 2012) priority setting process which identified food security, one health and stewardship as key focal areas for future investments in animal science. The Managers encourage the Department to use these focal areas and the underlying priorities identified in FAIR 2012 as a starting point and to regularly consult with industry when developing requests for proposal under the new competitive component of Section 1433.

(8) *Research on national or regional programs*

The House bill repeals section 1434. (Section 7111)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

The Conference substitute reauthorizes many critical agricultural research programs. In so doing, the Managers recognize

the need to streamline the authorities in this title and permitted some authorities that had not received funding in recent years to expire.

(9) *Grants to upgrade agriculture and food science facilities and equipment at insular area land-grant institutions*

The House bill authorizes grants to support tropical and subtropical agricultural research, including pest and disease research and reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018. (Section 7113)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018. (Section 7110)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7113)

(10) *National research and training virtual centers*

The House bill repeals section 1448. (Section 7114)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7114)

(11) *Competitive grants program for Hispanic agricultural workers and youth*

The House bill authorizes the award of competitive grants to provide for training in the food and agricultural sciences of Hispanic agricultural workers and Hispanic youth working in the food and agricultural sciences. (Section 7116)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7116)

(12) *Research equipment grants*

The House bill declares repeals section 1462A. (Section 7118)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7118)

(13) *Auditing, reporting, bookkeeping, and administrative requirements*

The House bill states that notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may retain not more than 4 percent of amounts made available for agricultural research, extension, and teaching assistance programs for the administration of those programs authorized under this Act or any other Act, except for peer panel expenses or any other provision that contains a limitation of less than 4 percent. The Secretary is authorized, to the maximum extent practicable and for the purposes of supporting ongoing research and information dissemination activities, to enter into grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, or other legal instruments with former Department of Agriculture agricultural research facilities. The Secretary is also authorized, for the purposes of receiving support for agricultural research, to enter into grants, contracts, cooperative agreements or other legal instruments with agricultural research organizations. (Section 7121)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to enter into agreements with former USDA agricultural research facilities. (Section 7121)

Agricultural research, extension, and education programs serve the food and agriculture sector, consumers of American agricultural products, and rural communities throughout the United States. Research programs and funding are primarily delivered

by two agencies at USDA: the Agriculture Research Service (ARS), which focuses on 'intramural' research and basic research; and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) which was created by the 2008 Farm Bill to restructure, combine and improve 'extramural' research functions at USDA to make better use of limited funds.

The Managers are concerned about the increasing use of assessments, fees, and higher indirect costs rates imposed on its university partners by ARS. These university partners play a major role in achieving ARS research priorities and objectives. In a time of scarce budgetary resources, ARS must ensure limited research dollars are maximized and administrative costs are reduced to the fullest extent possible. In recent years, ARS has imposed a variety of administrative assessments on its university partners, effectively reducing funds intended for important research projects. The Managers expect ARS to operate within historical administrative cost parameters, namely by imposing a total indirect cost rate not exceeding four percent. All administrative assessments, fees, dues, or charges, of any type, must be included within this overall administrative cost cap. ARS must administer its programs more efficiently to ensure valuable research funds are maximized so it may continue to maintain a robust agricultural research enterprise. The Managers encourage ARS to continue university research partnerships to ensure our nation's premier educational and clinical institutions play a major role in achieving ARS and congressional research objectives.

The Managers encourage the Secretary, acting through ARS, to continue and expand the Agricultural Technology Innovation Partnership (ATIP). The Managers recognize the success of the ATIP initiative in facilitating technology transfer from USDA to the private sector, and particularly encourage the Secretary to support the further development of public-private partnerships to provide venture development training, promote the sustainability of soil health for multiple agricultural uses, and expand the National Nutrient Database to facilitate a healthier food supply.

The Managers encourage the Secretary to review and assess technological solutions for the disposal of acid whey associated with the production of certain dairy products. The Managers recognize that USDA and the ARS can maximize resources through public-private partnerships to develop technologies to effectively process acid whey in an effort to address concerns of the dairy and food industries.

(14) *Special authorization for biosecurity planning and response*

The House bill authorizes authorization of appropriations of such sums as necessary through fiscal year 2013 and \$10,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7126)

The Senate amendment amends the authorization of appropriations of such sums as necessary through fiscal year 2013 and \$20,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7119)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7126)

(15) *Matching funds requirement*

The House bill authorizes the requirement of matching funds from the recipient of competitive grants under certain covered laws. The recipient shall provide, from sources other than funds provided through the grant, funds or in-kind contributions or a combination of both to match at least 100 percent of the amount of the grant. The match require-

ment shall not apply to grants awarded to a research agency of the USDA, an entity eligible to receive funds under a capacity and infrastructure program as defined in the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 or to the partner of such eligible entity. (Section 7128)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment requires at least a 100 percent match from the recipient of competitive grants under certain covered laws but exempts grants awarded to a research agency of the USDA and entities, including their partners, that are eligible to receive capacity funds. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to waive the match requirement if the grant involves research or extension activities that the NAREEE Advisory Board has determined is a national priority specific to a statutory purpose of the program under which the grant is awarded. The match policy will apply to new grants awarded after October 1, 2014. (Section 7128)

The use of matching funds has proven to be an effective tool in leveraging limited Federal resources with commitments from those benefitting from agricultural research and extension. Unfortunately, concerns about the consistency of USDA's application of these policies have been brought to the attention of the Managers.

Efforts by the Congress to develop a comprehensive policy on research and extension matching funds originated during the development of the 2008 farm bill. At the time, it was noted that as research programs have been authorized or modified, the incorporation of matching requirements was done in a subjective manner. An effort was initiated during the 2008 farm bill conference to harmonize the matching requirements, but due to the complexity of the task and time constraints, the effort was dropped with the understanding that the Congress and USDA would undertake a stakeholder process designed to provide recommendations in advance of the 2012 farm bill. Unfortunately that process never materialized after passage of the 2008 bill.

The House Agriculture Committee maintained an interest in engaging stakeholders in a discussion about how to harmonize these policies to improve consistency and transparency in their application. Several requests were made for suggestions on how best to approach this issue and the consensus seemed to be that the Committee should propose a discussion draft. The language included in the 2012 House Committee legislation was the result of technical assistance received by the USDA and was meant to begin this discussion.

As part of the discussion that commenced following release of the 2012 House Agriculture Committee farm bill draft, several comments were received and a consensus was formed regarding an effort to utilize matching fund policies to leverage Federal investment, while at the same time reducing the administrative and accounting burden on USDA and grant recipients.

The Conference substitute recognizes the value of matching funds, but likewise takes into account the long-standing Federal investment in research, extension and teaching capacity and infrastructure programs (as defined in Sec. 251(f)(1)(C) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994). Whereas the 2012 House draft bill allowed for capacity and infrastructure program funds

to be utilized in meeting the matching requirement for competitive research and extension grants, the resulting accounting burden was deemed to be counterproductive. In the conference substitute, eligibility to receive capacity and infrastructure program funds is deemed to be sufficient to authorize a blanket exemption from competitive grant matching requirements. Likewise, any individual grant awarded to multiple recipients would be exempt from matching requirements if at least one of the recipients is eligible to receive capacity and infrastructure program funds from USDA.

The Conference substitute includes a provision requiring the Secretary to establish an ongoing process through which institutions may apply for designation as a Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture. The Managers expect the Secretary to take all reasonable steps for the purposes of ensuring additional institutions that meet the criteria can be designated as a Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture.

Additionally, the conference substitute provides the Secretary the authority to issue a waiver of the matching funds requirement for competitively awarded grants that support research or extension activities that the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board has deemed to be a national priority. The Managers expect the national priorities identified by the Board to be consistent with the priorities established in the authorizing statute for the various agricultural research, education and extension programs.

(16) Sense of Congress regarding expansion of the Land Grant program

The House bill provides a Sense of Congress that land-grant programs should be expanded to include enhanced funding and additional institutions should be considered. (Section 7129)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment designates Central State University as a land grant institution, but prohibits the University from receiving formula funds for two years. (Section 7129)

(17) Education grants program for Alaska and Hawaiian Native serving institutions

The Senate amendment eliminates grants without regard to any requirement for competition and reauthorizes appropriations through 2018. (Section 7106)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7107)

SUBTITLE—FOOD, AGRICULTURE,

CONSERVATION, AND TRADE ACT OF 1990

(18) Sustainable agriculture technology development and transfer

The House bill authorizes authorization of appropriations of \$5,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7203)

The Senate amendment amends authorization of appropriations of such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7203)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7203)

(19) National Agricultural Weather Information System

The House bill repeals Title XVI. (Section 7206)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$1,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7206)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7206)

The Managers are aware that advanced weather forecasts, using systems such as Tropospheric Airborne Meteorological Data Reporting, have been utilized by various Federal agencies for nearly a decade. The Managers support advanced forecasting in that it enhances U.S. meteorological forecasting systems, which are particularly useful in agricultural weather forecasts. The Managers therefore encourage continued use of these systems.

(20) Rural Electronic Commerce Extension Program

The House bill repeals section 1670. (Section 7207)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7207)

(21) Agricultural Genome Initiative

The House bill repeals Section 1671. (Section 7208)

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to encourage awards to consortia of eligible entities. (Section 7207)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7208)

(22) High-priority research and extension initiatives

The House bill repeals high-priority research and extension areas in subsections (e), (f) and (i). Pollinator protection is reauthorized through fiscal year 2018 and an annual report is amended to address honey bee health disorders and best management practices. A coffee plant health initiative is authorized as well as the authorization of appropriations through 2018. Section 7405(b)(2)(C) addresses research needs regarding cervidae and Section 6405 authorizes a Pulse Health Initiative. (Section 7209)

The Senate amendment repeals certain high-priority research and extension areas. Pollinator protection is reauthorized through fiscal year 2018. A cervidae initiative, a Corn, Soybean Meal, Cereal Grains, and Grain Byproducts Research and Extension priority, Forestry Products Advanced Utilization Research, Training Coordination for Food and Agriculture Protection, and Farm Animal Agriculture Integrated Research are authorized as well as the authorization of appropriations through 2018. (Section 7208)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations through 2018, strikes certain high-priority research and extension areas, authorizes a coffee plant health initiative, a corn and soy meal high-priority research and extension area, a pulse crop health initiative, and training coordination for food and agriculture protection. Pollinator protection is reauthorized and amended to include health and population status surveillance. The amendment also authorizes Forestry products advanced utilization research in Section 7310. (Section 7209 and 7310)

The Managers recognize that it is in the economic interest of agricultural producers and American consumers to ensure a healthy, sustainable population of native and managed pollinators, including managed honey bees. Pollinators are essential to the production of an estimated one-third of the human diet and to the reproduction of at least 80 percent of flowering plants. Insect-pollinated agricultural commodities result in significant income for agricultural producers and account for about \$20 billion in U.S. agricultural output yearly.

The Managers remain concerned about the decline in the health and viability of managed honey bees due in part to a loss of appropriate habitat. As a result, the conference substitute continues to include a priority for creating pollinator habitat utilizing the Title II conservation programs. The Managers remain committed to pollinator protection activities, including the granting of priority treatment to conservation program applicants who commit to providing pollinator habitat. The Managers expect the Secretary to continue to utilize conservation programs to create, restore and enhance native and managed pollinator habitat quantity and quality, and specifically encourage the Secretary to ensure that conservation programs are resulting in sufficient high-quality pollinator habitat for managed honey bees—habitat that includes common alfalfa and sweet clover varieties utilized effectively in farm bill conservation programs.

The Conference substitute also continues the authorization for research on pollinator protection, and adds a consideration for honey bee health disorders and best management practices related to colony collapse disorder to the annual report that the Secretary is required to submit to Congress. The Managers also recognize the need to assist honey bee producers who suffer from disasters in the commodity title with the funding provided for the emergency assistance program that includes honey bees. Additionally, the Managers are aware that specialty crop producers groups are working collaboratively with institutions of higher learning on research and education activities. The Managers applaud these actions and encourage the Secretary to support their efforts.

The Cooperative Extension system is a nationwide, non-formal educational network. Each state, territory, and the District of Columbia has an office at its land-grant universities and a network of local or regional offices which are staffed by experts who provide practical, research-based education to agricultural producers, small business owners, youth, consumers, and others in rural and urban communities. The Managers encourage the Secretary to ensure that Cooperative Extension is effectively utilized to deliver the educational component of USDA programs. The Secretary is also encouraged to engage in discussions with other federal departments and agencies to consider ways to use the Cooperative Extension to deliver education for other federal programs as practicable.

In addition, the Managers recognize the unique knowledge and information that the Cooperative Extension system experts provide to various groups regarding farm and food systems. As mentioned, this education and information is disseminated through a network of local or regional offices, and when the Secretary utilizes the Cooperative Extension to deliver the educational component of the various programs at the Department, to the extent practicable, the Rural Development mission area programs should be included.

During the creation of the Reservation Extension Agent Program, the Congress required the Secretary to consult with Native American farmers and ranchers in establishing Extension programs on Indian reservations and tribal jurisdictions. The Managers understand that changes in the operation of grant programs have impacted this consultation, and expect that the Secretary would find ways to continue the dialogue on the operation of these Extension programs with the populations that they are serving.

The Conference substitute moves the Forestry Products Advanced Utilization Research Initiative provision from High Priority Research and includes it as a separate provision in the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998. The Managers intend for this provision to address research needs of the forestry sector and their respective regions. The Conference substitute directs the Secretary to ensure that this program is administered in coordination with the U.S. Forest Service Research and Development Program and the Forest Products Laboratory. The Managers encourage the U.S. Forest Service Research and Development Program to contribute funding to carry out this initiative. The Managers also recognize the benefits the Land Grant System can offer this initiative in terms of developing and disseminating science-based tools through research and extension activities.

(23) *Nutrient management research and extension initiative*

The House bill repeals section 1672A. (Section 7210)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7210)

(24) *Organic agriculture research and extension initiative*

The House bill eliminates the funds transfer, encourages farm business management, authorizes \$20,000,000 in mandatory funding for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018 and reauthorizes appropriations for 2014 through 2018. (Section 7211)

The Senate amendment eliminates the funds transfer and authorizes \$16,000,000 in mandatory funding for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7209)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes competitive grant purposes, including farm business management, reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations and authorizes \$20,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7211)

The Conference substitute provides additional funding for the Organic Research and Education Initiative. One of the primary activities necessary to encourage continued market growth, improved food safety and risk management for both of these industries is adequate dedicated research support. The Managers recognize that research is one of the primary means by which the Farm Bill provides assistance to organic farmers, so conference substitute increases funding beyond the levels in the 2008 Farm Bill, consistent with increased market needs.

The Managers encourage the USDA to explore technology that meets the requirements of the National Organic Program and that can control weeds and pests while maintaining healthy water resources.

(25) *Agricultural bioenergy feedstock and energy efficiency research and extension initiative*

The House bill repeals section 1672C. (Section 7212)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7212)

(26) *Centers of excellence*

The House bill moves the authority in subsection 1672(i) requiring the Secretary to prioritize any center of excellence established for specific agricultural commodities

for the receipt of funding for any competitive research or extension program administered by the Secretary. A center of excellence is composed of 1 or more eligible entities specified in subsection (b)(7) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act that provide financial or in-kind support to the center. Certain criteria will be considered for recognition as a center of excellence and where practicable, the criteria for consideration shall include efforts to improve teaching capacity and infrastructure at colleges and universities. (Section 7214)

The Senate amendment moves the authority in subsection 1672(i) providing that the Secretary may prioritize regional centers of excellence established for specific agricultural commodities for the receipt of funding and authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7211)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes the Secretary to prioritize centers of excellence established for the purposes of carrying out research, extension, and education activities relating to the food and agricultural sciences for the receipt of funding for any competitive research or extension program. (Section 7214)

With limited resources to invest in critical programs, the Managers considered multiple options by which Federal funds can be leveraged to improve overall program effectiveness. With the recognition that multiple institutions and organizations participate in projects of similar interest, the Managers have sought to incentivize the formation of formal partnerships and other organizational structures as Centers of Excellence. The conference substitute directs that such centers that meet established criteria be granted priority in receipt of competitive research and extension grants.

The Managers would recommend that USDA establish procedures to implement this provision in accordance with appropriate regulatory procedures in order to allow interested stakeholders to gain a firm understanding of USDA's implementation of the provision.

(27) *Red Meat Safety Research Center*

The House bill repeals section 1676. (Section 7215)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7215)

(28) *Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$6,000,000 for fiscal year 2013 and \$3,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7216)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$6,000,000 for fiscal year 2013 and \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7212)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7216)

SUBTITLE C—AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 1998

(29) *Coordinated program to improve visibility of small and medium size dairy, livestock and poultry operations*

The House bill repeals section 407. (Section 7303)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(30) *Fusarium Graminearum*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of such sums as necessary through fiscal year 2013 and \$7,500,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7304)

The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$10,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7303)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7303)

(31) *Bovine Johne's Disease Control Program*

The House bill repeals section 409. (Section 7305)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7304)

(32) *Specialty Crop Research Initiative*

The House bill authorizes research in plant breeding, genetics and genomics to include other methods and also authorizes handling and processing. It authorizes the Secretary to award competitive grants on the basis of an initial scientific peer review and a final funding determination made by the Secretary based on a review and ranking for merit, relevance and impact conducted by a panel of specialty crop industry representatives for the specific crop. \$50,000,000 of mandatory monies is authorized for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, \$55,000,000 for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and \$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter and the authorization of appropriations is reauthorized for 2014 through 2018. Section 6128 provides a universal match policy that applies to this provision. (Section 7307)

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to consult with the Specialty Crops Committee during the peer and merit review process. \$25,000,000 of mandatory monies is authorized for fiscal year 2014, \$30,000,000 for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, \$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2017 and \$50,000,000 fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter. The amendment also eliminates the non-federal funds limitation on the match requirement. (Section 7305)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes the initiative to address research in genomics and other methods as well as efforts to improve handling and processing. The Secretary is directed to award competitive grants on the basis of a scientific peer review and a review and ranking for merit, relevance and impact and to consult each fiscal year with the Specialty Crops Committee and report to Congress the results of the consultation and the committee's review of the grants awarded in the previous year, including the Citrus Disease subcommittee's consultation and grant review in Section 1408(g) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977. The amendment also authorizes \$80,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter and reauthorizes the authorization of appropriations for each year 2014 through 2018.

The amendment also adopts the Senate amendment, Section 12212, with an amendment, authorizing an Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program with a reservation of Commodity Credit Corporation funds authorized for SCRI of \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 through 2018, available and reserved until expended, and an authorization of appropriations of \$25,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018. (Section 7306)

The Managers are aware of concerns that the current merit review process for competitive research grants generally and the

Specialty Crops Research Initiative can provide a significantly better approach to evaluating the relevancy of the proposed research projects through industry participation. The conference substitute incorporates amendments to strengthen the merit review process to address these shortcomings.

As the Secretary implements the amendments to sections 103 and 412 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998; and section 1408A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, the Managers intend the Secretary to institute a grant review process that will consist of a scientific peer review and a merit/relevance review of proposals to be conducted by panels of industry representatives for the specific crop or livestock species being evaluated to assess industry relevance.

While the Managers do not specify the order of review between scientific peer review and merit/relevance review, it is understood that there exists an initial preference among industry, academia and the Department that merit/relevance review should be sequenced first. If the Secretary chooses to sequence merit/relevance review prior to scientific peer review, the Managers expect future modifications to the overall process to be guided by an ongoing evaluation to be conducted by the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board, and the Specialty Crop Committee (for merit/relevance review related to the Specialty Crop Research Initiative). The advisory committee review of this process should occur before and after each annual funding cycle. The results of these reviews should be made publicly available and forwarded to the House Committee on Agriculture, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, and the Appropriations Subcommittees on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies in the House and Senate.

The Managers further understand that the Department is considering a pre-proposal process to conduct an enhanced merit/relevance review. While a pre-proposal process is neither authorized nor prohibited, the Managers expect that if the Secretary uses his discretion to pursue this process, this too would be evaluated as part of the ongoing review of program effectiveness.

In order to sufficiently evaluate the pre-proposals for merit/relevance, the Managers expect the submission must include: the process used to obtain stakeholder input to identify the industry need and proposed project objectives; the problem, rationale, significance, and hypotheses; how the proposed research approach will address each objective; the process to be used for continued stakeholder engagement to achieve project objectives; how the project will translate results into delivery of usable information to the entire stakeholder community in a timely fashion; and documentation of the relevance of the Principal Investigator(s) scientific background to project objectives.

Applicants submitting project pre-proposals that are found to rank high on merit/relevance review would then be invited to submit full proposals for scientific peer review conducted by a panel of subject matter experts from Federal agencies, non-Federal entities, and the industry. Among those project proposals that pass scientific peer review, final awards determinations should, to the maximum extent practicable, emphasize the results of the merit/relevance review process.

The Managers encourage the Secretary to prioritize competitive grants to address imminent threats which may impact the future of specialty crop production in this country.

The Conference substitute provides additional funding for the Initiative. One of the primary activities necessary to encourage continued market growth, improved food safety, and risk management is adequate dedicated research support. The Managers recognize that research is one of the primary means by which the Farm Bill provides assistance to specialty crop producers, so the reported bill significantly increases funding beyond the levels in the 2008 Farm Bill, consistent with increased market needs.

The U.S. citrus industry has been devastated by huanglongbing, an invasive disease also known as citrus greening disease, which has been spread by a foreign pest known as the Asian Citrus Psyllid. Citrus greening poses an imminent threat to the viability of this multibillion dollar industry in several states and promises to ravage the rest of the U.S. citrus producing sector if a cure or effective treatment is not found expeditiously. USDA has already affirmed this emergency with the citrus quarantine for Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, and Mississippi as well as parts of California, South Carolina, and Arizona in October 2012. Citrus greening spreads quickly, and because of its dormancy period, surrounding groves are often already destroyed by the time the disease has been discovered.

The conference substitute establishes a research program dedicated to discovering or developing a cure or effective treatment for citrus greening and any other diseases and pests, domestic or invasive, that emerge to threaten the U.S. citrus producing and processing industry. The Managers recognize the need to target research toward citrus greening in a sustained and adequately funded manner. The urgent need to find a cure or effective treatments for citrus greening that will be useful in all of the major citrus-producing states of Arizona, California, Florida, and Texas is paramount. This urgency should guide the Department's operation of this program.

The Managers also recognize the importance of ensuring close collaboration between the Department, the industry stakeholders described in this section, and the relevant entities engaged in scientific research under this program. The Managers intend that the Department will consult closely and regularly with the industry stakeholders in the formulation, consideration, and approval of research projects performed under this program and will give great weight to input from these stakeholders. Those persons selected to serve as industry stakeholders should be chosen in a manner that reflects the views and interests of the commercial citrus-producing sectors in the major citrus-producing states.

(33) National Swine Research Center

The House bill repeals section 612. (Section 7309)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7308)

(34) Studies of agricultural research, extension and education

The House bill repeals Subtitle C of title VI. (Section 7311)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7311)

SUBTITLE D—OTHER LAWS

(35) Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994

The House bill adds Aaniih Nakota College, College of the Muscogee Nation, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College, and Navajo Technical College and removes Crownpoint Institute of Technology, Fort Belknap College, and Si Tanka/Huron University to the authority and updates the names of Chief Dull Knife College and Sisseton Wahpeton College. The bill reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018 and requires certification that research will be performed under a cooperative agreement with ARS or at least one other land grant college or university (exclusive of another 1994 Institution), at least one non-land grant college of agriculture or at least one cooperating forestry school. (Section 7402)

The Senate amendment adds the same institutions as the House bill and updates the name of the Sisseton Wahpeton College, reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018 and requires the same certification as the House provision.

Amends subsection (a)(2)(A)(ii) to except 1994 Institutions as provided under section 3(b)(3) of Smith-Lever, and for programs for children, youth and families at risk and for Federally recognized tribes implemented under section 3(d) of that Act (subsection (b)). (Section 7402)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7402)

The Managers remain concerned about the agency's operation of FRTEP as if it were a 3(d) program. The Reservation Extension Agent Program was not authorized under Section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act. While this may have made administration of grants easier for the agency, it has led to confusion and unintended consequences. The Managers encourage the agency to follow congressional intent when implementing programs, old and new.

(36) Carbon cycle research

The House bill repeals section 221. (Section 7404)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

The Managers encourage the Agricultural Research Service to continue their field studies around the country to assess how biochar affects crop productivity and soil quality. Preliminary studies show promising results of how hardwood biochar can improve soil structure and the ability of sandy soils to retain water.

(37) Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act

The House bill reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018. The provision authorizes priority areas on plant-based foods that are major sources of nutrients of concern, the research and development of surveillance methods, vaccines, vaccination delivery systems or diagnostic test for pests and diseases in wildlife reservoirs, the identification of animal drug needs, conservation practices and technologies addressing nutrient loss and improving water quality, and the economic costs of adopting conservation practices and technologies to improve water quality. The bill requires the Secretary to establish procedures under which State or Federal commodity promotion entities may directly submit proposals for requests for applications to address issues related to established priorities and award grants to eligible entities that submit proposals. Eligible entities are amended to include foundations. The

Inter-regional research project number 4 is amended to include pesticides for use on specialty crops. Subsection (k) is repealed. (Section 7405)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes appropriations through fiscal year 2018. Section 7208(6) authorizes the Pulse Health Initiative, including an authorization of appropriations of \$25,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Sec. 12101 amends Title IV of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 to establish a wildlife reservoir zoonotic disease initiative to provide grants for research and development of surveillance methods, vaccines, vaccination delivery systems, or diagnostic tests for covered diseases. Sec. 7308 authorizes four regional integrated pest management centers to provide research and extension programs, outreach, and response to information needs, among other purposes. The amendment also requires that not less than 30 percent of funding be made available for integrated research, extension and education activities and requires the Secretary to submit a report to Congress regarding streamlining the AFRI grant application process. (Section 7404)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes appropriations through 2018, and adds priority areas to the competitive grant program and foundations to the list of eligible entities. The amendment also directs the Secretary to establish procedures under which a commodity promotion board or a State commodity board (or its equivalent) may submit to the Secretary for consideration proposals for requests for applications that address issues related to the priority areas of this grant program. Grants will not be funded under this authority unless the grant is matched with an equal contribution of funds from the entities submitting proposals for requests for applications. The Inter-regional research project number 4 is amended to include specialty crops. (Section 7404)

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) is the premier competitive research and extension grants program within the USDA. The AFRI program was established in 2008 as a successor program to the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems. The statutory priorities for the AFRI program are purposefully broad. In developing these priorities, the Congress was aware that as science evolves, a balance needed to be achieved between the need for flexibility to respond to new and emerging threats and opportunities, and the need for transparency and accountability in the expenditure of taxpayer funds.

Concerns are periodically raised regarding the annual allocations among the various statutory programmatic priorities and sub priorities. The Managers were aware of these qualitative concerns but lacked quantitative information on which to base any policy modifications. As a continuation of the programmatic audit carried out by the House Committee on Agriculture in preparation for developing the FARRM Act, USDA was requested to provide a listing of recent awards under the AFRI program sorted according to the corresponding statutory priorities and sub priorities. That data revealed a dramatic shift in awards funding away from traditional areas of production agriculture. For instance, awards for research in plant systems dropped from 38.7 percent of available funds in fiscal year 2007, the final full year

under the predecessor programs, to 18.4 percent in 2011. Awards for research in animal systems fell from 22.4 percent to 9.4 percent over the same time period.

Following receipt of a final report in February 2013, there remained concern that the allocation of research and extension awards under the AFRI program was inconsistent with national priorities. As a result of the analysis, commitments were made by senior leadership of the National Institutes of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to address these concerns. Efforts undertaken by the Director of NIFA to incorporate enhancements in the fiscal year 2014 budget submission, while still lacking in certain respects, demonstrate the seriousness to which these commitments are being upheld.

While the Managers are encouraged by the progress being made, there remains a desire to codify the transparency and accountability measures contained within this budget submission language. (section 7513)

The Managers recognize the importance of basic animal health research. The Conference substitute includes a priority for the research and development of surveillance methods, vaccines, vaccination delivery systems and diagnostic tests for pests and diseases that cause epizootic diseases in domestic livestock (including deer, elk, bison, and other cervidae) and zoonotic diseases (including bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis) in domestic livestock or wildlife reservoirs that present a potential concern to public health.

The Managers recognize the growing importance of and need for comprehensive and practical scientific and economic assessments of agricultural practices and technologies intended to improve agriculture's water quality and quantity performance. This is particularly the case as states work with producers on high priority or high profile water quality challenges. Such scientific and economic assessments are needed for the major crop producing regions of the country, taking into account soils, climate, crops grown, and the technologies and agricultural practices in use. The goal of such assessments should be to develop information and continue to build on the tools already in place. The assessments should continue to develop new and innovative approaches to help producers and policy makers in states understand what is affordable, achievable and sustainable for producers. The assessment can then be used to consider how different water quality policy choices relate to other important societal objectives involving agriculture. The Managers encourage the Secretary to initiate a multi-year effort to help the states and USDA continue to develop this base of science and knowledge through the funding of proposals from qualified institutions capable of supporting interdisciplinary teams of researchers and experts to carry out such efforts.

The Managers recognize the success of the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) and the cross collaborative approach between multiple agencies at USDA, and strongly encourages USDA to continue and expand on those efforts. The Managers do not intend for this provision to be a replacement for or duplication of CEAP, but rather as a source of sound, complementary economic and technical information that could be used in conjunction with CEAP to create more accurate assessments of the effects of prospective conservation measures on agricultural land.

The Managers recognize that maintaining and enhancing wild rice, a uniquely Amer-

ican specialty crop, depends on continued use of traditional breeding methods, along with the application of new genetic tools to make conventional breeding more efficient. Genetic analysis of shattering, disease resistance, reduced plant height, and other traits require not only development of new genetic markers for wild rice, but also new methods for gathering accurate phenotypic information on the plants. The use of these improved genetic resources in the future depends on their continued availability through reliable seed storage methods. Some research has been done on maintaining viability of stored seeds, but these need to be translated into reliable and useful methods at the local level to ensure breeding progress.

The Managers would hope that the Secretary would consider the following research objectives regarding wild rice genetic resources: preserving and enhancing wild rice breeding lines for testing and release as future varieties; developing phenotyping methods and genotypic markers for various traits; using genotypic and phenotypic information to identify superior genetic resources for breeding and to develop more efficient breeding methods; evaluating and maintaining the genetic distinctiveness of wild rice breeding lines and populations; and developing improved methods for short- and medium-term storage of wild rice breeding lines and populations.

The Managers are concerned about the spread of tick-borne illnesses, particularly Lyme Disease in humans. The disease is heavily concentrated in the Northeast and upper Midwest. Lyme Disease, along with other tick-borne illnesses which affect livestock, presents a public health concern, particularly in the Agriculture community. Recognizing the impact of pests such as ticks, the Managers have reauthorized important research and development priorities and urge NIFA, in conjunction with other agencies, to build upon its existing efforts and pest management resources to protect humans and livestock from tick-borne illnesses.

The Managers recognize that eligible applicants with limited institutional capacity may face unique challenges in successfully competing for funding administered by NIFA. The Managers encourage the Secretary to assess these challenges and to consider appropriate methods of streamlining the competitive grants application process.

(38) Remote sensing data

The House bill repeals section 892. (Section 7408)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7407)

(39) Reports under Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002

The House bill repeals Sections 7409, 7410 and 7411. (Section 7409)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7408)

(40) Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program

The House bill amends the authorized areas for programs and services and includes school-based agricultural educational organizations as a priority recipient. The bill requires that not less than 5 percent of the funds in a fiscal year used to make grants be used to support programs and services that address the needs of military veteran beginning farmers and ranchers and authorizes

the Secretary to coordinate between a recipient of a grant used for this purpose and a recipient of a grant under section 1680 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 in addressing the needs of military veteran beginning farmers and ranchers with disabilities. The provision prohibits a recipient of a grant from using more than 10 percent of grant funds for the indirect costs of carrying out an authorized grant initiatives. Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, \$20,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018 is authorized and the authorization of appropriations is extended for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7410)

The Senate amendment includes beginning farmers and ranchers who are veterans in the current set-aside of funding and authorizes competitive grants to States to establish and improve farm safety program at the local level. Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, \$17,000,000 for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018 is authorized and the authorization of appropriations is extended for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 7408)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes grant purposes including farm safety and awareness and a priority for school-based agricultural educational organizations. It also specifies that an eligible entity may be a community-based or nongovernmental organization and provides at least a 5 percent set-aside for those programs and services already qualified for the set-aside in current law as well as another 5 percent set-aside for veteran farmers and ranchers. The amendment limits indirect costs and permits coordination with recipients of an assistive technology program for farmers with disabilities grant. \$20,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended, is authorized and the authorization of appropriations is extended through 2018. (Section 7409)

The Conference substitute reauthorizes and provides mandatory funding to the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, which develops and offers education, training, outreach and mentoring programs to ensure the success of the next generation of farmers. The conference substitute expands eligibility to include military veterans who wish to begin a career in agriculture.

(41) McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act

The House bill amends the definition of state to include American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. (Section 7411)

The Senate amendment amends the definition of state to include the Federated States of Micronesia, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the District of Columbia and exempts eligible 1890 Institutions from the matching funds requirement if the allocation is below \$200,000. (Section 8301)

The Conference substitute adopts neither the House nor the Senate provision. Both the House bill and Senate amendment included amendments to the McIntire-Stennis cooperative forestry program to extend eligibility to the 1862 land grant colleges in insular areas not currently specified in the Act. USDA has since provided the Managers with technical assistance clarifying that those institutions were already eligible to participate by virtue of other law, specifically section 1361(a) of P.L. 96-374, thus negating the need for this provision.

The National Association of University Forest Resources Programs (NAUFRP), (for-

merly the National Association of Professional Forestry Schools and Colleges) represents 69 of our nation's universities and their respective scientists, educators and extension specialists. NAUFRP's purpose is to advance the health, productivity, and sustainability of America's forests by providing university-based natural resource education, research, science, extension and international programs. The Managers would encourage USDA to engage in discussions with NAUFRP to ensure that their proposals for resource management are appropriately addressed.

SUBTITLE E—FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008

(42) Enhanced Use Lease Authority Pilot Program

The House bill states that section 308 is amended to terminate 10 years after the date of enactment of section 308 and reports are required not later than 6, 8, and 10 years after enactment. (Section 7511)

The Senate amendment states that subparagraph (b)(6)(A) is amended to extend the authority of this section on September 30, 2018. (Section 7405)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7511)

(43) Grazinglands Research Laboratory

The House bill amends section 7502 to extend the authority for 10 years beginning on the date of enactment of the Act. (Section 7512)

The Senate amendment amends section 7502 to extend the authority until September 30, 2018. (Section 7511)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7512)

(44) Budget submission and funding

The House bill requires information regarding each research program carried out by the ARS or ERS for which annual appropriations are requested in the annual budget submission of the President and each competitive program carried out by the NIFA for which annual appropriations are requested in the annual budget submission of the President, requires additional information for each funding request for a covered program to be submitted to Congress each year together with the annual budget submission of the President, prohibits the President from carrying out any program under certain authorities during the fiscal year unless the President submits the information required and described for a fiscal year and requires an annual report to Congress. (Section 7512)

The Senate amendment requires information regarding each research program carried out by the ARS or ERS for which annual appropriations are requested in the annual budget submission of the President and each competitive program carried out by the NIFA for which annual appropriations are requested in the annual budget submission of the President, requires additional information for each funding request for a covered program to be submitted to Congress each year together with the annual budget submission of the President, and requires an annual report to Congress. (Section 7512)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7513)

The Managers are aware of the need for the statutory priorities for the various agricultural research, education and extension programs to be written with sufficient flexibility so that the Administrators of the USDA research agencies can respond quickly and efficiently to emerging problems and opportunities. Further, recent changes in Congressional appropriations procedures have

only enhanced USDA's flexibility in administering these programs. The Managers are nevertheless cognizant of the need for taxpayer funds to be used in a transparent and accountable manner.

Given the spending discretion that USDA has gained in recent years, it is incumbent upon the Department to manage the research, education and extension programs in a most transparent manner. This transparency assures Congress and stakeholders of the integrity of these programs.

In the past year, the Managers have expressed concerns about funding allocations under various research, education, and extension programs to the senior leadership of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). These fruitful discussions with NIFA leadership resulted in several commitments to address the underlying concerns of the Managers as well as to enhance the information available in future budget submissions.

In order to increase the ability of Congress to appropriately oversee funding allocations, the conference substitute seeks to codify the commitments that have been made by NIFA leadership in order to provide transparency and accountability with regard to the research, extension and education budget. It is the intent of the Managers that USDA provide increasingly detailed spending plans to Congress in advance of the development of annual appropriations measures so that Congress and interested constituencies can weigh the merits of these allocations against evolving priorities, and as a representative body, Congress can approve or disapprove of the proposed allocations.

The Managers believe that receipt of the information requested in this section will be beneficial to the long-term goal of expanding resources available for agricultural research, extension and education. The Managers believe that enhanced transparency in the budgeting process can only increase awareness and broad-based support for these critical programs.

It is likewise the intent of the Managers that the process of submitting information concerning the budget outline would be an iterative process and that the research agencies would consult with the Congressional authorizing committees and appropriating subcommittees to ensure clarity of the budget request. To this end, the conference substitute specifically authorizes the research agencies to submit corrections and clarifications in a reasonable period of time to fulfill the requirements of this section.

The Managers are aware that the ARS is shifting its funding priorities from core work in areas impacting crop protection and livestock production to environmental stewardship. The Managers are concerned that this action is short-sighted, especially in light of the fact that many plant disease issues may be magnified under varying weather conditions, and this is especially the case in the work on fusarium head blight in wheat and barley.

The Managers are aware of budgetary constraints throughout the Department; nevertheless, the Managers question the priority setting process on how funds are allocated with regard to aquaculture. In particular, the Managers are aware of the continuing threat of predators to aquaculture operations and encourage the Secretary to continue to fund these important livestock protection programs.

The Managers recognize that historical funding levels for equine sciences have been

limited and encourage the Secretary to consider increasing resources allocated to research priorities for equine health in the Department's annual budget submission.

The Managers recognize that historical funding levels for rangeland and prairie grass research has been limited and encourage the Secretary to consider increasing resources allocated to research priorities for rangeland and prairie grass research, including tall-grass and other native vegetation.

The Managers recognize the importance of nationally coordinated, regionally managed canola research and education programs. In awarding grants for these activities, the Managers encourage the Secretary to seek input from stakeholders and give priority consideration to proposals that address research needs in production areas with the greatest potential to expand as well as those where canola production is established and needs to be maintained.

The Managers would like to encourage the Secretary to fund competitive research into the fundamental issues of stabilizing food prices to enhance food security in the U.S. and globally. One area of interest is an examination of the economic factors leading to increased food security in the U.S. The Managers are also interested in how financial markets and the expansion of the bioenergy industry globally has impacted global food prices.

(45) Research and education grants for the study of antibiotic-resistant bacteria

The House bill reauthorizes appropriations through 2018. (Section 7514)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(46) Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network

The House bill repeals Section 7522. (Section 7515)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(47) Seed distribution

The House bill repeals Section 7523. (Section 7516)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7514)

(48) Sun Grant Program

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to coordinate among appropriate Federal agencies, authorizes grants to be used towards integrated, multistate research, extension and education programs on technology development and implementation repeals Funding allocations for specific programs, amends requirements for the plan for research activities to be funded to address bioproducts and priorities of appropriate Federal agencies and reauthorizes the program. (Section 7518)

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary to coordinate among appropriate Federal agencies, authorizes grants to be used towards integrated, multistate research, extension and education programs on technology development and implementation repeals Funding allocations for specific programs, amends requirements for the plan for research activities to be funded to address bioproducts and priorities of appropriate Federal agencies, reauthorizes the program, and authorizes grants to a Sun Grant Center for each region. (Section 7514)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 7516)

The Conference substitute directs the Secretary to utilize and leverage the investment, resources, and capacities of the current regional Sun Grant Program Centers and Sub-center to continue their leadership and management of the regional Sun Grant competitive grants program.

The Conference substitute reauthorizes, consolidates, and amends the Sun Grant Program to expand input from other appropriate federal agencies, authorize bio products, eliminate authorization for gasification research and make the program competitive. The Managers recognize the leadership and work of the Sun Grant Centers in each region and intends that the revisions to the program to make it competitive do not reduce the effectiveness of the overall program. The Managers also recognize the importance of the collaborative nature of the Sun Grant Centers and is requiring that applicants represent consortia of universities with prior experience working collaboratively to pursue the intent of the program. The Managers recognize the importance of demonstrated experience in working with multiple federal agencies and in awarding and managing funding provided through competitive grants to land grant institutions and institutions partnering with land grant institutions. Accordingly, the Secretary is encouraged to competitively select a single association of universities that will implement the Sun Grant Program for the duration of this farm bill authorization. This association of universities should be made up of a university from each of the sun grant regions and sub region that will serve as the Sun Grant Center or Sub center for that region or sub region. In making the competitive selection, the Secretary should consider giving preference to an association of universities that has demonstrated experience in managing regional competitive grant programs for research and education programs that support the development of bioenergy, biomass feedstocks, and biobased products. Finally, the Managers recognize the value and importance of committed use of peer review principles and other research best practices in the selection, management, and dissemination of research projects.

(49) Study and report on food deserts

The House bill repeals Section 7527. (Section 7519)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7517)

(50) Agricultural and rural transportation research and education

The House bill repeals Section 7529. (Section 7520)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7518)

SUBTITLE F—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

(51) Agreements with nonprofit organizations for National Arboretum

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to negotiate agreements with nonprofit organizations that support the purpose of the National Arboretum and use the proceeds of the organizations towards operation and maintenance of the facilities. In addition, a nonprofit organization that entered into such agreement may recognize donors if such recognition is approved by the Secretary. (Section 7601)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The

amendment authorizes the Secretary to negotiate concessions and agreements for the National Arboretum with nonprofit scientific or educational organizations and nonprofit organizations that entered into a concession or agreement to recognize donors. (Section 7602)

(52) Cotton Disease Research Report

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit to Congress a Cotton Disease Research Report. (Section 7602)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7604)

(53) Acceptance of facility for Agricultural Research Service

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to allow a non-Federal entity to construct a facility for use and on land owned by the Agricultural Research Service under certain conditions. (Section 7603)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(54) Technical Corrections

The House bill makes miscellaneous technical corrections. (Section 7604)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 7605)

(55) Legitimacy of industrial hemp research

The House bill authorizes research using industrial hemp at an institution of higher education if the growing or cultivating of industrial hemp is allowed under the laws of the State where the institution of higher education is located and the research occurs. Industrial hemp is defined. (Section 7605)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes an institution of higher education or State department of agriculture to grow or cultivate industrial hemp for research purposes if the laws of the State permit its growth and cultivation. (Section 7606)

(56) Foundation for food and agriculture research

The Senate amendment authorizes a foundation for food and agriculture research, a new nonprofit corporation designed to supplement USDA's basic and applied research activities. On Oct. 1, 2013, of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary shall transfer to the Foundation \$200,000,000 to remain available until expended. (Section 7601)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes a foundation for food and agricultural research designed to supplement USDA's basic and applied research activities and \$200,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funding to the Foundation to remain available until expended. (Section 7601)

The Managers recognize the significant need for agricultural research and the challenge to find funding in the current fiscal environment. As such the conference substitute creates a new non-profit foundation, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, to leverage private funding, matched with federal dollars, to support public agricultural research. This approach will foster continued innovation in agricultural research.

The increased productivity and boost in crop yields experienced by American farmers can be attributed to research investments made 30 to 50 years ago. Federal investment in public agricultural research has been trending downward at a time when the demands of a growing population require that American agriculture research again take a leading role in pushing forward food production. USDA, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Science Foundation and agricultural research stakeholders will play an integral role in establishing the Foundation.

The Managers do not intend for the Foundation to be duplicative of current funding or research efforts, but rather to foster public-private partnerships among the agricultural research community, including federal agencies, academia, non-profit organizations, corporations and individual donors to identify and prioritize the most pressing needs facing agriculture. It is the Managers view that the Foundation will complement the work of USDA basic and applied research activities and further advance USDA's research mission. Furthermore, the Managers do not intend in any way for the Foundation's funding to offset or allow for a reduction in the appropriated dollars that go to agricultural research.

(57) *Agricultural and food law research, legal tools and information*

The Senate amendment authorizes the Secretary, acting through the National Agricultural Library, to support the dissemination of agricultural and food law research, legal tools and information by entering into cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education. The Secretary may not use more than \$5,000,000 of the amounts made available to the national Agricultural Library. (Section 7602)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment directs the Secretary, through the National Agricultural Library, to support the dissemination of agricultural and food law research, legal tools and information by entering into cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education and authorizes \$5,000,000 in appropriations for fiscal year 2014 and each year thereafter. (Section 7603)

The Managers recognize that farms, ranches, and forests in the United States are impacted by a complex and rapidly evolving web of competition and international, Federal, State, and local laws, including regulations. The agricultural community of the United States, including farmers, ranchers, foresters, attorneys, policymakers, and extension personnel, need access to agricultural and food law research and information provided by objective, scholarly, and neutral sources.

TITLE VIII—FORESTRY

SUBTITLE A—REPEAL OF CERTAIN FORESTRY PROGRAMS

(1) *Watershed Forestry Assistance Program*

The House bill repeals the Watershed Forestry Assistance Program in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, effective on October 1, 2013. (Section 8002)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment eliminates the effective date. (Section 8002)

(2) *Expired Cooperative National Forest Products Marketing Program*

The House bill repeals the Cooperative National Forest Products Marketing Program in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 which has been expired. (Section 8003)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 8003)

(3) *Separate forest service decision making and appeals process*

The House bill repeals Section 322 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1993. It prohibits application of Section 428 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 to any project or activity implementing a land and resource management plan that is categorically excluded from an EA or EIS under NEPA. (Section 8006)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 8006)

This provision clarifies the intent of Congress regarding administrative review of projects and activities implementing land and resource management plans. This language came as a result of a federal court decision in March 2012 that the Forest Service must engage in this process for non-controversial, common sense actions that provide jobs, public safety, community fire protection, and clean water. This is not required of the Department of Interior or any other federal agency. This provision would return the agency to the procedures that were in place prior to the 2012 court decision.

SUBTITLE B—REAUTHORIZATION OF COOPERATIVE FORESTRY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1978 PROGRAMS

(4) *State-wide assessment and strategies for forest resources*

The House bill requires the State Forester or equivalent State official in developing or updating the State-wide assessment and strategy for forest resources to coordinate with, when feasible, appropriate military installations. (Section 8101)

The Senate amendment extends the authorization of appropriations for the state-wide assessment and strategies for forest resources through 2018.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides for the extension of the authorization of appropriations for state-wide assessment and strategies for forest resources that was in the Senate amendment. (Section 8101)

The 2008 farm bill conference report included language directing state foresters to perform statewide assessments of forest lands within their borders to better understand how to properly manage these resources. The first reports came back in 2010. The Managers considered these reports a success and adopted the House provision that directs state foresters to coordinate with military facilities within their borders when developing future plans.

(5) *Forest Legacy Program*

The House bill eliminates the authorization for the Forest Legacy Program of such sums as necessary and replaces it with an authorization of appropriations of \$55,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 8102)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(6) *Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program*

The House bill eliminates the authorization for the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program of such sums as necessary and replaces it with an authorization of appropriations of \$1,500,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 8103)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

SUBTITLE C—REAUTHORIZATION OF OTHER FORESTRY-RELATED LAWS

(7) *Office of International Forestry*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$6,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for the Office of International Forestry. (Section 8202)

The Senate amendment extends authorization of appropriations through fiscal year 2018. (Section 8202)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 8202)

(8) *Change in funding source for Healthy Forests Reserve Program*

The House bill authorizes appropriations of \$9,750,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Appropriated funds may be used to carry out the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act for land enrolled in the program. (Section 8203)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House. It defines the term "Acreage Owned by Indian Tribes" for the purposes of Section 502(e)(3). (Section 8205)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment increases the authorization levels from \$9,750,000 to \$12,000,000. (Section 8203)

The Managers intend to clarify the definition of Indian-owned acreage for the program managed by NCRS. Further, as a result of the potential increase in participation in the program, the Managers increased the authorization level.

(9) *Stewardship end result contracting project authority*

The House bill states that section 347 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999 is reauthorized through fiscal year 2018. It authorizes the Secretary to consider a Stewardship Contract as a contract for the sale of property. Further, it requires the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of Bureau of Land Management to issue fire liability provisions for use in all contracts and agreements under section 347. (Section 8204)

The Senate amendment repeals Section 347 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1999. It authorizes the Secretary to consider a Stewardship Contract as a contract for the sale of property. It further adds Stewardship End Result Contracting Projects to the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, authorizing the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to enter into stewardship end-result contracting projects (Stewardship Contracts) for services that achieve land management goals. The authorization is permanent. (Section 8204)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment includes the House language that requires the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management to issue fire liability provisions for use in all contracts and agreements under section 347. (Section 8205)

The Managers provide the Forest Service with a permanent extension of stewardship contracting authority. This approach to land management has proved to be effective nationwide since it was first authorized in 1999 and extended in 2003. Stewardship Contracting allows the Forest Service to conduct important forest restoration work by allowing the value of wood removed to help offset the cost of needed restoration treatments, like forest thinning, introduction of prescribed fire, and habitat improvements for a variety of species. The Managers include in this extension, provisions that allow for designation by prescription for the marking of timber under this program. The Conference substitute also includes language which provides the same fire liability provisions utilized under the current timber sales program to be available for Stewardship Contracts. The Managers do not intend for Stewardship Contracting to replace, diminish, or adversely impact the U.S. Forest Service's timber sales program.

The Managers expect the Chief to work with purchasers of Forest Service timber to address concerns they have raised about methods of selecting the winning bidders on Stewardship Contracts, and to provide feedback to losing bidders to help increase their understanding of the process to become more effective in the future.

(10) Insect and disease infestation

The Senate amendment authorizes the designation of treatment areas, as part of an insect and disease treatment program, one or more subwatersheds in at least one National Forest in each State that is experiencing an insect or disease epidemic within 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act. Additional areas may be designated as needed after the initial 60 day period. The Secretary may carry out priority projects on Federal land in designated subwatersheds to reduce the risk or extent of, or increase the resilience to, insect or disease infestation. Priority projects shall maximize the retention of old-growth and large trees, as appropriate and to the extent the trees promote stands resilient to insects and disease. The Senate amendment authorizes appropriations of \$200,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 8203)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment replaces the subwatershed size treatment area with a landscape scale and includes a limited categorical exclusion for projects smaller than 3,000 acres. The program is authorized for 10 years through 2024. (Section 8204)

The outbreak of the pine bark beetle afflicting states across the nation is a great concern to the Managers. To date, an estimated 41 million acres have been affected across the United States, creating potentially hazardous fuel loads in several western states. The Managers agreement includes provisions to provide the Forest Service with increased flexibility to address this issue and work with partners to mitigate the potential damage.

The Conference substitute recognizes that the current system for managing national forests affected by historic insect infestations has not been responsive to the speed and widespread impact of the infestations. The final language builds on current law familiar to all stakeholders, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, by targeting the law's application for a ten-year period to insect- and disease-affected forests. It appropriately

focuses on landscape-scale restoration work and protects old-growth and large trees to the extent their retention promotes resilient stands in a given type of forest. The final language also includes a Categorical Exclusion (CE) under the National Environmental Policy Act that is subject to several critical sideboards.

The most important limitation is that any projects subject to a CE must be developed and implemented through a collaborative process that is transparent, nonexclusive, and includes multiple and diverse stakeholders. Collaborative forest restoration partnerships have a proven record of fostering the social license that is crucial to managing our public lands appropriately. The Conference substitute recognizes the success of forest collaboratives and encourages their continued work across the country. Additional limitations to use of the CE include that projects may be no larger than 3,000 acres; projects may only take place in the wildland-urban interface or in forests facing a risk of fire greater than their historical norm; no permanent roads may be constructed and any temporary roads must be decommissioned within three years; and the Forest Service must report to Congress each year about its use of the CE.

The Mountain Pine Beetle Response Project (MPBR) in the Black Hills National Forest can be used as a model for the type and scale of projects that are to be conducted with these provisions to keep pace with expanding insect infestations. The MPBR Project encompasses approximately 248,000 acres of National Forest System lands and includes approximately 122,000 acres of thinning or other measures aimed at reducing stand density and hazardous fuels. The Managers expect that acres covered by the projects are tailored to the local circumstances depending on the size of the forest and scope of the infestation. The authority in these provisions provides the Forest Service with additional tools to replicate these types of landscape scale projects across the country in coordination with local stakeholders.

SUBTITLE D—NATIONAL FOREST CRITICAL AREA RESPONSE

(11) Definitions

The House bill defines the terms "Critical Area", "National Forest System", and "Secretary" for the purposes of this title. (Section 8301)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(12) Designation of critical areas

The House bill provides for the designation of critical areas within the National Forest System to address deteriorating forest health conditions due to insect infestation, drought, disease or storm damage and the future risk of insect infestations or disease outbreaks through preventative treatments. (Section 8302)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(13) Application of expedited procedures and activities of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to critical areas

The House bill authorizes the application of Title I of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to all Forest Service projects and activities carried out in a critical area and requires the same projects and activities be consistent with the applicable land and re-

source management plan. However, Sec. 322 of P.L. 102-381 will not apply to projects conducted in accordance with this section, and in applying Title I, the authority shall apply to the entire critical area and all projects and activities of the Forest Service shall be considered as authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects. Certain smaller projects shall be considered an action categorically excluded from the requirements of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement and exempt from section 105 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. (Section 8303)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(14) Good neighbor authority

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with a state forester to provide forest, rangeland, and watershed restoration, management and protection services on National Forest System land. (Section 8304)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. (Section 8206)

The Conference substitute includes language that allows for the Secretary to enter into cooperative agreements with state foresters nationwide to engage in management activity, otherwise known as Good Neighbor Authority. This practice allows for better coordination between federal and state officials in promoting healthy state forests. The Managers note the successful implementation of this program in Colorado and Utah and recognize the benefit to extending this authority nationwide. The Managers expect the Secretary to seek projects which utilize the full range of contracting tools available to accomplish the objectives of Good Neighbor Authority.

SUBTITLE E—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

(15) Forest service participation in ACES program

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to use funds from conservation-related programs on National Forest lands to utilize the Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services Program to provide technical service on conservation-related programs. (Section 8402)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 8302)

The Managers are concerned about the increasing number of retirements among Forest Service employees in recent years and the loss of institutional knowledge as a result. The Conference substitute includes language to allow the Forest Service to hire retired employees under the Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services (ACES) program. The Forest Service will continue to see a large number of retirements in the coming years. Allowing the Forest Service to participate in the ACES program allows the agency to retain the institutional knowledge acquired through the years by these senior employees.

(16) Green Science and Technology Transfer Research under Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978

The House bill includes as a priority science and technology transfer through the Forest Products Lab to demonstrate the beneficial characteristics of wood as a green building material. It requires the Secretary

to submit an annual report describing the research conducted in furtherance of the priority added above, the number of buildings the Forest Service has built with wood and the investments made by the Forest Service in green building wood promotion. (Section 8403)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(17) *Extension of stewardship contract authority*

The House bill authorizes designation by description and designation by prescription as valid methods of designation for timber sales. Both methods may be supervised by use of post-harvest cruise, sample weight scaling or other methods. (Section 8404)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 8303)

(18) *Reimbursement of fire funds*

The House bill requires that the State seeking reimbursement and the State providing reimbursement must each have a mutual assistance agreement with the Forest Service or an agency of the Department of the Interior. (Section 8405)

The Senate amendment requires that the State seeking reimbursement and the State providing reimbursement must each have a mutual assistance agreement with the Forest Service or another Federal agency. (Section 8303)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 8304)

(19) *Ability of National Forest System lands to meet needs of local wood producing facilities for raw materials*

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit to Congress a report regarding raw material needs of wood producing facilities within the boundaries of each National Forest System unit or within 100 miles of such boundaries and the ability of each unit to meet the needs of such facilities, including information on the volume of timber available, sold and harvested from each unit. (Section 8406)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

Although the Managers did not adopt the House provision directing the Secretary to issue a report to Congress on its ability to provide raw material to facilities within 100 miles of a national forest, the Managers encourage the Forest Service to engage with the sawmill owners who utilize material harvested from National Forest System land. The Managers are concerned that certain regions within the National Forest System are not meeting the timber production target laid out in their management plans. The Managers note that many wood producing facilities are dependent on material produced on National Forest land and that all 10 regions of the National Forest System should strive to meet their target where appropriate.

(20) *Report on the National Forest System roads*

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit to Congress a report regarding National Forest System roads and trails. (Section 8407)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

Although the Managers did not adopt the House provision which required the Sec-

retary to issue a report to Congress on the state of the National Forest System roads, the Managers believe this is an important issue and encourage the Forest Service to prioritize the maintenance of currently used roads.

(21) *Forest Service Large Airtanker and Aerial Asset Firefighting Recapitalization Pilot Program*

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to establish a large airtanker and aerial asset lease program. (Section 8408)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 8305)

The 2012 and 2013 wildfire seasons have been some of the worst on record. The devastating wildfires are important reminders that the Forest Service's current available large airtanker fleet is vastly inadequate to meet our expected firefighting needs now or in the coming years. The U.S. Forest Service's Large Airtanker Modernization Strategy, released in 2012, recommended a "next generation" aerial solution and specifically stated that "[airtankers] are important to the Federal, state, and local wild land firefighting missions of protecting communities and natural resources from wildfires and to successfully managing wildfires in this country." The report also stated that "the current fleet of large airtankers is old, with an average of age of more than 50 years. With rising age, the cost of maintaining large airtankers is rapidly increasing, as are the risks associated with using them." Support for implementing the modernization strategy is urgently needed before the Forest Service is unable to adequately respond to future fires. The Managers strongly support the establishment of a large airtanker and aerial asset lease program to support the Forest Service's vital modernization strategy for its firefighting large airtanker fleet.

(22) *Land conveyance, Jefferson National Forest in Wise County, Virginia*

The House bill authorizes the Secretary to convey upon payment all right, title and interest of the U.S. in and to a parcel of National Forest System land in the Jefferson National Forest in Wise County, Virginia. (Section 8409)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 8306)

(23) *Categorical exclusion for forest projects in response to emergencies*

The House bill states that any forest project carried out to clean up or restore damaged National Forest System land during a two-year period following the date of a presidential disaster or emergency declaration shall be categorically excluded from an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. (Section 8410)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

TITLE IX—ENERGY

(1) *Definitions*

The House bill modifies the definition of "biobased product" to explicitly include forestry materials and forest products that meet biobased content requirements, notwithstanding the market share the product holds, the age of the product, or whether the market for the product is new or emerging. (Section 9001(1)) The bill also defines "forest product" to ensure that mature forest prod-

ucts are treated in the same manner as other biobased products. (Section 9001(3)) Additionally, the bill defines "renewable energy system" to limit the eligible projects in the Rural Energy for America Program. (Section 9001(4))

The Senate amendment defines "renewable chemical" as a monomer, polymer, plastic, formulated product, or chemical substance produced from renewable biomass. (Section 9002(3))

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment includes the Senate definition of "renewable chemical". The modification of the definition of "biobased product" is moved to Section 9002. (Section 9001)

(2) *Biobased Markets*

The House bill extends current law through FY2018. No mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$2 million annually for FY2014–FY2018. (Section 9002(h))

The Senate amendment establishes a targeted biobased-only procurement requirement for federal agencies. The amendment limits reporting on the availability, relative price, performance and environmental and public health benefits of biobased materials subject to the availability of data. It adds reporting requirements of quantities and types of biobased products purchased by procuring federal agencies and a focus on biobased content requirements (explicitly including forest products). The amendment mandates (within one year of enactment) designation of intermediate ingredients or feedstocks and assembled and finished biobased products according to guidelines. (Section 9002(a)(1)) Additionally, the amendment adds auditing and compliance activities to ensure proper use of biobased labeling. (Section 9002(a)(2)) It adds an outreach, education, and promotion component (with annual reports) to increase awareness of biobased products. (Section 9002(a)(4)) It also mandates a study (and report) by USDA to assess the economic impact of the biobased product industry, due 180 days after enactment. It encourages coordination, review and approval (with appropriate technical assistance) of forest-related biobased products. (Section 9002(a)(5)) The amendment also authorizes mandatory funding of \$3 million annually for FY2014–FY2018. Lastly, it authorizes to be appropriated \$2 million annually for FY2014–FY2018. (Section 9002(a)(7))

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment removes the outreach, education and promotion component and provides that the economic impact study be completed within one year of enactment. (Section 9002)

The Conference substitute reauthorizes the BioPreferred Program and the Federal Government Procurement Preference Program with modifications to include reporting of biobased purchases by the federal agencies, as well as providing for auditing and enforcement of biobased purchasing activities. The Conference substitute also clarifies that all forest products are eligible for inclusion in the BioPreferred Program and the Federal Government Procurement Program if they meet biobased content requirements and the innovation standards for the program as outlined in Section 9002(a)(1)(B)(i)(III)(vi). Finally, the Conference substitute provides \$3 million in mandatory funding each fiscal year.

The Managers are cognizant of concerns that the USDA Biobased Markets Program has excluded most forest products. This exclusion, created in USDA rulemaking, has effectively made many forest products ineligible for the program. Therefore, Sections

9001(2) and 9002(a)(1)(B)(i)(III) are intended to clarify that all forest products, regardless of the market share the product holds, the age of the product, or whether the product's market is new or emerging, are eligible for the procurement and labeling program as long as the product meets biobased content requirements and the innovation standards for the program as outlined in Section 9002(a)(1)(B)(i)(III). It is the Managers' intention that all products in the program use innovative approaches in the growing, harvesting, sourcing, procuring, processing, manufacturing, or application of the biobased product.

The Managers believe that most forest products, including products with recovered fiber content, apply innovative approaches in the growing, harvesting, sourcing, procuring, and manufacturing of the product. Innovative approaches for forest products include, but are not limited to, sourcing fiber from non-controversial, responsible or certified sources identified in the ASTM 7612-10 standard; using an environmental product declaration that meets the ISO 14025:2006 standard; improving wood, recovered fiber and virgin fiber processing technologies; or modifying manufacturing facilities to make them more energy efficient and enhance their ability to use renewable energy sources. The Managers also believe innovative approaches should capture any innovation in the application of the forest product. Such innovative approaches should include the use of raw forestry materials, processed forestry materials, as well as recovered fiber. The Managers direct USDA to work through the USDA Forest Products Laboratory to provide technical assistance as necessary to forest product applicants to ensure that forest products are included in the program.

Finally, the Managers recognize the tremendous opportunity that exists for Biobased products to be used in food packaging and the food service industry. Products made from wheat straw can play an important role in this effort, and the Managers expect USDA to continue to work with companies bringing these types of products to market under the BioPreferred label.

(3) Biorefinery Assistance

The House bill eliminates grant funding to ensure that program funds are spent more efficiently through loan guarantees. (Section 9003(a)) Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$75 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9003(b))

The Senate amendment renames the program as the Biorefinery, Renewable Chemical, and Biobased Product Manufacturing Assistance Program. It extends and expands the program to include renewable chemical and biobased product manufacturing (defined as development, construction, and retrofitting of technologically new commercial-scale processing and manufacturing equipment and required facilities used to convert renewable chemicals and other biobased outputs into commercial-scale end products). It extends grant and loan guarantee availability to the development and construction of renewable chemical and biobased product manufacturing facilities. (Section 9003(a)) The amendment authorizes mandatory funding of \$100 million for FY2014 and \$58 million each for FY2015-FY2016, but not more than \$25 million of FY2014-FY2015 may be used to promote biobased product manufacturing. It authorizes to be appropriated \$150 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9003(b))

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The

amendment eliminates grant funding, directs the Secretary to ensure that there is diversity in the types of projects approved, and caps the amount of funds used for loan guarantees to promote biobased product manufacturing at 15% of the total available mandatory funds. Mandatory funding of \$100,000,000 is provided for FY2014, \$50,000,000 for each of FY2015 and FY2016 and an authorization of \$75,000,000 is provided for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 9003)

(4) Repowering Assistance Program

The House bill extends current law through FY2018. Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. It authorizes to be appropriated \$10 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9004)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment provides mandatory funding of \$12,000,000 in fiscal year 2014, available until expended. (Section 9004)

(5) Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels

The House bill extends the program through FY2018. Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$50 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9005)

The Senate amendment extends the program through FY2018. Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. It authorizes to be appropriated \$20 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9004)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment provides mandatory funding of \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 9005)

(6) Biodiesel Fuel Education Program

The House bill extends the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program through FY2018. Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$2 million annually for FY2014-FY2018.

The Senate amendment extends the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program through FY2018. The amendment authorizes mandatory funding of \$1 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. It authorizes to be appropriated \$1 million annually for FY2014-FY2018.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 9006)

(7) Rural Energy for America Program

The House bill creates a three-tiered application process for loan guarantees and grants. (Section 9007(a)) Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$45 million annually for FY 2014-FY2018. (Section 9007(b))

The Senate amendment creates a three-tiered application process with language similar to the House provision. The amendment adds a council (as defined in section 1528 of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981) as an eligible entity, and adds "such as for agricultural and associated residential purposes" to clarify the type of renewable energy systems that may be purchased. It repeals the use of REAP funds for feasibility studies and limits grants to the lesser of \$500,000 or 25% of the cost of the RES or EEI activity. (Section 9006(a)) The amendment authorizes mandatory funding of \$68.2 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. It authorizes to be appropriated \$20 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9006(b))

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment strikes the provision clarifying

the type of renewable energy systems that may be purchased and strikes the \$500,000 cap on grants for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements. Mandatory funding of \$50,000,000 is provided for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter. (Section 9007)

The Managers encourage the Department to continue to support renewable and energy efficiency projects to help farmers and rural small businesses cut costs. The Managers also encourage the Department to consider and fund a diverse range of projects.

The Managers clarify that the intent of the program has been to promote energy efficiency and the production of renewable energy, rather than energy delivery. Therefore, renewable fuel blender pumps or other mechanisms to dispense fuel are not a use of the program consistent with this purpose.

(8) Biomass Research and Development

The House bill extends BRDI through FY2018. Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$20 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9008)

The Senate amendment extends BRDI through FY2018. The amendment authorizes mandatory funding of \$26 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. It authorizes to be appropriated \$30 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9007)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment provides mandatory funding of \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2017 and discretionary funding of \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 9008)

The purpose of the Biomass Research and Development Initiative (BRDI) is to promote research and development regarding the production of biofuels and biobased products. The Managers encourage the Department to support research, development and demonstration efforts focused on reducing the costs of producing sugars from cellulosic biomass. The Managers also encourage the Department to prioritize and focus investment in projects that use pre-commercialization processes and methods to advance product development.

The Managers are aware of a number of advanced manufacturing facilities around the country that can play an active part in the development phase of biofuels and biobased products and urge the Secretary to encourage their involvement in BRDI projects.

(9) Biomass Crop Assistance Program

The House bill eliminates collection, harvest, storage, and transportation payments. The bill adds "existing project areas that have received funding" to the factors the Secretary shall consider when selecting project areas. Additionally, no mandatory funding is authorized. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$75 million annually for FY2014-FY2018. (Section 9010)

The Senate amendment rewrites Sec. 9011 of Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 including the following revisions: changes enrolled land eligibility; includes residue from crops receiving Title I payments as eligible material, but extends exclusion to any whole grain from a Title I crop, as well as bagasse and algae. One-time establishment payments are limited to no more than 50% of cost of establishment, not to exceed \$500 per acre (\$750/acre for socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers). CHST matching payments may not exceed \$20 per dry ton but are available for a four year period. Not later than four years after enactment, USDA shall submit a report on best

practice data and information gathered from participants. It authorizes mandatory funding of \$38.6 million annually for FY2014–FY2018. Not less than 10% or more than 50% of funding may be used for CHST. (Section 9011)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment provides that CHST payments are available for a period of two years and provides that funding under the subsection shall be available for technical assistance. The amendment provides mandatory funding of \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 9010)

(10) Forest Biomass for Energy

The Senate amendment repeals the provision. (Section 9010)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 9011)

(11) Community Wood Energy Program

The House bill extends the Community Wood Energy Program through FY2018. The bill authorizes to be appropriated \$2 million annually for FY2014–FY2018. (Section 9011)

The Senate amendment defines “Biomass Consumer Cooperative”. The amendment authorizes grants of up to \$50,000 to be made to establish or expand biomass consumer cooperatives that will provide consumers with services or discounts relating to the purchase of biomass heating systems or products (including their delivery and storage). Any biomass consumer cooperative that receives a grant must match at least the equivalent of 50% of the funds toward the establishment or expansion of a biomass consumer cooperative. (Section 9011(a)–(c)) It authorizes to be appropriated \$5 million annually for FY2014–FY2018. (Section 9011(d))

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 9012)

(12) Biofuels Infrastructure Study

The House bill repeals the study. (Section 9012)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 9013)

(13) Renewable Fertilizer Study

The House bill repeals the study. (Section 9013)

The Senate amendment repeals the study. (Section 9012)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 9014)

(14) Energy Efficiency Report for USDA Facilities

The House bill requires USDA to submit a report to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees on energy use and energy efficiency projects at USDA facilities within 180 days.

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision (Section 9015)

TITLE X—HORTICULTURE

(1) Farmers’ Market and Local Food Promotion Program

The House bill amends section 6 of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976 to authorize local food promotion and assist in the development of local food business enterprises. Program purposes are amended to include the increase of domestic consumption and consumer access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products. The purposes are further amended to

include local and regional food business enterprises that process, distribute, aggregate, and store locally or regionally produced food products. Eligible entities receiving a grant from this program must provide a 25 percent match and may not use the grant towards a building or structure. The section authorizes \$30,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 and \$10,000,000 in appropriated funds for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. It requires 50 percent of the funds made available to carry out the program in a fiscal year be used towards domestic farmers’ markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities and the other 50 percent to be used towards local and regional food business enterprises. The section further limits administrative expenses to not more than 3 percent. (Section 10003)

The Senate amendment amends section 6 of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976 is amended to authorize local food promotion and local food capacity development. The program purposes are amended to include the increase of domestic consumption and consumer access to locally and regionally produced agricultural products. This purpose is authorized to be accomplished by developing, improving, expanding and providing outreach, training and technical assistance. Program purposes are further amended to include local and regional food enterprises that are not direct producer-to-consumer markets but process, distribute, aggregate, store and market locally or regionally produced food products. The section authorizes \$20,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 and \$20,000,000 of appropriated funds for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. It limits administrative expenses to not more than 10 percent. The section further authorizes priorities for grant applications that benefit underserved communities, develop market opportunities for small and mid-sized farm and ranch operations and include a strategic plan to maximize the use of fund to build capacity for local and regional food systems in a community. (Section 10003)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendment. The amendment includes the Senate language on the purposes of the program as well as food enterprises that are not direct-to-consumer markets. The amendment sets the limitation of administrative expenses at 4 percent. It further includes the Senate language on giving priority to applications that include projects that benefit underserved communities. (Section 10003)

The Managers do not intend for this language to restrict resources for other key uses such as cold storage or equipment including mobile processing units or shelf stable packing activities.

(2) Organic Agriculture

The House bill reauthorizes the organic production and market data initiative authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, amends the Organic Foods Production Act to authorize the Secretary to modernize database and technology systems of the National Organic Program (NOP) and authorizes appropriations of \$11,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for the same. The House bill also repeals the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program. In addition, section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 is amended to exempt certified organic products from promotion order assessments re-

gardless of whether a person also handles conventional products and authorize an organic commodity promotion order and section 513(1) of the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 is amended to add organic products as a class to the definition of “agricultural commodity”. (Section 10004)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes the organic production and market data initiative authorization of appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2018, and authorizes \$5,000,000 in mandatory monies to remain available until expended and an annual report to Congress regarding implementation of the program and additional data needs as well as a description of how data collection agencies are coordinating with data user agencies to ensure data collected can be used by data users, including RMA to offer price elections for all organic crops. The amendment also authorizes the Secretary to modernize database and technology systems of the NOP, provides an authorization of appropriations of \$15,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 as well as \$5,000,000 in mandatory monies towards modernization. Section 11034(b)(1)(A) of Senate Amendment requires 50 percent of the funds to go to organic certification. In addition, section 501 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 is amended to exempt certified organic products from promotion order assessments regardless of whether a person also handles conventional products and authorize an organic commodity promotion order and section 513(1) of the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 is amended to add organic products as a class to the definition of “agricultural commodity”. (Section 10005)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes an Organic Production and Market Data Initiative annual report to Congress, including a description how data collection and user agencies are coordinating to ensure data can be utilized, and reauthorizes \$5,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for this initiative and the authorization of appropriations through fiscal year 2018. The amendment authorizes annual appropriations of \$15,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for the National Organic Program and \$5,000,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for modernization and technology upgrades. The National Organic Certification Cost Share Program is reauthorized with \$11,500,000 of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for each fiscal year 2014 through 2018, to remain available until expended. The amendment also authorizes an exemption of certified organic products from promotion order assessments and an organic commodity promotion order. (Section 10004)

In the Conference substitute, research and promotion programs or “checkoffs” occupy a unique place within the broad range of programs overseen by USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). One distinctive attribute of these programs is their structure, under which the message of the promotional campaign undertaken is effectively controlled by the Federal Government itself. *Johanns v. Livestock Marketing Ass’n*, 544 U.S. 550 (2005).

The organic checkoff program as agreed to by the Managers would differ from existing checkoffs, which are specific to a particular commodity. For the first time, a checkoff program is not solely commodity-specific, but could be established on the basis of a specific set of production and processing practices.

The Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996, under which this provision is established, prohibits any advertising that may be disparaging to another commodity. As with any time a new checkoff is formed, a new potential for disparagement of all types of products arises. As with all checkoff programs, the Managers remain concerned about the potential for disparagement of other commodities, production and processing methods for the same commodity, competitors, processes, and products under this new authority.

Should an organic checkoff program be developed and approved, the Managers strongly encourage USDA AMS to review and revise, as appropriate, the November 4, 2010, "Guidelines for AMS Oversight of Commodity Research and Promotion Programs" to ensure these guidelines address potential disparagement in both commodity and process based checkoff programs.

(3) Organic Enforcement

The House bill authorizes recordkeeping requirements and investigative powers to the Secretary as well as suspension and revocation of an organic certification of a producer, handler or the accreditation of a certifying agent. (Section 10005)

The Senate amendment authorizes recordkeeping requirements and investigative powers to the Secretary as well as the stop sale of an agricultural product and revocation of an organic certification of a producer, handler or the accreditation of a certifying agent. (Section 10005)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes investigative powers to the Secretary and recordkeeping requirements for persons who sell, label or represent agricultural products as produced or handled using organic methods. Refusal to provide accurate information is made unlawful and a violation of the Organic Foods Production Act. Information shall be made public in a manner that ensures confidentiality. (Section 10005)

(4) Food Safety Education Initiatives

The House bill amends Section 10105 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 to authorize the education of farm workers and education regarding additional food safety practices and contamination. It reauthorizes appropriations for fiscal years through 2018. (Section 10006)

The Senate amendment reauthorizes appropriations for fiscal years through 2018. (Section 10006)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 10006)

(5) Specialty Crop Block Grants

The House bill reauthorizes section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 through fiscal year 2018. The section provides that the amount of grants to the States be based on value production and acreage. It further amends eligibility requirements to include an application that contains an assurance that any grant funds for equipment or capital-related research costs will be supplemented by State funds at not less than 50 percent during the fiscal year and completely replaced by State funds after the fiscal year is over. The House section requires the Secretary to issue guidance for the purpose of making grants for projects involving food safety, plant pests and disease, research and crop-specific projects. It makes certain administrative requirements including an authorization of multistate projects. Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, \$72,500,000 for fiscal

years 2014 through 2017 and \$85,000,000 for fiscal year 2018 is authorized. (Section 10007)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House language. However, it requires the Secretary to issue guidance for the purpose of making grants for projects involving food safety, plant pests and disease and crop-specific projects. Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, \$70,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter is authorized. (Section 10008)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendment. The amendment eliminates the House language on the State supplement for equipment or capital-related research costs. The amendment further established the mandatory funding level for fiscal year 2018 and each of the fiscal years thereafter. (Section 10010)

The Managers recognize the difficulty in coordinating and funding multi-state projects within the block grant program, and the Managers expect the USDA to issue guidance and work with states in making grants available for such projects. These multi-state projects may include food safety, research, plant pest and disease, and crop specific projects. These projects have the ability to link growers across state lines and promote much needed collaborative research. The Managers also encourage the Department to work with states to allow for funding for priority research objectives that are supported by the states and that comply with the purposes of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act.

The Managers believe that many specialty crop growers benefit from the programs dedicated to the production and marketing of specialty crops and products derived from them. Throughout this legislation, the Managers have sought to bolster support for the specialty crop sector, but recognize that some specialty crop products continue to have production and marketing concerns outside of the policies specifically addressed in this legislation. One such specialty crop product is olive oil. In addition to the challenges associated with the production of an agriculture commodity, olive growers and olive oil processors face additional concerns related to trade and product standards of identity. With reference to international trade, tariff disparities pose a significant barrier to our export potential.

Regarding standards, the International Olive Council, an intergovernmental organization under the auspices of the United Nations, has traditionally set standards for olive oil throughout the world. USDA standards for olive oil closely match those of the IOC, even though the United States is not an IOC member.

However, testing standards continue to be an area of dispute due to differences in naturally occurring compounds, rapid chemical decomposition in olive oil, challenges related to sensory testing, and disagreement over what constitutes adulteration. Because of the difficulty in establishing an enforceable national standard of identity, there is potential for consumer confusion in cases where blending of oils and lesser quality oils into extra virgin olive oil is alleged to have occurred. In fact, Connecticut, New York, and Oregon have recently enacted olive oil grade standards to address consumer concerns.

A recent U.S. International Trade Commission report, "Olive Oil: Conditions of Competition between U.S. and Major Foreign Supplier Industries (Investigation No. 332-537)," issued September 12, 2013, at the behest of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means documents some of these concerns.

The Commission's staff interviewed U.S. olive oil importers, European olive oil producers and exporters, U.S. olive growers and processors, government officials and others involved in the world olive oil industry. In the U.S. the total value of domestic and imported olive oil exceeds \$1 billion and at the retail level the value is in excess of \$5 billion. The report provided evidence of different olive oil standards in the U.S. and in foreign markets, which adds to the confusion.

Highlights from the report point indicate that:

Current international standards for extra virgin olive oil allow a wide range of oil qualities to be marketed as extra virgin. In addition, the standards are widely unenforced. Mandatory testing with penalties for noncompliance exists only in Canada and the European Union. However, testing in the EU is only mandatory for a very small share of production (0.1 percent). Broad and unforced standards lead to adulterated and mislabeled products, weakening the competitiveness of high-quality producers, such as those in the United States, who try to differentiate their product based on quality.

Olive oil consumption has risen due to a recent focus on the benefits of a healthy diet, and as a result, the olive oil industry has great potential for our nation's farmers. However, barriers remain for domestic production. Many consumers also make purchasing decisions based on price. The Managers acknowledge that additional testing procedures could have an effect on olive oil importers and consumers.

The Managers urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to study the U.S. International Trade Commission report and take action to remove the obstacles that are preventing the U.S. olive oil industry from reaching its potential. The Managers encourage USDA to collaborate with industry officials to determine if a marketing order for olive oil would effectively address concerns, benefit the U.S. consumer, and protect domestic growers and importers.

The Managers expect the Secretary to enforce the regulations contained in 7 CFR Part 46.44, Good Delivery Standards for Lettuce. The Managers are particularly concerned about contracts and invoices that use disclaimers to exempt product from the condition standards for damages due to bruising and discoloration following bruising. The Managers expect the Secretary to investigate any contracts or invoices that violate standards and leave perishable product receivers no recourse for damages beyond the Good Delivery Standards for Lettuce.

Another important issue to the specialty crop industry is the challenges surrounding a federal standard of identity for honey.

The conference substitute requires the Secretary to consult with honey industry stakeholders, including the American Honey Producers Association, the American Beekeeping Federation, the National Honey Packers and Dealers Association, the Sioux Honey Association, and the Western States Honey Packers and Dealers Association, on a report describing the contents of a new federal standard of identity for honey. The honey industry is currently faced with a number of major challenges, including the dilution of honey with increased quantities of other substances as well as the addition or substitution of substances in order to mask dilution. The subsection requires that this report be submitted to the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) within 180 days of enactment.

A citizens' petition was filed with the FDA in March 2006, which represents the honey industry's previous effort to develop a federal honey standard of identity. Since 2006, a number of states have enacted differing honey standards raising concerns about inconsistencies, the flow of commerce within the honey industry, confusion in the market place and unanticipated legal challenges. The honey industry is now undertaking efforts to develop a consensus federal standard of identity for consideration in the Secretary's report to the FDA.

(6) *Department of Agriculture Consultation Regarding Enforcement of Certain Labor Law Provisions*

The House bill Requires the Secretary of Agriculture to consult with the Secretary of Labor regarding the restraining of shipments of agriculture commodities or the confiscation of such commodities by the Department of Labor for actual or suspected labor law violations to consider the perishable nature of such commodities, impact on economic viability of farming operations and the competitiveness of specialty crops through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. (Section 10008)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment requires the consultation between the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor regarding the restraining of shipments or confiscation of agriculture commodities by the DoL for labor law violations as well as a report to Congress describing the number of instances that the DoL has contacted a purchaser of perishable agricultural commodities to notify them of an investigation or pending enforcement action against a producer from whom the purchaser bought such commodities. (Sec. 10011)

(7) *Bulk Shipment of Apples to Canada*

The House bill amends Section 4 of the Export Apple Act to allow apples shipped to Canada in bulk bins without complying with the Act. It requires the Secretary to issue regulations to carry out this provision. (Section 10010)

The Senate amendment provides that the Secretary of Agriculture has no authority to inspect apples in bulk bins prior to export in Canada. (Section 10011)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendment. The amendment clarifies that the section applies to apples shipped in any bulk container and is not limited to bulk bins. (Section 10009)

(8) *Consolidation of Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Programs*

The House bill relocates legislative language authorizing the National Clean Plant Network to the Plant Protection Act, authorizes funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, \$62,500,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2017 and \$75,000,000 for fiscal year 2018, including \$5,000,000 of those funds for the Clean Plant Network, and provides technical assistance shall not be considered an allotment or fund transfer from the CCC for purposes of the limit on expenditures for technical assistance. (Section 10011)

The Senate amendment provides relocates legislative language authorizing the National Clean Plant Network, authorizes funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, \$60,000,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2017 and \$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2018, and provides technical assistance shall not be considered an allotment or fund transfer from

the CCC for purposes of the limit on expenditures for technical assistance. (Section 10007)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment relocates the authorization of the National Clean Plant Network, authorizes \$62,500,000 for fiscal years 2014 through 2017 and \$75,000,000 for fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention, including \$5,000,000 of such funds for the National Clean Plant Network, and limits indirect costs for cooperative agreements. The amendment also prohibits CCC funds used for technical assistance under this title to be considered an allotment or fund transfer from the CCC for the purpose of the limit on expenditures for technical assistance. (Sections 10007 and 10017)

The Managers have combined this program with the Pest and Disease program and increased baseline funding for both to ensure the continued availability of funding for the important work of the National Clean Plant Network. The Conference substitute sets a funding floor of \$5 million per year to the National Clean Plant Networks but further encourages the Secretary to provide from within the overall allocation under this section additional funds if deemed necessary. These funds may be provided to the Network without regard to the process for distributing funds to address the other provisions of Section 420 of the Plant Protection Act. The Managers recognize that Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Programs as previously authorized in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 includes imminent pressing and persistent threats from pests and disease, such as Citrus Greening, to agriculture production.

The Managers recognize the importance of the Federal government, specifically the USDA, developing and maintaining the highest technological capability of identifying plant pests and invasive species. Further, the Managers believe that the advanced technological capabilities acquired through development of plant pest and disease detection technologies should facilitate the development of a coordinated, interagency response plan for the federal government to effectively mitigate plant pests and disease. The Managers encourage USDA to take the appropriate steps to facilitate information and technology sharing with other appropriate agencies of the Federal government involved in managing invasive pests such as Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

(9) *Modification Cancellation, or Suspension on Basis of a Biological Opinion*

The House bill provides that except in the case of a voluntary request from a registrant under section 3 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136a), a registration may be modified, canceled or suspended on the basis of the implementation of a Biological Opinion issued by the NMFS or the USFWS prior to the completion of the National Academy of Sciences study commissioned by the Administrator of the EPA or Jan. 1, 2015, whichever is earlier, only if the action is taken pursuant to section 6 of the Act and the Biological Opinion complies with the recommendations contained in the study. The study shall include at minimum: (1) a formal, independent, and external peer review, consistent with OMB policies of each Biological Opinion, (2) an assessment of economic impacts of measures

or alternatives recommended in each Biological Opinion, (3) an examination of specific scientific and procedural questions and issues pertaining to economic feasibility contained in a June 23, 2011 letter sent to the Administrator and other Federal officials from Members of Congress. (Section 10012)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes two reports to Congress that describe approaches and actions taken by the EPA, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service to implement recommendations of the report, "Assessing Risks to Endangered and Threatened Species from Pesticides", to ensure public participation and transparency during such implementation and to minimize delays in integrating applicable pesticide registration and registration review requirements and the species and habitat protection processes described in sections 7 and 10 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The final report to Congress shall include an evaluation to establish that approaches utilize the best available science, reasonable and prudent alternatives (RPA) are technologically and economically feasible, reasonable and prudent measures (RPM) are necessary and appropriate and the agencies ensure public participation and transparency in the development of RPA's and RPM's. The amendment also authorizes an update of a study to identify reasonable and prudent measures to implement the endangered species pesticides labeling program which would comply with the ESA and allow the continued production of food and fiber and the report to Congress regarding the results of the study. (Section 10013)

Overall Purpose of Provision

This provision addresses the activities of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (collectively, the Services) in addressing the integration of the consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the pesticides registration requirements of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

A longstanding and well-documented inability to resolve fundamental scientific issues central to the integration of these statutory requirements led the EPA Administrator and the Secretaries of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Interior and Department of Commerce to ask the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to provide guidance on certain scientific issues.

The final report from the NRC, Assessing Risks to Endangered and Threatened Species from Pesticides, was completed on April 30, 2013 (NAS Report). For the following five months EPA, the Services, and USDA worked together and produced an "interim" implementation plan (the "Interim Plan") that was shared with stakeholders in mid-November of 2013. However, the Managers believe that further work needs to be done to adequately address the concerns regarding the "Interim Plan."

It is the Managers intent through routine oversight to keep all involved government entities focused on promptly building the "Interim Plan" into a final set of processes and procedures that will maximize the efficient use of limited governmental resources, minimize delays in registration actions under Sections 3 and 33 of FIFRA, make it

possible for EPA to comply with the FIFRA requirement that all registrations be reviewed every fifteen years, and ensure meaningful public participation. Additionally, the Managers through this provision reemphasize Congress's intention that all reasonable and prudent alternatives to address ESA concerns are economically and technologically feasible.

Intent of Specific Subsections

Subsection (a) requires that two reports be provided to the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and Environment and Public Works of the Senate jointly by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretaries of Commerce, Agriculture and the Interior, the first to be delivered 180 days after enactment of the legislation, and the second six months later. Both reports are to describe the actions taken and approaches underway to implement the NAS Report's recommendations and otherwise minimize delays in integrating FIFRA's pesticide registration and registration review requirements and the ESA's species and habitat protection processes. The Managers expect that each report should include an explanation of how any remaining delays in this integration are expected to be overcome, and a schedule for doing so.

The provision references both Section 3 and 33 of FIFRA because both require timely EPA registration and registration review actions, including specific deadlines for action. It is the view of the Managers that the need for ESA compliance does not override these deadlines. It is important that the integration processes and procedures developed by EPA and the Services assure EPA can meet its statutory deadlines. Similarly, the Services should be exploring how habitat conservation plans as part of an Incidental Take Permit under Section 10 could be employed to simplify the consultation process under Section 7 when processing a permit application.

The provision underlines the importance of meaningful public participation and transparency. In addition to describing approaches and actions to ensure public participation and transparency, the Managers specifically expect the report to address experience with the process described in EPA's March 2013 paper, *Enhancing Stakeholder Input in the Pesticide Registration Review and ESA Consultation Processes and Development of Economically and Technologically Feasible Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives* and any modifications of that process that have been adopted or are anticipated.

The conference report requires that the second report to Congress address, in addition to an update of the matters discussed in the first report, a number of other matters. First, in identifying specific actions yet to be undertaken, the report should provide a schedule for the initiation and completion of each, which should be realistic and allow for public participation.

Second, the processes adopted both before and after completion of the two reports should recognize EPA's obligations to meet the requirements for timely action set forth in FIFRA Sections 3 and 33 and the resources available to the Services to address pesticide-related consultations.

Third, the report should comprehensively explain why the approaches and actions that have been or will be taken to address Congress's concerns in enacting this provi-

sion utilize the best available science, assure that reasonable and prudent alternatives presented in biological opinions are technologically and economically feasible and that reasonable and prudent measures are necessary and appropriate. Among other matters, this explanation should explain how the substantive and procedural concerns that resulted in the vacating of certain portions of the regulation appearing in Subpart D of Part 402 of the Code of Federal Regulations in *Washington Toxics Coalition v. USEPA*, 457 F.Supp. 2d 1158 (W.D. Wash. 2006), have been overcome; how the January 4, 2004 letter from the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Assistant Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service to the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances of the Environmental Protection Agency has been updated and revised; and how the Alternative Consultation Agreement entered into in August, 2004 by the Acting Assistant Administrator of the Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has been revised or whether it is scheduled to be revised.

Fourth, the report should include an update of the study and report on how ESA implementation is being undertaken while minimizing the impacts on persons engaged in the production of agricultural food and fiber commodities and other affected pesticide users and applicators.

(10) Use and Discharge of Authorized Pesticides

The House bill amends section 3(f) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act prohibiting the Administrator or a State from requiring a permit under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act for pesticide applications authorized under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, except in certain instances and amends section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act prohibiting the Administrator or a State from requiring a permit under section 402 for the application into navigable waters of a pesticide applications authorized under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. Subsection (s)(2) provides exceptions for certain instances. (Section 10013)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(11) Seed not Pesticide or Device for Purposes of Importation

The House bill amends the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to eliminate the requirement to notify the Administrator for seeds, including treated seeds, of the arrival of pesticides and devices. (Section 10014)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment prohibits the requirement of notification to the Administrator of the EPA of the arrival of a plant-incorporated protectant (PIP) contained in a seed. The Secretary, if requested, shall provide to the Administrator a list of seeds containing PIPs. The amendment does not limit the Secretary's other authorities regarding the movement of seeds. (Section 10008)

(12) Stay on Regulations Related to Christmas Tree Promotion, Research and Information Order

The House bill requires the Secretary, within 60 days of the enactment of this Act, to lift the administrative stay imposed by the rule establishing an industry-funded promotion, research and information program for fresh cut Christmas trees. (Section 10015)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 10014)

(13) Study on Proposed Order Pertaining to Sulfuryl Fluoride

The House bill authorizes a report to Congress regarding the potential economic and public health effects that would result from finalization of the proposed order pertaining to sulfurlyl fluoride. (Section 10016)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment directs the Administrator of the EPA to exclude nonpesticidal sources of fluoride from aggregate exposure assessments required under section 408 of the FFDCA when assessing tolerances associated with residues from the pesticide. (Section 10015)

(14) Study on Local and Regional Food Production and Program Evaluation

The House bill requires the Secretary to collect data on the production and marketing of locally or regionally produced agricultural food products, facilitate data sharing, and monitor programs designed to aid local and regional food systems. The bill further provides a sunset date of September 30, 2018 for the annual report. (Section 10017)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House bill but does not include the sunset date.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment adds further requirements for the Secretary to collect data on regulatory compliance costs, monitor regulatory barriers, and evaluate local food systems. (Section 10016)

(15) Annual Report

The House bill authorizes a report and annual update to Congress regarding invasive species including a list of each invasive species that is in the U.S. as of the date of the report and information regarding each invasive species listed, including the means in which the species entered the U.S., cost estimates of the species to the public and private sectors and a description of any legal recourse available to people affected by the species. (Section 10018)

The Senate amendment has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(16) Effective Date

The Senate amendment provides an effective date of this title as October 1, 2013. (Section 10013)

The House bill has no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

TITLE XI—CROP INSURANCE

(1) Information sharing

The House bill, in section 11001(a), requires the Farm Service Agency (FSA), when authorized by the producer, to provide in a timely manner information to an agent or an approved insurance provider (AIP) that may

assist the agent or AIP in insuring the producer, providing for privacy protection and limited sharing. Section 11001(b) requires disclosure (by name) of the amount of crop insurance assistance received by Members of Congress, Cabinet Secretaries, and members of their immediate families. (Section 11001)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment deleting the disclosure requirements under section 11001(b). (Section 11001)

The Managers intend that the information sharing required under this section be effective upon enactment of the Farm Bill. The Managers view the requirement of this section as an important measure to ensure the timely correction and prevention of errors. The Managers intend that the Farm Service Agency provide agents or AIPs with information in a timely fashion to fully effectuate the intent of this section.

(2) *Publication of information on violations of prohibition on premium adjustments*

The House bill requires the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (the Corporation) to publish information regarding each violation of the prohibition on rebates or premium adjustments, including any sanctions imposed, in sufficient detail so that the information may serve as effective guidance to AIPs, agents, and producers. (Section 11002)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 11002)

The Managers stress the importance of timely enforcement and publication of violations, especially in the heavy sales period prior to the sales closing date. The Managers also intend for the Risk Management Agency to investigate reports of violations made to the Risk Management Agency by agents or AIPs in the field. The Managers observe that the prohibition on rebating under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (FCIA) has not been construed to limit customary client relations, including but not limited to providing risk management education, maps, or help explaining coverage to lenders; promotional materials such as pens, caps, notepads; or engagement of clients in a social or civic setting. The Managers view these services and activities as ordinary business expenses common to the industry.

(3) *Supplemental coverage option*

The House bill, in section 11003(a), amends section 508(c)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO). Section 508(c)(3)(A) and (B) (as amended by section 11003(a) of the House bill) offers producer the option of purchasing additional coverage based on: (1) an individual yield and loss basis; (2) an area yield and loss basis; or (3) an individual yield and loss basis supplemented with coverage based on an area yield and loss basis to cover part of the deductible under the individual yield and loss policy. Section 508(c)(3)(C) (as amended by section 11003(a) of the House bill) establishes coverage on a margin basis alone or in combination with coverage on an individual yield and loss basis or on an area yield and loss basis, or an individual yield and loss basis supplemented with coverage based on an area yield and loss basis. Subsection (b) amends section 508(c)(4) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish the level of coverage available under SCO. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(i) (as amended by section 11003(b) of the House bill) requires SCO to be available at a county-wide level to the full-

est extent practicable or, in counties that lack sufficient data, on the basis of a larger area that the Corporation determines will provide sufficient data. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(ii) (as amended by section 11003(b) of the House bill) stipulates that indemnities will be triggered only if losses in the area exceed 10 percent of normal levels. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(iii) (as amended by section 11003(b) of the House bill) establishes coverage in an amount that does not exceed the difference between 90 percent and the coverage level selected by the producer for the underlying policy or plan of insurance. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(iv) (as amended by section 11003(b) of the House bill) stipulates that crops enrolled in Revenue Loss Coverage or acres enrolled in stacked income protection for producers of upland cotton (STAX) are not eligible for SCO. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(v) (as amended by section 11003(b) of the House bill) establishes the premium for SCO at an amount that is sufficient to cover anticipated losses and a reasonable reserve and include an amount for operating and administrative expenses. Subsection (c) amends section 508(e)(2) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish premium support for SCO at 65 percent of the additional premium associated with the coverage and A&O at 12 percent of the premium used to define loss ratio. Subsection (d) requires the provision of SCO beginning with the 2014 crop year. (Section 11003)

The Senate amendment amends section 508(c)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish SCO in the same manner as the House provision. Section 11001(a) amends section 508(c)(3) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish SCO. Section 11001(b) amends section 508(c)(4) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to establish the level of coverage available under the SCO. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(i) (as amended by section 11001(b) of the Senate amendment) requires SCO to be available if sufficient data is available (as determined by the Corporation). Section 508(c)(4)(C)(ii) (as amended by section 11001(b) of the Senate amendment) makes coverage under this section subject to a deductible. If a producer selects Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC), the amount of the deductible is equal to 22 percent of the expected value of the crop. For all other producers, the deductible is established at 10 percent. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(iii) (as amended by section 11001(b) of the Senate amendment) establishes coverage in an amount that does not exceed the difference between 100 percent and the coverage level selected by the producer for the underlying policy or plan of insurance. Section 508(c)(4)(C)(iv) establishes the premium for A&O in the same manner as the House provisions. Subsection (c) establishes premium support and A&O in the same manner as the House provision. Subsection (d) provides for a conforming amendment. Section 11013, which establishes a new section 508B of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, provides that acres enrolled in STAX are ineligible for supplemental coverage. (Sections 11001, 11013)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendments dropping the establishment of margin coverage provided in the House provision from the SCO section, establishing that SCO coverage will only be triggered if losses in the area exceed 14 percent of normal levels, limiting SCO coverage to not exceed the difference between 86 percent and the coverage level selected by the producer under the underlying policy, disallowing SCO coverage for crops enrolled in ARC (as well as acreage when en-

rolled in STAX), and requiring SCO to be made available beginning with the 2015 crop year. (Section 11003)

The Managers intend the Supplemental Coverage Option to be made available by the Corporation for sale by agents and AIPs in time for the 2015 crop year. This is essential given crop insurance is assuming a larger role in the risk management of producers in the wake of reduced support under the Commodity Title. The Managers particularly note that a producer may purchase a STAX policy and SCO coverage on the same cotton crop in the same county provided that they are purchased for separate acreage. The language in this section is clear on this point, precluding SCO coverage and ARC on the same crop but precluding SCO and STAX on the same acres. The Managers intend that producers of hybrid seed, including but not limited to hybrid seed corn, hybrid popcorn seed, hybrid sweet corn seed, hybrid sorghum seed, and hybrid rice seed, may supplement their coverage with either a revenue or yield SCO coverage option, at the producer's election. The Managers intend that cotton producers may supplement their cottonseed coverage with SCO yield coverage.

The Managers strongly urge the Corporation to allow popcorn producers to be covered under area risk protection insurance under written agreement until applicable policy provisions are amended to allow for such coverage.

Margin Coverage Option

The House bill, in section 11003(a), authorizes margin coverage for producers to elect alone, or in combination with individual yield and loss coverage or area yield and loss coverage, or in combination with both individual yield and loss coverage and area yield and loss coverage. (Section 11003)

The Senate amendment authorizes margin coverage to be made available alone or in combination with either individual yield and loss coverage or area yield and loss coverage. (Section 11002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision but authorizes margin coverage under a separate section in the Farm Bill from SCO. (Section 11004)

The Managers intend that margin coverage be approved and made available by the Corporation for sale by agents and AIPs in time for the 2015 crop year. Timely approval and availability is important to wheat, rice, and interested producers of other commodities.

(4) *Premium amounts for catastrophic risk protection*

The House bill requires the CAT premium to be reduced by the percentage equal to the difference between the average loss ratio for the crop and 100 percent, plus a reasonable reserve. (Section 11004)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House, except the reasonable reserve is "as determined by the Corporation." (Section 11003)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 11005)

(5) *Repeal of performance-based discount*

The House bill repeals the performance-based discount. (Section 11005)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the House provision.

(6) *Permanent enterprise unit subsidy*

The House bill makes permanent the Corporation's authority to pay a higher portion of the premiums for policies that insure on an enterprise unit basis. (Section 11006)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House. (Section 11004)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 11006)

(7) *Enterprise units for irrigated and non-irrigated crops*

The House bill requires the Corporation to make available separate enterprise units for acreages of irrigated and non-irrigated crops beginning with the 2014 crop year. (Section 11007)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House except that separate enterprise units are to be made available beginning with the 2013 crop year. (Section 11005)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision but makes separate enterprise units available beginning with the 2015 crop year. (Section 11007)

The Managers intend for Enterprise Units by practice to be made available by the Corporation in time for the 2015 crop year.

(8) *Data collection*

The House bill provides authority for the use of data collected by the Risk Management Agency (RMA), the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), or both, to determine yields. Where sufficient county data is not available, the Secretary is authorized to use data from other sources. (Section 11008)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House. (Section 11006)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 11008)

The Managers would note that the effectiveness of the improvements made by this Act to the Federal Crop Insurance Act hinges considerably on ensuring that necessary data is available for implementation of improvements in a manner that benefits all producers. The Managers intend that the Corporation will use this authority effectively to fully accomplish the objectives of the crop insurance title of the Farm Bill.

(9) *Adjustment in actual production history to establish insurable yields*

The House bill strikes the 60 percent yield plug in current law and replaces it with a 70 percent yield plug. (Section 11009)

The Senate amendment provides for a yield plug at 65 percent but only with respect to yields for the 2014 and subsequent crop years. (Section 11007)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment that drops the proposed replacement of the yield plug in current law and authorizes producers to exclude certain yield history from their APH database. The provision amends section 508(g) (as amended by section 11009 of the Farm Bill) by subjecting actual production history requirements under section 508(g)(2)(A) to the new yield exclusion authority and, under section 508(g)(4), by requiring an appropriate adjustment in premium when a producer elects to exclude yields pursuant to the authorities provided by this provision. The new section 508(g)(4)(C)(i) authorizes a producer to exclude any recorded or appraised yield for any crop year in which the per planted acre yield of the agricultural commodity in the county of the producer was at least 50 percent below the simple average of the per planted acre yield of the agricultural commodity in the county during the previous 10 consecutive crop years. Section 508(g)(4)(C)(ii) provides that for any crop year in which a producer is able to make an election to exclude a yield under clause (i), a producer in a contiguous county may also elect to exclude a yield under the authority granted by this provi-

sion. Section 508(g)(4)(C)(iii) requires this provision to be implemented by irrigation practice. (Section 11009)

The Managers intend that when a producer elects to exclude a yield under this section that the Corporation would also exclude a year for purposes of calculating the producer's average actual production history. For example, if a producer has 10 years of history and elects to exclude one year pursuant to this section, the conferees intend that the Corporation will add the yields from the 9 remaining years in the database and divide the total by 9, not 10. The amendment to the Act specifically declares that a producer may make an election to exclude one or more yields notwithstanding section 508(g)(2)(A) which requires a data base building up to 10 consecutive crop years. Since the statute does not drill down further as to how the producer's average Actual Production History is to be calculated by the Corporation, the Managers intend that the more general directive in this section along with this clarifying report language is sufficient to ensure proper implementation as intended by the Managers without the need to amend Corporation regulations. The Managers note that this provision is effective upon the date of enactment of the Farm Bill. To the extent that it is not feasible to implement for the 2014 crop year due to the reinsurance year already having begun, the Managers intend that the provision will be implemented in time for the 2015 crop year. The Managers would observe that this provision applies to any yield in a producer's actual production database, including any yield that predates the enactment of this section.

The Managers strongly urge the Corporation to discontinue use of downward trending with respect to databases of perennial crops of 5 years or less due to the hardship this inflicts on specialty crop producers, including peach producers, who, under the current rules, are not allowed to use their own proven APH despite the requirements of section 508(g)(2)(A). The Managers also strongly urge that vertically integrated producers be permitted to use adjusters' appraisals to settle claims and that transition yields for peaches be updated to account for technology and innovation.

(10) *Submission and review of policies*

The House bill, in section 11010(a), requires the Corporation to review and submit to the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Board of Directors (Board) any policy developed under research and development contracting authority or pilot program authority if the Corporation, at its sole discretion, finds the policy will likely result in a viable and marketable policy, would provide crop insurance coverage in a significantly improved form, and adequately protects producer interests. The provision also establishes priorities for consideration and approval under section 508(h) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, including a revenue policy for peanuts, a margin policy for rice producers, and separate enterprise units by risk rating in time for the 2014 crop year. Section 11010(b) allows for up to 75 percent of research and development cost to be paid in advance. (Section 11010)

The Senate amendment, in section 11008, is substantially similar to the House provision except that the Senate amendment does not include the House priorities. Section 11009 also proposes new policy review and approval criteria, requiring the Board to approve a new policy, plan of insurance, or other material for reinsurance and for sale by approved insurance providers to producers at actuarially appropriate rates and under appropriate

terms and conditions if the Board determines, at its sole discretion, that the interests of producers are adequately protected; the rates of premium and price election methodology are actuarially appropriate; the terms and conditions are appropriate and would not unfairly discriminate among producers; the proposed policy or plan of insurance will, at the Board's sole discretion, result in viable and marketable policy, will provide crop insurance in a significantly improved form or in a manner that addresses a recognized flaw or problem, and will provide an improved kind of coverage for crops without insurance or experiencing low participation in crop insurance; the proposed policy or plan of insurance would not, in the sole discretion of the Board, have a significant adverse impact on the crop insurance delivery system; and the policy or plan meets other requirements determined appropriate by the Board. Section 11009 also provides that the Board, at its sole discretion, may establish annual priorities which would be made available on the Corporation website as well as a process where priority submissions would be considered and approved first. The Board is to consider making the highest priority those submissions designed to serve underserved commodities, including commodities for which there is no insurance, and those designed to address existing policies where there is inadequate coverage or low participation levels. Section 11018 of the Senate provision modifies the approval of costs for research and development, including the allowance of a waiver on the 50 percent limit on advance costs, permitting the Board to approve an additional 25 percent advance payment to a submitter of a policy intended to provide coverage for a region or crop that is underserved by federal crop insurance, including specialty crops. (Sections 11008, 11009, 11018)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provisions, combining them into one section with the following amendments. The Board is required to review and approve for reinsurance and for sale by approved insurance providers to producers at actuarially appropriate rates and under appropriate terms and conditions any policy, plan of insurance, or other material where the Board determines that the interests of producers are protected. In addition, the Board must determine that the proposed policy or plan of insurance will provide a new kind of coverage that is likely to be viable and marketable, provide insurance coverage in a manner that addresses a clear and identifiable flaw or problem in an existing policy, or provide a new kind of coverage for a commodity that previously had no crop insurance or has demonstrated a low level of participation or coverage level under existing coverage. The Board must also determine that the policy or plan of insurance will not have a significant adverse impact on the crop insurance delivery system. The Board is required, in a timely manner, to first consider policies or plans of insurance that address underserved commodities, including commodities for which there is no insurance; secondly, to consider modifications to existing policies or plans of insurance for which there is inadequate coverage or there exists low participation levels for a crop; and finally to consider other submissions under section 508(h). The Board is required to make a priority the approval of a revenue policy for peanuts and a margin coverage policy for rice in time for the 2015 crop year; and the Board is authorized to approve another priority in time for the 2015 crop year, a submission that allows separate

Enterprise Units by risk rating. With respect to approval of costs for research and development, the requirement that a policy address “a unique need of agricultural producers” is dropped as part of the qualifying criteria for the 50 percent advance, and the submitter not having sufficient financial resources to complete the development of the submission into a viable or marketable policy is dropped as part of the criteria for an additional 25 percent advance. (Section 11010)

The Managers observe the importance of a section 508(h) submission process that is highly conducive to the development, approval, and availability of new risk management products for producers. The Managers intend that, provided that largely objective standards are met by a submission under section 508(h), the Board must approve the policy. The Managers intend that the Board will honor the general priorities as required under the amendments made to section 508(h) under this section but in a manner that also provides for the timely consideration of other policies. The Managers specifically intend for the Board to approve a peanut revenue policy and a margin policy for rice producers in time for the 2015 crop year, as required under this section, and intend for the Board to use the authority granted under this section to consider and approve a submission providing for separate Enterprise Units by risk rating also in time for the 2015 crop year. The Managers would also strongly urge the Board to place a high priority on the approval of a specialized irrigated grain sorghum policy that establishes improved rates and t-yields based on a certain high level of crop management.

(11) Equitable relief for specialty crop policies

The House bill provides that for each of the 2011 through 2015 reinsurance years, the Corporation must provide \$41 million in reimbursement (in addition to the total amount of funding for A&O reimbursement) with respect to eligible insurance contracts for any agricultural commodity that is not eligible for a benefit under subtitles A, B or C of Title I of this Act. (Section 11011)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the House provision.

(12) Consultation

The Senate amendment requires the submitter of a proposed policy to, as part of the 508(h) review process, consult with groups representing producers of agricultural commodities in all major producing areas for the commodities to be served or potentially impacted, either directly or indirectly. Any submission to the Board must include a summary assessment of the consultation and the Board must use the assessment to determine if the submission will create adverse market distortions. (Section 11010)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision but confines the scope of the new consultation requirements to fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, nursery crops, and floriculture. (Section 11011)

(13) Budget limitations on renegotiation of the Standard Reinsurance Agreement

The House bill requires that, to the maximum extent practicable, any new SRA negotiated under section 508(k)(8)(A)(ii) shall be budget neutral as compared to the previous SRA, that in no event may a new SRA significantly depart from budget neutrality, and that any incidental savings realized

from the renegotiation of the Standard Reinsurance Agreement be used to increase premium subsidies, A&O reimbursements, or fund pilot programs. (Section 11012)

The Senate amendment is similar except that the provision requires any savings realized from the renegotiation of the Standard Reinsurance Agreement “be used for programs administered or managed by the Risk Management Agency.” (Section 11011)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to clarify that, to the maximum extent practicable, estimated underwriting gains under any new SRA must be budget neutral as compared to estimated underwriting gains under the immediately preceding SRA were the preceding SRA extended over the same period of time (Subparagraph (F)(i)(I)). The substitute also clarifies that any future SRA must comply with provisions of the Federal Crop Insurance Act governing A&O rates but that this requirement is subject to the requirement that, to the maximum extent practicable, the estimated total amount of A&O under any new SRA shall not be less than the estimated total amount of A&O under the immediately preceding SRA were the preceding SRA extended over the same period of time, as estimated on the date of enactment of the Farm Bill (Subparagraph (F)(i)(II)). The substitute requires in the same clause that in no event shall a new SRA significantly depart from the budget neutrality as defined in each of subclauses (I) and (II) unless otherwise required by the Federal Crop Insurance Act (Subparagraph (F)(i)(III)). The substitute further requires that to the extent there are any budget savings from a future SRA and they do not result in a significant departure from the budget neutrality required under each of subparagraphs (F)(i)(I) and (F)(i)(II), the savings must be used to increase A&O or underwriting gains (Subparagraph (F)(ii)). (Section 11012)

The Managers note that Federal Crop Insurance has been reduced by about \$17 billion over the past six years, including directly in the 2008 Farm Bill, in the context of the 2011 Standard Reinsurance Agreement negotiated in 2010 pursuant to section 508(k)(8)(A)(i), and in the subsequent premium rerating of policies. The Managers intend that, in compliance with this section, any SRA negotiated pursuant to section 508(k)(8)(A)(ii) shall not be used as a means of achieving further cuts to Federal Crop Insurance. To this end, this provision of law requires forbearance from further cuts in any future SRA negotiations to the maximum extent practicable. The Managers observe that this provision imposes a clear duty on the FCIC to fulfill the statutory command to the extent that it is feasible or possible to do so while still fulfilling the purposes of the statute, namely the provision of crop insurance to farmers and ranchers through approved insurance providers and private sector agents. Absent clear directive under a future Act of Congress, the Managers expect that forbearance from budget reductions under any future SRA is, in fact, both feasible and possible. In requiring budget neutrality, it is the intent of the Managers that the authority of the Corporation to carry out its authorities under this subtitle to establish or revise premium rates shall not be affected by this amendment.

The Managers note that this provision of law establishes an effective floor for estimated underwriting gains (UWGs) and A&O amounts under any future SRA that is based on estimates under the current SRA. Subject to the prescribed minimum amount of A&O,

the Managers also note that the provision requires the FCIC to comply with applicable provisions of the FCIA when establishing A&O rates. In contrast to UWGs where there is no statutory instruction, there is significant statutory instruction and history with respect to A&O rates. For instance, section 508(k)(4)(A)(ii) established a maximum A&O rate of 24.5 percent of premium used to define loss ratio beginning with the 1999 reinsurance year. Section 508(k)(4)(E) subsequently fixed the rate of A&O at 2.3 percentage points below the rate in effect on the date of enactment of the 2008 Farm Bill with respect to the 2009 and subsequent reinsurance years. And section 508(k)(8)(E) authorized alternative methods to determine A&O rates for covered reinsurance years under the SRA that took effect beginning with the 2011 reinsurance year. The Managers would observe that the applicable statutory A&O rates are made subject to the estimated minimum amount of A&O required under this provision of law as well as to any additional A&O required in the event of incidental savings from a future SRA negotiated under section 508(k)(8)(A)(ii). The Managers note that Subparagraph (F)(i)(III) enforces the overarching purpose of this provision of law which is to avoid future spending reductions by maintaining budget neutrality. The Managers do not intend that this provision be construed to require that funding be increased or decreased with respect to either A&O or UWGs in a manner that would increase or decrease such funding relative to a future SRA negotiated under section 508(k)(8)(A)(ii) unless an increase or decrease is otherwise required by the operation of law.

Subparagraph (F)(i)(III) generally restates the overarching purpose of this provision of law which is to maintain budget neutrality unless the statute requires otherwise. The Managers note that budget neutrality requirements as defined in each of subclauses (I) and (II) and each enforced by subclause (III) may not be construed to require a reduction to another program. Subparagraph (F)(ii) holds that any savings from an SRA negotiated under section 508(k)(8)(A)(ii) shall be purely incidental and any such savings must be redirected back into A&O and UWGs. Thus, the Managers intend that any savings under a future SRA be, in fact, purely incidental and that these savings be used to increase A&O and UWGs in a manner that is not discriminatory or prejudicial to any approved insurance provider or agent. The Managers further intend that incidental savings from UWGs should be redirected to UWGs and, likewise, incidental savings from A&O should be redirected to A&O.

(14) Test weight for corn

The Senate amendment requires the Corporation to establish procedures to allow insured producers not more than 120 days to settle claims, in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary, involving corn that is determined to have low test weight. As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this provision, the Corporation is required to implement this provision on a regional basis based on market conditions and the interests of producers. The authority under this section terminates 5 years from implementation. (Section 11012)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 11013)

(15) Crop production on native sod

The House bill amends Section 508(o) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act. The provision

amends the definition of native sod to include land that a producer cannot substantiate has ever been tilled. With respect to native sod, the provision requires a reduction in crop insurance premium support, and is denied NAP payments or Commodity Title payments. The provision requires that during the first 4 years of planting a crop on native sod, the premium support for crop insurance will be reduced by 50 percentage points. The provision also provides that the required reduction in benefits will apply to 65 percent of the transitional yield of the producer and that a producer may not substitute yields on native sod ground. The provision is limited in application to the Prairie Pothole National Priority Area. The provision amends the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) program in the same fashion. Section 10013(c) requires a cropland report to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and annual updates. (Section 11013)

The Senate amendment requires the same reduction in benefits as the House provision except that the Senate provision makes the reduction in benefits for planting on native sod nationwide. It further requires a cropland report and annual updates. (Section 11035)

The Conference substitute provides for a reduction in benefits for a producer that has tilled native sod for the production of an annual crop under both the Federal Crop Insurance Act and NAP. Under the Federal Crop Insurance Act, a producer is subject to a reduction in benefits during the first four crop years of planting. The crop insurance insured yield would be determined using a yield of 65 percent of the transitional yield of the producer. The reduced subsidy would be 50 percentage points less than the premium subsidy that would otherwise apply. The reduction in benefits does not apply to catastrophic level coverage.

In the case of benefits under NAP, a producer planting on native sod during the first four years is subject to a reduction in benefits. The reduced approved yield is determined by a yield that is 65 percent of the T yield of the producer. The service fees or premiums would be equal to 200% of the service fee or premium.

The conference substitute provides that the reduction in benefits for both federal crop insurance and NAP apply only on native sod in the states of Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Nebraska.

The conference substitute adopts the Senate provision on the requirement for a cropland report and annual updates. (Section 11014)

The Managers do not intend for approved insurance providers (AIP) or agents to be responsible for making any determinations relative to this section, nor for AIPs or agents to undertake any liability for changes in eligibility determinations.

(16) Coverage levels by practice

The House bill allows a producer that produces an agricultural commodity on both dry land and irrigated land to elect a different coverage level for each production practice beginning with the 2015 crop year. (Section 11014)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 11015)

The Managers intend that this provision will be implemented in time for the 2015 crop year. The Managers would observe that the risks relative to producing crops on dry land acreage versus irrigated acreage are consid-

erably different and that many producers seek different coverage levels that are tailored to those differing risks.

(17) Beginning farmers and rancher provisions

The House bill, in section 11015, defines a beginning farmer or rancher as one who has not actively operated and managed a farm or ranch with a bona fide interest in a crop or livestock as an owner-operator, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper for more than 5 crop years. Except in the case of CAT coverage, beginning farmers and ranchers receive premium assistance that is 10 percentage points higher than premium assistance otherwise provided. The section requires that a beginning farmer or rancher previously involved in a farming or ranching operation, including in decision making or physical involvement, be assigned a yield that is the higher of the APH of the previous producer of the crop or livestock on the acreage or the yield of the producer as otherwise provided by statute. The section further provides beginning farmers and ranchers with a higher yield plug of 80 percent of the applicable transitional yield. (Section 11015)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House. (Section 11032)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 11016)

The Managers intend this section to be implemented in a manner that does not discriminate against producers who grew up on a farm or ranch, left for post-secondary education or military service, and returned to the farm or ranch. When calculating the 5 crop years in this section, the Managers intend that any year when a producer was under the age of 18, in post-secondary studies, or serving in the U.S. military should not be counted.

(18) Stacked income protection plan for producers of upland cotton

The House bill, in section 11016(a), requires the Corporation to make available to upland cotton producers, beginning with the 2014 crop year, a new additional policy which is to provide coverage consistent with the Group Risk Income Protection (GRIP) Plan along with the Harvest Revenue Option Endorsement offered in the 2011 crop year. The section authorizes the Corporation to modify the policy on a program-wide basis provided the plan complies with certain requirements. The section requires coverage for revenue loss of not less than 10 percent and not more than 30 percent of expected county revenue, offered in increments of 5 percent. The section establishes a deductible under the policy of 10 percent of revenue loss in a county. The section requires that the policy be made available to all upland cotton producers in all counties of production at a county-wide level to the fullest extent practicable, or in counties that lack sufficient data, on the basis of a larger geographical area as determined by the Corporation. The section provides that this coverage may be purchased alone or in addition to any other individual or area coverage on the same acreage except that in the latter case the coverage may not exceed the deductible of the other policy. The section requires that coverage be based on the expected price established under existing GRIP or area wide policy offered by the Corporation for the county or area and crop year and an expected county yield. The section requires that the expected county yield be the higher of the expected county yield for existing area wide plans for the applicable county (or area) and crop year (or in geographic areas where area-wide plans are not offered, an expected yield determined in

a consistent manner with an area wide plan) or the average of the applicable yield data for the county (or area) for the most recent 5 years, excluding the high and low, as observed by RMA, NASS, or both, or other data determined appropriate by the Secretary if sufficient county data is not available. The section requires use of a multiplier factor of not less than the higher of the level established on a program wide basis or 120 percent. The section requires an indemnity to be paid based on the amount that expected county revenue exceeds actual county revenue as applied to the individual coverage of the producer, except that indemnities may not include or overlap the producer's selected deductible. The section requires the availability of this coverage by irrigation practice in all counties where data is available. The section establishes the amount of premium and premium support and specifies the amount of A&O required for the policy. The section clarifies that the policy is in addition to all other coverage available to producers of upland cotton. Finally, section 11016(b) provides for a conforming amendment.

The Senate amendment: Section 11013 is similar to the House bill except that the Senate requires the stacked income protection plan to be made available beginning with the 2014 crop year if practicable and requires such protection to be made available by irrigation practice to the maximum extent practicable. (Section 11013)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that stacked income protection for upland cotton producers is required to be made available beginning not later than the 2015 crop year. (Section 11017)

The Managers intend that the Stacked Income Protection Plan for Producers of Upland Cotton be implemented in a manner that if a producer participates in both the Stacked Income Protection Plan and an area-wide policy, the total indemnification under both policies combined does not exceed the total insured value of the crop. The Managers intend that the Stacked Income Protection Plan for Producers of Upland Cotton be implemented in a manner that includes the features of existing area-wide crop insurance products, including allowing for producers to select or decline the Harvest Price Option. The Managers further intend that Stacked Income Protection Plan be fully implemented by the Corporation as expeditiously as possible.

(19) Peanut revenue crop insurance

The House bill, in Section 11017, requires the Corporation to make available revenue insurance for peanut producers beginning with the 2014 crop year. The section establishes an effective price for revenue and multiple peril insurance at a price equal to the Rotterdam price index for peanuts, adjusted to reflect the farmer stock price of peanuts in the U.S. The section authorizes RMA to adjust the effective price to correct distortions in an open and transparent manner with a report to the Agriculture Committees on the reasons for the adjustment. (Section 11017)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision. (Section 11014)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except that peanut revenue coverage is required beginning with the 2015 crop year and the effective price must be either the Rotterdam price or other appropriate price as determined by the Secretary. (Section 11018)

The Managers note that peanut revenue coverage is required to be made available to

peanut producers in time for the 2015 crop year and that a separate section within the crop insurance title of this Act requires that the approval of a peanut revenue policy be made a priority.

(20) Authority to correct errors

The House bill amends section 515(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to allow an agent or an AIP to correct unintentional errors in information that are provided by a producer. Section 515(c)(3)(A) (as amended by section 11018 of the House bill) specifies that the authority granted by section 10018 shall be in addition to any corrections already permitted and in place on the date of enactment of this Act. Section 515(c)(3)(A)(i) provides agents and AIPs authority to correct unintentional errors in information provided by the producer to obtain insurance within a reasonable period following the sales closing date. Section 515(c)(3)(A)(ii)(I) also provides that, within a reasonable time following the acreage reporting date, agents and AIPs may correct unintentional errors in factual information that are provided by a producer after the sales closing date to reconcile the information with the information reported by the producer to FSA. Section 515(c)(3)(A)(ii)(II) provides that agents and AIPs may make corresponding corrections within a reasonable amount of time following the date of any subsequent correction of data by the FSA made as a result of the verification of information. Section 503(c)(3)(A)(iii) provides that AIPs and agents may at any time correct unintentional errors made by FSA, agents, or AIPs in transmitting the information provided by the producer to the approved insurance provider or the Corporation. Section 515(c)(3)(B) provides that in accordance with Corporation procedures, the corrections permitted under clauses (i) and (ii) may only be made if the corrections do not allow the producer to avoid ineligibility requirements; to obtain, enhance or increase an insurance guarantee or avoid a premium owed if a cause of loss exists or has occurred before any correction has been made; or to avoid an obligation or requirement under federal or state law. Section 515(c)(3)(C) exempts errors corrected pursuant to this section from any late filing sanctions. (Section 11018)

The Senate amendment amends section 515(c) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to require the Corporation to establish procedures to allow an agent or an AIP to, within a reasonable amount of time after the sales closing date, correct errors in specified information that is provided by a producer to ensure the information is consistent with information reported to FSA. The section limits the ability to correct errors if allowance would allow the producer to obtain a disproportionate benefit under crop insurance or other USDA program, avoid ineligibility requirements for crop insurance, or avoid an obligation under federal or state law. (Section 11015)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision but requires the Corporation to establish procedures to implement the authority to correct errors that are in addition to authorities to correct errors in place as of the day before the date of enactment of this Act. The substitute also clarifies that the authority granted under Section 508(c)(3)(A)(i) is also to ensure that the information is consistent with information reported by the producer for other programs administered by the Secretary. The substitute allows an agent or approved insurance provider to make corresponding corrections within a reasonable amount of time

following the date of any correction by the FSA made as a result of the verification of information. The substitute also clarifies that at any time an agent or an approved insurance provider may correct their electronic transmission errors, or the electronic transmission errors of FSA or other USDA agencies to the extent that the agent or AIP relied on that information. The substitute also provides authority to allow a producer to make late payment for crop insurance under certain conditions. (Section 11019)

The Managers would note that the authority to correct errors is in addition to any authorities to correct errors in existence on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, and that the additional authority provided under this section does not preclude the agency from administratively providing other additional authorities to correct errors.

(21) Implementation

Section 11020 requires the Secretary to maintain and upgrade information management systems used in the administration and enforcement of the FCIA. The section requires the Secretary to ensure that new hardware and software are compatible with the same used by other USDA agencies. The section requires the Secretary to develop and implement an acreage report streamlining initiative project. Mandatory funds are authorized by the section for systems upgrades (\$25 million for FY2014 and \$10 million for each fiscal year from FY2015 through FY2018) with additional funding (an additional \$5 million for each fiscal year from FY2015 through FY2018) made available upon completion of the Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI). The section requires a report to the Agriculture Committees upon the substantial completion of ACRSI. (Section 11019)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision and the funding levels are the same, except the expected completion date for ACRSI and the submission date of the report to the Agriculture Committees of Congress are different. (Section 11016)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision except with reduced funding levels, with \$14 million in FY2014 and \$9 million in each fiscal year from FY2015 through FY2018 with an additional \$5 million for each fiscal year from FY2015 through FY2018 if the specified conditions are met. (Section 11020)

(22) Crop insurance fraud

The Senate amendment amends section 516(b)(2) to require that beginning with the 2014 reinsurance year and for each reinsurance year thereafter, the Corporation may use up to \$5 million from the insurance fund to pay costs to reimburse expenses incurred for the review of policies, plans of insurance, and related materials and assist the Corporation in maintaining program integrity and, in addition to other amounts for this purpose, costs incurred by RMA for compliance operations. (Section 11017)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with modifications. The substitute provides that the Corporation may use from the insurance fund not more than \$9 million for each of the 2014 and subsequent reinsurance years to reimburse expenses incurred for the operations and review of policies, plans of insurance, and related materials, and to assist the Corporation in maintaining program actuarial soundness and financial integrity. The substitute further provides that Secretary may, without fur-

ther appropriation merge some or all of the funds made available under this subparagraph into the accounts of the Risk Management Agency and obligate those funds. The substitute also provides that the funds made available under this subparagraph are in addition to other funds made available for costs incurred by the Corporation. (Section 11021)

(23), (24), (26) Research and development priorities, Additional Research and Development Contracting Requirements, Alfalfa Crop Insurance Policy

The House bill authorizes the Corporation to conduct research and development in addition to current authority to enter into contracts for research and development. The section also makes underserved agricultural commodities, including sweet sorghum, biomass sorghum, rice, peanuts, sugarcane, alfalfa, pennycress, and specialty crops research and development priorities. (Section 11020)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision but excludes rice, peanuts, alfalfa, and pennycress while adding dedicated energy crops. The section also requires the Corporation to follow consultation requirements before conducting research and development or entering into a contract. (Section 11028)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision and, within the same section, incorporates specific research and development requirements from section 10021 of the House bill and sections 11019, 11020, 11021, 11022, 11023, 11026 of the Senate bill, including House section 11021's margin coverage for catfish (which is the same as Senate section 11022); House section 11021's biomass and sweet sorghum energy crop insurance policies, which is similar to Senate section 11025; the House study on swine catastrophic disease program, which is similar to the study in Senate section 11021 except that under the Substitute the Corporation is required to contract with 1 or more qualified entities; the House whole farm diversified risk management insurance plan, which is similar to Senate section 11019, except that the Corporation is given up to two years to reach resolution before having to follow the directive of the section under the Substitute; the House section 11021 study on poultry catastrophic disease program; the House section 11021 poultry business interruption insurance policy which is similar to Senate section 11023 except that under the Substitute any coverage is limited to a portion of losses; the House section 11021 study of food safety insurance which is similar to Senate section 11020; and Senate section 11026 regarding alfalfa crop insurance policy. (Section 11022)

The Managers would note that sweet sorghum and biomass sorghum are listed as underserved commodities and intend that the Corporation give proper priority to the development and ultimate availability of coverage for these crops. The listing of rice and peanuts as underserved commodities also prioritizes development and availability of new policies serving these crops, including margin coverage for rice and revenue coverage for peanuts.

The Managers recognize alfalfa to be an important domestic forage crop valued for nitrogen fixation, soil conservation, crop rotation, and as a natural habitat. The Managers view alfalfa as having great potential for the national cash hay market and as an affordable means of supporting the forage and intensive grazing needs of the horse, cattle, and dairy sectors. However, from 2002 through 2011, alfalfa acreage has declined 15.7

percent, and in 2012 alone acreage declined an additional 10 percent. The Managers stress the importance of an alfalfa crop insurance policy to ensure that producers have the risk management protection that they need to produce this important crop. The Managers urge the Secretary to include information regarding regional differences in cultivation in the alfalfa crop insurance study.

In developing the whole farm diversified risk management insurance policy, the Managers recognize that the Corporation may include coverage for the value of any packing, packaging, or any other similar on-farm activity the Corporation determines to be the minimum required in order to remove the commodity from the field. Making a crop market-ready may require incidental on-farm processing that could occur either in-field or off-field. This activity includes packing, packaging, washing, labeling, trimming, and other similar activities that occur after harvest in order to ensure a marketable commodity. It is the Managers' view that the production cost of such activities does not add value to the product beyond making it a saleable commodity.

In conducting the study on food safety insurance, the Managers do not intend to delay RMA's on-going efforts on these issues. The Managers are aware of existing RMA pilots on quarantine and encourages additional on-the-ground exploration into how risk management might work for quarantine in a specialty crop setting in both perennial and annual crops. The Managers acknowledge that naturally occurring food safety pathogens (a natural peril) could be insurable as cause of loss, but in light of the historical challenges of insuring these perils urges the agency to make examination of data collection into the extent and severity of these perils a priority for this report. The Managers likewise encourage RMA to continue to refine how crop insurance might protect against the risks associated by naturally occurring food safety pathogens. These risks could be associated with either revenue or yield and RMA's on-the-ground product development should not be slowed by this study. This study is designed to help specialty crop producers and Congress understand how these risks are already being, or could be, addressed by the crop insurance system. Special emphasis should be placed on the types of practical challenges that RMA believes are present that need to be overcome in order to create actuarially sound products as is required by statute, including, for example, data collection challenges that may be different or unique to specialty crops vis-a-vis row crops and the implementation of new insurance products on a pilot basis is encouraged as a part of an insurance-relevant data collection effort.

In establishing appropriate maintenance payments under Section 522(b)(4)(D)(ii) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, the Managers urge the Corporation to consider whether it is appropriate to establish such payments at an amount totaling not less than the greater of \$10 per policy (as adjusted periodically for inflation); one half of one percent of the total risk premium applicable to the policy; or, if applicable, the fee per policy approved by the Board under this paragraph that was in effect for crop year 2013.

(25) Study of crop insurance for seafood harvesters

The Senate amendment requires the Corporation to conduct a feasibility study of insuring seafood harvesters and report to Congress on the results of the study. (Section 11024)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the Senate provision.

(27) Crop insurance for organic crops

The Senate amendment requires as soon as possible but not later than for the 2015 reinsurance year, the Corporation shall offer producers of organic crops price elections for all organic crops, produced in compliance with USDA standards, that reflect the retail or wholesale price, as appropriate. The provision requires the Corporation to then report to Congress on progress made in developing and improving crop insurance for organic crops. (Section 11027)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 11023)

(28) Program compliance partnerships

The House bill provides that the purpose of subsection 522(d) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act is to authorize the Corporation to enter into partnerships with private and public entities for the purpose of either increasing availability of loss mitigation, financial, and other risk management tools for producers, with a priority given to risk management tools for producers covered by the Non-Insured Assistance program (NAP), specialty crops, and underserved commodities or improving analysis tools and technology regarding compliance or identifying and using innovative compliance strategies. (Section 11022)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment that rewrites the purposes of section 522(d), as proposed in the House provision, and adds to the objectives provided under section 522(d)(3) the improvement of analysis tools and technology regarding compliance or identifying and using innovative compliance strategies. (Section 11024)

In expanding the Partnerships for Risk Management Development and Implementation to include both improving analytical tools and technology and using innovative strategies for compliance with the federal crop insurance program, the Managers urge the Corporation to utilize this new authority to provide the government and industry with additional options with regard to ensuring program compliance.

(29) Index-based weather insurance pilot programs

The Senate amendment authorizes \$10 million in each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for the Corporation to conduct a pilot program to provide financial assistance for producers of underserved crops and livestock (including specialty crops) to purchase an index-based weather insurance product from a private insurance company. The Corporation may pay a portion of the premium but not in excess of 60 percent. The provision also provides certain eligibility requirements for providers, as well as procedures for administration of the pilot program. (Section 11030)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with modifications. The substitute defines livestock to include cattle, sheep, swine, goats, poultry, and pasture, rangeland, and forage as a source of a feed for livestock. The substitute authorizes the Corporation to conduct two or more pilot programs to provide producers of under-

served specialty crops and livestock with index-based weather insurance. The substitute requires the Board of the FCIC to approve two or more policies or plans of insurance of AIPs if the Board determines the pilot programs meet the requirements above and additional requirements that the AIPs must: have adequate experience underwriting and administering the kinds of policies proposed under the pilot; have sufficient assets or reinsurance and have sufficient credit rating; and have applicable authority and approval from each state in which the policy will be offered. Pilot program applications submitted pursuant to this section are required to be reviewed in a manner consistent with section 508(h) as well as the actuarial soundness requirements applied to other policies or plans of insurance. The substitute provides priority to pilot program policies that provide a new kind of coverage for specialty crops and livestock that have no available crop insurance or demonstrate low participation under available coverage. The substitute requires the Corporation to pay a percentage of premium, except that the premium support may not exceed 60 percent of total premium. The substitute prescribes the calculation of premium support and requires that the Corporation pay the premium support in the same manner and under the same terms and conditions as premium support for other policies. The substitute authorizes A&O unless such costs are included in the premium but prohibits federal reinsurance, research and development cost reimbursement, or other reimbursements or maintenance fees. The substitute provides that the AIP that submitted the pilot program may offer the policy exclusively unless, in an exception to the prohibitions on fees, another AIP agrees to pay agreed upon maintenance fees that are reasonable and appropriate and the other AIP meets other eligibility requirements. The substitute requires the requirements of paragraph (4) to be met notwithstanding confidentiality requirements in paragraph (6). The substitute establishes oversight requirements, provides for confidentiality, and prohibits any policy or plan of insurance to be approved if it is substantially similar to privately available hail insurance. The substitute provides \$12.5 million for each fiscal year 2015 through 2018 with such amounts to be made available until expended. The substitute clarifies that these amounts for the pilot program are in addition to amounts made available under other provisions in the Act. (Section 11026)

The Managers note that many producers of specialty crops and livestock are not adequately served by the existing suite of crop insurance products and that alternative approaches, such as this provision, may be appropriate to extend insurance coverage to those producers. Further, the Managers would urge the Corporation to use this pilot authority to develop new expertise and collect as much information as possible about the future development and use the weather-based index insurance as a method for covering producers who are currently underserved by existing crop insurance products. Consistent with the requirements of this section, the Managers intend for RMA to look at states or regions where the level of crop insurance coverage for a particular commodity is significantly below the national average.

(30) Enhancing producer self-help through farm financial benchmarking

The Senate amendment adds "farm financial benchmarking" to the list of objectives

under the partnerships authorized under section 522(d) and the education and risk management assistance authorized under section 524(a). (Section 11031)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 11027)

(31) Limitation on premium subsidy based on average adjusted gross income

The Senate amendment requires that, beginning with the 2014 reinsurance year, the total amount of premium subsidy for additional coverage for any person or entity that has an average adjusted gross income in excess of \$750,000 be 15 percentage points less than the premium subsidy that would otherwise be available for the applicable policy. This section would only take effect if the Secretary, in consultation with the Government Accountability Office, finds that the limitation would not: (1) significantly increase the amount of premium paid by producers with a lower AGI; (2) result in a decline in coverage available; and (3) increase the total cost of the federal crop insurance program. (Section 11033)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the Senate provision.

(32) Agricultural management assistance, risk management education, and organic certification cost share assistance

The House bill eliminates tree plantings and soil erosion control from the list of approved uses, and permanently authorizes the Agricultural Management Assistance Program at \$10 million in mandatory money each fiscal year. It sets aside 30 percent to NRCS for conservation, 10 percent to the Agricultural Marketing Service for organic certification, and 60 percent to the Risk Management Agency for risk management. (Section 2506)

The Senate amendment eliminates the list of states eligible for agricultural management assistance and specified uses for such assistance and authorizes Agricultural Management Assistance, Risk Management Education, and Organic Certification Cost Share Assistance. The provision applies a payment limit of \$50,000. The provision provides \$23 million in mandatory funding for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 11034)

The Conference substitute deletes both the House and Senate provisions.

(33) Technical amendments

The House bill strikes the crop insurance coverage requirement to receive certain benefits. The provision also eliminates the exclusion from assistance for losses due to drought conditions under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program. (Section 11024)

The Senate amendment strikes the crop insurance coverage requirement to receive certain benefits. (Section 11036)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with amendments to clarify that premium subsidy for area revenue and area yield plans are separately provided for, and that the Corporation must provide notice to Congress if it elects to renegotiate an SRA pursuant to section 508(k)(8)(A)(ii). (Section 11029)

(34) Advance public notice of crop insurance policy and plan changes

The House bill requires any changes to the terms and conditions of a policy to be published in the Federal Register at least 60 days before June 30 for fall planted crops and at least 60 days before November 30 for spring planted crops. (Section 11025)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the House provision.

(35) Greater accessibility for crop insurance

The Senate amendment requires that when issuing regulations and guidance relating to plans and policies of crop insurance, RMA and the Corporation use plain language, to the greatest extent practicable, as required under Executive Orders 12866 and 12988. The provision requires the Secretary to improve the website on which crop insurance information is disseminated and to report to Congress on efforts to accelerate compliance. (Section 11037)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the Senate provision.

(36) GAO crop insurance fraud report

The Senate amendment requires the Comptroller General of the United States, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this paragraph, to conduct and submit to Congress a report describing the results of a study regarding fraudulent claims filed and benefits provided under this subtitle. (Section 11038)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute deletes the Senate provision.

TITLE XII—MISCELLANEOUS

SUBTITLE A—LIVESTOCK

(1) Repeal of the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center

The House bill repeals the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. (Section 12101)

The Senate amendment moves the Sheep Center from the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946. It establishes a competitive grant program in the Agricultural Marketing Service to improve the sheep industry. It also provides \$1,500,000 in Commodity Credit Corporation funds for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended. Additionally, the amendment increases the amount of funds that can be used for administration from 3 percent to 10 percent, and it eliminates the authorization of appropriations. (Section 12104)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 12102)

(2) Repeal of certain regulations under the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921

The House bill repeals the requirement to promulgate regulations with respect to the Packers and Stockyards Act; repeals the definition of additional capital investment; and prohibits enforcement of certain already promulgated regulations. (Section 12102)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(3) Country of origin labeling

The House bill requires the Secretary to conduct an economic analysis of USDA's March 12, 2013, proposed rule on country of origin labeling for beef, pork, and chicken. (Section 12105)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to clarify that the analysis should be conducted on USDA's final version of the rule. (Section 12104)

(4) Repeal of duplicative catfish inspection program

The House bill repeals section 11016 of the 2008 Farm Bill, thus no longer specifying catfish as amenable species and eliminating the grading program. (Section 12107)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute amends section 11016 of the 2008 Farm Bill by clarifying the definition of "catfish." It also requires the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to enter into a memorandum of understanding to ensure that inspections of dual jurisdiction facilities by the FSIS satisfy the requirements of the FDA, thereby preventing duplicative inspection oversight. (Section 12106)

It is the intent of the Managers to ensure the safety of the American food supply from food containing dangerous contaminants and banned substances. The Conference substitute amends section 11016 of the 2008 Farm Bill to address perceived concerns regarding duplication; to provide direction to the Secretary regarding covered species; and to otherwise expedite implementation. The Managers are aware that the inappropriate and unregulated use of chemicals and veterinary drugs in aquaculture in some countries raises questions regarding health effects. There exists scientific evidence that demonstrates that the use of substances such as malachite green, nitrofurans, fluoroquinolones, and gentian violet during the stages of production can result in continued presence in edible Siluriforme products. The Managers believe that continuous inspection of farm-raised fish species is a legitimate tool to address these concerns. The Managers believe that the catfish inspection program authorized in the 2008 farm bill is consistent with the principles of most-favored-nation and national treatment, in that U.S. and foreign producers, processors, and products would be treated equally. Therefore, implementation of the program should proceed, as it upholds World Trade Organization responsibilities.

The Managers are aware of claims that implementation of the 2008 mandate has been delayed due to confusion related to the definition of catfish to be utilized by the FSIS. The Conference substitute clarifies this definition in a manner that achieves consistency in the application of the program and avoids arbitrary or unjustifiable distinctions in the level of inspection.

While the Managers fundamentally disagree with claims that a transfer of responsibility from one Federal agency to another somehow duplicates government oversight, the Managers are nevertheless sensitive to historical examples of bureaucratic jurisdictional conflict and have taken steps to address this concern. Specifically, the conference substitute directs the FSIS and FDA to exercise their existing authority to enter into a memorandum of understanding to improve interagency cooperation and to ensure that inspections of dual jurisdiction facilities by the FSIS satisfy the requirements of the FDA, thereby negating any requirement (real or perceived) for duplicative inspection oversight. Moreover, FSIS should work in collaboration with FDA to improve analysis and share information with regard to risk. The Managers are dissatisfied that the implementation process has already exceeded 5 years and see no barrier to FSIS completing this MOU and fully implementing the underlying inspection mandate within 60 days from the date of enactment of this Act. (Section 12106)

(5) National Poultry Improvement Program

The House bill requires the Secretary to administer the surveillance program for low pathogenic avian influenza for commercial poultry without amending the regulations for the governance of the General Conference Committee. Requires that the funding levels stay at FY 2013 levels. (Section 12108)

The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to continue to administer the avian influenza surveillance program in commercial poultry through NPIP. Requires the Secretary to ensure it meets any relevant standards established by WTO. (Section 12107)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment changing "Program" to "Plan" in the Section heading. (Section 12107)

(6) Report on bovine tuberculosis in Texas

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit a report on the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in Texas from January 1, 1997 to December 31, 2013. (Section 12109)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(7) Economic fraud in wild and farm-raised seafood

The House bill requires the Secretary to submit a report to Congress on the economic implications for consumers, fishermen, and aquaculturists of fraud and mislabeling of wild and farm-raised seafood. The report must be submitted within 180 days. (Section 12110)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(8) Feral swine eradication pilot program

The Senate amendment establishes a pilot program to study the extent of damage caused by feral swine and to develop methods to eradicate or control and to restore damage caused by feral swine. The amendment includes a 75 percent Federal cost-share, and it authorizes \$2 million in appropriated funds for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 12105)

The House bill contains no comparable provision, authority expires.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment revises the language as a Sense of Congress urging the Secretary of Agriculture to recognize the threat feral swine pose to the agricultural industry and to prioritize eradication of feral swine. (Section 12108)

SUBTITLE B—SOCIALY DISADVANTAGED PRODUCERS AND LIMITED RESOURCE PRODUCERS*(9) Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center*

The House bill requires the Secretary to establish a center for developing policy recommendations for the protection and promotion of the interests of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. (Section 12203)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House, but uses a competitive grant program. (Section 12002)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 12203)

(10) Receipt for or denial of service from certain Department of Agriculture agencies

The House bill requires USDA to provide a receipt for service to all persons requesting a benefit offered by the Department. (Section 12204)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 12204)

SUBTITLE C—OTHER MISC. PROVISIONS*(11) Program benefit eligibility status for participants in high plains water study*

The House bill amends Section 2901 to prohibit ineligibility for program benefits under the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 or an amendment made by that Act. (Section 12302)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 12302)

The Managers recognize that the ongoing depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer is an acute concern for the eight States that depend on it for agricultural, domestic, industrial uses, and other uses. This provision will allow agricultural producers to participate in a one-time study of aquifer recharge potential that will help inform State and local water conservation investment and policy to aid in managing this critical aquifer. The study is narrowly focused on a small number of playa lakes situated on agricultural land over the Ogallala Aquifer.

Playas are temporary wetlands unique to the High Plains of North America, numbering more than 60,000. Playas not only serve as the primary source of recharge for the Ogallala Aquifer, they are the most important wetland type for wildlife in this region. The Managers encourage the Department to further recognize the importance of playas through increased communication to landowners of the benefits of playas and conservation programs available. The Managers also encourage the Department to work with the Playa Lakes Joint Venture to enhance the use of such programs like CRP to help ensure the protection of playas.

(12) Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison

The House bill authorizes the position and duties of a Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison at the Department of Agriculture. (Section 12304)

The Senate amendment provides the Liaison the additional authority to enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with the research centers of the Agricultural Research Service, institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations for specific purposes. (Section 12201)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 12304)

(13) Prohibition on keeping GSA leased cars overnight

The House bill prohibits Farm Service Agency employees that are issued government cars from taking the cars home overnight unless they are on official travel involving per diem. (Section 12305)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(14) Noninsured Crop Assistance Program

The House bill allows producers to obtain NAP coverage that is equivalent to additional coverage provided under subsections (c) and (h) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act except the coverage level may not exceed 65 percent. The provision expands availability of NAP coverage for crops for which coverage under subsections (c) and (h) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act are not available and specifically includes sweet sorghum and biomass sorghum. The provision establishes a premium payment and application deadline date and requires the changes to NAP to become effective beginning with the 2015 crop. (Section 12306)

The Senate amendment is similar to the House provision except the provision excludes crops and grasses used for grazing, as well as ferns and tropical fish. The provision increases NAP fees per crop per county, per producer per county, and the maximum fee amount. The provision provides additional availability of NAP with respect to producers suffering losses to their 2012 annual fruit crop grown on a bush or tree and producers suffering losses in a county covered by a Secretarial disaster declaration due to freeze and frost. The provision is repealed effective October 1, 2018 upon which date the provision shall be construed to have never been enacted, except the exclusions from coverage provided under the provision are made permanent. (Section 12204)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision except that crops and grasses for grazing may receive NAP coverage equivalent to CAT coverage but not additional coverage; sweet sorghum and biomass sorghum, including that which is grown for biofuels, renewable electricity, or biobased products is covered under NAP; the Secretary may waive the fees with respect to CAT equivalent NAP for beginning, limited resource, and socially disadvantaged farmers and these producers pay 50 percent less than otherwise required for additional coverage NAP; the applicable pay limit is included in the calculation of premium; the effective period for the provision is for the 2014 through 2018 crop years; and the Federal Crop Insurance Act is amended to exclude CAT coverage for crops and grasses uses for grazing. (Section 12305)

The Managers would observe that NAP is made available with respect to crops for which crop insurance has not yet been made available. The Managers stress that it is the objective of Congress that all crops, to the maximum extent practicable and unless otherwise provided for in law, should ultimately be covered by crop insurance, rather than NAP, where producers pay actuarially sound premiums in consideration for coverage and where private sector delivery has proven very effective. The Managers intend that the additional financial resources and the adjustments to the policy submission process under section 508(h), the research and development process, and the pilot program process will achieve this goal.

(15) Ensuring high standards for agency use of scientific information

The House bill requires federal agencies, by January 1, 2014, to have in effect guidelines to ensure and to maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of the scientific information upon which the agencies rely. It prohibits any policy decision issued by an agency after January 1, 2014, from taking effect unless such agency has in effect guidelines for use of scientific information that have been approved by the Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. (Section 12307)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(16) Evaluation required for purposes of prohibition on closure or relocation of county office for the FSA

The House bill requires a workload assessment before any Farm Service Agency county office closures take place. (Section 12308)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(17) Acer Access and Development Program

The House bill authorizes grants to state and tribal governments and research institutions for the purpose of promoting the domestic maple syrup industry. It authorizes \$20 million in appropriated funds for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. (Section 12309)

The Senate amendment does not specify that the grants are run on a competitive basis and does not include research institutions as eligible for receiving grants. It authorizes appropriations for fiscal years 2014 and 2015. (Section 12208)

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 12306)

(18) Regulatory review by the Secretary of Agriculture

The House bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to review publications that provide notice of Environmental Protection Agency guidance, policy, memorandums, regulations or statements, for significant impacts on agricultural entities and then take certain, specified action. (Section 12310)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment authorizes a standing agriculture-related committee to provide scientific and technical advice to the science advisory committee and a report to Congress regarding the activities of the committee. (Section 12307)

The Managers expect the Administrator to consider requests received from the House Committee on Agriculture or the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry in regard to issues or questions that the Committees believe merit action by the agriculture-related standing committee.

(19) Animal fighting venture

The House bill amends Section 26(a)(1) of the Animal Welfare Act to prohibit knowingly attending an animal fighting venture or causing a minor to attend an animal fighting venture. Penalties are covered by existing authorities in 18 U.S.C. 49. (Section 12311)

The Senate amendment is the same as the House. It confirms that penalties for violations are prescribed and enforced. The amendment sets the penalty for each violation for attending an animal fighting venture. It also sets the penalty for causing a minor to attend an animal fighting venture. (Section 12209)

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment changes the age of a minor from a person under the age of 18 years old to a person under the age of 16 years old. (Section 12308)

The Conference substitute amends the Animal Welfare Act by providing “that a dealer or exhibitor shall not be required to obtain a license as a dealer or exhibitor under this Act if the size of business is determined by the Secretary to be de minimus.” By limiting the scope of dealers and exhibitors who are required to obtain a license, the conference substitute allows the Secretary of Agriculture to focus the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s limited budget and inspection and enforcement staff on entities that pose the greatest risks to animal welfare and public safety. USDA has found that no license is required for small-scale breeders of certain animals (i.e., those that maintain four or fewer breeding cats and dogs and who sell only the offspring of those animals which were born and raised on the premises for pets

or exhibition) and the Conference substitute codifies this exemption, allowing USDA to determine that animal breeders who raise animals on their own premises need not obtain a license if the number of animals they breed or sell, or the gross annual dollar amounts earned from such activities, are so minor as to merit disregard. The Managers continue to recognize the importance of ensuring that all animals bred, transported, and sold in (or substantially affecting) interstate commerce are humanely treated. The Conference substitute also allows USDA to determine that certain exhibition businesses are de minimus. An exhibitor’s business must not be considered de minimus merely because the facility operates as a non-profit corporation, nor is the exhibition of a small number of dangerous animals (including, but not limited to, big cats, bears, wolves, nonhuman primates, or elephants) de minimus.

The Managers expect APHIS to complete this rulemaking expeditiously and would suggest a timeframe not to exceed one year from the date of enactment in order that the agency begin receiving the benefit the policy provides related to resource allocation. Furthermore, by freeing up resources and more effectively focusing its regulatory program, the Managers observe that this policy eliminates a direct obstacle to lifting the stay on the agency’s contingency rule and issuance of the proposed rule to regulate bird dealers and exhibitors, and expect action to be taken on these rules without delay.

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA or the Act, 7 U.S.C. 2131 et seq.) seeks to ensure the humane handling, care, treatment, and transportation of certain animals that are sold at wholesale and retail for use in research facilities, for exhibition purposes, or for use as pets by means of federal licensing and inspection. A revised definition of retail pet store included in the Final Rule published by USDA on September 10, 2013, and effective November 18, 2013, restored and amended the exemption in §2.1(a)(3)(vii) so that any person including, but not limited to, purebred dog or cat fanciers, who maintains a total of four or fewer breeding female dogs, cats, and/or small exotic or wild mammals, and who sells, at retail, only the offspring of these dogs, cats, and/or small exotic or wild mammals, which were born and raised on his or her premises, for pets or exhibition, and is not otherwise required to obtain a license, is also considered a retail pet store for regulatory purposes.

The Managers are aware of confusion among the regulated industry and request clarification of two principles pertaining to the sale of pets: (1) Current regulatory language uses the term “breeding female” which does not appear in statute and thus lacks statutory direction. The Managers urge APHIS to clarify that only those female animals capable of reproduction and actively being used in a breeding program qualify as breeding females. (2) The Managers also recommend clarifying that USDA oversight of such sales pertains to those transactions in interstate commerce as provided for under the Commerce Clause (U.S. Const. amend. I, §8.) [and as referenced in §2132(c) of the Animal Welfare Act and regulated under authority of the United States department of Agriculture].

(20) Prohibition against interference by state and local governments with production or manufacture or items in other states

The House bill prohibits any state or local government from setting standards or conditions on the production or manufacture of

agricultural products and preventing interstate sales of such agricultural products. The term “agricultural product” is as defined in the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946. (Section 12312)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(21) Increased protection for agricultural interests in the Missouri River basin

The House bill directs the Secretary to take action to promote immediate increased flood protection to agricultural interests in the Missouri River basin. (Section 12313)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(22) Increased protection for agricultural interests in the Black Dirt region

The House bill directs the Secretary to take action to promote immediate increased flood protection for agricultural interest around the Wallkill River and the Black Dirt region. (Section 12314)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(23) Protection of honey bees and other pollinators

The House bill requires the Secretary to carry out activities to protect and ensure the long-term viability of populations of honey bees, wild bees, and other beneficial insects of agricultural crops, horticultural plants, wild plants, and other plants. The bill directs the Secretary to establish a task force to coordinate Federal efforts addressing the decline in bee health and assess Federal efforts to mitigate pollinator loss. It requires the Secretary to report to Congress within 180 days from the date of enactment. The Secretary may conduct feasibility studies to consider relocating and modernizing pollinator research labs. (Section 12315)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(24) Produce represented as grown in the US when it is not in fact grown in the US

The House bill requires the Secretary to provide technical assistance to U.S. Customs and Border Protection for identifying produce that is falsely represented as grown in the United States. Requires the Secretary to submit to the Agriculture Committees a report on produce represented as grown in the US. (Section 12316)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision. (Section 12309)

(25) Urban agricultural coordination

The House bill requires the Secretary to compile a list of programs for which urban farmers can apply, to adjust programs to enable urban farmers to participate, and to streamline the process for urban farmer participation. (Section 12317)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

Urban agriculture may include the use of backyard, roof-top, and balcony gardening, community gardening in vacant lots and parks, roadside urban fringe agriculture and livestock grazing in open space.

The Managers are aware of the importance of urban agriculture to many urban residents, and its potential for increased entrepreneurship, work opportunities, access to nutritious food, and improved quality of life.

The Managers are also aware that USDA has a number of resources and tools available that are applicable to urban farmers. The Managers encourage the Secretary to ensure that relevant USDA employees are knowledgeable regarding ways in which urban farmers can participate in their programs and include urban farmers in their ongoing outreach efforts to build awareness of the assistance and services that USDA can offer.

The Managers also encourage USDA to consider additional ways to expand its support of urban agriculture, which may take the form of economic analysis, statistical reports, dissemination of best practices, in addition to the vast quantity of knowledge and assistance already available through USDA's research, education and extension programs.

(26) Sense of Congress on increased business opportunities for black farmers, women, minorities, and small business

The House bill includes the sense of Congress that the Federal Government should increase the number of contracts awarded to black farmers, businesses owned and controlled by women, businesses owned and controlled by minorities, and small business concerns. (Section 12318)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

The Managers expect the Secretary to continue efforts to ensure that women and minority owned and controlled businesses and small businesses have the opportunity to do business with the Department of Agriculture. The Conference Substitute continues efforts to ensure that socially-disadvantaged, beginning, and limited resource farmers and ranchers are aware of the programs and services available to them through USDA offices and initiatives.

(27) Sense of Congress on agricultural security problems

The House bill includes the sense of Congress that nutrients and chemicals play an important role in agricultural production. The Secretary should coordinate with the Department of Homeland Security to develop regulations and procedures to handle these agricultural chemicals. (Section 12319)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

Federal agencies have recently proposed a number of regulations in an effort to secure potentially dangerous amounts of chemical ingredients without hampering legitimate use in commercial grade fertilizers. While the Managers support regulations to properly secure, store and handle such ingredients, there are valid concerns that proposed regulations could unnecessarily impede American farmers' access to essential crop input products.

The Managers remind the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Coordination within the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Secretary to actively work with the Federal departments and agencies responsible for the development and implementation of security programs that affect the availability, storage, transportation and use of a variety of chemicals and products used in agriculture.

The Managers recommend that the Office regularly engage with the Federal agencies responsible for establishing security programs to ensure they have the information necessary from manufacturers, retailers of crop input products, and the general farm community to develop procedures for effective security administration and enforcement while minimizing the potential for adverse impact on domestic agricultural productivity.

(28) Report on water sharing

The House bill requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to Congress on Mexico's Rio Grande water deliveries to the U.S., and the benefits to the U.S. of cooperation with Mexico on reservoir conservation in the Colorado River basin. The report is due 120 days from the date of enactment. (Section 12320)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment to strike from the report the paragraph relating to the benefits to the U.S. (Section 12310)

(29) Scientific and economic analysis of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act

The House bill requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide a scientific economic analysis for the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) before enforcing final regulations and to report to the Agriculture Committees on the impact of implementation of FSMA one year after date of enactment of the Farm Bill. (Section 12321)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment eliminates the prohibition of enforcement of the regulations and instead simply requires the Secretary, when publishing the final rule on Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption, to include analysis of the information used in promulgating the final rule; an analysis on the economic impact of the rule; and a plan to evaluate any impacts and respond to producer concerns. The amendment further limits the reporting requirement from an annual report on the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act to two reports on the plan to evaluate the impact of the produce provisions and the evaluation and response to concerns, specifically. (Section 12311)

(30) Improved Department of Agriculture consideration of economic impact of regulation on small business

The House bill requires the Secretary to complete the procedures consistent with 5 U.S.C. 609(b) when it promulgates any rule that will have a significant economic impact on small entities. (Section 12322)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(31) Silvicultural activities

The House bill restores the specified silvicultural activities to nonpoint source status by exempting the listed activities from permits and the discretionary authority of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under section 402(p)(6) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). (Section 12323)

The Senate bill contains no comparable provisions.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision with an amendment. The amendment clarifies that the exemption ap-

plies to permits but does not extend to other authorities, including CWA section 402(p)(6). It further provides that the specific silvicultural activities are excluded from citizen enforcement actions under section 505(a) of the CWA (Section 12313)

The managers believe that that substitute will help resolve legal and economic uncertainty, and also help ensure that forests continue to provide important public benefits, like good paying jobs, renewable consumer products, and outdoor recreational opportunities.

The Conference substitute provides legal and economic certainty by codifying the EPA's long-standing policy that the specified silvicultural activities do not require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The amendment explicitly excludes the specified activities from the NPDES permit requirement. The substitute also recognizes that these activities are standard industry practice, which refers to normal silviculture as practiced in each state.

The substitute leaves EPA authority to take measures regarding these activities if future circumstances demonstrate the need to address adverse impacts to water quality caused by point source discharges of stormwater from silvicultural activities. The Managers expect the Agency to exercise this authority based on identified threats to water quality.

The Conference substitute amends the savings provisions. The House bill reiterated clarification provided in the EPA Silviculture Rule that the amendment does not affect the regulation of dredged and fill discharges under CWA section 404. The Managers clarify that nothing in the provision should be construed to affect any existing NPDES permit requirement, nor should it be construed to affect any other application of Federal law to these activities.

By defining these silvicultural activities as nonpoint sources in 1976, EPA effectively excluded them from citizen enforcement actions under CWA section 505. The Conference substitute recognizes this by excluding any program adopted by EPA under section 402(p)(6) for the specified silvicultural activities from citizen enforcement actions under CWA section 505. The Managers ensure that no EPA measure adopted to address runoff associated with the specified silvicultural activities as expressly described in this section will be considered an effluent limitation subject to citizen enforcement actions under CWA section 505.

(32) Applicability of spill prevention, control, and countermeasure rule

The House bill amends the volume threshold that would require a Professional Engineer to certify a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan to farms with individual aboveground storage tanks larger than 10,000 gallons, aggregate aboveground storage of greater than 42,000 gallons, or a history of spills. Farms with aggregate aboveground storage of more than 10,000 gallons, but less than 42,000 gallons, and no spill history may self-certify. Farms with less than 10,000 gallons and no spill history are exempt from all SPCC requirements. For calculating aboveground storage capacity, containers on separate parcels of less than 1,320 gallons and containers approved by FDA for livestock feed are exempt. (Section 12324)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(33) Agricultural producer information disclosure

The House bill prohibits the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from publicly disclosing names, telephone numbers, email addresses, physical addresses, GPS coordinates, or other identifying information of any owner, operator, or employee of an agricultural or livestock operation. The prohibition does not apply when: (1) information is in a statistical or aggregated form at the county or higher level; (2) the producer consents; or (3) a state agency has the authority to collect data. EPA is prohibited from requiring information disclosure for the purposes of the approval of a permit, practice, or program administered by the agency. (Section 12325)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(34) Report on National Ocean Policy

The House bill requires that the Inspector General of USDA submit to the Agriculture Committees, within 90 days after enactment, a report on the activities and resources expended on Executive Order 13547 since July 19, 2010. The report shall include any budget requests for FY2014 for the implementation of the executive order. (Section 12326)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(35) Sunsetting of programs

The House bill sunsets all discretionary programs in the Farm Bill upon expiration of the five-year authorization. (Section 12327)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

(36) Information gathering

The Senate amendment requires the disclosure of information to state and local agencies or subdivisions as needed to implement state programs. Information can only be used by the state and is not subject to citizen request. (Section 12202)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the House provision.

(37) Bioenergy coverage in noninsured crop assistance program

The Senate amendment adds industrial crops grown expressly for the purpose of producing a feedstock for renewable biofuel, renewable electricity, or biobased products to the list of included crops under the Non-insured Crop Assistance Program. (Section 12205)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision. (Section 12305)

(38) Pima Cotton Trust Fund

The Senate amendment establishes a trust fund in the Treasury, funded through appropriations, for the Secretary to make payments to nationally recognized associations that promote pima cotton use, yarn spinners who produced ring spun cotton from January 1, 1998 to December 21, 2003, and manufacturers who cut and sew cotton shirts and used imported cotton fabric from January 1, 1998 through July 1, 2003. Payments to spinners and manufacturers are based on a production ratio and must be certified through affidavit. (Section 12210)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment alters the funding mechanism for the Trust Fund to use funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation. (Section 12314)

(39) Agricultural Wool Apparel Manufacturers Trust Fund

The Senate amendment establishes a trust fund in the Treasury, funded through appropriations, for the Secretary to make payments to eligible manufacturers under paragraphs (3) and (6) of section 4002(c) of the Wool Suit and Textile Trade Extension Act of 2004. Payments are to be made to eligible manufacturers for years 2010–2013, no later than 30 days after funds are transferred to the trust fund. For years 2014–2019, payments are to be made no later than April 15 of the year of payment. (Section 12211)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision with an amendment. The amendment alters the funding mechanism for the Trust Fund to use funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation. (Section 12315)

(40) Citrus Disease Research and Development Trust Fund

The Senate amendment establishes a trust fund in the Treasury, funded through appropriations, for the Secretary to make payments to entities engaged in 1) scientific research on diseases and pests; 2) the dissemination and commercialization of relevant information, techniques, or technology to solve citrus production disease or pest problems; and 3) the Citrus Disease Research and Development Trust Fund Advisory Board, if established. The Citrus Advisory Board would have five members from Florida, three from Arizona or California, and one from Texas. Not more than 5 percent of the Citrus Trust Fund may be used for the operations of the advisory board. The Secretary shall give strong deference to funding research projects on the proximity of citrus producers and the effects of such diseases as huanglongbing (citrus greening). (Section 12212)

The House bill contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute amends and moves this provision to Title VII. (Sections 7103 & 7306)

SUBTITLE D—CHESAPEAKE BAY
ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECOVERY

(41) Chesapeake Bay Accountability Act of 2013

The House bill requires the Director of OMB to submit to Congress a crosscut budget on federal and state restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay. It requires the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a plan to provide assistance to Chesapeake Bay States to employ adaptive management in carrying out restoration activities. The Administrator shall update the plan every two years and report annually to Congress on the implementation of the plan. The amendment also requires the Administrator to appoint an Independent Evaluator to review and report on restoration activities and the use of adaptive management in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. (Section 12401)

The Senate amendment contains no comparable provision.

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision.

The Managers continue to support the efforts of farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff. The Managers made significant invest-

ments in Title II programs aimed at providing financial and technical assistance to producers within the watershed. The Managers note the newly-created Regional Conservation Partnership Program which will provide USDA additional authorities to promote conservation practices within the watershed.

COMPLIANCE WITH RULES OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND
SENATE REGARDING EARMARKS AND
CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTED SPENDING
ITEMS

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, neither this conference report nor the accompanying joint statement of managers contains any congressional earmarks, congressionally directed spending items, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits, as defined in such rules.

From the Committee on Agriculture, for consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

FRANK D. LUCAS,
RANDY NEUGEBAUER,
MIKE ROGERS of Alabama,
MICHAEL K. CONAWAY,
GLENN THOMPSON of
Pennsylvania,
AUSTIN SCOTT,
ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD,
MARTHA ROBY,
KRISTI L. NOEM,
JEFF DENHAM,
RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois,
COLLIN C. PETERSON,
MIKE MCINTYRE,
JIM COSTA,
TIMOTHY J. WALZ,
KURT SCHRADER,
SUZAN K. DELBENE,
GLORIA NEGRETE MCLEOD,
FILEMON VELA,

From the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for consideration of title III of the House amendment, and title III of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
TOM MARINO,
ELIOT L. ENGEL,

From the Committee on Ways and Means, for consideration of secs. 1207 and 1301 of the House amendment, and secs. 1301, 1412, 1435, and 4204 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

DAVE CAMP,
SAM JOHNSON of Texas,

For consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

STEVE SOUTHERLAND, II,
MARCIA L. FUDGE,

Managers on the Part of the House.

DEBBIE STABENOW,
PATRICK J. LEAHY,
TOM HARKIN,
MAX BAUCUS,
SHERROD BROWN,
AMY KLOBUCHAR,
MICHAEL F. BENNET,
THAD COCHRAN,
SAXBY CHAMBLISS,
JOHN BOOZMAN,
JOHN HOEVEN,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

SNAP CUTS IN THE FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HUDSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for 30 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. First, let me say thank you to my colleagues who are leaving the floor for your great work on the issue of wage stagnation and the inability for upward mobility for people in this Nation. You have done a great service here tonight with laying out what the facts are. What we need to do is to be able to increase people's income and, therefore, give them the economic wherewithal to take care of themselves and their families and have a road to economic security. So I thank you very, very much.

I also want to say a thank you to my colleague from Rhode Island, Congressman CICILLINE, who will join me in this 30-minute Special Order for tonight.

Tonight, I want to talk about the severe and immoral cuts being made to anti-hunger and nutrition programs, and particularly the continuation of devastating food stamp cuts being made in the proposed conference farm bill. We have said here that food stamps—food stamps—are an economic safety net.

As written, the farm bill would force 850,000 households—1.7 million men, women, children and veterans across America—to go hungry, even while wealthy agri-businesses continue to get generous crop subsidies. Low-income seniors, working poor families with children, and individuals with disabilities would be particularly impacted by the cruel cuts in this bill.

Meanwhile, the conference has decided to reopen the loopholes that the House of Representatives, in a bipartisan way, closed; and those loopholes as they reopen them will make sure that millionaires and billionaires are getting crop subsidies. One has to ask the question, Who are we working for here? In effect, this is reverse Robin Hood legislation. It steals food from the poor to help pay crop subsidies to the rich. And when I see Members supporting the immoral cuts in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, I have to wonder if some people in this institution have really lost their perspective and understand why we are here and what our moral responsibility is.

Across this country—this great country—nearly 50 million Americans, including over 16 million children, are struggling with hunger right now. Think for a moment about what that means. In 1974, a writer at Time magazine explained it this way:

The victim of starvation burns up his own body fats, muscles and tissues for fuel. His body quite literally consumes itself and deteriorates rapidly. The kidneys, liver and endocrine system often cease to function properly. A shortage of carbohydrates, which

play a vital role in brain chemistry, affects the mind. Lassitude and confusion set in, so that starvation victims often seem unaware of their plight.

That is what we are talking about here. Hunger is agonizing. It is a curse. We are talking about men and women experiencing real physical torment, children who cannot concentrate in school because all they can think about is food. Seniors are forced to decide, in this virulent winter season, this polar vortex that we talked about, whether or not they will go hungry or whether or not they will go cold.

This is a problem all across this land. The estimates of Americans at risk of going hungry, here in the land of plenty, are appalling. In my Connecticut district, nearly one in seven households is not sure if they can afford enough food to feed their families. In Mississippi, 24.5 percent suffer food hardship. That is nearly one in four people. In West Virginia and Kentucky, 22 percent, one in five people, suffer food hardship; in Ohio, nearly 20 percent; and in California, just over 19 percent.

The continued existence of hunger in America is a disgrace and, quite frankly, an indictment of this institution. As the late Senator George McGovern, a champion against hunger, wrote:

The Earth has enough knowledge and resources to eradicate this ancient scourge. Hunger has plagued the world for thousands of years. But ending it is a great moral imperative now more than ever before, because for the first time humanity has the instruments at hand to defeat this cruel enemy at a very reasonable cost. We have the ability to provide food for all within the next three decades.

□ 2030

Or as President John F. Kennedy put it:

We have the ability, we have the means, and we have the capacity to eliminate hunger from the face of the Earth. We need only the will.

Mr. Speaker, that will seems to be lacking in the Congress right now. Instead of working to end hunger for good, this farm bill takes food from the plates of 1.7 million Americans. And again, we are talking about seniors, veterans, children, families who are playing by the rules and many of whom are working full-time, all the time.

The farm bill, this one that is being proposed, would force Americans to go hungry. And at the same time, the conference has chosen, against the will of the House and the Senate, to reopen loopholes and strip out payment limits so that millionaires and wealthy agri-businesses can continue to get handouts.

It is unconscionable what has happened here. On its own cognizance, and in violation of the congressional rule that provisions passed by both bodies should not be changed, the conference more than doubled the annual dollars on primary payments. They said you

now get \$50,000 for a primary payment for your commodities, we are now going to raise that to \$125,000. That loophole was closed. They then reopened the loophole closed in the House and the Senate that allows large wealthy farmers to collect far, far more than that nominal payment limit. And they did this while they cut \$8.5 billion from food stamps.

What is interesting, what is very interesting and cruel, if you will, is that those folks who are upper-income scale, the wealthiest of farmers, they don't have to have any income threshold or test to see how much they make before they qualify for these payments. They don't have to tell us about what assets they have before they qualify for these payments. We don't have a cap on the payments that we give them. These are millionaires. And yes, for food stamp recipients, we have an asset threshold, an income threshold. We say, if you make so much money, you are not eligible for \$1.40 per meal. You are not eligible. But if you are a millionaire, all bets are off. All bets are off. And you know those folks at the top rung, they are eating well. They are getting three squares a day. They are feeding their kids. And what we are going to do is to take food away from food stamp recipients—men, women, seniors, children, and veterans.

Where are the values of this great Nation? We have lost our way. We have lost our way.

In the past, there has been a strong tradition of bipartisanship on fighting hunger and supporting nutrition, from the left, leaders like George McGovern, and from the right, leaders like Bob Dole who would come together to make a difference for families in need. In fact, Senator Dole called the egregious cuts to food stamps in the House version of the bill "an about-face on our progress fighting hunger." This is because food stamps is our country's most important effort to deal with hunger here at home and to ensure that American families can put food on the table for their kids. They help over 47 million Americans, nearly half of them children, meet their basic food needs, and they make a tremendous difference for the health and well-being of families. Food stamps have been proven to improve low-income children's health and development, reduce food insecurity, and have a continuing positive influence into adulthood.

Children's Health Watch researchers found, after collecting 14 years' worth of data on over 20,000 low-income families, that when families experience a loss or reduction in food stamp benefits, they are more likely to be food insecure, be in poor health, and their children experience intensified developmental delays relative to their peers.

Food stamps also have one of the lowest error rates of any government program. It is around 3.8 percent. That

includes overpayments and underpayments. I defy to go to any other agency—let's look at the crop insurance program and find out what their error rate is all about.

Food stamps are good for the economy, a positive impact on growth, because food stamps not only help to feed the hungry, they get resources into the hands of families who will spend them right away. The U.S. Department of Agriculture research shows that every \$5 of Federal food stamp benefits generates nearly twice that in economic activity.

Most importantly, of course, they are the right thing to do. Ninety-nine percent of food stamp recipients have incomes below the poverty line. It is the job of good government to help vulnerable families get back on their feet. In the words of Harry Truman:

Nothing is more important in our national life than the welfare of our children, and proper nourishment comes first in attaining this welfare.

That is why, when he declared that “the moment is at hand to put an end to hunger in America,” Richard Nixon called for a significant expansion of the food stamp program to “provide poor families enough food stamps to purchase a nutritionally complete diet.”

This is something we all used to agree on. But now we are seeing a farm bill that cuts deeply into food stamps, and I ask again, how can anyone possibly support this?

Keep in mind, food stamps have already seen deep and dangerous cuts. If you look at the fridge in the picture that I am holding up, this represents where we should be in terms of access to food. But because of the recent expiration of the Recovery Act provisions, food stamps have already been cut by \$5 billion next year, and they will be cut by \$11 billion over the next 3 years.

On November 1, 2013, SNAP benefits were reduced, about \$36 less for a family of four each month. This means that a family of four loses \$36, or 16 meals a month, in support. That is the difference between health and hunger.

Now this Congress wants to enact another \$8.5 billion in cuts, meaning an additional \$90 per month, and that much more food taken away from 850,000 households. This is the proposed farm bill. SNAP cuts would result in 850,000 households, 1.7 million people, losing almost \$90 a month in monthly benefits.

And already, for far too many Americans, the last few weeks of the month, this is what their fridge looks like. Why would we put any more hardship on the most vulnerable families in our Nation, families who are already battling food insecurity and hunger? They will have an empty refrigerator. No one should go hungry due to food stamp cuts.

However you cut it, this is a terrible policy. Cutting food stamps will cause

more hunger and health problems. These cuts are a dereliction of our responsibility as Members of Congress and our moral responsibility to help the least fortunate among us.

As the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has said:

We must form a “circle of protection” around programs that serve the poor and vulnerable in our Nation and throughout the world.

Or in the words of Pope Francis:

The scandal that millions of people suffer from hunger must not paralyze us, but push each and every one of us to act—singles, families, communities, institutions, governments—to eliminate this injustice.

Mr. Speaker, this farm bill takes us in the wrong direction. Instead of helping to end hunger, it cuts food stamps by \$90 a month for 1.7 million people. It forces poor families to choose between food on the table or warmth, and it does all of this while preserving loopholes and maximizing handouts for wealthy farmers and agribusinesses. We have to do better.

I hope all of my colleagues in both parties will stand up against the outrageously misplaced priorities in this farm bill. I hope we can rekindle the strong bipartisan support that existed for decades for ending hunger in America.

The astronaut Buzz Aldrin once said, “If we can conquer space, we can conquer childhood hunger,” and we can. This institution has the power. It has the potential to make that transformative change. We have the ability. We have the means, and we have the capacity to eliminate hunger in America. We only need the will to do what is right.

With that, I would like to yield to my colleague from Rhode Island, who is such a strong supporter of families in this Nation and who has seen the ravages of families who have lost their unemployment benefits; and now what we intend to do is not only have they lost their unemployment benefits, we want to make sure, with this farm bill, what it would mean is that they are hungry and that they are cold. I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for being here tonight.

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for her extraordinary work and for her incredible passion on this very, very important issue and for giving me an opportunity to speak on this serious issue tonight.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from Connecticut has been a great champion for policies that fight hunger and protect a crucial safety net for our Nation's most vulnerable children and families. I am very proud to stand with her tonight against these devastating cuts to the SNAP program. You don't end hunger by cutting nutrition programs; you make it worse.

We should be working together to find ways to end hunger in America.

We can do that. This is the greatest country on Earth. We should be certain that no man, woman, or child in this country goes hungry.

Unfortunately, some of my colleagues filed the farm bill conference report that would be absolutely devastating to families struggling to get by. For just a moment, I would like to walk through some of the cuts being proposed.

In States like mine with cold winters, many working families already struggling to buy food face the additional burden of expensive monthly utility bills to heat their homes. Faced with this reality, some parents are forced to decide what is more important for their child: a good, nutritious meal or a warm home. For decades now, the SNAP program has worked to provide additional benefits to struggling families facing both food insecurity and high heating or housing costs.

For example, in my home State of Rhode Island, individuals who receive even nominal assistance through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, are also eligible for additional assistance under SNAP. This policy, often called Heat and Eat, makes sense for two reasons. First, this kind of policy helps prevent some of our most vulnerable families from having to face the difficult choice between a warm home and a good meal. Let's not forget, these families are living in the worst kind of poverty, the poorest and most needy members of our community, and they very often face the real threat of hunger and a freezing home.

The second reason this program is important is because it makes both programs more efficient and streamlines the application process. Without this policy, the same family would be forced to navigate a maze of bureaucracies to access resources in a time of tremendous need. Instead, under this policy, struggling families can access critical resources more easily and focus on the things that matter, like getting back on their feet or finding work. In a time of limited Federal resources for the poor, Heat and Eat helps. It helps States coordinate assistance programs and leverages funding from SNAP and LIHEAP so no family is faced with that impossible choice.

Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle have called this a loophole, but it is not a loophole. This is a policy, an effective policy, designed to address a real problem for families facing especially hard times. The conference report that was filed tonight cuts and undermines States' efforts to coordinate food and heating assistance, and it will make the lives of our neediest families even more difficult.

I know many of my colleagues will think that this is an easy pill to swallow. Why? Because it places the burden of further reductions to nutrition problems on the backs of a smaller group of

individuals in a limited number of States. Only 16 States administer Heat and Eat programs, primarily cold weather States like Rhode Island and Connecticut, and it is a cruel twist that my colleagues have decided to target cold weather States right after many parts of the country faced record-breaking cold and incredibly high heating costs.

□ 2045

According to the previous estimates of this policy, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said that about 850,000 households would see their benefits cut by an average of about \$90 a month. Of course, many of the households affected by this cut will be low-income seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, children, and the working poor. In total, this cut impacts 1.7 million people struggling to put food on the table, and it imposes all of these cuts on only those families living in 16 States.

The same people that are proposing these cuts in nutrition programs are more than happy to provide agricultural companies with extremely generous subsidies to purchase crop insurance. They are happy to spend \$40 billion over the next 10 years in commodity programs. They are happy to undermine payment reform, like limits on total commodity payments for personnel, reforms that were approved and voted on by the full House last June and that could result in even higher subsidies for the wealthiest farmers.

In fact, one of the architects of this bill has tried to make the case for maintaining certain agricultural subsidies by saying, "The safety net still has to exist." Apparently, to protect the safety net, the wealthiest farmers, children, and families in 16 States will be forced to struggle even harder to put food on the table. It is a sad day in this country when the safety net for wealthy farmers is more important than the safety net for hungry families.

I thank the gentlelady for all of the work that she has done and for the information she just shared about how effective and important this program is.

I just want to end with two quotes from important religious groups who have spoken to this issue that I hope my colleagues will hear and rethink this decision and reject this proposal and speak to our values as a country.

The National Association of Evangelicals said:

As you determine the policies and appropriations for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, please maintain this vital program at or near its current level of funding, and refrain from enacting policies that could damage our most vulnerable citizens.

And a U.S. Catholic bishop said:

How the House chooses to address our Nation's hunger and nutrition programs will

have profound human and moral consequences.

I hope we will all hear those words and do what is right for families, will speak to our values as a country and protect those most in need from any additional cuts that will adversely impact their families and their ability to feed themselves.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Ms. DELAURO. I can't thank the gentleman enough for your eloquence and what clarity you brought to the discussion around the connection between the low-income energy assistance program and the food stamp program and taking it out of the realm of what people are trying to do, which is to de-mean it and talk about it as a scheme or a loophole, none of which is true. We can talk about some schemes and some loopholes in this bill, but they don't apply where it has to do with the food stamp beneficiaries.

I want to pick up on a point that you made about the safety net. The farm bill—and I had the opportunity to work in 2008 on the farm bill, and particularly the nutrition piece—has always been a safety net for farmers and for those who are the beneficiaries of the nutrition programs. That is the link that was established, so that the benefits would go nationwide, not to a particular region of the country, not to a particular population, but a safety net so that we could make sure that people in bad times, in difficult times, could be able to sustain themselves. That is what has been broken apart here with this farm bill.

The point is that where the farm bill conferees will say that they are cutting back on these payments to farmers, what they have done is to create a series of other programs where these folks can make themselves whole through crop insurance, through putting more farm managers on the land and no restrictions as to how many you can put at \$125,000 a pop. So they found ways in terms of which they make these folks whole.

The only beneficiaries in the farm bill who have no place to go when you cut back on that \$90 a month are the food stamp recipients. So you have yanked the safety net away from them and you have done it to benefit the wealthiest farm interests in the Nation. It is wrong.

That bipartisan support we had in the past for a safety net is what created strength. I am sad to tell you that that has been rent asunder, and we cannot let that happen.

I am going to encourage my colleagues—and I know you will—that we will defeat this effort to leave people without sustenance in this Nation.

I thank the gentleman for participating tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2223

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SESSIONS) at 10 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 7, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2014, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2642, FEDERAL AGRICULTURE REFORM AND RISK MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2013

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-334) on the resolution (H. Res. 465) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, and providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. JONES (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and the balance of the week on account of surgical recovery.

Mr. TIPTON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

Mr. FARR (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of travel delay.

Mr. HONDA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of flight delay.

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIAL

AGGREGATES, ALLOCATIONS, AND OTHER BUDGETARY LEVELS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2014 BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, section 111 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, Public Law No. 113-67, which established a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2014, requires the chairs of the House and Senate Budget Committees to

submit for printing in the Congressional Record committee allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels for fiscal year 2014.

Pursuant to section 111 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, I hereby submit for printing in the Congressional Record: (1) an allocation for fiscal year 2014 for the House Committee on Appropriations, (2) allocations for fiscal years 2014 and 2014 through 2023 for committees other than the Committee on Appropriations, (3) aggregate spending levels for fiscal year 2014, and (4) aggregate revenue levels for fiscal years 2014 and 2014 through 2023.

In the case of allocations for committees other than the Committee on Appropriations and for the revenue aggregates, the levels shall be set consistent with the Congressional Budget Office's May 2013 baseline, adjusted to account for the budgetary effects of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and other legislation enacted since the release of the May 2013 baseline. In other words, in these instances, the new allocations and levels are set equal to the updated May baseline.

Associated tables are attached. These committee allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels are made for the purposes of enforcing titles III and IV of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and other budgetary enforcement provisions.

If there are any questions on these committee allocations, aggregates, and other budgetary levels please contact Paul Restuccia, Chief Counsel of the Budget Committee, at 202-226-7270.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. RYAN OF WISCONSIN,
Chairman,
House Budget Committee

Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Totals

(On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars)

	Fiscal year—	
	2014	2014–2023
Appropriate Level:		
Budget Authority	2,924,837	(1)
Outlays	2,937,044	(1)
Revenues	2,311,026	31,095,742

¹ Not applicable because annual appropriations acts for fiscal years 2015 through 2022 will not be considered until future sessions of Congress.

Allocation of Spending Authority to the House Committee on Appropriations
(in millions of dollars)

	2014	
Base Discretionary Action:	BA	1,012,237
	OT	1,154,816
Global War on Terrorism:	BA	91,938
	OT	45,207
Disaster Designated Funds:	BA	5,626
	OT	281
Program Integrity:	BA	924
	OT	832
Total Discretionary:	BA	1,110,725
	OT	1,201,136
Current Law Mandatory:	BA	749,400
	OT	738,140

Spending Authority for House Authorizing Committees

(On-budget amounts in millions of dollars)

	2014		2014–2023	
Agriculture:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	92,956	906,903	
OT	BA	89,341	900,800	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	-59	-770	
OT	OT	-59	-770	
Total	BA	92,897	906,133	
OT	OT	89,282	900,030	
Armed Services:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	150,138	1,764,863	

Spending Authority for House Authorizing Committees—Continued

(On-budget amounts in millions of dollars)

	2014		2014–2023	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	OT	149,922	1,768,772	
	BA	87	-7,607	
OT	OT	89	-7,566	
Total	BA	150,225	1,757,256	
OT	OT	150,011	1,761,206	
Financial Services:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	12,981	114,942	
OT	OT	2,112	-57,397	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Total	BA	12,981	114,942	
OT	OT	2,112	-57,397	
Education & Workforce:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	-25,740	-661	
OT	OT	-18,800	2,383	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	12,003	-21,885	
OT	OT	10,453	-21,790	
Total	BA	-13,737	-22,546	
OT	OT	-8,347	-19,407	
Energy & Commerce:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	356,892	4,936,804	
OT	OT	354,784	4,935,838	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	1,242	-9,326	
OT	OT	3,933	-9,319	
Total	BA	358,134	4,927,478	
OT	OT	358,717	4,926,519	
Foreign Affairs:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	29,118	241,385	
OT	OT	26,085	235,012	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	2	20	
OT	OT	2	20	
Total	BA	29,120	241,405	
OT	OT	26,087	235,032	
Oversight & Government Reform:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	102,657	1,199,434	
OT	OT	99,645	1,170,525	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	0	-2,861	
OT	OT	0	-2,861	
Total	BA	102,657	1,196,573	
OT	OT	99,645	1,167,664	
Homeland Security:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	1,916	22,255	
OT	OT	1,779	22,321	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	-390	-12,630	
OT	OT	-390	-12,630	
Total	BA	1,526	9,625	
OT	OT	1,389	9,691	

Spending Authority for House Authorizing Committees

(On-budget amounts in millions of dollars)

	2014		2014–2023	
House Administration:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	40	371	
OT	OT	6	206	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Total	BA	40	371	
OT	OT	6	206	
Natural Resources:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	6,441	63,590	
OT	OT	7,069	66,964	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	-63	-1,325	
OT	OT	-67	-1,325	
Total	BA	6,378	62,265	
OT	OT	7,002	65,639	
Judiciary:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	19,809	102,678	
OT	OT	11,573	105,537	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	-693	-693	
OT	OT	-277	-693	
Total	BA	19,116	101,985	
OT	OT	11,296	104,844	

Spending Authority for House Authorizing Committees—Continued

(On-budget amounts in millions of dollars)

	2014		2014–2023	
Transportation & Infrastructure:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	71,454	728,035	
OT	OT	16,822	193,098	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Total	BA	71,454	728,035	
OT	OT	16,822	193,098	
Science, Space & Technology:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	101	1,010	
OT	OT	104	1,013	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Total	BA	101	1,010	
OT	OT	104	1,013	
Small Business:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Total	BA	0	0	
OT	OT	0	0	
Veterans Affairs:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	2,939	93,544	
OT	OT	3,098	95,206	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	-1	-4	
OT	OT	-1	-4	
Total	BA	2,938	93,540	
OT	OT	3,097	95,202	
Ways & Means:				
May 2013 Baseline	BA	963,421	14,458,848	
OT	OT	962,271	14,455,530	
Adjustment for Enacted Legislation	BA	-751	-75,356	
OT	OT	116	-75,356	
Total	BA	962,670	14,383,492	
OT	OT	962,387	14,380,174	

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4548. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Florida: Non-interference Demonstration for Removal of Federal Low-Reid Vapor Pressure Requirement [EPA-R04-OAR-2013-0564; FRL-9905-09-Region-4] received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4549. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Tennessee; Bristol; 2010 Lead Base Year Emissions Inventory and Conversion of Conditional Approvals for Prevention of Significant Deterioration [EPA-R04-OAR-2013-0440; FRL-9905-13-Region

4] received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4550. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Dimethyl esters of glutaric acid (i.e., dimethyl glutarate), succinic acid (i.e., dimethyl succinate), and adipic acid (i.e., dimethyl adipate); Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0874; FRL-9904-57] received January 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4551. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 13-46, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4552. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting Transmittal No. 13-60, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance, pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4553. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a Memorandum of Justification for a Drawdown under section 506(a)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, to the African Union-Led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4554. A letter from the Assistant Legal Advisor for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4555. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13-136; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4556. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13-183; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4557. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13-182; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4558. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting an addendum to a certification, transmittal number: DDTC 13-143; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4559. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act with respect to Cote d'Ivoire that was declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4560. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. ACT 20-266, "Closing of a Portion of the Public Alley in Square 5452, S.O. 12-03541, Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4561. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. ACT 20-267, "Micro-stamping Implementation Temporary

Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4562. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. ACT 20-265, "Minimum Wage Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4563. A letter from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting three reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4564. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting four reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4565. A letter from the Director, Federal Election Commission, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Title VI of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Commission's Report to Congress on FY 2013 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4566. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers employed at the Sandia National Laboratories-Livermore in Livermore, California, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4567. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of workers employed at the Rocky Flats Plant in Golden, Colorado, to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4568. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting report on the Secretary of State's decision to designate an entity and its aliases as a "foreign terrorist organization", pursuant to Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), as amended (8 U.S.C. 1189); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4569. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Barge Launches; Gulfport Lake Gulfport, MS [Docket Number: USCG-2013-0837] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4570. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Waiver for Marking Sunken Vessels with a Light at Night [Docket No.: USCG-2012-0054] (RIN: 1625-AC11) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4571. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Sausalito Lighted Boat Parade Fireworks Display, San Francisco Bay, Sausalito, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0930] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4572. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; 2013 Holiday Boat Parades, Captain of the Port Miami Zone; FL [Docket Number: USCG-2013-0939] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4573. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Vessel Launch; Menominee River; Marinette, WI [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1012] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4574. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Eighth Coast Guard District Annual Safety Zones; New Year's Eve Celebration/City of Mobile; Mobile Channel; Mobile, AL [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0980] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4575. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Allied PRA-Solid Works, San Diego Bay; San Diego, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0992] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4576. A letter from the Secretaries, Department of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, transmitting notification that the Office of Management and Budget has approved the Department's recommendation to procure midazolam to mitigate and/or treat the effects of exposure to nerve agents for the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) using the Special Reserve Fund (SRF); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Homeland Security.

4577. A letter from the Secretaries, Department of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, transmitting notification that the Office of Management and Budget has approved the Department's recommendation to procure cytokines — NEUPOGEN (filgrastim) and Leukine (sargarmostim) — to treat Acute Radiation Syndrome (ARS) to be procured for the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) using the Special Reserve Fund; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Homeland Security.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. LUCAS: Committee of Conference. Conference report on H.R. 2642. A bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-333). Ordered to be printed.

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 465. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, and providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for

other purposes (Rept. 113-334). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 3928. A bill to improve the accountability and transparency of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois (for herself, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 3929. A bill to establish Pullman National Historical Park in the State of Illinois as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. RAHALL, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. PERRY, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ENYART, Mr. BARR, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. COLE, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MATHESON, and Mr. BARBER):

H.R. 3930. A bill to establish the National Commission on the Structure of the Army, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. DENT (for himself, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BARLETTA):

H.R. 3931. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to allow for the continuation of the pre-ACA flexibility of States in providing CHIP coverage to low-income children; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 3932. A bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 3933. A bill to amend title 11 of the United States Code to include firearms in the types of property allowable under the alternative provision for exempting property from the estate; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 3934. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to exempt certain flights from increased aviation security service fees; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. POCAN:

H.R. 3935. A bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for country of origin labeling for dairy products; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H. Con. Res. 78. Concurrent resolution recognizing the difficult challenges Black veterans faced when returning home after serving in the Armed Forces, their heroic military sacrifices, and their patriotism in fighting for equal rights and for the dignity of a

people and a Nation; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Ms. HAHN):

H. Res. 463. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Black History Month and honoring the outstanding contributions of African-American Medal of Honor recipients; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H. Res. 464. A resolution honoring the victims of the Cambodian genocide that took place from April 1975 to January 1979; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 3928.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 (To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes); Article I, Section 8, Clause 5 (To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures); Article I, Section 8, Clause 6 (To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States); and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department thereof).

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3929.

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

Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States which grants Congress the authority to make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 3930.

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

Article I, Section 8—The Congress shall have the power to provide for the common defense.

By Mr. DENT:

H.R. 3931.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 3932.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 3933.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4: To establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

By Ms. GABBARD:

H.R. 3934.

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

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. POCAN:

H.R. 3935.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

United States Congress shall have power "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes." Courts and commentators have tended to discuss each of these three areas of commerce as a separate power granted to Congress.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 7: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. COOK, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. BYRNE, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.

H.R. 24: Mr. MCALLISTER, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 38: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 55: Mr. MICA.

H.R. 164: Mr. FOSTER, Ms. MENG, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 274: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 337: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 455: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. HAHN, and Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 562: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 637: Mr. LABRADOR and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 721: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 763: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 769: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 855: Mr. PETERS of Michigan.

H.R. 906: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 938: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1010: Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 1015: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1020: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1024: Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 1040: Mr. HALL.

H.R. 1078: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 1091: Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 1094: Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 1098: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 1146: Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 1148: Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 1154: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 1175: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 1179: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1199: Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 1249: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 1250: Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 1270: Mr. LANKFORD.

H.R. 1331: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 1339: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 1343: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 1416: Mr. WHITFIELD.

H.R. 1423: Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

H.R. 1437: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 1563: Mr. HUNTER, Mr. DINGELL, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 1598: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 1609: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 1666: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1692: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 1717: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 1726: Mr. HOLT and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1761: Ms. TITUS, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1814: Mr. WENSTRUP and Mr. SCALISE.

- H.R. 1827: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 1852: Mr. MORAN and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 1921: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 1933: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 1953: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 2073: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 2084: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 2123: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2302: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 2333: Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 2502: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 2536: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 2548: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 2552: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 2591: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 2643: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2652: Mr. SHERMAN and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2703: Mr. GARDNER.
H.R. 2738: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 2788: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 2822: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 2825: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 2866: Ms. ESTY and Mr. ANDREWS.
H.R. 2918: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, and Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 2939: Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 2994: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. POSEY, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 2996: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 3040: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 3097: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 3121: Mr. ROYCE.
H.R. 3133: Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 3179: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 3228: Mr. CUMMINGS.
H.R. 3301: Mr. CASSIDY.
H.R. 3303: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3335: Mr. HARPER, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. JORDAN.
H.R. 3344: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CALVERT, Mrs. DAVIS of California, and Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 3367: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. GRIMM.
H.R. 3377: Mr. LABRADOR.
H.R. 3395: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 3399: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3404: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3413: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 3461: Mr. RANGEL, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HIMES, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 3485: Mr. GOWDY and Mr. ROONEY.
H.R. 3486: Mr. GOWDY, Mr. ROONEY, and Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 3490: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 3494: Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3508: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 3513: Mr. DEFazio, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 3541: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 3544: Mrs. ELLMERS.
H.R. 3546: Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 3590: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ROSS, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 3635: Mr. SCALISE, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. HURT, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. COOK, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. SANFORD.
H.R. 3658: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. NEAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3665: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 3673: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. PITTS.
H.R. 3685: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 3706: Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 3708: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. ROSS, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 3712: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3716: Mr. HORSFORD.
H.R. 3717: Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 3718: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 3726: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3740: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3745: Mr. FOSTER and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 3757: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. VARGAS, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 3768: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 3787: Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 3804: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 3812: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3824: Mr. HIMES, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RUSH, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
H.R. 3826: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. HARPER, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. BACHUS.
H.R. 3851: Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 3863: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. FLORES, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. POSEY, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 3884: Mr. DOGGETT.
H.R. 3887: Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 3895: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 3921: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H. Res. 109: Mr. McCLINTOCK and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H. Res. 418: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H. Res. 436: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H. Res. 447: Mr. ANDREWS, Ms. BASS, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. BERA of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LANCE, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MARINO, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIREN, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H. Res. 456: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. JONES, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DENT, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LANCE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 457: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. HONDA.
H. Res. 461: Mr. HARRIS.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 2014 CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG/BUNDES RAT EXCHANGE

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, since 1983, the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag and Bundesrat have conducted an annual exchange program for staff members from both countries. The program gives professional staff the opportunity to observe and learn about each other's political institutions and interact on issues of mutual interest.

A staff delegation from the U.S. Congress will be selected to visit Germany for 10 days from June 28–July 6, 2014. During this 10-day exchange, the delegation will attend meetings with Bundestag/Bundesrat Members, Bundestag and Bundesrat party staff members, and representatives of numerous political, business, academic, and media agencies.

A comparable delegation of German staff members will visit the United States for 10 days from April 26–May 4, 2014. They will attend similar meetings here in Washington. The U.S. delegation is expected to organize and facilitate these meetings.

The Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Exchange is highly regarded in Germany and the United States, and is one of several exchange programs sponsored by public and private institutions in the United States and Germany to foster better understanding of the politics and policies of both countries. This exchange is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The U.S. delegation should consist of experienced and accomplished Hill staff who can contribute to the success of the exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The Bundestag reciprocates by sending senior staff professionals to the United States.

Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in events in Europe. Applicants need not be working in the field of foreign affairs, although such a background can be helpful. The composite U.S. delegation should exhibit a range of expertise in issues of mutual concern to the United States and Germany such as, but not limited to, trade, security, the environment, economic development, health care, and other social policy issues. This year's delegation should be familiar with transatlantic relations within the context of recent world events.

In addition, U.S. participants are expected to plan and implement the program for the Bundestag/Bundesrat staff members when they visit the United States.

Participants are selected by a committee composed of personnel from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State and past participants of the exchange.

Members of the House and Senate who would like a member of their staff to apply for participation in this year's program should direct them to submit a resume and cover letter in which they state their qualifications, the contributions they can make to a successful program and some assurances of their ability to participate during the time stated.

Applications may be sent to the Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, HC-4, the Capitol, by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 21, 2014.

IN MEMORIAM OF HIS HOLINESS DR. SYEDNA MOHAMMED BURHANUDDIN SAHEB

HON. GLORIA NEGRETE McLEOD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD. Mr. Speaker, the Nation mourns the passing of His Holiness Dr. Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin Saheb who passed away January 17, 2014 at the age of 102 in Mumbai.

Dr. Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin Saheb was the 52nd Dai-al-Mutlaq of the Dawoodi Bohra community. Dr. Burhanuddin was the revered and beloved leader of over one million Bohras worldwide, many of which reside in the United States.

Under his leadership the community has had great success throughout the world. In 2005, Dr. Burhanuddin was congratulated by President George W. Bush in a letter from the White House, when he last visited the United States for the inauguration of a mosque in Fremont, California.

His Holiness' leadership and spiritual guidance to the Dawoodi Bohra community will be greatly missed. The Dawoodi Bohra community will observe days of mourning on his Holiness' passing. Many Dawoodi Bohras throughout the Nation have stayed home from school, work, and business in honor of His Holiness.

I offer my sincere condolences on behalf of the United States Congress to the family, friends, and all worldwide followers of His Holiness, and especially to the local Anjuman E-Qutbi community in the City of Ontario in the 35th Congressional District which has over 120 families who were spiritually guided by the teachings of Dr. Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin Saheb.

IN HONOR OF DR. DALE McINNIS, RICHMOND COUNTY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the community service of Richmond

Community College President, Dr. Dale McInnis, who was recently named Citizen of the Year by the Richmond County Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. McInnis was raised in Richmond County and has served the region admirably for decades. He has worked at three community colleges in North Carolina's 8th Congressional District, which cover five of the twelve counties in my district. Dr. McInnis started as a business instructor at Montgomery Community College in 1992 before being named Vice President of Administrative Services the following year. He then worked at South Piedmont Community College before accepting a position at Richmond Community College in 2002. Dr. McInnis became Richmond Community College's seventh President in 2010, where he still serves today.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. McInnis has had a direct impact on the lives of thousands of hard-working folks across the 8th District. He has developed and implemented programs at these community colleges that helped people transition to new careers at a time of unprecedented textile and manufacturing job losses in the region.

Community colleges will continue to play a pivotal role in helping improve our economy in the coming years. Thanks to the strong leadership of Dr. McInnis, Richmond Community College is leading the charge in getting the workforce of Richmond and Scotland Counties the skills they need to thrive in a 21st century economy. I'm proud to have worked with Dr. McInnis over the years, and I know I speak for countless people across the 8th District when I congratulate him on being named Citizen of the Year.

CONGRATULATING THE GLMV CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2014 MEMBER RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor a select group of business leaders who make our communities strong. Illinois's Tenth District has a long tradition of business innovation and excellence, and year after year more businesses add to that legacy.

Each year, the Green Oaks, Libertyville, Mundelein and Vernon Hills (GLMV) Chamber of Commerce recognizes a few exceptional individuals for achieving success in the business world and for practicing good citizenship in and for the community.

It is my great honor to congratulate the recipients of the GLMV 2014 Member Recognition Dinner Awards:

Entrepreneur of the Year: Alexa and Seth Holzwarth of LexiWynn; Restaurateur of the

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

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

Year: Scott Fine of Fine's; Community Service Award: Dr. Robert Rosenberg of Advocate Condell Medical Center; Civic Leadership Award: Sedrik Newbren of Phoenix Insurance; Member of the Year: Brian Logsdon of Corner Bakery Cafe; Volunteer of the Year: Lars Rasmussen of World Financial Group.

These noteworthy award recipients embody the hardworking, forward-thinking and community-oriented spirit that makes the Tenth District of Illinois such a special place. Their leadership and success exemplify a model for their fellow businesses, and I congratulate them on receiving these distinctions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank the GLMV Chamber of Commerce for everything it does. Local businesses are the foundation of our communities, and the GLMV Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to keeping those foundations strong.

IN RECOGNITION OF AL RIDER ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Al Rider. Born and raised in Hardin County, Al strived to better the community by promoting a quality education.

On Friday, January 31st, Al will retire from his role as President and CEO of the Central Kentucky Community Foundation (CKCF). Since 1992, Al has worked to develop and implement initiatives to promote a good education and ensure that students follow through on those efforts.

Al has, at one time or another had a hand in virtually every component of education in central Kentucky. According to CKCF, Al has most recently served as the Educational Liaison for the transformation at Fort Knox, facilitator of the K-12 education roundtables, and as the chairperson of the Education Subcommittee of the Hardin County United Project.

An editorial in his hometown paper, The News-Enterprise, said it best. "From that time to today, Rider has been an influential and instrumental player in improving educational opportunities and, thereby, quality of life in Hardin County." I could not agree more.

Al has received several awards relating to his leadership in the field of education, including: the Joseph W. Kelly Award from the Kentucky Department of Education and the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Lincoln Heritage Council Boy Scouts of America.

I am grateful for Al's dedication to bettering the education of Kentuckians and wish him well in his retirement.

TO RECOGNIZE BHS AWARENESS

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to a condition that is sadly mis-

understood. Breath-holding spells occur when a young child stops breathing for up to one minute, generally as a response to stress or emotions like fear and frustration. Sometimes, these spells cause the child to pass out. However, it is important to note that breath-holding is an involuntary reaction, and not something the child can control. While most children do not need treatment for breath-holding spells, they can be a difficult and scary experience for both parent and child.

Jennifer Horne of Prospect Park, PA, in the 7th district of Pennsylvania, is the founder of BHS Awareness. Ms. Horne's son, Brayden, suffers from BHS. Founded in 2013, the group is dedicated to providing medical facts and personal experiences from parents. BHS Awareness recently supported an effort in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to pass legislation officially recognizing July 14 as Involuntary Breath Holding Awareness Day.

Mr. Speaker, I honor BHS Awareness for its bravery and leadership regarding breath-holding spells. Ms. Horne and BHS Awareness are helping parents and children understand and cope with a difficult condition. Their hard work on this little-known condition is raising awareness for the children who experience these spells and the parents who care for them.

RECOGNIZING DAVID BRADLEY

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and achievements of First Sergeant David Bradley, United States Army—Retired, on the occasion of his passing from this life to the next.

David was a linchpin of the central Ohio veterans community for more than thirty years. In 1983, Dave took his first major steps in veterans advocacy as the Executive Director of the Vietnam Veterans of America—Department of Ohio. Over nine years in this position, he became a distinguished advisor throughout Ohio as a valued member of the Ohio Veterans Employment and Training Council and the Ohio Job Training Council. In 1991, he began his tenure as the Director of the Franklin County Veterans Service Commission and gave immeasurably to the service and care of hundreds of thousands of central Ohio's veterans.

I am extremely honored to play a small role in recognizing the life and accomplishments of such a uniquely dedicated public servant. Dave generously gave his time and energies to the many organizations and projects that have grown to shape the central Ohio veterans community. His leadership in these capacities was recognized by the Ohio Department of Veteran Services when he was inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame in 2012. I personally partnered with David on many projects, including advocating for the construction of the Chalmers P. Wylie Ambulatory Care Center in Columbus, Ohio. This facility stands, in part, as a testament to David's relentless work to better serve the veterans of Columbus and the surrounding area. His tire-

less efforts embodied the devotion and honor of our nation's military, and his service to central Ohio reflected the very best of what we the people demand from our public servants. His wisdom and indefatigable drive will be sorely missed in our communities, and I will miss his advice and counsel.

On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 12th Congressional District, I thank David Bradley for his sacrifices for our nation and his unrelenting service to our community. I offer my deepest sympathies to his family. Their sense of loss at this time is shared by many of us who knew and loved David Bradley, and he will be dearly missed.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF EU-LESS POLICE OFFICER JOHN WILLIAMS

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize retiring Lieutenant John Williams for his 31 years of public service as a police officer.

John graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1972 with a Bachelor's Degree in Management. In the following year, he earned his Basic Police Certification and shortly afterwards joined the Arlington Police Department as an officer where he served for four years. Following his service in Arlington, John served as an officer for the Odessa Police Department for two years.

Aside from being a police officer, John has been the owner of several successful businesses including a bowling center and custom harvesting operation.

In 1988, John was hired as a patrol officer by the Euless Police Department. Throughout his career with the City of Euless, John has accomplished many achievements such as obtaining the ranks of sergeant in 1992, lieutenant in 1999, and the supervisor roles of the Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations, Jail & Property Operations, Internal Affairs, and the Traffic Unit. Aside from his promotions, John has been honored with 35 police commendations and nominated ten times as Supervisor of the Year, which he won in 2005.

John has also earned a number of certifications and academic degrees within the field of law enforcement. The distinctions John has received over the years include the Intermediate Police Certification in 1975, Advanced Police Certification in 1990, Breath Test Operator Certification in 1991, Police Officer Instructor License in 1992, and Masters Police Certification in 1996. In 1992, John graduated from the Southwest Law Enforcement Institute School of Police Supervision; additionally, he graduated in 2000 from the Southwest Law Enforcement Institute Command School. At both institutes, John obtained high honors for his academic achievements. Overall, John has received over 3,000 hours of in-service training throughout his career.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking

John Williams for his 31 years of public service as a police officer.

RECOGNIZING MS. YUSHU "JOY"
XIE

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Ms. Yushu "Joy" Xie's acceptance into the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship Program. The Fulbright Program is universally recognized as America's premier international exchange program. I am honored to represent Joy and wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING DR. FRANK EUGENE
STAGGERS, SR.

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and career of Bay Area community leader and tireless advocate for the expansion of healthcare to the underserved, Dr. Frank Eugene Staggers, Sr. Dr. Staggers was known throughout the Bay Area as someone who believed that the health of the individual is directly tied to the health of the community. With his passing, we look to Dr. Staggers' tremendous legacy and the outstanding quality of his life's work.

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, Dr. Staggers served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army in Belgium during World War II. After returning home, Dr. Staggers attended Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia, earning a Bachelor's degree in Zoology. He enrolled in Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he earned his degree in Medicine. Upon graduation, Dr. Staggers put his extensive knowledge to use as a medical resident in the Navy as a Lieutenant Commander with a surgical subspecialty in Urology. He eventually retired from the Navy with the rank of Commander in 1963.

Dr. Staggers worked tirelessly to ensure equality in healthcare, and the organizations he helped to found continue to carry out his vision, specifically the St. Luke's Society, an organization dedicated to creating an alliance between African-American doctors and ministers, and the Alta Bates Summit Ethnic Health Institute, a community service focused on promoting community health awareness, organizational alliances, and health-provider training to underserved and minority populations that experience disparities in healthcare.

As an advocate for equality in healthcare, Dr. Staggers actively served in many leadership roles. Notably, he served as Chairman of the American Medical Association's Advisory Committee on Minority Physicians. He was also President, Vice Chair, and Chair of the California Medical Association Foundation, as

well as President of the Alameda-Contra Costa County Medical Society. In addition, he was President and a member of the Golden State Medical Association, the National Medical Association, and the Sinkler Miller Medical Association.

For his many contributions and dedication to furthering minority access to healthcare, Dr. Staggers was recognized numerous times, including by the California State Legislature, the Golden State Medical Association, the National Medical Association, the Meharry Medical College, and the American Medical Association Foundation.

Dr. Staggers was a mentor to many, including myself. I benefitted from his wise counsel and input on my healthcare legislation and agenda while in the California State Legislature and in Congress. He was steady, focused and passionate as he shared his knowledge and clarity regarding what I needed to know and do to address healthcare disparities in communities of color. For that, I am deeply grateful.

As a board certified urologist, Dr. Staggers mentored minority medical students all across the United States, and he supported and was involved with many historic Black colleges. This reflects Dr. Staggers belief in, and commitment to nurturing the next generation to continue to build on the progress made by the previous generation.

On a personal note, I had the privilege to spend time with Frank and his beloved wife, my friend and colleague while serving in the California State Legislature, the Honorable Teresa Hughes. Frank and "Terrie" loved each other deeply. They were able to pull both of their very busy lives together, never neglected each other and gave their friends a glimpse of "true love" even in their golden years. The love he exhibited toward Terrie and his family was unconditional and inspiring.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors a great friend of the Bay Area and a true champion for equality, Dr. Frank Eugene Staggers, Sr. His steadfast commitment to ensuring that minorities have access to better healthcare and quality of life will forever live on in the legacy that he leaves behind. I offer my sincerest condolences to his many loved ones and to all of those whose lives he touched over the years. He will be deeply missed.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,261,485,887,733.09. We've added \$6,634,608,838,820.01 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2014

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Catholic Schools Week and honor the accomplishments of America's Catholic schools. This year is the 40th anniversary of National Catholic Schools Week, an annual celebration of Catholic education.

With more than two million students enrolled nationwide, Catholic schools equip children with the knowledge and skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives. Catholic schools are pillars of academic excellence, graduating 99 percent of high school students and sending 85 percent on to college.

But these institutions go beyond merely providing a quality education. They also strive to instill values of faith and a commitment to social justice and service that grow today's students into tomorrow's leaders.

Catholic schools extend those same values to their local neighborhoods and communities. Beyond the classroom, schools encourage their students to give back and work together to improve the world around them. This dedication is on display every day in Illinois' 5th Congressional District at schools like Guerin College Prep High School in River Grove, Immaculate Conception High School in Elmhurst, St. Andrew School and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Academy in Chicago and many more.

Finally, Catholic schools demonstrate an admirable spirit of diversity and acceptance. Nearly 20 percent of attendees practice other faiths and more racial and ethnic minorities continue to enroll in Catholic institutions.

Catholic schools have a rich tradition of providing exceptional educations to our nation's youth. Today, I honor their many contributions and thank them for their service to our students and our communities.

IN RECOGNITION OF HIS EMINENCE
METROPOLITAN
EVANGELOS OF NEW JERSEY

HON. FRANK PALLONE JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey as he is honored by the Hellenic Federation of New Jersey with the Alexander the Great Achievement Award at its Fourth Annual Banquet. Metropolitan Evangelos is celebrating his 10th anniversary as Metropolitan of New Jersey and is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Metropolitan Evangelos began his service to the Greek Orthodox church as a Deacon in 1987 and 2 years later was ordained into priesthood. In 1991, he was ordained archimandrite by His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos of North and South America. As a Deacon, he served at the Orthodox Center of Ecumenical Patriarchate in Geneva and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

In addition to his role as Deacon, Metropolitan Evangelos also served as Assistant Director of Archives and Director of the Department of Registry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. He also served as assistant to the Dean of St. Demetrios Cathedral in New York, President of the Spiritual Court for the Archdiocesan District and Dean of the Hellenic Orthodox Community of Astoria "St. Demetrios Cathedral."

Metropolitan Evangelos was elected Bishop on April 12, 2003. A month later, he was ordained to the Episcopacy and he was enthroned as the spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey on May 11, 2003.

Founded in 2009, the Hellenic Federation of New Jersey is led by President Savas Tsivicos. Its mission aims to preserve and promote the history and culture of the Hellenic community. It is currently comprised of 44 Greek American organizations from across New Jersey. The Fourth Annual Banquet is chaired by the Federation's immediate past president Tassos Efstratiades.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Metropolitan Evangelos on his selection as recipient of the Alexander the Great Achievement Award and thanking the Hellenic Federation of New Jersey for its continued efforts to honor the Hellenic heritage.

RECOGNIZING MR. PATRICK PIJLS

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Mr. Patrick Pijls' acceptance into the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship Program. The Fulbright Program is universally recognized as America's premier international exchange program. I am honored to represent Patrick and wish him nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week of January 7th, 2014. If I were present, I would have voted on the following.

Wednesday, January 8th, 2014: rollcall No. 2: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 724, "yea;" rollcall No. 3: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, H.R. 3527, "yea;" rollcall No. 4: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, H.R. 3628, "yea."

Thursday, January 9th, 2014: rollcall No. 5: On Ordering the Previous Question on H.R. 2279, "no;" rollcall No. 6: On Agreeing to the Resolution providing for the consideration of H.R. 2279, H.R. 3362, and H.R. 3811, "no;" rollcall No. 7: On Agreeing to the Amendment, "aye;" rollcall No. 8: On Agreeing to the Amendment, "aye;" rollcall No. 9: On Motion

to Recommit with Instructions, "aye;" rollcall No. 10: On Passage, H.R. 2279, "no."

Friday, January 10th, 2014: rollcall No. 11: On Passage, H.R. 3811, "yea."

HONORING ROBERTA MOCK

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments and career of an outstanding educator, Roberta Mock of Greensburg.

Roberta Mock has been a teacher and administrator at Greensburg Community High School for nearly fifty years. In that time, she has helped shape the lives of countless students who have passed through her classroom. A lifelong resident of Greensburg, Roberta Mock received her bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree from Ball State University. She has also obtained an education specialist degree in education administration from Indiana University.

At Greensburg, Ms. Mock taught a variety of subjects including English, speech, journalism, world history, social studies, economics, and psychology. She also served as the high school's assistant principal and mentored students in extracurricular activities including wrestling, soccer, and track. I will always be grateful for the impact Ms. Mock had on my life, when I was her student in high school. She lived her love for her students every day.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional District to join me in congratulating Roberta Mock on a long career in education. As she retires from Greensburg Community High School, I have no doubt that Ms. Mock will bring the same enthusiasm, dedication and passion to the next chapter of her life.

RECOGNIZING MS. JOSEPHINE KAO

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Ms. Josephine Kao's acceptance into the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship Program. The Fulbright Program is universally recognized as America's premier international exchange program. I am honored to represent Josephine in Congress and wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO DEVANSHI UDESHI

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Devanshi Udeshi on completing a Silver Award, the highest achievement a Girl Scout Cadette can earn. Devanshi, an eighth

grader at Sartartia Middle School in Sugar Land, achieved this honor through her accomplishments in leadership, advocacy, and dedication to improving her community.

After watching an episode of the Dr. Oz show about childhood obesity, Devanshi was inspired to make a positive impact in her community. For Devanshi's Silver Award project, "Brocc N' Roll," she hosted a Nutrition Awareness Workshop at the Impact Church to bring more awareness to the issue of obesity. During the workshop, she gave a presentation to the adults on the importance of healthy eating and exercise. For attending children, she planned competitions and games to show them how fun exercise can be. In addition, Devanshi has volunteered her time at the Creative Dreams Outreach center, educating children on the importance of a balanced diet.

On behalf of all of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, it's an honor to recognize Devanshi's accomplishment and desire to make her community a better place. We are all proud of Devanshi Udeshi.

HONORING ARMY CAPTAIN
CLAYTON CARPENTER

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of my constituent, Army Captain Clayton Carpenter of Cortlandt Manor, New York, who recently lost his life during a helicopter training incident.

Captain Carpenter leaves behind a loving mother and father, and I extend my thoughts and prayers to them during this time of pain and grief.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Captain Carpenter flew Black Hawk helicopters in both Iraq and Afghanistan. A soldier dedicated to helping children, he even took time in the midst of the Iraq conflict to take photographs of the children's book figure Flat Stanley for use in classrooms in New York.

Now, Congress must honor Captain Clayton and others who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and ensure our soldiers have the safest equipment possible for training and combat.

"THE PASSING OF A PRESIDENT:"
IN HONOR OF PRESIDENT JOHN
F. KENNEDY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, on November 22, 2013, my hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts held a ceremony to remember President John Fitzgerald Kennedy on the 50th anniversary of his death. What sets this ceremony apart from the many others that took place on this significant anniversary is that in 1964,

Springfield established a monument with an eternal flame in our beautiful Forest Park in President Kennedy's memory. The citizens of Springfield hold President Kennedy's memory dear and gather to remember him each November 22nd since. I am proud to have participated in at least forty of these ceremonies over the years.

Following this year's event, I received a very touching letter from a long-time friend and Springfield native, Mary Ellen Long Franz. In the letter, she included a poem, which she had written in November of 1963. I found her poem to be very moving and believe it captures the emotions that millions across the country felt on that day. I want to thank Mary Ellen for this tribute to our fallen President and I submit this poem.

THE PASSING OF A PRESIDENT

(By Mary Ellen Long Franz, November 1963)

Began the somber, solemn days of horror growing.

Hollow tumult gnawing, aching, pelting . . . Dear God, this cannot be.

But so it was and sorrow swelled and soared and burst its bonds to rush cascading

The million tears of all the millions flowing. Endless sadness softly going.

O see, brave lady, love surrounding and unfolding, holding heartfelt.

To give at last where always we have taken

And still are taking even now your grieving. Our loved one so much more is loved when gone, so unwarned gone.

Forgive us this, our trespassing, and nearness to him wanting.

Too undreamed were we of such nightmarish thing.

Unwilling now to part, to break apart, to lose so soon, too sadly soon . . .

In memory enough to keep his faith, his love that gave with heart's whole love . . .

His mind that gleaned from all the good, from all the harvest of our history . . .

Enough to hold his soul's warm dedication, His love of peace and laughter sunning,

His giving, selfless giving of all that one can give?

Please, God, it can be so.

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL CALVIN H. ELAM

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brigadier General Calvin H. Elam on the occasion of his retirement from the South Carolina Air National Guard. The first African American general officer of the South Carolina Air National Guard, General Elam currently serves as the Assistant Adjutant General for Air of the South Carolina National Guard at McEntire Joint National Guard Base in Eastover, South Carolina.

General Elam's retirement marks the end of 25 years of service in the Air National Guard. Commissioned in December 1988 when he graduated from the Air National Guard's Academy of Military Science, he has served in numerous capacities, including as Commander and Deputy Commander of the 169th Mission

Support Group, Commander of the 169th Maintenance Squadron, and Chief of Supply of the 169th Logistics Readiness Squadron. Prior to his commissioning, he spent six years on active duty; culminating in his service as a Contracting Specialist. He is highly decorated, having earned, among several other awards and commendations, the Legion of Merit and Meritorious Service Medal.

A native of Greenwood, South Carolina, General Elam is a graduate of the University of South Carolina's Darla Moore School of Business, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Marketing. Now residing in Irmo with his wife, Mary, and their three children, General Elam is a pillar of the community. He is the Chief Executive Officer of Elam Financial Group, conducting retirement planning, wealth management, and life and estate planning. He also serves on the Claflin University Board of Trustees and is Chairman of the Board's Budget and Finance Committee.

While General Elam's military service is coming to an end, I have no doubt that his service in other spheres will continue apace.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating General Elam on this milestone and wishing him well in his much-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING MS. STEPHANIE CHEN

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Ms. Stephanie Chen's acceptance into the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship Program. The Fulbright Program is universally recognized as America's premier international exchange program. I am honored to represent Stephanie in Congress and wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors.

REMEMBERING THE HONORABLE OTIS PIKE

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to former Congressman Otis Grey Pike, who represented New York's First Congressional District for eighteen years and passed away on January 20, 2014.

Born on August 31, 1921, in Riverhead, New York, Otis was orphaned at a young age and was subsequently raised by two sisters and an aunt. Overcoming his early losses, he finished his primary and secondary education in the Riverhead public schools and enrolled at Princeton University.

In 1942, Otis put his studies on hold to serve our country as a United States Marine. During World War Two he was a fighter pilot who flew 120 missions and won five air medals. After the war Otis returned to his studies, ultimately graduating from Columbia Law School in 1948.

Upon completing law school, Otis returned to Riverhead, where he began practicing law and became a Justice of the Peace in his home town in 1954.

Otis decided to run for Congress in 1958, having become fascinated with politics as a teenager. Although his first bid was unsuccessful, he was elected to the House in 1960. When voters send someone to Congress, they expect that person to be their advocate. And an advocate is exactly what the residents of New York's First Congressional District got when they sent Otis Pike to Washington.

Otis first gained national attention for his advocacy in 1967, when he spoke out about the military spending too much for small parts that he believed could be purchased at greatly reduced rates. The awareness he raised helped lead to changes in the Pentagon's purchasing procedures. In 1969, Otis led a subcommittee investigation into North Korea's seizure of the *Pueblo*, a United States intelligence ship.

In 1975, Otis became the Chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence. While serving in this role, he took on the intelligence community in a way Congress had not previously attempted. He led the first Congressional investigation into the Central Intelligence Agency, which resulted in a report calling for greater Congressional oversight of intelligence operations. After being blocked from public disclosure by the full House of Representatives, the report was leaked by the media.

During his tenure in Congress, which ended in 1979, Otis was also instrumental in the passage of legislation that helped shape the Long Island we know today. Among his most important legacies was securing enactment of the law creating the Fire Island National Seashore.

Otis was well-liked, admired and respected in Congress, and he was also known for his love of bowties. While on the campaign trail, he had often carried a banjo and ukulele to create songs about opponents public policy issues. Upon his retirement from the House, he devoted greater time to writing and became a syndicated columnist for *Newhouse Newspapers*, a post he held for twenty years.

On a personal note, I will never forget the kindness Otis extended to me when I first ran for his former seat and every subsequent occasion I had the pleasure of speaking with him.

Otis was predeceased by his first wife, Doris Orth, and a son, Robert Pike. He is survived by his second wife, Barbe Bonjour Pike, his daughter, Lois Pike Eyre, his son, Douglas Pike, and two grandchildren. I would like to express condolences to the Pike family on behalf of the residents of New York's First Congressional District, both past and present.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman Pike was a dedicated and highly effective public servant who made an indelible impression on Congress and on New York's first district. He enjoyed an impeccable reputation as one of Long Island's longest serving representatives in Congress and will always be remembered as one whose career should serve as a model for all who engage in public service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week of January 13, 2014. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall No. 12: H.R. 1513, "yea";

Rollcall No. 13: S. 230, "yea";

Rollcall No. 14: H.R. 2274, "yea";

Rollcall No. 15: H.R. 801, "yea";

Rollcall No. 16: Journal Vote, "yea";

Rollcall No. 17: H.R. 2860, "yea";

Rollcall No. 18: H.R. 1233, "yea";

Rollcall No. 19: Motion on Ordering the Previous Question to H.R. 3547, "nay";

Rollcall No. 20: H. Res. 458, "no";

Rollcall No. 21: Concurring in the Senate Amendment with an Amendment to H.R. 3547, "yea";

Rollcall No. 22: Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 3362, "yea"; and

Rollcall No. 23: Final Passage of H.R. 3362, "nay."

RECOGNIZING AL FRACASSA

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I seek recognition on behalf of Al Fracassa, head coach of Birmingham Brother Rice's football team for 45 years. Throughout these years, Mr. Fracassa taught young men at Brother Rice the values of leadership, teamwork, and discipline. In a world where mediocrity is encouraged, and even praised through things like "participation awards," Mr. Fracassa accepted nothing less than the best from his teams. As he said, ". . . the difference between good and great is just a little effort." It is this mindset, that success must be earned through hard work and perseverance, which has made America the great nation it is today.

Whereas, Mr. Fracassa has achieved a record 430 wins over the course of his career, along with nine playoff titles, and the most wins in Michigan football history, putting him at fifth in the nation; and

Whereas, he has raised an estimated \$150,000 for Brother Rice by auctioning off pasta dinners with Al; and

Whereas, he has won awards including the 1997 and 2006 NFL High School Coach of the Year, the 2002 American Football Coaches Association National Coach of the Year, and the Fred Danzinger Award; and

Whereas, he has been named Michigan's Coach of the Year four times, been inducted into the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame, and received the MSU Duffy Daugherty Memorial Lifetime Achievement; and

Whereas, the Brother Rice Football Field was renamed Fracassa Field in 2006, and he will be Coach Emeritus following his retirement; and

Whereas, he has been praised as influential, inspirational, caring, and humble, and

been called a leader, a mentor, and a legend; and

Whereas, he will remain active at Brother Rice and in the community as a motivational speaker, continuing to be a paragon of strength and virtue; now, therefore be it proclaimed by the Congress of the United States of America that Al Fracassa be honored for his commitment to excellence, his pursuit of greatness, and his stalwart demonstration of American traditions and values.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH KOISA

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Joseph Koisa as he retires from the Union Beach Fire Department. Mr. Koisa dedicated 50 years to serving the Union Beach community and is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Joseph Koisa joined the Harris Gardens Fire Company in 1959. Among many other officer positions, he was elected Captain, Third Deputy Chief and Department Chief over the years. In addition, he served as Chief Engineer from 1984 until 2012.

Throughout Mr. Koisa's tenure as Deputy Chief and Chief, Union Beach experienced three major fires, one of which required assistance from additional towns, which Mr. Koisa had to coordinate. As Chief Engineer, Mr. Koisa ensured that the department's trucks and apparatus were properly maintained and worked on securing the best equipment available.

Mr. Koisa was also active outside of the Harris Gardens Fire Company, joining the New Jersey Relief Association and the New Jersey Exempt Association of Union Beach in 1966. In 1980, he became a member of the Bayshore Active Fire Chiefs Association and served on the Historic Committee and Membership Audit Committee. He is currently a Life Member of all three associations.

Together with Lorraine, his wife of over 44 years, he has a daughter Annie, a son Joey and two grandsons Sean and Kyle. Joey is also a member of the Harris Gardens Fire Company and currently serves as Chief Engineer.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Joseph Koisa on his retirement from the Union Beach Fire Department and thanking him for his 50 years of dutiful service to the residents of Union Beach.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF EULESS POLICE OFFICER STEVEN ESKEW

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize retiring Captain Steven Eskew for

his 34 years of public service as a police officer.

Steven graduated in 1977 from Central Missouri State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice Administration. Following his graduation, Steven worked for the Department of Public Safety in Raytown, Missouri, and as a security officer in the private sector.

In 1980, Steven was hired as a patrol officer by the Euleess Police Department. Throughout his career with the City of Euleess, Steven has accomplished many achievements such as obtaining the ranks of Criminal Investigator in 1985, Sergeant in 1989, Lieutenant in 1993, and Captain in 2011. Aside from his promotions, Steven has been honored with 12 personnel commendations, Distinguished Service Award in 1984, Police Officer of the Year in 1985, and Supervisor of the Year in 1991.

Steven served as the Department Armorer for many years. Additionally, he has held the positions of Tactical Commander, Internal Affairs Officer, and Firearms Instructor.

Steven has also earned a number of certifications and academic degrees within the field of law enforcement. The distinctions Steven has received over the years include the Basic Police Certification in 1981, Intermediate Police Certification in 1982, Advanced Police Certification in 1986, Tactical and Sniper training in 1986, Firearm Instructor Certification in 1995, and Master's Police Certification in 1995. In 1989, Steven graduated from the Southwest Law Enforcement Institute School of Police Supervision; additionally, he graduated in 1994 from the Southwest Law Enforcement Institute Command School. At both institutes, Steven obtained high honors for his academic achievements. Overall, Steven received over 2,600 hours of in-service training throughout his career.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking Steven Eskew for his 34 years of public service as a police officer.

RECOGNIZING MR. MARK JACKSON

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Mr. Mark Jackson's acceptance into the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship Program. The Fulbright Program is universally recognized as America's premier international exchange program. I am honored to represent Mark in Congress and wish him nothing but the best in his future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF DuWAYNE BRIDGES BEING NAMED 2013 LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR BY THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize a dear friend and former colleague of mine in the Alabama State House, DuWayne Bridges, for being named the 2013 Legislator of the Year by the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs.

DuWayne Bridges is a resident of Valley, Alabama. He served our country as a member of the United States Marine Corps in Vietnam. He and his wife, Pat, have two children, DuWayne Jr. and Karen. They are the proud grandparents of nine children. DuWayne received his Bachelor's Degree from Faulkner University and his Master's Degree from Troy University. He is the owner of Bridges Travel Plaza in Cusseta, Alabama.

DuWayne is a past Vice Chairman for the Alabama State Department of Mental Health and was elected as Chambers County's 1996 Gentleman of the Year. In 2000, DuWayne was elected to represent Alabama's 38th District, which encompasses Lee and Chambers counties. He serves as the Chairman of the Military and Veterans' Committee in the State House, and also serves as a member of my Third District Veterans' Advisory Board.

On January 10th, DuWayne was recognized as the 2013 Legislator of the Year by the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs. He was recognized for his support of several bills that will benefit Alabama's Veterans. Among those bills was the "Heroes for Hire Act" which provides a tax credit to employers who hire recently deployed Veterans.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating DuWayne for his dedication to Alabama's Veterans. His tireless service to our state and country is an inspiration to legislators everywhere. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors outside of the State House as he retires this year.

HONORING CATHEY DANDRIDGE

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 27, 2014

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and celebrate the life and business career of W. Cathey Dandridge. On January 25th, 2014, friends and fellow Fayette County, Tennessee residents are gathering for a Community Appreciation Reception and rejoice the 47 year entrepreneurship of the man simply known as "Mr. Cathey."

Mr. Dandridge was born and raised in the small Mississippi town of Thyatira, where his graduating high school class consisted of just 16 students. While in high school a young student named JoAnn Hawkins caught his eye

and both ultimately attended the University of Memphis and were later married in 1960.

With a degree in Industrial Arts, Mr. Dandridge accepted a job from John Deere working in Cullman, Alabama. Proving to be a valued employee, Mr. Dandridge quickly moved up with new positions in Greenville, Mississippi and Brownsville, Tennessee. With a growing family, Mr. Dandridge made the decision to take a leap of business faith and purchase Warren Implement. Thus, Dandridge Equipment was brought into existence on October 11th, 1967.

What started as the smallest John Deere dealership in Tennessee grew over the years to include sales to Europe, Asia, South America, and all over North America achieving numerous awards and recognitions from John Deere. Locally, Mr. Dandridge and Dandridge Equipment received the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce's Large Business Award in 2011. Over the years "Mr. Cathey" employed 46 individuals with 582 years of combined service to his company.

W. Cathey Dandridge's life stands as a testament to the American dream. Humble and rural beginnings, hard work and dedication, appreciation and community service, are all hallmark traits of what it takes to create a successful business and more importantly a successful life. On behalf of Tennessee's 8th Congressional District, I congratulate and wish the best of luck to the family and friends of "Mr. Cathey" Dandridge for all future endeavors.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, January 28, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JANUARY 29

10 a.m.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Michael Keith Yudin, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, James Cole, Jr., of New York, to be General Coun-

sel, James H. Shelton III, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary, Theodore Reed Mitchell, of California, to be Under Secretary, and Ericka M. Miller, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, all of the Department of Education, France A. Cordova, of New Mexico, to be Director of the National Science Foundation, David Weil, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, and Steven Joel Anthony, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Railroad Retirement Board.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 1486, to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Justice.

SD-226

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine S. 1728, to amend the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to improve ballot accessibility to uniformed services voters and overseas voters.

SR-301

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold hearings to examine worldwide threat.

SH-216

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 1448, to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydro-power by the Grand Coulee Dam, and the nomination of Vincent G. Logan, of New York, to be Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Department of the Interior; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine S. 919, to amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to provide further self-governance by Indian tribes.

SD-628

3:30 p.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Economic Policy

To hold hearings to examine the annual report and oversight of the Office of Financial Research.

SD-538

JANUARY 30

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine opportunities and challenges associated with lifting the ban on United States crude oil exports.

SD-366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety

To hold a joint oversight hearing to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) implementation of the Fukushima Near-Term Task Force recommendations and other actions to enhance and maintain nuclear safety.

SD-406

10 a.m.
 Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard
 To hold hearings to examine West Coast and Western Pacific perspectives on Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization. SR-253

Committee on Finance
 To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Karen Dynan, of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. SD-215

Committee on Foreign Relations
 To hold hearings to examine civilian nuclear cooperation agreements, focusing on Section 123. SD-419

Committee on the Judiciary
 Business meeting to consider S. 619, to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent unjust and irrational criminal punishments, S. 1410, to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders, S. 1675, to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, and the nominations of Indira Talwani, to be

United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, James D. Peterson, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Wisconsin, Nancy J. Rosenstengel, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, and Debo P. Adebile, of New York, and John P. Carlin, of New York, both to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice. SD-226

2:30 p.m.
 Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
 Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia
 To hold hearings to examine Federal government closure impacts on the District of Columbia, focusing on the shutdown. SD-342

Select Committee on Intelligence
 To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters. SH-219

FEBRUARY 3

3 p.m.
 Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
 Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance
 To hold hearings to examine safeguarding consumers' financial data. SD-538

FEBRUARY 4

10 a.m.
 Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, and Janice Marion Schneider, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Mineral Management, both of the Department of the Interior. SD-366

10:15 a.m.
 Committee on the Judiciary
 To hold hearings to examine privacy in the digital age, focusing on preventing data breaches and combating cybercrime. SD-226

SENATE—Tuesday, January 28, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You are always right, just, and fair. We sing of Your steadfast love and proclaim Your faithfulness to all generations. Today, inspire our lawmakers to walk in the light of Your countenance. Abide with them so that they will not be brought to grief but will avoid the pitfalls that lead to ruin. Lord, empower them to glorify You in all they think, say, and do as they remember that all they have and are is a gift from You. This is the day that You have made. We will rejoice and be glad in You, the source of our hope and joy.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926, the flood insurance bill, postclosure.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 to 2:15 today to allow for our weekly caucus meetings.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1963

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that S. 1963 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1963) to repeal Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, could I ask who the sponsors of this legislation are? Who is sponsoring it?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senators PRYOR, HAGAN, SHAHEEN, and BEGICH.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

TRIBUTE TO DIANE SKVARLA, SENATE CURATOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I congratulate Diane Skvarla on her retirement after 20 years of service dedicated service as the Senate Curator.

Every day people from across the country—students on field trips, tourists, dignitaries, staffers and Senators alike—appreciate the historic treasures displayed in the hallways of the Capitol.

These works of fine art and craftsmanship are symbols of our democracy. For two decades Diane has been the steward of these treasures.

I thank Diane for her dedication, and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am gratified that we were able to get enough votes on the flood insurance bill to get us this far. We have been trying to get to it for a long time. We are very close to a consent agreement to move forward on the bill with a few relevant amendments.

We are going to move forward with the consent agreement or move forward with the bill. This bill is going to move forward this week. I hope we can work out something today to move forward. Once again, I commend Senators MENENDEZ, LANDRIEU, and ISAKSON for their hard work.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Republican leader is recognized.

STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, tonight Members of both parties will welcome the President to the Capitol as he lays out his plans for the year. We look forward to hearing what he has to say. We also look forward to hearing what Congresswoman McMORRIS RODGERS has to say, too. She is a leader in our

party with a compelling story, someone who truly understands what it means to overcome adversity, someone who is dedicated to helping every single American realize her greatest potential. The people of Washington's Fifth District are lucky to have her, and so are we.

As for the President's speech, this is a pivotal moment in the Obama Presidency. We are now entering our sixth year with President Obama at the helm of our economy, the sixth year of his economic policies. At this point we have seen just about everything in the President's tool box. We had a years-long clinic on the failures of liberalism: the government stimulus, the taxes, the regulations, the centralization, and the government control. It just has not worked.

So 74 percent of the American people say it still feels as if the country is in a recession because to them it still feels like it. As the majority leader likes to say, the rich have gotten richer and the poor have gotten poorer, and ladders into the middle class have been kicked away, sawed off, and literally regulated into oblivion.

This is the legacy of the Obama economy, as we stand here at the start of 2014. But it does not have to be the legacy President Obama leaves behind in January of 2017, and that is why tonight's address is so important—because it will give us the clearest indication yet of whether the President is ready to embrace the future or whether he will, once again, take the easy route, the sort of reflexive liberal route, and just pivot back to the failed policies of the past. The choice the President now confronts is a pretty basic one. Does he want to be a hero to the left or a champion for the middle class? He can't be both. He has to choose.

He could double down on the failed policies that brought us to this point. It would make his base pretty happy, I am sure, but we certainly know where that path leads for the middle class. Folks can try to package it any way they like—say it is a new focus on income stagnation that has gotten so much worse under this President's watch. But it is essentially the same path we have been on since he took office. The point is this. Americans do not need a new message; they need a new direction. The problem is not the packaging. It never has been. It is the policies themselves, and President Obama is the only person who can force that turn in direction. He is the only one who can lead it.

He could reach to the center tonight and embrace change over the broken

status quo, embrace hope over stale ideology—ideology that has led not just to stagnant incomes but to lower median incomes, to dramatic increases in the number of folks forced to take part-time work when what they really want is full-time work, to greater long-term unemployment, and to more poverty. He could ask Members of both parties to help him make 2014 a year of real action rather than just a talking point.

If he does, he is going to find he has a lot of support from Republicans because we want to work with him to get things done, and we always have. We will be listening closely to see if he is finally prepared to meet us in the political middle so we can finally get some important work done for the middle class. Let's be honest; there is a lot that can be done.

For instance, he could call on Senate Democrats to stop blocking all the job-creation bills the House of Representatives has already passed. He could call for revenue-neutral tax reform that would abolish loopholes, lower tax rates for everyone, and jump-start job creation where it counts—in the private sector. He could push his party to join Republicans supporting bipartisan trade promotion legislation, something the President has said is a priority, and work aggressively to clinch the kind of job-creating trade agreements our allies in places such as Canada and Europe and Australia have already been seeking.

He could work with us to reduce the debt and deficit to ensure the programs Americans count on will be there when they retire, to make government smarter and leaner, and to unshackle the growth potential of small businesses and entrepreneurs to address the massive dissatisfaction out there with the size and the scope of government.

If President Obama wants to score an easy win for the middle class, he could simply put the politics aside and approve the Keystone pipeline. The Keystone pipeline is thousands of American jobs very soon. With regard to the Keystone pipeline, he will not even need to use the phone—just the pen. One stroke and the Keystone pipeline is approved.

I know the Keystone issue is difficult for him because it involves a choice between pleasing the left and helping the middle class, but that is exactly the type of decision he needs to make. He needs to make it now. It is emblematic of the larger choices he will need to make about the direction of our country too, because for all of his talk of going around Congress, he would not have to if he actually tried to work with the people's elected representatives every now and then. I am saying don't talk about using the phone, just use the phone and please be serious when you call.

Take the income inequality issue we hear he will address tonight. Is this

going to be all rhetoric or is he actually serious, because he is correct to point out that the past few years have been very tough on the middle class. As I indicated, median household income has dropped by thousands since he took office. Republicans want to work with him on this issue but only if he is serious about it. He could show us he is by calling for more choices for underprivileged children trapped in failing schools or he could agree to work with Senator RAND and me to implement Economic Freedom Zones in our poorest communities.

Here is something else: He could work with us to relieve the pain ObamaCare is causing for so many Americans across the country, across all income brackets. I asked him last year to prepare Americans for the consequences of this law. He did not do it. Today those consequences are plain for anyone to see.

Just last night I hosted a tele-town-hall meeting where Kentuckians shared their stories about the stress that ObamaCare is causing them and their families: restricted access to doctors and hospitals, lost jobs, lower wages, fewer choices, and higher costs. I assure you these folks will not be applauding when the President is trying to spin this law as a success tonight. More than a quarter million Kentuckians lost the plans that they had and presumably wanted to keep, despite the President's promises to the contrary. This is a law that caused premiums to increase an average of 47 percent in Kentucky and in some cases more than 100 percent. This is a law that in some parts of my State is limiting choices to health care coverage to just two companies in the individual exchange market.

At what cost to the taxpayer for all of this? It is \$253 million. That is how much Washington has spent so far for these results in my State—a quarter of a billion dollars to essentially limit care, cancel plans, and increase costs.

Kentucky has gotten more money to set up its exchange than every State except for California, New York, Oregon, and Washington—that is a lot of money—and they still only enrolled 30 percent of the people they were supposed to at this point. How in the world could that be considered a success?

So President Obama and Governor Beshear can keep telling Americans to "get over it" if they don't like this law, but sooner or later they are going to have to come to terms with reality. They are going to have to accept that ObamaCare hasn't worked as the administration promised in Kentucky and across America, and it is time to start over with real reform.

That is why tonight I hope the President will make change. I hope he will announce his willingness to work with both parties to start over with real bipartisan reform that can actually

lower costs and improve quality of care. That is the kind of reform Kentuckians and Americans want, and that is the way President Obama can show he is serious about having a year of action. This time next year we will be able to judge if he was serious.

If the President is still talking about unemployment benefits next January rather than how to manage new growth, if he is still forced to address the pain of ObamaCare rather than touting the benefits of bipartisan health care reform, if we are trapped in these endless cul de sacs of Keystone and trade and tax reform, then we will know what choice the President made. We will know the special interests won and the middle class lost.

I hope we won't get there. I hope he will reach out tonight. I hope he will be serious. I hope he will help us chart a new path for the American people both parties can support. That may sound like a fantasy to some on the hard left who think tonight is all about them, but the fact is there have always been good ideas the two parties can agree on in Washington—ideas that would make life easier, not harder, for working Americans. Until now the President has mostly chosen to ignore them. Here is hoping for something different tonight.

TRIBUTE TO DIANE SKVARLA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to say a fond farewell to the Senate's long-term curator Diane Skvarla, who has been such a tremendous asset to the institution over the years and a very good friend to our office as well. All of our dealings with Diane over the years have been marked by her great professionalism and her deep knowledge of and respect for the Senate and its history.

Diane and her staff have been invaluable in the multiyear restoration of the Strom Thurmond room and keeping up the rest of our historic suite. My staff has always enjoyed working with Diane and her staff, and I hope we have been as gracious in return.

For a lot of young people who wring their hands or wander around for a while after college, Diane started working full time in the Senate the Monday after she graduated and has been here off and on ever since.

She witnessed a lot of changes in the curator's office over the years. When Diane started here full time in 1979, there were only three staffers in the office, but in the years leading up to and after the Nation's bicentennial when preservation came back into vogue, there was no shortage of new work.

Diane went on to earn a master's degree in museum studies from George Washington University in 1987, and it paid off when she helped put together a major exhibit for the Senate's own bicentennial in 1989. Diane collaborated

on the exhibit with Don Ritchie, and together they set a new high standard for projects of this kind. At the time Diane was the associate curator and Don was the associate historian. They both rose through the ranks of their respective offices, so it has been a fruitful collaboration for many years.

Diane spent most of her early childhood in England where she first learned the sport of dressage. She gave up horses during college at Colgate University in upstate New York and went back to England in 1991 to become certified in teaching the sport. She kept up her riding after she returned to the States and came back to the Senate as head curator in late 1994, replacing the widely admired Jim Ketchum.

With Jim's support and encouragement, Diane learned the ropes and has doggedly pursued the legislative mandate of the Senate curator's office ever since, and that mandate is to protect, preserve, and educate.

Some of the biggest challenges Diane has faced have involved dealing with disasters. In 1983, a bomb planted near the Senate Chamber destroyed portions of the corridor—including a portrait of Daniel Webster. Under Diane's supervision, a conservator put the pieces back together and restored it.

Other projects Diane has been particularly proud of over the years include the publication of the U.S. Senate Catalogue of Fine Art, a 481-page book that took years to complete, and the restoration of a giant portrait of Henry Clay, from my State, that was given to the Senate after being discovered in the basement of a historical society. This magnificent painting of Clay now hangs in the stairway off the Brumidi corridor. The restoration of the Old Senate Chamber was also a proud achievement.

The entire Senate family is grateful to Diane for her many years of devoted service to this institution. Through her work, she has helped preserve and bring to life the shared objects of our collective history as a people—precious objects that belong to all Americans and to our posterity. Her legacy is literally all around us.

We thank her for her work and wish her and her husband Chris all the very best in the years ahead.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 294, S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to speak for up to 10 minutes. I think we are in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is moving to proceed to consider S. 1926.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Wonderful. I thank the Presiding Officer. I will then speak on the bill that is before us.

I appreciate the cooperation of so many Members who voted last night to move forward on the debate of the fix to Biggert-Waters. We had a very strong and very impressive vote. I think 83 Members, Republicans and Democrats, came together from all parts of the country, from all different areas and districts and backgrounds to vote to move forward on the debate on flood insurance. I am grateful.

We have been working on this for about a year and a half. It has been a tough slog because 2 years ago a bill called Biggert-Waters was passed, named after the two cosponsors in the House, Congresswoman Biggert and Congresswoman WATERS. They passed a bill with very good intentions. They were thinking they were going to strengthen the flood insurance program. The bill had wonderful intentions, but unfortunately, the way it was drafted in the conference committee has resulted in disastrous results.

Some of us knew that 2 years ago and started working literally the moment the conference bill was passed to begin changing it. So we have worked diligently and together and built a great coalition. I thank the 200 organizations that quickly came together over the last year and a half—as quickly as any of these things can happen in a practical sense—to understand what went wrong in the first bill and how we could fix it so we could accomplish two important goals for the National Flood Insurance Program: first, that the program could be self-sustaining. In other words, it could pay for itself with limited or minimal taxpayer burden.

The other equally important goal—and the Presiding Officer, who represents New Jersey, knows, as I do, how important this is—is that the program would be affordable to middle-class families. If it is not affordable to middle-class families, they will not participate in it and the program will go bankrupt due to lack of participation.

The idea of insurance is to have a large pool to spread the risk, and that is how an insurance system works. If

we don't fix it, it is going to make that pool get smaller and smaller and smaller. Because people will not be able to afford it, the program will collapse and the taxpayers will be saddled with debt.

The goal of our coalition—led by Senator MENENDEZ, the senior Senator from New Jersey who is on the Banking Committee and has been one of the great spokesmen and leaders for this bill, and Senator ISAKSON from Georgia, who is literally the most respected Member in this whole body on issues related to real estate because he had one of the largest real estate companies in Atlanta and knows the issue well. He is very respected on both sides of the aisle. These two gentlemen have led this effort and have built a bipartisan coalition.

So we are now ready this week, of all weeks. It is the State of the Union week. We would have probably preferred another week, but that is how this worked out. We are ready to debate the bill on the floor of the Senate. At last count, when we left, there were about six or seven relevant amendments. We are only going to accept relevant amendments to this bill. We are not going to accept amendments on other subjects by Members who are attempting to derail the Senate, get us off topic, et cetera, et cetera. We will only accept relevant amendments to this bill.

The happy thing is we think we only have about seven or eight amendments. Some amendments are Republican, some amendments are Democratic.

We just received an amendment from one of the opponents of our bill, the good Senator from Pennsylvania, who has not been supportive of our bill and has not worked with the coalition and has not cooperated in any way. We got his amendment an hour ago. We have been actually waiting for a year and a half.

Last May he opposed the bill, and we couldn't even get to the debate because he wasn't happy with the direction we were going. So that happened in May. What is this month? It is January. We are now in the month of January, and he opposed the bill in May. It set us back 7 months. We tried to explain to the Senator from Pennsylvania that 74,000 people in his State have these policies and they too need help. Whether he has been able to reconcile that with his constituents I don't know, but we literally asked him to please let us know what we could do. We told him we would be happy to meet with him. The homebuilders and the realtors were willing to sit down and speak to him. We finally got a draft of his amendment in the last hour. We are literally reading it for the first time. I don't think that is cooperation, but he may have a different definition of it. We are reading that amendment now. I don't believe this amendment is going

to help our cause. I think it is going to undermine what we are trying to do.

I will have more comments about the specifics of it, but the Senator from Pennsylvania, for whatever reason, has not been cooperative the whole time. We will be happy to vote on his amendment. I think the amendment is going to do great harm to the bill, and I think I would urge our coalition at this point to vote no, but I am going to look at it.

Senator ISAKSON has just received a copy of it in the last hour, and all I can do is ask our colleagues to be patient while we review his 13-page amendment. We have 200 organizations that have been working on this. We are trying to be fair and get their input, and then we will know how to proceed.

The bottom line is this: This week we are going to pass a flood insurance relief bill off the floor of the Senate. I wish to put everybody on notice that we have run out of patience. We have been working on this for a year and a half. We were told before Christmas we could have a vote, and then we were told we could have a vote when we got back. Then we were told we could have a vote before we left.

This is it. There is no more time. We are voting on this legislation this week. We are either going to do it the easy way or the hard way. We are either going to have a few amendments the Republicans put up, the Democrats put up, and we get back to legislating as we should or the leader is going to file cloture on this bill and we are going to pass it without an amendment. If one single Republican comes to this floor and says they did not have time to discuss their amendment, we will debate until the cows come home because I am not leaving this floor until every single person in America knows the games that can be played here.

I have been more than transparent. I have been more than honest. I have come here more than any Senator. I don't know if this is good or bad; it is the only way I know how to lead, which is to be forthright and honest with myself, with my constituents, and with people who need to know what in the heck is going on. I don't know how else to do it. I am not going to apologize. I am not going to read about how to do this in a book. There are no books on this. This is about leadership from the inside, and the only people who taught me this were my parents.

I am just saying, if anyone in this Chamber thinks they are going to get away with trying to give some flimsy excuse about how they didn't get their amendment considered, how they are upset with the leader, they will have to go through me, and I am not moving because I have people all over this country who are desperate. We passed the wrong bill. We should not have passed it. We must fix it, and we

are going to fix it this week in the Senate.

What the House does, what Speaker BOEHNER does—he made some negative comments about the bill last week. My comments back were the Speaker has his hands full. He has been busy. I understand it. I wouldn't want his job. He has a tough job with a lot of issues to juggle. But I said, and I will say again, when this bill goes to the House, which it will after it passes the Senate this week, he will hear from millions and millions of Americans who paid their mortgage every month, who went to work every day, who honor their family by building homes in places they have been for generations, and they are about ready to take those front-door keys and turn them in to the local bank and walk away from their house. Speaker BOEHNER is going to hear that. I hope those words, those expressions, those pictures, those letters will hit his heart the way they have hit mine and that he will have a softened heart and an open mind and he will consider what we are trying to do.

I realize our way may not be the most perfect way, but it is a good way, and if somebody wants to improve it, fine. But don't scuttle it, pretending to be helping. Don't scuttle it by pretending to be for some kind of better approach. If there was a better approach, we would have found it in the last year and a half we have been searching. We are not going to find it in the last 3 minutes of this debate.

We are reviewing the Toomey amendment. He has been the lead opponent of our effort. I don't believe his amendment is helpful, but until I read it, I will not be able to give a definitive assessment. Senator ISAKSON will have to give his views on it, as will Senator MENENDEZ, and we will figure it out. But we are going to bring relief to the 5 million people who have done nothing wrong—middle-class families, some of them very poor families—who have been living in these places for generations, and because FEMA can't get its flood maps right, because FEMA can't get the affordability study done, they are going to be kicked out of their homes.

Talk about misguided regulation. I hope MITCH MCCONNELL, our Republican leader, talking about misguided regulation, will put a little muscle into helping us. He has been cooperative, and I thank him. Senator REID has been putting a lot of muscle into this, and I thank him.

I hope people will come to the floor and speak about the importance of this bill. We will figure out this amendment process—all germane amendments—and get the final vote this week. This is going to get done this week, the easy way or the hard way, and we are done. The vote is going to happen this week. We are going to move this bill from the floor to the President, who put out a

statement—and his administration—they didn't have many positive things to say about this. Let me just say I think their statement is misinformed. It is misguided. I am hoping the White House will reconsider. The President is coming here tonight to speak about the importance of strengthening the middle class. I would think that allowing middle-class people to stay in their homes would be a good place to start. So I hope the administration will take a second look and join us and help us to let middle-class families stay in their homes.

Let me conclude. Colorado is a beautiful State. I have been there many times. However, not everybody can live in the mountains of Colorado. There are some of us who have to live along rivers and streams and ports to build and to support the infrastructure that helps to make this country grow. My people who fish every day, who harvest the oysters, who put seafood on the table, who bring those huge and magnificent barges up and down the river, can't live in Vail, CO. I am sorry. They don't like the snow and they couldn't afford to live there anyway. They live in little places such as Burris and Venice and Plackman, and the lower ninth ward that got flooded out, every single home destroyed. They can go back if we use our science, our engineering, our brains, and lead with our hearts and our heads. This can work. But if people are playing political games, if they are trying to score political points or if they are not working hard enough to understand the issue, then I feel sorry for them because the public needs our help.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to talk about the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. This bill is a bill that is designed to fix the damage that has been done by the Biggert-Waters Act, and this damage is extensive. This bill would freeze dramatic rate hikes, and these rate hikes have several impacts.

We have, of course, the impact on families who currently have flood insurance who will be paying much higher levels than they bargained for when they bought their home and may not be able to afford those much higher levels, raising questions about their ability to stay in those homes.

We have the impact on commercial enterprises and the fact that now that they are paying higher rates, they may not feel they can add on to their business in that location.

Then we have the impact, of course, on selling your property, whether you are a homeowner or you are a business, because the folks who might be buying might have to jump to a full rate that would be many times—in some cases 10 times—the price the current owner is paying, and when that happens the property becomes unaffordable and, therefore, the value that one has in their home or business drops dramatically.

All of this is of great concern, and we need to reverse the features of Biggert-Waters that are causing this economic havoc.

This bill comes out of discussions that were in my Subcommittee on Economic Policy several months ago. This discussion is now led by Senator MENENDEZ, and he has been ably assisted and partnered with Senator MARY LANDRIEU and Senator ISAKSON and Senator VITTER and I compliment them all for being vocal advocates and instrumental in helping to move this bill forward.

The Biggert-Waters Act, while well intentioned, is creating massive burdens for our middle-class homeowners in Oregon and certainly across the Nation. Flooding is something of an equal opportunity disaster. For some, it is the coastlines. For others, it is broad flood plains along major rivers. For others, it is narrow valleys and flash floods. But in all of these situations, the common impact is dramatic devastation.

Something is very wrong though when families are more worried about dramatic spikes in their flood insurance premiums than they are worried about dramatic floods, and that is where my Oregon families are right now. I wish to share a letter from Kelly. She lives in Tigard. She says, in her own words, she is “a middle class, single mother currently working to get [her] daughter through college.”

She bought her home 13 years ago to provide stability for her daughter. This is a goal of so many parents, to have a piece of the American dream, to have the stability that goes with home ownership, to have the equity that you build in your home as a financial reservoir with which to assist your children going forward in life.

She thought about selling a few years ago but decided to stay in that house and keep that financial foundation. But now, with Biggert-Waters going into effect, she has been caught between two bad choices. If she stays in her home, her flood insurance rates will go up precipitously, making her home increasingly unaffordable and squeezing an already tight budget. But should she try to sell, the new owner will face annual flood insurance premiums of \$15,000 or more, making her home completely unaffordable for middle-class buyers.

Keep this in mind: For every \$1,000 a buyer pays in flood insurance per year,

the value of a home drops by about \$20,000. So if the flood insurance is \$15,000, we are talking about a value of a home dropping \$300,000. Many middle-class homes in Oregon are not priced at \$300,000. They might be valued at \$200,000 or \$220,000 or \$250,000 or, in more rural areas, \$150,000 or \$175,000. So we can wipe out the complete value of a home and certainly easily wipe out the equity a homeowner has built over a number of years. Essentially, you have to give the home away. That makes no sense.

To read from Kelly's letter, she says:

Here is where I see a problem. There is an old saying, “you can't get blood from a stone.”

She continues:

I know I am not alone in my predicament of barely getting by financially.

Middle income folks like me are squeezed from all sides. . . .

While living expenses rise every year, our income generally does not raise enough to make up for it. . . .

We tighten our belts and wait for better times. So, the problem here is, we can't afford to pay these, much higher rates. We just don't have the money.

She continues in her analysis:

There are options, of course. We can come up with many 10's of thousands of dollars to raise our houses up and make them flood friendly. . . .

But wait—we don't have 10's of thousands of dollars. And, we can't sell—that's the beauty here. Who will buy a small, middle income type home that has a flood insurance bill annually of 15-30k [a year]?

She continues:

So what will we do, the over 1 million homeowners in this situation? To our utter frustration and humiliation, many of us have no choice but to walk away. . . .

Whatever the attitudes about us are, most of us are good Americans who believe in paying our debts. We have worked hard our entire lives, and asked for little or no help along the way.

This will crush us, and since we don't have the money to give, there is no benefit to be had.

That is how she concludes her letter: “This will crush us. . . .” She is right. It will crush her family. It will crush millions of families across this country. It will include foreclosures. It will include equity wiped out. It will result in families having to walk away from their home and hope they are not pursued by their mortgage company that will be unable to sell the home on a secondary market for the debt owed and, therefore, could pursue the owners.

It is wrong and counterproductive to squeeze middle-class homeowners such as Kelly when it will only result in more foreclosures or families trapped in their homes unable to sell them.

Making flood insurance more solvent is a laudable goal, but it is one we have to approach in a manner that involves fairness over time. Achieving solvency by putting a huge burden, a huge financial shock on the backs of our middle-

class families is not just wrong, it is a financial disaster that is unfolding now and will continue to unfold across this country.

We cannot get to solvency by asking families to pay sums they simply do not have or, as Kelly said, “You can't get blood from a stone.”

We need to immediately stop these dramatic rate hikes for our homeowners and our businesses while FEMA goes back to the drawing board to figure out how to make this program affordable and effective for our middle-class families.

That is exactly what this bill does. This bill has several important provisions that help ensure affordability and fairness for our middle-class families.

The first is it delays implementation of flood insurance rate increases. It does so on primary residences and on businesses until FEMA can complete an affordability study, propose regulations to address the problem of affordability, and give Congress time to weigh in.

Second, unlike Biggert-Waters, the bill ensures that FEMA will truly have the funding they need to complete a comprehensive affordability study.

Third, this bill takes on a catch-22 in the current system, which is that when homeowners face unaffordable rates that they think are inaccurate, they have to pay out of their pocket for a flood map appeal to prove that their premiums should be lowered. So when someone else makes a mistake, they have to pay for that mistake, and that is wrong.

The studies necessary for an appeal can cost between \$500 and \$2,000. It is a prohibitive cost for many families to undertake. This bill ensures that any homeowner who can successfully appeal a flood map finding will be reimbursed by FEMA for their expense, making the system fairer for the homeowner and giving FEMA an added incentive to get it right.

Finally, this bill does something very important in creating a flood insurance rate map advocate within FEMA, someone to educate and advocate for homeowners. One of the complaints my office has heard is that FEMA has not been responsive to homeowners' concerns or questions about changes in their policy.

It creates this position. An advocate will do several things. The advocate will educate policyholders about their flood risks and their options in choosing a policy. The advocate will assist those who believe a flood map is wrong and assist them through the appeal process. The advocate will improve outreach and coordination with local officials, community leaders, and Congress.

My colleagues Senators HOEVEN and HEITKAMP have also done great work on this bill to ensure that homeowners in certain communities are not hit by unfair rules on how their basements impact a flood policy.

I would like to address one other issue that is not in this bill that hopefully I will be able to offer an amendment on; that is, protection for consumers whose policies are purchased by their mortgage servicer or their bank rather than by themselves. This is the issue of predatory force-placed premiums.

Let me explain. Let's say, for example, that you are notified by your servicer that they have reviewed the records and they now consider you to be in a flood plain they had not noticed before and you have to get flood insurance. But that flood insurance, unsubsidized, is so expensive you cannot afford it. So then the servicer says: Well, we are going to put on flood insurance for you. The rate might be 5 to 10 times the market rate. In other words, the homeowner who already cannot afford flood insurance is gouged by predatory premiums on force-placed insurance.

Let's consider that perhaps you had a transition in your family. Maybe you have one partner paying the bills and another partner takes it over while the first partner is sick and you miss the fact that your annual premium was due on your flood insurance. So what happens? That lapse can trigger much higher rates that you cannot afford. Then suddenly you are in the situation of force-placed insurance.

How about if new maps are issued. The new maps now put you into a 100-year flood plain that you were not in previously. It is not that the geography changed; it is that a different set of engineers, doing a different study, different assumptions about where the rain will fall, which creek will swell the quickest, puts you into this 100-year flood plain.

So now what are you going to do? You are going to be in this situation. You cannot afford that insurance, that newly placed requirement for insurance, so the servicer or bank puts it on for you. Well, they should put it in at a fair market rate, not at a rate which is 5 to 10 times the fair market rate and which is designed to gouge.

I have an amendment that addresses this by saying the servicers or banks cannot take fees—or, as some would say, “kickbacks”—for placing this insurance and therefore have an incentive to do a nonmarket rate policy that is 5 or 10 times higher than the actual market rate.

This is a significant problem in force-placed home insurance. Certainly, we do not need to add to this problem by allowing predatory premiums on force-placed policies in the realm of flood insurance. I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take a look at this issue, to support banning the anti-competitive features of the market that have led to these predatory premiums on force-placed flood insurance.

In closing, I again thank my colleagues who have worked so hard. This

is an important issue, an incredibly important issue for families across Oregon. Let's stop these dramatic rate hikes. Let's work together for an affordable flood insurance program that will be effective and fair for all Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

INCOME INEQUALITY

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the letters I will be speaking about be printed in the RECORD at the end of my remarks.

Recently the Obama administration has been talking a lot about income inequality and poverty. Yesterday I spoke about the issue, about the war on poverty, its successes and its failures. As I said yesterday, the United States has spent trillions of dollars in the last 50 years fighting the so-called war on poverty. I said yesterday that the results have been marginal, in some cases successful, reducing the poverty rate from 19 percent down to the 15 percent it is now. But a lot more needs to be done.

Now, in the fight against the war on poverty, this administration, like a lot of administrations, wants to spend more money on more programs. Some of that may be justified, but that does not seem to fix the problems. If you just hand this money out with no strings and no oversight, it gets diverted and misused. That is the purpose of my speaking today on the subject of public housing.

Wasted money does not help the poor. There are a lot of people who make a nice profit from the poverty of others. This administration has been helping a number of these profiteers while the poor suffer. I want to be clear as to some of these issues I am talking about—their genesis goes back to previous administrations as well. Through my oversight work, I have seen this happen over and over, that a few people profit from trying to help the poor, but the money does not go there. The Department of Housing and Urban Development hands out \$4 billion in Federal money every year to local housing authorities. This money is supposed to help provide clean, affordable, safe housing for the poor. But, while no one is watching, much of the money gets spent on high salaries and perks for the people who run the housing authorities. These housing authorities have other sources of money. For most of them, up to 90 percent of their total funding comes from the \$4 billion contributed by the Federal taxpayers.

Housing and Urban Development argues that because housing authorities are State and local government enti-

ties, there is no reason to scrutinize them from here in Washington, DC. As far as I am concerned, HUD is missing the point for 4 billion reasons. Those are dollar reasons. Taxpayer money should come with Federal oversight. We need to make sure that the Federal authorities who disburse it make sure they oversee that it is spent in the legal way—to help the people who need the help.

I have been conducting oversight of the wasteful spending at housing authorities for almost 4 years. I have been urging the Obama administration to look at what is happening and to take action. But there is little if any interest in the oversight of these Federal dollars by the folks writing the checks here in Washington, DC. They just want to send the checks and pat themselves on the back. They do not want to talk about what actually happens to the money once it is disbursed.

Federal funds end up feathering the nests of local housing bureaucrats instead of housing the poor. I will show you how that is done. Here are some of the most egregious examples of how ineffective the Department of Housing and Urban Development has been at policing local housing authorities.

Bradenton, FL, is an area of the country which was hit extremely hard during the foreclosure crisis, but employees at Bradenton Housing Authority only have to work 4 days a week. They get 2 weeks off at Christmas, bonuses in June and December, and the option to cash out up to a month of sick leave twice per year. They get free use of a car purchased by the housing authority. After 15 years of employment, they get to keep the car when they leave or take \$10,000 instead; it is their choice.

There are generous fringe benefits, but many housing authorities also provide very lucrative salaries. These salaries far exceed the salaries of Federal employees right here in Washington, DC, who hand out the taxpayers' money to the housing authorities. The biggest salary jackpot winner I have encountered so far is the Atlanta Housing Authority. At least 22 employees there earn between \$150,000 and \$303,000 per year. The Atlanta Housing Authority benefits from a special HUD designation called “moving to work.” That program exempts designated housing authorities from certain requirements, including salary justification. This is not just an isolated example. The executive director of the Raleigh, NC, housing authority receives about \$280,000 in salary and benefits, plus up to 30 vacation days. He also accumulates comp time for any hours he works over 7½ hours per day. He has used over 20 days of comp time per year since 2009. Add that to his regular vacation time, and he is out of the office nearly 3 months per year. Nine months of work for \$280,000 is an annualized

salary of \$375,000 per year. Very few taxpayer-funded jobs pay anything close to that amount.

So what is the justification for such high salaries, particularly considering the fact that they are supposed to provide safe, affordable housing for low-income people? After years of ignoring the issue, HUD finally capped Federal funding for executive salaries at \$155,500 per employee. Of course, this was only after various local media and I exposed deep-rooted problems and pushed the Department of Housing and Urban Development to act. But now housing authority executives have turned to creative accounting tricks to get around that limit of \$155,500 per employee. Since some of their money comes from other sources, the housing authorities simply claim that any salary over the Federal limit comes from one of those other sources, whereas the money from those other sources ought to be used to help low-income people have affordable, clean, and safe housing.

Because of my oversight letters on this subject, HUD recently notified the housing authorities that they must document the original source of the funding used to pay salaries over the Federal limit. That is good news, but there are still larger problems. The Department is still not making this salary data public in a reasonable timeframe. I will give an example. This administration refused to release the 2010 set of data for almost a year. I hope we do not have to wait a year to get the most recent data.

Like many of our Federal agencies, some housing authorities spend large amounts of money on travel for conferences and training. Some of that may be legitimate, but I am raising questions about the extent to which it is done and the amount of money that is consumed. Staff and board members often attend the same conferences throughout the United States year after year. They often attend multiple conferences in a single year. In addition to travel costs, housing authorities must pay a conference fee for each attendee they send, often ranging from \$400 at the low end to \$1,000 per employee at the higher end.

That money could easily be used to improve conditions and make needed repairs in public housing facilities. Instead, it is frittered away on conferences. In other words, forget the low-income people they are supposed to be helping and spend the money someplace else.

The Tampa Housing Authority has spent more than \$860,000 since 2009 for staff and board members to attend various conferences, seminars, and training programs—\$860,000 that could have been used to provide affordable housing for low-income people. Tampa also has been sending 20 or more employees per year to conferences sponsored by the

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. That alone costs more than \$177,000 per year.

The Atlanta Housing Authority spent more than \$480,000 since 2009 for the employees to attend conferences and training sessions. In fact, the housing authority paid over \$68,000 in conference fees to a software company after giving them a multimillion-dollar contract for a new computer system.

I wonder—I don't know, but I think it is legitimate to question—if the housing authority executive director thought to ask for a discount. Many of the housing authorities with questionable spending don't limit the abuses to salaries or travel.

The Tampa Housing Authority purchased a new \$7 million administrative office that includes nearly \$3 million in renovations and upgrades. That could have helped hundreds, if not thousands, of poor people needing the housing. They are also paying nearly \$800,000 in salary and benefits for a public relations department while at the same time paying an employee another \$170,369 as a PR consultant.

Other housing authorities are also spending exorbitant amounts for outside consultants. Some of these consultants are former employees of the local housing authority.

In 2013, the Pittsburgh Housing Authority retained 10 law firms for a total of \$3.5 million over 3 years. One law firm has been representing the housing authority during inquiries by the Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General and the city controller.

Think about that. It is bad enough that taxpayers' money meant to help the poor is wasted, but when the taxpayer also pays the lawyers to defend the very organization from scrutiny about whether the taxpayers' money was wasted is even more outrageous. Of course, that adds insult to injury.

In Philadelphia, outside lawyers blocked the inspector general's office from assessing spending data for months, and that cost the taxpayers millions of dollars.

The Pittsburgh Housing Authority also paid an outside consulting firm \$1.25 million in the year 2012. The vice president at the consulting company billed the housing authority \$404,000 for 2,400 hours of work. That is 48 hours a week for a year. It is more than double the \$168,000 salary of the housing authority executive director.

Harris County, TX, is one of the most egregious examples of out-of-control spending. In 2013, the HUD inspector general questioned the mismanagement of over \$27 million in Federal funding for Harris County. The IG provided the following examples of fraud and abuse: over \$1.7 million in excessive payroll expenses; \$190,000 for statues and monuments; \$66,000 for employees' shirts embossed with logos; \$27,000

for trophies, plaques, and awards; \$14,500 for a helicopter, a chartered bus, and golf cart rentals for a grand opening; and \$18,000 for letters written by Abraham Lincoln.

I continue to send my oversight letters to the Senate appropriators and the Senate banking committee. These are the letters I received permission to put in the RECORD at the end of my statement.

The Senate appropriators and the Senate banking committee members have jurisdiction over the Department of Housing and Urban Development. They have the authority to do something about these abuses. My colleagues need to know the extent of the problems, and that I am ready to work with the Members of this body to address these issues.

Employment at public housing authorities should be about public service. That is why we have a program serving the needs of low-income people. It is supposed to be providing clean, safe, affordable housing for those in need, not helping bureaucrats live high on the hog on the taxpayers' dime.

As I said in my opening, this problem didn't start with this administration. There is a culture here that had to start back a long time ago. But now, bringing these problems to the attention of this administration, I hope it will take them seriously. If this administration is truly serious about income inequality—and not only using it for political purposes—it would stop shoveling taxpayers' money out the door with practically no oversight, no controls, no limits, and the waste of money I have just expressed. If President Obama is truly serious about income inequality, he would take the money high-income public housing authorities waste and give it to the benefit of low-income patrons of public housing to provide what the law is meant to provide these people: safe, affordable, healthy housing.

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

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2013.

Hon. SHAUN DONOVAN,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DONOVAN: The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded high performer status to the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) "for eight consecutive years" between 2004 and 2011. In the 2009 Consolidated On-Site Review, the HUD field office director, Dan Rodriguez, even stated that, HCHA "practices are some of the best throughout our region." Following revelations of possible mismanagement in 2012, Mr. Rodriguez then told the Houston Chronicle, "We didn't expect that anything was actually going on here of concern." He further stated, "We in the field office here have always had the privilege of having one of the highest-performing housing authorities in the country."

On June 19, 2013, the HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG) released an audit report raising concerns about HCHA mismanagement of over \$27 million in federal funding. In addition to over \$7 million spent on an unauthorized disaster assessment and over \$8 million for the now-defunct Patriots on the Lake development, the OIG provided numerous examples of fraud and abuse of taxpayer dollars. These include:

Over \$1.7 million in excessive payroll expenses;

\$190,000 for statues and monuments;
\$66,000 for employee shirts embossed with HCHA logos;

\$54,000 for apartment rental for housing consultants;

\$24,000 for a book writing project about disaster housing;

\$27,000 for trophies, plaques and awards;
\$14,500 for helicopter, chartered bus and golf cart rentals for a grand opening;

\$18,000 for letters written by Abraham Lincoln; and

Over \$150,000 in missing electronic equipment including computers and electronic tablets.

The OIG found that both HCHA management and the Board failed to fulfill their oversight responsibilities. Specifically, "the Authority expended funds for many items that were not reasonable or necessary and did not support the Authority's mission." Moreover, "they neglected their management and oversight responsibilities; wasted Authority funds, at times for personal gain; circumvented existing internal controls; and manipulated accounting records. These conditions occurred because the Authority's management and Board failed to exercise their fiduciary responsibilities and did not act in the best interest of the Authority."

HUD also failed to ensure that millions in Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP) funding, awarded following Hurricane Ike, were used properly or as intended. Instead, HCHA awarded a lucrative consulting contract to the former HCHA Board chairman Odysseus Lanier's firm just two months after he resigned from the Board. The conflict-of-interest waiting period is one year. Mr. Lanier's consulting firm received "\$11.3 million from HCHA, according to agency director Tom McCasland, most of it for work on some sort of multi-state disaster response survey that nobody wanted. Harris County tried to get \$7 million in reimbursement for it from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, but was denied, according to the audit." Additionally, in 2008 the housing authority purchased at least five high-end SUVs which were subsequently donated to the Harris County Office of Emergency Management and earmarked for five specific employees.

Purchasing \$18,000 historic documents, spending \$190,000 on statues and monuments, and paying for chartered helicopter flights is not a hallmark of "one of the highest performing housing authorities in the country." This is money that should have been used to provide clean, safe, and affordable housing for those in need. HUD must take greater steps to safeguard taxpayer dollars, especially during this time of budget cuts due to sequestration. Please provide the following information:

1. What steps are being taken by HUD to recoup as much of the \$27 million in questionable spending outlined in the OIG audit report?

Given the efforts that Mr. Rankin and other officials at HCHA took to hide their questionable spending, have criminal refer-

als been made to the Department of Justice? If so, for what offenses? Who has been referred?

2. I have raised concerns about unreported conflicts-of-interest at HCHA and other housing authorities that have cost taxpayers millions. What steps are being taken by HUD to tighten up conflict-of-interest reporting requirements and increased oversight to reduce the questionable payments in the future?

3. It is my understanding that HUD has conducted no oversight of the billions in Disaster Housing Assistance Program (DHAP) funding granted to HCHA and other housing authorities along the Gulf Coast impacted by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Ike. Please explain why this has not been done and, given the recent financial problems at HCHA and billions provided for Hurricane Sandy efforts, when we might expect an audit to be conducted?

4. It is my understanding that neither the former HCHA executive director, Guy Rankin IV, nor his new company, International Housing Solutions, has been suspended or disbarred from receiving federal funding through HUD. In fact, Mr. Rankin may be trying to obtain or has already received Hurricane Sandy funding even after allegedly wasting millions in Hurricane Ike funding.

Please state whether HUD has suspended or disbarred Mr. Rankin and/or International Housing Solutions, as well as other bad housing authority actors, from receiving federal funding.

Please also explain what steps HUD is taking to ensure that Hurricane Sandy funding is used as Congress intended and not lost to waste, fraud and abuse.

5. What specific changes have been and will be made to the housing authority assessment program that will address the many deficiencies in the current self-assessment program? When will these changes be fully implemented?

6. Currently, the housing authorities' financial and management audits are paid for by the housing authorities themselves, which may result in conflicts of interest. What alternatives to auditor contracting awards and payments are being considered by in order to ensure that the auditors are serving the taxpayers instead of housing authority management?

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. I would appreciate receiving your response to this matter by July 31, 2013. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Janet Drew of my staff.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member,
Committee on the Judiciary.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, November 20, 2013

Hon. SHAUN DONOVAN,
Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DONOVAN: I have been raising concerns about questionable spending at public housing authorities (PHA) across the United States. I have questioned excessive travel spending at public housing authorities in the past, but the Tampa Housing Authority (THA), a HUD high performer, appears to have far surpassed those housing authorities in travel and conference spending.

Recent investigative reports by Channel 10 News in Tampa found that THA has spent in

excess of \$860,000 since 2009 for staff and Board members to attend various conferences, seminars and training programs. According to travel documents provided by THA (see attached), staff and board members often attend the same conferences throughout the United States, some for the same organizations year after year, and often attend multiple conferences in a single year. In addition to travel costs, THA pays a conference fee for each attendee, ranging between \$400 and \$1000. Every dollar that goes to airfare, meals, lodging and conference fees, is another dollar that cannot be used to help house homeless Tampa Bay residents.

Additionally, these trips amount to thousands of man hours spent away from the office and not serving the citizens of Tampa. According to the travel documents, THA staff and board members annually spend more than 500 work days outside the office. While THA may argue the necessity for the conference and training attendance, a vast majority of these trips appear to be non-critical to housing authority business and give the impression of being an excuse to take expensive vacations paid for with taxpayer dollars.

Like other housing authorities I have been investigating, THA has been spending limited federal funding for other questionable expenses. The executive director, Jerome Ryans, receives an annual salary of \$214,000 plus a compensation package which puts him well over the \$155,500 salary cap. Additional examples include: a new \$7 million administrative office with nearly \$3 million in renovations and upgrades, nearly \$800,000 on salary and benefits for the public relations department while paying \$170,369 for a PR consultant, \$2.8 million in outside legal fees since 2009 while one outside lawyer is also married to a housing authority employee.

In August, Executive Director Ryans complained that "the agency will also lose approximately 1 million dollars in administrative fees that cover operational costs due to sequestration." He also stated that "it is our goal to continually find ways or opportunities to reduce overall departmental costs." I strongly suggest that Mr. Ryans and HUD start by curtailing attendance at conferences and training seminars, excessive salaries, consulting and legal fees.

Please provide the following:

1. Please describe the steps being taken by HUD to rein in excessive spending on travel, conferences and training at THA and other housing authorities across the country and explain why those steps have been ineffective in preventing the abuses described above.

2. The complete annual compensation packages of all THA employees, including salaries, bonuses and any other compensation (health care, retirement, etc).

3. A copy of most recent employment contracts for the executive director and all THA financial statements filed with HUD, including any statements made about executive director salary and all benefits.

4. Complete documentation of the remodeling expenditures for the new headquarters building.

5. The total number of credit cards issued to THA, including any provided to THA board members.

6. All legal bills and professional service and consulting fees paid by the PHAs. Please also document all conflict of interest waivers.

7. A list of all take-home vehicles provided by the housing authorities and the names of the employees who drive them.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter. I would appreciate your response by December 6, 2013. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Janet Drew of my staff.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, January 8, 2014.

Hon. SHAUN DONOVAN,
Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DONOVAN: The Dayton Daily News recently reported questionable management decisions at the Dayton (Ohio) Housing Authority, renamed Greater Dayton Premier Management (GDPM). I want to ensure that HUD taxpayer dollars are used for safe, affordable housing instead of questionable compensation packages.

According to the article, the GDPM Board of Commissioners recently fired the interim CEO, Al Prude. Mr. Prude was removed by a Board resolution which stated that the housing authority "is going to a 'new business model' that consists of four agency directors acting as a team that will meet twice a day to run the agency." Instead of hiring a new CEO immediately, the housing authority is paying the four department heads each an additional \$1,000 per week to cover the CEO duties. At that rate, the housing authority is spending \$16,000 per month or \$192,000 per year for the department directors to cover the CEO duties, with no time frame for naming a replacement. The former CEO was paid just over \$123,000 per year which now looks like a bargain.

It also appears that prior to his removal, Mr. Prude received two very lucrative pay raises on one day last year. The first bumped his salary "from \$98,542 to \$123,157 on Aug. 30, 2012, along with a check for back pay through June 1, when he was appointed interim CEO." The second was an increase "from \$81,000 to \$98,542, retroactive to the date of his hire on Jan. 31, 2011." He also received a lump-sum payment for back pay back to his hire date. The raises were signed by himself, the board chairman and the chief financial officer.

Although the GDPM Board decided to terminate Mr. Prude, the decision to pay the department heads to cover his duties indefinitely appears to be even more expensive than the previous CEO. Therefore, I am requesting the following information for the period of 2008 to the present:

1. Please provide an explanation for why a housing authority is allowed to pay an additional \$16,000 per month for four individuals to act as CEO. Please also document how HUD intends to enforce the \$155,000 salary limit when the duties are split among several individuals.

2. The complete annual compensation packages of all GDPM employees, including salaries, bonuses, retroactive pay, separation pay and any other compensation (health care, retirement, etc.).

3. Provide a list of all legal bills and professional service and consulting fees paid by GDPM.

4. Please document any Conflict of Interest waivers filed by the GDPM and Board of Commissioners with HUD.

5. What additional oversight is being conducted by HUD regarding payments to outside consultants and law firms by all housing authorities across the country to ensure that all federal funds, including stimulus and dis-

aster funds, are protected against waste, fraud and abuse? Please be specific.

6. Provide all travel records for all employees at GDPM as well as the GDPM Board members.

7. Please provide the names of all nonprofit affiliates with ties to GDPM. Please include the names of all officers and their salary/benefit packages.

Accordingly, please provide responses by no later than January 24, 2014. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please have your respective staff members contact Janet Drew.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, January 9, 2014.

Hon. SHAUN DONOVAN,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DONOVAN: Recent reports in the Raleigh News & Observer, which we have attached to this letter, have shone a light on the situation surrounding the executive director of the Raleigh, North Carolina Housing Authority (RHA) and his extremely generous salary and fringe benefits. Specifically, we are concerned that the RHA—a HUD "high performer"—allows its executive director, Steve Beam, to be on paid vacation from the housing authority for nearly three months a year to pursue his outside hobbies and interests.

According to the article, Mr. Beam is one of the most highly paid housing authority executive directors in the country. His compensation package, which includes "salary, bonuses, longevity payments and car allowance," totals approximately \$280,000 per year. This year, the RHA board also increased his annual vacation time from 24 days to 30 days per year. In return for the high salary, Mr. Beam is only required to work 7.5 hours per day.

In addition to the generous salary and vacation days he receives through his contract, Mr. Beam also accumulates comp-time for any hours he works over 7.5 hours. This benefit is extremely unusual for such a highly paid manager and Mr. Beam has used it to rack up over four months of paid vacation from 2010 to the present. In fact, because of Mr. Beam's unique 7.5 hour work day, over the course of one year he accrues an additional two weeks of comp-time simply by working a traditional eight hour day. All told, he used 22.5 comp days in 2009, 23.5 in 2010, 20 in 2011, 20.5 in 2012, and only 14 through October 2013.

It appears however, that despite these extremely generous benefits, Mr. Beam still uses government funded time to indulge his interest in magic tricks, which he referred to as his "business/hobby" in a statement to the News & Observer. The newspaper spotlighted several examples of Mr. Beam's using work time to pursue his hobby including posting to a website called "The Magic Café." Given that the RHA board specifically gives Mr. Beam months of vacation unavailable to other housing authority executives in order to pursue his interest in magic, it is extremely concerning that Mr. Beam was unable to confine his "business/hobby" to his multiple months of vacation which suggests the RHA does not have sufficient oversight controls over Mr. Beam's activities.

The RHA executive director and board believe that RHA functions well while the executive director is away from the office for nearly three months a year mainly because

RHA has a "capable" deputy executive director to pick up the slack. As the RHA receives the vast majority of its funds from HUD, it is important for HUD to hold Mr. Beam and the RHA board accountable for their actions. To examine the extent of HUD's oversight over Mr. Beam in the RHA, please answer the following questions and provide the requested documents:

1. An explanation for why Mr. Beam is allowed to accumulate up to three weeks of comp time while working less than the standard 40 hour work week.

2. An explanation for how RHA is deemed a "high performer" when the executive director is away from the office for nearly three months per year.

3. The complete list of annual compensation packages of all RHA employees, including salaries, bonuses, longevity pay, car allowance and/or take-home vehicle, vacation and comp time and any other compensation (health care, retirement, etc.).

4. Please review and document the executive director's use of RHA office equipment to conduct non-RHA business.

5. Provide a list of all legal bills and professional service and consulting fees paid by RHA.

6. Please provide copies of all employee financial disclosure forms and document any Conflict of Interest waivers filed by the RHA and RHA board with HUD.

7. Provide all travel records for all employees at RHA as well as the RHA board members.

8. Please provide the names of all nonprofit affiliates with ties to RHA. Please include the names of all officers and their salary/benefit packages.

Accordingly, please provide responses by no later than January 24, 2014. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please have your respective staff members contact Janet Drew with Senator Grassley or Kris Denzel with Congressman Holding.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senator.

GEORGE HOLDING,
U.S. Congressman.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, January 16, 2014.

Hon. SHAUN DONOVAN,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY DONOVAN: A recent series of articles in the Bradenton Herald describe very serious financial mismanagement issues at the Bradenton (Florida) Housing Authority (BHA). Specifically BHA—a HUD "high performer"—has provided lucrative employee compensation packages that helped put the housing authority \$400,000 in debt. HUD has already removed both employees for attendance and vacation time infractions, but there appear to be other financial and management problems as well.

The BHA employee manual contains very questionable provisions for take-home vehicles, lucrative bonus and leave policies, and retirement benefits. According to an October 6, 2013 Bradenton Herald article, at least half of the ten person staff have take-home vehicles. According to page 49 of the BHA employee handbook, the take-home vehicles are "available for both business and personal use," and "BHA issues a fuel credit card for each vehicle user." Additionally, the employee is required to "arrange for routine vehicle servicing . . . through the Development Director" and the vehicle must be "cleaned

every other week inside and out at a designated car wash.”

If employees with fifteen or more years of service like their take-home vehicles, they have the option of keeping them when they retire or voluntarily leave. According to the employee handbook, the employee “will be entitled to either the vehicle that they are driving at the time of the separation or \$10,000.” Moreover, the policy provides that “if said vehicle is leased, the Housing Authority will immediately pay the lease in full.” Interestingly, the policy places no limit on the value of the vehicle or the lease to be paid off.

Most BHA employees are given two bonuses every year, one in June and one in December. According to the employee handbook, employees who have been with BHA for at least a year are eligible for a bonus of up to ten percent which is determined by the executive director. The bonus is paid in June and even employees who retire or voluntarily leave during the year receive a prorated bonus. According to an October 20, 2013, Bradenton Herald article, BHA instituted a new bonus policy in February 2013, without Board approval, that gave every employee a ten percent raise in March 2013. The second bonus, a longevity award, is paid in December of each year (see Table below). Even employees who voluntarily left BHA after five or more years of employment are paid a prorated amount.

For service of at least:	But less than:	The Amount is:
2 years	3 years	\$100
3 years	4 years	\$200
4 years	5 years	\$300
5 years	10 years	1 Weeks Pay
10 years	15 years	Two Weeks Pay
15 years	20 years	Three Weeks Pay
20 years	4 Weeks Pay

The BHA has very liberal leave policies including 15 hours of vacation and 15 hours of sick leave per month and bonus vacation hours after five years of service. Although the employee handbook allows for two days off for Christmas and one for New Year’s Day, BHA had been closing between December 20th and January 2nd for the Christmas and New Year’s holidays. Plus, an employee can, according to the employee handbook, cash out between 40 and 160 sick leave hours twice per year and may convert vacation hours to sick leave hours in order to cash them out. In fact, the Bradenton Herald estimates that the former executive could cash out “between \$7127.50 and \$28,510 at a time” so he could have pocketed an extra \$14,225 to \$57,020 per year.

Meanwhile, BHA board members failed due diligence and oversight responsibilities. The board consistently passed “resolutions without seeing the language” and the chairman now wants to review employee policies only after the executive director was fired. Another board member stated “HUD is the official agency.” And, “They didn’t call me and say, ‘Did you know your budget is in deficit.’”

To examine the extent of HUD’s oversight over BHA management, please answer the following questions and provide the requested documents from years 2008 to present:

1. A copy of the former BHA executive director’s most recent employment contract.
2. The total amount of salary and compensation paid to the former executive director.
3. The complete annual compensation payments to all BHA employees, including salaries, bonuses, longevity awards and cashed out sick time any other compensation (health care, retirement, take-home vehicle).

4. The total number and description of BHA take-home vehicles. The number of BHA vehicles or \$10,000 payments given as a retirement/separation benefit, as well as whether or not the housing authority paid off the vehicle lease.

5. The total number of fuel and other credit cards authorized by BHA. Please include the names of each employee provided with a fuel or other credit card, and the monthly fuel charges paid by BHA.

6. In addition to every Friday, please document every week day (both full and half) per year that the BHA has been closed and for what reason.

7. A list of all legal bills and professional service and consulting fees paid by BHA, including all vehicle service bills.

8. Please provide all financial disclosure forms completed by BHA employees and document any Conflict of Interest waivers filed by the BHA and Board of Commissioners with HUD.

9. Provide all travel records for employees at BHA as well as the BHA Board members.

Accordingly, please provide responses by no later than January 31, 2014. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please have your respective staff members contact Janet Drew.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Without objection, it is so ordered.

WOMEN’S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, this month we recognize the 41st anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, a ruling that assured every woman her constitutional right to make her own decision about whether and when to have a child based on her fundamental right to have her privacy protected.

I had the honor to clerk for the author of *Roe v. Wade*, Justice Harry Blackmun, shortly after that decision in 1974. Few of us expected we would be here 41 years later facing the kind of attacks—in fact, the onslaught on women’s health care and on their right to privacy—that we see again and again and again on the part of States, and even in this Congress.

Today the House of Representatives will debate and probably vote on a bill that would severely restrict—very practically constrict—a women’s right to choose. H.R. 7 is a threat to that right of privacy. Instead of moving forward in protecting women’s health, all too often we have seen ongoing attacks. After four decades, this judgment is threatened by onerous and ongoing limitations repeatedly passed by State legislators and this body.

I am very proud to be joined today by two of my most distinguished col-

leagues, Senator MURRAY of the State of Washington and Senator BALDWIN of Wisconsin, who have been tireless champions for women’s rights—for our constitutional rights—and for women’s health care. I am humbled and admiring of the work they have already done and the work we have ahead of us.

With their support, I have introduced—particularly with the active work of Senator BALDWIN—a measure that will proactively and preventively protect women’s rights against this onslaught at the State level.

The Women’s Health Protection Act is designed to stop restrictions that purportedly protect women’s health but really use that cause as a ruse and a ploy to impose physical layouts on clinics, admitting privileges on doctors, and other kinds of severely burdensome restrictions—such as ultrasound requirements when there is no real medical reason for them—and basically apply to abortion health care the same kinds of restrictions with no more limitations than are required for medically comparable procedures. That is the basic principle.

The goal is to push back the offensive onslaught on women’s health care. We want to be on the offense rather than the defense because undoubtedly most of these restrictions, if not all, will eventually be struck down by the courts. The resources which are required are burdensome on the organizations and groups and individuals who are forced to carry on that fight.

I know about that fight because I helped to wage it as an attorney general in the State of Connecticut for 20 years. I am very proud that I enforced many of the laws that are designed to protect a woman’s right to choose, including the FACE statute. I was the first attorney general to enforce the FACE statute.

We have many issues that are now before the Supreme Court, such as the *McCullen v. Coakley* case—which I hope will be decided—to uphold the buffer zone that makes women’s rights real against the intimidation and deterrents that anti-choice groups try to bring.

Making these rights real—the right of privacy, the right to be left alone—is the fundamental reason that we have introduced the Women’s Health Protection Act.

The President tonight will talk about many of the most important issues that matter to this country, including economic opportunity, job creation, recovery from the deepest recession in recent history; giving people a greater sense of confidence and trust in their ability to gain the skills they need to move forward in their lives. Economic mobility in this country is one of the greatest challenges we face for our children and our grandchildren. Those issues of job creation and economic growth are what we should be debating,

not H.R. 7, not the restrictions at the State level that seek to inhibit and impede the ability of a woman to exercise her fundamental right to privacy. Let's keep in mind what is important to the American people who sense deeply, because it is part of our cultural DNA, part of our fundamental reason for being as a nation, that we have a right to privacy over a personal decision that should be made by a woman in consultation with her doctor, her health care provider, and her family, without interference from government bureaucrats or politicians. That is what is important. Ending the chilling effect of those State restrictions is also one of the goals—the chilling effect that deters women from exercising those rights, making those rights real, protecting a woman's right to decide whether and when to have a child. Every pregnant woman faces her own unique circumstances and challenges, and she has a right to make her own decision based on her own values, guidance from a physician she trusts, a family member she loves and her personal goals and what is right for her family.

In the 40 years since *Roe v. Wade*, the attacks on this right have not been slowed; they have merely evolved, and they have taken new forms. I stand with my colleagues today and ask that we recognize together these pervasive threats, that we counter them and stand together in fighting back.

I am very proud to stand with Senator BALDWIN and Senator MURRAY, and I am proud to yield for Senator BALDWIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Connecticut.

Last week marked the 41st anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which affirmed that women have the right to make their own personal health care decisions and to have access to safe and legal reproductive care.

The anniversary of *Roe* should commemorate how far our country has progressed in the last 40 years in safeguarding women's reproductive freedoms and access to quality health care. But today I rise to recognize that history has been made in another way; that is, turning back the clock.

Americans across the country expect to have access to high-quality, dependable health care when they and their families need it. Unfortunately, for women across this country, this access has come under attack.

As my colleagues and I have worked to reform our health care system, to expand access to quality, affordable health care, too many States have enacted record numbers of laws that restrict a woman's access to comprehensive reproductive health services and the freedom to make her own health

care decisions. In the past 3 years, States across the country have enacted a total of 205 provisions that restrict women's access to safe abortion services. In 2013 alone, States enacted 70 of these measures.

In my home State of Wisconsin, we are now ranked as one of the worst States when it comes to a woman's reproductive rights, thanks to our Republican Governor and legislature. Wisconsin women, families, and their doctors are facing a slew of new and radical restrictions to health services mandated by one-party—Republican—rule in my State.

Most recently, our Governor has enacted four new restrictions on women's access to safe and legal abortion care in our State. For one, he signed a law that not only forces women to undergo unnecessary medical procedures but also imposes unreasonable requirements on doctors who deliver care to women.

I recently heard from a mother in Middleton, WI. She found out her baby had severe fetal anomalies and would not survive delivery. She had to undergo an emergency termination, and a clinic in Milwaukee was the only place that would do the procedure. But because the Governor was set to sign this law imposing unreasonable requirements on providers, the clinic was preparing to close its doors and wouldn't schedule her for an appointment. She and her husband were forced to find childcare for their two sons and leave the State and travel to Minnesota just to get the medical care she needed. If not for a Federal court order blocking the law shortly after the Governor signed it, the admitting privileges provision would have reduced women's access to safe and legal abortions in Wisconsin by 66 percent, closing several health care clinics and leaving women out in the cold. But unfortunately for this woman in Middleton, the court order did not come fast enough and the Governor's law disrupted her family during a deeply personal and trying time.

The threat in Wisconsin and in States across the country is clear. Politicians are doing this because they think they know better than women and their doctors. The fact is they don't. It is not the job of politicians to play doctor and to dictate how these professionals practice medicine, nor is it their job to intrude in the private lives and important health decisions of American families.

That is why I am proud to stand with my colleagues, including my good friend from Connecticut and my good friend from Washington State, and challenge these attacks on women's freedoms. I am proud to have introduced the Women's Health Protection Act because every American woman deserves the freedom to exercise her constitutional rights by making personal

health decisions for herself and for her family with a trusted doctor and without political interference.

Our bill makes it clear that States can no longer enact laws that unduly limit access to reproductive health care and that do nothing to further women's health or safety. The Women's Health Protection Act creates Federal protections against State restrictions that fail to ensure women's health and intrude upon personal decisionmaking. It promotes and protects a woman's individual constitutional rights and guarantees that she can make her own responsible health care decisions no matter where she lives.

Elected officials should not put politics before women's health and women's safety. Women are more than capable of making their own personal medical decisions without consulting their legislator. Every woman in America deserves the freedom to plan her own family, to make her own health care decisions, and to have access to essential and quality women's health care services. We need to act now to guarantee that women will continue to have that freedom.

Today I stand with 33 of my Senate colleagues and 99 Members of the House of Representatives to move our country forward with the Women's Health Protection Act and to safeguard women's constitutional rights under *Roe*. We need to act now to protect a woman's access to care and her constitutional rights, no matter where she lives, by enacting the Women's Health Protection Act.

Again, I thank my colleagues, in particular my good friend from Connecticut, in leading us in this discussion on the Senate floor but also with the introduction of the bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I thank my colleagues from Connecticut and Wisconsin for their strong voices in support of a woman's right to make her own health care decisions in this country. I appreciate them being here today to talk about that and to stand with me to remind our colleagues that 41 years ago last week, just about 400 yards from where we are standing today, the course of history for women in the United States was changed forever.

After over one century of struggle, a new generation of American women had access to safe and legal abortion. With one case, American women gained the ability to make their own decisions about their own health care and their own bodies. At a time when some Members of this body were far too young to remember, women stood up to the restrictive laws of States and the Federal Government and to the men who at that time wrote them.

I would like to think that after four decades, many of those who want to

make women's health care decisions for them have come to grips with the fact that *Roe v. Wade* is settled law. But unfortunately that notion is quickly shattered with one look at our legislatures across the country and efforts right here in Congress. In fact, tomorrow the House of Representatives is slated to vote on their misleadingly named "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act." That bill severely undermines a woman's access to insurance coverage of comprehensive health care and fails to allow her to get the care she needs, even when her own health is at risk. It is nothing more than an attempt to eliminate access to abortion services while restricting a woman's ability to make personal decisions about her own care. I guess we shouldn't be surprised.

The truth is that the tide of these politically driven, extreme, and unconstitutional laws continues to rise. In 2013, our Nation saw yet another record-breaking year of State legislatures passing restrictive legislation barring women's access to abortion services. In fact, in the past 3 years, the United States has enacted more of these restrictions than in the previous 10 years combined. That means that now, more than ever, it is our job to protect this decision for women, to fight for women's health, and to ensure that women's health does not become a political football.

For that reason today I will, along with 18 other Members of my caucus, file a brief with the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., v. Sebelius*. Just as in the many attempts before this case, there are those out there who would like the American public to believe that this conversation is anything but an attack on women's health care. To them, it is a debate about freedom—except, of course, for the freedom of women to access their own care.

It is no different than when we are told that attacks on abortion rights aren't an infringement on a woman's right to choose, they are about religion or States' rights, or when we are told that restricting emergency contraception isn't about limiting women's ability to make their own family planning decisions, it is about protecting pharmacists, or when last week we were told that a certain former Republican Governor's comments about women's libido was a "tone" issue rather than a direct reflection of the Republican Party's misguided and arcane policies.

The truth is this is about contraception. This is an attempt to limit a woman's ability to access care. This is about women.

Allowing a woman's boss to call the shots about her access to birth control should be inconceivable to all Americans in this day and age and takes us back to a place in history when women had no voice or no choice.

In fact, contraception was included as a required preventive service in the Affordable Care Act on the recommendation of the independent, non-profit Institute of Medicine and other medical experts because it is essential to the health of women and their families. After many years of research, we know ensuring access for effective birth control has a direct impact on improving the lives of women and families in America. We have been able to directly link it to declines in maternal and infant mortality, reduced risk of ovarian cancer, better overall health care outcomes for women, and far fewer unintended pregnancies and abortions, which is a goal we should all share.

But what is at stake in this case before the Supreme Court is whether a CEO's personal belief trumps a woman's right to access free or low-cost contraception under the Affordable Care Act. Every American deserves to have access to high-quality health care coverage, regardless of where they work, and each of us should have the right to make our own medical and religious decisions without being dictated to or limited by our employer. Contraceptive coverage is supported by the vast majority of Americans who understand how important it is for women and families.

In weighing this case, my hope is the Court realizes that women working for private companies should be afforded the same access to medical care regardless of who signs their paycheck.

We cannot allow for-profit, secular corporations or their shareholders to deny female employees' access to comprehensive women's health care under the guise of a religious exemption. It is as if we are saying that because you are a CEO or a shareholder in a corporation, your rights are more important than your employees who happen to be women. That is a very slippery slope that could lead to employers cutting off coverage for childhood immunizations, if they object to it, or prenatal care for children born to unmarried parents, if they thought that was wrong, or an employee's ability to access HIV treatment.

I am proud to be joined in this effort by 18 other Senators who were here when Congress enacted the religious protections through the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993 and who also were here when Congress made access to women's health available through the Affordable Care Act in 2010. They are Senators who know that Congress never intended for a corporation—or furthermore, its shareholders—to restrict a woman's access to preventive health care, because we all know that improving access to birth control is good health policy and good economic policy. We know it will mean healthier women, healthier children, and healthier families. And we

know it will save money for businesses and consumers.

So today we are taking another step forward to uphold the promise we made to women and provide this access broadly, and I believe our Nation will be better for it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for no longer than 15 minutes.

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

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, tonight the President of the United States will come before the Congress and make his State of the Union Address. That is an annual ritual we go through around here every year, and I have been through State of the Union speeches through multiple administrations. I sort of liken them to somebody making New Year's resolutions at the beginning of the new year, filled with lots of rhetoric and promises, most of which get left on the cutting-room floor when the speech concludes. But that being said, it is something that gives the President an opportunity to lay out his agenda for the coming year.

Rumor has it that this year the President's speech is going to focus on income inequality and economic opportunity. Well, that is good to hear because these last 5 years of the Obama administration have been devastating to Americans who are trying to advance economically.

Nobody can deny that the President inherited a difficult economic situation. I think we would all concede that at the very outset. But he has had now 5 years, going on 6, to make things better. Unfortunately, he has not made much progress.

For the majority of Americans, things do not look much better today than they did 5 years ago. The economy still is not working; unemployment remains at historic recession-level highs; income inequality is at the highest point literally in 86 years; household income has dropped by nearly \$4,000 since the President took office.

I would like to quote from a piece that was published on Sunday. It said this:

The last five years have been cataclysmic. . . . The average income of the top 1 percent of earners increased about 31.4 percent from 2009 to 2012, while wages for the other 99 percent essentially stood still. The proportion of economic gains going to the very wealthy under the Obama administration is greater than it was under Mr. Bush.

Those are not Republican talking points. That is from a column published in the *New York Times*. The column goes on to state:

The rich-poor gap in the United States is now greater than in any other industrialized

country. Upward mobility, a staple of the American Dream, is eroding compared with more than a few nations.

That again is from the New York Times.

Whether the author intended it that way, it is a pretty damning indictment of the economic policies of the past 5 years.

So I am glad to hear that the President is planning to focus on income inequality and economic opportunity tonight. These statistics make it very clear just how important it is we have that discussion right now. And they also make it clear we cannot continue the economic policies of the past 5 years because these policies have clearly failed.

The President has tried throwing taxpayer money at the problem—witness the failed trillion-dollar stimulus bill. He has tried economic bandaids that attempt to alleviate some of the symptoms of economic stagnation without doing anything to address the cause. Neither of those strategies has been successful in doing the one thing that will turn our economy around; that is, creating full-time, well-paying jobs for the American people.

Extending unemployment benefits or offering food stamps may provide short-term relief, but no government assistance is going to provide a stable, secure, prosperous future like a good job will. Real long-term economic security and prosperity comes when families have access to stable well-paying jobs, with the potential for advancement.

If we really want to help Americans, if we really want to get our economy growing, that is where our focus needs to be: creating the kind of environment where job creation can flourish. That means making it easier and less expensive for businesses—particularly small businesses, which create a majority of the jobs in this country—to expand and hire new workers.

Unfortunately, the President has spent much of his Presidency making it more difficult. ObamaCare, for example, saddled businesses with a host of new taxes and regulations that have made it difficult or in some cases impossible for businesses to hire new employees.

CBS reported in December that—and I quote—“Nearly half of U.S. companies said they are reluctant to hire full-time employees because of the [ObamaCare] law.” That is not how you want businesses to feel if you are looking to encourage them to grow and create jobs.

So I am hoping that this evening the President will turn away from the policies that have made nearly half of U.S. companies too worried to hire new full-time employees and turn toward policies that will enable real job creation in our economy.

According to his advisors, the President wants 2014 to be a year of action.

Republicans could not agree more, and there are a number of actions we think the President can take, and I hope he will announce them tonight.

One thing Republicans and Democrats agree on, and would like the President to do, is grant immediate approval of the Keystone pipeline. According to the President's own State Department, the Keystone pipeline would support 42,000 jobs that would provide \$2 billion—\$2 billion—in wages and earnings without taxpayers having to spend a dime. All that is required for the creation of these jobs is the President's approval, which he has inexplicably delayed now for 5 years, despite numerous reports testifying to the benefits of the project and its low environmental impact.

The President's staff has spent a lot of time over the last week talking about the President's intention of acting without Congress when Congress disagrees with him. Well, here is something the President can legitimately do unilaterally. He has the authority to open the door to these 42,000 jobs, and I hope this evening he will announce his intention of acting on approval of the Keystone pipeline.

Another thing I hope the President will do tonight is encourage the majority leader to take up dozens of jobs bills that have been passed by the House of Representatives. Many of these bills passed the House with bipartisan support and could pass the Senate the same way. There is no good reason why the majority leader has decided to let them languish. Surely we could take up a few of those bills. The President ought to call on his party to pass these bills to get Americans back to work.

In the same spirit, I hope the President will call on his party in the Senate to approve trade promotion authority legislation, which would help create U.S. jobs by giving farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and job creators in this country access to 1 billion new consumers around the globe.

Republicans hope the President will use that phone of his that he keeps talking about to call the majority leader here in the Senate and encourage him to pass trade promotion authority as soon as possible.

Of course, no discussion of relief for middle-class Americans and job creators is complete without discussing ObamaCare, which is putting an intolerable burden on middle-class families and small businesses.

I am not very hopeful that the President is going to announce his intention tonight of working with Congress to repair some of the worst parts of his signature law, but for all Americans' sake, I hope he does.

Around the country, families are reeling under the impact of ObamaCare: higher insurance premiums, higher out-of-pocket costs, re-

duced access to doctors and hospitals. Meanwhile, businesses are cutting workers' hours, eliminating health care plans, or declining to expand their businesses to protect themselves from ObamaCare's burdensome taxes and regulations.

There is bipartisan support for more than one change to ObamaCare, and there is particularly strong support for repealing the job-killing medical device tax, which is forcing medical device companies to send American jobs overseas.

In March of last year, the Senate voted 79 to 20—79 to 20—against the tax. More than 30 Democrats voted for repeal. If the President is really serious about putting Americans back to work, he will announce his intention of working with Congress to repeal this job-destroying portion of his legislation.

Last month almost 350,000 Americans gave up looking for jobs and dropped out of the labor force altogether. That is 350,000 Americans in 1 month—1 month—who gave up looking for a job.

The labor force participation rate is at its lowest level in 36 years. More than 10 million Americans are looking for work, and nearly 4 million of them have been unemployed for more than 6 months. In fact, if you had the labor participation rate today that we had when the President took office, the unemployment rate today would be about 11 percent.

It is definitely—it is definitely—time for a year of action. It is time to leave behind the economic bandaids of the past 5 years and focus on policies that will not address just the symptoms but the cause of our weak economic growth.

We need to remove the obstacles facing our Nation's job creators so that struggling Americans can finally get back to work. We need to help create a future where every American has the opportunity for a well-paying, full-time job, with the possibility of advancement. You are not going to see that as long as the policies coming out of Washington, DC, and this administration make it more expensive and more difficult to create jobs for the American people.

And you are not going to do anything about income inequality if you drive people's cost of living higher, which is what ObamaCare's premium increases, higher out-of-pocket increases, energy-cost increases—there are new regulations coming out today that are going to put new requirements and regulations on existing coal-fired powerplants that are going to drive electricity costs through the roof for people whom I represent in South Dakota.

Fifty percent of the electricity in South Dakota comes from coal-fired power. We are told the administration is coming out with regulations that are going to apply those same things that apply to new plants to existing coal-

fired power. So you are going to have not only new plants that are going to be prevented from being constructed but those that are existing that are going to have to modify their plants at enormous cost, in many cases with technologies that do not exist. All that does is put people out of work and makes it more expensive for middle-class Americans to make ends meet.

If you want to do something about income inequality, provide good-paying jobs for middle-class families in this country. Put policies in place that make it less expensive, less difficult to create those jobs, and then drive down the cost for middle-class Americans rather than raising them—rather than having higher energy costs, higher health care costs, higher this, higher that, all because of policies coming out of Washington.

We can do better. The President has not always shown his eagerness to work with Congress in the past. I am told that tonight he is going to talk about all the things he can do unilaterally. I hope that tonight's State of the Union Address will mark a new start. Republicans are ready to get to work. I hope the President is too. I yield the floor.

RECESS

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

There upon, the Senate, at 12:45 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR KIDS ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, this morning the Senator from South Carolina, Mr. SCOTT, and I went to the American Enterprise Institute and outlined two bills that together represent the most ambitious proposals ever to enable States to use Federal dollars to allow parents to find a better school for their child.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about my proposal, which is called the Scholarships for Kids Act, and the context in which we find ourselves today as we look forward to the President's State of the Union address. I would also like to briefly mention the proposal of Senator SCOTT from South Carolina. He has already introduced his bill. He will be on the floor at another time to talk about it. But these are big ideas. Together they represent redirecting about 35 billion Federal dollars that are now being spent through a series of programs and instead spend them in a way that better fits the age in which we find ourselves, an age in

which the best Federal investments can be made in things that enable Americans to do things for ourselves to make our lives better and happier and safer and longer.

Let me talk first about Scholarships for Kids. I ask unanimous consent that an article describing the bill be printed following my remarks.

The legislation that I am introducing today would allow approximately 11 million new Federal scholarships to follow low-income children to any school their parents choose as long as it is accredited. It is not a Federal mandate. It would enable States to create those choice options. But it would mean about a \$2,100 scholarship of Federal dollars on top of the money that States already spend on elementary and secondary education for each child.

The State of Tennessee, for example, spends nearly \$8,000 per child on public elementary and secondary education. This would be providing a \$2,100 scholarship to the one-fifth of students who are low income and allowing that money to follow them to the school they attend.

Our country is united, not by race, but by a set of principles upon which we agree. One of the most important of these is the principle of equal opportunity. For me, equal opportunity means creating an environment where the largest number of people can begin at the same starting line. I believe this is a real answer to the inequality in America that we hear so much about, giving children more opportunity to attend a better school.

The Scholarships for Kids Act will cost \$24 billion a year. It will be paid for by redirecting about 41 percent of all the dollars we now directly spend on Federal elementary and secondary education programs. About 90 percent of all of the spending on our elementary and secondary schools is State and local spending, and about 10 percent is Federal spending. This is 41 percent of that 10 percent.

It includes all of the money the Federal Government spends on elementary and secondary education except money for children with disabilities—and Senator SCOTT's legislation addresses that. It does not touch the Student School Lunch Program. It does not affect Federal research in education, and it does not affect Impact Aid.

The whole purpose of Federal aid to elementary and secondary education is to help low-income students. But unfortunately, often the Federal dollars are diverted to schools with wealthier students. The left and the right both have noticed this and would like to change it.

Scholarships for Kids would benefit only children that fit the Federal definition of "poverty" which is about one-fifth of all school children. That is because it would pin the \$2,100 scholarship to the blouse or the shirt of the

child, and it would follow that child to the school the child attends.

Allowing Federal dollars to follow students to a school has been a successful strategy in American education for more than 70 years. Last year, \$33 billion in Federal Pell Grants and \$106 billion in Federal loans followed students to the public and private colleges of their choice. Since the GI bill began in 1944, these vouchers—that is what they are—have helped to create a marketplace of about 6,000 autonomous institutions and a higher education system that is regarded by almost everyone as the best in the world.

Our elementary and secondary education system is not the best in the world. U.S. 15-year-olds rank 28th in science and 36th in math. I believe one reason for this is that more than 93 percent of the dollars that we spend through the Federal Government for higher education follows students to the colleges of their choice, but Federal dollars do not automatically follow students to the elementary or secondary school of their choice.

Instead, with our elementary schools and our middle schools and our high schools, money is sent directly to the schools. Local government monopolies run most of those schools. They tell most students exactly which school to attend. There is little choice and no K-through-12 marketplace as there is in higher education. Again, in higher education, you have 6,000 autonomous institutions. You have generous amounts of Federal dollars. They can follow you to the college or university of your choice, whether it is public or private or nonprofit or for-profit, as long as it is accredited. So students may go to Harvard, Yeshiva or Notre Dame, or to Nashville's Auto Diesel College or to the University of Tennessee or to the community college nearby. The former Librarian of Congress, Daniel Boorstin, often wrote that American creativity has flourished during "fertile verges," times when Americans became more self-aware and creative.

In his book, "Breakout," Newt Gingrich argues that society is on the edge of such an era, the Internet age, an age where everything will change, like everything changed at the time of the new internal combustion engine.

Newt Gingrich in his book cites computer handbook writer Tim O'Reilly for his suggestion about how the Internet could transform government. Here is how Tim O'Reilly says we ought to do our job as we try to help use the government to help Americans during this period of time:

The best way for government to operate is to figure out what kinds of things are enablers of society and make investments in those things. The same way that Apple figured out, "If we turn the iPhone into a platform, outside developers will bring hundreds of thousands of applications to the table."

Already 16 States have begun a variety of innovative programs supporting

private school choice. Private organizations in many parts of our country supplement these efforts. Scholarships For Kids, allowing \$2,100 Federal scholarships to follow 11 million children, would enable other school choice innovations in the same way that developers rushed to provide applications for the iPhone platform.

Senator TIM SCOTT has proposed what he calls the CHOICE Act. It would allow 11 billion other Federal dollars that the Federal Government now spends through programs for children with disabilities to follow these 6 million children to the schools their parents believe provide the best services.

So there might be a child in Tennessee or Wisconsin or South Carolina who is eligible for both—the Scholarship For Kids, because he or she comes from a family that fits the Federal poverty definition. So there is \$2,100. Then, if that child is also disabled, the child might be eligible for a scholarship under the CHOICE Act of several thousand dollars. That would then be in addition to the amount of money that South Carolina, let's say, spends on education per child, which is in the neighborhood of \$9,000.

So to take the case of Tennessee again, \$8,000 or so for the State, \$2,100 more Federal dollars through Scholarship For Kids, a few more thousand dollars, depending upon circumstances, for the scholarship under Senator SCOTT's proposal, and you have a significant amount of money that a parent could use to follow a child to the school that helps that child succeed.

Especially in the case of children with disabilities, that seems to make so much good sense to me. Senator SCOTT tells a poignant story of a young girl in South Carolina who was in a kindergarten. She has Down syndrome. She was in a kindergarten that helped her succeed. But then her parents moved. They had to fight for a year to get her new school to treat her in a mainstream way. Then they realized that the school they had been fighting for a year was the one they were counting on.

Why not let that family take the \$13,000, \$14,000, \$15,000 or \$16,000 for that child with Down syndrome, pick a school that treasures that child, and let the money follow the child to the school the child attends.

So a student with a disability and from a low-income family would benefit under both programs. As I said when I began my remarks, taken together with Senator SCOTT's proposal, Scholarship For Kids constitutes the most ambitious proposal ever to use existing Federal dollars to enable States to expand school choice.

Importantly, this is not a Federal mandate. Washington is full of politicians who fly an hour or an hour and a half from their home town, and they get here and think they have suddenly

gotten smarter. They have a good idea and they say: Oh, let's apply that in Wisconsin and in Tennessee and in South Carolina. I try not to do that. I am a very strong believer, for example, in teacher evaluations. I led the fight for teacher evaluations as Governor of Tennessee 30 years ago. We were the first State to do it. When I came to Washington people said: Well then, you will want to make everybody do that? My answer was no, I will not. States have the opportunity to be right, and they have the opportunity to be wrong.

The last thing Tennessee needs is the Federal Government peering over the shoulders of communities and school districts and legislators and governors and school boards who are trying to work out the very difficult problem of teacher evaluations. It is the holy grail of education reform as far as I am concerned, but it should not be mandated from Washington. I very much believe in school choice, but it should not be mandated from Washington. So under Scholarships For Kids, States still would govern pupil assignments, deciding, for example, whether parents could choose private schools.

When I was Secretary of Education years ago, Milwaukee was in the midst of a major program to try to give low-income parents more choice of schools, including private schools. So along with President George H. W. Bush, we proposed what we called a GI bill for kids to allow Milwaukee and Wisconsin to do it if it wished to do it. But it did not impose what we thought was a good idea from Washington. Under Scholarship For Kids, schools that parents chose for their child with their \$2,100 scholarship would have to be accredited. Federal civil rights rules would apply. My proposal does not affect school lunches. There also is an independent evaluation after 5 years so that Congress can assess the effectiveness of the new tool for innovation.

In remarks that Senator SCOTT and I made this morning, the issue of private schools came up, which always does when we talk about expanding school choice. But in this case, we are not necessarily talking about private schools. Most schools are public schools. I would assume that most of these \$2,100 scholarships would follow students to the school they attend, which would be a public school.

So if a State chose to create a program whereby its low-income citizens could choose a private school, as long as it was accredited, that would be appropriate under the law. Why shouldn't a low-income family have the same opportunities for a better school for its child that a wealthier family, who may move to a different part of town or may be able to afford a private school, does?

The idea of allowing dollars to follow students to the school of their choice has not exclusively been an idea of the

left or of the right in our country. In the late 1960s, the most conspicuous proposal for school choice was from Ted Sizer, then Harvard University's education dean. He suggested a \$5,000 scholarship in his poor children's bill of rights. That \$5,000 scholarship would be worth two or three times as much today.

In 1992, when I was the U.S. Secretary of Education, President George H. W. Bush proposed a GI bill for kids, a \$½ billion Federal pilot program for States creating school choice opportunities. Yet despite its success in higher education, and despite the fact that it has had powerful advocates on both the left and the right, the word "voucher" remains a bad word among most of the kindergarten-through-12th-grade education establishment, and the idea has not spread widely. Equal opportunity in America should mean that everyone, as much as possible, has the same starting line.

During this week celebrating school choice, there would be no better way to help children move up from the back of the line than by allowing States to use Federal dollars to create 11 million opportunities to choose a better school.

STATE OF THE NATION

If I may conclude with a word about the context in which we find ourselves today, Senator SCOTT and I made our remarks today at American Enterprise Institute. I am speaking on the floor of the Senate on a very important day in our country's history. It is not only National School Choice Week, but it is the day the President of the United States makes his annual state of the Union address. Every President has done that except two—as the Senate historian told us today—and those two died before it was time to make the address, so it is a tradition that goes back to the beginning of the country. We will all go over to the House of Representatives, listen carefully, and the country will watch to listen to what the President has to say.

We are told the issue the President will address is the one of income inequality. If that is what he does, that is certainly an appropriate issue for any American President. Because if equal opportunity is central to the American character, so is the idea of the American dream, the idea that anything is possible, that anyone can go from the back to the front of the line with hard work; and equal opportunity, therefore, helps to create a starting line from which we move.

If the President makes that proposal, I think we know the kind of agenda we are likely to hear. It will have to do with a higher minimum wage that would actually cost jobs. It will have to do with more compensation for perpetual unemployment. It will have to do with canceling more health insurance policies, which is what ObamaCare will be doing in 2014—much more so than it did in 2013.

There is another agenda, another picture, another vision of how we can help the largest number of Americans realize the American dream; that is, more jobs, more job training, and more choices for low-income parents of better schools for their children so they can get a better job.

Instead of a higher minimum wage, which actually reduces the number of jobs, we would liberate the free enterprise system of the wet blanket of ObamaCare, other Obama rules and regulations, and create many more jobs with good wages. Instead of more compensation for long-term unemployment, we would say let's have more job training so they can take one of these good new jobs we propose to create.

Then, instead of directing the money to a model that hasn't worked as well over the last 70 years, let us take the Federal dollars we are now spending on elementary and secondary education and let them follow low-income children and disabled children to the schools of their parents' choice. So they have an opportunity to go to a better school, just as children who aren't disabled and with parents who have more money do.

We will be arguing that a better agenda for income equality to realize the American dream, to help Americans move from the back to the front of the line, is more jobs, more job opportunities, and more choices of better schools for low-income children. That agenda is especially right for the age we are in.

I mentioned the discussion Daniel Boorstin had about America's fertile verges, Newt Gingrich's new book, and the suggestion by the computer programmer that the best way for government to operate is not with Washington mandates or Washington programs but to spend money on things that enable each of us as Americans to do things for ourselves—to live a happier life, to live a better life, to live a wealthier life, to live a safer life.

I hope in the remarks I have made today that I have done that, because we have 70 years of experience with such programs in education. I would argue there may be no more successful social program in American history than the GI bill for veterans. It began 70 years ago in 1944. It did not send money to the University of Chicago, Tennessee, Michigan, and Harvard. It followed the soldier, the airman, and the Navy veteran to the college of his or her choice. We began that practice in 1944. We continue it with the Pell grants today. We continue it with the student loans today. Why should we not follow it with the Federal dollars we spend for elementary and secondary education?

If Federal dollars following students to the colleges of their choice helped to produce the finest higher education system in the world, why should we not

allow States to try to create the best schools in the world for our children—especially our low-income children?

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will recognize this isn't the proposal of the left or the right. I don't know many Democrats who want to get rid of Pell grants or student loans. They are vouchers, pure and simple, that have lasted for 70 years and may be the most successful social program we have. Why not allow States in this Internet age to take the Federal dollars we are already spending for low-income children and make sure the money gets directly to them—and for disabled children, and make sure it goes to directly to them—and give their parents an opportunity to exercise the same kinds of decisions wealthier parents do? They would say: What school would be the best school for my child.

Would that not be a way to help a young American get a leg up on moving to the same starting line that children from wealthier families have—and maybe even a chance to move to the head of the line?

I hope my colleagues and American people will take a good look at the Scholarships for Kids Act, and Senator SCOTT's CHOICE Act. Together they constitute the most ambitious proposal ever to use existing Federal dollars to enable States, and to allow parents—especially low-income parents—to choose a better school for their child. There is no better way to create opportunity in America.

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

11 MILLION \$2,100 "SCHOLARSHIPS FOR KIDS":
A REAL ANSWER TO INEQUALITY

Today I am introducing legislation that would allow \$2,100 federal scholarships to follow 11 million low-income children to any public or private accredited school of their parents' choice.

This is a real answer to inequality in America: giving more children more opportunity to attend a better school.

The "Scholarships for Kids Act" will cost \$24 billion a year—paid for by redirecting 41 percent of the dollars now directly spent on federal K-12 education programs. Often these dollars are diverted to wealthier schools. "Scholarships for Kids" would benefit only children of families that fit the federal definition of poverty, which is about one-fifth of all school children.

Allowing federal dollars to follow students has been a successful strategy in American education for 70 years. Last year, \$33 billion in federal Pell grants and \$106 billion in loans followed students to public and private colleges. Since the GI Bill began in 1944, these vouchers have helped create a marketplace of 6,000 autonomous higher education institutions—the best in the world.

Our elementary and secondary education system is not the best in the world. U.S. 15-year olds rank 28th in science and 36th in math. I believe one reason for this is that while more than 93 percent of federal dollars spent for higher education follow students to colleges of their choice, federal dollars do not automatically follow K-12 students to schools of their choice.

Instead, money is sent directly to schools. Local government monopolies run most schools and tell most students which school to attend. There is little choice and no K-12 marketplace as there is in higher education.

Former Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstin often wrote that American creativity has flourished during "fertile verges," times when citizens became more self-aware and creative. In his book *Breakout*, Newt Gingrich argues that society is on the edge of such an era and cites computer handbook writer Tim O'Reilly's suggestion for how the Internet could transform government.

"The best way for government to operate," O'Reilly says, "is to figure out what kinds of things are enablers of society and make investments in those things. The same way that Apple figured out, 'If we turn the iPhone into a platform, outside developers will bring hundreds of thousands of applications to the table.'"

Already 16 states have begun a variety of innovative programs supporting private school choice. Private organizations supplement these efforts. Allowing \$2,100 federal scholarships to follow 11 million children would enable other school choice innovations, in the same way that developers rushed to provide applications for the iPhone platform.

Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) has proposed the CHOICE Act, allowing 11 billion other dollars the federal government now spends through the program for children with disabilities to follow those 6 million children to the schools their parents believe provide the best services.

A student who is both low income and has a disability would benefit under both programs. Especially when taken together with Sen. Scott's proposal, "Scholarships for Kids" constitutes the most ambitious proposal ever to use existing federal dollars to enable states to expand school choice.

Under "Scholarships for Kids," states still would govern pupil assignment, deciding, for example, whether parents could choose private schools. Schools chosen would have to be accredited. Federal civil rights rules would apply. The proposal does not affect school lunches. So that Congress can assess the effectiveness of this new tool for innovation, there is an independent evaluation after five years.

In the late 1960s, Ted Sizer, then Harvard University's education dean, suggested a \$5,000 scholarship in his "Poor Children's Bill of Rights." In 1992, when I was U.S. education secretary, President George H.W. Bush proposed a "GI Bill for Kids," a half-billion-federal-dollar pilot program for states creating school choice opportunities. Yet, despite its success in higher education, voucher remains a bad word among most of the K-12 educational establishment and the idea has not spread widely.

Equal opportunity in America should mean that everyone has the same starting line. During this week celebrating school choice, there would be no better way to help children move up from the back of the line than by allowing states to use federal dollars to create 11 million new opportunities to choose a better school.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, it has been 1,406 days since the President signed into law the Affordable Care Act. Since that time, about 10 million Americans who have not had access to

affordable insurance have gotten it and patients have been reempowered, along with their doctors, to take control of their own health care, taking power away from the insurance company which had run our medical lives for too long.

The Presiding Officer and I lived through dozens of votes in the House of Representatives to repeal the bill, as the Senate saw as well, but absolutely no genuine effort to replace the health care bill. I was sitting in the Chair yesterday when one of our colleagues, Senator HATCH, came to the floor to talk about a new proposal—I would probably argue the first proposal from Republicans in 1,406 days to actually talk about what their vision—what Republicans' vision—for health care reform would be. This is just a framework, not a bill, that has been suggested by our colleagues, Senator HATCH and Senator COBURN and Senator BURR. So I wanted to come to the floor to talk about the implications of this framework for affordability and patient protections all across this country.

First of all, I give some credit to our colleagues because it has been 1,406 days of complaints, of politics, of obfuscation, of obstruction. So for the first time we are at least beginning to see what the Republican vision is for the future of health care in this country. Although we don't have a bill—all we have at this point is a framework—it is a pretty scary future because the proposal from our Republican colleagues would dramatically increase the cost of health care for millions of Americans and would put the insurance companies back in charge of our health care.

So for a few minutes I wish to talk in real terms about what this proposal will actually do for health care in this country. I only have a few minutes, so it is hard to go through the litany of backward steps we would take were we to adopt the proposal that has been laid out by a couple of our very brave Republican colleagues.

But the first thing it would do is it would reinstate the fact that being a woman for decades in this country was considered to be a preexisting condition. The health care reform bill says very simply there can be no difference in the amount of money one pays for health care based on gender. The facts are plain: Women have historically paid 50 percent more in terms of health care costs than men have across this country; \$1 billion more is the total amount of money women have paid more than men simply because insurance companies believe that being a woman is a preexisting condition. That is no longer the law of the land. Women pay the same rate as men. There is no difference based on gender. But that would be eliminated by this plan. Once again, being a woman could be considered a preexisting condition.

Second, annual limits on the ability to recoup the cost of your health care from your insurance company would be reimposed. The health care bill says: Listen. It isn't fair that you buy an insurance policy, and when you get very sick, you are told at some point midway through the year your insurance is up. That is not real insurance. The idea of insurance is that we all pool our risks together, and then if one of us, through no fault of our own, gets sick, we actually get those insurance bills paid.

The Affordable Care Act says there can't be any more of those annual limits, but the proposal from our Republican friends says that annual limits can come back from insurance companies. To someone such as Debra Gauvin from Connecticut, who had a \$20,000 limit and who was diagnosed with stage II breast cancer and hit her limit about halfway through the year and then incurred about \$18,000 of additional costs, causing her to basically forgo treatment, that was a painful reality of an insurance plan not delivering on insurance simply because she got so sick she had big costs. That would once again be the reality. The Republican plan would once again allow for annual limits.

Our friends talk about the fact that they address the issue of preexisting conditions, but they don't. They truly don't. Because all their plan says is that if you switch plans and you have no gap, the new plan has to cover whatever illness you may have. But that is not how life works. There are 89 million Americans, in an average year, who have at least a 1-month gap in coverage. That 1-month gap in coverage under the Republican plan—the one shown to us in a basic framework—would allow for preexisting condition discrimination to once again be the law.

Betty Berger, one of my constituents, had insurance her entire life except for basically about a 1- or 2-month period of time where her husband was switching jobs. During that time, their son was diagnosed with cancer. The new insurance company at her husband's new employer wouldn't cover the preexisting condition, and the Bergers lost everything. They lost their home, they lost their savings, and their lives were financially ruined.

The Affordable Care Act ends that nightmare for families. Fifty percent of bankruptcies in this country are caused by medical debt. The Republican plan does not fix the preexisting condition discrimination. All it says is, if you don't have any change, any gap in your coverage, then the new insurance company has to cover your preexisting condition. But for millions of families that is not how life works.

Lastly, although the Republican plan does acknowledge the basic underlying wisdom of the Affordable Care Act is

right, in that the best way to get coverage to people is to give them a tax credit with which to go buy private insurance—that is the foundation of the Affordable Care Act, and the Republican alternative that our colleagues introduced basically adopts that as their framework for expanding coverage as well—it is at a much lesser subsidy rate, with much greater tax consequences to Americans than the Affordable Care Act has in it.

For instance, the Republican alternative says, if you hit 300 percent of the poverty level, that is it, no more subsidy. Well, 300 percent sounds like a lot. Three hundred is a big number. But the poverty level is pretty measly in this country. If someone is making 300 percent of the poverty level, they are making \$34,000 a year. I don't know about the State of the Presiding Officer, but in Connecticut it is hard to put food on the table on a consistent basis at \$34,000 a year. Then to have no help from the government to buy insurance essentially means we will have a huge class of people making \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year who under the Affordable Care Act are getting helped by insurance but whom under this alternative plan will get no help.

But here is how it is even worse. The Republican alternative we have seen this framework on says that one of the ways we are going to pay for this is by taxing people for the health care they are getting. Right now, if someone gets health care coverage through their employer, which 150 million Americans do, they get to essentially exclude that money from taxation. They get those benefits in pretax dollars. The Republicans have said: Well, we are going to allow that to happen but only for about 65 percent of your benefit. So just under half of your health care is now going to be taxable. That is a massive tax increase on the people of this country.

We can debate whether there is policy wisdom in limiting the tax exclusion of health care, but let us just admit that if you are going to fund your proposal based on eliminating the tax exclusion of employer-sponsored benefits to employees, then you are dramatically raising taxes on middle-class Americans all across this country.

So while I give a lot of credit to the Senators who have put this framework out there, because it is the first time we have seen any alternative, it is a pretty miserable alternative for consumers all across this country who have finally for the first time, because of the Affordable Care Act, gotten access to affordable insurance and for countless more Americans who have been insured and who finally feel as though all of the tricks and the gimmicks they have seen from insurance companies, such as excluding people from coverage because of a preexisting

condition or putting an annual limit on their coverage, that those days are over.

So as we go into the debate about the effective implementation of the Affordable Care Act and as we talk about these alternatives that are now being promoted, it is important we do that with eyes wide open. Nobody on our side of the aisle who supported the health care bill is going to tell you it is perfect. No one on our side of the aisle is going to defend every step of the implementation, but it is changing the lives of millions of Americans. It is reducing the overall health care expenditure of this government, and it is putting Americans back in charge of their health care.

Now is not the time to be discussing going back to the good old days when millions of Americans were left out of the rolls and the ranks of those who are insured and insurance companies dictated the day-to-day, week-to-week, and month-to-month health care that is so critical to the lives of middle-class families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, tonight President Obama is going to deliver his State of the Union Address. It will be in front of Congress and the TV cameras, and he will be talking to the American people as well. He and his advisers are probably working right now on some last-minute sound bites and applause lines. But I would say, instead of that, they should be working on an agenda that actually helps unemployed Americans, an agenda that will get our economy back on track.

The President doesn't have very many big opportunities left to do this. He is quickly becoming a lameduck President. The President is going to become a lameduck even faster if he comes to the Capitol tonight and delivers a lengthy speech that just attacks Republicans.

The economic recession ended 4½ years ago. Many Americans have still not seen their careers or their finances or their quality of life improve. That is what Americans are looking for. Unfortunately, they haven't found it because of the Obama economy. That is what the Obama economy has done to Americans.

Millions of Americans have actually, regrettably, given up looking for work. They are falling further and further behind, further and further away from achieving the dreams they have had. Is the President going to tell those people he has no new ideas about how to actually help them?

President Obama is failing. He is failing to make it easier for the American economy to recover and he is failing to help Americans who desperately want to work. He is failing because he is fo-

cused on things such as extending emergency unemployment benefits and raising the minimum wage. While an unemployment check can be a vital safety net for families, it is not a long-term solution for what is becoming a part-time economy under President Obama.

Tonight the President can deliver yet another partisan political speech—he may get a standing ovation here and there from the most liberal side of the aisle—or he can do what he should do as President: focus on solutions with proven bipartisan support.

The President has made a point of saying lately that 2014 will be, as he calls it, a year of action. He said he intends to act on his own, without waiting for Congress. I believe that would be the wrong course. President Obama has had trouble getting some of his policies through Congress, and the main reason is the American people do not support his policies. He should use this speech tonight to move to the center, to show he is willing to work with others. He shouldn't give a speech that shows he is moving further to the left. We have had too much of the President's politics of division.

The politics of division is hurting the economy and it is hurting the country. Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill already agree on ideas to get America and Americans back to work.

There are many policies that President Obama can talk about in his speech tonight that will not require him to go around Congress but, rather, to come to Congress. I would like to suggest three of them that he should announce tonight.

First is the Keystone XL Pipeline. The President should say he will stop blocking construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline. His own State Department says that the pipeline construction could support over 42,000 jobs across the country, and a bipartisan group of 62 Senators, 62 Members of this body, backs the project. Early in 2013 President Obama met with Senate Republicans. He told us we would have an answer about the pipeline by the end of the year. That was 2013. The year has come, gone, and the Keystone XL Pipeline approval is still sitting on the President's desk. The American people deserve an answer, and the answer should be yes.

Second, the President really should address his reckless Environmental Protection Agency—the EPA—and how its regulations are putting Americans out of work. Recently the EPA released new requirements for powerplants. The requirements are unachievable and they are unnecessary. Ironically, the EPA did this on the exact same day as the 50th anniversary of the start of the war on poverty declared by LBJ. These harsh new regulations are going to cause energy costs to go up, and they are going to cause people to lose their

jobs as coal plants are forced to close. The job losses and higher prices are going to fall most heavily on people struggling in Appalachia and across coal country. Higher energy costs clearly hurt our economy. The President must sensibly rein in his EPA before it does even more economic damage.

Third, the President should support bipartisan efforts to repeal his medical device tax. This is a destructive tax, and it was part of the health care law. It has been estimated by some that the tax puts thousands of American jobs at risk because it helps to push manufacturing overseas. An amendment to repeal that medical device tax passed right here in the Senate last year with a bipartisan vote of 79 to 20. With all the changes President Obama has made to his health care law, it is barely recognizable. Repealing this tax would be a change that actually helps Americans and not just the President's poll numbers.

There are many things the President can talk about tonight that have this sort of bipartisan support. These are just three, but they would be a good place to start.

When the President leaves here after the State of the Union, he is going to go visit four States: Maryland, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and then Tennessee—four States, eight U.S. Senators. When we take a look at who they are, four are Republicans, four are Democrats. All 8 of them—4 Democrats and 4 Republicans—were part of the 79 Members of this body who voted to repeal the medical device tax.

When the President's spokesman the other day on Sunday's TV shows said the President is going to use his phone and his pen, I would say he ought to use the phone to call the eight Senators to say: I am going to use my pen, after you vote to repeal the medical device tax, to sign that into law. That is something which would show bipartisanship on the part of the President as well as really help with our economy.

Nearly 21 million Americans are out of work or they are trapped in part-time jobs. It is time for President Obama to talk less about divisive ways to redistribute Americans' prosperity and more about helping all Americans increase their own prosperity. America is a strong and resilient nation. We can overcome the Obama economy, and we will. We can overcome—and we will—the bad policies of this administration. The President should come tonight to the Capitol and say he is willing to help Americans return to prosperity.

If the President announces these three policies tonight, the country and the economy will benefit and a bipartisan group of Republicans and Democrats will all be able to stand and applaud.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would also like to address the matter of the President's State of the Union speech tonight. I am sure that, as has been the rule, President Obama will make an eloquent speech. He is very good at that. There is just one problem: The President's credibility has been shattered. Indeed, on issue after issue we see a massive gap between his rhetoric and the reality. You might say that the two biggest challenges the President faces tonight are those two challenges. One is to his credibility, and the other is to his competence and the competence of the Federal Government, actually, to be able to deliver on the promises it makes.

The most obvious example is the health care law, which we have heard a lot about and will continue to hear a lot about in this ensuing year. I was visiting with one health insurance company executive who told me that basically the bad news is going to continue to unroll and unravel over the coming months. There will be nowhere to hide.

Perhaps what people want most from Washington, DC, is accountability. I hear it all the time. People say what does it take to get fired? Do people promise the Sun and the Moon and deliver nothing without any consequences? How about people who were charged with implementing the policies of the administration, whether it is the Web site contractor or whomever. The Web site contractor finally did get fired and a new one hired, so I assume that sooner or later the Web site will actually work as advertised. But that still leaves us with the flaws in the underlying policy, which will not work. The American people understand that and they are looking to Washington for help, saying please deliver us from this epic failure which is not what we were promised. In the event there is not a response to that that they deem credible, I promise there will be an accounting come November 2014.

The President said repeatedly that under his signature health care law, if you liked the coverage you had you could keep it. Public opinion polls then showed that roughly 90 percent of the American people liked their health care coverage. Why in the world did we undermine or did ObamaCare undermine the existing coverage people liked just in order to cover more people, which in fact it did not do. We know ObamaCare has forced millions of Americans to lose their preferred coverage, the coverage they said they liked back in 2009. The President repeatedly said ObamaCare will reduce your premiums, make them lower—for a family of 4, about \$2,500. The stories we see, day after day, of American citizens signing up on the health care exchanges is just the opposite. They are experiencing premium shock, and the

fact is it is going to continue to get nothing but worse as people realize that the ones who are signing up for ObamaCare are older, sicker Americans and that young healthy Americans are simply taking a pass, saying I cannot afford it and if I have a problem I will take care of it later.

Premiums are going to continue to skyrocket, and Americans who are looking for more affordable health care coverage will find out that indeed it has been priced beyond their ability to pay.

Here is the rub. The President said—and I think this was the implicit, underlying promise of ObamaCare: If you pass ObamaCare, Congress, everybody will have coverage. We will have universal coverage. The Congressional Budget Office has projected that ObamaCare, even if it were implemented to perfection, exactly as the proponents and the President had expected, it would still leave 30 million people uninsured—30 million people uninsured.

The President said this new law would bring a greater sense of certainty to the U.S. health care system. Instead, we see one of the credit rating agencies actually slashing the credit rating of America's health insurers, citing the uncertainty generated by the implementation of ObamaCare—the opposite, again, of what was promised.

The President also said the Web site, when you plug in your personal information—your Social Security number, your health information that is protected already by Federal law—if you plug it into the ObamaCare Web site it is going to be safe and secure. Cyber experts have testified, particularly in the House of Representatives, that the security of the Web site is worse today than it was several months ago. There is no guarantee that if you put your personal information, your private information, your confidential information into the Web site, it is going to be protected.

Here is the real surprise: I remember when Secretary Sebelius appeared before the Senate Finance Committee just a couple of months ago. I asked her about the navigator program. You remember, the navigator program was supposed to get people to help you sign up for ObamaCare. I said: There is no background check, is there, to be a navigator.

She said no.

I asked: So is it possible that a convicted felon could be a navigator, somebody you are giving your personal information to, to help you sign up for ObamaCare?

To her credit she said, in all candor: Yes; that is possible.

I nearly fell out of my chair.

ObamaCare's broken promises have caused enormous pain and anxiety in millions of Americans in Texas and all

around the country. We see from the Wall Street Journal poll that came out this morning, which had to be a wake-up call to the administration and its allies, the American people are anxious, they are dissatisfied, they are wondering what has gone so terribly wrong in Washington, DC, and ObamaCare is exhibit 1. That is why we are committed on this side of the aisle to working with our colleagues, when they are ready to talk to us, and to replacing ObamaCare with patient-centered alternatives that will actually bring down the cost and make it more affordable.

What better way to get more people covered than to make it more affordable and to make sure government does not make these private decisions for us and our family when it comes to health care but that we, families, get to make that decision in consultation with their family doctor.

When you begin to scrape the surface, the President's problem of credibility and competence—those are the two crises he confronts tonight as he addresses the Nation—all we have to do, beyond ObamaCare, is look at what is happening in the economy. After raising taxes \$1.7 trillion, that was about 1 year ago, during the time President Obama has been President of the United States, the national debt has gone up \$6.6 trillion. But my friends across the aisle, many of them—I would exclude the present occupant of the Chair who I know is concerned about this—my friends across the aisle think nothing of bringing legislation to the floor that is unpaid for that would add to the national deficit and national debt. That is the reason we now have a national debt in excess of \$17 trillion.

That is more than any of us can possibly conceive. When President Obama became President, the national debt was about \$10 trillion. That is bad enough. But in the last 5 years it has gone up \$6.6 trillion—or more than \$6.6 trillion. It is no coincidence that he has presided over the weakest recovery and highest unemployment since the Great Depression back in the 1930s.

President Obama has this very strange idea that the best way to get the economy going is to raise taxes and spend more money. It is just not working. As a matter of fact, we have great debates in Congress about the role and the size of the Federal Government. But perhaps the best example of why big government does not work has been the lousy economy, the slow economic growth, the high unemployment, and the number of people who have actually dropped out of the workforce.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has this figure that it calculates. It is called the labor participation rate. You can google Bureau of Labor Statistics or labor participation rate. That will show you that the percentage of people

between the ages of 25 and 54 who are actively engaged and looking for work is lower today than it was at the height of the recession in 2008. Another 347,000 people dropped out of the workforce in December alone.

I know when we look at the unemployment rates that are released from time to time, we see the rate coming down a little bit, and we say: That is great. The unemployment rate is coming down. The problem is that in December alone almost 350,000 people quit looking for work. They gave up. We know that nearly 4 million people who are still looking for work have been out of a job for more than 6 months. That is not an economy to be proud of.

Let me just contrast that with what happened in the 1980s during the Reagan recovery. Typically, what economists will tell you is that when we have a recession, it is sort of a V shape. So when it hits bottom, it actually bounces up pretty quickly because there is nothing but the upside left to go. Yet this recession has been more of a U shape. In other words, we hit bottom, and we are still bouncing along the bottom. We haven't seen the kind of economic growth that we need to get people back to work, to grow our economy, and to get our budget balanced. I think the reason for that is some of the very policies I talked about a moment ago. It is due to the same misguided policies that the President has advocated and will no doubt talk about again tonight in his State of the Union Address.

I heard my colleague Senator BARRASSO from Wyoming talk about the Keystone XL Pipeline. The President likes to say: I have a pen, I have a phone, and I'm going to go it alone. Of course he can't do that under our Constitution. We all learned in high school about the checks and balances of the three coequal branches of government. The President can't spend a penny without Congress appropriating the money.

If we take him at his word, and he really wants to do something about the economy and reduce our dependence on imported oil from dangerous sources abroad, he could use that pen he talked about to authorize the Canadian-American connection of the Keystone XL Pipeline. You would then see a lot of the oil and energy produced in Canada, which is combined with the energy added to that pipeline, make its way down to southeast Texas where the refineries will turn it into gasoline and jet fuel, and in the process create thousands of new jobs.

Rather than using that pen to put people back to work and make sure that we have safe sources of energy, his administration is working behind the scenes to kill the Keystone XL Pipeline. Politics is the only explanation.

The President should not be surprised at what this Wall Street Journal

poll showed this morning—that most of the voters disapprove of how he handled the economy. Likewise, he should not be surprised that trust in the Federal Government has also fallen to historic lows; that is the credibility problem. You can't promise the Sun and the Moon and deliver squat and expect people to trust you next time when you make another promise.

Then there is this. The Obama administration has repeatedly ignored or waived laws that prove inconvenient—from ObamaCare to immigration to welfare reform to education, energy, and drug policy.

One of the most frequent questions my constituents ask me back home in Texas is: How can the President do that? I thought we were a nation that believed in the rule of law, that the law applied to everybody in America no matter how humble your station in life or how exalted—whether you are the commander in chief. I guess we have to revisit that when the President picks and chooses which laws he wants to enforce. Of course, Congress can pass laws. That is what Congress does.

The executive branch is the one that is supposed to enforce the law. So unless someone files a lawsuit—not Eric Holder in the Department of Justice, one of the most politicized Departments of Justice I can even remember. When some private organization or individual—such as the one who recently challenged the contraception mandate in ObamaCare that was recently stayed by the Supreme Court of the United States—or some association or business files a lawsuit that culminates in a judgment of a court years later, but for that, there really isn't much of a check on President Obama. But that can change, and the voters know how to do it: By changing who is in charge in the Senate in November.

Here is another place where the President overreached and recently had his hands slapped by the courts. This had to do with his claimed authority to do another end run around Congress to make recessed appointments. We all know that under the Constitution the advise and consent function of the Senate is to act on the President's nominees and to vote to confirm them or not. Again, in a case of the President trying to go it alone, the court of appeals slapped down his attempt to do this end run around the Constitution and the advise and consent rule of the Senate. But that didn't stop him. Now he is threatening to take even more unilateral action: I have my phone, I have a pen—he is ready to do it again. That is not how the Federal Government is supposed to operate.

For example, after the President made these unconstitutional recess appointments, the DC Circuit of Appeals ruled on them and said: If the President's claim to make that appointment would be upheld, it would "eviscerate

the Constitution's separation of powers"—the three coequal branches of government, checks and balances. What could be more fundamental to our form of government? The court of appeals said that if they upheld the President's claimed power to make those appointments, it would "eviscerate the Constitution's separation of powers."

We know how important the role of checks and balances is in our form of government and in our democracy. Indeed, our democracy would not be able to survive without them. The people who founded this great country knew that the greatest threat to their freedom and their individual liberties and their most basic rights was the concentration of power, so that is why they separated power at the Federal and State level in the 10th Amendment, but they also separated the power at the Federal level between the judicial, executive, and the legislative branches. Yet this President and his administration have shown repeated contempt for the checks and balances that are so essential to our form of government.

I have said many times that no President has the authority to disregard or selectively enforce the law based on political expediency. If he or she can, then we are nothing better than a banana republic. We are no longer a nation that believes in the rule of law, which has really been the competitive edge that this country has had over other countries. People know if you come and do business in the United States, you are going to have access to the courts, your contracts are going to be enforced, and the laws that are written will actually be enforced by an impartial judiciary. That gives us a competitive advantage economically, morally, and otherwise, but it is being undermined.

Republicans are not the only ones that are worried about the President's willingness to bypass the normal legislative process. Yesterday my colleague from Maine, a Democratic caucus member, urged the White House not to treat Congress as—what he called—an afterthought.

In that spirit, I would like to remind the President of something he said just a few months ago. He said:

We've got this Constitution; we've got this whole thing about separation of powers. So there is no shortcut to politics, and there's no shortcut to democracy.

That is what the President of the United States said just a few months ago. Yet now he is claiming: I have a phone, I have a pen, and I'm going to go it alone. I would like to remind him of something he also said back in 2006, which is very similar. He said:

The Founders designed this system, as frustrating as it is, to make sure that there's a broad consensus before the country moves forward.

I couldn't agree more with the Barack Obama of 2006 or the Barack Obama of a few months ago, but I couldn't disagree more with President Barack Obama of today who somehow has this fantasy—it is nothing better than a fantasy—that somehow he can rise above Congress and the Constitution and the separation of powers and don the robe of a virtual dictator, force new laws down our throat or force the country in a direction that it doesn't want to go. It is a fantasy. It ain't gonna happen.

Yet on issue after issue the President still likes to tell the American people that he can move forward without any regard to consensus or constitutional checks and balances. It is a terrible mistake, and I wish he would reconsider.

In addition to its assault on the separation of powers, this administration has targeted other enemies, such as its intrusive monitoring of journalists' phone records. It has attempted to shake down private companies to get them to fund ObamaCare. It has fostered a culture of intimidation and punished whistleblowers. There have been scandals from Benghazi to Fast and Furious and those responsible for the attempt to intimidate the American people—or some part of the American people—from participating in the political process through the IRS scandal.

We know this administration has repeatedly obstructed the investigations and refused to cooperate with the inquiries that would bring the facts out into the light of day so we can all know what happened, make sure that those responsible are held accountable and, more importantly, make sure it never happens again.

I am confident that this is not the record President Obama will talk about tonight. Although this is his record, it is not too late to change. His own record is what has destroyed his credibility, as well as caused people to question his competence and the Federal Government's ability to actually deliver on the extravagant promises he has made time and time again.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I grew up in East Saint Louis, IL, on the banks of the Mississippi River. As a child, it was a dominant feature in my life—crossing that river, watching that river. It didn't take long as I grew up

to realize that that river has a mind of its own.

Last year, because of drought conditions in the Midwest, the Mississippi River was so low in January and February of 2013 that the Army Corps of Engineers had to come out on an emergency basis and literally scour the bottom of the river of rock formation so that navigation could continue. We were worried that we would have to shut down this major economic artery in the Midwest because the river was so low. The Army did a great job. The navigation continued with only slight delays and no major interruptions. Within 60 to 90 days, that same river was at flood stage. That is what those of us who grew up in the Midwest come to expect and understand—the unpredictability of that river. As we grew up and started to look around, we realized there were bluffs behind us that at one point were the banks of this great river and that we were living in the flood plain, if you will—that area close to the river that once was totally under water, way back when.

So there were flooding episodes, as most communities went through, and efforts made to deal with that flooding, including the building of levees. Those levees, for the most part, on the Illinois side of the river have been reliable. Some have questioned whether they can meet 500-year standards or these epic floods, and I think the question is well worth asking. But the fact is that the efforts made on the Illinois side—I can't speak for others, but at least in that region—have really been up to the task and we have not had serious flooding in a long time in that part of the world.

Because of concerns raised by the Army Corps of Engineers about whether these levees that protect the towns and businesses and families were up to the job, something remarkable occurred. Leaders who lived in the counties—and I will be more specific in a moment—closest to that area got together and said, We are not going to wait on the Federal Government. We are going to impose a tax on ourselves and raise tens of millions of dollars to start fortifying these levees to protect our towns and businesses. I don't know if that has ever happened anywhere else. We have to salute them. They weren't waiting for Uncle Sam to show up and ride to the rescue; they took it into their own hands. Well, I salute them because they did raise the money and they are prepared and they are fortifying those levees.

I love the Army Corps of Engineers. They came to our rescue last year. But the locals have asked the Army Corps of Engineers to come in and certify these levees, that they are stronger now than they ever were, and the Army Corps has been slow to do it. It is frustrating. The locals are doing everything we could ask of them and they

aren't getting at least a timely response from the Army Corps of Engineers. So, as a consequence, we are living in this uncertain world.

All of these businesses, all of these towns, all of these families in this so-called flood plain believe they are protected by the levees, the levees have not been certified by the Corps, and now comes the new National Flood Insurance Program which says to the people living there that they are going to have to pay higher premiums for flood protection in the future. The people rightly said, Wait a minute. We are paying higher sales taxes; we voted to pay higher sales taxes to protect ourselves, and now we are being told we still have to pay higher premiums. That gets to the heart of why we are on the floor discussing the National Flood Insurance Program.

Now I wish to say a few words about my position on this issue because it is one I have struggled with, to try to find the right answer in light of what I think is an extraordinary, if not heroic, effort by local people to address their problem and not wait for the Federal Government, their frustration of not having at least a timely cooperation by the Army Corps of Engineers, and now the prospect that the premiums for their flood insurance are going to go up despite their best efforts to protect themselves. If they were doing nothing, standing back and saying, This isn't our worry; if something bad happens, Washington will ride to the rescue, that is one thing. But they are doing something specific that costs them money and they are trying to protect themselves.

Rapid increases in flood insurance premiums, which are on the horizon, are hard for many people in my State. For the people in Metro East, which is the area I just described which is on the eastern side of the Mississippi River across from St. Louis—the southwestern part of Illinois—for many of them this increase in these premiums would be impossible for them to pay. Forty percent of the Metro East I have just described is mapped as flood plain, and most of the National Flood Insurance Program policyholders there have their premiums subsidized. This meant that instead of paying \$500 a year, they were paying about \$150. It made it more affordable to them. However, the new increases that are anticipated could be as much as 400 percent.

In Granite City, IL, policyholders paid \$585 last year for flood insurance, but with the new increases, the premiums are expected to rise to \$1,500 or even \$2,000 a year. For some people, \$2,000 a year may not sound like a sacrifice. But for hard-working families in small homes they have worked hard to buy and build, another \$2,000 a year can make some real impact on their lives.

Additionally, 30,000 new structures in Metro East could be newly mapped into

a flood plain when FEMA finally finalizes its flood maps. These homeowners could end up paying \$500 to \$2,000 a year for flood insurance. Allowing their premiums to rise so high so quickly is unacceptable, especially given how the people in Metro East have worked together over the last 7 years at significant expense to themselves to improve the 74-mile levee system.

In 2007, the Army Corps notified Metro East locals that their levees needed improvement. The next year FEMA notified them that much of the area would be mapped into a flood plain, triggering mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements unless the levee was improved. In response, the three Metro East counties I mentioned earlier—Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair, where I grew up—taxed themselves to pay for the improvements to their levees. They raised \$150 million. I believe this type of local commitment is unprecedented. I don't know if anyone else is doing this. They did it.

There have been a number of setbacks, but when they occurred, I have tried to work with the Army Corps and with my colleagues in Congress to get these projects back on track. I commend the people in Metro East for working together to honestly address the threat of flooding. No community wants to go through the pain and loss of damaging flooding. The Presiding Officer has been through it in West Virginia. I have been through it. Twenty years ago, in 1993, there was horrific flooding on the Mississippi River and there have been several instances since. I was out there piling up the sandbags with a lot of folks trying to protect homes and businesses.

These communities in Metro East are actively doing something to prevent the recurrence of that kind of a disaster. So while the locals continue to work with the Army Corps to achieve the highest level of levee protection as quickly as possible, I am going to continue to make their work a priority in my efforts. Because the residents of Metro East have taken on a significant financial commitment to protect homes and businesses, I will work to ensure that flood insurance premiums are affordable.

I wanted to draw attention to the way the residents of Metro East have taken the initiative to help protect themselves from the risk of flooding, because not every community is engaged as directly with this threat as they have been. My constituents in this part of the country, for the most part, cannot afford to buy flood insurance at the new levels and the new rates.

I agree with the effort underway by Senators MENENDEZ, ISAKSON, LANDRIEU, and others to slow down these increases, and that is why I am supporting their effort. But we need to do this with our eyes wide open. The Na-

tional Flood Insurance Program is not going to keep up with the costs of recovery from severe weather events that we see on the horizon.

The National Flood Insurance Program provides nearly 6 million business owners, homeowners, and renters \$1.2 trillion in coverage. The problem is the program simply doesn't collect enough money to cover the costs of rebuilding communities from floods, hurricanes, and other disasters.

The flood insurance program will be more than \$20 billion in debt after making payments for Superstorm Sandy. If we in Congress continue to ignore the structural weakness in the flood insurance program, that deficit, that debt, that shortfall is going to grow in the future. We can and should, sadly, expect more intense extreme weather events. According to computer models, the changing climate means the storms we are seeing will become stronger and more extreme in the future, causing even greater amounts of damage. Nationwide, the financial consequences of weather-related disasters and climate change hit an historic high in 2012, causing over \$55 billion in damages.

I had a hearing on this issue, and I thought: If I bring in environmentalists, a lot of folks will discount it completely when they start talking about climate change. They may not attend. They may walk out of the room. So instead I brought in people from the property and casualty industry, the insurance industry. What do they do for a living? They watch the weather. They watch it more closely than any politician ever did, and they decide adequate premiums to cover the reserves needed to protect from these weather disasters.

The story they told us was: Get ready. The weather is going to get more extreme, and the costs and damages are going to grow dramatically. Some insurance companies—major insurance companies—have walked away from States, saying: There is just too much exposure there. We cannot charge premiums and collect enough to create a reserve in the instance of a natural disaster.

Now, that is the reality of the private sector analysis of this issue. This is not some—pejorative term—tree-hugging environmentalist musing about possibilities. These are hard-hearted actuaries and accountants taking a hard look at what the future holds. The private insurance industry has looked at the scientific data, and they have made changes in the way they do business. They are adjusting their operations to prepare for worse weather and bigger losses. They have begun raising premiums for wind, earthquake, and flood insurance in areas where disasters are likely, ensuring the rates accurately reflect the risk of damage. The industry has also

begun to refuse insuring properties in states where there is just too much risk. In contrast, the Federal Government has not adequately prepared to handle the growing number of severe weather events.

Well, Senator DURBIN, where does this leave you? You do not think your people can afford to pay the higher premiums, and yet you do not think the reserves set aside for the flood insurance program are adequate.

I think that is the reality of what this political vote is likely to show.

Yesterday the vote on the floor was an overwhelming bipartisan vote to go forward on this measure. We know the Flood Insurance Program will not be able to keep up with the damage inflicted on our communities. The cost—asking homeowners and businesses to pay dramatically more in flood insurance premiums—is too high to make the National Flood Insurance Program viable in the near future.

We need to recognize that losses from future floods will likely cost more than the National Flood Insurance Program can cover. And then—and that is why I think we need a dose of reality in this Chamber and on Capitol Hill—Congress has to step up. That is a reality. We know these disasters are likely to occur, and we cannot—will not—collect the premiums necessary to create the reserves to cover them. It will be our responsibility to ensure that help is there. Whether that disaster is in Kansas, Illinois, West Virginia, or anywhere across the United States, Congress cannot deny that help.

It is time that we seriously address the effects of climate change and rethink how we protect and provide disaster assistance to communities on a regular basis. Those who choose to ignore the overwhelming scientific evidence of climate change cannot ignore the overwhelming accounting evidence that the National Flood Insurance Program will not be able to meet the increasing expense of natural flooding disasters.

Our votes—if we pass this measure before us—may spare families from an unacceptable financial burden if flood premiums skyrocket, but they do not spare us from the reality that the damages from future flooding disasters will be nationalized, as the damages of Katrina and Sandy were.

Those who vote for this Menendez-Isakson-Landrieu measure—as I will—are voting at the same time to nationalize the cost and damages of future disasters, to say that this is going to be something we will respond to as needed. I have done that throughout my congressional career in the House and Senate, stood up to help those regions of the country in trouble, from California all the way to the east coast, and I will do it again because I think it is an American family responsibility. There is a limitation to what this National Flood Insurance Program can

achieve. There is certainly a limit to how much working families can pay for these premiums. And we have to accept the reality that when these flooding events occur, when these disasters occur, we have to accept that responsibility.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

FARM BILL

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the Agriculture Act of 2014. That is the new name of the farm bill.

After over 3 years of hard work by the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and other interested Members, we are finally nearing the finish line for this version of the Nation's farm and food policy.

As all Kansans and all farmers and ranchers from every State know, the farm bill impacts not only our farmers and ranchers but also businesses up and down Main Street, as well as families in our rural towns and urban cities.

Everyone in Kansas, people who work in agriculture or are impacted by its success—which, by the way, is every single American—and my colleagues in the Congress deserve to know why I was the only Senator on the conference committee not to sign the conference report as of last night. I am here today to fully explain my reasoning and why I cannot and will not vote for this legislation.

It all comes down to this simple question: Does the new farm bill improve agriculture in America? I believe the answer is, unfortunately, no.

While we all want to provide long-overdue certainty to producers—something lacking for over 400 days, for 2 years; a record—the conference missed an opportunity for greater and necessary reforms to our Nation's farm programs, Federal nutrition programs, and burdensome regulations.

We should not march backward and pass a farm bill with more government subsidies, more regulations, and more waste.

How on Earth did we get to this point today?

Back in 2011 Chairperson STABENOW and I started the process of writing a new farm bill with a field hearing in her home State of Michigan. Later that year we held another successful hearing in Wichita, KS. After more formal hearings in the Senate and conversations with Kansas producers, Michigan producers, producers all over this country, it was clear to me that this farm bill would have to be reform-oriented, reduce the deficit, and be responsible—not only to farmers and ranchers but also to consumers and taxpayers. Unfortunately, as I stand here today, this farm bill does not meet those standards, and, taken as a whole, the conference report fails to move both Federal farm and food programs forward.

I previously voted against the Senate bill, which looked too much in the rearview mirror for outdated programs, but this report is even worse. Just listen to this: Last year's House bill was officially called the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act—"reform," "risk management"—and here in the Senate we passed the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act. The final report now is reduced to the Agriculture Act, the farm bill.

Today I will focus my comments on my three biggest concerns: commodity subsidy programs, nutrition program spending, and the lack of regulatory reforms so sorely needed.

Considering we all commonly refer to the legislation as the farm bill, my first concern and criticism is the new price loss coverage program. The acronym for that is PLC. It is a subsidy program.

Back in 2012, 2 years ago, I was pleased that the Senate Agriculture Committee and the full Senate passed a bipartisan commodity title that contained real reform. We ended the current countercyclical commodity subsidy program and got the government out of the business of sending signals to producers essentially telling them which crops to plant by setting target price guarantees for producers—farming for the government, not farming for the market. Unfortunately, that reform was replaced in the latest Senate bill with a new target price subsidy program, doubled down in the House version with even higher target prices, and manipulated even more in the conference report to suit the desire of specific crops over the objections of others in different regions.

The new Price Loss Coverage Program repeats a classic government subsidy mistake: setting high fixed target prices or subsidies, which only guarantees overproduction, with long periods of low crop prices, leading to more expensive farm programs funded directly by taxpayers.

Why do we have to go down that road again? I have yet to hear one legitimate explanation for why Congress is about to tell all producers across this country that the Federal Government will guarantee the price of your wheat at \$5.50 per bushel—by the way, it is a little over \$6 right now at the country elevator in Dodge City—and rice at \$14 per hundredweight for the next 5 years regardless of what happens in the market. We have done this before, and we know it creates planting and marketing distortions instead of letting our producers respond to market conditions.

After the World Trade Organization—the WTO—ruled against the United States for our cotton programs, I thought we had learned a lesson. I have said it before and will say it again: The WTO stove is hot. Why would we reach out and touch it again? Remember that

we are still required to pay Brazil millions of dollars a year under that decision.

The Amber Box subsidy programs in this bill will open American agriculture to global trade disputes—which we have already lost and will likely lose again if challenged.

To date, objections and solutions from me and my colleagues—ranging from South Dakota, Senator THUNE; Nebraska, Senator JOHANNIS; Iowa, Senator GRASSLEY; and even Ohio, Representative BOB GIBBS—have all fallen on deaf and stubborn ears. Our efforts to add market orientation to the price loss coverage subsidy program, as well as attempts to end it outright, have all been blocked and are certainly not reflected in the final report.

I am equally unhappy with the final outcome of the nutrition title of the farm bill.

Partisan politics has unnecessarily infiltrated this debate, with many Members on the other side of the aisle drawing a line in the sand at zero savings or real reform to the expensive and unrestricted Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. That is called SNAP. It is really the food stamp program. Facts are stubborn things. Despite good intentions, SNAP—food stamps—now makes up more than 80 percent of the Department of Agriculture's budget and was previously exempted from across-the-board sequestration cuts.

What we have here today is a ballooning and expensive set of Federal nutrition programs, with a patchwork of eligibility standards, loopholes, and, frankly, unneeded bonuses to State governments for simply administering the program. If you administer the program right, you get a bonus.

I understand and sympathize with the need for nutrition assistance for hard-working families. I have championed their efforts. However, we cannot and simply should not box off SNAP from unnecessary and timely reforms.

While the Senate version of the bill in 2012 and 2013 did tighten the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program—LIHEAP—loophole to save roughly \$4 billion over 10 years, there have always been additional needed reforms to the program.

At the end of the 2012 Senate bill, I included my personal views in the report. I identified eight additional ways to rein in the out-of-control spending and reinstitute program integrity for the SNAP program.

Last year, in 2013, I introduced a stand-alone piece of legislation that would have saved a total of \$36 billion in SNAP without ever touching individual monthly benefits, and it failed on a party-line vote.

Eventually, the House of Representatives passed nearly \$40 billion in savings—after intense debate over there—

within the SNAP program. That is a 5-percent reduction over a 10-year period. I do not see how the final legislation, amounting to a 1-percent reduction in SNAP spending, is a fair compromise between both versions of the legislation. This just does not add up.

In every single one of my townhall meetings in Kansas—and I know the Presiding Officer from West Virginia finds the same thing true in his home State—the first question fed-up producers and business owners ask is, How can we stop or even slow down the onslaught—the onslaught—of regulations?

This farm bill had great potential to help producers and ranchers and all of agriculture with reducing the crushing regulatory burden from the government's rules and requirements. They just want relief.

Despite years of work in both committees and strong provisions in the House-passed farm bill, the final legislation lacks key, commonsense, and sound science regulatory reforms.

I am more than disappointed that a WTO-compliant resolution to mandatory country-of-origin labeling—it is called COOL—was not reached. As a result, our livestock producers who were already facing drought and high feed prices, now are going to have to worry about retaliatory actions by the Governments of Canada and Mexico.

Our ranchers are equally troubled that provisions in the House bill directing the USDA to refocus their efforts on the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Act, the acronym for that is GIPSA, they were excluded. Another regulatory relief provision was already cleared by the full House and the Senate ag committee would have ended the duplicative National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. I will not try the acronym for that.

These are pesticide permits required by the Environmental Protection Agency. We had an opportunity to protect human health and eliminate duplicative, unnecessary regulatory actions, and instead, despite all of our commitments to work together to resolve the issue, we were all blocked from including the simple and necessary regulatory relief.

Each of these regulatory reforms had bipartisan support. But now producers across the country are left without an explanation and, much worse, no needed relief. I am shocked at how far some Members will go to protect this administration's regulatory agenda instead of protecting real hard-working Americans.

After all of that, let me point out that with any large piece of legislation one can usually find some positives to point to and today's farm bill is no different. While I support many of the programs in the less talked about titles of the farm bill, I am especially appreciative of the inclusion of strong crop

insurance provisions and livestock disaster programs. The No. 1 issue we heard over and over again from our producers across the country and in every corner of Kansas was that crop insurance was their No. 1 one priority for the farm bill; secondly, they said get the regulations off our backs.

The policies in the final bill protect the commitment to producers by strengthening crop insurance as the cornerstone of our farm safety net, regardless of the size of their farm or the commodity they grow. As this bill moves forward, the Risk Management Agency, RMA, will be busy offering expanded coverage for commodities such as cotton that have not traditionally participated in the program as much as other crops.

However, I am concerned that the conservation compliance requirement included in the legislation on crop insurance, not on cropping operations, not on being a farmer but on crop insurance, will unnecessarily burden producers who are already good stewards of their land and already subjected to conservation requirements in the commodity programs. This is a duplication—more paperwork.

As the western half of Kansas continues to linger in a historic drought, the lack of livestock disaster programs that expired in 2011 is truly upsetting. We should have never let the programs expire in the first place. We had an opportunity in 2012 to reauthorize them, but the Senate failed to act, over my calls of action.

All of the livestock disaster programs are finally retroactively authorized. But the assistance will be too little and too late in many parts of cattle country. Some have lost part of their herds and even strains of cattle genetics.

Unfortunately, as a Kansan, as well as a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and the farm bill conference committee, I am disappointed to say that the final policies of this farm bill do not outweigh the positives. While we all want to provide certainty to producers, the conference has missed an opportunity for greater and necessary reforms to our Nation's farm programs, Federal nutrition programs, and burdensome regulations.

After over 3 years of debate, the challenges that agriculture faces at home and across the world have only continued to grow. We need 21st century policies and innovative solutions. Instead, this bill misses the mark and goes backward to protectionist programs.

The issues I raise deserve to be debated fully and publicly. I know time is of the essence. Yet the full conference committee met only once for opening statements last October. With all of the ramifications of the farm bill, we met once last October—for 3 minutes apiece.

In truth, the majority of this bill was negotiated behind closed doors without

the opportunity for votes, amendments or discussion. There is too much of that around here. Producers, consumers, and our global trading partners expected more. Unfortunately, the U.S. taxpayers deserve better than this conference report. I did not sign this conference report last night and cannot in good conscience vote for this legislation.

But I will promise this to all of the Members who worked so hard to at least get a bill. I will continue to work and advocate on behalf of advancing agriculture.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in America, education is one of the keys to success—but too many Kentucky children are trapped in failing schools. This week is National School Choice Week, an ideal time to remember that school choice can be an important option for children living in poverty.

Over 10,000 young Kentuckians a year drop out of school, with little likelihood to return and reduced prospects for the future. Dropping out before graduating high school very often subjects kids to added hardship. Studies by the U.S. Census Bureau show that the average high school dropout earns 42 percent less than a high school graduate without a college degree. And these failures of our school system fall hardest on minority and low-income children.

But the big government-educational complex too often cares more about the bricks and mortar of a failing school than the children attending it. Special interests, like those of unions, can outweigh the interests of individual students.

We need to provide increased opportunities for families to choose the education environment that best meets the needs of their children. School choice programs do just that—they empower parents.

There are two types of school choice programs. One program provides financial assistance for disadvantaged students to enroll in private schools. The second charter schools—are public schools that are entrepreneurial and free from many of the constraints of school district bureaucracies. Rather than focusing on red tape, they are singularly focused on academic achievement, and give parents the opportunity to choose the best school for their child.

Both types of programs offer families the opportunity to send their child to safer schools with a proven track record of success. They allow public education dollars to follow the student to the school of their parents' choosing and improve student performance. Surely parents, not bureaucrats, are the best judges of what school is right for their child.

In Washington, DC, studies have shown that the city's private school scholarship program has increased graduation rates by 21 percent. In Indiana, enrollment in the State's private school scholarship program has more than doubled this year, to nearly 20,000 students. Clearly parents in Indiana are pleased with the availability of this option.

Indiana charter school students also saw improvements in learning for math and reading compared to their traditional public school counterparts. If Indiana and Washington, DC, can offer their children better choices, why can't Kentucky do the same?

A recent poll shows that 72 percent of Kentuckians favor charter schools, and yet Kentucky is one of only seven States that does not allow them. I agree with the vast majority of Kentuckians who favor charter schools and have supported Federal incentives for States that permit them, and will continue to do so.

For these reasons, I am a proud sponsor of legislation in the Senate that would expand school choice and allow 11 million low-income students to take Federal funding to the public or private school they choose. This would give parents, not Washington or bloated school bureaucracies, the power to decide how to best use the education money allocated for their children. It would also ensure that students trapped in failing schools don't have to wait for those schools to get better to get a quality education.

While I was encouraged to see Kentucky's ranking among States has improved, more is still needed. Last year, 18 of Kentucky's 22 failing schools were in Jefferson County. Students trapped in failing schools, such as those in the Louisville area, need options before they fall too far behind.

School choice is a way out. For low-income families, it can break the cycle of poverty. Thanks to school choice, many young men and women who

would otherwise not have had the opportunity to excel can grow up to become leaders in their communities and their country.

The current one-size-fits-all education system is not the best approach. Our Commonwealth needs to make fundamental changes so that every child has the opportunity to leave a failing school. I'm grateful for the organizations across the Bluegrass State which are fighting to make that happen. Kentucky's school children are capable of great things; let's make sure we empower their parents to help their children succeed.

TRIBUTE TO DR. LOUIS ARNOLD

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in celebration of the anniversary of Dr. Louis Arnold's birth. Dr. Arnold, or "the Flying Evangelist" as he is known by many in our home State, was born 100 years ago on January 19, 1914, in Buckeye, KY, and has spent his life in service to the Baptist church. He is the founding pastor of Clays Mill Road Baptist Church.

Dr. Arnold felt the call to preach early in life. At age 11, he began preaching to his classmates while they walked to and from school. Then, at 19, he publicly announced his call to preach and held his first sermon in the Mitchellsburg Baptist Church. Following that first sermon—the story goes—he gazed up into the stars with a Bible in hand and said, "Lord, I'd rather be a preacher than to be President of the United States."

Dr. Arnold got the nickname "the Flying Evangelist" during the second World War. Already the pastor of a church in Lexington, KY, he was called to pastor another church in Cincinnati, OH. The churches were separated by 85 miles of country road—too far of a drive to be able to preach at both Sunday services. Undeterred, Dr. Arnold bought an interest in a small plane and learned to fly. Now, not only could he easily commute between the two churches, but he could also fly to revivals and churches across the region. He even equipped his plane with a loudspeaker so he could preach from the sky over cities and towns.

Although Dr. Arnold was born in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, his message has spread far and wide. He has his own radio broadcast, "Preaching at Your Church," and his paper, "The Arnold Report," is mailed to all 50 States. He's organized churches and revivals in his home State of Kentucky as well as travelled abroad to places such as Mexico, Central America, Europe, and the Bahamas. He's written numerous books of sermon and Bible study, and dozens of inspirational novels which have sold in all 50 States and several foreign countries.

Dr. Arnold celebrated his 100th birthday by preaching at the Clays Mill

Road Baptist Church; a remarkable testament to his conviction and faith that have not wavered in the more than 80 years since his first sermon. I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Louis Arnold, an upstanding Kentucky citizen, on the occasion of his 100 years of life and his unwavering devotion to his faith.

TRIBUTE TO IRENE GAINER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to congratulate Irene Gainer on her upcoming retirement from Federal service. Most of my colleagues know Irene through her husband, Senate Sergeant at Arms Terry Gainer, but today Irene gets the spotlight as I take a few minutes to recognize her impressive career.

Many great things come from Chicago, including Irene, who was born and raised in Chicago. Chicago is also where she met her husband Terry and started her first career as a nurse. She attended the College of St. Francis and St. Bernard's School of Nursing. During the early years of their marriage, Irene joined Terry as the Navy moved them around the country from Rhode Island to Virginia and then to California. In each State Irene worked as a nurse, and to this day she maintains her licenses and professional credentials in all three States.

Irene also worked in Illinois hospitals, including St. Bernard's Hospital, Christ Hospital, Central Community Hospital, and for 14 years at the Little Company of Mary Hospital.

In 1988, Irene started her second career—she began law school at John Marshall. Irene attended law school during the day, continued working nights as a nurse at Little Company of Mary Hospital, and—did I mention?—she and her husband were raising their six children.

After law school graduation in 1990, Irene accepted a job as Clerk in the Circuit Court of Cook County. She also worked for the State of Illinois as Assistant Director of Health and Energy Policy, served as General Counsel and Executive Director of the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association, and as an associate in a law firm.

Irene and Terry moved to Washington, DC in 1998. While living here in DC, Irene has worked for the National Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities, Sibley Memorial Hospital, and the Peace Corps. And for the past 5 years, she has been Director of the Hearing Office for the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals.

If Irene's busy career is any indication, there is little chance she will spend much idle time in retirement. Between volunteering with her local Catholic church and staying in touch with her six children spread around the world, she is sure to stay active.

I thank Irene for her many years of Federal service and wish her all the

best in retirement. And I especially hope that she and Terry find lots of time to spend with their 14 grandchildren.

REMEMBERING ALEXIS "LEXIE" KAMERMAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on January 17, just days before our Nation observed a day in remembrance of Martin Luther King, Jr., a man recognized for his nonviolent activism during the civil rights movement, a restaurant in Kabul, Afghanistan, popular with foreigners and expatriates, including Americans, was rocked by a terrorist attack, killing 21 people.

Tragically, we lost one of our own from Illinois during this act of senseless violence: Ms. Alexis "Lexie" Kamerman, a Chicago native who for years had dedicated herself to serving others and only the year prior had moved to Afghanistan, working with the American University there to help increase access to education for Afghan girls and women.

Lexie grew up in Chicago in my home State. She was a 2004 graduate of the Latin School of Chicago, a 2008 graduate of Knox College—where she was also an all-star conference water polo player—and she went on to receive her Masters in Higher Education from the University of Arizona.

Countless friends and family have described Lexie as generous, fearless, and passionate about helping to create a better world. It's no surprise that the 27-year-old found herself in Kabul, working as a student development specialist with American University of Afghanistan. American University of Afghanistan has been committed for years to extend high-quality, affordable education for Afghans, especially girls, who may not have had access to it otherwise.

Sadly, American University of Afghanistan lost another member of its family in the same attack: 29-year-old political science professor Alexandros Petersen from Washington, DC. He and Lexie both were too young, too bright, and too dedicated to helping others to be leaving the world so soon.

Afghanistan has seen many ups and downs over the years. But these heinous attacks on innocent civilians, people such as Lexie who work every day to help the Afghan people achieve a better future, are among the lowest of lows.

My deepest sympathies go out to Lexie's parents, Jack and Alison, and the rest of her family, as well as the family at American University of Afghanistan and to all victims of the attack and their loved ones. It is only fitting that Knox College has created a scholarship in Lexie's name, a well-deserved tribute for a young woman who was so dedicated to others and to the value of education during her all-too-short life.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDICAL RESEARCH

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I rise today to correct some unfortunate remarks made on the floor this month and reaffirm my long-standing support for the medical research programs at the Department of Defense, most of which fall under the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program, or CDMRP. This program has led to major scientific breakthroughs since its creation in 1992 and it is one of my proudest accomplishments here in the U.S. Senate.

This program was created by me and together with my Defense Appropriations colleagues Senator Ted Stevens and Senator Daniel Inouye specifically in response to grassroots advocacy spearheaded by those who suffer from breast cancer, those who have survived it, and their families. The Department of Defense runs one of the largest health systems in the country, serving 9.6 million servicemembers, their families and military retirees, and as a result offered a unique opportunity to undertake Breast Cancer Research. Military families suffer from the same conditions and diseases that affect our society at large, and they also have disproportionate rates of some diseases as a result of their service. My colleagues and I believed that offering potentially lifesaving research specifically focused on this population was a logical step.

So we started with Breast Cancer research in 1992. In the 22 years this program has been funded, we have spent almost \$3 billion on Breast Cancer research, and \$7.5 billion overall on important research on numerous conditions through the Department of Defense. Millions of Americans, including those who receive their health care from DOD, have been touched by conditions such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis—or Lou Gehrig's disease—autism, lung cancer, multiple sclerosis, neurofibromatosis, ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, tuberous sclerosis complex and many others.

And what has that investment yielded? It has paid dividends, with breakthroughs in our understanding of breast cancer. It led to the development of the revolutionary drug Herceptin that is saving and prolonging the lives of millions of American women every day. DOD breast cancer research directly contributed to the discovery of a frequently mutated gene that contributes to several cancers and the OncoVue breast cancer risk assessment test.

But this program's payoff has not been limited to breast cancer: Those who receive Coenzyme Q10 treatment for gulf war illness can thank DOD medical research. The prostate cancer treatment Zytiga received FDA approval in 2011 due to the rapid early-phase clinical testing funded by DOD.

Research jointly funded by CDMRP, the National Institutes of Health—NIH—and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency are creating advanced prosthetics that are accurately recreating the movement of the human hand—which in recent trial allowed a quadriplegic to feed herself for the first time in years. These are just a few small examples of the many research, diagnosis, and treatment breakthroughs this research has brought about.

DOD medical research has also made direct contributions to the understanding and treatment of medical conditions that uniquely or acutely affect those who serve. In addition to the research on gulf war illness, servicemembers and veterans who suffer from traumatic brain injury, tinnitus, or vision problems know that they can receive the most advanced treatment possible thanks to this medical research. DOD medical research is also finding biomarkers to better treat mental illness, so individual servicemembers do not have to go through the trial and error of being prescribed psychotropic medications that may or may not be effective for them. These research programs are helping to provide a better quality of life for those who have recently served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For a number of years now, some in Congress have made the argument that this program does not belong at the Department of Defense, suggesting that these programs are duplicative and that this funding should be spent elsewhere. In fact, the medical research done at the Department of Defense is complementary to and coordinated with the research done at NIH, and other Federal agencies including the Department of Veterans Affairs. While the medical research done at DOD and NIH may have overlapping goals, including many research grants that have been jointly funded, CDMRP has a different mandate, uses different criteria in selecting grants, and uses a unique two-tiered review process that assures high quality of research.

I simply say to those critics of the program, the outcomes speak for themselves. Any suggestion that I believe this program should have been created elsewhere or should be moved is incorrect, and I want to make sure the RECORD is clear on this point.

I thank my colleagues on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Chairman DURBIN and Ranking Member COCHRAN, and the chair and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI and Senator SHELBY, for providing \$1.55 billion in funding for these critical and successful medical research programs in Fiscal Year 2014. I look forward to many more years of breakthrough medical research conducted by the DOD that will directly address the needs of our military members and that will have

broad application to millions of Americans.

MENTAL EXERCISES FOR SENIORS

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today I wish to call attention to the ACTIVE, or Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elderly, study on mental exercises for seniors. The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Florida College of Public Health and Health Professions, showed that older adults who receive cognitive training can significantly improve their reasoning and mental processing skills. Elderly patients were coached and assessed in memory, reasoning, and processing speed at baseline. The study participants were then reassessed at intervals of 2, 3, 5, and 10 years. The result was that participants who received cognitive training reported significantly less difficulty with activities of daily living. Most patients achieved improved reasoning and mental processing speed at the end of the study, the results of which may be found in the January 13 online issue of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

These results echo findings from Senate Special Committee on Aging in its recent work on improving quality of life for seniors who suffer from Alzheimer's and dementia. The Committee's 2012 report, entitled "Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia: A Comparison of International Approaches," stated that "individuals who are cognitively active—such as individuals who regularly read or do crossword puzzles—are at a lower risk of developing mild cognitive impairment (MCI)—an early symptom of dementia and AD, Alzheimer's disease—because they have increased cognitive reserve."

The Senate Special Committee on Aging is also committed to embracing innovative brain health care advances for seniors. During our committee's recent Healthy Aging Forum, various groups invested in senior health care shared novel ideas for better mental health care and quality of life. These included research and medical technology devices that sharpen senior memory, thinking, and cognitive processing skills. Among these were Microsoft Kinect software, which uses cognitive and mental diagnostic, rehabilitative, and routine mental game-based exercises to help improve senior brain health and fine motor skills. Loneliness, which adversely impacts brain health and increases risk for dementia in seniors, can be minimized by engaging seniors with the Gerijoy avatar—also showcased at the Healthy Aging Forum—an interactive virtual pet companion that strengthens seniors' mental capabilities by providing opportunities for meaningful interaction.

The University of Florida Institute on Aging, another invited exhibitor at

the Senate Health Aging Forum, is currently conducting a LIFE, Lifestyle Interventions and Independence for Elders, study in which the effect of physical activity and/or aging health education on senior mobility and independence are being assessed. Cognitive function and impairment are also being examined as a part of the study.

The Senate Special Committee on Aging has conducted numerous hearings on Alzheimer's in recent years, coinciding with my cosponsorship of the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act, S.709/H.R.1507, which will improve diagnosis and care planning services for patients with Alzheimer's. A panel of witnesses from the government, academia, and the Alzheimer's Association discussed recent advancements in these areas in an April 2013 hearing entitled, "The National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease: Are We On Track to 2025?" An updated 2013 version of the national plan also highlights anticipated milestones in prevention of the disease. Lifestyle modifications and identification of Alzheimer's and dementia risk factors are included as part of the plan.

I have long been a tireless advocate in the fight against Alzheimer's and dementia. As the chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I am committed to doing whatever I can to ensure the health and well-being of our seniors. Although much progress has been made, we still have a long way to go in ensuring the best possible quality of life for Americans in their later years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL CATHERINE M. BLACK

• Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to my constituent LTC Catherine M. Black for her exemplary dedication and service to the United States Army and to the United States of America. She has served for the last 2 years as a congressional budget liaison for the Secretary of the Army.

A native of Chicago, IL, Lieutenant Colonel Black enlisted in the Army in the summer of 1994. She was selected as the Soldier of the Year at Fort Gordon, GA, and was subsequently selected for the Officer Candidate School, earning a commission as a finance officer in April 1997.

Lieutenant Colonel Black has served in a broad range of duty stations and assignments over her two decades of service. As a Lieutenant, she served as a disbursing officer in a finance group at Fort Bragg, NC. This culminated in a rotation through the U.S. Army Forces Center in Doha, Qatar. Following the horrific attacks on September 11, 2011, she provided financial management services during the ground invasion in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

As a Captain, Catherine Black served as a finance detachment commander and battalion operations officer at Fort Richardson, AK, and later as a financial management operations officer at Fort Belvoir, VA. After promotion to major, she commanded the 126th Financial Management Unit for a year and a half, while simultaneously serving as the Battalion Executive Officer for the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade at Fort Riley, KS. She trained and deployed her three financial management detachments to both Iraq and Afghanistan. She then deployed her headquarters to Kandahar, Afghanistan and stood up financial operations throughout southern Afghanistan. There she provided finance support to joint and coalition forces and developed financial management infrastructure for the nation of Afghanistan.

Lieutenant Colonel Black was selected to serve as a congressional budget liaison officer in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for financial management and comptroller. She managed the Army's military personnel and operations and maintenance accounts, the Working Capital Fund, and activity at the depots and arsenals that support the Nation's organic industrial base, including Illinois' Rock Island Arsenal.

Lieutenant Colonel Black's leadership throughout her career has positively impacted her soldiers, peers, and superiors. As a budget liaison officer, she worked directly with the Senate and House Appropriations Committees to educate and inform Senators, Representatives, and staff for the United States Army.

Mr. President, on behalf of a grateful Nation, I thank and commend LTC Catherine Black for two decades of service to her country. I wish Catherine, her husband Geert Jacobs, and her sons Alexander, Achilles, and Elias all the best as they continue their journey of service.●

VERMONT ESSAY WINNERS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the Fourth Annual State of the Union Essay contest conducted by my office. These 9 finalists were selected from over 380 entries.

The essays follow:

CARLY NEELD, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11 (FINALIST)

It is a great privilege to be a citizen of the United States. As citizens, we have a responsibility to ensure that our government is used to improve lives. Although this country has achieved much, there are many aspects that can be improved. In particular, we need to work towards reducing the unemployment rate and take meaningful steps to stop climate change. Addressing these two issues now will go a long way towards helping current and future generations.

The unemployment rate is at seven percent. It is our obligation, as a nation, to lower this rate. By lowering the unemployment rate, we could see a drop in crime and a reduction in poverty as more people are earning a steady income. Because of this steady income, there will be more tax revenue which could then support safety net programs that help the impoverished. An increased employment rate will also cause an increased access to health care and other necessities to living, strengthening families and communities.

In order to decrease the unemployment rate, there are things in our country that will need improvement and our support. Affordable childcare can benefit the employment rate, as it allows parents to be free to go to work. Access to higher education is also essential in increasing the employment rate, as more people will be able to obtain higher paying jobs or start businesses that create jobs. Quality public education, especially early childhood education, will build a strong workforce as jobs are created. It is important to acknowledge the small businesses that provide countless jobs and to ensure that the government is giving these businesses the support they need to sustain their existence.

Climate change is a pressing issue the world is now facing and, as the United States, we need to lead the world in a greener direction. Carbon dioxide emissions are growing exponentially and are hurting our environment and our people's health. We need to take meaningful steps to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions and put our energy and resources into renewable energy technologies. Not only will the environment benefit, but we will benefit economically as the prices of energy will be stable and affordable.

These goals may be difficult to achieve; however, the result will benefit the country immensely and place us as a world leader in many aspects. These issues must be addressed, as they will improve the lives of every citizen and will allow us to strengthen our union.

REBECCA PAIGE, SOUTH ROYALTON SCHOOL,
GRADE 12 (FINALIST)

The rising cost of a college education is becoming a chronic problem for everyone. We want everyone to become a well-educated, informed citizen, but are doing so at a steep price. We are paying an exorbitant amount of money and are being left with large amounts of debt.

For many families, having a high school senior in the household brings mixed feelings towards college. There is the excitement towards experiencing new things, but also the concern for how they will be able to afford a college education. The worries start right at the beginning, before the senior is even accepted. Having just finished my college application, I estimate that I paid about \$600 for application and testing fees. What do these fees do to help with post-secondary education? Nothing. These fees are being used as a gamble for the right to a college education. There is nothing saying that the applicant will be guaranteed admittance to college, only the chance of it. There should be a movement passed that will eliminate all application, testing, and other miscellaneous fees associated with the application process, so students have a chance to apply to the college they want without money to limit them in the pursuit of a higher education.

Even once students have been accepted to a college or university, the tuition should be lowered or subsidized by the government.

Pursuing education beyond high school serves to help better society and, in turn, will help us out of the unstable state in which we find ourselves. There are many positive aspects about pursuing education beyond high school, but they are being outweighed by the financial repercussions of the decision to do so. This is not how the system should be run. We should not have to cringe at the word college; we should embrace it because of the plethora of opportunities that it will provide us.

There seems to be a double standard in this country. We want our citizens to pursue a higher education because the country will reap the benefits, yet we still limit the post-secondary education to those that can afford it and not let everyone have the opportunity to a higher education. There needs to be a change, if anything is going to move forward. Therefore, let all fees be eliminated, let there be lower tuition costs, and allow all people a chance for a college education without having to sign over their life in order to get one.

KENDALL SPAULDING, MISSISSQUOI VALLEY
UNION MIDDLE, HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11 (FI-
NALIST)

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts," said Winston Churchill. Churchill's quote links two controversial issues that our country is now facing, education and unemployment. We have to think about the people in our state and their futures. How will they continue to succeed? If people want to continue seeking jobs, they must go through a schooling process in order for them to feel satisfied. We want to grow strong and protect our views, so, taking control of our future will make it stronger and brighter as a country. We have to start to address these topics first, so they won't become a failure, but a success for our country.

I believe education should be the government's biggest concern because of what it can push our nation to accomplish. We have to make the common core strong, so that students know what to expect. We cannot just give up after a failure, we have to be determined and think more about our future. Marion Brady, who is a classroom teacher, asked, "What knowledge is absolutely essential for every learner?" His question is what we think the curriculum should be to everyone. I believe if any student is strong in a core of truly essential skills, they can succeed in anything they want in their future. I believe enforcing the common core will help achieve our goals and lead to courageous decisions.

Building a successful education program will begin to strengthen the unemployment rate in our country. I think benefits being extended isn't the right solution because there are so many opportunities to go towards to be successful. If the government chooses to extend the benefits, we would be spending billions of dollars in a short amount of time, which would not help our economy. We have to think about what's best for the individual, as well as the whole country. It's best if we continue to persevere by going to a job training facility to be more successful. Making no extensions would lead people to create a successful life on their own, gain confidence, and rely on only themselves. Leading people to search for a job is in their own hands and they need to have courage in order to succeed in life.

To conclude, our country has to continue to grow as a whole in order to solve the controversial issues. Making successful deci-

sions can permanently change the way the country grows. Also, creating a confident country leads to less room for failure in the long run. Let's believe we can create a strong common core plan for education and a non-extendable unemployment plan. I believe it can be done, it just takes time and hard work to get them. Let these two topics not be an issue anymore and finally resolve them, so we all can grow to our best.

ERIC TUCKER, SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE
11 (FINALIST)

The year 2013 was a period of progress and setback. The government was shut down for sixteen days, the unemployment rate decreased to seven percent, the lowest unemployment rate in five years, The Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare) was passed with mixed initial success, and many other influential achievements and failures occurred. A new year is here, and now is the time to further develop 2013's successes and solve its problems. The best way to turn 2014 into a year of achievement is to unite Americans and Congress by offering multiple solutions to common disagreements and by discovering a series of common goals with the support of the entire nation.

One of the catastrophically unsolved problems in 2013 was the gap between Republicans and Democrats in America. The government was shut down from October 1st to October 16th, and it nearly defaulted on its bills during this harsh debt-ceiling debate. This could have been avoided, if multiple choices were offered during these debates. For example, the main reason the Republicans did not want to re-open the government is they strongly opposed the Democratic principle of a government-controlled health insurance system (ObamaCare). One compromise, which could have solved this dilemma, is making ObamaCare optional. This compromise never occurred because the Democrats wanted ObamaCare nationalized with a fine on those who did not enlist and the Republicans wanted complete abolishment. Middle ground must be reached.

Further connecting Congress and America will also help eliminate some of 2013's largest problems. Sometimes Congress is split because each Congressperson is acting on behalf of his or her voters. At other times, such as the government shutdown, Republicans and Democrats disagree on the best ways to solve a problem. If Congress and the White House listened to the public more, then America can help its leaders tackle America's most difficult problems. Utilize Facebook, utilize Twitter, utilize easy, accessible websites and conduct multiple surveys concerning many issues the country faces. Have America decide if the debt ceiling should be raised; have America decide if ObamaCare should be mandatory and existent; have America become one of the mediators of public dilemma. Stop having Republicans elect Republicans and Democrats elect Democrats; have Americans elect Americans.

Unification and success can also be created through generating nationally common goals. For example, the issue of clean energy is a project being half-heartedly tackled by the government. Turn 2014 into the year that the United States of America leads the world to a greener Earth. Begin the movement that creates 4.5 million jobs, stimulates the economy, and eliminates 1.2 billion tons of carbon emissions per year by 2030. This single goal can cause America to reap the benefits of economic stimulation, energy-efficiency, and national unification.

It is time for America to raise itself to new heights as a truly united nation. Allowing the public to help its leaders compromise and work on common goals will bring this country together. Now is the time to unite the United States of America.

MADISON GILLEY, MOUTH ABRAHAM UNION
MIDDLE, HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 9 (FINALIST)

There are many factors that impact our environment. Air pollution, deforestation, and climate change are just a few. These specific problems are caused by humans. We have a responsibility to our planet, ourselves, and to the other species that live here with us. Senator BERNIE SANDERS should take a stronger stance in protecting the environment because it is important to the state and the world.

Air pollution has a vast effect on climate change and the environment. In 2012 alone, the world produced 9.7 billion metric tons of CO₂ emissions (CO₂Now). All of the carbon emissions that go into the air cause climate change because the atmosphere traps the CO₂, which causes all the extra heat. The air, in many places, is not very clean because of air pollution and smog. Some factories use green energy so they do not put out as much pollution as other factories.

Deforestation, caused by logging, farming, mining, and development is also another immense problem that needs to be addressed. Rain forests are being cut down at an alarming rate. These rainforests need to be protected. Madagascar has lost 95% of its rainforests. Sumatra only has 15% of its rainforests left. The Atlantic coast of Brazil has lost 90-95% of its rainforest (Mongabay). Rainforests are important because they provide a habitat for plants and animals, they regulate our climate, they help to prevent soil erosion, and they provide a home for indigenous people. BERNIE SANDERS needs to help protect the forests not just in Vermont, but all around the world.

Different environments around the world are in danger because of climate change. One way that climate change is caused is by carbon emissions. Air pollution causes climate change because when the air is polluted by all the CO₂ that we are producing, it damages the ozone layer. Climate change also affects forests which causes damage to the animal population and their homes. The earth isn't an unlimited supply; we need to use what we have carefully and conscientiously.

Senator BERNIE SANDERS should take a stronger stance in protecting the environment because climate change, deforestation and air pollution are major problems damaging our environment. These are all environmental issues that have social and economic impacts. We only have one planet and we need to use what we have carefully.

KYLEE DIMAGGIO, MISSISQUOI VALLEY UNION
HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11 (FINALIST)

Barack Obama once said, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." The American dream that many strive for is currently far out of reach for most. Our current economy is in such a dire state that some are even predicting another economic depression. This economic issue is vital to our future as a nation and impacts United States citizens directly. I also fear that if this issue is not addressed before long the consequences may be great. Fossil fuel usage (along with other things) have aided in the increase of unemployment rates in the United States and the poor economy. I be-

lieve that if the president were to focus on the state of the economy many other issues in the United States could be addressed as well.

Although I believe that many people blame the state of the economy on an excess of government spending, a huge expenditure of the government is in the subsidization of fossil fuels. Not only are fossil fuels harmful to the environment, but they are extremely costly. With the current economy, many citizens struggle to afford the prices of this resource. Furthermore, the large amount of dependence on fossil fuels leaves this resource an unreachable necessity. It is vital for the president to search for an alternative resource because fossil fuels are currently too costly for average citizens to afford. The president should be focused on finding an alternative resource for fossil fuels to decrease government spending and, in turn, improve the economy.

As a result of a poor economy, citizens are finding it hard to live comfortably and fulfill their ideas of the American dream. Government spending reduces the amount of money the government is able or willing to provide to the unemployed. Theodore Roosevelt said, "Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people." In saying this, Roosevelt infers that the president is not to blame, it is the politicians below him that do not allow him to make change. I believe that the government as a whole should be concerned with the outcome of such a poor economy. For example, jobs are extremely limited, leaving unemployment rates higher than the United States have seen in years. The unemployed are finding it hard to live comfortably on the current unemployment benefits. Therefore, the government, as a whole, should be focused on extending unemployment benefits to those in need. Citizens are suffering because of the poor economy and the government needs to take action to avoid this.

The United States economy must improve the state of our union. Government spending must also decrease to make room for citizens in need of assistance. Without government assistance the citizens turn against their government and grow unhappy. The United States should focus on decreasing government spending to improve the economy because without a stable economy, citizens suffer and the state of the union crumbles.

TREVOR MCNANEY, MILTON HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE
12 (FINALIST)

Amidst not only our challenges in the past year, but in our progress as well, we as a nation have proved our unity and strength. We have confronted issues, such as gun control and gay marriage and have worked hard to figure out how to best deal with issues like these. We have proved ourselves as pioneers; we have explored the wonders of space and have developed amazing technologies new to the world. I ask the American people, with their strength and their unity, to confront an entirely different issue. One that is so intertwined with our lives and society, yet one that is so ignored. I ask the people to confront a world issue. Today, I ask that each and every individual of this nation to consider the impacts that our society has on the environment.

We as a nation have come to understand that in order to prosper, we need to work, produce, and consume with our earnings. Companies produce goods that are meant to be broken and thrown away so that con-

sumers will simply buy more of their product. I argue that we are smarter. A society that values monetary gain at the demise and destruction of the environment is one that will not last. Without a healthy environment, we cannot have a healthy society. We are too scared to look at the destruction and pollution that we are causing as a society and as a global economic system. I ask what is more fearful, deciding to make progress today or ignoring the issues of tomorrow? Ignoring until there are no longer any issues to worry about, until the Earth itself has perished along with its inhabitants. Now is our gateway and foundation to the future. We must change the way we live in order to live.

The exciting possibility is that we can change. We hold more knowledge and resources than we ever have before. America, it is time that we put the environment first. It is time that we alter the way that we view and interact with the world around us. By 2026, every home needs a solar panel and seventy percent of the buildings we use need to use gray water. And by 2030, seventy-five percent of the transportation industry needs to use bio-fuels. By 2035, seventy percent of vehicles need to be electric and seventy percent of America needs to be powered by clean renewable energy and resources. Dismiss the idea that it cannot be done, that we as a society and the world cannot solve the problems that we have created. And most of all, dismiss the notion that "it is not your problem." The problems are here, they are real, and they are now. This world is our home, let's treat it like one.

EMIL KOENIG, VERMONT COMMONS SCHOOL,
GRADE 12 (FINALIST)

This past year has posed many serious national security and foreign policy challenges for the United States. The nation encountered various issues like the Edward Snowden's NSA leaks, chemical weapons uses in the Syrian civil war, and a government closing. While all of these issues are significant and have captured the headlines of the news media, we must also keep in mind the small issues that can potentially transform into global conflicts.

Currently, for example, one of the seemingly more exotic issues threatening world peace involves the disputed Diaoyu (or Senkaku) Islands in the South China Sea. Although these barren rocks might seem truly worthless, as they are uninhabited and lack natural resources, this fact did not stop China, Japan or South Korea from staking conflicting claims and angrily criticizing each other, escalating a small territorial issue into a potentially larger crisis. While China flaunts its growing dominance in the region, the South Koreans and Japanese reject Beijing's territorial claims.

In my conversations with various Chinese people during my last year studying abroad in Beijing, most people strongly sided with their government's territorial claims. In almost the same breath, they catalogued a long list of grievances from the turbulent history of Sino-Japanese relations. Many still vividly recalled earlier atrocities, such as the "Rape of Nanjing." When Japanese troops stormed Nanjing, raping women and burying people alive.

Chinese authorities play on these popular fears, disseminating propaganda that blames Japan for countless issues. Debates about truly useless ocean rocks, therefore, become conflated with deeply felt passions from the past, which is why it is important to understand the cultural and historical backgrounds of various conflicts in order to resolve them.

Because the situation now brewing in the South China Sea stems from deeply felt cultural and historical origins, the situation is extremely volatile. When the United States flew two bombers over the islands to demonstrate close ties with Japan, we may have raised the level of tension to a still higher level. Following the flights by our bombers, the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Koreans all sent planes to fly over the islands, to demonstrate their respective ownership claims over the islands.

As a nation, if we want to avoid potential wars, the government should consider more peaceful options, such as encouraging negotiations, before sending in war planes. The government must practice more diplomatic conversations with Chinese, Japanese and Korean partners in order to reduce the likelihood of war. Flying war planes over disputed islands never solves issues; it mainly risks causing more tensions.

In sum, to avoid international incidents, the United States must practice a more responsible system of foreign policy. The tension of the East Asian region is only one example of when America used force prior to engaging in other forms of international communication. Instead, the US government must assess historical and cultural backgrounds of various conflicts and first try to resolve them through peaceful means, rather than skyrocket the likelihood of starting wars.

ABIGAIL MORRIS, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION
HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11 (FINALIST)

Many United States issues have been the subject of attention from the media, citizens and officials. However, in my opinion the environmental issues in the US have not had their share of the spotlight. Small measures, whether involving policy or simple publicity, could change the US environment for the better. One of these measures is increased regulation of the fracking industry.

Hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" is the process of gathering oil by forcing highly pressurized fluid into oil or gas formations, so that the oil or gas flows to the surface. The use of fracking has jumped to 25% of oil production, up from 1% in 2000. It has spurred hopes of an energy independent United States, but there are many drawbacks, especially where the environment is concerned. Fracking endangers plants, livestock, and most importantly, human beings. Refusal or reluctance to crack down on the fracking industry could seriously harm the health of the United States and its people. We must not let ourselves be lured by the economic benefits of fracking, and instead must examine it closely to determine if energy independence is worth the risk.

Of the 750 chemicals that can be used in fracking fluid, 29 are carcinogens. In Wyoming, Pennsylvania and other states, these chemicals have contaminated drinking water in residential areas. If there is no way to change the chemical makeup of fracking fluid or legalize fracking completely, making sure the fracking industry is subject to strict regulation is the next best course of action.

Progress is being made, however. The FRAC (Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals) Act was introduced in 2011, which shows that the issue has caught the attention of Congress. However, both the House and Senate versions have yet to be passed. These bills need to be brought back to the attention of Congress, because as long as the fracking industry is not subject to the same regulation as every other, the natural

environment and citizens of the United States will continue to be at risk.●

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE
UNION DELIVERED TO A JOINT
SESSION OF CONGRESS ON JANU-
ARY 28, 2014—PM 27

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to lie on the table:

To the Congress of the United States:

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, my fellow Americans:

Today in America, a teacher spent extra time with a student who needed it, and did her part to lift America's graduation rate to its highest level in more than three decades.

An entrepreneur flipped on the lights in her tech startup, and did her part to add to the more than eight million new jobs our businesses have created over the past 4 years.

An autoworker fine-tuned some of the best, most fuel-efficient cars in the world, and did his part to help America wean itself off foreign oil.

A farmer prepared for the spring after the strongest five-year stretch of farm exports in our history. A rural doctor gave a young child the first prescription to treat asthma that his mother could afford. A man took the bus home from the graveyard shift, bone-tired but dreaming big dreams for his son. And in tight-knit communities across America, fathers and mothers will tuck in their kids, put an arm around their spouse, remember fallen comrades, and give thanks for being home from a war that, after 12 long years, is finally coming to an end.

Tonight, this chamber speaks with one voice to the people we represent: it is you, our citizens, who make the state of our Union strong.

Here are the results of your efforts: The lowest unemployment rate in over 5 years. A rebounding housing market. A manufacturing sector that's adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. More oil produced at home than we buy from the rest of the world—the first time that's happened in nearly 20 years. Our deficits—cut by more than half. And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is.

That's why I believe this can be a breakthrough year for America. After 5 years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better-positioned for the 21st century than any other nation on Earth.

The question for everyone in this chamber, running through every decision we make this year, is whether we are going to help or hinder this

progress. For several years now, this town has been consumed by a rancorous argument over the proper size of the Federal Government. It's an important debate—one that dates back to our very founding. But when that debate prevents us from carrying out even the most basic functions of our democracy—when our differences shut down government or threaten the full faith and credit of the United States—then we are not doing right by the American people.

As President, I'm committed to making Washington work better, and rebuilding the trust of the people who sent us here. I believe most of you are, too. Last month, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, this Congress finally produced a budget that undoes some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education. Nobody got everything they wanted, and we can still do more to invest in this country's future while bringing down our deficit in a balanced way. But the budget compromise should leave us freer to focus on creating new jobs, not creating new crises.

In the coming months, let's see where else we can make progress together. Let's make this a year of action. That's what most Americans want—for all of us in this chamber to focus on their lives, their hopes, their aspirations. And what I believe unites the people of this Nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead.

Let's face it: that belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated a lot of good, middle-class jobs, and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after 4 years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility has stalled. The cold, hard fact is that even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by—let alone get ahead. And too many still aren't working at all.

Our job is to reverse these trends. It won't happen right away, and we won't agree on everything. But what I offer tonight is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class. Some require Congressional action, and I'm eager to work with all of you. But America does not stand still—and neither will I. So wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for

more American families, that's what I'm going to do.

As usual, our First Lady sets a good example. Michelle's Let's Move partnership with schools, businesses, and local leaders has helped bring down childhood obesity rates for the first time in 30 years—an achievement that will improve lives and reduce health care costs for decades to come. The Joining Forces alliance that Michelle and Jill Biden launched has already encouraged employers to hire or train nearly 400,000 veterans and military spouses. Taking a page from that playbook, the White House just organized a College Opportunity Summit where already, 150 universities, businesses, and nonprofits have made concrete commitments to reduce inequality in access to higher education—and help every hardworking kid go to college and succeed when they get to campus. Across the country, we're partnering with mayors, governors, and state legislatures on issues from homelessness to marriage equality.

The point is, there are millions of Americans outside Washington who are tired of stale political arguments, and are moving this country forward. They believe, and I believe, that here in America, our success should depend not on accident of birth, but the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That's what drew our forebears here. It's how the daughter of a factory worker is CEO of America's largest automaker; how the son of a barkeeper is Speaker of the House; how the son of a single mom can be President of the greatest nation on Earth. Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that promise.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to hire more people this year. And over half of big manufacturers say they're thinking of insourcing jobs from abroad.

So let's make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our tax code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that punish businesses investing here, and reward companies that keep profits abroad. Let's flip that equation. Let's work together to close those loopholes, end those incentives to ship jobs overseas, and lower tax rates for businesses that create jobs here at home.

Moreover, we can take the money we save with this transition to tax reform to create jobs rebuilding our roads, upgrading our ports, unclogging our commutes—because in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. We'll need Congress to protect more than three million jobs by finishing transportation and waterways bills this summer. But I

will act on my own to slash bureaucracy and streamline the permitting process for key projects, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance, right now, to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My Administration has launched two hubs for high-tech manufacturing in Raleigh and Youngstown, where we've connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. Tonight, I'm announcing we'll launch six more this year. Bipartisan bills in both houses could double the number of these hubs and the jobs they create. So get those bills to my desk and put more Americans back to work.

Let's do more to help the entrepreneurs and small business owners who create most new jobs in America. Over the past 5 years, my Administration has made more loans to small business owners than any other. And when 98% of our exporters are small businesses, new trade partnerships with Europe and the Asia-Pacific will help them create more jobs. We need to work together on tools like bipartisan trade promotion authority to protect our workers, protect our environment, and open new markets to new goods stamped "Made in the USA." China and Europe aren't standing on the sidelines. Neither should we.

We know that the nation that goes all-in on innovation today will own the global economy tomorrow. This is an edge America cannot surrender. Federally-funded research helped lead to the ideas and inventions behind Google and smartphones. That's why Congress should undo the damage done by last year's cuts to basic research so we can unleash the next great American discovery—whether it's vaccines that stay ahead of drug-resistant bacteria, or paper-thin material that's stronger than steel. And let's pass a patent reform bill that allows our businesses to stay focused on innovation, not costly, needless litigation.

Now, one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy independence than we've been in decades.

One of the reasons why is natural gas—if extracted safely, it's the bridge fuel that can power our economy with less of the carbon pollution that causes climate change. Businesses plan to invest almost \$100 billion in new factories that use natural gas. I'll cut red tape to help States get those factories built, and this Congress can help by putting people to work building fueling stations that shift more cars and trucks from foreign oil to American natural gas. My Administration will

keep working with the industry to sustain production and job growth while strengthening protection of our air, our water, and our communities. And while we're at it, I'll use my authority to protect more of our pristine Federal lands for future generations.

It's not just oil and natural gas production that's booming; we're becoming a global leader in solar, too. Every 4 minutes, another American home or business goes solar; every panel pounded into place by a worker whose job can't be outsourced. Let's continue that progress with a smarter tax policy that stops giving \$4 billion a year to fossil fuel industries that don't need it, so that we can invest more in fuels of the future that do.

And even as we've increased energy production, we've partnered with businesses, builders, and local communities to reduce the energy we consume. When we rescued our automakers, for example, we worked with them to set higher fuel efficiency standards for our cars. In the coming months, I'll build on that success by setting new standards for our trucks, so we can keep driving down oil imports and what we pay at the pump.

Taken together, our energy policy is creating jobs and leading to a cleaner, safer planet. Over the past 8 years, the United States has reduced our total carbon pollution more than any other nation on Earth. But we have to act with more urgency—because a changing climate is already harming western communities struggling with drought, and coastal cities dealing with floods. That's why I directed my Administration to work with States, utilities, and others to set new standards on the amount of carbon pollution our power plants are allowed to dump into the air. The shift to a cleaner energy economy won't happen overnight, and it will require tough choices along the way. But the debate is settled. Climate change is a fact. And when our children's children look us in the eye and ask if we did all we could to leave them a safer, more stable world, with new sources of energy, I want us to be able to say yes, we did.

Finally, if we are serious about economic growth, it is time to heed the call of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement—and fix our broken immigration system. Republicans and Democrats in the Senate have acted. I know that members of both parties in the House want to do the same. Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficits by almost \$1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason: When people come here to fulfill their dreams—to study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and create jobs for everyone. So let's get immigration reform done this year.

The ideas I've outlined so far can speed up growth and create more jobs. But in this rapidly-changing economy, we have to make sure that every American has the skills to fill those jobs.

The good news is, we know how to do it. Two years ago, as the auto industry came roaring back, Andra Rush opened up a manufacturing firm in Detroit. She knew that Ford needed parts for the best-selling truck in America, and she knew how to make them. She just needed the workforce. So she dialed up what we call an American Job Center—places where folks can walk in to get the help or training they need to find a new job, or better job. She was flooded with new workers. And today, Detroit Manufacturing Systems has more than 700 employees.

What Andra and her employees experienced is how it should be for every employer—and every job seeker. So tonight, I've asked Vice President BIDEN to lead an across-the-board reform of America's training programs to make sure they have one mission: Train Americans with the skills employers need, and match them to good jobs that need to be filled right now. That means more on-the-job training, and more apprenticeships that set a young worker on an upward trajectory for life. It means connecting companies to community colleges that can help design training to fill their specific needs. And if Congress wants to help, you can concentrate funding on proven programs that connect more ready-to-work Americans with ready-to-be-filled jobs.

I'm also convinced we can help Americans return to the workforce faster by reforming unemployment insurance so that it's more effective in today's economy. But first, this Congress needs to restore the unemployment insurance you just let expire for 1.6 million people.

Let me tell you why.

Misty DeMars is a mother of two young boys. She'd been steadily employed since she was a teenager. She put herself through college. She'd never collected unemployment benefits. In May, she and her husband used their life savings to buy their first home. A week later, budget cuts claimed the job she loved. Last month, when their unemployment insurance was cut off, she sat down and wrote me a letter—the kind I get every day. “We are the face of the unemployment crisis,” she wrote. “I am not dependent on the government. . . . Our country depends on people like us who build careers, contribute to society . . . care about our neighbors . . . I am confident that in time I will find a job . . . I will pay my taxes, and we will raise our children in their own home in the community we love. Please give us this chance.”

Congress, give these hardworking, responsible Americans that chance. They

need our help, but more important, this country needs them in the game. That's why I've been asking CEOs to give more long-term unemployed workers a fair shot at that new job and new chance to support their families; this week, many will come to the White House to make that commitment real. Tonight, I ask every business leader in America to join us and to do the same—because we are stronger when America fields a full team.

Of course, it's not enough to train today's workforce. We also have to prepare tomorrow's workforce, by guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education.

Estiven Rodriguez couldn't speak a word of English when he moved to New York City at age nine. But last month, thanks to the support of great teachers and an innovative tutoring program, he led a march of his classmates—through a crowd of cheering parents and neighbors—from their high school to the post office, where they mailed off their college applications. And this son of a factory worker just found out he's going to college this fall.

Five years ago, we set out to change the odds for all our kids. We worked with lenders to reform student loans, and today, more young people are earning college degrees than ever before. Race to the Top, with the help of governors from both parties, has helped States raise expectations and performance. Teachers and principals in schools from Tennessee to Washington, D.C. are making big strides in preparing students with skills for the new economy—problem solving, critical thinking, science, technology, engineering, and math. Some of this change is hard. It requires everything from more challenging curriculums and more demanding parents to better support for teachers and new ways to measure how well our kids think, not how well they can fill in a bubble on a test. But it's worth it—and it's working.

The problem is we're still not reaching enough kids, and we're not reaching them in time. That has to change.

Research shows that one of the best investments we can make in a child's life is high-quality early education. Last year, I asked this Congress to help States make high-quality pre-K available to every four-year-old. As a parent as well as a President, I repeat that request tonight. But in the meantime, 30 states have raised pre-K funding on their own. They know we can't wait. So just as we worked with States to reform our schools, this year, we'll invest in new partnerships with States and communities across the country in a race to the top for our youngest children. And as Congress decides what it's going to do, I'm going to pull together a coalition of elected officials, business leaders, and philanthropists willing to help more kids access the high-quality pre-K they need.

Last year, I also pledged to connect 99 percent of our students to high-speed broadband over the next 4 years. Tonight, I can announce that with the support of the FCC and companies like Apple, Microsoft, Sprint, and Verizon, we've got a down payment to start connecting more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students over the next 2 years, without adding a dime to the deficit.

We're working to redesign high schools and partner them with colleges and employers that offer the real-world education and hands-on training that can lead directly to a job and career. We're shaking up our system of higher education to give parents more information, and colleges more incentives to offer better value, so that no middle-class kid is priced out of a college education. We're offering millions the opportunity to cap their monthly student loan payments to 10 percent of their income, and I want to work with Congress to see how we can help even more Americans who feel trapped by student loan debt. And I'm reaching out to some of America's leading foundations and corporations on a new initiative to help more young men of color facing tough odds stay on track and reach their full potential.

The bottom line is, Michelle and I want every child to have the same chance this country gave us. But we know our opportunity agenda won't be complete—and too many young people entering the workforce today will see the American Dream as an empty promise—unless we do more to make sure our economy honors the dignity of work, and hard work pays off for every single American.

Today, women make up about half our workforce. But they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. That is wrong, and in 2014, it's an embarrassment. A woman deserves equal pay for equal work. She deserves to have a baby without sacrificing her job. A mother deserves a day off to care for a sick child or sick parent without running into hardship—and you know what, a father does, too. It's time to do away with workplace policies that belong in a “Mad Men” episode. This year, let's all come together—Congress, the White House, and businesses from Wall Street to Main Street—to give every woman the opportunity she deserves. Because I firmly believe when women succeed, America succeeds.

Now, women hold a majority of lower-wage jobs—but they're not the only ones stifled by stagnant wages. Americans understand that some people will earn more than others, and we don't resent those who, by virtue of their efforts, achieve incredible success. But Americans overwhelmingly agree that no one who works full time should ever have to raise a family in poverty.

In the year since I asked this Congress to raise the minimum wage, five

States have passed laws to raise theirs. Many businesses have done it on their own. Nick Chute is here tonight with his boss, John Soranno. John's an owner of Punch Pizza in Minneapolis, and Nick helps make the dough. Only now he makes more of it: John just gave his employees a raise, to ten bucks an hour—a decision that eased their financial stress and boosted their morale.

Tonight, I ask more of America's business leaders to follow John's lead and do what you can to raise your employees' wages. To every mayor, governor, and state legislator in America, I say, you don't have to wait for Congress to act; Americans will support you if you take this on. And as a chief executive, I intend to lead by example. Profitable corporations like Costco see higher wages as the smart way to boost productivity and reduce turnover. We should too. In the coming weeks, I will issue an Executive Order requiring Federal contractors to pay their federally-funded employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour—because if you cook our troops' meals or wash their dishes, you shouldn't have to live in poverty.

Of course, to reach millions more, Congress needs to get on board. Today, the Federal minimum wage is worth about 20 percent less than it was when Ronald Reagan first stood here. TOM HARKIN and GEORGE MILLER have a bill to fix that by lifting the minimum wage to \$10.10. This will help families. It will give businesses customers with more money to spend. It doesn't involve any new bureaucratic program. So join the rest of the country. Say yes. Give America a raise.

There are other steps we can take to help families make ends meet, and few are more effective at reducing inequality and helping families pull themselves up through hard work than the Earned Income Tax Credit. Right now, it helps about half of all parents at some point. But I agree with Republicans like Senator RUBIO that it doesn't do enough for single workers who don't have kids. So let's work together to strengthen the credit, reward work, and help more Americans get ahead.

Let's do more to help Americans save for retirement. Today, most workers don't have a pension. A Social Security check often isn't enough on its own. And while the stock market has doubled over the last 5 years, that doesn't help folks who don't have 401Ks. That's why, tomorrow, I will direct the Treasury to create a new way for working Americans to start their own retirement savings: MyRA. It's a new savings bond that encourages folks to build a nest egg. MyRA guarantees a decent return with no risk of losing what you put in. And if this Congress wants to help, work with me to fix an upside-down tax code that gives big tax breaks

to help the wealthy save, but does little to nothing for middle-class Americans. Offer every American access to an automatic IRA on the job, so they can save at work just like everyone in this Chamber can. And since the most important investment many families make is their home, send me legislation that protects taxpayers from footing the bill for a housing crisis ever again, and keeps the dream of homeownership alive for future generations of Americans.

One last point on financial security. For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system. And in case you haven't heard, we're in the process of fixing that.

A pre-existing condition used to mean that someone like Amanda Shelley, a physician assistant and single mom from Arizona, couldn't get health insurance. But on January 1st, she got covered. On January 3rd, she felt a sharp pain. On January 6th, she had emergency surgery. Just one week earlier, Amanda said, that surgery would've meant bankruptcy.

That's what health insurance reform is all about—the peace of mind that if misfortune strikes, you don't have to lose everything.

Already, because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 3 million Americans under age 26 have gained coverage under their parents' plans.

More than nine million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage.

And here's another number: zero. Because of this law, no American can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma, back pain, or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she's a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors.

Now, I don't expect to convince my Republican friends on the merits of this law. But I know that the American people aren't interested in refighting old battles. So again, if you have specific plans to cut costs, cover more people, and increase choice—tell America what you'd do differently. Let's see if the numbers add up. But let's not have another forty-something votes to repeal a law that's already helping millions of Americans like Amanda. The first forty were plenty. We got it. We all owe it to the American people to say what we're for, not just what we're against.

And if you want to know the real impact this law is having, just talk to Governor Steve Beshear of Kentucky, who's here tonight. Kentucky's not the most liberal part of the country, but he's like a man possessed when it comes to covering his commonwealth's families. "They are our friends and

neighbors," he said. "They are people we shop and go to church with—farmers out on the tractors—grocery clerks—they are people who go to work every morning praying they don't get sick. No one deserves to live that way."

Steve's right. That's why, tonight, I ask every American who knows someone without health insurance to help them get covered by March 31st. Moms, get on your kids to sign up. Kids, call your mom and walk her through the application. It will give her some peace of mind—plus, she'll appreciate hearing from you.

After all, that's the spirit that has always moved this Nation forward. It's the spirit of citizenship—the recognition that through hard work and responsibility, we can pursue our individual dreams, but still come together as one American family to make sure the next generation can pursue its dreams as well.

Citizenship means standing up for everyone's right to vote. Last year, part of the Voting Rights Act was weakened. But conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats are working together to strengthen it; and the bipartisan commission I appointed last year has offered reforms so that no one has to wait more than a half hour to vote. Let's support these efforts. It should be the power of our vote, not the size of our bank account, that drives our democracy.

Citizenship means standing up for the lives that gun violence steals from us each day. I have seen the courage of parents, students, pastors, and police officers all over this country who say "we are not afraid," and I intend to keep trying, with or without Congress, to help stop more tragedies from visiting innocent Americans in our movie theaters, shopping malls, or schools like Sandy Hook.

Citizenship demands a sense of common cause; participation in the hard work of self-government; an obligation to serve to our communities. And I know this chamber agrees that few Americans give more to their country than our diplomats and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

Tonight, because of the extraordinary troops and civilians who risk and lay down their lives to keep us free, the United States is more secure. When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq. More than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. Together with our allies, we will complete our mission there by the end of this year, and America's longest war will finally be over.

After 2014, we will support a unified Afghanistan as it takes responsibility

for its own future. If the Afghan government signs a security agreement that we have negotiated, a small force of Americans could remain in Afghanistan with NATO allies to carry out two narrow missions: training and assisting Afghan forces, and counterterrorism operations to pursue any remnants of al Qaeda. For while our relationship with Afghanistan will change, one thing will not: our resolve that terrorists do not launch attacks against our country.

The fact is, that danger remains. While we have put al Qaeda's core leadership on a path to defeat, the threat has evolved, as al Qaeda affiliates and other extremists take root in different parts of the world. In Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and Mali, we have to keep working with partners to disrupt and disable these networks. In Syria, we'll support the opposition that rejects the agenda of terrorist networks. Here at home, we'll keep strengthening our defenses, and combat new threats like cyberattacks. And as we reform our defense budget, we have to keep faith with our men and women in uniform, and invest in the capabilities they need to succeed in future missions.

We have to remain vigilant. But I strongly believe our leadership and our security cannot depend on our military alone. As Commander in Chief, I have used force when needed to protect the American people, and I will never hesitate to do so as long as I hold this office. But I will not send our troops into harm's way unless it's truly necessary; nor will I allow our sons and daughters to be mired in open-ended conflicts. We must fight the battles that need to be fought, not those that terrorists prefer from us—large-scale deployments that drain our strength and may ultimately feed extremism.

So, even as we aggressively pursue terrorist networks—through more targeted efforts and by building the capacity of our foreign partners—America must move off a permanent war footing. That's why I've imposed prudent limits on the use of drones—for we will not be safer if people abroad believe we strike within their countries without regard for the consequence. That's why, working with this Congress, I will reform our surveillance programs—because the vital work of our intelligence community depends on public confidence, here and abroad, that the privacy of ordinary people is not being violated. And with the Afghan war ending, this needs to be the year Congress lifts the remaining restrictions on detainee transfers and we close the prison at Guantanamo Bay—because we counter terrorism not just through intelligence and military action, but by remaining true to our Constitutional ideals, and setting an example for the rest of the world.

You see, in a world of complex threats, our security and leadership de-

pends on all elements of our power—including strong and principled diplomacy. American diplomacy has rallied more than 50 countries to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands, and allowed us to reduce our own reliance on Cold War stockpiles. American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force, is why Syria's chemical weapons are being eliminated, and we will continue to work with the international community to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve—a future free of dictatorship, terror and fear. As we speak, American diplomacy is supporting Israelis and Palestinians as they engage in difficult but necessary talks to end the conflict there; to achieve dignity and an independent state for Palestinians, and lasting peace and security for the State of Israel—a Jewish state that knows America will always be at their side.

And it is American diplomacy, backed by pressure, that has halted the progress of Iran's nuclear program—and rolled parts of that program back—for the very first time in a decade. As we gather here tonight, Iran has begun to eliminate its stockpile of higher levels of enriched uranium. It is not installing advanced centrifuges. Unprecedented inspections help the world verify, every day, that Iran is not building a bomb. And with our allies and partners, we're engaged in negotiations to see if we can peacefully achieve a goal we all share: preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

These negotiations will be difficult. They may not succeed. We are clear-eyed about Iran's support for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah, which threaten our allies; and the mistrust between our nations cannot be wished away. But these negotiations do not rely on trust; any long-term deal we agree to must be based on verifiable action that convinces us and the international community that Iran is not building a nuclear bomb. If John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan could negotiate with the Soviet Union, then surely a strong and confident America can negotiate with less powerful adversaries today.

The sanctions that we put in place helped make this opportunity possible. But let me be clear: if this Congress sends me a new sanctions bill now that threatens to derail these talks, I will veto it. For the sake of our national security, we must give diplomacy a chance to succeed. If Iran's leaders do not seize this opportunity, then I will be the first to call for more sanctions, and stand ready to exercise all options to make sure Iran does not build a nuclear weapon. But if Iran's leaders do seize the chance, then Iran could take an important step to rejoin the community of nations, and we will have resolved one of the leading security challenges of our time without the risks of war.

Finally, let's remember that our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats, but by the enormous opportunities to do good and promote understanding around the globe—to forge greater cooperation, to expand new markets, to free people from fear and want. And no one is better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities than America.

Our alliance with Europe remains the strongest the world has ever known. From Tunisia to Burma, we're supporting those who are willing to do the hard work of building democracy. In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have the right to express themselves freely and peacefully, and have a say in their country's future. Across Africa, we're bringing together businesses and governments to double access to electricity and help end extreme poverty. In the Americas, we are building new ties of commerce, but we're also expanding cultural and educational exchanges among young people. And we will continue to focus on the Asia-Pacific, where we support our allies, shape a future of greater security and prosperity, and extend a hand to those devastated by disaster—as we did in the Philippines, when our Marines and civilians rushed to aid those battered by a typhoon, and were greeted with words like, "We will never forget your kindness" and "God bless America!"

We do these things because they help promote our long-term security. And we do them because we believe in the inherent dignity and equality of every human being, regardless of race or religion, creed or sexual orientation. And next week, the world will see one expression of that commitment—when Team USA marches the red, white, and blue into the Olympic Stadium—and brings home the gold.

My fellow Americans, no other country in the world does what we do. On every issue, the world turns to us, not simply because of the size of our economy or our military might—but because of the ideals we stand for, and the burdens we bear to advance them.

No one knows this better than those who serve in uniform. As this time of war draws to a close, a new generation of heroes returns to civilian life. We'll keep slashing that backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they've earned, and our wounded warriors receive the health care—including the mental health care—that they need. We'll keep working to help all our veterans translate their skills and leadership into jobs here at home. And we all continue to join forces to honor and support our remarkable military families.

Let me tell you about one of those families I've come to know.

I first met Cory Remsburg, a proud Army Ranger, at Omaha Beach on the 65th anniversary of D-Day. Along with

some of his fellow Rangers, he walked me through the program—a strong, impressive young man, with an easy manner, sharp as a tack. We joked around, and took pictures, and T. told him to stay in touch.

A few months later, on his tenth deployment, Cory was nearly killed by a massive roadside bomb in Afghanistan. His comrades found him in a canal, face down, underwater, shrapnel in his brain.

For months, he lay in a coma. The next time I met him, in the hospital, he couldn't speak; he could barely move. Over the years, he's endured dozens of surgeries and procedures, and hours of grueling rehab every day.

Even now, Cory is still blind in one eye. He still struggles on his left side. But slowly, steadily, with the support of caregivers like his dad Craig, and the community around him, Cory has grown stronger. Day by day, he's learned to speak again and stand again and walk again—and he's working toward the day when he can serve his country again.

"My recovery has not been easy," he says. "Nothing in life that's worth anything is easy."

Cory is here tonight. And like the Army he loves, like the America he serves, Sergeant First Class Cory Rensburg never gives up, and he does not quit.

My fellow Americans, men and women like Cory remind us that America has never come easy. Our freedom, our democracy, has never been easy. Sometimes we stumble; we make mistakes; we get frustrated or discouraged. But for more than 200 years, we have put those things aside and placed our collective shoulder to the wheel of progress—to create and build and expand the possibilities of individual achievement; to free other nations from tyranny and fear; to promote justice, and fairness, and equality under the law, so that the words set to paper by our founders are made real for every citizen. The America we want for our kids—a rising America where honest work is plentiful and communities are strong; where prosperity is widely shared and opportunity for all lets us go as far as our dreams and toil will take us—none of it is easy. But if we work together; if we summon what is best in us, with our feet planted firmly in today but our eyes cast towards tomorrow—I know it's within our reach.

Believe it.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

BARACK OBAMA,
THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 28, 2014.*

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:08 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House passed the

following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1684. An act to convey certain property to the State of Wyoming to consolidate the historic Ranch A, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2166. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3008. An act to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1684. An act to convey certain property to the State of Wyoming to consolidate the historic Ranch A, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 2166. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3008. An act to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1963. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4441. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, an interim response to the Conference Report 112-705 of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2013, Section 737; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4442. A communication from the President of the United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 12947 with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4443. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Registration of Municipal Advisors" (RIN3235-AK86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4444. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4445. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Executive Compensation" (RIN2590-AA12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4446. A communication from the General Counsel of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Golden Parachute Payments" (RIN2590-AA08) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4447. A communication from the Director of Human Resources, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, three (3) reports relative to vacancies in the Environmental Protection Agency, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4448. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Species; Designation of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Central Valley Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Below Friant Dam in the San Joaquin River, CA" (RIN0648-BC68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4449. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Bond Premium Carryforward" ((RIN1545-BL28) (TD 9653)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4450. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Sales-Based Royalties and Vendor Allowances" ((RIN1545-BI57) (TD 9652)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4451. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Computation of, and Rules Relating to, Medical Loss Ratio" ((RIN1545-BL05) (TD 9651)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4452. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2014 Prevailing State Assumed Interest Rates" (Rev. Rul. 2014-4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4453. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Exclusion from Income of Payments to Care Providers from Medicaid Waiver Programs" (Notice 2014-7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4454. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Current Refundings of Recovery Zone Facility Bonds" (Notice 2014-9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4455. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0042); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4456. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to groups designated by the Secretary of State as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (OSS 2014-0043); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4457. A communication from the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's response to the GAO report entitled "Central America: U.S. Agencies Considered Various Factors in Funding Security Activities, but Need to Assess Progress in Achieving Inter-agency Objectives"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4458. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-155); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4459. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, twenty-nine (29) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of State, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4460. A communication from the Chairman of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on the Current Disposition of Highly Enriched Uranium Exports Used as Fuel or Targets in Nuclear Research or Test Reactors"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4461. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2014-0001—2014-0010); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4462. A communication from the Executive Analyst, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, four (4) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Health and Human Services; to the Com-

mittee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4463. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Pediatric Uses of Devices; Requirement for Submission of Information on Pediatric Subpopulations That Suffer From a Disease or Condition That a Device Is Intended To Treat, Diagnose, or Cure" (RIN0910-AG29) (Docket No. FDA-2009-N-0458) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4464. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Payment of Premiums; Large-Plan Flat-Rate Premium" (RIN1212-AB26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 611. A bill to make a technical amendment to the T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113-136).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEVIN from the Committee on Armed Services.

*Brad R. Carson, of Oklahoma, to be Under Secretary of the Army.

*William A. LaPlante, Jr., of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

*Madelyn R. Creedon, of Indiana, to be Principal Deputy Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration.

Air Force nomination of Col. Donald R. Lindberg, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. William D. Cobetto, to be Major General.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Bart O. Iddins, to be Major General.

Air Force nominations beginning with Colonel Roy-Alan C. Agustin and ending with Colonel Stephen C. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 7, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Colonel Dennis J. Gallegos and ending with Colonel John S. Tuohy, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Colonel Paul D. Jacobs and ending with Colonel Andrew E. Salas, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brigadier General Jon K. Kelk and ending with Brigadier General Kenneth W. Wisian, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brigadier General Daryl L. Bohac and ending with Brigadier General Robert S. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Brigadier General Christopher J. Bence and ending with Brigadier General Mark W. Westergren, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nomination of Col. Paul W. Tibbets IV, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Lt. Gen. David D. Halverson, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Stuart W. Risch, to be Brigadier General, Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORD on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nomination of Teresa G. Paris, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Joel K. Warren, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jeffrey P. Tan and ending with Cristalle A. Cox, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 7, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Robert D. Coxwell and ending with Scot L. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 7, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Therese A. Bohusch and ending with James A. Stephenson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Richard T. Barker and ending with Ian P. Wiechert, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jenara L. Allen and ending with Derrick A. Zech, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Erin E. Artz and ending with Todd K. Zuber, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Adam L. Ackerman and ending with Kristen P. Zeligs, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Army nomination of David W. Bryant, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Joseph B. Berger III and ending with William D. Smoot III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 7, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Joseph A. Anderson and ending with D011695, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Victor M. Anda and ending with Joshua A. Worley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Tracy K. Abenoja and ending with Daniel J. Yourk, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Harris A. Abbasi and ending with David M. Zupancic, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Stephen E. Forsyth, Jr. and ending with Eric J. Frye, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 16, 2014.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 1965. A bill to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 1966. A bill to provide for the restoration of the economic and ecological health of National Forest System land and rural communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 1967. A bill to provide for the management of certain inventoried roadless areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mr. COATS, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 1968. A bill to allow States to let Federal funds for the education of disadvantaged children follow low-income children to the accredited or otherwise State-approved public school, private school, or supplemental educational services program they attend; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. Res. 340. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that all necessary measures should be taken to protect children in the United States from human trafficking, especially during the upcoming Super Bowl,

an event around which many children are trafficked for sex; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 162

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 162, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act of 2004.

S. 655

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 655, a bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to authorize the Secretary of Labor to provide grants for Urban Jobs Programs, and for other purposes.

S. 738

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 738, a bill to grant the Secretary of the Interior permanent authority to authorize States to issue electronic duck stamps, and for other purposes.

S. 913

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 913, a bill to amend the National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 2000 to reauthorize and improve that Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1012

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1012, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve operations of recovery auditors under the Medicare integrity program, to increase transparency and accuracy in audits conducted by contractors, and for other purposes.

S. 1022

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1022, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to extend the exemption from the fire-retardant materials construction requirement for vessels operating within the Boundary Line.

S. 1137

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1137, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize payments for ambulatory surgical centers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Wash-

ington (Mrs. MURRAY) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1186

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1186, a bill to reauthorize the Essex National Heritage Area.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1658

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1658, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent certain small business tax provisions, and for other purposes.

S. 1697

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1697, a bill to support early learning.

S. 1704

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1704, a bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1896

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1896, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the new markets tax credit and provide designated allocations for areas impacted by a decline in manufacturing.

S. 1902

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1902, a bill to require notification of individuals of breaches of personally identifiable information through Exchanges under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1923

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

S. 1926

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

S. 1950

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 26

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 26, a concurrent resolution recognizing the need to improve physical access to many federally funded facilities for all people of the United States, particularly people with disabilities.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr.

COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, supra.

S. RES. 339

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 339, a resolution commemorating the 150th anniversary of Mayo Clinic.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 340—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT ALL NECESSARY MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING, ESPECIALLY DURING THE UPCOMING SUPER BOWL, AN EVENT AROUND WHICH MANY CHILDREN ARE TRAFFICKED FOR SEX

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 340

Whereas according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 children in the United States are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation;

Whereas the average age of victims at the time of their entry into sex trafficking is between just 12 and 14 years old;

Whereas sex trafficking victims are often abducted or lured into running away by traffickers;

Whereas sex trafficking victims are routinely raped and beaten, and sometimes even branded;

Whereas the vast majority of child victims of sex trafficking are children from the foster care system, where they have often been failed by the officials entrusted to protect them;

Whereas instances of sex trafficking occur in every state, and tens of thousands of men, women, and children are brought to the United States every year and exploited for sex and labor by traffickers;

Whereas it is widely recognized that the beloved American tradition of the Super Bowl, an event that draws tens of thousands of fans to the host city, like other major recreational events, leads to a surge in the sex trafficking of underage girls and boys in the host city; and

Whereas traffickers aggressively advertise and sell sex trafficking victims on websites like backpage.com during the Super Bowl in order to meet the increased demand from visitors to the host city: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) law enforcement officers, the juvenile justice system, social services, and the public should recognize and treat all children being trafficked for sex as victims of human

trafficking each and every day of the year; and

(2) Federal and State law enforcement agencies should take all necessary measures to protect children in the United States from harm, including arresting and prosecuting both traffickers and buyers of children for sex in accordance with the applicable State and Federal laws against child abuse, statutory rape, and human trafficking, particularly during the festivities surrounding Super Bowl XLVIII.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2692. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2693. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2694. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2695. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2696. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2697. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2698. Mr. BLUNT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2699. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2700. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2701. Mr. REID (for Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. HATCH)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1302, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

SA 2702. Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mr. PRYOR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2703. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2704. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2705. Mr. KING (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended

to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2706. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2707. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2708. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2709. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2692. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 9, line 8, strike “18 months” and insert “3 months”.

SA 2693. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, insert the following:
SEC. 110. PREDISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION FUNDING.

Section 203(g) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

“(10) the number of properties in the State or in a community located in an area represented by the local government with a risk premium rate for flood insurance coverage provided under the National Flood Insurance Program (as established under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.)) of not less than \$10,000 per year; and”.

SA 2694. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 5, line 3, after the period insert the following: “The prohibition established under this paragraph shall not apply to any residential property which is not the pri-

mary residence of an individual or any business property.”.

SA 2695. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 6, between lines 4 and 5, insert the following:

(4) **ELIMINATION OF OUTSTANDING SUBSIDIES FOR PRE-FIRM PROPERTIES.**—

(A) **ELIMINATION OF SUBSIDY.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, upon the expiration of the period set forth under paragraph (3), the Administrator may not estimate any risk premium rate for flood insurance for any property subject to paragraph (2) of section 1307(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)) and not otherwise described in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of such paragraph, if such rate is less than that estimated under paragraph (1) of such section 1307(a).

(B) **PHASE-IN OF CHARGEABLE RISK PREMIUM RATE.**—Upon the expiration of the period set forth under paragraph (3), the chargeable risk premium rate for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 for any property described under subparagraph (A) shall be increased by 20 percent each year, until the risk premium rate for such property is equal to the full actuarial risk premium rate for that property.

SA 2696. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MORTGAGE INTEREST DEDUCTION ALLOWED WITH RESPECT TO BOATS ONLY IF BOAT IS USED AS THE PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE OF THE TAXPAYER.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subclause (II) of section 163(h)(4)(A)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting “(other than a boat)” after “1 other residence of the taxpayer”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The amendment made by this section shall apply to indebtedness incurred after the date that is 3 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) **SPECIAL RULE FOR REFINANCINGS.**—For purposes of this subsection, indebtedness resulting from the refinancing of indebtedness shall be treated as incurred on the date the refinanced indebtedness was incurred (taking into account the application of this paragraph in the case of multiple refinancings) but only to the extent the indebtedness resulting from such refinancing does not exceed the refinanced indebtedness.

SA 2697. Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 330 of subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, as added by section 202(a), insert the following:

“(C) **STATE OPT-OUT-RIGHTS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Any State, as described in section 333(9)(A), may elect not to participate in the Association, and insurance producers doing business in that State shall be subject to all otherwise applicable insurance-related laws, rules, and regulations of that State.

“(2) **PROCEDURE.**—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that elects not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) shall do so by enacting legislation indicating such election.

“(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE OF OPT-OUT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the effective date of an election by a State, as described in section 333(9)(A), not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) is 2 years after the date on which the State enacts legislation under paragraph (2).

“(B) **IMMEDIATELY EFFECTIVE OPT-OUT.**—An election by a State, as described in section 333(9)(A), not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) shall take effect upon the enactment of legislation under paragraph (2) if such legislation is enacted not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

“(4) **EXCLUSION OF INSURANCE PRODUCERS.**—No insurance producer, the home State, as described in section 333(9)(A), of which has made an election not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1), may become a member of the Association.

“(5) **NOTIFICATION OF OPT-OUT.**—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that elects not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) shall notify the Board and the primary insurance regulatory authority of each State of such election.

“(6) **CHANGE IN ELECTION.**—

“(A) **OPT-IN.**—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that has elected not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) may elect to participate in the Association by enacting legislation indicating such election.

“(B) **EFFECTIVE DATE OF OPT-IN.**—An election by a State, as described in section 333(9)(A), to participate in the Association under subparagraph (A) shall take effect upon the enactment of the legislation indicating such election.

“(C) **NOTIFICATION OF OPT-IN.**—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that has elected to participate in the Association under subparagraph (A) shall notify the Board and the primary insurance regulatory authority of each State of such election.

In section 334 of subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, as added by section 202(a), strike paragraph (9) and insert the following:

“(9) **STATE.**—The term ‘State’—

“(A) means any State, the District of Columbia, any territory of the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands; and

“(B) does not include any State (as described in subparagraph (A)) that has made

an election not to participate in the Association under section 330(c)(1).

SA 2698. Mr. BLUNT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking “30 percent” and inserting “50 percent”.

SA 2699. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. WICKER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) REPEALS.—

(1) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(e) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), no credit shall be allowed under this section to a taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and taxpayer identification number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.

“(2) REFUNDABLE PORTION.—Subsection (d)(1) shall not apply to any taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and social security number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.”.

(2) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct TIN under section 24(e)(1) (relating to child tax credit) or a correct Social Security number required under section 24(e)(2) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), to be included on a return.”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2700. Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment

intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. AUTHORITY OF STATES TO REGULATE PRIVATE FLOOD INSURANCE.

Section 102(b)(7) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(b)(7)) is amended to read as follows:

“(7) PRIVATE FLOOD INSURANCE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘private flood insurance’ means an insurance policy that—

“(A) provides flood insurance coverage;

“(B) is issued by an insurance company that is—

“(i) licensed, admitted, or otherwise approved to engage in the business of insurance in the State or jurisdiction in which the insured building is located, by the insurance regulator of that State or jurisdiction; or

“(ii) eligible as a nonadmitted insurer to provide insurance in the State or jurisdiction where the property to be insured is located, in accordance with section 524 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (15 U.S.C. 8204); and

“(C) is issued by an insurance company that is not otherwise disapproved as a surplus lines insurer by the insurance regulator of the State or jurisdiction where the property to be insured is located.”.

SA 2701. Mr. REID (for Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. HATCH)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1302, to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ‘Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act’.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Congressional findings and declarations of policy.

Sec. 3. Effective date.

TITLE I—AMENDMENTS TO EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974 AND OTHER PROVISIONS

Sec. 101. Definition of cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

Sec. 102. Funding rules applicable to cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

Sec. 103. Elections.

Sec. 104. Transparency.

Sec. 105. Sponsor education and assistance.

TITLE II—AMENDMENTS TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986

Sec. 201. Definition of cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

Sec. 202. Funding rules applicable to cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

Sec. 203. Election not to be treated as a CSEC plan.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS OF POLICY.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) Defined benefit pension plans are a cost-effective way for cooperative associations and charities to provide their employees with economic security in retirement.

(2) Many cooperative associations and charitable organizations are only able to provide their employees with defined benefit pension plans because those organizations are able to pool their resources using the multiple employer plan structure.

(3) The pension funding rules should encourage cooperative associations and charities to continue to provide their employees with pension benefits.

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Unless otherwise specified in this Act, the provisions of this Act shall apply to years beginning after December 31, 2013.

TITLE I—AMENDMENTS TO EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974 AND OTHER PROVISIONS

SEC. 101. DEFINITION OF COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.

Section 210 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1060) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f) COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this title, except as provided in this subsection, a CSEC plan is an employee pension benefit plan (other than a multiemployer plan) that is a defined benefit plan—

“(A) to which section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 applies, without regard to—

“(i) section 104(a)(2) of such Act;

“(ii) the amendments to such section 104 by section 202(b) of the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010; and

“(iii) paragraph (3)(B); or

“(B) that, as of June 25, 2010, was maintained by more than one employer and all of the employers were organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(2) AGGREGATION.—All employers that are treated as a single employer under subsection (b) or (c) of section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be treated as a single employer for purposes of determining if a plan was maintained by more than one employer under paragraph (1)(B).”.

SEC. 102. FUNDING RULES APPLICABLE TO COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part 3 of title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1081 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 306. MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS.

“(a) GENERAL RULE.—For purposes of section 302, the term ‘accumulated funding deficiency’ for a CSEC plan means the excess of the total charges to the funding standard account for all plan years (beginning with the first plan year to which section 302 applies) over the total credits to such account for such years or, if less, the excess of the total charges to the alternative minimum funding standard account for such plan years over the total credits to such account for such years.

“(b) FUNDING STANDARD ACCOUNT.—

“(1) ACCOUNT REQUIRED.—Each plan to which this section applies shall establish and maintain a funding standard account. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this section.

“(2) CHARGES TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be charged with the sum of—

“(A) the normal cost of the plan for the plan year,

“(B) the amounts necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

“(i) in the case of a plan in existence on January 1, 1974, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 302 applies, over a period of 40 plan years,

“(ii) in the case of a plan which comes into existence after January 1, 1974, but before the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 302 applies, over a period of 30 plan years,

“(iii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net increase (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

“(iv) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience loss (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

“(v) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net loss (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

“(C) the amount necessary to amortize each waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 302(c)(3)) for each prior plan year in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years,

“(D) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years any amount credited to the funding standard account under paragraph (3)(D), and

“(E) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 20 years the contributions which would be required to be made under the plan but for the provisions of section 302(c)(7)(A)(i)(I) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be credited with the sum of—

“(A) the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year,

“(B) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

“(i) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net decrease (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

“(ii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience gain (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

“(iii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net gain (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

“(C) the amount of the waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 302(c)(3)) for the plan year, and

“(D) in the case of a plan year for which the accumulated funding deficiency is determined under the funding standard account if such plan year follows a plan year for which such deficiency was determined under the alternative minimum funding standard, the excess (if any) of any debit balance in the funding standard account (determined without regard to this subparagraph) over any debit balance in the alternative minimum funding standard account.

“(4) COMBINING AND OFFSETTING AMOUNTS TO BE AMORTIZED.—Under regulations pre-

scribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, amounts required to be amortized under paragraph (2) or paragraph (3), as the case may be—

“(A) may be combined into one amount under such paragraph to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization period for all items entering into such combined amount, and

“(B) may be offset against amounts required to be amortized under the other such paragraph, with the resulting amount to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization periods for all items entering into whichever of the two amounts being offset is the greater.

“(5) INTEREST.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited (as determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury) with interest at the appropriate rate consistent with the rate or rates of interest used under the plan to determine costs.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—The interest rate used for purposes of computing the amortization charge described in subsection (b)(2)(C) or for purposes of any arrangement under subsection (d) for any plan year shall be the greater of—

“(i) 150 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(ii) the rate of interest determined under subparagraph (A).

“(6) AMORTIZATION SCHEDULES IN EFFECT.—Amortization schedules for amounts described in paragraphs (2) and (3) that are in effect as of the last day of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, by reason of section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 shall remain in effect pursuant to their terms and this section, except that such amounts shall not be amortized again under this section.

“(c) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(1) DETERMINATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER FUNDING METHOD.—For purposes of this section, normal costs, accrued liability, past service liabilities, and experience gains and losses shall be determined under the funding method used to determine costs under the plan.

“(2) VALUATION OF ASSETS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the value of the plan's assets shall be determined on the basis of any reasonable actuarial method of valuation which takes into account fair market value and which is permitted under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) DEDICATED BOND PORTFOLIO.—The Secretary of the Treasury may by regulations provide that the value of any dedicated bond portfolio of a plan shall be determined by using the interest rate under section 302(b)(5) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS MUST BE REASONABLE.—For purposes of this section, all costs, liabilities, rates of interest, and other factors under the plan shall be determined on the basis of actuarial assumptions and methods—

“(A) each of which is reasonable (taking into account the experience of the plan and reasonable expectations), and

“(B) which, in combination, offer the actuary's best estimate of anticipated experience under the plan.

“(4) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CHANGES AS EXPERIENCE GAIN OR LOSS.—For purposes of this section, if—

“(A) a change in benefits under the Social Security Act or in other retirement benefits created under Federal or State law, or

“(B) a change in the definition of the term ‘wages’ under section 3121 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or a change in the amount of such wages taken into account under regulations prescribed for purposes of section 401(a)(5) of such Code,

results in an increase or decrease in accrued liability under a plan, such increase or decrease shall be treated as an experience loss or gain.

“(5) FUNDING METHOD AND PLAN YEAR.—

“(A) FUNDING METHODS AVAILABLE.—All funding methods available to CSEC plans under section 302 (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) shall continue to be available under this section.

“(B) CHANGES.—If the funding method for a plan is changed, the new funding method shall become the funding method used to determine costs and liabilities under the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary of the Treasury. If the plan year for a plan is changed, the new plan year shall become the plan year for the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(C) APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS BY CERTAIN SINGLE-EMPLOYER PLANS SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—No actuarial assumption (other than the assumptions described in subsection (h)(3)) used to determine the current liability for a plan to which this subparagraph applies may be changed without the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(ii) PLANS TO WHICH SUBPARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to a plan only if—

“(I) the plan is a CSEC plan,

“(II) the aggregate unfunded vested benefits as of the close of the preceding plan year (as determined under section 4006(a)(3)(E)(iii) of such plan and all other plans maintained by the contributing sponsors (as defined in section 4001(a)(13)) and members of such sponsors' controlled groups (as defined in section 4001(a)(14)) which are covered by title IV (disregarding plans with no unfunded vested benefits) exceed \$50,000,000, and

“(III) the change in assumptions (determined after taking into account any changes in interest rate and mortality table) results in a decrease in the funding shortfall of the plan for the current plan year that exceeds \$50,000,000, or that exceeds \$5,000,000 and that is 5 percent or more of the current liability of the plan before such change.

“(6) FULL FUNDING.—If, as of the close of a plan year, a plan would (without regard to this paragraph) have an accumulated funding deficiency (determined without regard to the alternative minimum funding standard account permitted under subsection (e)) in excess of the full funding limitation—

“(A) the funding standard account shall be credited with the amount of such excess, and

“(B) all amounts described in paragraphs (2)(B), (C), and (D) and (3)(B) of subsection (b) which are required to be amortized shall be considered fully amortized for purposes of such paragraphs.

“(7) FULL-FUNDING LIMITATION.—For purposes of paragraph (6), the term ‘full-funding limitation’ means the excess (if any) of—

“(A) the accrued liability (including normal cost) under the plan (determined under the entry age normal funding method if such

accrued liability cannot be directly calculated under the funding method used for the plan), over

“(B) the lesser of—

“(i) the fair market value of the plan’s assets, or

“(ii) the value of such assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In no event shall the full-funding limitation determined under subparagraph (A) be less than the excess (if any) of—

“(I) 90 percent of the current liability (determined without regard to paragraph (4) of subsection (h)) of the plan (including the expected increase in such current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year), over

“(II) the value of the plan’s assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(ii) ASSETS.—For purposes of clause (i), assets shall not be reduced by any credit balance in the funding standard account.

“(8) ANNUAL VALUATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a determination of experience gains and losses and a valuation of the plan’s liability shall be made not less frequently than once every year, except that such determination shall be made more frequently to the extent required in particular cases under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) VALUATION DATE.—

“(i) CURRENT YEAR.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be made as of a date within the plan year to which the valuation refers or within one month prior to the beginning of such year.

“(ii) USE OF PRIOR YEAR VALUATION.—The valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) may be made as of a date within the plan year prior to the year to which the valuation refers if, as of such date, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 100 percent of the plan’s current liability.

“(iii) ADJUSTMENTS.—Information under clause (ii) shall, in accordance with regulations, be actuarially adjusted to reflect significant differences in participants.

“(iv) LIMITATION.—A change in funding method to use a prior year valuation, as provided in clause (ii), may not be made unless as of the valuation date within the prior plan year, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 125 percent of the plan’s current liability.

“(9) TIME WHEN CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS DEEMED MADE.—For purposes of this section, any contributions for a plan year made by an employer during the period—

“(A) beginning on the day after the last day of such plan year, and

“(B) ending on the day which is 8½ months after the close of the plan year, shall be deemed to have been made on such last day.

“(10) ANTICIPATION OF BENEFIT INCREASES EFFECTIVE IN THE FUTURE.—In determining projected benefits, the funding method of a collectively bargained CSEC plan described in section 413(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall anticipate benefit increases scheduled to take effect during the term of the collective bargaining agreement applicable to the plan.

“(d) EXTENSION OF AMORTIZATION PERIODS.—The period of years required to amortize any unfunded liability (described in any clause of subsection (b)(2)(B)) of any plan may be extended by the Secretary of the Treasury for a period of time (not in excess

of 10 years) if such Secretary determines that such extension would carry out the purposes of this Act and provide adequate protection for participants under the plan and their beneficiaries, and if such Secretary determines that the failure to permit such extension would result in—

“(1) a substantial risk to the voluntary continuation of the plan, or

“(2) a substantial curtailment of pension benefit levels or employee compensation.

“(e) ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A CSEC plan which uses a funding method that requires contributions in all years not less than those required under the entry age normal funding method may maintain an alternative minimum funding standard account for any plan year. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this subsection.

“(2) CHARGES AND CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year the alternative minimum funding standard account shall be—

“(A) charged with the sum of—

“(i) the lesser of normal cost under the funding method used under the plan or normal cost determined under the unit credit method,

“(ii) the excess, if any, of the present value of accrued benefits under the plan over the fair market value of the assets, and

“(iii) an amount equal to the excess (if any) of credits to the alternative minimum standard account for all prior plan years over charges to such account for all such years, and

“(B) credited with the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year.

“(3) INTEREST.—The alternative minimum funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited with interest in the manner provided under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the funding standard account.

“(f) QUARTERLY CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If a CSEC plan which has a funded current liability percentage for the preceding plan year of less than 100 percent fails to pay the full amount of a required installment for the plan year, then the rate of interest charged to the funding standard account under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the amount of the underpayment for the period of the underpayment shall be equal to the greater of—

“(A) 175 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(B) the rate of interest used under the plan in determining costs.

“(2) AMOUNT OF UNDERPAYMENT, PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1)—

“(A) AMOUNT.—The amount of the underpayment shall be the excess of—

“(i) the required installment, over

“(ii) the amount (if any) of the installment contributed to or under the plan on or before the due date for the installment.

“(B) PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—The period for which interest is charged under this subsection with regard to any portion of the underpayment shall run from the due date for the installment to the date on which such portion is contributed to or under the plan (determined without regard to subsection (c)(9)).

“(C) ORDER OF CREDITING CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), contributions shall be credited against unpaid

required installments in the order in which such installments are required to be paid.

“(3) NUMBER OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENTS; DUE DATES.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) PAYABLE IN 4 INSTALLMENTS.—There shall be 4 required installments for each plan year.

“(B) TIME FOR PAYMENT OF INSTALLMENTS.—

“In the case of the following required installments:

The due date is:

1st	April 15
2nd	July 15
3rd	October 15
4th	January 15 of the following year.

“(4) AMOUNT OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of any required installment shall be 25 percent of the required annual payment.

“(B) REQUIRED ANNUAL PAYMENT.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ‘required annual payment’ means the lesser of—

“(i) 90 percent of the amount required to be contributed to or under the plan by the employer for the plan year under section 302 (without regard to any waiver under subsection (c) thereof), or

“(ii) 100 percent of the amount so required for the preceding plan year. Clause (ii) shall not apply if the preceding plan year was not a year of 12 months.

“(5) LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A plan to which this paragraph applies shall be treated as failing to pay the full amount of any required installment to the extent that the value of the liquid assets paid in such installment is less than the liquidity shortfall (whether or not such liquidity shortfall exceeds the amount of such installment required to be paid but for this paragraph).

“(B) PLANS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This paragraph shall apply to a CSEC plan other than a plan described in section 302(d)(6)(A) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) which—

“(i) is required to pay installments under this subsection for a plan year, and

“(ii) has a liquidity shortfall for any quarter during such plan year.

“(C) PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any portion of an installment that is treated as not paid under subparagraph (A) shall continue to be treated as unpaid until the close of the quarter in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(D) LIMITATION ON INCREASE.—If the amount of any required installment is increased by reason of subparagraph (A), in no event shall such increase exceed the amount which, when added to prior installments for the plan year, is necessary to increase the funded current liability percentage (taking into account the expected increase in current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year) to 100 percent.

“(E) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this paragraph—

“(i) LIQUIDITY SHORTFALL.—The term ‘liquidity shortfall’ means, with respect to any required installment, an amount equal to the excess (as of the last day of the quarter for which such installment is made) of the base amount with respect to such quarter over the value (as of such last day) of the plan’s liquid assets.

“(ii) BASE AMOUNT.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘base amount’ means, with respect to any quarter, an amount equal to 3 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 12 months ending on the last day of such quarter.

“(II) SPECIAL RULE.—If the amount determined under subclause (I) exceeds an amount equal to 2 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 36 months ending on the last day of the quarter and an enrolled actuary certifies to the satisfaction of the Secretary of the Treasury that such excess is the result of nonrecurring circumstances, the base amount with respect to such quarter shall be determined without regard to amounts related to those nonrecurring circumstances.

“(iii) DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE PLAN.—The term ‘disbursements from the plan’ means all disbursements from the trust, including purchases of annuities, payments of single sums and other benefits, and administrative expenses.

“(iv) ADJUSTED DISBURSEMENTS.—The term ‘adjusted disbursements’ means disbursements from the plan reduced by the product of—

“(I) the plan’s funded current liability percentage for the plan year, and

“(II) the sum of the purchases of annuities, payments of single sums, and such other disbursements as the Secretary of the Treasury shall provide in regulations.

“(v) LIQUID ASSETS.—The term ‘liquid assets’ means cash, marketable securities and such other assets as specified by the Secretary of the Treasury in regulations.

“(vi) QUARTER.—The term ‘quarter’ means, with respect to any required installment, the 3-month period preceding the month in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(F) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this paragraph.

“(6) FISCAL YEARS AND SHORT YEARS.—

“(A) FISCAL YEARS.—In applying this subsection to a plan year beginning on any date other than January 1, there shall be substituted for the months specified in this subsection, the months which correspond thereto.

“(B) SHORT PLAN YEAR.—This subsection shall be applied to plan years of less than 12 months in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(g) IMPOSITION OF LIEN WHERE FAILURE TO MAKE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a plan to which this section applies, if—

“(A) any person fails to make a required installment under subsection (f) or any other payment required under this section before the due date for such installment or other payment, and

“(B) the unpaid balance of such installment or other payment (including interest), when added to the aggregate unpaid balance of all preceding such installments or other payments for which payment was not made before the due date (including interest), exceeds \$1,000,000,

then there shall be a lien in favor of the plan in the amount determined under paragraph (3) upon all property and rights to property, whether real or personal, belonging to such person and any other person who is a member of the same controlled group of which such person is a member.

“(2) PLANS TO WHICH SUBSECTION APPLIES.—This subsection shall apply to a CSEC plan for any plan year for which the funded current liability percentage of such plan is less

than 100 percent. This subsection shall not apply to any plan to which section 4021 does not apply (as such section is in effect on the date of the enactment of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994).

“(3) AMOUNT OF LIEN.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the amount of the lien shall be equal to the aggregate unpaid balance of required installments and other payments required under this section (including interest)—

“(A) for plan years beginning after 1987, and

“(B) for which payment has not been made before the due date.

“(4) NOTICE OF FAILURE; LIEN.—

“(A) NOTICE OF FAILURE.—A person committing a failure described in paragraph (1) shall notify the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation of such failure within 10 days of the due date for the required installment or other payment.

“(B) PERIOD OF LIEN.—The lien imposed by paragraph (1) shall arise on the due date for the required installment or other payment and shall continue until the last day of the first plan year in which the plan ceases to be described in paragraph (1)(B). Such lien shall continue to run without regard to whether such plan continues to be described in paragraph (2) during the period referred to in the preceding sentence.

“(C) CERTAIN RULES TO APPLY.—Any amount with respect to which a lien is imposed under paragraph (1) shall be treated as taxes due and owing the United States and rules similar to the rules of subsections (c), (d), and (e) of section 4068 shall apply with respect to a lien imposed by subsection (a) and the amount with respect to such lien.

“(5) ENFORCEMENT.—Any lien created under paragraph (1) may be perfected and enforced only by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or at the direction of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, by any contributing employer (or any member of the controlled group of the contributing employer).

“(6) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) DUE DATE; REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—The terms ‘due date’ and ‘required installment’ have the meanings given such terms by subsection (f), except that in the case of a payment other than a required installment, the due date shall be the date such payment is required to be made under this section.

“(B) CONTROLLED GROUP.—The term ‘controlled group’ means any group treated as a single employer under subsections (b), (c), (m), and (o) of section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(h) CURRENT LIABILITY.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘current liability’ means all liabilities to employees and their beneficiaries under the plan.

“(2) TREATMENT OF UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFITS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any unpredictable contingent event benefit shall not be taken into account until the event on which the benefit is contingent occurs.

“(B) UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFIT.—The term ‘unpredictable contingent event benefit’ means any benefit contingent on an event other than—

“(i) age, service, compensation, death, or disability, or

“(ii) an event which is reasonably and reliably predictable (as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury).

“(3) INTEREST RATE AND MORTALITY ASSUMPTIONS USED.—

“(A) INTEREST RATE.—The rate of interest used to determine current liability under this section shall be the third segment rate determined under section 303(h)(2)(C).

“(B) MORTALITY TABLES.—

“(i) SECRETARIAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the Treasury may by regulation prescribe mortality tables to be used in determining current liability under this subsection. Such tables shall be based upon the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience. In prescribing such tables, the Secretary of the Treasury shall take into account results of available independent studies of mortality of individuals covered by pension plans.

“(ii) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall periodically (at least every 5 years) review any tables in effect under this subsection and shall, to the extent the Secretary of the Treasury determines necessary, by regulation update the tables to reflect the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience.

“(C) SEPARATE MORTALITY TABLES FOR THE DISABLED.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of plan years beginning after December 31, 1995, the Secretary of the Treasury shall establish mortality tables which may be used (in lieu of the tables under subparagraph (B)) to determine current liability under this subsection for individuals who are entitled to benefits under the plan on account of disability. The Secretary of the Treasury shall establish separate tables for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning before January 1, 1995, and for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning on or after such date.

“(ii) SPECIAL RULE FOR DISABILITIES OCCURRING AFTER 1994.—In the case of disabilities occurring in plan years beginning after December 31, 1994, the tables under clause (i) shall apply only with respect to individuals described in such subclause who are disabled within the meaning of title II of the Social Security Act and the regulations thereunder.

“(4) CERTAIN SERVICE DISREGARDED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a participant to whom this paragraph applies, only the applicable percentage of the years of service before such individual became a participant shall be taken into account in computing the current liability of the plan.

“(B) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the applicable percentage shall be determined as follows:

“If the years of participation are:	The applicable percentage is:
1	20
2	40
3	60
4	80
5 or more	100.

“(C) PARTICIPANTS TO WHOM PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to any participant who, at the time of becoming a participant—

“(i) has not accrued any other benefit under any defined benefit plan (whether or not terminated) maintained by the employer or a member of the same controlled group of which the employer is a member,

“(ii) who first becomes a participant under the plan in a plan year beginning after December 31, 1987, and

“(iii) has years of service greater than the minimum years of service necessary for eligibility to participate in the plan.

“(D) ELECTION.—An employer may elect not to have this subparagraph apply. Such an election, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(i) FUNDED CURRENT LIABILITY PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘funded current liability percentage’ means, with respect to any plan year, the percentage which—

“(1) the value of the plan’s assets determined under subsection (c)(2), is of

“(2) the current liability under the plan.

“(j) FUNDING RESTORATION STATUS.—Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section—

“(1) NORMAL COST PAYMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a CSEC plan that is in funding restoration status for a plan year, for purposes of section 302, the term ‘accumulated funding deficiency’ means, for such plan year, the greater of—

“(i) the amount described in subsection (a), or

“(ii) the excess of the normal cost of the plan for the plan year over the amount actually contributed to or under the plan for the plan year.

“(B) NORMAL COST.—In the case of a CSEC plan that uses a spread gain funding method, for purposes of this subsection, the term ‘normal cost’ means normal cost as determined under the entry age normal funding method.

“(2) PLAN AMENDMENTS.—In the case of a CSEC plan that is in funding restoration status for a plan year, no amendment to such plan may take effect during such plan year if such amendment has the effect of increasing liabilities of the plan by means of increases in benefits, establishment of new benefits, changing the rate of benefit accrual, or changing the rate at which benefits become nonforfeitable. This paragraph shall not apply to any plan amendment that is required to comply with any applicable law. This paragraph shall cease to apply with respect to any plan year, effective as of the first day of the plan year (or if later, the effective date of the amendment) upon payment by the plan sponsor of a contribution to the plan (in addition to any contribution required under this section without regard to this paragraph) in an amount equal to the increase in the funding liability of the plan attributable to the plan amendment.

“(3) FUNDING RESTORATION PLAN.—The sponsor of a CSEC plan shall establish a written funding restoration plan within 180 days of the receipt by the plan sponsor of a certification from the plan actuary that the plan is in funding restoration status for a plan year. Such funding restoration plan shall consist of actions that are calculated, based on reasonably anticipated experience and reasonable actuarial assumptions, to increase the plan’s funded percentage to 100 percent over a period that is not longer than the greater of 7 years or the shortest amount of time practicable. Such funding restoration plan shall take into account contributions required under this section (without regard to this paragraph). If a plan remains in funding restoration status for 2 or more years, such funding restoration plan shall be updated each year after the 1st such year within 180 days of receipt by the plan sponsor of a certification from the plan actuary that the plan remains in funding restoration status for the plan year.

“(4) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION BY PLAN ACTUARY.—Not later than the 90th day of each

plan year of a CSEC plan, the plan actuary shall certify to the plan sponsor whether or not the plan is in funding restoration status for the plan year, based on the plan’s funded percentage as of the beginning of the plan year. For this purpose, the actuary may conclusively rely on an estimate of—

“(A) the plan’s funding liability, based on the funding liability of the plan for the preceding plan year and on reasonable actuarial estimates, assumptions, and methods, and

“(B) the amount of any contributions reasonably anticipated to be made for the preceding plan year.

Contributions described in subparagraph (B) shall be taken into account in determining the plan’s funded percentage as of the beginning of the plan year.

“(5) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) FUNDING RESTORATION STATUS.—A CSEC plan shall be treated as in funding restoration status for a plan year if the plan’s funded percentage as of the beginning of such plan year is less than 80 percent.

“(B) FUNDED PERCENTAGE.—The term ‘funded percentage’ means the ratio (expressed as a percentage) which—

“(i) the value of plan assets (as determined under subsection (c)(2)), bears to

“(ii) the plan’s funding liability.

“(C) FUNDING LIABILITY.—The term ‘funding liability’ for a plan year means the present value of all benefits accrued or earned under the plan as of the beginning of the plan year, based on the assumptions used by the plan pursuant to this section, including the interest rate described in subsection (b)(5)(A) (without regard to subsection (b)(5)(B)).

“(D) SPREAD GAIN FUNDING METHOD.—The term ‘spread gain funding method’ has the meaning given such term under rules and forms issued by the Secretary of the Treasury.”

(b) SEPARATE RULES FOR CSEC PLANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 302(a) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1082(a)) is amended by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting “, and”, and by inserting at the end thereof the following new subparagraph:

“(D) in the case of a CSEC plan, the employers make contributions to or under the plan for any plan year which, in the aggregate, are sufficient to ensure that the plan does not have an accumulated funding deficiency under section 306 as of the end of the plan year.”

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 302 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1082) is amended—

(A) by striking “multiemployer plan” the first place it appears in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(A) and the last place it appears in paragraph (2) of subsection (d), and inserting “multiemployer plan or a CSEC plan”,

(B) by striking “303(j)” in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) and inserting “303(j) or under section 306(f)”,

(C)(i) by striking “and” at the end of clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B),

(ii) by striking the period at the end of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B), and inserting “, and”, and

(iii) by inserting the following new clause after clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B):

“(iii) in the case of a CSEC plan, the funding standard account shall be credited under section 306(b)(3)(C) with the amount of the waived funding deficiency and such amount shall be amortized as required under section 306(b)(2)(C).”

(D) by striking “under paragraph (1)” in clause (i) of subsection (c)(4)(A) and inserting “under paragraph (1) or for granting an extension under section 306(d)”,

(E) by striking “waiver under this subsection” in subparagraph (B) of subsection (c)(4) and inserting “waiver under this subsection or an extension under 306(d)”,

(F) by striking “waiver or modification” in subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(B)(i) and inserting “waiver, modification, or extension”,

(G) by striking “waivers” in the heading of subsection (c)(4)(C) and of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting “waivers or extensions”,

(H) by striking “section 304(d)” in subparagraph (A) of subsection (c)(7) and in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) and inserting “section 304(d) or section 306(d)”,

(I) by striking “and” at the end of subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and adding “or the accumulated funding deficiency under section 306, whichever is applicable.”,

(J) by striking “303(e)(2),” in subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and inserting “303(e)(2) or 306(b)(2)(C), whichever is applicable, and”,

(K) by adding immediately after subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) the following new subclause:

“(III) the total amounts not paid by reason of an extension in effect under section 306(d).”

(L) by striking “for waivers of” in clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting “for waivers or extensions with respect to”, and

(M) by striking “single-employer plan” in subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(2) and in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B) and inserting “single-employer plan (other than a CSEC plan)”.

(3) BENEFIT RESTRICTIONS.—Subsection (g) of section 206 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1056) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

“(12) CSEC PLANS.—This subsection shall not apply to a CSEC plan (as defined in section 210(f)).”

(4) BENEFIT INCREASES.—Paragraph (3) of section 204(i) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1054(i)) is amended by striking “multiemployer plans” and inserting “multiemployer plans or CSEC plans”.

(5) SECTION 103.—Subparagraph (B) of section 103(d)(8) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1023(d)(8)) is amended by striking “303(h) and 304(c)(3)” and inserting “303(h), 304(c)(3), and 306(c)(3)”.

(6) SECTION 502.—Subsection (c) of section 502 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 is amended—

(A) by redesignating the last paragraph as paragraph (11), and

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

“(12) The Secretary may assess a civil penalty against any sponsor of a CSEC plan of up to \$100 a day from the date of the plan sponsor’s failure to comply with the requirements of section 306(j)(3) to establish or update a funding restoration plan.”

(7) SECTION 4003.—Subparagraph (B) of section 4003(e)(1) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1303(e)(1)) is amended by striking “303(k)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986” and inserting “303(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 306(g)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 433(g)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986”.

(8) SECTION 4010.—Paragraph (2) of section 4010(b) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1310(b)) is amended by striking “303(k)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986” and inserting “303(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 306(g)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 433(g)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986”.

(9) SECTION 4071.—Section 4071 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1371) is amended by striking “section 303(k)(4)” and inserting “section 303(k)(4) or 306(g)(4)”.

SEC. 103. ELECTIONS.

(a) ELECTION NOT TO BE TREATED AS A CSEC PLAN.—Subsection (f) of section 210 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as added by section 101, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) ELECTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If a plan falls within the definition of a CSEC plan under this subsection (without regard to this paragraph), such plan shall be a CSEC plan unless the plan sponsor elects not later than the close of the first plan year of the plan beginning after December 31, 2013, not to be treated as a CSEC plan. An election under the preceding sentence shall take effect for such plan year and, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) SPECIAL RULE.—If a plan described in subparagraph (A) is treated as a CSEC plan, section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, as amended by the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010, shall cease to apply to such plan as of the first date as of which such plan is treated as a CSEC plan.”.

(b) ELECTION TO CEASE TO BE TREATED AS AN ELIGIBLE CHARITY PLAN.—Subsection (d) of section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, as added by section 202 of the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010, is amended—

(1) by striking “For purposes of” and inserting “(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of”, and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) ELECTION NOT TO BE AN ELIGIBLE CHARITY PLAN.—A plan sponsor may elect for a plan to cease to be treated as an eligible charity plan for plan years beginning after December 31, 2013. Such election shall be made at such time and in such form and manner as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Any such election may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(3) ELECTION TO USE FUNDING OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO OTHER PLAN SPONSORS.—

“(A) A plan sponsor that makes the election described in paragraph (2) may elect for a plan to apply the rules described in subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D) for plan years beginning after December 31, 2013. Such election shall be made at such time and in such form and manner as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Any such election may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) Under the rules described in this subparagraph, for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, a plan has—

“(i) an 11-year shortfall amortization base, and

“(ii) a 12-year shortfall amortization base,

“(iii) a 7-year shortfall amortization base.

“(C) Under the rules described in this subparagraph, section 303(c)(2)(A) and (B) of the

Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and section 430(c)(2)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied by—

“(i) in the case of an 11-year shortfall amortization base, substituting ‘11-plan-year period’ for ‘7-plan-year period’ wherever such phrase appears, and

“(ii) in the case of a 12-year shortfall amortization base, substituting ‘12-plan-year period’ for ‘7-plan-year period’ wherever such phrase appears.

“(D) Under the rules described in this subparagraph, section 303(c)(7) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 430(c)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall apply to a plan for which an election has been made under subparagraph (A). Such provisions shall apply in the following manner:

“(i) The first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, shall be treated as an election year, and no other plan years shall be so treated.

“(ii) All references in section 303(c)(7) of such Act and section 430(c)(7) of such Code to ‘February 28, 2010’ or ‘March 1, 2010’ shall be treated as references to ‘February 28, 2013’ or ‘March 1, 2013’, respectively.

“(E) For purposes of this paragraph, the 11-year amortization base is an amount, determined for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, equal to the unamortized principal amount of the shortfall amortization base (as defined in section 303(c)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 430(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that would have applied to the plan for the first plan beginning after December 31, 2009, if—

“(i) the plan had never been an eligible charity plan,

“(ii) the plan sponsor had made the election described in section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and in section 430(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to have section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of such Act and section 430(c)(2)(D)(iii) of such Code apply with respect to the shortfall amortization base for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2009, and

“(iii) no event had occurred under paragraph (6) or (7) of section 303(c) of such Act or paragraph (6) or (7) of section 430(c) of such Code that, as of the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, would have modified the shortfall amortization base or the shortfall amortization installments with respect to the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2009.

“(F) For purposes of this paragraph, the 12-year amortization base is an amount, determined for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, equal to the unamortized principal amount of the shortfall amortization base (as defined in section 303(c)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 430(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that would have applied to the plan for the first plan beginning after December 31, 2010, if—

“(i) the plan had never been an eligible charity plan,

“(ii) the plan sponsor had made the election described in section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and in section 430(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to have section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of such Act and section 430(c)(2)(D)(iii) of such Code apply with respect to the shortfall amortization base for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2010, and

“(iii) no event had occurred under paragraph (6) or (7) of section 303(c) of such Act or paragraph (6) or (7) of section 430(c) of such Code that, as of the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, would have modified the shortfall amortization base or the shortfall amortization installments with respect to the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2010.

“(G) For purposes of this paragraph, the 7-year shortfall amortization base is an amount, determined for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, equal to—

“(i) the shortfall amortization base for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, without regard to this paragraph, minus

“(ii) the sum of the 11-year shortfall amortization base and the 12-year shortfall amortization base.

“(4) RETROACTIVE ELECTION.—Not later than December 31, 2014, a plan sponsor may make a one-time, irrevocable, retroactive election to not be treated as an eligible charity plan. Such election shall be effective for plan years beginning after December 31, 2007, and shall be made by providing reasonable notice to the Secretary of the Treasury.”.

(c) DEEMED ELECTION.—For purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, sections 4(b)(2) and 4021(b)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and all other purposes, a plan shall be deemed to have made an irrevocable election under section 410(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 if—

(1) the plan was established before January 1, 2014;

(2) the plan falls within the definition of a CSEC plan;

(3) the plan sponsor does not make an election under section 210(f)(3)(A) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 414(y)(3)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this Act; and

(4) the plan, plan sponsor, administrator, or fiduciary remits one or more premium payments for the plan to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation for a plan year beginning after December 31, 2013.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 104. TRANSPARENCY.

(a) NOTICE TO PARTICIPANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 101(f) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1021(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) EFFECT OF CSEC PLAN RULES ON PLAN FUNDING.—In the case of a CSEC plan, each notice under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(i) a statement that different rules apply to CSEC plans than apply to single-employer plans,

“(ii) for the first 2 plan years beginning after December 31, 2013, a statement that, as a result of changes in the law made by the Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act, the contributions to the plan may have changed, and

“(iii) in the case of a CSEC plan that is in funding restoration status for the plan year, a statement that the plan is in funding restoration status for such plan year.

A copy of the statement required under clause (iii) shall be provided to the Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.”.

(2) MODEL NOTICE.—The Secretary of Labor may modify the model notice required to be published under section 501(c) of the Pension

Protection Act of 2006 to include the information described in section 101(f)(2)(E) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as added by this subsection.

(b) NOTICE OF FAILURE TO MEET MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS.—

(1) PENDING WAIVERS.—Paragraph (2) of section 101(d) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1021(d)) is amended by striking “303” and inserting “303 or 306”.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—Paragraph (3) of section 101(d) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (21 U.S.C. 1021(d)) is amended by striking “303(j)” and inserting “303(j) or 306(f), whichever is applicable”.

(c) ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 103 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1023) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO MULTIPLE EMPLOYER PLANS.—With respect to any multiple employer plan, an annual report under this section for a plan year shall include a list of participating employers and a good faith estimate of the percentage of total contributions made by such participating employers during the plan year.”.

SEC. 105. SPONSOR EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “CSEC plan” has the meaning given that term in subsection (f)(1) of section 210 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1060(f)(1)) (as added by this Act).

(b) EDUCATION.—The Participant and Plan Sponsor Advocate established under section 4004 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1304) shall make itself available to assist CSEC plan sponsors and participants as part of the duties it performs under the general supervision of the Board of Directors under section 4004(b) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 1304(b)).

TITLE II—AMENDMENTS TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986

SEC. 201. DEFINITION OF COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.

Section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(y) COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this title, except as provided in this subsection, a CSEC plan is a defined benefit plan (other than a multiemployer plan)—

“(A) to which section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 applies, without regard to—

“(i) section 104(a)(2) of such Act;

“(ii) the amendments to such section 104 by section 202(b) of the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010; and

“(iii) paragraph (3)(B); or

“(B) that, as of June 25, 2010, was maintained by more than one employer and all of the employers were organizations described in section 501(c)(3).

“(2) AGGREGATION.—All employers that are treated as a single employer under subsection (b) or (c) shall be treated as a single employer for purposes of determining if a plan was maintained by more than one employer under paragraph (1)(B).”.

SEC. 202. FUNDING RULES APPLICABLE TO COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart A of part III of subchapter D of chapter 1 of subtitle A of the

Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section: “SEC. 433. MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS.

“(a) GENERAL RULE.—For purposes of section 412, the term ‘accumulated funding deficiency’ for a CSEC plan means the excess of the total charges to the funding standard account for all plan years (beginning with the first plan year to which section 412 applies) over the total credits to such account for such years or, if less, the excess of the total charges to the alternative minimum funding standard account for such plan years over the total credits to such account for such years.

“(b) FUNDING STANDARD ACCOUNT.—

“(1) ACCOUNT REQUIRED.—Each plan to which this section applies shall establish and maintain a funding standard account. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this section.

“(2) CHARGES TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be charged with the sum of—

“(A) the normal cost of the plan for the plan year,

“(B) the amounts necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

“(i) in the case of a plan in existence on January 1, 1974, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 412 applies, over a period of 40 plan years,

“(ii) in the case of a plan which comes into existence after January 1, 1974, but before the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 412 applies, over a period of 30 plan years,

“(iii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net increase (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

“(iv) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience loss (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

“(v) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net loss (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years.

“(C) the amount necessary to amortize each waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 412(c)(3)) for each prior plan year in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years,

“(D) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years any amount credited to the funding standard account under paragraph (3)(D), and

“(E) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 20 years the contributions which would be required to be made under the plan but for the provisions of section 412(c)(7)(A)(i)(I) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be credited with the sum of—

“(A) the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year,

“(B) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

“(i) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net decrease (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising

from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

“(ii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience gain (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

“(iii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net gain (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

“(C) the amount of the waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 412(c)(3)) for the plan year, and

“(D) in the case of a plan year for which the accumulated funding deficiency is determined under the funding standard account if such plan year follows a plan year for which such deficiency was determined under the alternative minimum funding standard, the excess (if any) of any debit balance in the funding standard account (determined without regard to this subparagraph) over any debit balance in the alternative minimum funding standard account.

“(4) COMBINING AND OFFSETTING AMOUNTS TO BE AMORTIZED.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, amounts required to be amortized under paragraph (2) or paragraph (3), as the case may be—

“(A) may be combined into one amount under such paragraph to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization period for all items entering into such combined amount, and

“(B) may be offset against amounts required to be amortized under the other such paragraph, with the resulting amount to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization periods for all items entering into whichever of the two amounts being offset is the greater.

“(5) INTEREST.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited (as determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary) with interest at the appropriate rate consistent with the rate or rates of interest used under the plan to determine costs.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—The interest rate used for purposes of computing the amortization charge described in subsection (b)(2)(C) or for purposes of any arrangement under subsection (d) for any plan year shall be the greater of—

“(i) 150 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(ii) the rate of interest determined under subparagraph (A).

“(6) AMORTIZATION SCHEDULES IN EFFECT.—Amortization schedules for amounts described in paragraphs (2) and (3) that are in effect as of the last day of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, by reason of section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 shall remain in effect pursuant to their terms and this section, except that such amounts shall not be amortized again under this section.

“(c) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(1) DETERMINATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER FUNDING METHOD.—For purposes of this section, normal costs, accrued liability, past service liabilities, and experience gains and losses shall be determined under the funding method used to determine costs under the plan.

“(2) VALUATION OF ASSETS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the value of the plan’s assets shall be determined on the basis of any reasonable actuarial method of valuation which takes into account fair market value and which is

permitted under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(B) DEDICATED BOND PORTFOLIO.—The Secretary may by regulations provide that the value of any dedicated bond portfolio of a plan shall be determined by using the interest rate under section 412(b)(5) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS MUST BE REASONABLE.—For purposes of this section, all costs, liabilities, rates of interest, and other factors under the plan shall be determined on the basis of actuarial assumptions and methods—

“(A) each of which is reasonable (taking into account the experience of the plan and reasonable expectations), and

“(B) which, in combination, offer the actuary's best estimate of anticipated experience under the plan.

“(4) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CHANGES AS EXPERIENCE GAIN OR LOSS.—For purposes of this section, if—

“(A) a change in benefits under the Social Security Act or in other retirement benefits created under Federal or State law, or

“(B) a change in the definition of the term ‘wages’ under section 3121 or a change in the amount of such wages taken into account under regulations prescribed for purposes of section 401(a)(5),

results in an increase or decrease in accrued liability under a plan, such increase or decrease shall be treated as an experience loss or gain.

“(5) FUNDING METHOD AND PLAN YEAR.—

“(A) FUNDING METHODS AVAILABLE.—All funding methods available to CSEC plans under section 412 (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) shall continue to be available under this section.

“(B) CHANGES.—If the funding method for a plan is changed, the new funding method shall become the funding method used to determine costs and liabilities under the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary. If the plan year for a plan is changed, the new plan year shall become the plan year for the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary.

“(C) APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS BY CERTAIN SINGLE-EMPLOYER PLANS SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—No actuarial assumption (other than the assumptions described in subsection (h)(3)) used to determine the current liability for a plan to which this subparagraph applies may be changed without the approval of the Secretary.

“(ii) PLANS TO WHICH SUBPARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to a plan only if—

“(I) the plan is a CSEC plan,

“(II) the aggregate unfunded vested benefits as of the close of the preceding plan year (as determined under section 4006(a)(3)(E)(iii) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974) of such plan and all other plans maintained by the contributing sponsors (as defined in section 4001(a)(13) of such Act) and members of such sponsors' controlled groups (as defined in section 4001(a)(14) of such Act) which are covered by title IV (disregarding plans with no unfunded vested benefits) exceed \$50,000,000, and

“(III) the change in assumptions (determined after taking into account any changes in interest rate and mortality table) results in a decrease in the funding shortfall of the plan for the current plan year that exceeds \$50,000,000, or that exceeds \$5,000,000 and that

is 5 percent or more of the current liability of the plan before such change.

“(6) FULL FUNDING.—If, as of the close of a plan year, a plan would (without regard to this paragraph) have an accumulated funding deficiency (determined without regard to the alternative minimum funding standard account permitted under subsection (e)) in excess of the full funding limitation—

“(A) the funding standard account shall be credited with the amount of such excess, and

“(B) all amounts described in paragraphs (2)(B), (C), and (D) and (3)(B) of subsection (b) which are required to be amortized shall be considered fully amortized for purposes of such paragraphs.

“(7) FULL-FUNDING LIMITATION.—For purposes of paragraph (6), the term ‘full-funding limitation’ means the excess (if any) of—

“(A) the accrued liability (including normal cost) under the plan (determined under the entry age normal funding method if such accrued liability cannot be directly calculated under the funding method used for the plan), over

“(B) the lesser of—

“(i) the fair market value of the plan's assets, or

“(ii) the value of such assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In no event shall the full-funding limitation determined under subparagraph (A) be less than the excess (if any) of—

“(I) 90 percent of the current liability (determined without regard to paragraph (4) of subsection (h)) of the plan (including the expected increase in such current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year), over

“(II) the value of the plan's assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(ii) ASSETS.—For purposes of clause (i), assets shall not be reduced by any credit balance in the funding standard account.

“(8) ANNUAL VALUATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a determination of experience gains and losses and a valuation of the plan's liability shall be made not less frequently than once every year, except that such determination shall be made more frequently to the extent required in particular cases under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(B) VALUATION DATE.—

“(i) CURRENT YEAR.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be made as of a date within the plan year to which the valuation refers or within one month prior to the beginning of such year.

“(ii) USE OF PRIOR YEAR VALUATION.—The valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) may be made as of a date within the plan year prior to the year to which the valuation refers if, as of such date, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 100 percent of the plan's current liability.

“(iii) ADJUSTMENTS.—Information under clause (ii) shall, in accordance with regulations, be actuarially adjusted to reflect significant differences in participants.

“(iv) LIMITATION.—A change in funding method to use a prior year valuation, as provided in clause (ii), may not be made unless as of the valuation date within the prior plan year, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 125 percent of the plan's current liability.

“(9) TIME WHEN CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS DEEMED MADE.—For purposes of this section, any contributions for a plan year made by an employer during the period—

“(A) beginning on the day after the last day of such plan year, and

“(B) ending on the day which is 8½ months after the close of the plan year, shall be deemed to have been made on such last day.

“(10) ANTICIPATION OF BENEFIT INCREASES EFFECTIVE IN THE FUTURE.—In determining projected benefits, the funding method of a collectively bargained CSEC plan described in section 413(a) shall anticipate benefit increases scheduled to take effect during the term of the collective bargaining agreement applicable to the plan.

“(d) EXTENSION OF AMORTIZATION PERIODS.—The period of years required to amortize any unfunded liability (described in any clause of subsection (b)(2)(B)) of any plan may be extended by the Secretary for a period of time (not in excess of 10 years) if the Secretary determines that such extension would carry out the purposes of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and provide adequate protection for participants under the plan and their beneficiaries, and if the Secretary determines that the failure to permit such extension would result in—

“(1) a substantial risk to the voluntary continuation of the plan, or

“(2) a substantial curtailment of pension benefit levels or employee compensation.

“(e) ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A CSEC plan which uses a funding method that requires contributions in all years not less than those required under the entry age normal funding method may maintain an alternative minimum funding standard account for any plan year. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this subsection.

“(2) CHARGES AND CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year the alternative minimum funding standard account shall be—

“(A) charged with the sum of—

“(i) the lesser of normal cost under the funding method used under the plan or normal cost determined under the unit credit method,

“(ii) the excess, if any, of the present value of accrued benefits under the plan over the fair market value of the assets, and

“(iii) an amount equal to the excess (if any) of credits to the alternative minimum standard account for all prior plan years over charges to such account for all such years, and

“(B) credited with the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year.

“(3) INTEREST.—The alternative minimum funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited with interest in the manner provided under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the funding standard account.

“(f) QUARTERLY CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If a CSEC plan which has a funded current liability percentage for the preceding plan year of less than 100 percent fails to pay the full amount of a required installment for the plan year, then the rate of interest charged to the funding standard account under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the amount of the underpayment for the period of the underpayment shall be equal to the greater of—

“(A) 175 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(B) the rate of interest used under the plan in determining costs.

“(2) AMOUNT OF UNDERPAYMENT, PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1)—

“(A) AMOUNT.—The amount of the underpayment shall be the excess of—

“(i) the required installment, over
“(ii) the amount (if any) of the installment contributed to or under the plan on or before the due date for the installment.

“(B) PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—The period for which interest is charged under this subsection with regard to any portion of the underpayment shall run from the due date for the installment to the date on which such portion is contributed to or under the plan (determined without regard to subsection (c)(9)).

“(C) ORDER OF CREDITING CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), contributions shall be credited against unpaid required installments in the order in which such installments are required to be paid.

“(3) NUMBER OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENTS; DUE DATES.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) PAYABLE IN 4 INSTALLMENTS.—There shall be 4 required installments for each plan year.

“(B) TIME FOR PAYMENT OF INSTALLMENTS.—

“In the case of the following required installments:

The due date is:

1st	April 15
2nd	July 15
3rd	October 15
4th	January 15 of the following year.

“(4) AMOUNT OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of any required installment shall be 25 percent of the required annual payment.

“(B) REQUIRED ANNUAL PAYMENT.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ‘required annual payment’ means the lesser of—

“(i) 90 percent of the amount required to be contributed to or under the plan by the employer for the plan year under section 412 (without regard to any waiver under subsection (c) thereof), or

“(ii) 100 percent of the amount so required for the preceding plan year.

Clause (ii) shall not apply if the preceding plan year was not a year of 12 months.

“(5) LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A plan to which this paragraph applies shall be treated as failing to pay the full amount of any required installment to the extent that the value of the liquid assets paid in such installment is less than the liquidity shortfall (whether or not such liquidity shortfall exceeds the amount of such installment required to be paid but for this paragraph).

“(B) PLANS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This paragraph shall apply to a CSEC plan other than a plan described in section 412(1)(6)(A) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) which—

“(i) is required to pay installments under this subsection for a plan year, and

“(ii) has a liquidity shortfall for any quarter during such plan year.

“(C) PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any portion of an installment that is treated as not paid under subparagraph (A) shall continue to be treated as unpaid until the close of the quarter in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(D) LIMITATION ON INCREASE.—If the amount of any required installment is increased by reason of subparagraph (A), in no event shall such increase exceed the amount which, when added to prior installments for the plan year, is necessary to increase the funded current liability percentage (taking into account the expected increase in current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year) to 100 percent.

“(E) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this paragraph—

“(i) LIQUIDITY SHORTFALL.—The term ‘liquidity shortfall’ means, with respect to any required installment, an amount equal to the excess (as of the last day of the quarter for which such installment is made) of the base amount with respect to such quarter over the value (as of such last day) of the plan’s liquid assets.

“(ii) BASE AMOUNT.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘base amount’ means, with respect to any quarter, an amount equal to 3 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 12 months ending on the last day of such quarter.

“(II) SPECIAL RULE.—If the amount determined under subclause (I) exceeds an amount equal to 2 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 36 months ending on the last day of the quarter and an enrolled actuary certifies to the satisfaction of the Secretary that such excess is the result of nonrecurring circumstances, the base amount with respect to such quarter shall be determined without regard to amounts related to those nonrecurring circumstances.

“(iii) DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE PLAN.—The term ‘disbursements from the plan’ means all disbursements from the trust, including purchases of annuities, payments of single sums and other benefits, and administrative expenses.

“(iv) ADJUSTED DISBURSEMENTS.—The term ‘adjusted disbursements’ means disbursements from the plan reduced by the product of—

“(I) the plan’s funded current liability percentage for the plan year, and

“(II) the sum of the purchases of annuities, payments of single sums, and such other disbursements as the Secretary shall provide in regulations.

“(v) LIQUID ASSETS.—The term ‘liquid assets’ means cash, marketable securities and such other assets as specified by the Secretary in regulations.

“(vi) QUARTER.—The term ‘quarter’ means, with respect to any required installment, the 3-month period preceding the month in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(F) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this paragraph.

“(6) FISCAL YEARS AND SHORT YEARS.—

“(A) FISCAL YEARS.—In applying this subsection to a plan year beginning on any date other than January 1, there shall be substituted for the months specified in this subsection, the months which correspond thereto.

“(B) SHORT PLAN YEAR.—This subsection shall be applied to plan years of less than 12 months in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(g) IMPOSITION OF LIEN WHERE FAILURE TO MAKE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a plan to which this section applies, if—

“(A) any person fails to make a required installment under subsection (f) or any other payment required under this section before

the due date for such installment or other payment, and

“(B) the unpaid balance of such installment or other payment (including interest), when added to the aggregate unpaid balance of all preceding such installments or other payments for which payment was not made before the due date (including interest), exceeds \$1,000,000,

then there shall be a lien in favor of the plan in the amount determined under paragraph (3) upon all property and rights to property, whether real or personal, belonging to such person and any other person who is a member of the same controlled group of which such person is a member.

“(2) PLANS TO WHICH SUBSECTION APPLIES.—This subsection shall apply to a CSEC plan for any plan year for which the funded current liability percentage of such plan is less than 100 percent. This subsection shall not apply to any plan to which section 4021 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 does not apply (as such section is in effect on the date of the enactment of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994).

“(3) AMOUNT OF LIEN.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the amount of the lien shall be equal to the aggregate unpaid balance of required installments and other payments required under this section (including interest)—

“(A) for plan years beginning after 1987, and

“(B) for which payment has not been made before the due date.

“(4) NOTICE OF FAILURE; LIEN.—

“(A) NOTICE OF FAILURE.—A person committing a failure described in paragraph (1) shall notify the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation of such failure within 10 days of the due date for the required installment or other payment.

“(B) PERIOD OF LIEN.—The lien imposed by paragraph (1) shall arise on the due date for the required installment or other payment and shall continue until the last day of the first plan year in which the plan ceases to be described in paragraph (1)(B). Such lien shall continue to run without regard to whether such plan continues to be described in paragraph (2) during the period referred to in the preceding sentence.

“(C) CERTAIN RULES TO APPLY.—Any amount with respect to which a lien is imposed under paragraph (1) shall be treated as taxes due and owing the United States and rules similar to the rules of subsections (c), (d), and (e) of section 4068 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 shall apply with respect to a lien imposed by subsection (a) and the amount with respect to such lien.

“(5) ENFORCEMENT.—Any lien created under paragraph (1) may be perfected and enforced only by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or at the direction of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, by any contributing employer (or any member of the controlled group of the contributing employer).

“(6) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) DUE DATE; REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—The terms ‘due date’ and ‘required installment’ have the meanings given such terms by subsection (f), except that in the case of a payment other than a required installment, the due date shall be the date such payment is required to be made under this section.

“(B) CONTROLLED GROUP.—The term ‘controlled group’ means any group treated as a single employer under subsections (b), (c), (m), and (o) of section 414.

“(h) CURRENT LIABILITY.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘current liability’ means all liabilities to employees and their beneficiaries under the plan.

“(2) TREATMENT OF UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFITS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any unpredictable contingent event benefit shall not be taken into account until the event on which the benefit is contingent occurs.

“(B) UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFIT.—The term ‘unpredictable contingent event benefit’ means any benefit contingent on an event other than—

“(i) age, service, compensation, death, or disability, or

“(ii) an event which is reasonably and reliably predictable (as determined by the Secretary).

“(3) INTEREST RATE AND MORTALITY ASSUMPTIONS USED.—

“(A) INTEREST RATE.—The rate of interest used to determine current liability under this section shall be the third segment rate determined under section 430(h)(2)(C).

“(B) MORTALITY TABLES.—

“(i) SECRETARIAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may by regulation prescribe mortality tables to be used in determining current liability under this subsection. Such tables shall be based upon the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience. In prescribing such tables, the Secretary shall take into account results of available independent studies of mortality of individuals covered by pension plans.

“(ii) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The Secretary shall periodically (at least every 5 years) review any tables in effect under this subsection and shall, to the extent the Secretary determines necessary, by regulation update the tables to reflect the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience.

“(C) SEPARATE MORTALITY TABLES FOR THE DISABLED.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of plan years beginning after December 31, 1995, the Secretary shall establish mortality tables which may be used (in lieu of the tables under subparagraph (B)) to determine current liability under this subsection for individuals who are entitled to benefits under the plan on account of disability. The Secretary shall establish separate tables for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning before January 1, 1995, and for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning on or after such date.

“(ii) SPECIAL RULE FOR DISABILITIES OCCURRING AFTER 1994.—In the case of disabilities occurring in plan years beginning after December 31, 1994, the tables under clause (i) shall apply only with respect to individuals described in such subclause who are disabled within the meaning of title II of the Social Security Act and the regulations thereunder.

“(4) CERTAIN SERVICE DISREGARDED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a participant to whom this paragraph applies, only the applicable percentage of the years of service before such individual became a participant shall be taken into account in computing the current liability of the plan.

“(B) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the applicable percentage shall be determined as follows:

“If the years of participation are:	The applicable percentage is:
2	40
3	60
4	80
5 or more	100.

“(C) PARTICIPANTS TO WHOM PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to any participant who, at the time of becoming a participant—

“(i) has not accrued any other benefit under any defined benefit plan (whether or not terminated) maintained by the employer or a member of the same controlled group of which the employer is a member,

“(ii) who first becomes a participant under the plan in a plan year beginning after December 31, 1987, and

“(iii) has years of service greater than the minimum years of service necessary for eligibility to participate in the plan.

“(D) ELECTION.—An employer may elect not to have this subparagraph apply. Such an election, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary.

“(i) FUNDED CURRENT LIABILITY PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘funded current liability percentage’ means, with respect to any plan year, the percentage which—

“(1) the value of the plan’s assets determined under subsection (c)(2), is of

“(2) the current liability under the plan.

“(j) FUNDING RESTORATION STATUS.—Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section—

“(1) NORMAL COST PAYMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a CSEC plan that is in funding restoration status for a plan year, for purposes of section 412, the term ‘accumulated funding deficiency’ means, for such plan year, the greater of—

“(i) the amount described in subsection (a), or

“(ii) the excess of the normal cost of the plan for the plan year over the amount actually contributed to or under the plan for the plan year.

“(B) NORMAL COST.—In the case of a CSEC plan that uses a spread gain funding method, for purposes of this subsection, the term ‘normal cost’ means normal cost as determined under the entry age normal funding method.

“(2) PLAN AMENDMENTS.—In the case of a CSEC plan that is in funding restoration status for a plan year, no amendment to such plan may take effect during such plan year if such amendment has the effect of increasing liabilities of the plan by means of increases in benefits, establishment of new benefits, changing the rate of benefit accrual, or changing the rate at which benefits become nonforfeitable. This paragraph shall not apply to any plan amendment that is required to comply with any applicable law. This paragraph shall cease to apply with respect to any plan year, effective as of the first day of the plan year (or if later, the effective date of the amendment) upon payment by the plan sponsor of a contribution to the plan (in addition to any contribution required under this section without regard to this paragraph) in an amount equal to the increase in the funding liability of the plan attributable to the plan amendment.

“(3) FUNDING RESTORATION PLAN.—The sponsor of a CSEC plan shall establish a written funding restoration plan within 180 days of the receipt by the plan sponsor of a certification from the plan actuary that the plan is in funding restoration status for a plan year. Such funding restoration plan shall consist of actions that are calculated,

based on reasonably anticipated experience and reasonable actuarial assumptions, to increase the plan’s funded percentage to 100 percent over a period that is not longer than the greater of 7 years or the shortest amount of time practicable. Such funding restoration plan shall take into account contributions required under this section (without regard to this paragraph). If a plan remains in funding restoration status for 2 or more years, such funding restoration plan shall be updated each year after the 1st such year within 180 days of receipt by the plan sponsor of a certification from the plan actuary that the plan remains in funding restoration status for the plan year.

“(4) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION BY PLAN ACTUARY.—Not later than the 90th day of each plan year of a CSEC plan, the plan actuary shall certify to the plan sponsor whether or not the plan is in funding restoration status for the plan year, based on the plan’s funded percentage as of the beginning of the plan year. For this purpose, the actuary may conclusively rely on an estimate of—

“(A) the plan’s funding liability, based on the funding liability of the plan for the preceding plan year and on reasonable actuarial estimates, assumptions, and methods, and

“(B) the amount of any contributions reasonably anticipated to be made for the preceding plan year.

Contributions described in subparagraph (B) shall be taken into account in determining the plan’s funded percentage as of the beginning of the plan year.

“(5) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) FUNDING RESTORATION STATUS.—A CSEC plan shall be treated as in funding restoration status for a plan year if the plan’s funded percentage as of the beginning of such plan year is less than 80 percent.

“(B) FUNDED PERCENTAGE.—The term ‘funded percentage’ means the ratio (expressed as a percentage) which—

“(i) the value of plan assets (as determined under subsection (c)(2)), bears to

“(ii) the plan’s funding liability.

“(C) FUNDING LIABILITY.—The term ‘funding liability’ for a plan year means the present value of all benefits accrued or earned under the plan as of the beginning of the plan year, based on the assumptions used by the plan pursuant to this section, including the interest rate described in subsection (b)(5)(A) (without regard to subsection (b)(5)(B)).

“(D) SPREAD GAIN FUNDING METHOD.—The term ‘spread gain funding method’ has the meaning given such term under rules and forms issued by the Secretary.

“(E) PLAN SPONSOR.—The term ‘plan sponsor’ means, with respect to a CSEC plan, the association, committee, joint board of trustees, or other similar group of representatives of the parties who establish or maintain the plan.”

(b) CSEC PLANS.—Section 413 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) CSEC PLANS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, in the case of a CSEC plan—

“(1) FUNDING.—The requirements of section 412 shall be determined as if all participants in the plan were employed by a single employer.

“(2) APPLICATION OF PROVISIONS.—Paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (5) of subsection (c) shall apply.

“(3) DEDUCTION LIMITATIONS.—Each applicable limitation provided by section 404(a) shall be determined as if all participants in

“If the years of participation are:	The applicable percentage is:
1	20

the plan were employed by a single employer. The amounts contributed to or under the plan by each employer who maintains the plan (for the portion of the taxable year included within a plan year) shall be considered not to exceed such applicable limitation if the anticipated employer contributions for such plan year of all employers (determined in a reasonable manner not inconsistent with regulations prescribed by the Secretary) do not exceed such limitation. If such anticipated contributions exceed such limitation, the portion of each such employer's contributions which is not deductible under section 404 shall be determined in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

(4) ALLOCATIONS.—Allocations of amounts under paragraph (3) and subsection (c)(5) among the employers maintaining the plan shall not be inconsistent with the regulations prescribed for this purpose by the Secretary.

(c) SEPARATE RULES FOR CSEC PLANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 412(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting “, and”, and by inserting at the end thereof the following new subparagraph:

“(D) in the case of a CSEC plan, the employers make contributions to or under the plan for any plan year which, in the aggregate, are sufficient to ensure that the plan does not have an accumulated funding deficiency under section 433 as of the end of the plan year.”

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 412 of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking “multiemployer plan” in paragraph (A) of subsection (a)(2), in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B), the first place it appears in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(A), and the last place it appears in paragraph (2) of subsection (d), and inserting “multiemployer plan or a CSEC plan”;

(B) by striking “430(j)” in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) and inserting “430(j) or under section 433(f)”;

(C)(i) by striking “and” at the end of clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B),

(ii) by striking the period at the end of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B) and inserting “, and”, and

(iii) by inserting the following new clause after clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B):

“(iii) in the case of a CSEC plan, the funding standard account shall be credited under section 433(b)(3)(C) with the amount of the waived funding deficiency and such amount shall be amortized as required under section 433(b)(2)(C).”

(D) by striking “under paragraph (1)” in clause (i) of subsection (c)(4)(A) and inserting “under paragraph (1) or for granting an extension under section 433(d)”;

(E) by striking “waiver under this subsection” in subparagraph (B) of subsection (c)(4) and inserting “waiver under this subsection or an extension under 433(d)”;

(F) by striking “waiver or modification” in subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(B)(i) and inserting “waiver, modification, or extension”;

(G) by striking “waivers” in the heading of subsection (c)(4)(C) and of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting “waivers or extensions”;

(H) by striking “section 431(d)” in subparagraph (A) of subsection (c)(7) and in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) and inserting “section 431(d) or section 433(d)”;

(I) by striking “and” at the end of subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and insert-

ing “or the accumulated funding deficiency under section 433, whichever is applicable,”;

(J) by striking “430(e)(2),” in subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and inserting “430(e)(2) or 433(b)(2)(C), whichever is applicable, and”;

(K) by adding immediately after subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) the following new subclause:

“(III) the total amounts not paid by reason of an extension in effect under section 433(d),” and

(L) by striking “for waivers of” in clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting “for waivers or extensions with respect to”.

(3) BENEFIT RESTRICTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (29) of section 401(a) of such Code is amended by striking “multiemployer plan” and inserting “multiemployer plan or a CSEC plan”.

(B) CONFORMING CHANGE.—Subsection (a) of section 436 of such Code is amended by striking “single-employer plan” and inserting “single-employer plan (other than a CSEC plan)”.

(4) BENEFIT INCREASES.—Subparagraph (C) of section 401(a)(33) of such Code is amended by striking “multiemployer plans” and inserting “multiemployer plans or CSEC plans”.

(5) LIQUIDITY SHORTFALLS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 401(a)(32) of such Code is amended by striking “430(j)(4)” each place it appears and inserting “430(j)(4) or 433(f)(5)”.

(B) PERIOD OF SHORTFALL.—Subparagraph (C) of section 401(a)(32) of such Code is amended by striking “430(j)(3) by reason of section 430(j)(4)(A) thereof” and inserting “430(j)(3) or 433(f) by reason of section 430(j)(4)(A) or 433(f)(5), respectively”.

(6) DEDUCTION LIMITS.—Subsection (o) of section 404 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(8) CSEC PLANS.—Solely for purposes of this subsection, a CSEC plan shall be treated as though section 430 applied to such plan and the minimum required contribution for any plan year shall be the amount described in section 412(a)(2)(D).”

(7) SECTION 420.—Paragraph (5) of section 420(e) of such Code is amended by striking “section 430” each place it appears and inserting “sections 430 and 433”.

(8) COORDINATION WITH SECTION 4971.—

(A) Subsection (a) of section 4971 of such Code is amended by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (1), by striking the period at the end of paragraph (2) and inserting “, and”, and by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

“(3) in the case of a CSEC plan, 10 percent of the CSEC accumulated funding deficiency as of the end of the plan year ending with or within the taxable year.”

(B) Subsection (b) of section 4971 of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking “or” at the end of paragraph (1), by adding “or” at the end of paragraph (2), and by inserting immediately after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

“(3) a tax is imposed under subsection (a)(3) on any CSEC accumulated funding deficiency and the CSEC accumulated funding deficiency is not corrected within the taxable period,” and

(ii) by striking “minimum required contributions or accumulated funding deficiency” and inserting “minimum required contribution, accumulated funding deficiency, or CSEC accumulated funding deficiency”.

(C) Subsection (c) of section 4971 of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking “accumulated funding deficiency” each place it appears in paragraph (2) and inserting “accumulated funding deficiency or CSEC accumulated funding deficiency”;

(ii) by striking “accumulated funding deficiency or unpaid minimum required contribution” each place it appears in paragraph (3) and inserting “accumulated funding deficiency, CSEC accumulated funding deficiency, or unpaid minimum required contribution”, and

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

“(5) CSEC ACCUMULATED FUNDING DEFICIENCY.—The term ‘CSEC accumulated funding deficiency’ means the accumulated funding deficiency determined under section 433.”

(D) Paragraph (1) of section 4971(d) of such Code is amended by striking “accumulated funding deficiency or unpaid minimum required contribution” and inserting “accumulated funding deficiency, CSEC accumulated funding deficiency, or unpaid minimum required contribution”.

(E) Subsection (f) of section 4971 of such Code is amended—

(i) by striking “430(j)(4)” in paragraph (1) and inserting “430(j)(4) or 433(f)”;

(ii) by striking “430(j)” in paragraph (1)(B) and inserting “430(j) or 433(f), whichever is applicable”, and

(iii) by striking “412(m)(5)” in paragraph (3)(A) and inserting “430(j) or 433(f), whichever is applicable”.

(9) EXCISE TAX ON FAILURE TO ADOPT FUNDING RESTORATION PLAN.—Section 4971 of such Code is amended by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i), and by inserting after subsection (g) the following new subsection: “(h) FAILURE OF A CSEC PLAN SPONSOR TO ADOPT FUNDING RESTORATION PLAN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a CSEC plan that is in funding restoration status (within the meaning of section 433(j)(5)(A)), there is hereby imposed a tax on the failure of such plan to adopt a funding restoration plan within the time prescribed under section 433(j)(3).

“(2) AMOUNT OF TAX.—The amount of the tax imposed under paragraph (1) with respect to any plan sponsor for any taxable year shall be the amount equal to \$100 multiplied by the number of days during the taxable year which are included in the period beginning on the day following the close of the 180-day period described in section 433(j)(3) and ending on the day on which the funding restoration plan is adopted.

“(3) WAIVER BY SECRETARY.—In the case of a failure described in paragraph (1) which the Secretary determines is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, the Secretary may waive a portion or all of the tax imposed by such paragraph.

“(4) LIABILITY FOR TAX.—The tax imposed by paragraph (1) shall be paid by the plan sponsor (within the meaning of section 433(j)(5)(E)).”

(10) REPORTING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 6059(b) of such Code is amended by striking “430,” and inserting “430, the accumulated funding deficiency under section 433.”

(B) ASSUMPTIONS.—Subparagraph (B) of section 6059(b)(3) of such Code is amended by striking “430(h)(1) or 431(c)(3)” and inserting “430(h)(1), 431(c)(3), or 433(c)(3)”.

SEC. 203. ELECTION NOT TO BE TREATED AS A CSEC PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 414(y) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by section 201, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) ELECTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If a plan falls within the definition of a CSEC plan under this subsection (without regard to this paragraph), such plan shall be a CSEC plan unless the plan sponsor elects not later than the close of the first plan year of the plan beginning after December 31, 2013, not to be treated as a CSEC plan. An election under the preceding sentence shall take effect for such plan year and, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary.

“(B) SPECIAL RULE.—If a plan described in subparagraph (A) is treated as a CSEC plan, section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, as amended by the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010, shall cease to apply to such plan as of the first date as of which such plan is treated as a CSEC plan.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2702. Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mr. PRYOR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking “(A) or (B), if—” and inserting the following: “(A)—

“(i) if—”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following

“(ii) in the case of a loan that—

“(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

“(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

“(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

“(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

“(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

“(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

“(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

“(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

“(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms “Federal entity for lending regulation”, “improved real estate”, “regulated lending institution”, and “servicer” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term “outstanding loan” means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower’s payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

SA 2703. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of

the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. . STUDY OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY-BASED FLOOD INSURANCE OPTIONS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall conduct a study to assess options, methods, and strategies for making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into consideration and analyze how voluntary community-based flood insurance policies—

(i) would affect communities having varying economic bases, geographic locations, flood hazard characteristics or classifications, and flood management approaches; and

(ii) could satisfy the applicable requirements under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a); and

(B) evaluate the advisability of making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies to communities, subdivisions of communities, and areas of residual risk.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Administrator may consult with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Administrator determines is appropriate.

(b) REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains the results and conclusions of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations for—

(A) the best manner to incorporate voluntary community-based flood insurance policies into the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) a strategy to implement voluntary community-based flood insurance policies that would encourage communities to undertake flood mitigation activities, including the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of levees, dams, or other flood control structures.

(c) REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the report required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(A) an analysis of the report submitted by the Administrator;

(B) any comments or recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(C) any other recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to community-based flood insurance policies.

SA 2704. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 103, add the following:

(h) DISCLOSURE.—

(1) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER BIGGERT-WATERS.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from the amendment made by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 919) is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(2) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER THIS ACT.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(3) REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(i) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(ii) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”).

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(ii) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”).

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 110. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS FOR PREMIUMS.

Section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended by striking “either annually or in more frequent installments” and inserting “annually, monthly, or in other installments that are more frequent than annually”.

SEC. 111. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)) is amended by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) based on consideration of—

“(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

“(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures.”.

SA 2705. Mr. KING (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 106, strike subsection (a) and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after “as the case may be,” the following: “or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community.”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”.

SA 2706. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. __. EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR CERTAIN MAP CHANGE REQUESTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a requester shall be exempt from submitting a review or processing fee for a request for a flood insurance rate map change based on a habitat restoration project that is funded in whole or in part with Federal or State funds, including dam removal, culvert redesign or installation, or the installation of fish passage.

SA 2707. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike sections 103 through 109 and insert the following:

SEC. 103. PHASE-IN OF FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES.

(a) MAP CHANGES.—Section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)) is amended—

(1) in the second sentence, by striking “shall be phased in over a 5-year period” and all that follows and inserting the following:

“shall be implemented by increasing the risk premium rate by 25 percent each year following such effective date until the risk premium rate accurately reflects the current risk of flood to such property.”; and

(2) in the third sentence, by striking “shall be phased in over a 5-year period” and all that follows and inserting the following: “shall be phased in by increasing the risk premium rate by 25 percent each year following the effective date of such issuance, revision, updating, or change.”.

(b) HOME SALE TRIGGER.—

(1) PHASE-IN.—Section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) described in section 1307(g)(2) that are principal residences shall be increased by 25 percent each year, beginning in the year after the first sale of such a property that occurs after the date of enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and continuing in each successive year regardless of any further sale or resale of the property, until the risk premium rate charged for the property accurately reflects the current risk of flood to the property.”.

(2) APPLICATION OF PHASE-IN TO PRINCIPAL RESIDENCES PURCHASED BETWEEN JULY 7, 2012 AND APRIL 1, 2013.—

(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term “eligible policy” means a flood insurance policy—

(i) that covers a principal residence that was purchased during the period beginning on July 7, 2012 and ending on April 1, 2013; and

(ii) for which the risk premium rate charged was increased, after the purchase described in clause (i), to the full risk premium rate estimated under subsection (a)(1) of section 1307 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014) as required under subsection (g)(2) of such section (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act).

(B) APPLICATION OF PHASE-IN TO RISK PREMIUM RATE UPON POLICY RENEWAL.—The risk premium rate charged for an eligible policy shall—

(1) on the date on which the policy is first renewed after the date of enactment of this Act, be adjusted to be the rate that would have been charged as of that date if the phase-in provision under paragraph (3) of section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)), as added by paragraph (1) of this subsection, had been in effect when the property covered by the eligible policy was purchased; and

(ii) be increased by 25 percent each year thereafter, in accordance with paragraph (3) of section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)), as added by paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(c) PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS AND RATE TABLES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall promulgate such regulations and make available such rate tables as necessary to implement subsections (a) and (b) and the amendments made by those subsections, as though those subsections were enacted as part of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916).

(2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—To ensure community, stakeholder, and expert participation in the promulgation of regulations and

the establishment of rate tables under this subsection, the Administrator shall—

(A) publish the regulations and rate tables in the Federal Register; and

(B) before promulgating final regulations and making available final rate tables, provide a period for public comment on the regulations and rate tables published under subparagraph (A) that is not shorter than 45 days.

(3) **TIMING OF PREMIUM CHANGES.**—To allow for appropriate implementation of subsections (a) and (b) and the amendments made by those subsections, the Administrator may not implement any premium changes with respect to policy holders, including charges or rebates, that are necessary to implement subsections (a) and (b) and the amendments made by those subsections until the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Administrator promulgates final regulations and makes available final rate tables under this subsection.

(d) **FLOOD INSURANCE FEE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) **FEE TO OFFSET PHASE-IN OF CERTAIN PREMIUM RATE INCREASES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall charge an annual fee to each holder of a flood insurance policy issued under this Act to offset the costs of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 and the amendments made by that Act.

“(2) **AMOUNT.**—In establishing an amount of the fee to be charged under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall charge a policyholder with an annual household income that is not less than \$500,000 twice the amount that the Administrator charges a policyholder with an annual household income that is less than \$500,000.”.

(2) **APPLICABILITY.**—The Administrator shall charge the fee required under section 1308(j) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as added by paragraph (1), with respect to any flood insurance policy that is issued or renewed on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 104. AFFORDABILITY STUDY AND REPORT.

Notwithstanding the deadline under section 100236(c) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957), not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the affordability study and report required under such section.

SEC. 105. AFFORDABILITY STUDY FUNDING.

Section 100236(d) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended by striking “not more than \$750,000” and inserting “such amounts as may be necessary”.

SEC. 106. FUNDS TO REIMBURSE HOMEOWNERS AND COMMUNITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL MAP APPEALS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after “as the case may be,” the following: “or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community,”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator

may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1310(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) for carrying out section 1363(f).”.

SEC. 107. FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) **ADEQUATE PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.**—Section 1307(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting “or reconstruction” after “construction”;;

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator shall find that adequate progress on the construction or reconstruction of a flood protection system, based on the present value of the completed flood protection system, has been made only if (1) 100 percent of the cost of the system has been authorized, (2) at least 60 percent of the cost of the system has been appropriated, (3) at least 50 percent of the cost of the system has been expended, and (4) the system is at least 50 percent completed.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in determining whether a community has made adequate progress on the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a flood protection system, the Administrator shall consider all sources of funding, including Federal, State, and local funds.”.

(b) **COMMUNITIES RESTORING DISACCREDITED FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.**—Section 1307(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(f)) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting the following: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this subsection shall apply to riverine and coastal levees that are located in a community which has been determined by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be in the process of restoring flood protection afforded by a flood protection system that had been previously accredited on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing 100-year frequency flood protection but no longer does so, and shall apply without regard to the level of Federal funding of or participation in the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of the flood protection system.”.

SEC. 108. TREATMENT OF FLOODPROOFED RESIDENTIAL BASEMENTS.

In implementing section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)), the Administrator shall rate a covered structure using the elevation difference between the floodproofed elevation of the covered structure and the adjusted base flood elevation of the covered structure.

SEC. 109. DESIGNATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE ADVOCATE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall designate a Flood Insurance Advocate to advocate for the fair treatment of policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners in the mapping of flood hazards, the identification of risks from flood, and the implementation of measures to minimize the risk of flood.

(b) **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate designated under subsection (a) shall be to—

(1) educate property owners and policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program on—

(A) individual flood risks;

(B) flood mitigation;

(C) measures to reduce flood insurance rates through effective mitigation; and

(D) the flood insurance rate map review and amendment process;

(2) assist policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners to understand the procedural requirements related to appealing preliminary flood insurance rate maps and implementing measures to mitigate evolving flood risks;

(3) assist in the development of regional capacity to respond to individual constituent concerns about flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions;

(4) coordinate outreach and education with local officials and community leaders in areas impacted by proposed flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions; and

(5) aid potential policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program in obtaining and verifying accurate and reliable flood insurance rate information when purchasing or renewing a flood insurance policy.

(c) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year such sums as may be necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

SEC. 110. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking “30 percent” and inserting “50 percent”.

SEC. 111. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”;

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking “(A) or (B), if—” and inserting the following: “(A)—

“(i) if—”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following

“(ii) in the case of a loan that is—

“(I) in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same property for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

“(II) secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

“(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

“(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

“(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

“(III) secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose; or

“(IV) a home equity line of credit or a home equity loan.”

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms “Federal entity for lending regulation”, “improved real estate”, “regulated lending institution”, and “servicer” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term “outstanding loan” means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016; and

(bb) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower’s payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

SA 2708. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR URBAN BUILDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidelines for property owners that—

(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to urban residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

(A) types of building materials; and

(B) types of floodproofing; and

(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.

(b) CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under subsection (a) of this section.

SA 2709. Mr. MERKLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 110. LIMITATIONS ON FORCE-PLACED INSURANCE.

Section 102(e) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(e)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (4) through (7), respectively; and

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

“(3) LIMITATIONS ON LENDERS AND SERVICERS.—

“(A) PAYMENTS FROM INSURANCE COMPANIES.—An lender or servicer, or an affiliate of a lender or servicer, may not receive a commission or any other payment from an insurance company in connection with securing business under paragraph (2) from the insurance company.

“(B) PURCHASE FROM AFFILIATED INSURANCE COMPANIES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), a lender or servicer, or an affiliate of a lender or servicer, that purchases insurance under paragraph (2) may not purchase the insurance from an insurance company that is affiliated with the lender or servicer.

“(ii) EXCEPTION.—Clause (i) shall not apply to the purchase of insurance under paragraph (2) by a lender or servicer, or an affiliate of a lender or servicer, that is a bank, or a Federal credit union or State credit union (as those terms are defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752)), with assets of not more than \$1,000,000,000.”

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I submit the following notice in writing: In accordance with Rule V of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby give notice in writing that it is my intention to move to suspend Rule XXII, in-

cluding germaneness requirements, for the purpose of proposing and considering amendment no. 2606 on S. 1845, as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 7. ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO JOBLESS MILLIONAIRES AND BILLIONAIRES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments of unemployment compensation (including such compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970 and the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008) to an individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than \$1,000,000.

(b) COMPLIANCE.—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify the individual’s adjusted gross income was not equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 in the preceding year.

(c) AUDITS.—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) STATUS OF APPLICANTS.—It is the duty of the states to verify the residency, employment, legal, and income status of applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining an individual’s eligibility under this Act.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to conduct a hearing on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 10:00 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

For further information please contact David Berick at (202) 224-2209, Megan Brewster (202) 224-6689 or Brian Hughes, (202) 224-7555.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Judicial Nominations."

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in order to conduct a hearing entitled "Examining the Use and Abuse of Administratively Uncontrollable Over-time at the Department of Homeland Security."

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Rose Mutiso, a fellow in Senator COONS's office, be given floor privileges for Wednesday, January 29, 2014.

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

COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION FLEXIBILITY ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 230, S. 1302; that the committee-reported substitute be considered; the Harkin-Roberts substitute amendment which is at the desk be agreed to; the committee-reported substitute, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the motions to reconsider

be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; further, that if the Senate receives a bill from the House that is identical to the text of S. 1302 as passed by the Senate, then the House bill be read three times and passed with no intervening action or debate.

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

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 1302) to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans, which had been reported from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the "Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Congressional findings and declarations of policy.

Sec. 3. Definition of cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

Sec. 4. Funding rules applicable to cooperative and small employer charity pension plans.

Sec. 5. Transparency.

Sec. 6. Elections.

Sec. 7. Sponsor education and assistance.

Sec. 8. Effective date.

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS OF POLICY.

Congress finds as follows:

(1) Defined benefit pension plans are a cost-effective way for cooperative associations and charities to provide their employees with economic security in retirement.

(2) Many cooperative associations and charitable organizations are only able to provide their employees with defined benefit pension plans because those organizations are able to pool their resources using the multiple employer plan structure.

(3) The pension funding rules should encourage cooperative associations and charities to continue to provide their employees with pension benefits.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.

(a) **AMENDMENT TO ERISA.**—Section 210 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1060) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(f) **COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.**—

"(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of this title, except as provided in this subsection, a CSEC plan is an employee pension benefit plan (other than a multiemployer plan) that is a defined benefit plan—

"(A) to which section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 applies, without regard to—

"(i) section 104(a)(2) of such Act;

"(ii) the amendments to such section 104 by section 202(b) of the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010; and

"(iii) paragraph (3)(B); or

"(B) that, as of January 1, 2013, was maintained by more than one employer and all of the employers were organizations described in sec-

tion 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

"(2) **AGGREGATION.**—All employers that are treated as a single employer under subsection (b) or (c) of section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be treated as a single employer for purposes of determining if a plan was maintained by more than one employer under paragraph (1)(B)."

(b) **AMENDMENT TO CODE.**—Section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(y) **COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.**—

"(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of this title, except as provided in this subsection, a CSEC plan is a defined benefit plan (other than a multiemployer plan)—

"(A) to which section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 applies, without regard to—

"(i) section 104(a)(2) of such Act;

"(ii) the amendments to such section 104 by section 202(b) of the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010; and

"(iii) paragraph (3)(B); or

"(B) that, as of January 1, 2013, was maintained by more than one employer and all of the employers were organizations described in section 501(c)(3).

"(2) **AGGREGATION.**—All employers that are treated as a single employer under subsection (b) or (c) shall be treated as a single employer for purposes of determining if a plan was maintained by more than one employer under paragraph (1)(B)."

SEC. 4. FUNDING RULES APPLICABLE TO COOPERATIVE AND SMALL EMPLOYER CHARITY PENSION PLANS.

(a) **AMENDMENTS TO ERISA.**—

(1) **MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS UNDER ERISA.**—Part 3 of title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1081 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 306. MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS.

"(a) **GENERAL RULE.**—For purposes of section 302, the term "accumulated funding deficiency" for a CSEC plan means the excess of the total charges to the funding standard account for all plan years (beginning with the first plan year to which section 302 applies) over the total credits to such account for such years or, if less, the excess of the total charges to the alternative minimum funding standard account for such plan years over the total credits to such account for such years.

"(b) **FUNDING STANDARD ACCOUNT.**—

"(1) **ACCOUNT REQUIRED.**—Each plan to which this section applies shall establish and maintain a funding standard account. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this section.

"(2) **CHARGES TO ACCOUNT.**—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be charged with the sum of—

"(A) the normal cost of the plan for the plan year,

"(B) the amounts necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

"(i) in the case of a plan in existence on January 1, 1974, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 302 applies, over a period of 40 plan years,

"(ii) in the case of a plan which comes into existence after January 1, 1974, but before the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 302 applies, over a period of 30 plan years,

"(iii) in the case of a plan that is subject to section 303 for the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, the sum of—

“(I) the plan’s funding standard carryover balance and prefunding balance (as such terms are defined in section 303(f)) as of the end of such plan year, and

“(II) the unfunded past service liability under the plan for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, over a period of 15 years,

“(iv) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net increase (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

“(v) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience loss (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

“(vi) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net loss (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

“(C) the amount necessary to amortize each waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 302(c)(3)) for each prior plan year in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years,

“(D) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years any amount credited to the funding standard account under paragraph (3)(D), and

“(E) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 20 years the contributions which would be required to be made under the plan but for the provisions of section 302(c)(7)(A)(i)(I) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be credited with the sum of—

“(A) the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year,

“(B) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

“(i) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net decrease (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

“(ii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience gain (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

“(iii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net gain (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

“(C) the amount of the waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 302(c)(3)) for the plan year,

“(D) in the case of a plan year for which the accumulated funding deficiency is determined under the funding standard account if such plan year follows a plan year for which such deficiency was determined under the alternative minimum funding standard, the excess (if any) of any debit balance in the funding standard account (determined without regard to this subparagraph) over any debit balance in the alternative minimum funding standard account, and

“(E) for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, in the case of a plan that is subject to section 303 for the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, the sum of the plan’s funding standard carryover balance and prefunding balance (as such terms are defined in section 302(f)) as of the end of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014.

“(4) COMBINING AND OFFSETTING AMOUNTS TO BE AMORTIZED.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, amounts required to be amortized under paragraph (2) or paragraph (3), as the case may be—

“(A) may be combined into one amount under such paragraph to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization period for all items entering into such combined amount, and

“(B) may be offset against amounts required to be amortized under the other such paragraph, with the resulting amount to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization periods for all items entering into whichever of the two amounts being offset is the greater.

“(5) INTEREST.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited (as determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury) with interest at the appropriate rate consistent with the rate or rates of interest used under the plan to determine costs.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—The interest rate used for purposes of computing the amortization charge described in subsection (b)(2)(C) or for purposes of any arrangement under subsection (d) for any plan year shall be the greater of (i) 150 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the 1st month of such plan year), or (ii) the rate of interest determined under subparagraph (A).

“(6) AMORTIZATION SCHEDULES IN EFFECT.—Amortization schedules for amounts described in paragraphs (2) and (3) that are in effect as of the last day of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, by reason of section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 shall remain in effect pursuant to their terms and this section, except that such amounts shall not be amortized again under this section. In the case of a plan that is subject to section 303 for the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, any amortization schedules and bases for plan years beginning before such date shall be reduced to zero.

“(c) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(1) DETERMINATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER FUNDING METHOD.—For purposes of this section, normal costs, accrued liability, past service liabilities, and experience gains and losses shall be determined under the funding method used to determine costs under the plan.

“(2) VALUATION OF ASSETS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the value of the plan’s assets shall be determined on the basis of any reasonable actuarial method of valuation which takes into account fair market value and which is permitted under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) DEDICATED BOND PORTFOLIO.—The Secretary of the Treasury may by regulations provide that the value of any dedicated bond portfolio of a plan shall be determined by using the interest rate under section 302(b)(5) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS MUST BE REASONABLE.—For purposes of this section, all costs, liabilities, rates of interest, and other factors under the plan shall be determined on the basis of actuarial assumptions and methods—

“(A) each of which is reasonable (taking into account the experience of the plan and reasonable expectations) or which, in the aggregate, result in a total contribution equivalent to that which would be determined if each such assumption and method were reasonable, and

“(B) which, in combination, offer the actuary’s best estimate of anticipated experience under the plan.

“(4) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CHANGES AS EXPERIENCE GAIN OR LOSS.—For purposes of this section, if—

“(A) a change in benefits under the Social Security Act or in other retirement benefits created under Federal or State law, or

“(B) a change in the definition of the term ‘wages’ under section 3121 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or a change in the amount of such wages taken into account under regulations prescribed for purposes of section 401(a)(5) of such Code,

results in an increase or decrease in accrued liability under a plan, such increase or decrease shall be treated as an experience loss or gain.

“(5) FUNDING METHOD AND PLAN YEAR.—

“(A) FUNDING METHODS AVAILABLE.—All funding methods available to CSEC plans under section 302 (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) shall continue to be available under this section.

“(B) NOT AFFECTED BY CESSATION OF BENEFIT ACCRUALS.—The availability of any funding method, including all spread gain funding methods, shall not be affected by whether benefit accruals under a plan have ceased. Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (C) or in regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, if benefit accruals have ceased under a plan, the spread gain funding methods may be applied by amortizing over the average expected future lives of all participants.

“(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—In the case of a plan amortizing over the average expected future lives of all participants pursuant to the second sentence of subparagraph (B), such amortization amount for any plan year shall not be less than the sum of—

“(i) the amount determined by amortizing, as of the first year for which the plan amortizes over the average future lives of all participants, the entire unfunded past service liability in equal installments over 15 years, and

“(ii) the amount determined by amortizing any increase or decrease in such unfunded past service liability in any subsequent year, other than an increase or decrease attributable to contributions or expected experience, in equal installments over 15 years.

“(D) CHANGES.—If the funding method for a plan is changed, the new funding method shall become the funding method used to determine costs and liabilities under the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary of the Treasury. The preceding sentence shall not apply to any change made pursuant to, or permitted by, the second sentence of subparagraph (B) if such change is made for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013. Any such change may be made without the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury. If the plan year for a plan is changed, the new plan year shall become the plan year for the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(E) APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS BY CERTAIN SINGLE-EMPLOYER PLANS SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—No actuarial assumption (other than the assumptions described in subsection (h)(3)) used to determine the current liability for a plan to which this subparagraph applies may be changed without the approval of the Secretary.

“(ii) PLANS TO WHICH SUBPARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to a plan only if—

“(I) the plan is a CSEC plan,

“(II) the aggregate unfunded vested benefits as of the close of the preceding plan year (as determined under section 4006(a)(3)(E)(iii)) of such plan and all other plans maintained by the contributing sponsors (as defined in section 4001(a)(13)) and members of such sponsors’ controlled groups (as defined in section 4001(a)(14)) which are covered by title IV (disregarding

plans with no unfunded vested benefits) exceed \$50,000,000, and

“(III) the change in assumptions (determined after taking into account any changes in interest rate and mortality table) results in a decrease in the funding shortfall of the plan for the current plan year that exceeds \$50,000,000, or that exceeds \$5,000,000 and that is 5 percent or more of the current liability of the plan before such change.

“(6) FULL FUNDING.—If, as of the close of a plan year, a plan would (without regard to this paragraph) have an accumulated funding deficiency (determined without regard to the alternative minimum funding standard account permitted under subsection (e)) in excess of the full funding limitation—

“(A) the funding standard account shall be credited with the amount of such excess, and

“(B) all amounts described in paragraphs (2)(B), (C), and (D) and (3)(B) of subsection (b) which are required to be amortized shall be considered fully amortized for purposes of such paragraphs.

“(7) FULL-FUNDING LIMITATION.—For purposes of paragraph (6), the term ‘full-funding limitation’ means the excess (if any) of—

“(A) the accrued liability (including normal cost) under the plan (determined under the entry age normal funding method if such accrued liability cannot be directly calculated under the funding method used for the plan), over

“(B) the lesser of—

“(i) the fair market value of the plan’s assets, or

“(ii) the value of such assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In no event shall the full-funding limitation determined under subparagraph (A) be less than the excess (if any) of—

“(I) 90 percent of the current liability (determined without regard to paragraph (4) of subsection (h)) of the plan (including the expected increase in such current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year), over

“(II) the value of the plan’s assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(ii) ASSETS.—For purposes of clause (i), assets shall not be reduced by any credit balance in the funding standard account.

“(B) ANNUAL VALUATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a determination of experience gains and losses and a valuation of the plan’s liability shall be made not less frequently than once every year, except that such determination shall be made more frequently to the extent required in particular cases under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) VALUATION DATE.—

“(i) CURRENT YEAR.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be made as of a date within the plan year to which the valuation refers or within one month prior to the beginning of such year.

“(ii) USE OF PRIOR YEAR VALUATION.—The valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) may be made as of a date within the plan year prior to the year to which the valuation refers if, as of such date, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 100 percent of the plan’s current liability.

“(iii) ADJUSTMENTS.—Information under clause (ii) shall, in accordance with regulations, be actuarially adjusted to reflect significant differences in participants.

“(iv) LIMITATION.—A change in funding method to use a prior year valuation, as provided in clause (ii), may not be made unless as of the valuation date within the prior plan year, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 125 percent of the plan’s current liability.

“(9) TIME WHEN CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS DEEMED MADE.—For purposes of this section, any contributions for a plan year made by an employer during the period—

“(A) beginning on the day after the last day of such plan year, and

“(B) ending on the day which is 8½ months after the close of the plan year, shall be deemed to have been made on such last day.

“(10) ANTICIPATION OF BENEFIT INCREASES EFFECTIVE IN THE FUTURE.—In determining projected benefits, the funding method of a collectively bargained CSEC plan described in section 413(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (other than a multiemployer plan) shall anticipate benefit increases scheduled to take effect during the term of the collective bargaining agreement applicable to the plan.

“(d) EXTENSION OF AMORTIZATION PERIODS.—The period of years required to amortize any unfunded liability (described in any clause of subsection (b)(2)(B)) of any plan may be extended by the Secretary for a period of time (not in excess of 10 years) if such Secretary determines that such extension would carry out the purposes of this Act and provide adequate protection for participants under the plan and their beneficiaries, and if such Secretary determines that the failure to permit such extension would result in—

“(1) a substantial risk to the voluntary continuation of the plan, or

“(2) a substantial curtailment of pension benefit levels or employee compensation.

“(e) ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARD.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A CSEC plan which uses a funding method that requires contributions in all years not less than those required under the entry age normal funding method may maintain an alternative minimum funding standard account for any plan year. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this subsection.

“(2) CHARGES AND CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.—For a plan year the alternative minimum funding standard account shall be—

“(A) charged with the sum of—

“(i) the lesser of normal cost under the funding method used under the plan or normal cost determined under the unit credit method,

“(ii) the excess, if any, of the present value of accrued benefits under the plan over the fair market value of the assets, and

“(iii) an amount equal to the excess (if any) of credits to the alternative minimum standard account for all prior plan years over charges to such account for all such years, and

“(B) credited with the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year.

“(3) SPECIAL RULES.—The alternative minimum funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited with interest in the manner provided under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the funding standard account.

“(f) QUARTERLY CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If a CSEC plan which has a funded current liability percentage for the preceding plan year of less than 100 percent fails to pay the full amount of a required installment for the plan year, then the rate of interest charged to the funding standard account under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the amount of the underpayment for the period of the underpayment shall be equal to the greater of—

“(A) 175 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(B) the rate of interest used under the plan in determining costs.

“(2) AMOUNT OF UNDERPAYMENT, PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1)—

“(A) AMOUNT.—The amount of the underpayment shall be the excess of—

“(i) the required installment, over

“(ii) the amount (if any) of the installment contributed to or under the plan on or before the due date for the installment.

“(B) PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—The period for which interest is charged under this subsection with regard to any portion of the underpayment shall run from the due date for the installment to the date on which such portion is contributed to or under the plan (determined without regard to subsection (c)(9)).

“(C) ORDER OF CREDITING CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), contributions shall be credited against unpaid required installments in the order in which such installments are required to be paid.

“(3) NUMBER OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENTS; DUE DATES.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) PAYABLE IN 4 INSTALLMENTS.—There shall be 4 required installments for each plan year.

“(B) TIME FOR PAYMENT OF INSTALLMENTS.—

“In the case of the following required installments:

The due date is:

1st	April 15
2nd	July 15
3rd	October 15
4th	January 15 of the following year.

“(4) AMOUNT OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of any required installment shall be 25 percent of the required annual payment.

“(B) REQUIRED ANNUAL PAYMENT.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ‘required annual payment’ means the lesser of—

“(i) 90 percent of the amount required to be contributed to or under the plan by the employer for the plan year under section 302 (without regard to any waiver under subsection (c) thereof), or

“(ii) 100 percent of the amount so required for the preceding plan year.

Clause (ii) shall not apply if the preceding plan year was not a year of 12 months.

“(5) LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A plan to which this paragraph applies shall be treated as failing to pay the full amount of any required installment to the extent that the value of the liquid assets paid in such installment is less than the liquidity shortfall (whether or not such liquidity shortfall exceeds the amount of such installment required to be paid but for this paragraph).

“(B) PLANS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This paragraph shall apply to a CSEC plan other than a plan described in section 302(d)(6)(A) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) which—

“(i) is required to pay installments under this subsection for a plan year, and

“(ii) has a liquidity shortfall for any quarter during such plan year.

“(C) PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any portion of an installment that is treated as not paid under subparagraph (A) shall continue to be treated as unpaid until the close of the quarter in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(D) LIMITATION ON INCREASE.—If the amount of any required installment is increased by reason of subparagraph (A), in no event shall such increase exceed the amount which, when added to prior installments for the plan year, is necessary to increase the funded current liability

percentage (taking into account the expected increase in current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year) to 100 percent.

“(E) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this paragraph:

“(i) LIQUIDITY SHORTFALL.—The term ‘liquidity shortfall’ means, with respect to any required installment, an amount equal to the excess (as of the last day of the quarter for which such installment is made) of the base amount with respect to such quarter over the value (as of such last day) of the plan’s liquid assets.

“(ii) BASE AMOUNT.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘base amount’ means, with respect to any quarter, an amount equal to 3 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 12 months ending on the last day of such quarter.

“(II) SPECIAL RULE.—If the amount determined under subclause (I) exceeds an amount equal to 2 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 36 months ending on the last day of the quarter and an enrolled actuary certifies to the satisfaction of the Secretary of the Treasury that such excess is the result of nonrecurring circumstances, the base amount with respect to such quarter shall be determined without regard to amounts related to those nonrecurring circumstances.

“(iii) DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE PLAN.—The term ‘disbursements from the plan’ means all disbursements from the trust, including purchases of annuities, payments of single sums and other benefits, and administrative expenses.

“(iv) ADJUSTED DISBURSEMENTS.—The term ‘adjusted disbursements’ means disbursements from the plan reduced by the product of—

“(I) the plan’s funded current liability percentage for the plan year, and

“(II) the sum of the purchases of annuities, payments of single sums, and such other disbursements as the Secretary of the Treasury shall provide in regulations.

“(v) LIQUID ASSETS.—The term ‘liquid assets’ means cash, marketable securities and such other assets as specified by the Secretary of the Treasury in regulations.

“(vi) QUARTER.—The term ‘quarter’ means, with respect to any required installment, the 3-month period preceding the month in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(F) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this paragraph.

“(6) FISCAL YEARS AND SHORT YEARS.—

“(A) FISCAL YEARS.—In applying this subsection to a plan year beginning on any date other than January 1, there shall be substituted for the months specified in this subsection, the months which correspond thereto.

“(B) SHORT PLAN YEAR.—This subsection shall be applied to plan years of less than 12 months in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(g) IMPOSITION OF LIEN WHERE FAILURE TO MAKE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a plan to which this section applies, if—

“(A) any person fails to make a required installment under subsection (f) or any other payment required under this section before the due date for such installment or other payment, and

“(B) the unpaid balance of such installment or other payment (including interest), when added to the aggregate unpaid balance of all preceding such installments or other payments for which payment was not made before the due date (including interest), exceeds \$1,000,000,

then there shall be a lien in favor of the plan in the amount determined under paragraph (3) upon all property and rights to property, whether real or personal, belonging to such person and any other person who is a member of the same controlled group of which such person is a member.

“(2) PLANS TO WHICH SUBSECTION APPLIES.—This subsection shall apply to a CSEC plan for any plan year for which the funded current liability percentage of such plan is less than 100 percent. This subsection shall not apply to any plan to which section 4021 does not apply (as such section is in effect on the date of the enactment of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994).

“(3) AMOUNT OF LIEN.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the amount of the lien shall be equal to the aggregate unpaid balance of required installments and other payments required under this section (including interest)—

“(A) for plan years beginning after 1987, and

“(B) for which payment has not been made before the due date.

“(4) NOTICE OF FAILURE; LIEN.—

“(A) NOTICE OF FAILURE.—A person committing a failure described in paragraph (1) shall notify the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation of such failure within 10 days of the due date for the required installment or other payment.

“(B) PERIOD OF LIEN.—The lien imposed by paragraph (1) shall arise on the due date for the required installment or other payment and shall continue until the last day of the first plan year in which the plan ceases to be described in paragraph (1)(B). Such lien shall continue to run without regard to whether such plan continues to be described in paragraph (2) during the period referred to in the preceding sentence.

“(C) CERTAIN RULES TO APPLY.—Any amount with respect to which a lien is imposed under paragraph (1) shall be treated as taxes due and owing the United States and rules similar to the rules of subsections (c), (d), and (e) of section 4068 shall apply with respect to a lien imposed by subsection (a) and the amount with respect to such lien.

“(5) ENFORCEMENT.—Any lien created under paragraph (1) may be perfected and enforced only by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or at the direction of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, by any contributing employer (or any member of the controlled group of the contributing employer).

“(6) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) DUE DATE; REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—The terms ‘due date’ and ‘required installment’ have the meanings given such terms by subsection (f), except that in the case of a payment other than a required installment, the due date shall be the date such payment is required to be made under this section.

“(B) CONTROLLED GROUP.—The term ‘controlled group’ means any group treated as a single employer under subsections (b), (c), (m), and (o) of section 414 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(h) CURRENT LIABILITY.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘current liability’ means all liabilities to employees and their beneficiaries under the plan.

“(2) TREATMENT OF UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFITS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any unpredictable contingent event benefit shall not be taken into account until the event on which the benefit is contingent occurs.

“(B) UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFIT.—The term ‘unpredictable contingent event benefit’ means any benefit contingent on an event other than—

“(i) age, service, compensation, death, or disability, or

“(ii) an event which is reasonably and reliably predictable (as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury).

“(3) INTEREST RATE AND MORTALITY ASSUMPTIONS USED.—

“(A) INTEREST RATE.—The rate of interest used to determine current liability under this

section shall be the third segment rate determined under section 303(h)(2)(C).

“(B) MORTALITY TABLES.—

“(i) SECRETARIAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of the Treasury may by regulation prescribe mortality tables to be used in determining current liability under this subsection. Such tables shall be based upon the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience. In prescribing such tables, the Secretary of the Treasury shall take into account results of available independent studies of mortality of individuals covered by pension plans.

“(ii) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall periodically (at least every 5 years) review any tables in effect under this subsection and shall, to the extent the Secretary of the Treasury determines necessary, by regulation update the tables to reflect the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience.

“(C) SEPARATE MORTALITY TABLES FOR THE DISABLED.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of plan years beginning after December 31, 1995, the Secretary of the Treasury shall establish mortality tables which may be used (in lieu of the tables under subparagraph (B)) to determine current liability under this subsection for individuals who are entitled to benefits under the plan on account of disability. The Secretary of the Treasury shall establish separate tables for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning before January 1, 1995, and for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning on or after such date.

“(ii) SPECIAL RULE FOR DISABILITIES OCCURRING AFTER 1994.—In the case of disabilities occurring in plan years beginning after December 31, 1994, the tables under clause (i) shall apply only with respect to individuals described in such subclause who are disabled within the meaning of title II of the Social Security Act and the regulations thereunder.

“(4) CERTAIN SERVICE DISREGARDED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a participant to whom this paragraph applies, only the applicable percentage of the years of service before such individual became a participant shall be taken into account in computing the current liability of the plan.

“(B) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the applicable percentage shall be determined as follows:

“If the years of participation are:	The applicable percentage is:
1	20
2	40
3	60
4	80
5 or more	100.

“(C) PARTICIPANTS TO WHOM PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to any participant who, at the time of becoming a participant—

“(i) has not accrued any other benefit under any defined benefit plan (whether or not terminated) maintained by the employer or a member of the same controlled group of which the employer is a member,

“(ii) who first becomes a participant under the plan in a plan year beginning after December 31, 1987, and

“(iii) has years of service greater than the minimum years of service necessary for eligibility to participate in the plan.

“(D) ELECTION.—An employer may elect not to have this subparagraph apply. Such an election, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(i) FUNDED CURRENT LIABILITY PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this section, the term

'funded current liability percentage' means, with respect to any plan year, the percentage which—

"(1) the value of the plan's assets determined under subsection (c)(2), is of

"(2) the current liability under the plan.

"(j) **TRANSITION.**—The Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe such rules as are necessary or appropriate with respect to the transition of a CSEC plan from the application of section 303 to the application of this section."

(2) **SEPARATE RULES FOR CSEC PLANS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Paragraph (2) of section 302(a) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1082(a)) is amended by striking "and" at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting ", and", and by inserting at the end thereof the following new subparagraph:

"(D) in the case of a CSEC plan, the employers make contributions to or under the plan for any plan year which, in the aggregate, are sufficient to ensure that the plan does not have an accumulated funding deficiency under section 306 as of the end of the plan year."

(B) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 302 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1082) is amended—

(i) by striking "multiemployer plan" the first place it appears in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(A) and the last place it appears in paragraph (2) of subsection (d), and inserting "multiemployer plan or a CSEC plan",

(ii) by striking "303(j)" in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) and inserting "303(j) or under 306(f)",

(iii)(I) by striking "and" at the end of clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B),

(II) by striking the period at the end of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B), and inserting ", and", and

(III) by inserting the following new clause after clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B):

"(iii) in the case of a CSEC plan, the funding standard account shall be credited under section 306(b)(3)(C) with the amount of the waived funding deficiency and such amount shall be amortized as required under section 306(b)(2)(C).",

(iv) by striking "under paragraph (1)" in clause (i) of subsection (c)(4)(A) and inserting "under paragraph (1) or for granting an extension under section 306(d)",

(v) by striking "waiver under this subsection" in subparagraph (B) of subsection (c)(4) and inserting "waiver under this subsection or an extension under 306(d)",

(vi) by striking "waiver or modification" in subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(B)(i) and inserting "waiver, modification, or extension",

(vii) by striking "waivers" in the heading of subsection (c)(4)(C) and of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting "waivers or extensions",

(viii) by striking "section 304(d)" in subparagraph (A) of subsection (c)(7) and in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) and inserting "section 304(d) or section 306(d)",

(ix) by striking "and" at the end of subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and adding "or the accumulated funding deficiency under section 306, whichever is applicable,"

(x) by striking "303(e)(2)," in subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and inserting "303(e)(2) or 306(b)(2)(C), whichever is applicable, and",

(xi) by adding immediately after subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) the following new subclause:

"(III) the total amounts not paid by reason of an extension in effect under section 306(d).",

(xii) by striking "for waivers of" in clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting "for waivers or extensions with respect to", and

(xiii) by striking "single-employer plan" in subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(2) and in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B) and inserting "single-employer plan (other than a CSEC plan)".

(3) **BENEFIT RESTRICTIONS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (g) of section 206 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1056) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

"(12) **CSEC PLANS.**—This subsection shall not apply to a CSEC plan (as defined in section 210(f))."

(B) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Any restriction under section 206(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 that is in effect with respect to a CSEC plan as of the last day of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, shall cease to apply as of the first day of the following plan year.

(4) **BENEFIT INCREASES.**—Paragraph (3) of section 204(i) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1054(i)) is amended by striking "multiemployer plans" and inserting "multiemployer plans or CSEC plans".

(5) **SECTION 103.**—Subparagraph (B) of section 103(d)(8) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1023(d)(8)) is amended by striking "303(h) and 304(c)(3)" and inserting "303(h), 304(c)(3), and 306(c)(3)".

(6) **SECTION 4003.**—Subparagraph (B) of section 4003(e)(1) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1303(e)(1)) is amended by striking "303(k)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986" and inserting "303(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 306(g)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 433(g)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986".

(7) **SECTION 4010.**—Paragraph (2) of section 4010(b) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1310(b)) is amended by striking "303(k)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986" and inserting "303(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 306(g)(1)(A) and (B) of this Act or section 430(k)(1)(A) and (B) or 433(g)(1)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986".

(8) **SECTION 4071.**—Section 4071 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1371) is amended by striking "section 303(k)(4)" and inserting "section 303(k)(4) or 306(g)(4)".

(b) **AMENDMENTS TO CODE.**—

(1) **MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.**—Subpart A of part III of subchapter D of chapter 1 of subtitle A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 433. MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS.

"(a) **GENERAL RULE.**—For purposes of section 412, the term "accumulated funding deficiency" for a CSEC plan means the excess of the total charges to the funding standard account for all plan years (beginning with the first plan year to which section 412 applies) over the total credits to such account for such years or, if less, the excess of the total charges to the alternative minimum funding standard account for such plan years over the total credits to such account for such years.

"(b) **FUNDING STANDARD ACCOUNT.**—

"(1) **ACCOUNT REQUIRED.**—Each plan to which this section applies shall establish and maintain a funding standard account. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this section.

"(2) **CHARGES TO ACCOUNT.**—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be charged with the sum of—

"(A) the normal cost of the plan for the plan year,

"(B) the amounts necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

"(i) in the case of a plan in existence on January 1, 1974, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 412 applies, over a period of 40 plan years,

"(ii) in the case of a plan which comes into existence after January 1, 1974, but before the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, the unfunded past service liability under the plan on the first day of the first plan year to which section 412 applies, over a period of 30 plan years,

"(iii) in the case of a plan that is subject to section 430 for the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, the sum of—

"(I) the plan's funding standard carryover balance and prefunding balance (as such terms are defined in section 430(f)) as of the end of such plan year, and

"(II) the unfunded past service liability under the plan for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013,

over a period of 15 years,

"(iv) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net increase (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

"(v) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience loss (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

"(vi) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net loss (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

"(C) the amount necessary to amortize each waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 412(c)(3)) for each prior plan year in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years,

"(D) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 5 plan years any amount credited to the funding standard account under paragraph (3)(D), and

"(E) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized) over a period of 20 years the contributions which would be required to be made under the plan but for the provisions of section 412(c)(7)(A)(i)(I) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

"(3) **CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.**—For a plan year, the funding standard account shall be credited with the sum of—

"(A) the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year,

"(B) the amount necessary to amortize in equal annual installments (until fully amortized)—

"(i) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net decrease (if any) in unfunded past service liability under the plan arising from plan amendments adopted in such year, over a period of 15 plan years,

"(ii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net experience gain (if any) under the plan, over a period of 5 plan years, and

"(iii) separately, with respect to each plan year, the net gain (if any) resulting from changes in actuarial assumptions used under the plan, over a period of 10 plan years,

"(C) the amount of the waived funding deficiency (within the meaning of section 412(c)(3)) for the plan year,

"(D) in the case of a plan year for which the accumulated funding deficiency is determined under the funding standard account if such plan year follows a plan year for which such deficiency was determined under the alternative minimum funding standard, the excess (if any) of any debit balance in the funding standard

account (determined without regard to this subparagraph) over any debit balance in the alternative minimum funding standard account, and

“(E) for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, in the case of a plan that is subject to section 430 for the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, the sum of the plan’s funding standard carryover balance and prefunding balance (as such terms are defined in section 430(f)) as of the end of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014.

“(4) COMBINING AND OFFSETTING AMOUNTS TO BE AMORTIZED.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary, amounts required to be amortized under paragraph (2) or paragraph (3), as the case may be—

“(A) may be combined into one amount under such paragraph to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization period for all items entering into such combined amount, and

“(B) may be offset against amounts required to be amortized under the other such paragraph, with the resulting amount to be amortized over a period determined on the basis of the remaining amortization periods for all items entering into whichever of the two amounts being offset is the greater.

“(5) INTEREST.—

“(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited (as determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary) with interest at the appropriate rate consistent with the rate or rates of interest used under the plan to determine costs.

“(B) The interest rate used for purposes of computing the amortization charge described in subsection (b)(2)(C) or for purposes of any arrangement under subsection (d) for any plan year shall be the greater of—

“(i) 150 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(ii) the rate of interest determined under subparagraph (A).

“(6) AMORTIZATION SCHEDULES IN EFFECT.—Amortization schedules for amounts described in paragraphs (2) and (3) that are in effect as of the last day of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, by reason of section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 shall remain in effect pursuant to their terms and this section, except that such amounts shall not be amortized again under this section. In the case of a plan that is subject to section 430 for the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, any amortization schedules and bases for plan years beginning before such date shall be reduced to zero.

“(c) SPECIAL RULES.—

“(1) DETERMINATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER FUNDING METHOD.—For purposes of this section, normal costs, accrued liability, past service liabilities, and experience gains and losses shall be determined under the funding method used to determine costs under the plan.

“(2) VALUATION OF ASSETS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, the value of the plan’s assets shall be determined on the basis of any reasonable actuarial method of valuation which takes into account fair market value and which is permitted under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(B) DEDICATED BOND PORTFOLIO.—The Secretary may by regulations provide that the value of any dedicated bond portfolio of a plan shall be determined by using the interest rate under section 412(b)(5) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006).

“(3) ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS MUST BE REASONABLE.—For purposes of this section, all costs, liabilities, rates of interest, and other fac-

tors under the plan shall be determined on the basis of actuarial assumptions and methods—

“(A) each of which is reasonable (taking into account the experience of the plan and reasonable expectations) or which, in the aggregate, result in a total contribution equivalent to that which would be determined if each such assumption and method were reasonable, and

“(B) which, in combination, offer the actuary’s best estimate of anticipated experience under the plan.

“(4) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN CHANGES AS EXPERIENCE GAIN OR LOSS.—For purposes of this section, if—

“(A) a change in benefits under the Social Security Act or in other retirement benefits created under Federal or State law, or

“(B) a change in the definition of the term ‘wages’ under section 3121 or a change in the amount of such wages taken into account under regulations prescribed for purposes of section 401(a)(5),

results in an increase or decrease in accrued liability under a plan, such increase or decrease shall be treated as an experience loss or gain.

“(5) FUNDING METHOD AND PLAN YEAR.—

“(A) FUNDING METHODS AVAILABLE.—All funding methods available to CSEC plans under section 412 (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) shall continue to be available under this section.

“(B) NOT AFFECTED BY CESSATION OF BENEFIT ACCRUALS.—The availability of any funding method, including all spread gain funding methods, shall not be affected by whether benefit accruals under a plan have ceased. Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (C) or in regulations prescribed by the Secretary, if benefit accruals have ceased under a plan, the spread gain funding methods may be applied by amortizing over the average expected future lives of all participants.

“(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—In the case of a plan amortizing over the average expected future lives of all participants pursuant to the second sentence of subparagraph (B), such amortization amount for any plan year shall not be less than the sum of—

“(i) the amount determined by amortizing, as of the first year for which the plan amortizes over the average future lives of all participants, the entire unfunded past service liability in equal installments over 15 years, and

“(ii) the amount determined by amortizing any increase or decrease in such unfunded past service liability in any subsequent year, other than an increase or decrease attributable to contributions or expected experience, in equal installments over 15 years.

“(D) CHANGES.—If the funding method for a plan is changed, the new funding method shall become the funding method used to determine costs and liabilities under the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary. The preceding sentence shall not apply to any change made pursuant to, or permitted by, the second sentence of subparagraph (B) if such change is made for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013. Any such change may be made without the approval of the Secretary. If the plan year for a plan is changed, the new plan year shall become the plan year for the plan only if the change is approved by the Secretary.

“(E) APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR CERTAIN CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS BY CERTAIN SINGLE-EMPLOYER PLANS SUBJECT TO ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—No actuarial assumption (other than the assumptions described in subsection (h)(3)) used to determine the current liability for a plan to which this subparagraph applies may be changed without the approval of the Secretary.

“(ii) PLANS TO WHICH SUBPARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to a plan only if—

“(I) the plan is a CSEC plan,

“(II) the aggregate unfunded vested benefits as of the close of the preceding plan year (as determined under section 4006(a)(3)(E)(iii) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974) of such plan and all other plans maintained by the contributing sponsors (as defined in section 4001(a)(13) of such Act) and members of such sponsors’ controlled groups (as defined in section 4001(a)(14) of such Act) which are covered by title IV (disregarding plans with no unfunded vested benefits) exceed \$50,000,000, and

“(III) the change in assumptions (determined after taking into account any changes in interest rate and mortality table) results in a decrease in the funding shortfall of the plan for the current plan year that exceeds \$50,000,000, or that exceeds \$5,000,000 and that is 5 percent or more of the current liability of the plan before such change.

“(6) FULL FUNDING.—If, as of the close of a plan year, a plan would (without regard to this paragraph) have an accumulated funding deficiency (determined without regard to the alternative minimum funding standard account permitted under subsection (e)) in excess of the full funding limitation—

“(A) the funding standard account shall be credited with the amount of such excess, and

“(B) all amounts described in paragraphs (2)(B), (C), and (D) and (3)(B) of subsection (b) which are required to be amortized shall be considered fully amortized for purposes of such paragraphs.

“(7) FULL-FUNDING LIMITATION.—For purposes of paragraph (6), the term ‘full-funding limitation’ means the excess (if any) of—

“(A) the accrued liability (including normal cost) under the plan (determined under the entry age normal funding method if such accrued liability cannot be directly calculated under the funding method used for the plan), over

“(B) the lesser of—

“(i) the fair market value of the plan’s assets, or

“(ii) the value of such assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(C) MINIMUM AMOUNT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In no event shall the full-funding limitation determined under subparagraph (A) be less than the excess (if any) of—

“(I) 90 percent of the current liability (determined without regard to paragraph (4) of subsection (h)) of the plan (including the expected increase in such current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year), over

“(II) the value of the plan’s assets determined under paragraph (2).

“(ii) ASSETS.—For purposes of clause (i), assets shall not be reduced by any credit balance in the funding standard account.

“(8) ANNUAL VALUATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this section, a determination of experience gains and losses and a valuation of the plan’s liability shall be made not less frequently than once every year, except that such determination shall be made more frequently to the extent required in particular cases under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(B) VALUATION DATE.—

“(i) CURRENT YEAR.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) shall be made as of a date within the plan year to which the valuation refers or within one month prior to the beginning of such year.

“(ii) USE OF PRIOR YEAR VALUATION.—The valuation referred to in subparagraph (A) may

be made as of a date within the plan year prior to the year to which the valuation refers if, as of such date, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 100 percent of the plan's current liability.

“(iii) **ADJUSTMENTS.**—Information under clause (ii) shall, in accordance with regulations, be actuarially adjusted to reflect significant differences in participants.

“(iv) **LIMITATION.**—A change in funding method to use a prior year valuation, as provided in clause (ii), may not be made unless as of the valuation date within the prior plan year, the value of the assets of the plan are not less than 125 percent of the plan's current liability.

“(9) **TIME WHEN CERTAIN CONTRIBUTIONS DEEMED MADE.**—For purposes of this section, any contributions for a plan year made by an employer during the period—

“(A) beginning on the day after the last day of such plan year, and

“(B) ending on the day which is 8½ months after the close of the plan year,

shall be deemed to have been made on such last day.

“(10) **ANTICIPATION OF BENEFIT INCREASES EFFECTIVE IN THE FUTURE.**—In determining projected benefits, the funding method of a collectively bargained CSEC plan described in section 413(a) (other than a multiemployer plan) shall anticipate benefit increases scheduled to take effect during the term of the collective bargaining agreement applicable to the plan.

“(d) **EXTENSION OF AMORTIZATION PERIODS.**—The period of years required to amortize any unfunded liability (described in any clause of subsection (b)(2)(B)) of any plan may be extended by the Secretary of Labor for a period of time (not in excess of 10 years) if such Secretary determines that such extension would carry out the purposes of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and provide adequate protection for participants under the plan, and their beneficiaries and if such Secretary determines that the failure to permit such extension would result in—

“(1) a substantial risk to the voluntary continuation of the plan, or

“(2) a substantial curtailment of pension benefit levels or employee compensation.

“(e) **ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARD.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A CSEC plan which uses a funding method that requires contributions in all years not less than those required under the entry age normal funding method may maintain an alternative minimum funding standard account for any plan year. Such account shall be credited and charged solely as provided in this subsection.

“(2) **CHARGES AND CREDITS TO ACCOUNT.**—For a plan year the alternative minimum funding standard account shall be—

“(A) charged with the sum of—

“(i) the lesser of normal cost under the funding method used under the plan or normal cost determined under the unit credit method,

“(ii) the excess, if any, of the present value of accrued benefits under the plan over the fair market value of the assets, and

“(iii) an amount equal to the excess (if any) of credits to the alternative minimum standard account for all prior plan years over charges to such account for all such years, and

“(B) credited with the amount considered contributed by the employer to or under the plan for the plan year.

“(3) **SPECIAL RULES.**—The alternative minimum funding standard account (and items therein) shall be charged or credited with interest in the manner provided under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the funding standard account.

“(f) **QUARTERLY CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If a CSEC plan which has a funded current liability percentage for the preceding plan year of less than 100 percent fails to pay the full amount of a required installment for the plan year, then the rate of interest charged to the funding standard account under subsection (b)(5) with respect to the amount of the underpayment for the period of the underpayment shall be equal to the greater of—

“(A) 175 percent of the Federal mid-term rate (as in effect under section 1274 for the 1st month of such plan year), or

“(B) the rate of interest used under the plan in determining costs.

“(2) **AMOUNT OF UNDERPAYMENT, PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.**—For purposes of paragraph (1)—

“(A) **AMOUNT.**—The amount of the underpayment shall be the excess of—

“(i) the required installment, over

“(ii) the amount (if any) of the installment contributed to or under the plan on or before the due date for the installment.

“(B) **PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.**—The period for which interest is charged under this subsection with regard to any portion of the underpayment shall run from the due date for the installment to the date on which such portion is contributed to or under the plan (determined without regard to subsection (c)(9)).

“(C) **ORDER OF CREDITING CONTRIBUTIONS.**—For purposes of subparagraph (A)(ii), contributions shall be credited against unpaid required installments in the order in which such installments are required to be paid.

“(3) **NUMBER OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENTS; DUE DATES.**—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) **PAYABLE IN 4 INSTALLMENTS.**—There shall be 4 required installments for each plan year.

“(B) **TIME FOR PAYMENT OF INSTALLMENTS.**—

“In the case of the following required installments:

The due date is:

1st	April 15
2nd	July 15
3rd	October 15
4th	January 15 of the following year.

“(4) **AMOUNT OF REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.**—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The amount of any required installment shall be 25 percent of the required annual payment.

“(B) **REQUIRED ANNUAL PAYMENT.**—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ‘required annual payment’ means the lesser of—

“(i) 90 percent of the amount required to be contributed to or under the plan by the employer for the plan year under section 412 (without regard to any waiver under subsection (c) thereof), or

“(ii) 100 percent of the amount so required for the preceding plan year.

Clause (ii) shall not apply if the preceding plan year was not a year of 12 months.

“(5) **LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—A plan to which this paragraph applies shall be treated as failing to pay the full amount of any required installment to the extent that the value of the liquid assets paid in such installment is less than the liquidity shortfall (whether or not such liquidity shortfall exceeds the amount of such installment required to be paid but for this paragraph).

“(B) **PLANS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.**—This paragraph shall apply to a CSEC plan other than a plan described in section 412(l)(6)(A) (as in effect on the day before the enactment of the Pension Protection Act of 2006) which—

“(i) is required to pay installments under this subsection for a plan year, and

“(ii) has a liquidity shortfall for any quarter during such plan year.

“(C) **PERIOD OF UNDERPAYMENT.**—For purposes of paragraph (1), any portion of an installment that is treated as not paid under subparagraph (A) shall continue to be treated as unpaid until the close of the quarter in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(D) **LIMITATION ON INCREASE.**—If the amount of any required installment is increased by reason of subparagraph (A), in no event shall such increase exceed the amount which, when added to prior installments for the plan year, is necessary to increase the funded current liability percentage (taking into account the expected increase in current liability due to benefits accruing during the plan year) to 100 percent.

“(E) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this paragraph:

“(i) **LIQUIDITY SHORTFALL.**—The term ‘liquidity shortfall’ means, with respect to any required installment, an amount equal to the excess (as of the last day of the quarter for which such installment is made) of the base amount with respect to such quarter over the value (as of such last day) of the plan's liquid assets.

“(ii) **BASE AMOUNT.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘base amount’ means, with respect to any quarter, an amount equal to 3 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 12 months ending on the last day of such quarter.

“(II) **SPECIAL RULE.**—If the amount determined under subclause (I) exceeds an amount equal to 2 times the sum of the adjusted disbursements from the plan for the 36 months ending on the last day of the quarter and an enrolled actuary certifies to the satisfaction of the Secretary that such excess is the result of non-recurring circumstances, the base amount with respect to such quarter shall be determined without regard to amounts related to those non-recurring circumstances.

“(iii) **DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE PLAN.**—The term ‘disbursements from the plan’ means all disbursements from the trust, including purchases of annuities, payments of single sums and other benefits, and administrative expenses.

“(iv) **ADJUSTED DISBURSEMENTS.**—The term ‘adjusted disbursements’ means disbursements from the plan reduced by the product of—

“(I) the plan's funded current liability percentage for the plan year, and

“(II) the sum of the purchases of annuities, payments of single sums, and such other disbursements as the Secretary shall provide in regulations.

“(v) **LIQUID ASSETS.**—The term ‘liquid assets’ means cash, marketable securities and such other assets as specified by the Secretary in regulations.

“(vi) **QUARTER.**—The term ‘quarter’ means, with respect to any required installment, the 3-month period preceding the month in which the due date for such installment occurs.

“(F) **REGULATIONS.**—The Secretary may prescribe such regulations as are necessary to carry out this paragraph.

“(6) **FISCAL YEARS AND SHORT YEARS.**—

“(A) **FISCAL YEARS.**—In applying this subsection to a plan year beginning on any date other than January 1, there shall be substituted for the months specified in this subsection, the months which correspond thereto.

“(B) **SHORT PLAN YEAR.**—This subsection shall be applied to plan years of less than 12 months in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(g) **IMPOSITION OF LIEN WHERE FAILURE TO MAKE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTIONS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of a plan to which this section applies, if—

“(A) any person fails to make a required installment under subsection (f) or any other payment required under this section before the due date for such installment or other payment, and

“(B) the unpaid balance of such installment or other payment (including interest), when added to the aggregate unpaid balance of all preceding such installments or other payments for which payment was not made before the due date (including interest), exceeds \$1,000,000, then there shall be a lien in favor of the plan in the amount determined under paragraph (3) upon all property and rights to property, whether real or personal, belonging to such person and any other person who is a member of the same controlled group of which such person is a member.

“(2) PLANS TO WHICH SUBSECTION APPLIES.—This subsection shall apply to a CSEC plan for any plan year for which the funded current liability percentage of such plan is less than 100 percent. This subsection shall not apply to any plan to which section 4021 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 does not apply (as such section is in effect on the date of the enactment of the Retirement Protection Act of 1994).

“(3) AMOUNT OF LIEN.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the amount of the lien shall be equal to the aggregate unpaid balance of required installments and other payments required under this section (including interest)—

“(A) for plan years beginning after 1987, and
“(B) for which payment has not been made before the due date.

“(4) NOTICE OF FAILURE; LIEN.—

“(A) NOTICE OF FAILURE.—A person committing a failure described in paragraph (1) shall notify the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation of such failure within 10 days of the due date for the required installment or other payment.

“(B) PERIOD OF LIEN.—The lien imposed by paragraph (1) shall arise on the due date for the required installment or other payment and shall continue until the last day of the first plan year in which the plan ceases to be described in paragraph (1)(B). Such lien shall continue to run without regard to whether such plan continues to be described in paragraph (2) during the period referred to in the preceding sentence.

“(C) CERTAIN RULES TO APPLY.—Any amount with respect to which a lien is imposed under paragraph (1) shall be treated as taxes due and owing the United States and rules similar to the rules of subsections (c), (d), and (e) of section 4068 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 shall apply with respect to a lien imposed by subsection (a) and the amount with respect to such lien.

“(5) ENFORCEMENT.—Any lien created under paragraph (1) may be perfected and enforced only by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, or at the direction of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, by any contributing employer (or any member of the controlled group of the contributing employer).

“(6) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) DUE DATE; REQUIRED INSTALLMENT.—The terms ‘due date’ and ‘required installment’ have the meanings given such terms by subsection (f), except that in the case of a payment other than a required installment, the due date shall be the date such payment is required to be made under this section.

“(B) CONTROLLED GROUP.—The term ‘controlled group’ means any group treated as a single employer under subsections (b), (c), (m), and (o) of section 414.

“(h) CURRENT LIABILITY.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘current liability’ means all liabilities to employees and their beneficiaries under the plan.

“(2) TREATMENT OF UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFITS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of paragraph (1), any unpredictable contingent event benefit

shall not be taken into account until the event on which the benefit is contingent occurs.

“(B) UNPREDICTABLE CONTINGENT EVENT BENEFIT.—The term ‘unpredictable contingent event benefit’ means any benefit contingent on an event other than—

“(i) age, service, compensation, death, or disability, or

“(ii) an event which is reasonably and reliably predictable (as determined by the Secretary).

“(3) INTEREST RATE AND MORTALITY ASSUMPTIONS USED.—

“(A) INTEREST RATE.—The rate of interest used to determine current liability under this section shall be the third segment rate determined under section 430(h)(2)(C).

“(B) MORTALITY TABLES.—

“(i) SECRETARIAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may by regulation prescribe mortality tables to be used in determining current liability under this subsection. Such tables shall be based upon the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience. In prescribing such tables, the Secretary shall take into account results of available independent studies of mortality of individuals covered by pension plans.

“(ii) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The Secretary shall periodically (at least every 5 years) review any tables in effect under this subsection and shall, to the extent the Secretary determines necessary, by regulation update the tables to reflect the actual experience of pension plans and projected trends in such experience.

“(C) SEPARATE MORTALITY TABLES FOR THE DISABLED.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B)—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of plan years beginning after December 31, 1995, the Secretary shall establish mortality tables which may be used (in lieu of the tables under subparagraph (B)) to determine current liability under this subsection for individuals who are entitled to benefits under the plan on account of disability. The Secretary shall establish separate tables for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning before January 1, 1995, and for individuals whose disabilities occur in plan years beginning on or after such date.

“(ii) SPECIAL RULE FOR DISABILITIES OCCURRING AFTER 1994.—In the case of disabilities occurring in plan years beginning after December 31, 1994, the tables under clause (i) shall apply only with respect to individuals described in such subclause who are disabled within the meaning of title II of the Social Security Act and the regulations thereunder.

“(4) CERTAIN SERVICE DISREGARDED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a participant to whom this paragraph applies, only the applicable percentage of the years of service before such individual became a participant shall be taken into account in computing the current liability of the plan.

“(B) APPLICABLE PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the applicable percentage shall be determined as follows:

If the years of participation are:	The applicable percentage is:
1	20
2	40
3	60
4	80
5 or more	100.

“(C) PARTICIPANTS TO WHOM PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—This subparagraph shall apply to any participant who, at the time of becoming a participant—

“(i) has not accrued any other benefit under any defined benefit plan (whether or not terminated) maintained by the employer or a member of the same controlled group of which the employer is a member,

“(ii) who first becomes a participant under the plan in a plan year beginning after December 31, 1987, and

“(iii) has years of service greater than the minimum years of service necessary for eligibility to participate in the plan.

“(D) ELECTION.—An employer may elect not to have this subparagraph apply. Such an election, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary.

“(i) FUNDED CURRENT LIABILITY PERCENTAGE.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘funded current liability percentage’ means, with respect to any plan year, the percentage which—

“(1) the value of the plan’s assets determined under subsection (c)(2), is of

“(2) the current liability under the plan.

“(j) TRANSITION.—The Secretary may prescribe such rules as are necessary or appropriate with respect to the transition of a CSEC plan from the application of section 430 to the application of this section.”

(2) SEPARATE RULES FOR CSEC PLANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 412(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting “, and”, and by inserting at the end thereof the following new subparagraph:

“(D) in the case of a CSEC plan, the employers make contributions to or under the plan for any plan year which, in the aggregate, are sufficient to ensure that the plan does not have an accumulated funding deficiency under section 433 as of the end of the plan year.”

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 412 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(i) by striking “multiemployer plan” in paragraph (A) of subsection (a)(2), in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B), the first place it appears in clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(A), and the last place it appears in paragraph (2) of subsection (d), and inserting “multiemployer plan or a CSEC plan”,

(ii) by striking “430(j)” in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) and inserting “430(j) or under 433(f)”,

(iii)(I) by striking “and” at the end of clause (i) of subsection (c)(1)(B),

(II) by striking the period at the end of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B) and inserting “, and”, and

(III) by inserting the following new clause after clause (ii) of subsection (c)(1)(B):

“(iii) in the case of a CSEC plan, the funding standard account shall be credited under section 433(b)(3)(C) with the amount of the waived funding deficiency and such amount shall be amortized as required under section 433(b)(2)(C).”,

(iv) by striking “under paragraph (1)” in clause (i) of subsection (c)(4)(A) and inserting “under paragraph (1) or for granting an extension under section 433(d)”,

(v) by striking “waiver under this subsection” in subparagraph (B) of subsection (c)(4) and inserting “waiver under this subsection or an extension under 433(d)”,

(vi) by striking “waiver or modification” in subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(B)(i) and inserting “waiver, modification, or extension”,

(vii) by striking “waivers” in the heading of subsection (c)(4)(C) and of clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting “waivers or extensions”,

(viii) by striking “section 431(d)” in subparagraph (A) of subsection (c)(7) and in paragraph (2) of subsection (d) and inserting “section 431(d) or section 433(d)”,

(ix) by striking “and” at the end of subclause (I) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and inserting “or the accumulated funding deficiency under section 433, whichever is applicable.”,

(x) by striking “430(e)(2),” in subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) and inserting “430(e)(2) or 433(b)(2)(C), whichever is applicable, and”;

(xi) by adding immediately after subclause (II) of subsection (c)(4)(C)(i) the following new subclause:

“(III) the total amounts not paid by reason of an extension in effect under section 433(d),” and

(xii) by striking “for waivers of” in clause (ii) of subsection (c)(4)(C) and inserting “for waivers or extensions with respect to”.

(3) BENEFIT RESTRICTIONS.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Paragraph (29) of section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “multiemployer plan” and inserting “multiemployer plan or a CSEC plan”.

(B) **CONFORMING CHANGE.**—Subsection (a) of section 436 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “single-employer plan” and inserting “single-employer plan (other than a CSEC plan)”.

(C) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Any restriction under sections 401(a)(29) and 436 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is in effect with respect to a CSEC plan as of the last day of the last plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, shall cease to apply as of the first day of the following plan year.

(4) **BENEFIT INCREASES.**—Subparagraph (C) of section 401(a)(33) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “multiemployer plans” and inserting “multiemployer plans or CSEC plans”.

SEC. 5. TRANSPARENCY.

(a) NOTICE TO PARTICIPANTS.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Paragraph (2) of section 101(f) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1021(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) **EFFECT OF CSEC PLAN RULES ON PLAN FUNDING.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of a CSEC plan, each notice under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(I) a statement that different rules apply to CSEC plans than apply to single-employer plans, and

“(II) for the first 2 plan years beginning after December 31, 2013, a statement that, as a result of changes in the law made by the Cooperative and Small Employer Charity Pension Flexibility Act, the contributions to the plan may have changed.

“(ii) **APPLICABLE PLAN YEAR.**—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘applicable plan year’ means any plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, for which—

“(I) the plan has a funding shortfall (as defined in section 303(c)(4)) greater than \$1,000,000, and

“(II) the plan had 50 or more participants on any day during the preceding plan year.

For purposes of any determination under subclause (II), the aggregation rule under the last sentence of section 303(g)(2)(B) shall apply.

“(iii) **SPECIAL RULE FOR PLAN YEARS BEGINNING BEFORE 2014.**—In the case of a preceding plan year referred to in clause (i)(III) which begins before January 1, 2014, the information described in such clause shall be provided only without regard to the different rules applicable to CSEC plans.”.

(2) **MODEL NOTICE.**—The Secretary of Labor may modify the model notice required to be published under section 501(c) of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 to include the information described in section 101(f)(2)(E) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as added by this subsection.

(b) NOTICE OF FAILURE TO MEET MINIMUM FUNDING STANDARDS.—

(1) **PENDING WAIVERS.**—Paragraph (2) of section 101(d) of the Employee Retirement Income

Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1021(d)) is amended by striking “303” and inserting “303 or 306”.

(2) **DEFINITIONS.**—Paragraph (3) of section 101(d) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (21 U.S.C. 1021(d)) is amended by striking “303(j)” and inserting “303(j) or 306(f), whichever is applicable”.

(c) **ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—Section 103 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1023) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO CSEC PLANS.**—With respect to any CSEC plan, an annual report under this section for a plan year shall include a list of participating employers and a good faith estimate of the percentage of total contributions made by such participating employers during the plan year.”.

SEC. 6. ELECTIONS.

(a) **ELECTION NOT TO BE TREATED AS A CSEC PLAN.—**

(1) **AMENDMENT TO ERISA.**—Subsection (f) of section 210 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as added by section 3, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **ELECTION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—If a plan falls within the definition of a CSEC plan under this subsection (without regard to this paragraph), such plan shall be a CSEC plan unless the plan sponsor elects not later than the close of the first plan year of the plan beginning after December 31, 2013, not to be treated as a CSEC plan. An election under the preceding sentence shall take effect for such plan year and, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) **SPECIAL RULE.**—If a plan described in subparagraph (A) is treated as a CSEC plan, section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, as amended by the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010, shall cease to apply to such plan as of the first date as of which such plan is treated as a CSEC plan.”.

(2) **AMENDMENT TO THE CODE.**—Section 414(y) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by section 3, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **ELECTION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—If a plan falls within the definition of a CSEC plan under this subsection (without regard to this paragraph), such plan shall be a CSEC plan unless the plan sponsor elects not later than the close of the first plan year of the plan beginning after December 31, 2013, not to be treated as a CSEC plan. An election under the preceding sentence shall take effect for such plan year and, once made, may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary.

“(B) **SPECIAL RULE.**—If a plan described in subparagraph (A) is treated as a CSEC plan, section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, as amended by the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010, shall cease to apply to such plan as of the first date as of which such plan is treated as a CSEC plan.”.

(b) **ELECTION TO CEASE TO BE TREATED AS AN ELIGIBLE CHARITY PLAN.—**

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (d) of section 104 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006, as added by section 202 of the Preservation of Access to Care for Medicare Beneficiaries and Pension Relief Act of 2010, is amended by—

(A) striking “For purposes of” and inserting “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of”, and

(B) adding at the end the following:

“(2) **ELECTION NOT TO BE AN ELIGIBLE CHARITY PLAN.**—A plan sponsor may elect for a plan to cease to be treated as an eligible charity plan

for plan years beginning after December 31, 2013. Such election shall be made at such time and in such form and manner as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Any such election may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(3) **ELECTION TO USE FUNDING OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO OTHER PLAN SPONSORS.—**

“(A) A plan sponsor that makes the election described in paragraph (2) may elect for a plan to apply the rules described in subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D) for plan years beginning after December 31, 2013. Such election shall be made at such time and in such form and manner as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury. Any such election may be revoked only with the consent of the Secretary of the Treasury.

“(B) Under the rules described in this subparagraph, for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, a plan has—

“(i) an 11-year shortfall amortization base,

and

“(iii) a 7-year shortfall amortization base.

“(C) Under the rules described in this subparagraph, section 303(c)(2)(A) and (B) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and section 430(c)(2)(A) and (B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied by—

“(i) in the case of an 11-year shortfall amortization base, substituting ‘11-plan-year period’ for ‘7-plan-year period’ wherever such phrase appears, and

“(ii) in the case of a 12-year shortfall amortization base, substituting ‘12-plan-year period’ for ‘7-plan-year period’ wherever such phrase appears.

“(D) Under the rules described in this subparagraph, section 303(c)(7) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and section 430(c)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall apply to a plan for which an election has been made under subparagraph (A). Such provisions shall apply in the following manner:

“(i) The first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, shall be treated as an election year, and no other plan years shall be so treated.

“(ii) All references in section 303(c)(7) of such Act and section 430(c)(7) of such Code to ‘February 28, 2010’ or ‘March 1, 2010’ shall be treated as references to ‘February 28, 2013’ or ‘March 1, 2013’, respectively.

“(E) For purposes of this paragraph, the 11-year amortization base is an amount, determined for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, equal to the unamortized principal amount of the shortfall amortization base (as defined in section 303(c)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 430(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that would have applied to the plan for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2009, if—

“(i) the plan had never been an eligible charity plan,

“(ii) the plan sponsor had made the election described in section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and in section 430(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to have section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of such Act and section 430(c)(2)(D)(iii) of such Code apply with respect to the shortfall amortization base for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2009, and

“(iii) no event had occurred under paragraph (6) or (7) of section 303(c) of such Act or paragraph (6) or (7) of section 430(c) of such Code that, as of the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, would have modified the shortfall amortization base or the

shortfall amortization installments with respect to the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2009.

“(F) For purposes of this paragraph, the 12-year amortization base is an amount, determined for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, equal to the unamortized principal amount of the shortfall amortization base (as defined in section 303(c)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 430(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that would have applied to the plan for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2010, if—

“(i) the plan had never been an eligible charity plan,

“(ii) the plan sponsor had made the election described in section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and in section 430(c)(2)(D)(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to have section 303(c)(2)(D)(i) of such Act and section 430(c)(2)(D)(iii) of such Code apply with respect to the shortfall amortization base for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2010, and

“(iii) no event had occurred under paragraph (6) or (7) of section 303(c) of such Act or paragraph (6) or (7) of section 430(c) of such Code that, as of the first day of the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, would have modified the shortfall amortization base or the shortfall amortization installments with respect to the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2010.

“(G) For purposes of this paragraph, the 7-year shortfall amortization base is an amount, determined for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, equal to—

“(i) the shortfall amortization base for the first plan year beginning after December 31, 2013, without regard to this paragraph, minus

“(ii) the sum of the 11-year shortfall amortization base and the 12-year shortfall amortization base.”

(c) **DEEMED ELECTION.**—For purposes of sections 4(b)(2) and 4021(b)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, a plan shall be deemed to have made an irrevocable election under section 410(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 if—

(1) the plan was established before January 1, 2014;

(2) the plan falls within the definition of a CSEC plan;

(3) the plan sponsor does not make an election under section 210(f)(3)(A) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 414(y)(3)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this Act; and

(4) the plan, plan sponsor, administrator, or fiduciary remits one or more premium payments for the plan to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation for a plan year beginning after December 31, 2013.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply as of the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 7. SPONSOR EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE.

(a) **DEFINITION.**—In this section, the term “CSEC plan” has the meaning given that term in subsection (f)(1) of section 210 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1060(f)(1)) (as added by this Act).

(b) **EDUCATION.**—The Participant and Plan Sponsor Advocate established under section 4004 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1304) shall make itself available to assist CSEC plan sponsors and participants as part of the duties it performs under the general supervision of the Board of Directors under section 4004(b) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 1304(b)).

SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Unless otherwise specified in this Act, the provisions of this Act shall apply to years beginning after December 31, 2013.

The amendment (No. 2701) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today’s RECORD under “Text of Amendments.”)

The committee-reported substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 334.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 334) recognizing the goals of Catholic Schools Week and honoring the valuable contributions of Catholic schools in the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. 334) was agreed to. The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of January 16, 2014, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

AUTHORIZING APPOINTMENT OF ESCORT COMMITTEE

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Presiding Officer of the Senate be authorized to appoint a committee on the part of the Senate to join a like committee on the part of the House to escort President Obama into the House Chamber for the joint session to be held tonight at 9 p.m.

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

ORDERS FOR RECESS AND FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 8:25 p.m. tonight and, upon reconvening, proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives for the joint session of Congress provided under the provisions of H. Con. Res. 75; and that upon dissolution of the joint session, the Senate adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, January 29, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and

the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each and the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half; and that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926, the flood insurance bill, postcloture, with the time until noon equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, and that at noon all postcloture time be deemed expired.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The President of the United States will deliver the State of the Union Address at 9 p.m. this evening. The Senate will begin gathering in the Senate Chamber at 8:20 p.m., depart from the Senate Chamber at 8:30 p.m., and proceed as a body to the House.

RECESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:15 p.m., recessed until 8:25 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. DONNELLY).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1926

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following morning business on Wednesday, January 29, all postcloture time be yielded back and the motion to proceed to S. 1926 be agreed to; that after the bill is reported, the following amendments be agreed to: Hagan, No. 2702; Rubio, No. 2704; King, No. 2705; Blunt, No. 2698; and the amended text be considered as original text for the purposes of further amendment; that the only other amendments in order be the following: Reed of Rhode Island, No. 2703; Coburn, No. 2697; Merkley, No. 2709; Heller, No. 2700; Whitehouse, No. 2706; Toomey, No. 2707—which is a substitute; Gillibrand, No. 2708; that no second-degree amendments be in order to any of these amendments prior to votes in relation to the amendments; that it be in order for Senator TOOMEY to modify his amendment with the text of Rubio No. 2704 and Hagan No. 2702; that there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided on each amendment or

motion to waive a budget point of order, if made; that there be up to 1 hour of general debate on the bill equally divided between the proponents and opponents; that amendments in this agreement must be offered prior to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, January 29, that is tomorrow; that it be in order for Senator CRAPO or designee to raise a budget point of order against the bill; that if such a point of order is raised, Senator MENENDEZ or designee be recognized to move to waive the point of order; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to the vote on the motion to waive, if made; that if the motion to waive is agreed to, the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the amendments in the order listed; that upon disposition of the amendments, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Reserving the right to object, and I will not be objecting, this is a good step in the direction of getting the Senate back to a process under which amendments are allowed and voted on by both sides. I particularly thank Senator ISAKSON for his hard work on this.

Obviously, I do not object.

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

JOINT SESSION OF THE TWO
HOUSES—ADDRESS BY THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
STATES

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will proceed to the Hall of the House of Representatives to receive a message from the President of the United States.

Thereupon, the Senate, preceded by the Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Drew Willison; the Secretary of the Senate, Nancy Erickson; and the Vice President of the United States, JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr., proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representatives to hear the address by the President of the United States, Barack H. Obama.

The address delivered by the President of the United States to the joint session of the two Houses of Congress appears in the proceedings of the House of Representatives in today's RECORD.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

At the conclusion of the joint session of the two Houses, and in accordance with the order previously entered, at 10:27 p.m., the Senate adjourned until Wednesday, January 29, 2014, at 10 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, January 28, 2014

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 28, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, as Yogi Berra once said, "It's *deja vu* all over again."

How many times can we have the same argument?

Forty-one years ago, the Supreme Court affirmed a woman's constitutional right to choose. Yet, four decades later, this Chamber will vote yet again to rob women of their right to control their own bodies.

Today, the Hyde amendment prohibits the use of taxpayer dollars to pay for abortion services. While I oppose this restriction, it is important to emphasize that this statute is already the law. It was passed in 1976. Yet the legislation we are considering today would take that restriction even further.

My friends on the other side of the aisle are no longer content with simply banning Federal funding for abortions. Now even private funding for this constitutional right is up for debate. A vote in favor of this bill will authorize for the first time penalties for private

insurance companies that offer plans that cover abortion services. Let me say that again. This bill will allow the Federal Government to use tax policy to punish private companies that even offer coverage for abortion as part of their insurance plans.

And the penalties don't stop at insurance companies. This bill also goes after consumers, penalizing those who choose insurance plans in the Federal exchange that include coverage for abortion services by removing their eligibility for income-based subsidies.

Mr. Speaker, the hypocrisy is staggering.

Every day on the floor, my colleagues lecture about their mission to keep the Federal Government out of the daily lives of the American people, but apparently those principles don't extend to a doctor's office or to the most private and intimate choices a woman can make about her own body. A woman who makes the choice to end her pregnancy should not have her motives questioned. It is a choice no one wants to make, but the unfortunate reality is that many people have to. If my colleagues are looking to end abortion, let's take actions that will actually reduce the number of abortions instead of making policies that embarrass and demonize women.

Here are a few suggestions:

Let's invest in family planning programs that help men and women have more control over when and how they start their families; let's support comprehensive sex education so that teenagers know how to be safe and prevent unintended pregnancies; let's make adoption easier for loving families so that no child is left spending his entire youth as a ward of the State.

Mr. Speaker, I know that many of us will never agree on the very personal and emotional issue of abortion, but instead of rehashing the same fights, let's focus on things we can agree on. Let's reconsider the definition of "pro-life" to include efforts that improve the quality of life for people in America. Being pro-life should mean supporting programs like Head Start and school lunches, which help our young people succeed. Being pro-life should mean supporting investments in job training programs to help people find well-paying jobs so they can provide for their families. Being pro-life should mean supporting a raise in the minimum wage so a single mother who is working 40 hours a week isn't living below the poverty line. Being pro-life should mean supporting SNAP benefits

so that working families don't have to choose between feeding their children and paying their rent.

The list of things this Congress can do to support the lives of Americans whom we represent is endless. It is a shame we waste so much time having the same old arguments. I am afraid we have lost sight of what our constituents sent us here to do. Let's stop attacking women's health, and instead let's focus on making investments in our future that will help Americans realize their full potential and live the American Dream.

A QUIET LEGACY OF CONVICTION

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

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, one of the most enjoyable parts of our job is speaking to children at schools, and you get some tough and interesting questions. A couple of months ago, a precious child at a school in upstate South Carolina asked me who was the most famous person I had ever met. That is a very good question, I told the child. I have met President Bush; I have met President Obama; I have met JOHN LEWIS; I have met PAUL RYAN; I have met Bono, the lead singer of U2; I have met McGruff, the Crime Dog—I have even met TIM SCOTT—but I told the child the most famous person I had ever met was his teacher, and we all smiled and laughed.

But it did get me thinking, Mr. Speaker, that we are surrounded by fame. We fly into an airport named for Reagan. We work in a town named for Washington. We pass monuments to Jefferson and Lincoln and Dr. King. The buildings we work in are named for famous people, and within those buildings are statues and portraits of still more famous people. We are surrounded by fame, Mr. Speaker, and it is easy to forget that, while those people made contributions to our country, the country was built, is being built, and will continue to be built by average, ordinary women and men who lead quiet lives of conviction and courage—average folks doing above average things, ordinary folks doing extraordinary things. That is the essence of who we are as a people, and while there may not be a monument or a portrait dedicated to those ordinary men and women, there is something even better, and it is called a legacy. So, in honor of those women and men, Mr. Speaker,

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

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

who lead quiet lives of conviction, I want to honor a man who was just like them.

Bruce Cash was a pharmacist in my hometown of Spartanburg. He was buried last week—way too soon, in my opinion, but such are the ways of the Lord. He was a pharmacist, so we saw him when we were sick, and more importantly, we saw him when our children were sick. He was compassionate, and he was kind, and he acted like you were the only person he was taking care of that day. He was active in his church, doing everything from driving a bus on choir tour, to being chairman of the Board of Deacons, to taking his vacation time to chaperone other people's children while they went and sang to prisoners in prisons.

He was a devoted father and husband. He and his wife, Kitty, had six children and scores of grandchildren; and when you walked into his pharmacy, Mr. Speaker, you didn't see his business license, and you didn't see his pharmacy license—you saw a picture of his children. He wanted to quietly signal to you that that was the most important thing in his life.

I would tell you, Mr. Speaker, to look up Bruce Cash on the Internet, but you are not going to find much. In fact, he never even bothered to change the name of his pharmacy. He left on his pharmacy the name of the man who owned it before him.

He had the quality that best defined the Lord Jesus that he believed in, which is humility. He didn't want to talk about himself; he wanted to talk about you. He didn't want to tell you his opinion; he wanted to ask you your opinion. He didn't want to talk about his illness; he wanted to talk about your illness. He didn't want to talk about how life had dealt him an unplayable hand of cards; he wanted to talk about grace and hope and things that last beyond our lifetime.

In conclusion, Bruce was humble, and he believed it was more important to live a sermon than to preach one.

So I want to thank you, Bruce, for setting an example of average, ordinary people building this country, and the next time a child asks me who the most famous person is I have met, I will tell him it is you.

THE STATE OF OUR ECONOMIC UNION

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, this evening, from the dais behind me, President Obama will deliver his annual State of the Union message; and while there are hopeful signs and a brightening of the economic outlook for the country as a whole, the President will almost certainly concentrate on the battles ahead.

Even as America struggles to shake off the effects of the worst downturn since the Great Depression, our economy and our society are being challenged by a yawning inequality gap that affects tens of millions of American families and threatens to erode the underpinnings of our social contract.

Last fall, economists Emmanuel Saez and Thomas Piketty released an analysis of 2012 tax returns, and they found that the top 10 percent of American earners took more than half of the country's total income in 2012—the highest level ever recorded. The top 1 percent received more than 20 percent of the income earned by Americans, a level not seen since 1928, the year before the stock market crash and the beginning of the Great Depression. Top earners have also recovered more quickly over the last 3 years as their wages and investments have recouped value at a much brisker clip than those of the rest of Americans.

Inequality has also been a persistent political theme here and around the world, and it helped to launch the Occupy Wall Street movement. Last year, Pope Francis spoke out against what he termed an "economy of exclusion" while New York City's new mayor, Bill de Blasio, won the election by highlighting inequality there. President Obama, himself, made expanding opportunity a major theme in a speech in December, and he discussed the issue at length in his past two State of the Union addresses. I expect him to return to the theme tonight and in the coming months of the 113th Congress as we prepare to go to the polls in November.

There is a broadly held, national consensus that an overly high concentration of wealth spawns a host of economic social and political ills, but that agreement has not fostered a concerted strategy on expanding opportunity and closing the wealth gap. America has always rewarded hard work, and the possibility for a better life has been part of the attraction for generations of immigrants and others struggling to climb the economic ladder; but economic mobility, as a recent study from Harvard and Cal demonstrates, varies greatly within the United States, and while economic mobility has not changed significantly over time, it is consistently less prevalent in the United States than in most developed countries. We should never seek to punish success or to, as some describe it, soak the rich, but we must take steps to address the problem of growing inequality both in the short term and in the long term.

I believe there are three things that Congress and the President can do to give Americans and the middle class and those who aspire to join it the chance to move up:

First, we need to extend emergency unemployment assistance for those

who are still looking for work and who cannot find a job on their own. The weekly litany of those who are losing benefits is disheartening, and we must not turn our backs on our fellow Americans;

Second, we need to raise the minimum wage nationwide, and it is shameful that it has been 5 years since the last increase. In fact, according to one study, the minimum wage today is actually worth \$2 less than in 1968. Raising the minimum wage to just over \$10, as I support, would push millions of hardworking Americans out of poverty and stimulate economic activity throughout the country;

These two steps can be part of a short-term solution that stops the bleeding, but real change requires giving American workers the education and training to compete domestically and internationally for the high-skilled, high-wage jobs that are the ticket to the middle class and beyond. Investing in education and building schools and curricula for the 21st century is a long-term project, but it is the one that has the greatest potential in terms of economic growth and increased opportunity while preserving the spirit of free enterprise and entrepreneurship that built this country.

Mr. Speaker, tonight the President will challenge us to join him in an effort to reinvigorate the American Dream for another generation. Let us join him in that sacred task.

THE DARRELL GWYNN FOUNDATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Darrell Gwynn Foundation, a national organization that for almost 12 years has made its mission "to provide support for people with paralysis and prevent spinal cord injuries."

On Friday, May 9, this important foundation will be holding an event in my congressional district to assist in providing power wheelchairs to children and young adults with spinal cord injuries.

Darrell Gwynn, son of former NHRA drag racing world champion Jerry Gwynn, seemed destined to replicate his father's achievements when his life took a tragic turn at the young age of 28. While participating at a demonstration race in England, Darrell's car broke apart, then veered into a retaining wall at 240 miles an hour.

□ 1015

He sustained life-threatening injuries, but faith and determination allowed Darrell to survive this ordeal.

In response to his new circumstances, Darrell was motivated to help others

who face similar challenges, and he founded the Darrell Gwynn Foundation. The Foundation's cornerstone, the Wheelchair Donation Program, provides the gift of mobility and independence to those living with paralysis.

Darrell's spirit and relentless efforts to offer support to people living with paralysis have earned him the respect and adulation of his colleagues. My good friend for many years—decades, actually—Angel Pardo, president of Spinal Cord Living-Assistance Development, said the following:

Mr. Gwynn is passionate about his work, and works hard to help others. Despite being quadriplegic and a partial arm amputee, he often works 7 days a week.

Thank you, Angel.

Mr. Speaker, the work that Darrell Gwynn and Angel Pardo do every day on behalf of individuals afflicted by this condition is very important. There are an estimated 12,000 new cases of spinal cord injury and paralysis each year. Over 36 percent are a result of car accidents.

I know from the many personal stories from my constituents and friends just how devastating these injuries can be. The toll is often not exclusively physical. The emotional and financial tolls can be substantial, both on the victims and their families.

The provision of a power wheelchair can return confidence, freedom, and independence to a victim. This life-changing piece of equipment, however, comes at the considerable cost of approximately \$25,000 a chair, and that is where the Darrell Gwynn Foundation comes in. They are committed to improving the victims' quality of life by providing each with a power wheelchair.

I encourage all members of our south Florida community to attend the Darrell Gwynn Foundation event on Friday, May 9, at Casa Larios Restaurant in Miami.

Congratulations, Darrell and Angel. May you continue to help so many afflicted individuals.

OPTIMISM

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak of the optimism of this Nation and of her people. Frankly, we do live in the greatest Nation in the world. Sometimes we are questioned when we say that, but I say it proudly and with a spirit of humbleness. I know that because on faraway shores and lands there are men and women who wear the uniform proudly.

This morning, in our own House of Representatives, we held a reception for participants of the Wounded Warriors program. These individuals are in a number of Members' offices. Many of us look forward to that opportunity, and they continue to serve.

So I know as President Obama rises tonight to speak to the Nation, he will have a sense of optimism, which I will enjoy and support. He will note, however, that as we are optimistic, we must provide that optimism and economic opportunity for all of our brothers and sisters, citizens and persons, in the United States of America.

It is well known that we have made great strides. We no longer have the horrific mortgage collapse, though we are still working with homeowners. We don't have the debacle on Wall Street because, as Democrats, we worked hard to fix that problem, as Wall Street continues to thrive. Of course, we have taken ourselves out of the doldrums of a deep depression—or recession—in 2008 and 2009 with a powerful stimulus package which today, in Houston, Texas, has seen the retrofit of the Mickey Leland Federal Building. With \$90 million, they put people to work fixing a building where citizens come for services.

That is the American way of investing, and not handouts, as has been described by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. When are we going to recognize that the investment in human resources is really the answer?

Thank you, Mr. President, for understanding that.

Theodore Roosevelt said:

The man of great wealth owes a peculiar obligation to the State, because he derives special advantage from the mere existence of government.

That is true. Wealth inequality must be fixed, and it must be fixed now. In the U.S., income inequality has been rising steadily over the past four decades, reaching levels not seen since the late 1920s.

The President has signed an executive order, which I congratulate him on, understanding that you cannot live on less than \$10 an hour. It needs to be more. That is investing in the American way. That is generating the jobs so that individuals can then spend their dollars and then more jobs are created.

So tonight I don't want there to be a retrenching. I don't want us to be overwhelmed with this myth of debt and deficit so much so that we cannot invest in the education of our children and we can't fix the horrible situation of individuals not having access to higher education.

Who in their right mind would continue to allow those who are chronically unemployed and need unemployment insurance to suffer, as they are doing? Who would allow four out of five beneficiaries who have at least one adult that they are taking care of, children that they are taking care of, or multiple adults, who would allow 50 percent of those who have a college education and 36 percent who have a high school education and are not able to get jobs, and not extend the unem-

ployment benefits on an emergency basis? Who would allow the over 9 in 10 that live in households with a total income under \$75,000 that need this extension of unemployment benefits so they can pay their rent or mortgage, who would allow such a crisis?

We are doing it right here, and we should be optimistic.

I have introduced legislation to extend unemployment for a whole year. It is an emergency. Then I introduced H.R. 3888, which indicates that those who are on unemployment benefits can get training to redirect their career with a stipend—their unemployment benefits do not cease—so that they can come back to what they want—the very stories that I listened to as I went to career recovery and resources fairs.

Mr. Speaker, tonight, I will be optimistic. I will be optimistic for Maggie, a 25-year-old Army veteran who has to get food stamps. She makes \$10 an hour, 6 days a week, in order to save for paramedic training. She is the very example of someone that we can provide that training for so she can invest in the community, even though she tried nursing but did not have the money to finish. Or, maybe I can speak of Ms. Aguilar, who lives in my State of Texas, which refuses to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act.

Where is the optimism, Mr. Speaker?

So tonight, Mr. President, you do what is necessary for the optimism of this Nation. It is the greatest Nation in the world. We will stand with you as you invest in human resources, create jobs, provide unemployment extension, and raise the minimum wage to cure wealth inequality.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of an important week for my community, but also for our Nation as a whole.

This is the 40th annual Catholic Schools Week, and it is a time to recognize the importance of parochial education on the fabric of our community and our country. This year's theme truly encapsulates the critical mission of Catholic schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service. These are important things to teach our children.

Yesterday, I was happy to be able to stop by St. Mark's School in historic Bristol, Bucks County, and meet with schoolchildren there. St. Mark's School has been providing a top-rate education for Bucks County families for over 125 years, and, like all Catholic schools, their connection to their community is deep and vital.

Parents are involved at the school. They were there at the school when I

arrived, running a book fair for the students. The teachers sacrifice greatly for the children, as do the families make sacrifices to send their children to St. Mark's and to other Catholic schools throughout our country.

As a Catholic school graduate, the husband of a Catholic school teacher, and a parent also, I understand how important it is to draw attention to the academic, the faith development, and the community service excellence performed year-round in Catholic schools.

Mr. Speaker, there are few things more important to a parent than the success of our children in and out of the classroom. One of the most important decisions a parent makes is the school that will educate their children.

National Catholic Schools Week is a time to recognize the importance of school choice for families looking to increase access to opportunity and the American Dream for future generations, and also to say thank you to the parishes and schools that serve our children this week and every week.

HONORING FALLEN TOLEDO FIREFIGHTERS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tonight, the President will deliver his State of the Union address to the Nation. Our Nation is great because of the patriotism, strength, and self-sacrifice of our people.

In that spirit, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give honor to two fallen Toledo firefighters, Stephen Machcinski and James Dickman.

Mr. Machcinski is survived by his parents, sister, and brother. Mr. Dickman is survived by his wife, 3-year-old daughter, 1-month-old son, and parents.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of these brave men. These heroes responded to a two-story apartment building fire where people were reported inside. Toledo Mayor Michael Collins said it best:

The average person would run in the opposite direction than they do, but that is their profession.

As we all go about our busy lives every day, we often fail to recognize that we likely owe our way of life to someone else because of their sacrifice. Firefighters, police officers, and other emergency and law enforcement personnel put their lives on the line for us every single day. We should all take a moment every now and then to say thank you to these extraordinary citizens.

Our hearts go out to the families who lost such brave and generous loved ones. May they be comforted with the knowledge that Stephen and James died in a noble profession founded to

protect and serve our people and our Republic. They accomplished their mission for our city. We are forever indebted to them, and are flying flags over this Capitol today in their memory.

CALLING FOR AN END TO VIOLENCE IN UKRAINE

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to reference as well this morning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reads:

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Sixty-five years after the ratification of this most important document, police in Ukraine continue to brutally fend off protesters and journalists, who have been demonstrating for over 2 months in the bitter cold for their human rights and democratic freedoms. We know there have been countless injuries, and now, sadly, there have been five deaths.

Kiev, a beautiful and historic city, now resembles a war zone, covered with ash and burning fires. The situation in Ukraine grows more dire everyday, and we in Congress have the responsibility to stand with Ukraine's freedom marchers.

I call on our fellow Members to support the passage of H. Res. 447, which supports the democratic aspirations of the people of Ukraine and calls for condemnation of the regime's undemocratic practices. We implore President Yanukovich and the opposition leaders to advance the cause of freedom for all the people of Ukraine.

Last evening, Ukraine's parliament rightly repealed its early passage of the anti-free assembly laws, and its prime minister resigned. These are hopeful signs to calm the unrest.

As we gather this evening to learn about the state of our own Union, let us not forget the state of our trusted allies around the world. I ask President Obama to please draw attention to the economic and political crisis in Ukraine here tonight.

No more blood should be shed in Ukraine. The world community looks to Ukraine to live up to the magnificent nation she can be, linking East and West, North and South. Her potential is unlimited.

Ukraine's people, who have suffered so much, not just currently, but over the last century, are owed their most deserved day in the sun. History's clock is ticking. May God be with them.

□ 1030

MASSACHUSETTS SNAP RECIPIENTS WILL BE HARMED BY FARM BILL HEAT AND EAT CUTS

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will be voting on a 950-page-

plus bill that no one has read. This is a bill, the farm bill, which was first made available to us late last evening.

To make matters even worse, Mr. Speaker, we are told that we will only have 1 hour of debate on this bill, and we are not even to have a rule on the bill. We are going to have a rule that incorporates the farm bill with an abortion bill. What they have to do with one another, I have no idea.

But it is clear what is going on here, and that is that the leadership of this House does not want anyone to know what is in that bill. One of the things that is in that bill, which I find reprehensible, is an \$8.6 billion cut in the SNAP program.

The SNAP program exists to make sure that people in this country do not go hungry. On November 1, last November 1, a cut of \$11 billion went into effect. The recovery moneys ran out. Congress did not renew them, so everybody on SNAP, all 47 million people, received a cut.

Food prices didn't go down. The economy hasn't gotten much better, but their food benefit went down. And their benefit is, on average, about \$1.40 a meal per day. So those who think that this is some sort of generous benefit have no idea what they are talking about.

So we cut their benefit; and they are now ending up spending more time at food banks and food pantries, looking for ways to put food on their table so that their kids don't go hungry; and we bring a farm bill to the floor that cuts that program by another \$8.6 billion.

Now, supporters of the farm bill say, well, really it could have been a lot worse. You should just be happy it is \$8.6 billion. You should declare victory.

Well, those people who are going to be adversely impacted by that \$8.6 billion cut don't feel a lot of victory.

Yes, it is targeted. It is targeted at those individuals who are on this so-called "Heat and Eat" program. These are poor people who get a little bump up in their benefit to put food on their table, mostly elderly people, mostly disabled people.

So we are going to go tell them that they are going to get significantly less a month in a food benefit, but the good news for them is there will be some that won't be adversely impacted. They should take some satisfaction in that.

We talk about numbers all the time. We talk about statistics. Let me read to you a couple of real life examples.

William, an elderly man from Salem, Massachusetts, currently receives \$181 a month in SNAP. He lives in senior housing, where heat and utilities are included, but the rent exceeds 35 percent of his \$802 a month supplemental Social Security income.

His SNAP benefit of \$181 a month is based on the Heat and Eat option. He incurs other health-related expenses not covered by Medicaid, but he has

had significant difficulty producing the detailed verification required by the State.

His current SNAP would be significantly reduced by more than \$80 a month if he lost this Heat and Eat option.

Pamela, a severely disabled woman from Northborough, Massachusetts, currently receives \$115 a month as SNAP benefits. She gets \$1,007 in monthly Social Security disability benefits. In addition to other medical conditions, she is a diabetic and requires a special diet to meet her daily nutritional needs.

While she lives in public housing, she must pay for her own appliances and maintenance fees, including her air conditioning unit, essential to her health. She does not have a car, but uses her limited income for private transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping and pharmacy trips, as she is not near any public transportation.

With the loss of the Heat and Eat SNAP option, her SNAP benefit will be reduced by \$100 a month, so from \$115 to the minimum of \$15 a month, significantly impacting her ability to maintain her special diet.

Let me say to my colleagues here, the cut that went into effect last November will cost the average family of three about \$30 a month in benefits. Those who will be impacted by the cuts of this Heat and Eat program will lose an additional \$80 to \$90 a month. So their reduction in their monthly benefit for food should be between \$120 and \$130 a month.

Where are they going to find the food?

Who is going to make up the difference?

My colleagues on the Republican side say, well, they can go beg to the States; the States ought to do more; or if the States say no, go to the churches or the synagogues or the mosques. Maybe they will do more.

The bottom line is, if any of my colleagues took the time to go back to their districts and visit their food banks, they would realize they are at capacity. Food banks can't give out any more.

So I would urge my colleagues, vote against this farm bill. Do not make hunger worse in America.

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, for the past 40 years, my work in this House has been guided by my firm belief that every child, regardless of his or her ZIP code, deserves access to a quality education that will prepare them for future success; and

every parent deserves to know that their child's school is helping their son or daughter achieve his or her full potential.

That is why, under No Child Left Behind, we demanded the accountability include transparency on school performance. We share the collective responsibility, at all levels of government, to make good on the promise of high-quality education for all students. Unfortunately, we all know that not every school is living up to that promise.

When any school fails its students, it is our responsibility, not only to give those students a high-quality public school option, but to also improve the low-performing schools. It is simple: no child should be stuck in a failing school.

This week is National School Choice Week. Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and their strategists have embraced the so-called "school choice" as a part of their re-branding effort to appear more caring.

Politico reported just last week that the Republican strategists have been counseling the Republicans that talking about helping poor minority children softens the Republican image. Talking about it, not doing something about it.

Conservative advocacy groups have declared in planning documents that it is an excellent media opportunity to focus on kids and the future. It is a media opportunity to focus on children, not to do something about it.

This new effort even has a warm and fuzzy name, the Growth and Opportunity Project. This is political posturing at its worst, and it does nothing to provide actual choice for our Nation's students.

The cornerstone of true school choice is the principle that every child has the right to attend a great school. Not only should the students have high-quality options, but we need to demand that low-performing schools improve, and support that improvement.

Without quality schools to pick from, families face an empty choice. Yet that is all the Republican majority has offered Americans so far.

Neither school choice nor quality of schools was on their agenda when they voted for the Republican rewrite of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. That bill abandoned our responsibility to ensure that every child has access to a high-quality education. It undercut Federal support for schools.

The majority leader pledged that Republicans remain vigilant in protecting and promoting school choice; yet their bill removed the school choice mechanisms that were already in current law. And their bill failed to require that schools in districts improve when they are failing to effectively educate students.

With the Republicans' Elementary and Secondary Education bill, along

with sequestration, the majority turned its back on the Nation's most vulnerable students. They took money away from America's poorest schools, and they took money away from America's poorest students.

The very people that the majority's school choice media opportunity pretends to support are the same ones that are hurt by the majority's actual votes in this Chamber. Not a media conversation, not the posturing to appear to soften the image, but the actual votes taken in this Chamber harm the very children that they now say they want to support with this media opportunity to soften their image.

It was the Democratic Elementary and Secondary Education bill that held schools accountable for improvement and demanded that children be afforded new education opportunities when stuck in a failing school.

School choice should not be an empty promise. It should not be a political tag line that frees my colleagues from taking responsibility for our Nation's education system.

Mr. Speaker, if you want meaningful school choice, you must demand schools be held accountable for equitably serving all students, and you must provide the support that the schools need to provide that quality education.

Without that accountability for school quality, what choices would parents really have when their schools are failing?

An option between two low-performing schools? Not a good option.

An option between low-performing neighborhood schools and figuring out how to get your child across town to a different school, providing the transportation, and still hold down the job, that is not a fair option.

What we know, Mr. Speaker, is that if you ask parents all across America, they will tell you that their first choice in school choice is to have a neighborhood school that is high-performing; have a neighborhood school that meets the demands of that family and those children to get a first-class education; not to drive across town; not to spend time putting their kids in transit or putting their kids in harm's way trying to walk to that better school.

Fix the neighborhood schools; and if you don't, then provide that child the alternative to go to another school, as we did in current law, not as we do in the media release.

I challenge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to go beyond the rhetoric and posturing and sit down with me and others to make real, sustainable improvements in public education for all students.

Poor and minority kids are not a media opportunity. These are real children who deserve an equal shot at a bright future.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MRS.
ADELFA CALLEJO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mrs. Adelfa Callejo, a well-respected civil rights leader and attorney in Texas.

Mrs. Callejo was 90 years old when she passed last week. She developed into her role as an advocate for justice at an early age. As the oldest daughter of a father who did not speak English, Mrs. Callejo often had to serve as an intermediary in the defense of her family against intimidation from Federal immigration agents or unfair treatment in schools targeted at Mexican American immigrants.

As the first Hispanic woman to graduate from law school at Southern Methodist University, her background and education have not gone unnoticed. Mrs. Callejo emerged as a prominent civil rights attorney in Texas, battling questionable city council redistricting in the late 1980s, and staunchly opposing illegal immigration policies in Farmers Branch, among other prominent legal battles, that have helped to shape our State.

Mrs. Callejo was known best for her forceful advocacy and fiery personality. She overcame tremendous adversity as a female and as a Hispanic, although nothing would deter her from becoming a powerful financial and social force in Texas.

She once said: Only through education will we make the world a better place than we found it. She lived true to these words and worked with the Dallas Independent School District to ensure a better education was offered to a more diverse range of students; and for that, she was honored by a school being named for her in the Dallas Independent School District.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Callejo was an inspirational character who offered her talent and her resources to those who were less fortunate. While she had an incredible presence in Dallas, her reputation as “the Godmother” extended far beyond the city limits.

While her passing comes as a great loss to many, we may continue to look to her life for an inspiration. I am proud to call her my friend and supporter.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a warrior.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, a gunman walked into a mall in Columbia, Maryland, and opened fire, killing two people before taking his own life. Prior to the mall

shooting, we saw six school shootings take place nationwide in just 10 days.

Countless other Americans are terrorized each day on streets that have become shooting galleries where kids aren't safe to walk to school or go to the corner store or sit on their front porches. And yet we do nothing.

Time and time again, despite the headlines and the bloodshed and the pleas from the parents of the victims to act, Congress has failed to pass commonsense gun reforms that would save thousands of American lives, including background checks, which are supported by 90 percent of Americans.

□ 1045

Somehow, in the years between Columbine and Newtown, we have developed a collective indifference to the killings. After each shooting, we are in disbelief; but then we shrug and move on, dismissing the mass shootings as isolated incidents and ignoring the everyday shootings altogether.

Sadly, a callus has formed where our compassion should be. Or is it that the gun lobby's agenda has taken the place of our country's conscience?

I am at a loss because I truly do not understand how we can continue to ignore the public health epidemic that is gun violence in America. What will it take? How many more must die? How many parents must weep before we do the right thing?

Make no mistake, gun violence is robbing us of a generation. It is a slow-motion plague that is killing our kids one day at a time.

In the Chicagoland area, gun violence has claimed some of our best and our brightest, like 15-year-old Hadiya Pendleton, who was shot and killed a year ago this week while standing in a park with friends. You may remember, she was killed a week after performing for President Obama's inauguration.

She was certainly one of my district's shining stars. But she was, by far, not the only one. There were many Hadiyas, young people with promise and potential who were felled by gun violence. They had family and friends who loved them, communities who mourned them, and they are:

Eva Casara, 17; Tyrone Lawson, 17; Maurice Knowles, 16; Darnell Williams, 17; Abdullah Trull, 16; Leonard Anderson, 17; Jaleel Pearson, 18; Malcolm Whitney, 16; Fearro Denard, 18; Tyshon Anderson, 18; Tyrone Hart, 18; Ashaya Miller, 15; Equiel Velasquez, 17; Christopher Lattin, Jr., 15; Rey Donantas, 14; Victor Vegas, 15; Tyrone Lawson, 17; Antonio Fenner, 16; Frances Colon, 18; Jorge Valdez-Benitez, 18; Oscar Marquez, 17; Jonyla Watkins, 6 months; Arrell Monegan, 16; Victor Damian, 15; Clifton Barney, 17; Miguel Delaluz, 17; Leetema Daniels, 17; Fearro Denard, 18; Patrick Sykes, 15; Dionte Maxwell, 18; Miguel Villegas, 15; April McDaniel, 18; Fernando Mondragon, 18; Kevin Rivera,

16; Ricardo Herrera, 17; and Alexander Lagunas, 18.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here in honor of their memories, asking my colleagues to get serious about gun reform and to pass legislation to help them stem the tide of shootings in this country. I hope one day never to have to add another name to that list.

RECOGNIZING BART OFFICER
TOMMY SMITH

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

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, there is no person more worthy of respect and tribute than he or she who lays down their own life while working to protect others. Today it is with great sadness that I wish to honor Bay Area Rapid Transit Sergeant Thomas Smith, whose end of watch came too early when he was tragically killed on January 21 of this year.

Sergeant Smith, known as Tommy to his family and friends, is from a law enforcement family that knows all too well the daily risks of wearing a badge and serving the community as a police officer. Sergeant Smith's wife, Kellie, also works as a police officer, as do his two brothers, Ed and Pat, and also his brother-in-law Todd. So aware were Sergeant Smith and his family of the personal danger they faced in their jobs that they had a rule of what they would say to each other whenever they would leave each other's company: Never say good-bye. You only tell each other, “Be safe.”

But Sergeant Smith is not a hero because of how he died; he is a hero because of how he lived. On the job, Sergeant Smith worked honorably every day—not just the day that we lost him—to protect our community.

Sergeant Smith cared most about his family, and nothing else was even a close second, as his own lieutenant described earlier last week. Sergeant Smith took every opportunity to spend time with whom he called his “girls”—his wife, Kellie, and their 6-year-old daughter, Summer.

May we always remember Sergeant Smith and how he lived so honorably for us. And may Sergeant Smith now watch over us from above, as he always did on Earth, to make sure that all of us can be safe.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

The people's House prepares to welcome the President of the United States this day, as well as the other governmental, judicial, and military leadership of our Nation. The world watches as America's great experiment in civilian self-government is in high relief.

May all who populate these hallways this day be possessed of goodwill and a shared commitment to guarantee the freedoms and responsibilities inspired by the soaring rhetoric and subsequent actions of our American ancestors.

May all that is said and done in this Chamber today redound to the benefit of our Nation and glory of Your holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without

amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1901. An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

THIS IS AMERICA, NOT BURGER KING

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union is tonight, but the President has already said that he would ignore Congress if he doesn't have his way. He is going to rule by pen and phone: the pen to write down laws and executive orders, bypassing Congress; the phone to call lower-level operatives I suppose, like the EPA, the IRS, NSA, and impose new rules and, thus, again, bypassing Congress.

Mr. Speaker, nowhere in the Constitution is the phrase "executive order." It is not in this Constitution. This is not an imperial kingdom where the ruler makes his own rules as he goes along.

We all learned in ninth-grade civics that Congress makes the law, and the President can approve or disapprove it. It is in the Constitution.

Rather than rule by pen and phone, the President should be bound by the law and rule by the Constitution and by his oath, but the Constitution seems to be a mere suggestion to this administration.

Madam Speaker, this is America; it is not Burger King. The President cannot always have it his way.

And that's just the way it is.

THE SO-CALLED NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION ACT

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

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, H.R. 7, the so-called No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, is as deceitful as it is dangerous. We already ensure that tax dollars don't fund abortions and have ever since the Hyde Amendment was introduced in 1976.

This new effort is an attempt to create restrictions far beyond the scope of current law, interfering with how women use their own private dollars,

on their own private insurance, for health coverage.

This is just the latest Republican assault in their ongoing war on women. It is why I felt it was so important to introduce the Women's Health Protection Act. My bill would put a stop to the unprecedented attack on abortion we have seen at the State level over the last few years. It would ensure that every woman has access to the medical care she is entitled to.

Decisions about pregnancies are deeply personal and difficult, and they belong to the woman and the doctor she trusts, period.

THE STATE OF OUR NATION'S FOREIGN POLICY

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

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, when the President delivers his State of the Union address tonight, it will be important to note what he won't say about the state of our Nation's foreign policy. This is because, on President Obama's watch, America has been notably absent from the world stage.

His foreign policy has taken America away from a role of global leadership to a shuffled retreat. Madam Speaker, successful foreign policy is defined by your friends trusting you and your enemies fearing you. Chances are the President will only touch momentarily on the Iranian nuclear deal tonight and for good reason. It has gathered strong bipartisan opposition, and the regime in Tehran has flaunted the deal as a legitimization of their shadowy nuclear program.

Madam Speaker, those who seek freedom and democracy look now more than ever to America for leadership. Chances are you won't hear much about that from the President tonight.

ROBERT MOSES PARKWAY FUNDING

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, today the New York Power Authority took an important step toward righting a historic wrong by providing funding to remove the Robert Moses Parkway in Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls is a national treasure, drawing millions of visitors each year.

However, with the construction of the Robert Moses Parkway in the 1960s, the New York Power Authority created both economic and physical barriers to Niagara Falls in arguably the greatest waterfront in the world.

For Niagara Falls, it is not about tearing something down; it is about building something up. Removal of the parkway is a critical step in giving this

city the waterfront it deserves and unleashing the limitless economic potential that comes with it.

The New York Power Authority did the right thing, and the future of Niagara Falls will be better because of it.

STATE OF THE UNION PREVIEW

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this evening, I am glad to hear the President will deliver the State of the Union address focused on optimism.

Optimism requires he change his disastrous policies destroying jobs, as revealed by the record number of food stamp recipients. Each higher food stamp report uncovers job destruction. Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin has proven jobs are created by citizens keeping their own money. It is not the government's money. Dangerous deficits are unsustainable.

The President needs to repeal and replace the ObamaCare train wreck which destroys jobs. He should uncover the tragedy of the Benghazi murders and promote peace through strength to prevent further attacks. Reducing the military threatens American families with expanded terrorist safe havens. The IRS targeting of citizens should really be investigated. The NSA should be restricted and not spy on all Americans. The Department of Justice and FBI eavesdropping on media should be stopped, with reprimands for malfeasance.

The President can restore optimism if he and his advisers change course. Americans have seen the overreach of Big Government. Now we should work together for limited government and expanded freedom.

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

WORKING FOR ALL OF AMERICA

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, the President is going to address this House and this country with great enthusiasm about the work that he has done with his Cabinet, Democratic Members of Congress, and others who have worked with him to make America better.

He will be able to report that 3 million Americans have enrolled in the Affordable Care Act, giving suffering Americans with preexisting conditions the opportunity for good health care. He will be able to acknowledge that people like Mrs. Aguilar would be better off if States like Texas would have expanded the Medicare coverage. Her

children are covered, but she is not. We are committed to working to make sure that that happens.

He will be able to say that he stands on the side of extending the unemployment for working Americans—those who have worked and now are unemployed, and yes, he will be able to say that it is important that we invest in the infrastructure.

It is important to note that America is great, as we watch our soldiers in foreign lands wearing the uniform with pride.

We must invest in the American people. Food stamps, which are now given mostly to working Americans, are an investment, and the President can be optimistic and work for all of America.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDS FOR ABORTION

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, last week, amid frigid temperatures, hundreds of thousands of Americans marched in our Nation's Capital in support of the unborn and the value of life. Today, it is our turn.

It is our turn to stand for life by supporting H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. This bill would ban the use of taxpayer dollars to fund abortions once and for all. The last thing pro-life taxpayers should be required to do is subsidize unethical practices. It is their money, and you better believe I will fight for them to have a say in how it is spent.

Enough is enough.

Madam Speaker, today, this isn't just what Republicans want. According to multiple polls, the majority of Americans oppose the use of Federal funding for abortions. This is what the American people want, and it is time folks in Washington listened. Remember, we work for them.

Let's stand for life. It is the right and just thing to do.

UKRAINE

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, today, Ukraine faces a pivotal moment in its history. The Ukrainian people are making their demand for freedom and economic growth loud and clear, protesting President Yanukovich's refusal to sign accords with the European Union. Ukrainian police forces have met protesters with intimidation, and the escalating violence has resulted in the death of protesters. The use of excessive force to silence peaceful voices undermines the country's democratic future.

The United States and Ukraine share an ideal of democracy in which citizens

may live free of oppression and may elect their own leaders. When those leaders break their promises, it is even more important that citizens can freely express their discontent.

We all must closely watch the negotiations between the current administration and the opposition. The United States should continue to stand with the Ukrainian people in their desire for economic growth and a free republic.

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

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

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, let me begin by reminding the House that the gentleman that spoke before me on this side of the aisle, Mr. SAM JOHNSON from Texas, is a real American hero, and let us not forget that.

This week is recognized as National School Choice Week, a week dedicated to bringing awareness to a very simple idea: let's put parents in charge of their children's education.

School choice means giving every child the opportunity to learn at the place that best meets their needs, not one they are relegated to because of where they may live or what district they are assigned to.

For decades now, where our children learn has been decided by arbitrary government rules that could never understand the needs of each individual child or family. When kids fail to make the grade, the solution has been to throw more money and government regulation into the mix, but the end results cannot be clearer.

This top-down, government-knows-best system has failed to serve the very people it seeks to help, and support from parents and teachers for initiatives like Common Core continues to crumble.

Be it a charter school, private school, home school, or local public school, the fact of the matter is parents know what works best for their child, not Washington. We owe it to our children to help them reach their full potential.

I strongly believe that every child, regardless of background or school district, should have the opportunity to learn at the school that best meets their needs. Let's work together for a brighter future for our children.

□ 1215

EVERYONE WHO WORKS HARD AND PLAYS BY THE RULES DESERVES A CHANCE AT SUCCESS

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, tonight, the President will

address a key American principle, that everyone who works hard and plays by the rules deserves a chance at success. We certainly expect our kids to work hard in school and play by the rules in hopes that they will have strong futures that include a shot at the American Dream.

No matter what side of the aisle we are on, we can all agree that what we want is the best for our kids and, in some cases, our grandkids. But what kind of future are we giving them if they have to start behind kids in other countries where access to pre-K is widespread?

Kids who are part of a quality pre-K program are more likely to graduate high school, to earn higher pay, and live more productive lives.

In looking for common ground, we should learn from the recent spending deal which showed bipartisan support for boosting early education. Let's not let tonight be a wasted opportunity to give our kids the strong start that they desire.

FEDERAL REGULATION

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

Mr. MULLIN. Madam Speaker, I would like to call attention to recent remarks made by Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell. Regarding document requests submitted by the Natural Resources Committee, the Secretary gave excuses as to why it was inconvenient for her agency to comply with these requests and allow Congress to fulfill its duty in providing oversight to Federal agencies.

I serve on the Natural Resources Committee, and the document requests submitted concerned Federal regulations burdening this Nation. The Secretary noted that going through these documents was a waste of time and money for her agency.

Yet Congress is charged with keeping an agency like the Department of the Interior accountable because we are all, in turn, held accountable to the American taxpayer. We want answers to these regulation questions.

A battle is being waged in our country between an increasingly overbearing government and an increasingly burdened country of entrepreneurs. The struggle between regulation and innovation has tied the hands of many job creators.

The Federal Government must stop putting people out of business through regulation and help get our country back to work.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDS FOR ABORTION ACT

(Mr. LOWENTHAL asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, instead of talking about jobs, or the economy, or the unemployed who have lost their benefits because of our inaction, we are here talking about legislation that strips women of their fundamental right to make their own medical decisions.

If H.R. 7 passes, millions of women who work for small businesses, or who will be buying insurance on the exchanges, will lose access to comprehensive health care.

H.R. 7 is a radical bill that places restrictions on how women can spend their private dollars to purchase their private insurance. It would also make the Hyde amendment permanent, which will cause detrimental and devastating effects to all women, especially low-income women.

We must stand by women and vote "no" on H.R. 7.

THE CONGRESSIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE CAUCUS

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

Mr. MESSER. Madam Speaker, no child in America should be forced to go to a school where they won't have a meaningful chance to learn. That is why school choice matters.

School choice is about the freedom of parents to choose the best educational environment for their child to succeed. For some, that means open enrollment. For others, that means a public charter school. Some may prefer a magnet school or a private school or even a virtual school. Others may want to home school their children.

Whatever the choice, National School Choice Week is about celebrating those choices and recognizing that applying market-based principles and technology to education can enhance student achievement and lead to better results.

That is why I am creating the Congressional School Choice Caucus, which will be dedicated to expanding educational freedom and promoting policies that increase high-quality education options for all children.

I urge my colleagues to join us and empower parents with a choice so their kids have a chance for success.

AN UNPRECEDENTED ASSAULT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, today, this House will consider H.R. 7, which is an unprecedented assault on women's health care.

This law would mean that millions of American women who would like to

purchase their health insurance with their own money cannot purchase comprehensive health insurance, insurance which is their legal right because this House of Representatives and, Madam Speaker, I would note, a House of Representatives, particularly on the majority side, that is dominated by men, tell them they cannot do so.

What is even more cynical, however, is that those who are promoting this and have said this know that it will not become law. It is a messaging bill.

It is intended to send a message to whom?

And just what is that message?

So while we are debating that, the House is not taking up unemployment insurance extension, which is not a messaging bill. It is heat in the home, it is keeping the lights on, it is paying the mortgage, it is putting food on the table for the children of the people in those homes.

That is not a messaging bill. That is the work that we were sent here to do.

GROWING CONCERNS ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, when we needed bipartisan action to lower costs and improve health care, Congress passed the Affordable Care Act on a party-line vote.

Given the growing number of failures that have been revealed since the law's implementation began, it is time for Congress to work together to address the unworkable provisions for the good of the American people.

Fortunately, opposition to the ACA's flawed policy is moving beyond party labels. Last year, the Democratic-led Senate voted 79-20 to repeal the law's medical device tax. Since then, more and more Members of Congress recognize there are bigger problems.

Earlier in January, despite the Obama administration's vocal opposition to the efforts to boost consumer protections under the law, a veto-proof majority of Republicans and Democrats in the House voted to pass H.R. 3811, which would help secure personal information on the online exchanges.

Madam Speaker, the American people deserve bipartisan solutions.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDS FOR ABORTION ACT

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

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, here we go again. Instead of working with President Obama and Democrats to create jobs, economic opportunities, and fight poverty, extreme

Tea Party Republicans are at it again, attacking women's health care and reproductive rights. Yes, it is another battle in the war on women.

Instead of working together to extend unemployment benefits, here we are today debating another dangerous and divisive attempt to strip away the rights of women.

Madam Speaker, Congress currently imposes unfair limitations on insurance coverage of abortion and, through the Hyde amendment, that is a fact, even though I personally think we should get rid of all these restrictions.

Yet this bill, H.R. 7, creates an unprecedented interference in the lives of women and their families by restricting coverage for women's health in private insurance plans.

It specifically attacks low-income women in the District of Columbia by permanently, mind you, permanently prohibiting the District from spending its purely local funds on abortions for low-income women.

How many of you would want the Federal Government to restrict your funding in your local districts for any health care benefits for women?

It codifies the harmful Helms amendment. Enough is enough.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION ACT

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Messrs. SMITH and LIPINSKI for introducing H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, a crucial bill that will help us save so many innocent lives. As pro-life Members of Congress, we have a commitment to fight on behalf of those who have no voice and to take the necessary steps to advance legislation on the floor.

The vast majority of Americans do not want their tax dollars to be used to pay for abortions. This bill would establish a permanent prohibition on taxpayer subsidies for abortions.

For many years, the Hyde amendment and other Federal prohibitions on public funding for abortion have been enacted as appropriation riders, but they are not permanent. We need to get rid of this patchwork approach and enact H.R. 7 to ensure that Federal funds are not used to pay for abortions.

I will continue to work with like-minded Members of Congress to promote H.R. 7 and all pro-life legislation because I understand that we have a responsibility to protect the innocent unborn.

ASSAULT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, I found her. Forty years ago I found my friend, Flora, bleeding, near death. She was a victim of an illegal abortion, forced to turn to a back-alley practitioner. She survived, but many like her did not.

Today, my Republican colleagues are, once again, trying to take us back to those days with a new, radical bill to deny our mothers, our daughters, our sisters the right to obtain a safe and legal abortion.

I have a better idea. Madam Speaker, let's pass the Women's Health Protection Act that will allow all women, no matter where they live in this country, access to the tools and information that they need to make their own private health care decisions.

Madam Speaker, we cannot—we will not—go back.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF DAVIE COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF CHRISTOPHER FLEMING

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Davie County Deputy Sheriff Christopher Fleming, injured last week while attempting to apprehend a violent suspected home invader.

When deputies initially attempted to arrest the suspect, he fled to a nearby home and held two juveniles hostage at gunpoint for over an hour. After the hostages were released, Deputy Fleming, along with three other members of the sheriff's office, entered the home in order to apprehend the suspect.

The suspect opened fire, hitting Deputy Fleming in the shoulder. Deputy Fleming's canine partner, Gorky, a Russian shepherd and 5-year veteran of the force, was also shot in the incident and died last Thursday.

Madam Speaker, I am happy to report the suspect is in custody, and Deputy Fleming is in good condition and expected to make a full recovery.

This incident is a reminder of the risks taken by those who work to keep our communities safe. We must not take their sacrifices for granted.

PROTECTING ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

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

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Speaker, today, the House will, once again, vote to restrict access to our reproductive health care. H.R. 7 would callously deny coverage to comprehensive health care for millions of women across America.

When women are denied the freedom to make their own personal health care

decisions, their economic opportunities are diminished as well. Instead of denying tax credits to women and small businesses seeking affordable health coverage, Congress needs to work together to empower women and increase opportunity.

We should start by passing the Paycheck Fairness Act so every woman deserves and receives equal pay for equal work. This week marks the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act being signed into law. Enactment of this law was a landmark achievement in the fight against gender discrimination, but there is so much work to do.

Madam Speaker, Congress needs to get to work for women, not against women.

□ 1230

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION STATISTICS

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

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Tonight, President Obama will give another speech on the state of the American Union, and here are a few facts you likely won't hear him report to the American people. After 1,834 days as President, here are the results:

6.5 million more Americans in poverty; \$6.6 trillion in massive new debt on our children and grandchildren; 13 million more Americans on food stamps; 5 million Americans and counting have lost their health insurance because of ObamaCare; and 24.2 million Americans are still looking for a full-time job in the Obama economy.

Mr. President, I can only hope that you will recognize and that you honestly will admit and that tonight you will apologize for the damage your policies have inflicted on our Nation, on the American people, and on the American Dream.

WOMEN SHOULD MAKE THEIR OWN HEALTH CARE DECISIONS

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

Mr. BARBER. Madam Speaker, as the husband of an incredible woman who has guided and advised me for 46 years and the father of two strong and accomplished young women and the grandfather of three granddaughters, I stand with all women today.

I stand in support of every woman's right to be able to choose what is best for her and her family. And I stand ready to protect and preserve the ability of every woman to make her own health care decisions with her doctor and without the interference of politicians in Washington. And I stand in opposition to H.R. 7, which would restrict

the rights of women and their access to care.

I urge my colleagues, every one, to stand with me.

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

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

Ms. TITUS. Like those who have spoken so eloquently before me, I stand in strong opposition to H.R. 7. This legislation would drastically undermine a woman's constitutional right to choose and could effectively eliminate access to safe, legal reproductive care for low-income women across the country. It would also hurt our small businesses by raising taxes on those who offer their employees comprehensive health insurance.

Republicans have repeatedly demonstrated a lack of understanding about basic women's health care, and this bill is just one more example of their continuing attack on women's rights.

H.R. 7 is a step backward. It is nothing more than a distraction from the critical work we should be doing to pass immigration reform, strengthen our economy, and create jobs. We apparently have no time to vote on unemployment benefits for our neighbors but plenty of time to take away a woman's right to choose.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this harmful and unconstitutional legislation.

UNEMPLOYMENT

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, many who are unemployed through no fault of their own remember December 28. That was when the unemployment insurance was not extended and Congress failed them. 1.3 million Americans were without any support as of that day. In 6 months, that number will grow to 1.9 million—72,000 a week, or one person every 8 seconds.

The real problem that we face is really the lack of job opportunities. Madam Speaker, we must bring the President's proposal for job creation to the floor. Remember, you have to be actively seeking work before you can receive unemployment insurance. Do you see the problem? There are no efforts to create jobs, and there is no bill there to protect those who are unemployed through no fault of their own.

This is the highest long-term unemployment this country has seen since World War II. People need government to recognize this problem, and we have failed. We need to go back and know why unemployment insurance was created in the first place. We need to be that compassionate country again.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING OF ABORTION ACT

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, for years, the other side of the aisle has been trying to get between a woman and her doctor. Now they are trying to come between a woman and her health insurance company. They want to open a new front in the war on women, and this one cruelly focuses on poor women.

The law of the land is already clear: no Federal funding for abortions. But with H.R. 7, which will be on the floor today, even private insurance plans could be restricted from covering abortion if you get a government subsidy. So if you are a low-income woman who needs help affording health care insurance, this bill is aimed squarely at you.

Rather than tackling the real problems of economic growth and job creation, the other side of the aisle seems obsessed with curbing a woman's reproductive rights. They may not want to call this a war on women, but I would point out to my colleagues that women—and only women—are the casualties of this multifaceted assault on a woman's right to choose and reproductive rights.

40TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, as a proud graduate of St. Symphorosa Grammar School and St. Ignatius College Prep, and as a strong supporter of Catholic education, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions Catholic schools have made to our Nation.

Next week is the 40th annual National Catholic Schools Week, and I have introduced H. Res. 461, along with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), to honor the work done by parents, teachers, administrators, and parishioners for the more than 2 million children at over 6,600 Catholic schools in America. This year's theme, "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service," highlights the values that are the centerpiece of a Catholic school education.

Later on this week, I will be visiting several schools, including St. Rene in Chicago, St. Francis Xavier in La Grange, the SS. Cyril and Methodius in Lemont, and St. Catherine's of Alexandria in Oak Lawn.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Catholic schools across our Nation for the outstanding education they provide to so many Americans.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 7, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2014, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2642, FEDERAL AGRICULTURE REFORM AND RISK MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2013

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 465 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 465

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-33 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary, the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I raise a point of order against House Resolution 465 because the resolution violates section 426(a) of the Congressional Budget Act. The resolution—in waiving all points of order against consideration of both H.R. 7, the anti-abortion bill, and the conference report on H.R. 2642, the farm bill—waives section 425 of the Congressional Budget Act, thereby causing a violation of section 426(a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK). The gentleman from Massachusetts makes a point of order that the resolution violates section 426(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The gentleman has met the threshold burden under the rule, and the gentleman from Massachusetts and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes of debate on the question of

consideration. Following debate, the Chair will put the question of consideration as the statutory means of disposing of the point of order.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, first of all, let me just say that it is outrageous, absolutely outrageous, that the Republican leadership has combined a major piece of antiabortion legislation with the farm bill conference report into one single rule, restricting our ability to debate both of these important issues.

There is an \$8.6 billion cut to SNAP in this conference report, a cut that will only affect poor families, primarily the elderly and the disabled. Besides being cruel and heartless, this cut is also an unfunded mandate. If States, cities, or towns want to prevent hunger from getting worse, they will have to spend more money out of their own budgets.

Now, I know my Republican friends are in a big hurry to go off to their issues retreat at some luxurious resort, but maybe we could have found another hour somewhere.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to serve on the Agriculture Committee. I was honored to serve on the conference committee for the farm bill. I want to thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON and all of my colleagues for their hard work.

I want a farm bill. I want to support the farm bill conference. But from the beginning of this process, I made my position very clear that I will not vote for a farm bill that makes hunger worse in America. And this farm bill fails that basic test. If this bill passes, hundreds of thousands of vulnerable Americans will have less to eat, period.

Now, some people will say, well, an \$8 billion cut in SNAP is better than what the House Republicans wanted to do. That is a strange argument, Madam Speaker. It is like saying thank goodness the burglar only took the silver, because he could have taken the jewelry, too.

The fact of the matter is that any cut to SNAP will be piled on top of the cut that already went into effect last fall. And any cut to SNAP will result in more Americans going hungry. And any cut in SNAP will increase the financial burdens on State and local governments.

There are those, Madam Speaker, who claim that the Heat and Eat program is some sort of a loophole. It isn't. It is a policy decision. It is a way for States to help some of our neighbors who are struggling through very difficult times. But even if this is a loophole, I ask my friends, of all the loopholes in Federal law, of all of the special interest giveaways, this is the one you are going to target? This is the one that is in your crosshairs, a program that helps poor people get enough food to eat? My goodness.

There are those who say that States and local governments or food banks or food pantries should pick up the slack. Have any of those people actually ever been to a food bank? Have they ever talked to a director of a food pantry? Because they are already at capacity, Madam Speaker. They can't meet the needs of the clients that they already have.

My Republican friends have made their priorities very clear. They want to dismantle the social safety net. They want to get the Federal Government out of the business of helping people get enough to eat.

But I also want to say that I am disappointed, Madam Speaker, in the people in my own party, here in the Congress and in the White House, who are going along with this.

Tonight, the President of the United States will stand in this Chamber and deliver the State of the Union; and when he talks about income inequality and helping people get into the middle class, all of us Democrats—and I hope some Republicans—will stand up and cheer. But before that happens, we have an opportunity to put our votes where our cheers are; we have a chance to match our actions with our rhetoric. And the way to do that is to vote “no” on this conference report.

□ 1245

So I say to my fellow Democrats, if cutting SNAP or other programs that help poor people is the price of admission to get anything done, any piece of major legislation passed, then we have strayed very, very far from our principles. Madam Speaker, again, I want to remind my colleagues that this is an unfunded mandate because there will be an increased burden on States, cities and towns to deal with this issue of hunger.

By the way, Madam Speaker, when people are hungry, when kids are hungry, they don't learn in school. When people are hungry, they end up going to the emergency room more often. When children are hungry, when they get a common cold, they end up staying in the hospital for a period of time. That all costs us a great deal in terms of not only Federal money but State and local money. So, in my opinion, this is an unfunded mandate, and this is a burden on the States.

Madam Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the remaining time to the gentlelady from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts, and I thank him for his dedication and his passion on this issue that people in the United States of America should not go hungry.

I rise in support of my colleague's point of order. This farm bill contains cuts to the food stamp program that will transfer the responsibility to States and cities to provide food to their families. May I remind the Members of this body that food stamps—our Nation's most important anti-hunger program—was just cut 2 months ago in November—in November.

Because of the recent expiration of the Recovery Act provisions, food stamps have already been cut by \$5 billion for next year and \$11 billion is the cut over 3 years. What does it mean? It means that a family of four lost \$36—or 16 meals—a month in support. That is already the difference between health and hunger.

Now the savage cuts in this farm bill would push Americans already living on the edge that much closer to the brink. Because of the \$8.5 billion in cuts here, 850,000 households—translates into 1.7 million Americans—will lose an average of \$90 a month or 66 more meals a month. Low-income seniors, working poor with families, individuals with disabilities and veterans would be particularly impacted by these cruel cuts.

Perhaps some Members have forgotten. That is because we eat well. That is because we eat well every day. Members have forgotten hunger is an abomination. We are talking about men and women experiencing real physical trauma, children who cannot concentrate in school because all they can think about is food, and seniors are forced to decide in what has been a polar vortex, a virulent winter season, whether or not they will go hungry or be cold.

This is a problem all across the land. In my Connecticut district, nearly one in seven households are not sure they can afford enough food to feed their families. In Mississippi, 24.5 percent suffer food hardship. In West Virginia and Kentucky, 22 percent. In Ohio, nearly 20 percent, and in California, just over 19 percent.

The continued existence of hunger in America is a disgrace. That is why in the past there has been a strong tradition of bipartisanship on fighting hunger and supporting nutrition. This farm bill flies in the face of that tradition. It takes food from the poor to pay for crop subsidies for the rich.

Food stamps have one of the lowest error rates of any government program. It is a powerful and positive impact on economic growth because they get resources into the hands of families who are going to spend them right away. The research shows that for every \$5 of Federal food stamp benefits, it generates nearly twice that in economic activity.

Children's Health Watch, those researchers found that after collecting 14 years of data on over 20,000 low-income families that when families experienced a loss or reduction in food stamp

benefits, they are more likely to be food insecure, to be in poor health, and their children experience intensified developmental delays relative to their peers.

Most importantly, food stamps are the right thing to do. It is the job of a good government to help vulnerable families to get back on their feet, and cutting food stamps will cause more hunger and health problems for Americans. In the words of Harry Truman:

Nothing is more important in our national life than the welfare of our children, and proper nourishment comes first in attaining this welfare.

This bill—this bill—flies in the face of that. It will cut \$8.5 billion. You couple that with the cuts that have already been made in the economic recovery program, and that is almost \$20 billion in a cut to the food stamp program. Some of my colleagues will say, well, we only did 8½ billion in the farm bill. Let me just tell you: it may come from two sources, but the constituency is the same.

Who are we as a nation? Where are our values? If we can provide crop subsidies for the richest farmers in this Nation and tell them that they can make \$900,000 a year before they will not be able to get a subsidy, or 26 individuals who get a premium subsidy for crop insurance of at least \$1 million a year—those folks are eating, they are high on the hog, they got three squares a day. When we provide \$1.40—it is \$1.40 per meal for food stamp beneficiaries—the people at the top end don't have an income cap. They don't have any asset test, and that is not true for food stamp recipients. We prescribe who can receive them. There are income limitations and asset limitations. Who are we as a nation? What are we about? Let's not take food out of the mouths of families and their children.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I claim time in opposition to the point of order and in favor of consideration of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 10 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, the question before the House is should the House now consider H. Res. 465. This point of order, Madam Speaker, is a dilatory tactic. I will remind the gentleman that each bill under this rule will be separately considered and debatable on the House floor.

Madam Speaker, in order to allow the House to continue its scheduled business for the day, I urge Members to vote "yes" on the question of consideration of the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Will the House now consider the resolution?

The question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I raise a point of order against House Resolution 465 under clause 9(c) of rule XXI because the resolution contains a waiver of all points of order against H.R. 7, the abortion bill, and the conference report on H.R. 2642, the farm bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts makes a point of order that the resolution violates clause 9(c) of rule XXI.

Under clause 9(c) of rule XXI, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes of debate on the question of consideration.

Following that debate, the Chair will put the question of consideration as follows: "Will the House now consider the resolution?"

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, the conference report on the farm bill was made public at around 7:30 last night. With nearly 1,000 pages dumped on us at the last minute, we know that no one has had a chance to read the entire thing. I'm a conferee, and even I had an extra few hours to try to digest this monstrosity of a bill, but who knows what is in this bill? That is why I'm raising this earmarks point of order.

As I said earlier, Madam Speaker, one of the things that is most troubling to me and a number of my colleagues, again, is this attack on poor people and is this attack on SNAP, a program that does nothing more than provide food to people.

Madam Speaker, I would like to include for the RECORD a letter that was addressed to Congress from the mayors of Baton Rouge, Boston, Dallas, the District of Columbia, Gary, Hartford, Ithaca, Los Angeles, Madison, Memphis, New York, Providence, Raleigh, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle and Tucson urging us in both the House and the Senate to reject these SNAP cuts. These mayors have made it very clear that it would have an adverse impact on the people that they represent. They have stressed in this letter the importance of SNAP to help people to be able to put food on the table for their children.

I also would like to reference a statement from the Food Research and Action Center, otherwise known as FRAC. They are urging us to vote against this conference committee report if these SNAP cuts remain in the bill. They have said that SNAP is essential to the nutrition, the health and the well-being of 47 million Americans each month, but every participant suffered a significant cut in benefits beginning last November 1.

As the gentlelady from Connecticut made mention of, on November 1, an \$11 billion cut in SNAP went into effect. All 47 million beneficiaries received a cut. Food prices didn't go down, but their benefit went down, and now we are going to pile on. There are some who say, well, it doesn't affect all 47 million. It is only going to be about 1 million or so people that will be adversely impacted, but those people that will be adversely impacted stand a great deal to lose. The November 1 cut for the average family of three resulted in a \$31 a month benefit cut. You add this on top of it, and it is another \$80 to \$90. So that family of three will receive about \$120 to \$130 less per month.

What are they going to do? Even before these cuts went into effect, they were going to food banks, they were going to charities looking for help because their benefit was so meager to begin with. What are they supposed to do? I think in this House of Representatives, I don't care what your political party or ideology is, it should never, ever, ever be acceptable that anybody in this country—the United States of America, the richest country in the history of the world—should go hungry.

The fact that we are moving forward with the farm bill—a deal that contains this \$8.6 billion in cuts—I think is outrageous. I'm all for a deal. I want a farm bill. I'm willing to swallow a lot of things in this bill that I don't like, but the price of doing that should not be to increase hunger and poverty in this country, and that is what this bill does.

We talk about deals. Behind these deals are real people. They are our neighbors. They are in every community. There is not a congressional district in our country that is hunger free. These people are everywhere. We have an obligation to not turn our backs on them. SNAP is one of the most efficiently run Federal programs with one of the lowest error rates.

This is important. SNAP in and of itself is not going to solve the problem of hunger or poverty. The bottom line is by cutting it the way we are doing, we are making things worse for people. I stood on the floor today, and I read the descriptions of individuals in Massachusetts who, if this farm bill passes, will see a significant cut in their benefit, and their question to me is, what do I do? Where do I go? Tell me how to put food on the table for my kids. Tell me how I'm going to survive.

We should not be making the lives of people who are suffering more miserable. That is not our job.

I will also insert for the RECORD the entire Food Research and Action Center statement.

Madam Speaker, in Massachusetts alone there will be 125,000 SNAP households that could suffer up to a \$70 to \$80 a month cut in SNAP benefit if this farm bill goes through as it is. There is

no reason in the world that we should be cutting this program. This is not an ATM machine to pay for big farm subsidies. This is not an ATM machine to make up for the fraud, the waste and the abuse in the crop insurance program.

Again, I will repeat to my colleagues, tonight we are going to hear the President talk about income inequality, and my criticism here, it is a bipartisan criticism. I'm critical of the Republicans for the cruel cuts that were proposed in the original farm bill—up to \$40 billion—and I'm frustrated that there are people in my own party, including in this White House, who don't believe this is worth a fight. Well, this is worth a fight. If this is not worth a fight, I don't know what the hell we are here for. If making sure people in this country don't go hungry is not a priority, then I don't know what we are doing here.

We can explain this away, we can rationalize it and justify it. I have heard all the talking points. My favorite is that nobody will actually lose their benefit.

□ 1300

What that neglects to tell you is that your benefit will be cut down to almost nothing. Yes, they will still get a little benefit, but it might be \$15 a month instead of \$115 a month. I mean, is that the best we can do, on both sides of the aisle? This never used to be a partisan issue. This never used to be a polarizing issue, and now all of a sudden it has become one. Again, I plea with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let's come together and get a farm bill done, but not at this price.

And I urge the White House to stand up and fight alongside of us on this. They should be taking a greater leadership role on this. It is not enough to just talk about income inequality; you have to fight for it, too.

MAYORS OF BATON ROUGE, BOSTON, DALLAS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, GARY, HARTFORD, ITHACA, LOS ANGELES, MADISON, MEMPHIS, NEW YORK, PROVIDENCE, RALEIGH, SACRAMENTO, SALT LAKE CITY, SAN DIEGO, SAN FRANCISCO, SEATTLE, AND TUCSON,

January 27, 2014.

Hon. DEBBIE STABENOW,
Chair, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. THAD COCHRAN,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. COLIN PETERSON,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Agriculture, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN STABENOW, RANKING MEMBER COCHRAN, CHAIRMAN LUCAS, AND RANKING MEMBER PETERSON: As mayors of

major cities across the United States, we write to express our serious concerns about provisions under discussion in the Farm Bill reauthorization conference that could make it much more difficult for millions of Americans to put food on their tables. These provisions include billions of dollars in cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). We urge you to work to remove these cuts to a program that provides essential food support to low-income families and individuals across the country.

SNAP provides food support for approximately 47 million Americans, more than half of whom are children and seniors. As mayors, every day we see the importance of SNAP benefits and how they have helped millions of Americans to feed their families during an extended period of economic uncertainty and high unemployment. Although the economy is showing signs of recovery, unemployment rates are still above pre-recession levels and we are still faced with rates above the national average in many cities across the country.

In addition, since every dollar in SNAP benefits generates up to \$1.80 in local economic activity, cuts will also have a negative impact on our urban economies.

At this critical juncture in our recovery, we urge you eliminate changes to the SNAP program that will reduce a support as basic as food to so many struggling Americans and could undermine our local economies.

Sincerely,

Ralph Becker, Mayor, Salt Lake City;
Karen Freeman-Wilson, Mayor, City of Gary;
Todd Gloria, Interim Mayor, City of San Diego;
Melvin L. "Kip" Holden, Mayor, City of Baton Rouge;
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor, City of San Francisco;
Bill de Blasio, Mayor, City of New York;
Eric Garcetti, Mayor, City of Los Angeles;
Vincent Gray, Mayor, District of Columbia;
Kevin Johnson, Mayor, City of Sacramento;
Nancy McFarlane, Mayor, City of Raleigh;
Ed Murray, Mayor, City of Seattle;
Mike Rawlings, Mayor, City of Dallas;
Pedro E. Segarra, Mayor, City of Hartford;
Angel Taveras, Mayor, City of Providence;
A C Wharton, Jr., Mayor, City of Memphis;
Svante L. Myrick, Mayor, City of Ithaca;
Jonathan Rothschild, Mayor, City of Tucson;
Paul R. Soglin, Mayor, City of Madison;
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor, City of Boston.

From: On Behalf of Food Research and Action Center

Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014

To: Ellen Teller

Subject: FRAC Statement on the Farm Bill

[From FRAC, Food Research and Action Center, Jan. 28, 2014]

SNAP CUTS IN FARM BILL WILL LEAD TO LESS FOOD FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

WASHINGTON, DC.—The Farm Bill moving from conference committee to the floor of the House and Senate will cut SNAP benefits to an estimated 850,000 households by an average of \$90/month. The Food Research and Action Center is encouraging members to vote "No" on the bill because of the pain this provision will cause for so many of the most vulnerable members of our society, making monthly food allotments fall even further short of what is needed.

SNAP is essential to the nutrition, health and well-being of 47 million Americans each month. But every participant suffered a significant cut in benefits beginning last November 1st. Demand at emergency food pro-

viders around the country has skyrocketed. Now the Farm Bill, if passed, will considerably worsen the already bad situation for nearly a million households.

The SNAP cuts in the conference bill amount to \$8.6 billion over 10 years. The bill has modest boosts in nutrition supports in respects (e.g. for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), for "double bucks" farmers' market programs, for improved SNAP education and training programs, for Healthy Food Financing). These are small positive steps but are far from commensurate to the SNAP damage in the bill.

We appreciate that key conferees and other Senators and House members spoke and acted to reject the far larger harmful cuts proposed by the House. But FRAC believes the \$8.6 billion SNAP cut is deeply harmful.

This cut has been opposed by major newspapers, anti-poverty and anti-hunger groups and food banks across the country. It is inconsistent with polls showing voters—across party, age and other demographics—reject food stamp cuts. It is inconsistent with the President's proposals to improve, not harm, SNAP benefits. In a bitter irony, the bill goes to the floor almost exactly a year after an expert Institute of Medicine committee found that SNAP benefits are already inadequate for most families to purchase an adequate, healthy diet; and it comes in the same month that researchers issued a new study showing that low-income people have increased hypoglycemia-related hospital admissions late in the month because they run out of food. The SNAP cuts will be a blow to health and nutrition, and to the government's long-term fiscal well-being as well.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the balance of my time.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I am proud once again to join my colleague. I, too, want a farm bill. In fact, I had the honor of helping to negotiate the 2008 farm bill, the nutrition portion of it, where we maintained that historic coalition between the safety net for agriculture and the safety net for nutrition.

I think it is almost unbelievable that we got a thousand-page bill, and I just want to say to the American public here that they should ask Members of Congress whether or not they have read the bill. We went over and over this with regard to the health care bill. Some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle kept asking us if we have read the bill. No one has really read this bill. There were four people who negotiated this work. There could well be significant earmarks in this effort.

Let me point out the reverse Robin Hood legislation here. It steals food from the poor to help pay for handouts to wealthy agribusiness. Let me just give a couple of examples. In violation of the congressional rule that provisions passed by both bodies should not be changed, the conference, four people, more than doubled the annual primary payments from \$50,000 to \$125,000, or \$250,000 a couple. They reopened the loophole that was closed in the House

and in the Senate that allows wealthy farmers to collect far more than the nominal payment limit: \$50,000. They raised it to \$125,000 for an individual; to a couple, \$250,000. House and Senate on a bipartisan basis closed the loophole.

This allows payments to be collected by multiple people on the farm. What we have today is eight people can collect a \$125,000 payment, leading to a million-dollar subsidy for a farm. Seven of those eight people never have to put their foot on the farm. It is called padding the payroll. "Farmers," they don't have to undergo any income means testing to receive a subsidy.

The Durbin-Coburn amendment in the Senate would reduce the level of Federal premium support for crop insurance participants with an adjusted gross income of \$750,000. The conference report—four people—determined that they would make that cap at \$900,000. Again, the wealthiest people in the Nation.

Let me tell you about crop insurance. I don't know that the American public knows that the Federal Government, you, Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer, you pick up 60 percent of the cost of that crop insurance. That doesn't include administrative fees. There are 26 individuals today who get at least a million dollars in premium subsidy. We can't find out who they are. They could be Members of Congress, because they are protected: 26 individuals. We have almost 50 million people who are on the food stamp program, 16 million of whom are children. And there is no fraud and abuse in this program, the way there is in the crop insurance program; and yet we want to take food out of the mouths of families and children in this Nation. It is the wrong thing to do. This bill should be rejected.

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise to claim time in opposition to the point of order and in favor of consideration of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 10 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. The question before the House is, Should the House now consider H. Res. 465? This point of order, Madam Speaker, is a dilatory tactic. None of the provisions contained in the underlying measures meet the definition of an earmark under the rule.

The chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary certified that H.R. 7 contains no congressional earmarks by including the following earmark statement in the report accompanying this bill, which was filed on January 23, 2014:

In accordance with clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, H.R. 7 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(e), 9(f) or 9(g) of rule XXI.

The following was included in the Joint Explanatory Statement for the farm bill:

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, neither this conference report nor the accompanying joint statement of managers contains any congressional earmarks, congressionally directed spending items, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits, as defined in such rules.

I also remind the gentleman that this conference agreement is a bipartisan and bicameral measure. Nine of the 10 Democrat conferees from the Agriculture Committee have signed the conference report. The conference report was made available to all Members and the public yesterday, in full compliance of the 3-day availability rule.

In order to allow the House to continue its scheduled business for the day, Madam Speaker, I urge Members to vote "yes" on the question of consideration of the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Will the House now consider the resolution?

The question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. House Resolution 465 provides for a closed rule allowing for consideration of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, and provides for separate consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013, under a standard conference report rule.

Madam Speaker, since 1976, the Hyde amendment—which prohibits the Federal funding of abortions—has been included in relevant appropriations bills. Each year it has been consistently renewed and supported by congressional majorities and Presidents of both parties.

NARAL, an abortion advocacy group, has suggested that prohibiting public

funds for abortion reduces abortion rates by roughly 50 percent. That means that half of the women who would have otherwise had a publicly funded abortion end up carrying their babies to term.

In 1993, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the Hyde amendment prevented as many as 675,000 abortions every single year. This means that millions of Americans are alive today because of the Hyde amendment. After 38 years, it is time for this life-saving amendment to become permanent law.

When Barack Obama was elected in 2008, a myriad of long-established laws, including the Hyde amendment, created a mostly uniform policy that Federal programs did not pay for abortion or subsidize health plans that included coverage of abortion, with only narrow exceptions.

Unfortunately, ObamaCare destroyed that longstanding policy, bypassing the Hyde amendment restriction and paving the way for publicly funded abortions. The President's health care law authorized massive public subsidies to assist millions of Americans to purchase private health plans that will cover abortion on demand. In other words, hard-earned taxpayer dollars are now being used to pay for elective abortions. This is simply unacceptable.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 will codify the principles of the Hyde amendment on a permanent, government-wide basis, which means it will apply longstanding Federal health programs such as Medicaid, SCHIP, and Federal Employees Health Benefits, as well as to new programs created by ObamaCare. H.R. 7 prohibits the use of Federal funds for abortions. It does so by prohibiting all Federal funding for abortion; prohibiting Federal subsidies for ACA health care plans that include coverage for abortion; prohibiting the use of Federal facilities for abortion; and prohibiting Federal employees from performing abortions.

This bill applies to the Federal funding of abortions, except in cases of rape, incest, or when the life of the mother is in danger. This commonsense measure, which restores a longstanding bipartisan agreement, protects the unborn and prevents taxpayers from being forced to fund thousands of abortions. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to vote for life by voting in favor of this rule and H.R. 7.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume. I will attach extraneous material to this part of my speech since we only have 30 minutes on two legislative matters.

Madam Speaker, at a time when millions are struggling to find work, the

majority has decided that their top priority, one of the first 10 bills of the session that they number, is to continue the decades-long assault on a woman's constitutionally protected right to choose.

Before I go any further, let me be clear: this bill is a hoax. Federal taxpayer dollars are not spent on abortion. This has been true for more than three decades. Under the Hyde amendment, the use of Federal dollars to pay for abortions is flatly prohibited except in the case of rape or incest or when the life of the mother is in danger.

Thus, despite what the majority may claim, H.R. 7 is not a solution to a problem but a poorly, thinly veiled attempt to chip away at ObamaCare and women's reproductive rights, another battle in the war against women.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 is a reflection of a majority out of touch with the American people and struggling to understand fundamental truths about reproductive health. And we really mean struggle.

This extreme legislation was originally sponsored by a man, originated from a subcommittee composed of 13 men, and was passed out of the Judiciary Committee with the votes of 21 Republican men. This has been the problem for a long time—men in blue suits and red ties determining what women can and should do when it comes to their own health.

One such Republican man has declared that "wife is to voluntarily submit" to her husband in a book that he recently wrote. Another has declared, and this is a new one, this is not the one from the last election, "the incidents of rape resulting in pregnancy are very low." In other words, Madam Speaker, the men who are making these decisions simply don't know what they are talking about.

Meanwhile, a Republican man on the Judiciary Committee recently said that today's legislation is good for reducing the unemployment numbers because:

Having new children brought into the world is not harmful to job creation. It very much promotes job creation for care and services and so on that need to be provided for a lot of people to raise children.

Unfortunately, the hypocrisy of that statement is it comes from a majority that staunchly opposes increasing any funding for pre-K education or paid sick leave for working parents, and the same majority cutting nutritional benefits for the working poor under the farm bill that we will consider tomorrow. Such a hypocritical and mean-spirited agenda reminds me of another quote from former Congressman Barney Frank who once famously said that the anti-choice legislators "believe that life begins at conception but ends at birth." In other words, once it is born, they don't want to have anything to do with it. In looking at the major-

ity's legislative priorities, it is almost impossible to disagree.

Madam Speaker, a new poll shows that 64 percent of Americans agree that "decisions on abortion should be made by a woman and her doctor." The government should never have gotten into the business of being between the woman and her doctor, or anyone else she wants to consult. Only 24 percent say "government has a right and obligation to pass restrictions on abortion." Perhaps that is why the majority is passing H.R. 7 on the same day as the State of the Union, because we know it is not going anywhere. We know that the Senate will not take this up; and if by some strange set of events it should pass the Senate, which it won't, the President would never sign it.

□ 1315

But anyway, we bring it up on the same day of the State of the Union, rushing it through Congress to make some kind of point to some people somewhere before they leave on a weekend retreat and making one rule to consider two drastically different bills even though we would have had plenty of time to have had two rules here.

Included under today's rule is the conference report on the farm bill, a major piece of legislation that impacts all aspects of the economy. Surely it deserves a full and open debate before its final passage.

Instead, the majority is proposing another closed and House rule-breaking process because we have not had time to read it. This will also be their 100th closed rule since taking control in 2011, and allowing just an hour of general debate for each bill and 15 minutes basically on the rule on our side of the House.

If one wonders at the lack of productivity from this Congress, just look at the closed and partisan legislative process pursued by the majority and you will quickly understand.

Madam Speaker, with all of the major issues facing our country, attacking women's health care shows just how extreme—and extremely out of touch—the Washington Republicans are because the Republicans at home don't feel that way.

We should be passing legislation to create jobs, to grow our economy and to level the playing field for working women, not taking the country backwards with bills that attack women's rights.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on today's rule and the underlying legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, for more than three decades, the so-called Hyde Amendment has flatly banned the use of Federal dollars to pay for abortions except in cases of rape or incest or

when the life of the mother is endangered. In part, the Hyde Amendment reads, "None of the funds appropriated in this Act, and none of the funds in any trust fund to which funds are appropriated in this Act, shall be expended for health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion."

Despite the Majority's claims to the contrary, today's legislation goes far beyond the definitive language of the Hyde Amendment in an attempt to restrict a woman's reproductive health options under private insurance plans and her ability to spend private dollars on a constitutionally protected right to reproductive health care.

At the heart of this legislative attack is the extremely broad and vague language included in today's bill that redefines the definition of "federal funding." Under this legislation, the definition of Federal funding would be expanded to include the benefit of a tax expenditure. While this terminology may seem complex, its consequences are quite simple.

If this bill becomes law, a woman purchasing health insurance that includes abortion coverage will be denied a premium tax credit that helps make coverage affordable in the first place. Facing such a circumstance, she would be financially incentivized to buy a cheaper health insurance plan that does not include abortion services. As more women give up health insurance plans with abortion coverage, health insurance companies will stop offering such plans. Very quickly, it will become both prohibitively expensive and difficult to purchase abortion coverage in a health insurance plan.

In so doing, this bill takes particular aim at the reproductive rights of poor women. Women who are struggling to get by rely almost exclusively upon insurance premium subsidies to reduce the cost of health care while more affluent women can often access additional benefits such as Flexible Spending Accounts to reduce their health care costs. While insurance premium subsidies are eliminated under today's bill Flexible Spending Accounts are left untouched.

We should not be restricting either of these tax benefits that serve America's women, but it is particularly immoral for the Majority to be targeting the most vulnerable women among us.

Sadly, targeting the reproductive health care of poor women is nothing new for the Republican Party. As far back as the 1970's Henry Hyde famously stated "I would certainly like to prevent, if I could legally, anybody having an abortion: a rich woman, a middle class woman, or a poor woman. Unfortunately, the only vehicle available is the [Medicaid] bill," he continued—which as we know only affects low-income women and families.

In addition to taking a tax benefit away from those struggling to get by, today's bill would raise taxes on small businesses in another attempt to make force small businesses to drop insurance coverage. Under this legislation, small businesses that offer health insurance plans that include abortion coverage would be ineligible for the Small Business Tax Credit. Currently, 87 percent of all employer-sponsored insurance plans include coverage for abortion, and the Small Business Tax Credit can be worth 35-50% of the cost of a small

business' premiums. Taking away this tax credit would be a major tax INCREASE on small businesses for simply keeping the same insurance coverage that they already have.

In short, today's legislation is an attempt to rewrite our Nation's laws so that it is financially impossible for a woman to access a private health insurance plan that provides abortion coverage. And it is yet another attack on women's rights from a Majority that seems to be struggling to understand the most fundamental aspects of an issue important to America's women.

Indeed, when it comes to the issue of reproductive rights, one member of the Majority has declared that "the incidence of rape resulting in pregnancy are very low." Another member of the Majority has declared that today's legislation is good for reducing unemployment, because "having new children brought into the world is not harmful to job creation. It very much promotes job creation for all the care and services and so on that need to be provided by a lot of people to raise children."

Quotes such as these make it clear how such extreme—and extremely misguided—legislation has made it to the floor today. They also remind us why it is so important that the Majority allows an open and transparent legislative process so that such dangerous legislation never sees the light of day.

Unfortunately, it is under a closed legislative process that variations of this legislation have been introduced and pushed through the House of Representatives in recent years. Repeatedly, the Majority has written similar legislation and included provisions that attempted to redefine rape. The Majority, who just weeks ago decried the role of the IRS in Obamacare, has even introduced a variation of this legislation that empowered the IRS to audit any woman who has had an abortion. This in no way should be the responsibility of the IRS and any attempt to impose the IRS in a woman's medical decisions is nothing but an attack on her constitutionally protected rights.

Once again, it is under a closed legislative process—and an abandonment of regular order—that we find ourselves here today considering yet another misguided attempt to restrict women's rights.

In fact, while today's legislation bears the same name, it is not the same bill that was reported out of the Judiciary Committee earlier this month.

Instead, it is an original Rules Committee print that was first made available less than a week ago and includes significant legislative changes, such as the addition of text from two bills that have never received any committee debate, review or mark-up.

Furthermore, the Majority is asking that we consider this new bill under another closed rule. If we do, it will be the 100th closed rule for a Majority that just concluded the most closed session in history.

Madam Speaker, it comes as little surprise that bad legislative process has produced another bad bill.

Over and over again, the Majority has shown no interest in opening up the legislative process and coming to the table to work on commonsense legislation with members from the other side of the aisle. My Democratic colleagues and I believe that we should be voting

on bills to create jobs, grow our economy and level the playing field for working women—but we will never be able to do so until the Majority allows us to truly participate in the legislative process.

Finally, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the farm bill conference report that is also brought to the floor by this resolution. Having only received the 900-plus page bill last night Members have had little chance to read the bill. In fact, as my friend Mr. MCGOVERN has noted, even conferees who supposedly negotiated this deal were not given a chance to read it!

But the one policy I know is included in the conference report is a massive, \$8.6 billion cut in SNAP, formerly known as "food stamps." Families receiving SNAP benefits already saw a cut in their monthly food budgets of approximately \$30 less than three months ago. For some families, this will mean an additional cut of up to \$90—a devastating blow for a low-income household.

In closing, I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "no" on today's rule, so that we can get to work on real solutions for the American people and put an end to the Majority's dangerous attacks on a woman's constitutionally protected right to choose, as well as their disregard for the plight of the poor and those searching for work.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding. I want to thank VIRGINIA FOXX for her extraordinary leadership on behalf of the weakest and the most vulnerable among us.

Madam Speaker, because abortion dismembers, decapitates, or chemically poisons an unborn child to death, Americans have consistently demanded that public funds not pay for abortion.

I would note parenthetically—and we just saw this last week—since 1973, some 56 million babies, unborn babies, have been killed by abortion, a number, a death toll that equates with the entire population of England.

Madam Speaker, a huge majority—well over 60 percent according to the most polls—show that women and men in this country don't want to be complicit in abortion by subsidizing it. A December 2009 Quinnipiac poll found that 72 percent opposed allowing abortion to be paid for by public funds under health care reform.

Another poll asked: If the choice were up to you, would you want your own insurance policy to include abortion? Sixty-nine percent of women said no.

Madam Speaker, this is because an ever-growing number of people recognize that abortion isn't health care; it kills babies and it hurts women.

We live in an age of ultrasound imaging: the ultimate window to the womb and the child who resides there. We are in the midst of a fetal health revolution, an explosion of benign life-affirming interventions designed to diagnose,

treat, and cure the precious lives of these youngest patients. Abortion is the antithesis of health care.

H.R. 7 will help save lives and it will reduce abortions. The Judiciary Committee report accompanying H.R. 7 notes that the high demand has saved over 1 million children, and the number is probably far larger because one in four women who would have had procured an abortion don't go through with it if public funding isn't available.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 seeks to accomplish three goals:

One, make the Hyde amendment and other current abortion funding prohibition permanent;

Two, ensure that the Affordable Care Act faithfully conforms with the Hyde amendment, as promised by the President;

And three, provide full disclosure, transparency, and the prominent display of the extent to which any health care insurance plan on the exchange funds abortion.

Madam Speaker, in the runup to passage of the Affordable Care Act, America was repeatedly assured by President Obama himself, including in a speech to a joint session of Congress in September of 2009, that: "Under our plan, no Federal dollars will be used to fund abortion."

On March 24, 2010, President Obama issued an executive order that said the Affordable Care Act "maintains current Hyde amendment restrictions governing abortion policy and extends those restrictions to newly created health insurance exchanges." Nothing could have been clearer. That seemed to be ironclad.

As far as my colleagues will recall, the Hyde amendment has two principles: it not only prohibits direct funding for abortion, but also bans funding for insurance plans that include abortion, except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.

We now know that the Hyde amendment principles have not been extended to the newly created health insurance exchanges. H.R. 7 seeks to correct that.

Under the Affordable Care Act, Madam Speaker, massive amounts of public funds in the form of tax credits are today paying for, and will soon pay for, insurance plans that include elective abortion. That violates the Hyde amendment and that violates the President's solemn promise.

As we all know, the new law is poised to give billions of dollars—they call them tax credits—directly to insurance companies on behalf of people who purchase health insurance. The Congressional Budget Office counts the cost of these so-called tax credits under the ACA as either direct spending or revenue reductions. Direct spending involves funds taken from where? The Treasury, to subsidize health insurance coverage. According to the CBO, the

ACA premium assistance credits will cost the Federal Government \$796 billion over 10 years.

Absent repeal or reform of the law, taxpayers will then be forced to foot the bill for abortion. Again, an overwhelming percentage of the people have consistently polled they don't want to be complicit in the taking of human life.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Michigan, Congressman KILDEE.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlelady from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending the unemployment insurance benefits for 1.6 million Americans instead of what is a radical Republican assault, a continuous assault, on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts, Congresswoman CLARK.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts, Congresswoman TSONGAS.

Ms. TSONGAS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Madam Speaker, I want to share emails from just three of the many people I hear from each week who have been personally affected by House Republicans' decision to block a vote on extending unemployment insurance.

Katie from Chelmsford: "I was laid off in April and have looked for a job since then—with no luck—In spite of the news reports about the economy and how great the job market is, we all know that is not true. I know so many folks still looking for jobs in MA—all well educated, well qualified good people! . . . I truly hope unemployment benefits are extended."

Clark from Westford: "I am writing you regarding the stopping of the Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation program.

I am a married father of 2 children in local area colleges living in Westford, MA and rely on this emergency money to survive. I have been able to work 8 months this year over 3 jobs but all were temporary positions that did not lead to full-time employment. The economy is not yet hot enough to create enough full-time jobs and without this money our family will not make it. Please find the money to pay for extending this program as it is saving our lives . . . literally!"

Doreen from Lowell: "I'm a single mom of a great 14 year old daughter who is an honor student! (Very proud.) In May of 2013 I was laid off after 23 wonderful years of employment with the same company. This has been a life changing time for [my daughter] and myself, however we have taken the change with nothing less than a positive attitude. We have made sacrifices such as canceling our cable and Internet as well as making cuts from cell phone service to more frugal grocery shopping.

"I found out today that after 6 months of unemployment it has ended! I received a letter just two months ago that I would be extended until May of 2014, however because of Federal budget cuts this is not happening. I've been looking and applying for jobs faithfully on a weekly basis with no luck. Nothing comes close to what I was making before, I have a mortgage by myself as a single mom . . .

"I've been proud of myself for this accomplishment and being a positive strong role model has always been important to me for my daughter. I don't understand how an extension can just be cancelled like that! My daughter and I are now just our small savings account away from being homeless and that's a shame. I can only hope that someone in Congress is listening to us hard working people and will step up and do something about this. It upsets me to think after 23 years of service I can't lean on my government for support. I don't expect to be on unemployment for long but unfortunately 6 months wasn't enough, it's still tough out there! I really appreciate you taking the time to read this email and please, please, please be my voice and make them hear me."

I urge my colleagues to pass an extension now and help hardworking people throughout our nation avoid economic disaster.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from California, Congressman TAKANO.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from New Mexico, Congresswoman LUJAN GRISHAM.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I also seek unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans, including

nearly 7,500 New Mexico job seekers, instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Georgia, Congressman JOHNSON.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will first make a statement.

The Member asking to insert remarks may include a simple declaration of sentiment toward the question under debate, but should not embellish the request with extended oratory.

The gentleman from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights. H.R. 7 is enumerated appropriately because it reflects the priorities of this Congress.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

For what purpose does the gentlewoman from North Carolina seek recognition?

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Chair to reiterate her statement made just a few minutes ago about the extent of the remarks that may be made.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Connecticut, Congresswoman ESTY.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman from New York will be charged due to the embellishment of the gentleman from Georgia.

The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized.

Ms. ESTY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Texas, Congressman AL GREEN.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from California, Congresswoman LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Rhode Island, Congressman CICILLINE.

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentlewoman from Texas, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Maryland, Congressman VAN HOLLEN.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from New York, Congressman ELIOT ENGEL.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans. We really have to have compassion for people. People are starving. We need to help them. That is what Congress should be all about.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of embellishment by the gentleman from New York will be charged to the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Florida, Congressman ALCEE HASTINGS.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

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

□ 1330

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Thank you to the gentlelady from North Carolina.

Madam Speaker, we stand in this Hall, and many times it is spoken of the history that goes on here and of the things that have been done, and often

it echos through time—the Speakers, the Presidents, the others who have spoken here. Today, I think, as we talk about this, there is an echo that should be coming forth, spoken in the Chamber that was spoken by this, our administration and our President, who said, One more misunderstanding I want to clear up. Adding, No Federal dollars will be used to fund abortions, and conscience laws will remain in place.

To me, that still echoes in this Chamber.

I rise today as a cosponsor of the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. I rise in strong support of the bill and the underlying rule. I share the belief of many taxpayers, which is that life is a gift worthy of our protection, not something to be snuffed out when deemed inconvenient or challenging. I rise in support of this bill on behalf of those who do not yet have a voice—the yet to be born daughters and sons of our Nation.

For me, this issue is very personal. When my wife was pregnant with our first child, we learned that our daughter, Jordan, was affected with spina bifida. When we were dealing with the struggle and were excited about her birth, we were shocked when people came to us after hearing of Jordan's diagnosis and said we have a choice about whether to keep our child. We knew that Jordan was a gift from God and that there was a plan and purpose for her life. We believe of that fact more strongly than ever today, and we cannot imagine life without Jordan.

I know my family is not alone. Many folks have welcomed children in the midst of difficult circumstances, not because it was easy but because it was right, for when we deny the humanity of the unborn, we betray our own. Every member of civil society has a sacred responsibility to protect the lives of children.

Today, we have the opportunity to affirm the responsibility by passing the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. This bill helps ensure that taxpayer dollars are directed to care that preserves and improves lives, not to a procedure that guarantees death. On behalf of the millions of Americans who object to abortion on demand, I urge this body to prevent taxpayer dollars from funding such abortions.

As has been said, life matters, and promises matter, and echoes of this Chamber matter as well, especially when spoken by the President.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule and give the House a vote on a bill, written by Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. LEVIN, to extend emergency unemployment benefits paid for with savings from the farm bill that, it seems, this House will pass today.

To discuss his bill, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, let me express very personally why we are asking for a “no” on the previous question.

Unemployment insurance has lifted 11 million people from poverty since 2008. It kept 2.5 million people from poverty in 2012. So, for so many people in this country today, there is a personal emergency. Since the end of this program, December 28, they have been facing bills to pay—utility bills, house payment bills, rental bills, money for gas to keep looking for work. These are hardworking Americans who are facing the winds of poverty.

One of them today is with me for the State of the Union—Josie Maisano, from Michigan. She will tell you, as others will today at a press conference, that there is an emergency. There is an emergency for them. Extending UI is a moral American imperative. It is also a national economic benefit.

The Speaker asked for an offset. We are proposing one. So let us today have the chance to bring to the floor a bill to extend unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans, growing 72,000 every week.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. It is a good bill, an important bill, that takes critical steps to protect the lives of the innocent unborn and the conscience rights of millions of Americans. Before discussing the bill, I think it is important to recall some important history that was discussed previously.

On Saturday, March 20, 2010, the President of the United States announced a so-called “agreement” on his Affordable Care Act. In part, because of this agreement supposedly protecting Americans' conscience rights, ObamaCare narrowly passed and was signed into law.

Madam Speaker, the so-called “Stupak agreement” was a charade—it did not protect our conscience rights; it did not stop the Federal funding of abortion. In fact, it did the very opposite. It was hidden behind a veil of secrecy and accounting gimmicks, and because of this charade, we are here today.

H.R. 7 is very simple. It does exactly what the administration hoped we would believe they were doing in the Stupak agreement, and it answers the fundamental question: How do we protect the moral beliefs of a majority of Americans on the wrenching issue of taking the lives of the innocent unborn? The answer is clear: We should not force people to pay for what they

do not believe in. We should stop Federal bureaucrats from using Americans' hard-earned tax dollars to pay for abortions, and we should allow Americans to exercise their God-given rights of conscience.

The American people are opposed to using taxpayer dollars to pay for the taking of innocent human life. We know this from the thousands of constituents who contact each of our offices. We know this from the hundreds and thousands of Americans who descended upon this Capitol and State capitals across the Nation in March for Lives just last week, and we know this from the 90-plus lawsuits that have been filed by organizations on religious liberty grounds, like the Little Sisters of the Poor, Wheaton College, Hobby Lobby, and Conestoga Wood. The list goes on and on.

We know this in our hearts. It is simply wrong to force people to pay for abortions—something that violates their consciences, their fundamental beliefs and religious liberties.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield for the purpose of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD).

Mr. HORSFORD. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert my statement into the RECORD in support of extending unemployment insurance benefits for the 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights in our great country.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my friend.

Madam Speaker, what we are seeing here is an abuse of process. We have one rule governing a bill that is an assault on women's health care rights, combined with the same rule for a 900-page farm bill that was filed at 7:30 last night. I know a lot of people around here claim to be speed readers, but we are supposed to have a vote on the farm bill on Wednesday. Some people may decide to vote for it, and some people may decide to vote against it.

What we are asking, Madam Speaker, is that we should all agree that this House—Republicans and Democrats alike—should have a chance to vote on a bill that says we will take the savings from cutting back on agriculture subsidies and use those savings to pay for an extension of emergency unemployment insurance for over 1.5 million Americans who lost their jobs through no fault of their own and are out there looking for work every day in an economy where there are still three people looking for every one job. That is what we are asking for, Madam Speaker, with respect to defeating the previous question and letting us have a vote.

Now, the Speaker has said repeatedly over the last couple of weeks that he would be open to extending unemployment insurance if we would find a way to pay for it. We have a way to pay for it. Mr. LEVIN and I went to the Rules Committee and said, Okay. Let's let the whole House vote today after the farm bill passes, if it does pass on Wednesday, and say, Let's use those savings for this important purpose. They said no. They didn't want this House to have that right. So now each of us—Republicans and Democrats alike—will have the opportunity to vote to decide whether this body can decide to spend the savings from cutting ag subsidies to help 1.5 million people in their districts and around the country who are struggling right now.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my friend.

By the way, it doesn't just help those struggling families. The Congressional Budget Office says it helps all of us—it helps the small businesses and merchants in our communities—because, if those struggling families can't pay the rent or the mortgage or go out and buy groceries, who does it hurt? It also hurts the local merchants and small businesses.

So, Madam Speaker, for goodness sakes, if people want to vote against the idea of using the savings from cutting the ag subsidies to help 1.3 million Americans—if you want to vote “no”—go for it, but for goodness sakes, let the people's House have that vote. Let the people's House decide whether we want to help 1.3 million Americans. I hope this will weigh heavily on the conscience of the House.

Ms. FOXX. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I remind my friends on the other side of the aisle and every American watching at home that normal unemployment benefits remain in effect for all Americans in need. What has expired is the additional emergency unemployment compensation that goes above and beyond the normal compensation. This emergency compensation was put in place during the economic downturn and was always intended to be temporary. In fact, we have been told that the recession is over and that it has been over for a long time. Republicans want to help create jobs, and we call on the Senate to act on the bills we have sent them, and we will do just that.

Madam Speaker, I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee, Dr. ROE.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, as an OB/GYN physician who has delivered close to 5,000 babies, I strongly support the sanctity of life and, therefore, H.R. 7.

Since 1976, Congress has prevented taxpayer funding for abortion. Unfortunately, this door was reopened with the passage of the Affordable Care Act. This misguided law, in addition to causing incredible harm to our health care system, has potentially put taxpayers on the hook for funding the termination of innocent life. That is why H.R. 7 is so important. It explicitly states that taxpayer dollars should not be used to fund abortions.

I am not here today making a point. I am here on this floor as a physician, trying to save lives. Abortion is not a business our government should be involved in. As legislators, we carry the responsibility and privilege to protect those who do not have a voice. We must make our laws consistent with our science and ensure full legal protections to those who are waiting to be born. This starts with legislation like H.R. 7.

One of our government's core functions is to protect the most innocent among us, and I will do my best to ensure that government fulfills its duty. I will always fight for the right to life because it is my belief that we are unique creations of God, who knows us and loves us even before we are born.

I urge my colleagues to support this important rule.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, let me give myself just a half a second to say that, again, we hear how important it is until a child is born, but if it is unemployed later, it is not going to get to eat as long as we have this majority.

I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY).

Ms. ESTY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule and to the underlying legislation.

Forty-one years ago, the Supreme Court recognized that women have the right to make their own decisions about their reproductive health. Yet, once again, this House is choosing to senselessly attack women's rights.

This bill would restrict a woman's right to make personal medical decisions by bullying small businesses to either drop comprehensive health coverage for their female employees or lose tax credits. Furthermore, it places restrictions on women using private funds to buy private insurance for their most personal medical decisions. This bill is nothing more than an unprecedented, mean-spirited attempt to shame women out of being in control of their own health.

We can and must do better, which is why I urge my colleagues to oppose this effort to restrict health care for women.

□ 1345

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, it is unfortunate that our colleagues are doing all that they can to portray this bill as an attack on women's rights. It is not

that at all. I appreciate all of my colleagues who have spoken so eloquently on our side of the aisle about what this bill truly is.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. NUNNELEE).

Mr. NUNNELEE. I thank the gentlelady from North Carolina for yielding.

Today, I rise in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, which will make policies like the Hyde amendment permanent and government-wide, and remove funding for insurance plans that include abortions from the Affordable Care Act.

Just last week, we marked the 41st anniversary of the Roe decision, and we memorialized the 56 million children whose lives have been sacrificed for that decision.

I am a proud defender of life. I represent a State that stands strongly for life. I understand that the very first inalienable right in our Declaration of Independence is the right to life. But I also acknowledge that there is wide disagreement on that subject throughout our Nation and throughout this House. I recognize there is wide debate on when life may begin.

Surely, we can agree that there should be no taxpayer dollars used to fund abortion procedures. There should be no taxpayer forced to pay for health care through ObamaCare that funds abortion against his or her will.

That is why I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 7, and I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the final bill.

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

Ms. LEE of California. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Currently, Congress imposes unfair limitations on insurance coverage of abortions through the Hyde amendment for low-income women, which should be, quite frankly, repealed. Today, Republicans are asking us to go even further—to create an unprecedented interference in the lives of women and their families by restricting coverage for women's health in private insurance plans.

Instead of working together to extend unemployment benefits for the more than 1.3 million unemployed Americans, here we are debating another dangerous and divisive attempt to strip away the rights of women, instead of creating economic opportunity and jobs. Here you go again, attacking women's health care, not to mention that this bill singles out an attack on low-income women in the District of Columbia by permanently prohibiting the District from spending its own locally raised funds on abortions for low-income women. You would not want us to restrict anything in your districts where privately raised local funds are used.

This is just another battle in the war on women. It has got to stop. We must stop these attacks on women's health.

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

I will say it again. We are not attacking women's health care with this rule and this legislation.

H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, codifies many longstanding pro-life protections that have been passed under both Republican- and Democrat-controlled Congresses.

The majority of taxpayers oppose Federal funding for abortion, as demonstrated in poll after poll. A recent Marist poll showed that 58 percent of respondents oppose or strongly oppose using any taxpayer dollars for abortions.

During the ObamaCare debate, a 2010 Zogby/O'Leary poll found that 76 percent of Americans said that Federal funds should never pay for an abortion or should pay only to save the life of the mother.

A January 2010 Quinnipiac University poll showed 67 percent of respondents opposed Federal funding of abortion.

An April 2011 CNN poll showed that 61 percent of respondents opposed public funding for abortion.

A November 2009 Washington Post poll showed 61 percent of respondents opposed government subsidies for health insurance that includes abortion.

A September 2009 International Communications Research poll showed that 67 percent of respondents opposed any measure that would "require people to pay for abortion coverage with their Federal taxes."

Madam Speaker, it is clear. The American people do not want the government spending their hard-earned tax dollars to destroy innocent human life. Period.

Like most taxpayers, employers also prefer plans that preclude abortion coverage. According to the insurance industry's trade association:

Most insurers offer plans that include abortion coverage, but most employers choose not to offer it as a part of their benefits package.

Even Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI has voted numerous times to prohibit taxpayer funding for abortion in the District of Columbia. President Obama voted against taxpayer funding of abortion in the District of Columbia twice when he was in the Senate, and since being elected President he has signed appropriations legislation into law that prohibits this funding.

As you can see, Madam Speaker, opposition to taxpayer funding for abortion is bipartisan, bicameral, and supported by a majority of the American people. It is time to restore the status quo on government funding of abortion and make this widely supported policy permanent across the Federal Government. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and H.R. 7.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, first, let me just point out that despite what the gentlelady from North Carolina just said, both President Obama and his administration, as well as Leader PELOSI, strongly oppose H.R. 7.

I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. Despite the misleading title, this bill is not about Federal funding for abortions. It is about intervening in women's personal health care decisions.

Forty-one years ago, the Supreme Court confirmed in *Roe v. Wade* a constitutional right for women to keep our decisions about our body between us and our doctors. Yet here we are, more than four decades later, confronted with another draconian bill that encroaches on that right.

Since 1976, the Hyde amendment has prohibited the use of Federal dollars for abortions. The Affordable Care Act is compliant with the Hyde amendment. The Affordable Care Act is law. The bill before us is nothing more than a deceitful attempt to place further restrictions on women's access to health care services.

Unfortunately, these kinds of baseless attacks on women's reproductive rights continue to be led by Republican men. It is clear that the all-male Republican members on the House Judiciary Committee who approved this bill would rather focus their time and American taxpayer dollars on restricting a woman's right to make her own medical decisions rather than confront our Nation's most pressing problems.

You would think that Republicans would realize we have a few more things to focus on that are a higher priority than whether or not women can make their own health care decisions. These men do not represent or reflect the voices of women in America. That is why as a mother, a lawmaker, and as a woman, I stand before you today to say: No more.

We should oppose H.R. 7.

We have worked too hard to secure freedom and independence for women in this country; and

We have come too far to let our nation inch back to the dark ages when barriers stood between women and their Constitutional rights.

When I think about the kind of world I want my daughters to live in, it's one where they have access to comprehensive, affordable, and safe health care services.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand up for women by voting "no" on H.R. 7.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the author of H.R. 7.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentlelady for yielding and for her extraordinary leadership.

Madam Speaker, let me again convey to my colleagues the fact that H.R. 7 seeks to make the Hyde amendment and other current abortion funding prohibitions permanent.

Just a couple of weeks ago, as part of the omnibus bill, Members on both sides of the aisle voted to renew the pro-life riders for another year. Title I of H.R. 7 are those separate riders made permanent. That is all it is.

Secondly, it ensures that the Affordable Care Act faithfully conforms to the Hyde amendment, as promised by the President of the United States.

As the previous speaker just said, she believes it comports with the Hyde amendment. It doesn't.

The Hyde amendment is made up of two parts, I remind my colleagues: direct funding for abortion and no funds to any insurance policy, any coverage, any plan that includes abortion.

It couldn't be simpler. It is right there in the Hyde amendment. It has been there year in and year out.

I would note, parenthetically, that I authored the ban on funding for abortions in the Federal Employees Health Benefit program. We mirrored the language of the Hyde amendment so that today every single insurance plan in the FEHB does not include abortion, except in cases of rape, incest, or life of the mother, just like the Hyde amendment.

Let me also say to my colleagues that we need transparency. There is a galling lack of transparency in ObamaCare on a myriad of fronts, including whether or not a plan includes abortion.

In my own State of New Jersey, we tried and tried and took hours upon hours and finally found out that of the 31 plans offered in the State, 14 plans subsidized abortion on demand. Yet none of the plans—not one—makes this information available to the consumers shopping online.

Ditto for State after State. You can't find out. When you make those phone calls, you get conflicting feedback from the person on the other side, who himself or herself doesn't know either. Every single ObamaCare plan in Connecticut and Rhode Island includes abortion on demand. Every single one. You may be happy with that, but we see that as the taking of human life.

I remind my colleagues, look at what abortion does to the unborn child. The baby is either dismembered, chemically poisoned, or decapitated. The methods are horrific, and we live in a culture of denial that does not want to look at the method.

It also is highly injurious of women, especially on the intermediate and long-term basis, as relates to psychological health.

Let me also say to my colleagues as well: Do you want to know what ObamaCare is doing? Just look at our own plan. Look at the DC Health Link,

our own portable health insurance. Of the 112 plans that you and I and our staff can obtain, 103 of those plans are subsidized by Federal dollars, completely in violation of the Hyde amendment—and my amendment, frankly. Only nine plans are pro-life. And 103 of those plans that you and I can buy pay for abortion on demand.

Just look at the facts.

The rhetoric that is so attacking of our side on the issue—I believe in talking about the issue and not attacking my friends and colleagues, and I do count so many as close personal friends, but when it comes to this issue, we need to talk about victims. I work with a lot of women. I know a lot of women who are post-abortive. They are in need of help and reconciliation. Abortion is the abandonment of women and also the destruction of a child.

ObamaCare has not lived up to its promise. H.R. 7 gets it to the point where it does so.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK).

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, which effectively bans insurance coverage for family planning and allows the government to step between a woman and her doctor even when there are risks of serious medical complications.

Madam Speaker, the women of America are watching. Dictating women's personal health care decisions should not be on the table today.

What should be on the table?

How about the many policies that ensure the economic success of women, such as pay equity, paid sick leave, and raising the minimum wage? How about making sure that millions of American job seekers have the vital safety net that unemployment insurance provides and allows them to put food on the table? How about instead of dictating women's health care decisions, we focus on making child care and education more accessible and affordable?

This bill does not move us forward. It moves us backward and inserts the government into the most personal decisions a woman and a family can make.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 7.

□ 1400

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), who was not able to testify before those 12 men.

Ms. NORTON. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I appreciate the opportunity to speak, particularly since I was denied the courtesy of speaking on this bill, which targets my own district.

Madam Speaker, the only thing worse than targeting the reproductive health of the Nation's women is reaching beyond that to do even greater damage to the women of a local jurisdiction—to permanently keep the District of Columbia from spending its own local funds on abortion services for poor women, as 17 States do. Among them are Alaska, Arizona, and Montana, hardly bastions of liberalism.

Mind you, such spending is already barred in the annual D.C. appropriations bill. Yet H.R. 7 strips—imagine this—strips the District of Columbia of its very identity for purposes of abortion by deeming the District of Columbia government to be part of the Federal Government. What an indignity.

Republicans captured the majority in the name of local control and devolving Federal power to the States and localities. Today, you turn your own principles on their heads to snatch power from a local jurisdiction. We will insist that Republicans practice what they preach.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this offensive and overreaching legislation. It endangers women's health and well-being and attempts to effectively ban working women's access to a legal medical procedure.

With a budget passed, and the President delivering the State of the Union tonight, this body has an important opportunity to turn the page and start acting in a bipartisan manner to address the Nation's real problem.

We should be working together to create jobs, encourage economic growth, and ensure steady and rising wages. Instead, this House majority has once again succumbed to their worst ideological impulses at the expense of women's health. Once again, for almost the 50th time now, they are trying to undermine the Affordable Care Act.

The bill claims to end taxpayer funding for abortion. Everyone in this room knows there is no taxpayer funding for abortion, per the Hyde amendment which is enacted every year.

What this bill does is prevents millions of women working for small businesses from using their own private funds to purchase coverage for services from private insurance. It aims to end any private coverage of these services by private insurance companies. Women cannot get the comprehensive coverage that they need in the insurance marketplace.

The same old, same old from this House Republican majority. Oppose this ideological legislation.

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

Madam Speaker, the passage of H.R. 7 will be welcome news for the majority of Americans who do not want their tax dollars paying for the grisly business of abortion. This bill, which is co-sponsored by 165 House Members and a quarter of the Senate, will make existing policies like the Hyde amendment permanent and will rid ObamaCare of its massive expansion of public funding for abortion insurance plans.

The President repeatedly assured Americans that ObamaCare would "maintain current Hyde amendment restrictions governing abortion policy and extend those restrictions to newly created health insurance exchanges." That promise didn't pan out, like so many other promises he made. It now joins, "If you like your plan, you can keep it" in President Obama's panoply of broken promises.

Madam Speaker, last week hundreds of thousands of Americans came to Washington, D.C., braved the cold, and marched for life. Participants hailed from all 50 States, various religions, and all different walks of life. The one thing they had in common was a shared dedication to protecting the unborn.

The March for Life gives a voice to the voiceless and sends a powerful message to Representatives of the people assembled here in Congress. It is heartening that so many Americans of different backgrounds are willing to take a stand for life.

This is not a partisan issue, and this is not a partisan bill. H.R. 7 reflects the bipartisan, bicameral agreement that our government should not be in the business of subsidizing abortions. This is not a radical idea, Madam Speaker. It is a commonsense proposal that codifies a longstanding practice. Therefore, I again urge my colleagues to vote for this rule and H.R. 7.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democrat leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding. I commend her for her longstanding and strong support and respect for women, for their judgment, for the size and timing of their families, for when women succeed, America succeeds. And Congresswoman Ranking Member SLAUGHTER has been a great proponent of that.

Today, the President will stand at the rostrum of the House to report on the State of the Union. On a day when we should join him in laying out a vision of opportunity and optimism for our country, Republicans are voting to limit women's health care decisions.

They are hiding the provisions of this legislation by what they have described as longstanding tradition and accepted

policy that there will be no Federal funding for abortions and, indeed, there isn't. It is spelled out every time we have a bill that addresses this in appropriation, which they have stated very clearly and they have said that, in a bipartisan way, we have supported.

So why are we wasting time coming to the floor today to take up something that, as they have conceded, is the accepted policy of the House and of the Congress of the United States?

Why?

We are doing it because they are using it as a front for legislation that is very harmful to reproductive health of women, very disrespectful of women's judgment and, again, a waste of time on the floor of the House, a waste of time when, instead of disrespecting women, we should be mindful and address the needs of 1.5 million and a growing number of Americans who have lost their unemployment insurance through no fault of their own, hardworking Americans who play by the rules and work hard.

The work-hard ethic is alive and well in America; but in this economic time, some people have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

Over time, we have always respected the system that we had, paid these benefits—but not now.

So today, instead of going down this path to nowhere—they know this legislation is going nowhere, that is to say, the underlying damage that they are doing to women's health in their legislation, it is going nowhere.

Instead, we should defeat this rule, vote against the previous question, follow the lead of distinguished Ranking Member SLAUGHTER on the committee, our distinguished Ranking Member VAN HOLLEN of the Budget Committee, vote this rule down, enable us to bring up a bill that will use the savings from the subsidy cuts in the farm bill in order to pay for unemployment insurance benefits.

I, myself, do not think that they should be paid for because it is an emergency and, by and large, those emergencies have never had an offset.

But if the Republicans want an offset, here is an offset, one that is going to be voted into law tomorrow in the House of Representatives. We can use it today to extend these benefits.

Why don't we use the time that we have to meet the needs of the American people, to honor their priorities, to make their future better, instead of dragging us into the past?

So I ask, again, our colleagues to vote against the bill so that we can take up a bill in support of extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans instead of this radical Republican assault on women's health care rights.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, our leader is right. Our message today should be to be able to help the chronically and unemployed individuals who have worked and are now in need of an extension of the unemployment benefits.

Instead, today, as we pass H.R. 7, we will be making a blatant attack on equal protection of the law, and that disappoints me because I know my good friends believe in the Constitution on the other side of the aisle. And the Hyde amendment, and I had the privilege of serving with Chairman Hyde for a number of years on the Judiciary Committee, clearly is the law.

But what this bill has done is gone even further. It has disenfranchised, from their civil liberties, the people of the District of Columbia, and completely abolished home rule, to the extent of women's health. And if it was a State, the question would be whether or not it was appropriate under the 10th Amendment.

Then it has disincentivized small businesses, for you have disqualified them from getting a tax incentive or a tax credit because they are not allowed to provide for their employees.

This bill should be put to the side, and we should pass legislation to ensure that the unemployed have unemployment insurance. That is what is right about America, and we should do the right thing.

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

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

Instead of resuming their War on Women, our colleagues across the aisle should be working with Democrats to extend unemployment insurance to the 1.9 million Americans whose benefits have been terminated and to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour so that people who work hard and play by the rules do not have to raise their families in poverty.

A far better use of our time would be to provide help to long-term unemployed jobhunters by bringing to the floor and passing H.R. 3888, the "New Chance for a New Start in Life Act," a bill I introduced that would provide compensated skills training for the jobs of tomorrow to the long-term unemployed.

Last year I opposed this irresponsible and reckless legislation when it was brought to the floor. I opposed this bill when it was considered in the Judiciary Committee earlier this month. I opposed this bill yesterday when it was being considered by the Rules Committee.

Madam Speaker, the version of H.R. 7 before us is only a little less bad than the bill reported by the Judiciary Committee.

Dropped are the tax provisions that would prevent an individual from deducting any abortion expenses as a tax-eligible medical expense or using pre-tax flex health or health savings accounts for abortion expenses.

But the other draconian provisions of this terrible bill remain intact:

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

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

3. Applies such prohibitions to District of Columbia funds.

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

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

Taken together, these provisions have the effect, and possibly the intent, of arbitrarily infringing women's reproductive freedoms and poses a nationwide threat to the health and wellbeing of American women and a direct challenge to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade*.

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

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

This condition meant that the fetus likely would be born with a shortening of muscle tissue that results in the inability to move limbs. In addition, Danielle's fetus likely would suffer deformities to the face and head, and the lungs were unlikely to develop beyond the 22-week point. There was less than a 10% chance that, if born, Danielle's baby would be able to breathe on its own and only a 2% chance the baby would be able to eat on its own.

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

Every pregnancy is different. No politician knows, or has the right to assume he knows, what is best for a woman and her family. These are decisions that properly must be left to women to make, in consultation with their partners, doctors, and their God.

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

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

In *Roe v. Wade*, the Court held that a State could prohibit a woman from exercising her right to terminate a pregnancy in order to protect her health prior to viability.

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

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

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

This right of privacy was hard won and must be preserved inviolate. The bill before us threatens this hard won right for women and must be defeated.

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY).

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition today to the rule. I offered an amendment to H.R. 7 which was not made in order by the Rules Committee. In fact, not a single amendment was made in order.

The majority continues to tell us about their commitment to open debate and regular order. Yet we continue to govern under closed rule.

I am disappointed by the majority's broken promises. I am also opposed to the underlying bill, which is an attack on women and an attack on their families. It limits a woman's constitutionally protected right to choose.

It denies affordable health care, particularly to low-income women. It disproportionately hurts individuals who are counting on Federal assistance to get health care coverage for themselves and their families.

Instead of bringing up bills that undermine a woman's constitutional rights, why can't we just focus on legislation that creates jobs and helps struggling families?

Madam Speaker, today, let us just put an end to these attacks on women's rights. Indeed, we can do this.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady.

Now, instead of taking up critical issues, we are here today considering a radical bill that failed several years ago. It has been resurrected by the majority so that they can continue their war on women and their vendetta against the Affordable Care Act.

It is a deceptively named bill. It is not about unauthorized use of taxpayer

dollars. The purpose of this legislation is to make the Federal Government interfere with a woman's decision to use her private dollars for legal health services.

□ 1415

It will restrict women's access to safe reproductive health; and because it would rule out standard insurance policies now available to women, it will leave even more women without health care coverage.

So instead of taking up an ideological, mean-spirited lost cause, let's turn our attention to helping women get comprehensive health care, excellent health care for themselves and their families. Let's help women get excellent affordable child care, help women get pay equity and fairness. Vote "no" on this rule.

Ms. FOXX. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, from renewing unemployment insurance for more than 1.6 million Americans to growing our economy and rebuilding our middle class, there is an urgent need for Congress to pass legislation that will help the American people. So I urge my colleagues to reject today's rule so that we can finally get to work, I hope, on real solutions to the problems that face our Nation, not wasting more time with another attack on women's constitutionally protected reproductive rights.

Madam Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to give the House a vote on the bill written by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) to extend emergency unemployment benefits, paid for with the savings from the farm bill that, it seems, this House will pass today or tomorrow.

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

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

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, the only thing I really need to say, other than the absolute requirements here, is that we have had a great demonstration in this rule debate on what is going on here.

H.R. 7, written by men, discussed before a subcommittee of 12 men and then voted on by the main committee, composed mostly of men, who carried the debate, was brought here today; and yet, with the exception of the manager of the bill, not a single woman on the other side came to speak on this bill.

On our side, we had diversity. We had women. We had men getting up and

talking about actually complying with the Constitution. And on the other side, we had, once again, men telling women what they are allowed to do.

We are so far past that. When we finally got the right to vote, we said, Let's put all this behind us, certainly in the House of Representatives, the people's House. Can't you understand the difference here in the people's House, that the people represent the diversity of the faces of America, and all the men over there who seem to have devoted their lives to making sure that women do what they expect them to do and what they are told to do and trying to pass laws to require that. I think it was one of the most telling debates that I have ever seen, and I hope that it will not go unnoticed by the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time. Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am going to say it again, this bill is not an attack on women or an attack on women's rights.

I think it is wonderful that we had so many men here today speaking on behalf of the unborn. Life is the most fundamental of all rights, Madam Speaker. It is sacred and God-given. But millions of babies have been robbed of that right in this, the freest country in the world. This is a tragedy beyond words and a betrayal of what we, as a Nation, stand for.

Before liberty, equality, free speech, freedom of conscience, and the pursuit of happiness and justice for all, there has to be life. And yet, for millions of aborted infants, many pain-capable and many discriminated against because of gender or disability, life is exactly what they have been denied. And an affront to life for some is an affront to life for every one of us. That is the message we want to get across today.

One day, we hope it will be different. We hope life will cease to be valued on a sliding scale. We hope the era of elective abortions, ushered in by an unelected Court, would be closed and collectively deemed one of the darkest chapters in American history. But until that day, it remains a solemn duty for all of us to stand up for life.

Regardless of the length of this journey, we will continue to speak for those who cannot. And we will continue to pray to the One who can change the hearts of those in desperation and those in power who equally hold the lives of the innocent in their hands.

Madam Speaker, the commonsense measure before us restores an important longstanding bipartisan agreement that protects the unborn and prevents taxpayers from being forced to finance thousands of elective abortions. It reflects the will of the American people and is the product of what has historically been a bipartisan, bicameral consensus in Congress. There-

fore, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this rule and H.R. 7.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 465 OFFERED BY MS. SLAUGHTER OF NEW YORK

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

Sec. 3. Immediately upon adoption of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3936), the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

Sec. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of the bill specified in section 3 of this resolution.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of House Resolution 465, if ordered, and approval of the Journal.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 222, nays 194, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 26]

YEAS—222

Aderholt	Barletta	Bentivolio
Amash	Barr	Bilirakis
Bachmann	Barton	Bishop (UT)
Bachus	Benishek	Black

Kilmer	Murphy (FL)	Schwartz	Doyle	Latham
Kind	Nadler	Scott (VA)	Duncan (SC)	Latta
Kirkpatrick	Napolitano	Scott, David	Duncan (TN)	Lipinski
Kuster	Neal	Serrano	Ellison	Loebach
Langevin	Negrete McLeod	Sewell (AL)	Enyart	Lofgren
Larsen (WA)	Nolan	Shea-Porter	Eshoo	Long
Larsen (CT)	O'Rourke	Sherman	Eshy	Lowenthal
Lee (CA)	Owens	Sinema	Farr	Lucas
Levin	Pallone	Sires	Fincher	Luetkemeyer
Lewis	Pascrell	Slaughter	Fleischmann	Lujan Grisham
Loebach	Pastor (AZ)	Smith (WA)	Fleming	(NM)
Lofgren	Payne	Speier	Fortenberry	Lujan, Ben Ray
Lowenthal	Pelosi	Swalwell (CA)	Foster	(NM)
Lowe	Perlmutter	Takano	Frankel (FL)	Maloney,
Lujan Grisham	Peters (CA)	Thompson (CA)	Franks (AZ)	Carolyn
(NM)	Peters (MI)	Thompson (MS)	Frelinghuysen	Marino
Lujan, Ben Ray	Peterson	Tierney	Gabbard	Masse
(NM)	Pingree (ME)	Titus	Gallego	McAllister
Lynch	Pocan	Tonko	Garrett	McCarthy (CA)
Maffei	Polis	Tsongas	Gerlach	McCaul
Maloney,	Price (NC)	Van Hollen	Gibbs	McClintock
Carolyn	Quigley	Vargas	Gingrey (GA)	McHenry
Maloney, Sean	Rahall	Veasey	Goodlatte	McIntyre
Matheson	Rangel	Vela	Gosar	McKeon
Matsui	Richmond	Velázquez	Gowdy	McKinley
McColum	Roybal-Allard	Visclosky	Granger	McMorris
McDermott	Ruiz	Walz	Graves (GA)	Rodgers
McGovern	Ryan (OH)	Wasserman	Grayson	McNerney
McNerney	Sánchez, Linda	Schultz	Griffith (VA)	Meadows
Meeks	T.	Waters	Grimm	Meeks
Meng	Sarbanes	Waxman	Guthrie	Meng
Michaud	Schakowsky	Welch	Hahn	Messer
Miller, George	Schiff	Wilson (FL)	Hanabusa	Mica
Moore	Schneider	Yarmuth	Harper	Michaud
Moran	Schrader		Harris	Miller (MI)

Roskam	Lewis	Pearce	Slaughter
Ross	LoBiondo	Perry	Smith (MO)
Rothfus	Lowe	Peters (CA)	Stivers
Roybal-Allard	Lummis	Peters (MI)	Stockman
Royce	Lynch	Peterson	Terry
Ruiz	Maffei	Pittenger	Thompson (CA)
Ryan (WI)	Maloney, Sean	Pitts	Thompson (MS)
Salmon	Marchant	Poe (TX)	Thompson (PA)
Sanford	Matheson	Price (GA)	Tiberi
Scalise	Matsui	Rahall	Tipton
Schiff	McDermott	Reed	Upton
Schneider	McGovern	Renacci	Valadao
Schock	Miller, George	Richmond	Veasey
Schwartz	Moore	Rigell	Vela
Schweikert	Mulvaney	Rogers (AL)	Visclosky
Scott (VA)	Neal	Ros-Lehtinen	Walberg
Scott, Austin	Negrete McLeod	Ryan (OH)	Waters
Scott, David	Nolan	Sánchez, Linda	Weber (TX)
Sensenbrenner	Palazzo	T.	Wittman
Serrano	Pallone	Sarbanes	Woodall
Sessions	Pastor (AZ)	Schakowsky	Yoder
Sewell (AL)	Paulsen	Sires	Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—15

Amodei	Jones	Ruppersberger
Bachmann	McCarthy (NY)	Rush
Blumenauer	Miller (FL)	Sanchez, Loretta
Campbell	Rogers (MI)	Tipton
Clay	Runyan	Westmoreland

□ 1502

So the resolution was agreed to.
 The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.
 A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.
 The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.
 This is a 5-minute vote.
 The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 260, nays 142, answered "present" 3, not voting 26, as follows:

[Roll No. 28]
 YEAS—260

Aderholt	Butterfield	Conaway
Bachmann	Byrne	Conyers
Barber	Calvert	Cook
Barletta	Camp	Cooper
Barrow (GA)	Cantor	Cramer
Beatty	Capito	Crawford
Becerra	Capps	Crenshaw
Bera (CA)	Carney	Cuellar
Bilirakis	Carson (IN)	Culberson
Bishop (GA)	Carter	Daines
Bishop (UT)	Cartwright	Davis (CA)
Black	Cassidy	Davis, Danny
Blackburn	Castro (TX)	DeGette
Bonamici	Chabot	Delaney
Boustany	Chu	DeLauro
Bridenstine	Cicilline	DeBene
Brooks (AL)	Clark (MA)	Dent
Brooks (IN)	Clarke (NY)	DesJarlais
Brown (FL)	Cleaver	Deutch
Brownley (CA)	Coble	Diaz-Balart
Buchanan	Cole	Dingell
Bustos	Collins (NY)	Doggett

Amash
 Andrews
 Bachus
 Barr
 Barton
 Bass
 Benishek
 Bentivolio
 Bishop (NY)
 Brady (PA)
 Braley (IA)
 Broun (GA)
 Bucshon
 Burgess
 Capuano
 Cárdenas
 Castro (FL)
 Chaffetz
 Clyburn
 Coffman
 Cohen
 Collins (GA)
 Connolly
 Costa
 Cotton
 Courtney

NAYS—142

Crowley	Hanna
Cummings	Hartzler
Davis, Rodney	Heck (NV)
DeFazio	Herrera Beutler
Denham	Holding
DeSantis	Honda
Duckworth	Hoyer
Duffy	Hudson
Edwards	Huizenga (MI)
Ellmers	Hunter
Farenthold	Israel
Fattah	Jeffries
Fitzpatrick	Jenkins
Flores	Johnson (OH)
Forbes	Jordan
Foxx	Joyce
Fudge	Keating
Garamendi	Kelly (PA)
Garcia	Kilmer
Gibson	Kind
Graves (MO)	Kinzinger (IL)
Green, Al	Kirkpatrick
Green, Gene	Lance
Griffin (AR)	Larson (CT)
Gutiérrez	Lee (CA)
Hall	Levin

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—3

Gohmert	Grijalva	Payne
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NOT VOTING—26

Amodei	McCarthy (NY)	Runyan
Blumenauer	McColum	Ruppersberger
Brady (TX)	Meehan	Rush
Campbell	Miller (FL)	Sanchez, Loretta
Clay	Neugebauer	Schrader
Engel	Nugent	Tipton
Gardner	Owens	Titus
Jones	Pocan	Westmoreland
Labrador	Rogers (MI)	

□ 1509

So the Journal was approved.
 The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1094

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the name of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1094.
 The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?
 There was no objection.

NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION AND ABORTION INSURANCE FULL DISCLOSURE ACT OF 2014

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 465, I call up the bill (H.R. 7) to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.
 The Clerk read the title of the bill.
 The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 465, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-33 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.
 The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 7

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.
 (a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2014".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—PROHIBITING FEDERALLY FUNDED ABORTIONS

Sec. 101. Prohibiting taxpayer funded abortions.

Sec. 102. Amendment to table of chapters.

TITLE II—APPLICATION UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

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

TITLE I—PROHIBITING FEDERALLY FUNDED ABORTIONS

SEC. 101. PROHIBITING TAXPAYER FUNDED ABORTIONS.

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

“CHAPTER 4—PROHIBITING TAXPAYER FUNDED ABORTIONS

“301. Prohibition on funding for abortions.

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

“303. Limitation on Federal facilities and employees.

“304. Construction relating to separate coverage.

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

“306. Non-preemption of other Federal laws.

“307. Construction relating to complications arising from abortion.

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

“309. Application to District of Columbia.

“§301. Prohibition on funding for abortions

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

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

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

“§303. Limitation on Federal facilities and employees

“No health care service furnished—
“(1) by or in a health care facility owned or operated by the Federal Government; or

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

“§304. Construction relating to separate coverage

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

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

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

“§306. Non-preemption of other Federal laws

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

“§307. Construction relating to complications arising from abortion

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

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

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

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

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

“§309. Application to District of Columbia

“In this chapter:

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

“(2) The term ‘Federal Government’ includes the government of the District of Columbia.”.

SEC. 102. AMENDMENT TO TABLE OF CHAPTERS.

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

“4. Prohibiting taxpayer funded abortions 301”.

TITLE II—APPLICATION UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

(a) IN GENERAL.—

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

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

(B) OPTION TO PURCHASE OR OFFER SEPARATE COVERAGE OR PLAN.—Paragraph (3) of section

36B(c) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

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

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

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

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

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

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any term”; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(A) by striking paragraph (2);

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

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

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

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

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to taxable years ending after December 31, 2014, but only with respect to plan years beginning after such date,

and the amendment made by subsection (b) shall apply to plan years beginning after such date.

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

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

“(3) RULES RELATING TO NOTICE.—

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Ways and Means, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the gentleman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), and the gentleman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I come in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act.

This legislation is written with the same simple principle that has been supported on a bipartisan basis for decades. No taxpayer dollars should be

spent on abortions and abortion coverage. H.R. 7 establishes a permanent Governmentwide prohibition on taxpayer subsidies for abortion.

This bill is all the more necessary because of the President's health care law and its attack on this long-standing protection of taxpayer dollars. For example, the health care law's premium subsidies can be used to purchase coverage on exchanges that include coverage of abortion.

The ACA breaks with the tradition of the Hyde Amendment, which has ensured that Federal dollars do not subsidize plans that cover abortion.

□ 1515

The bill before us would simply codify the Hyde amendment language so it applies across the Federal Government.

Consumers should also have the right to know whether the plans they are selecting on an exchange include abortion coverage. While the ACA included some notification provisions, many of our constituents are simply unable to find out whether a plan is paying for abortions. In fact, this inability to find out whether exchange plans provide abortion coverage seems to extend to the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

In October of last year, Secretary Sebelius committed in testimony before the Energy and Commerce Committee to provide the Congress and the American people a full list of exchange plans providing abortion coverage. She was asked again to provide this list in December. Yet we are still waiting as the days tick by. We do not have this list.

The self-appointed most transparent administration in history is simply either unwilling or unable to comply with this request. This is why we have added provisions of the Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act. This would ensure Americans have the right to know whether plans on the exchange are providing abortion coverage. This bill is about protecting taxpayer dollars and protecting life. It also ensures we have at least some transparency under the President's health care law.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise to speak in opposition to H.R. 7.

H.R. 7 is not based on fact. The Affordable Care Act does not secretly funnel taxpayer dollars to fund abortions, and it is not based on the real experiences of American women and families. They want to make their own personal health care decisions in consultation with their doctors and their spiritual advisors, not with their Congressmen.

Instead, this bill would squarely put the government, namely the IRS, in

the exam room by effectively raising the taxes of those who choose an insurance plan that happens to cover abortion services. That includes hard-working men, women, and families who would be penalized, and it would burden small businesses, making each one second-guess its current insurance plan. It would make them change their coverage if they want to keep their health insurance coverage affordable. Simply put, H.R. 7 would dictate what individuals can do with their own private dollars.

Instead of this cynical attack on women's personal decisionmaking, we should be empowering our Nation's families by focusing on the economy, by strengthening the middle class, and by helping parents provide the best for their kids. It is really time to stop reverting back to the culture wars and to start trusting our Nation's women, our Nation's families and small businesses to make their own personal health care decisions.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN).

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, we were told over and over again: if you like your health insurance plan, you can keep it. We all found out that that wasn't true. I will never forget on the day that ObamaCare passed—I was here in this Chamber—we were promised by the President of the United States that, not only would the taxpayers of this country not be forced to pay for other people's abortions, but that abortion would not be a part of ObamaCare. We know today that isn't true. Abortion is a part of ObamaCare.

What is worse is that no matter how anyone feels about that issue there is pretty strong agreement that no one should be forced to violate one's conscience and pay for other people's abortions and be forced to do that, but that is the way it is. H.R. 7 makes President Obama's promise stand up and ring true, and it is this: that no taxpayer-funded money ever goes to pay for someone else's abortion.

Couldn't we unite on this principle? This is important.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WAXMAN. I thank you for yielding to me.

Madam Speaker, existing law very clearly states no taxpayers' money can fund abortions—that is already the law—with the exception of rape, incest, or to save a woman's life. The Republicans are coming in and saying we have got to make sure that no taxpayer's money is going to be used to pay for any insurance that might provide abortions.

The law—the Affordable Care Act—provides that, if you get an insurance policy on the exchange, you can choose a policy that does not provide abortion coverage, but if you choose a policy that has abortion coverage, that portion of the policy must be paid by the purchaser, not the government.

So this is, in fact, like all we do around here, which is propaganda. It is politics. The Republicans try to make people believe that taxpayers' dollars are being used to pay for abortions. It is not true. This bill is bad in substance. It is an unfortunate bill that tries to interfere with the ability of people to buy with their own money a policy that may cover abortion services, which is a legal medical service.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS), who is a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Thank you to my distinguished colleague.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor. I am here today for those who cannot speak for themselves.

The premise of this legislation is nothing new. It simply continues the longstanding prohibition of using taxpayer dollars to pay for abortions. Regardless of whether you are pro-life or not, most Americans recognize that it is unfair to force every American in this country to subsidize abortion. This is, however, exactly what ObamaCare does. It has allowed taxpayer subsidies for health care plans that cover elective abortions. H.R. 7 is as much about protecting the taxpayer as it is about protecting the unborn.

I urge my colleagues to make the fair choice and to vote "yes" on this bill.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I am now pleased to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), who is the ranking member of the Health Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 7. This legislation does nothing but impede women's access to health care in this country and turns the clock back on reproductive rights by 38 years.

The bill's sponsors claim it will prevent taxpayer dollars from paying for abortions. However, we already know that Federal funds do not go to abortions except in the limited cases of rape, incest, or to save the mother's life. This bill does not simply codify the Hyde amendment. That is bogus. What this bill does is prohibit millions of American families from using their own money to buy health plans that include abortion coverage.

Madam Speaker, spending time attacking women's health shows just how far out of touch Republicans in Washington are. Instead of focusing on the

economy and job creation, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would rather focus on legislation that puts access to reproductive health care in danger and undermines a woman's right to choose.

On December 28, unemployment insurance expired for Americans still struggling to find work. Meanwhile, Democrats have a bill that would raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour, generating economic activity, creating jobs, and growing the middle class. These should be the priorities of the House of Representatives, not this phony bill before us. This legislation is an unprecedented, radical assault on women's health care. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN), who has been such an advocate on our life issues.

Mr. STUTZMAN. I thank the gentlelady for yielding and for her hard work on this very important issue.

Madam Speaker, I am humbled to join my pro-life colleagues here on the House floor and, more importantly, the millions of pro-life Americans across the country.

Although this debate is often clouded by empty euphemisms like "choice," we cannot forget the human element at the heart of this issue. This isn't about abstract concepts. This is about babies, the most vulnerable members of our society. At the same time, we must show compassion and offer help to those struggling through what seems like an impossible circumstance; and, as civilized people, we ought to prevent taxpayer dollars from subsidizing the senseless destruction of innocent lives once and for all. After all, we are a Nation founded to protect life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Today, we have an opportunity to do exactly that with commonsense legislation. Millions of pro-life Americans don't want their tax dollars used to subsidize abortions.

I urge my colleagues to support the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I am now very pleased to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE), a real champion for women's issues.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, this so-called "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act" has got to be the most deceptively named bill of this Congress.

Here are the facts:

There is no taxpayer funding for abortion. The Affordable Care Act does not change that. Let me say that again. There is no taxpayer funding for abortion. The Affordable Care Act does not change that.

The ACA contains a hard-fought compromise that guarantees that the tax credits made available through the exchanges are segregated out for plans

that cover certain women's health benefits. This bill is an attempt to undo that compromise. It effectively bans the coverage of important women's health services in the new health insurance exchanges. It restricts the way that women can use their own private dollars to purchase private insurance. It says small businesses cannot get tax credits if they choose to use their private dollars to purchase private insurance that covers important women's benefits.

It goes far, far beyond the Hyde amendment, which prohibits taxpayer funding for most abortions in the annual appropriations bills. It also, for the first time, puts the Hyde amendment into law, and it says women in the District of Columbia will not have the same right to access health services as women in other States throughout this country.

This bill would not only restrict comprehensive health care for women; it would also undermine a woman's right to make her own health care decisions under her insurance policy with her own money. Vote "no."

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. I thank my colleague from Tennessee for her leadership on this particular issue.

For far too long, Madam Speaker, I was silent on this particular issue. Some 22 years ago, as we were expecting our first child—my wife was pregnant—I began to talk to her about this particular thing. There my son was kicking in his mother's womb, and as we started to see this, I realized very profoundly that not only was it life but that it responded. My son was responding to my voice and to my touch, and as we saw that, I realized that I had been silent for far too long.

Regardless of where you are on this particular issue, we must say something today—the many of us who find this just appalling that it is even legal today—in allowing taxpayer dollars to be spent. This is something on which we must stand together. So, for those who can't speak for themselves, I stand here today, and I urge my colleagues to support this particular legislation.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

□ 1530

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem to be absolutely obsessed with taking away a woman's right to make her own personal health decisions with her own money.

Today, we could be extending unemployment benefits to 1.6 million Americans. Instead, we are considering legislation that would discriminate against a woman's right with her own money

to pick an insurance policy. We could be raising the minimum wage instead of effectively banning abortion coverage in the ACA market, even though not a penny of Federal dollars will go to do that. We could be passing the Healthy Families Act to provide paid sick leave, instead of erecting more barriers to women's ability to protect their health, and yes, including access to safe and legal abortions.

We should be defeating this legislation for three reasons:

First, because women and their doctors—not politicians—should make their health care decisions;

Secondly, because we should not be undermining access to comprehensive insurance coverage of women's health insurance paid by the insured woman, not the government;

Third, because we have more pressing priorities to address.

It is time that we moved on to things that matter to the American people and not continue this relentless war on women's rights.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I think it is important to realize over 60 percent of the American people agree with us on this issue. You can look at survey after survey. They do not want taxpayers funds used for abortion.

I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), joining us in this fight to make certain that we preserve taxpayer funds, a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee.

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Tennessee for her leadership on this.

I have been intrigued at the latest rhetoric on the so-called "war on women." I am intrigued because at some point pro-abortion activists stopped using the word "abortion." Instead of using the "A" word, they use terms like "women's health" or "reproductive rights." It is a clever word game designed to disguise the truth and build artificial support. After all, who would be against the health of women? Who would oppose anyone's right to reproduce? But what about the baby's health? What about the unborn child's "right" to life?

They don't call it abortion anymore because people understand what abortion is. It is the taking of a life. It is death where life once existed. It is cruel and tragic, and there is no place in the Federal budget for funding it.

Mrs. CAPPS. I am now pleased to yield 1½ minutes to my colleague from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I thank my colleague for yielding time.

Madam Speaker, here at the start of the new year, when Americans are facing so many challenges in their lives, the Republicans are taking us off on this cruel tangent. We should be debating how to boost wages across this country, how to better educate our

children, and how to ensure that everyone has a chance and an opportunity to be successful in their lives and secure in their futures, but yet again, a handful of mostly older, mostly male politicians here in Washington, D.C., believe that the priority for us is to interfere in the personal lives of women. They want to intrude in the personal, private health care decisions of women and their families. They think they know best. But how can they?

I trust women and their families to make their own decisions, not the politicians here in Washington, D.C. Republicans in Congress should respect our right to privacy. Politicians shouldn't be allowed to direct treatments and oversee diagnoses from Washington, and they shouldn't unnecessarily restrict a woman's health insurance coverage and the comprehensive policy that she has paid for.

This Republican bill is an unprecedented, radical assault on a woman's right to make her own health and health insurance decisions. It interferes with the relationship between a patient and doctor.

Thankfully, this bill is not going anywhere after the vote today, but it does provide evidence of what Republicans in the House believe is the top priority for America.

Is it jobs? No. Is it boosting wages? No. Is it improving our schools and higher ed? No.

The Republicans' top priority today is to interfere in the personal lives and health decisions of women across our country.

I urge a "no" vote.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. May I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California has 1 minute remaining, and the gentlewoman from Tennessee has 2 minutes remaining.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, H.R. 7 is not about taxpayer funding. It is about what women, families, and small businesses can do with their own money, their own private dollars, and it is about keeping Congress and the IRS out of the doctor's office.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to start trusting America's women to make their own decisions.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this dangerous bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

What an interesting debate we have and what a difference we have in philosophies as we approach the work of this Nation.

I have found it quite curious, as we have some who say we should be talking about how we live better lives and jobs and futures. You know what, Madam Speaker? As we talk today,

what our focus is on is making certain that these precious unborn children do have that right to life, to liberty, to the pursuit of happiness. Yes, indeed.

Today, let me just clear up the record for the legislation before us where we talk about no taxpayer funding of abortion. I want to read from the legislation itself, Madam Speaker.

Section 304 in title I:

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as prohibiting any individual, entity, or State or locality from purchasing separate abortion coverage or health benefits coverage that includes abortion so long as such coverage is paid for entirely using only funds not authorized or appropriated by Federal law.

Reading directly from the bill and then going to section 306:

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

So, Madam Speaker, may I lay the fears aside of my colleagues. This is an issue that 60 percent of the American people agree with us on. It is an action that they think is important to take; that it is important for taxpayers to have the assurance from their government that we are not going to have taxpayer funds used for abortion.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS).

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

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand before the House today in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. I supported this legislation last Congress because the message I have consistently received from my constituents is that they do not want their taxpayers dollars funding abortions. Period.

It is time to put this issue to rest once and for all. The majority of Americans, regardless of where they stand on the larger issue, do not want their taxpayer dollars paying for abortions, but for too long, we have had a patchwork of provisions when it comes to Federal funding, which has created potential loopholes and confusion. H.R. 7 solidifies the longstanding provisions of the Hyde amendment, which are especially needed when it comes to the Affordable Health Care Act.

Madam Speaker, I don't have time to stand here and list all of the problems with the President's health care law, but one of these problems can be fixed through the passage of this bipartisan bill, which simply states that taxpayer dollars will not pay for abortions.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

When I go home to talk to my constituents back home in Queens and the portions of the Bronx that I represent, there are a lot of issues that they bring up to me. They want to see unemployment insurance restored. They want to see jobs created. They want to see our economy strengthened. They want to see investments in infrastructure and building our communities.

But not once has anyone ever said, Forget all about that. They have never said to me, Please raise my taxes if Uncle Sam objects to the health care plan I have picked for me, my family, or my business.

Yes, that's exactly what this bill does. It raises taxes on individuals, families, and small businesses.

I offered an amendment that would block this bill from taking effect if it would raise taxes, but the Republican majority, with yet another closed rule, refused to make that amendment in order. Why?

Because they knew that if that amendment were to become a part of this bill, it would kill this bill. Because no matter how you slice it, this Republican bill will raise taxes on hard-working Americans. Small businesses will pay more taxes because if their employee health plan covers abortion or reproductive care, the business will be denied the small business tax credit. No one denies that.

Families will pay more in taxes when they lose any tax credits they received to purchase a health insurance plan if the plan that works best for them happens to include abortion coverage. That is right. Families will have to give up on choosing their own plan.

Stripping these health care tax credits will have the same effect as if we denied or stripped out similar tax credits like the child tax credit or the higher education tax credit.

If this isn't a tax increase, I don't know what is.

This bill interferes with personal choice and decisions.

I find it ironic that my Republican colleagues claim to support ensuring Americans can pick a private health plan that suits their individual needs until the plan they pick covers legal services they find personally objectionable. I find it ironic that my Republican colleagues oppose every suggested tax increase out there until it is one that abnegates their social agenda.

There is no question this is a serious issue and it deserves serious consideration. Yet on an issue as important as access to comprehensive health care coverage—and with such severe tax implications—it is outrageous that this bill was not first considered by the Ways and Means Committee. The reason for that is Republicans are rushing this new bill forward. Not because they are looking to make good policy, but because they are looking to make good political friends—good political friends

who support a very narrow political agenda.

I just wish the real issues that we need to be working on like extending unemployment insurance for 1.6 million Americans would get as much attention as all these made-up issues.

With that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1545

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume simply to note that, according to the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation, the bill would have negligible effects on tax revenues.

Similarly, the CBO estimates that any effects on direct spending would be negligible for each year and over the 10-year budget window.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the author of the bill.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for her leadership and her very eloquent remarks.

My friend from New York talked about a narrow agenda and a narrow perspective. More than 60 percent of every poll, in the case of one poll, 69 percent of all women in the United States of America say they do not want their funds being used to subsidize abortion on demand.

Let me remind my colleagues that this legislation accomplishes three goals:

One, it makes the Hyde amendment and other current abortion funding prohibitions permanent. We just reauthorized all of those riders just a few weeks ago. This just makes them permanent;

Ensures that the Affordable Care Act faithfully conforms to the Hyde amendment, as promised by the President of the United States;

And provides full disclosure, transparency, and prominent display that is absolutely lacking right now of the extent to which any health insurance plan on the exchange funds abortion.

Madam Speaker, the President of the United States stood about 10 feet from where I am standing right now back in September of 2009 and told a joint session of Congress:

Under our plan, no Federal dollars will be used to fund abortion.

The executive order that was issued in March of 2010 said, and I quote, that the Affordable Care Act “maintains current Hyde amendment restrictions governing abortion policy and extends those restrictions to newly created health insurance exchanges.”

Madam Speaker, that is simply not true. It is absolutely not true. As my colleagues know, the Hyde amendment has two parts. It prohibits direct funding for abortion, and it bans funding to any insurance coverage, any insurance plan that includes abortion, except in

the cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.

Earlier speakers have said not a penny will go to pay for abortion. Yet under the Affordable Care Act, massive amounts of public funds—what are they if they are not public? They are public funds coming out of the U.S. Treasury in the forms of tax credits. That is the word used.

\$796 billion in direct spending, over 10 years, according to CBO, will pay for insurance plans, many, perhaps most of which will include elective abortions, abortion on demand.

Madam Speaker, that massively violates the Hyde amendment. You can't have it both ways. You can't say you are for the Hyde amendment and you are comporting with the Hyde amendment when you violate it in such a way.

Let me also point out to my colleagues that there are many States where pro-life individuals and constituents will have no opportunity to buy a plan that is pro-life on the exchanges. That includes Connecticut and Rhode Island. Every plan is abortion-on-demand, so their premium dollars, your tax dollars and mine, will be combining to buy plans that provide for abortion-on-demand.

In 2014, Madam Speaker, we have learned so much about the magnificent life of an unborn child. Increasingly, we have also learned about the deleterious effects that abortions have on women, psychologically, the children born subsequently to them and, of course, to other aspects of their physical health.

Please support H.R. 7.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, may I ask how much time we have.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 6 minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from Kansas has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, when you are not limited by the facts, you can say almost anything out on this floor; and we are hearing that today because, in the grand tradition of the anti-choice terminology, the title of this bill is an absolute farce.

Taxpayers do not currently fund abortions, and this legislation would do nothing more than make it difficult for private businesses to provide adequate health care for their workers, restrict how our Nation's Capital conducts its affairs, and generally block poor women from accessing safe and legal abortions.

In 1963, I was an intern in Buffalo, New York, before the Hyde amendment, before all the business and abortions were illegal. I stood there on the general medicine ward with two women, one with eight children, one with 12 children, who had gotten septic

abortions done in a back alley, and they died.

They left eight and 12 children in that situation. Now, they did that because they didn't have access to clean abortions. They had made a choice. They can make a choice.

If we say women can't make a choice, that is very simple. We will just tell women what to do, which is really what this bill is all about.

The Republicans want to tell women what to do. Stay out of our lives, get the government out of our lives. No, in every area except women's health.

Now, the truth of the matter is not tax credits or health coverage. The heart of this debate is a simple question about does women's health count?

Do women deserve comprehensive health care?

Or are they some kind of submissive person who hangs around the house and we tell them what to do?

Are their health care needs real?

And does 51 percent of our population deserve control over their own health decisions?

Or are they special exceptions who need to be taken care of because they can't decide for themselves?

Do they have a right to make health decisions for themselves?

Does Congress have a right to stigmatize a safe, legal procedure?

Imagine if we were standing up here debating whether or not private business would be allowed to help employees get coverage for prostate cancer or erectile dysfunction drugs or vasectomies. Suppose we were to pass a law and say you can't pay for that kind of stuff?

Imagine if we told men that they would lose their deserved tax credits in the exchange if they purchased insurance that covered their health needs as they decide them?

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

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Women's health care is health care. It is not Congress' job to stigmatize legal medical procedures and punish women who use them. It is also not Congress' job to tell Washington, D.C., what to do or to stop people from having their options.

This bill is insulting to women, and the Republicans are asking for it in the next election. If anybody votes for you, it is because they haven't paid attention to what you are doing out here today. You are insulting every woman in this country. She can't make her own decision about her health care.

I urge you to vote "no."

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), my colleague on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this is appalling that we are

even at this point in talking about this providing health care for women. I am really shocked. If we are not providing the best possible medical help for expectant mothers and their unborn child, that is not the issue.

This country has always been the champion of life around the world, protecting human rights. We have always showed up at every single encounter, whenever people were being treated in a way that we thought was not right.

We worry about Syria and the fact that they are losing their citizens, that Assad is killing their citizens. Yet, since 1973, we have aborted 56 million unborn children, 56 million unborn children.

And today we are having a discussion on H.R. 7, where the only thing the American taxpayers are saying, we know, by law, a woman can make that choice, but we also know that taxpayers don't want to fund it.

It is appalling that we have to have this type of a discussion in the United States of America when you know how we feel in our hearts and in our souls. You know how people feel about this.

I want you to think about those 56 million unborn children who could have made a huge difference in this world. It is absolutely appalling to sit in this great room where so many great debates over the protection of human rights and freedom and liberty have taken place and to be having this discussion.

This has nothing to do with us cutting back on women's health care. It has to do with taxpayers not wanting to fund an abortion. This is what we are talking about.

Please—and as the gentleman just said—is it about the next election? Really?

Have we reduced ourselves to only winning elections and not winning on behalf of people's rights?

These are human rights. I appreciate the time to come to speak.

Madam Speaker, I have got to tell you, this is one of the most disturbing things that we face in the country today, and I want our people to think about this: 56 million children have been aborted.

If we can't wake up and smell the roses on this, then shame on us.

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

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, there is no tax money being used for abortions. That has been true since Henry Hyde served here with us.

What this bill does is not address that issue. It really is intended to eliminate abortion coverage in private insurance plans.

Our witness, Professor Wood, testified in the Judiciary Committee that eliminating the tax benefit, essentially raising taxes if a small business offers a broad insurance plan that includes

abortion, will result in dropping that portion of the coverage. So this is really an extreme measure.

I understand that not everyone believes that women should make this choice. If you are opposed to abortion, don't have an abortion. But don't put the Federal Government in charge of the decisions that are properly and legally made by women, along with their husbands and families.

This is an extreme agenda. It is wrong, and I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, throughout history, there has often been great intensity surrounding the debates over protecting the innocent lives of those who, through no fault of their own, find themselves obscured in the shadows of humanity.

It encourages me greatly that in nearly all of those cases the collective conscience was finally moved in favor of the victims. The same thing is beginning to happen in this debate related to innocent, unborn children.

No matter how the left has tried to obscure the true issue, we are finally beginning to ask ourselves the real question: Does abortion take the life of a child?

And we are finally beginning to realize, as a human family, Madam Speaker, that it does. Ultrasound technology demonstrates to all reasonable observers both the humanity of the victim and the inhumanity of what is being done to them.

And we are finally beginning to realize, as Americans, that 56 million lost little lives and their blood staining the foundations of this Nation is enough.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, we are prepared to close, if the gentlelady has any additional speakers before she closes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 1½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Kansas has 2½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I don't see any additional speakers, so we will be prepared to close.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady.

The gentlelady from Kansas, my good friend, who I respect greatly, said the overall tax effect is negligible. I would ask, negligible to whom?

If you are that person who can't get a needed tax credit, it is not negligible to you. It is very real.

Part of what is so troubling about this bill is it is not only how much further it goes than current existing law, but how much further this kind of thinking could go.

What other restrictions on medical procedures are next, as my friend from Washington said? If your procedure involves stem cells, prenatal care for teen mothers?

Could hospitals lose funding for training doctors in necessary procedures that this majority may deem troubling?

The question is, where does it end?

How many other ways can the majority use our laws to punish hardworking Americans?

□ 1600

Can they take away your student loans because your teacher wants you to read "Catcher in the Rye"? Can they limit your tax benefits for buying a house in the wrong neighborhood? The slope is steep and slippery. Vote "no" on this wrongheaded bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, we are not interested in raising taxes. This bill does not do that. We are simply ensuring that hardworking Americans who pay taxes and oppose abortion don't see their taxpayer dollars going to fund abortion.

We have had legislation similar to this bill in place for over three decades. This legislation is not a new idea. The majority of Americans have long held that taxpayers should not be forced to foot the bill for abortion practices that they do not believe in.

I would ask everyone to support passage of H.R. 7, Madam Speaker, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I consume.

However stark Americans' differences of opinions can be on the matter of abortion, generally, there has long been bipartisan agreement that Federal taxpayer funds should not be used to destroy innocent life. The Hyde amendment, named for its chief sponsor, former House Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde, has prohibited the Federal funding of abortion since 1976, when it passed a House and Senate that was composed overwhelmingly of Democratic Members.

It has been renewed each appropriations cycle with few changes for over 35 years, supported by Congress' control by both parties and Presidents from both parties. It is probably the most bipartisan, pro-life proposal, sustained over a longer period of time than any other.

Just last week, a Marist landline and cell phone poll of over 2,000 adults found that 58 percent of those surveyed oppose or strongly oppose using any taxpayer dollars for abortions. It is time the Hyde amendment was codified in the United States Code.

H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, sponsored by CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, would do just that. It would codify the two core principles of the Hyde amendment throughout the operations of the Federal Gov-

ernment, namely, a ban on Federal funding for abortions and a ban on use of Federal funds for health benefits coverage that includes coverage of abortion.

During the time the Hyde amendment has been in place, probably millions and millions of innocent children and their mothers have been spared the horrors of abortion. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the Hyde amendment has led to as many as 675,000 fewer abortions each year. Let that sink in for a few precious moments.

The policy we will be discussing today has likely given America the gift of millions more children and, consequently, millions more mothers and millions more fathers, millions more lifetimes and trillions more loving gestures and other human gifts in all their diverse forms. What a stunningly wondrous legacy.

I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Ladies and gentlemen, H.R. 7 is not about the regulation of Federal funds. Through the Hyde amendment, Congress already prevents funding of abortion and has done so for more than 30 years. Nothing in the Affordable Care Act changes this fact.

H.R. 7 is not needed to prevent the Federal funding of abortion, nor does it merely codify existing law as has been falsely asserted by those proponents. As a matter of fact, the bill on the floor today contains numerous new provisions adopted after the Judiciary Committee marked up and reported the bill.

This version of the bill has never been examined, debated, or amended by any committee of the House, yet my colleagues in the majority refuse to allow their colleagues any opportunity to amend this harmful bill today. This bill is far too significant and its impact on women is far too harmful to foreclose meaningful debate on an amendment as my colleagues in the majority have done.

This measure represents yet another assault on women's health care and constitutionally protected rights and should be rejected.

I reserve the balance of my time.

I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 7, the so-called "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act."

This bill is just another ill-conceived attempt to push a divisive social agenda instead of focusing on what Americans care most about: creating jobs and improving our Nation's economy.

Plain and simple, H.R. 7 is not about the regulation of federal funds, but yet again another attack on women's health and their constitutionally-protected rights.

Sponsors of H.R. 7 want you to believe that the bill merely codifies existing law, but this is false.

For more than 30 years, the current law has prohibited federal funding for abortion. There is absolutely no risk that the public fisc will be raided to pay for abortion services, even under the Affordable Care Act.

The goal of H.R. 7 is to nullify the decisions of women and small business employers who choose insurance coverage that includes abortion coverage paid for with purely private, non-federal funds.

Through its novel tax penalty provisions, H.R. 7 departs radically from existing law, taking away women's existing health care and placing their health and lives at risk.

H.R. 7 eradicates the authority of the District of Columbia to make decisions about how locally raised funds are used for the healthcare of women.

When Delegate HOLMES-NORTON sought to address the Judiciary Committee about the bill's overreach, her request was denied by the Majority in utter disrespect for her and the District.

Women deserve a meaningful examination of their constitutionally-protected private health care decisions, not the frivolous and reckless process the Majority has undertaken on this bill before us today.

This bill was rushed through the Judiciary Committee, and was discharged from two other committees of jurisdiction—leaving no opportunity for their Members to seriously consider this legislation.

What the Majority has brought to the floor today contains numerous new provisions, has never been examined, debated, or amended by any Committee of the House.

The fact that the Minority is foreclosed from offering any amendments today is yet further proof that this legislation is simply intended to be yet another polemic attack on women, against our deliberative legislative process, and an attack against the citizens of the District of Columbia.

Why are these latest changes being demanded? Who is pushing this drastic course?

I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this egregious bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER).

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank Congressman CHRIS SMITH for his leadership in protecting the rights of the unborn.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of life. I believe in the sanctity of life, that life begins at conception, and that life is truly our greatest gift. I also recognize that abortion can be a very divisive issue. However, there is an area where most Americans agree and where elected officials can come together, and that is on the Federal funding of abortion.

Recent polling and information confirms what we have always known, that the majority of Americans do not want their hard-earned tax dollars going to pay for abortions. And Congress has consistently worked together over the years by attaching the Hyde amendment to appropriations bills to prevent

taxpayer funds from going towards abortions.

Today the House will vote on a bill that I am proud to cosponsor and support, H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. This bill does exactly what the name implies: it permanently ensures that no taxpayer dollars go to pay for abortions or abortion coverage. This bill codifies the Hyde amendment as well as addresses taxpayer funding that, unfortunately, the Hyde amendment does not cover.

For example, ObamaCare expressly allows funding for plans that include abortions through taxpayer subsidies. During the health care debate, the President assured the American people that no Federal dollars would be used to fund abortions under ObamaCare. Yet this was just one more in a long line of inaccurate statements on ObamaCare by the President and his administration.

The No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act not only prevents taxpayer funding for abortion under ObamaCare, but it also requires transparency to ensure consumers are fully informed about which plans on the exchanges contain abortion coverage and surcharges.

Madam Speaker, throughout my life, I have worked hard to draw attention to the pro-life movement. I do it with love and compassion. I live for the day when abortion is not just illegal, but it is unthinkable.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, today we consider H.R. 7, the misleadingly named No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion bill. Congress, unfortunately, already prohibits Federal funding of abortion. This bill does not simply codify existing law. Rather, it modifies and extends current funding restrictions in the Hyde amendment and, for the first time ever, uses the Tax Code to penalize the use of private funds to purchase insurance that covers abortion. It denies small businesses the tax credits they are entitled to under the Affordable Care Act if they offer their employees health insurance, if that health insurance covers abortion. It similarly denies income-eligible women and families the tax credits that they are entitled to under the Affordable Care Act if they use their own money to purchase insurance, if that insurance covers abortion.

The claim here is that a tax credit equals Federal funding. This is a completely new principle, asserted for the first and only time in this context. If we adopt this new theory—that granting tax relief is Federal funding—then how can tax relief for churches, synagogues, and religious-affiliated schools not be considered Federal funding in violation of the Establishment Clause

of the First Amendment? We should all be very careful about establishing this new principle.

H.R. 7 is not a codification of existing law, nor is it just another attempt to enact the approach taken in the Stupak-Pitts amendment to the House-passed Affordable Care Act. H.R. 7 is a radical departure from current tax treatment of medical expenses and insurance coverage; and it is not justifiable, nor is it necessary, unfortunately, to prevent Federal funding of abortion.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote “no” on this bill.

Today the House will consider H.R. 7—a bill that embraces the completely fictitious claim that legislation is needed to prevent federal funding of abortion services.

Congress already prohibits federal funding of abortion and has done so for more than thirty years. Many of us disagree with that decision. But regardless, there is no need for this bill, at least not to prevent federal funding of abortion.

Nor is the bill simply an effort to codify existing law. H.R. 7 modifies and extends current funding restrictions in the Hyde Amendment that are limited in time and scope, without any effort to determine how such a sweeping and permanent expansion would impact American women and their families.

If this were all, that would be reason enough to oppose it, but H.R. 7 actually goes much further. For the first time ever, anti-choice lawmakers are using the Federal tax code to penalize the purchase of insurance that covers abortion in certain circumstances. These penalties would apply when women and businesses use their own money—let me repeat that, their own money, not Federal funds—to purchase insurance that covers abortion.

In particular, H.R. 7 penalizes income-eligible women by denying them the tax credits that they are entitled to under the Affordable Care Act if they use their own money to purchase insurance that covers abortion. It similarly denies small businesses the tax credits that they are entitled to under the Affordable Care Act if the insurance they offer their employees includes abortion coverage.

The claim here is that a tax credit equals Federal funding. This is a completely new principle, asserted for the first and only time in this context. If we adopt this new theory—that granting tax relief is Federal funding—then how can tax relief for churches not be considered Federal funding in violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment? I am sure that many churches, synagogues, other houses of worship, and religiously-affiliated schools would be alarmed to discover this.

We all should be very careful about establishing this new principle.

Some additional tax penalties were in the bill when it was considered by the House Judiciary Committee. Those were removed and we now have new provisions that have never been considered by any Committee.

We have no idea who made these changes or why they were made. But they demonstrate the fiction and hypocrisy that underlies this bill.

This bill, unlike the version considered in the Judiciary Committee, no longer denies women who pay for abortion out-of-pocket the ability

to claim those expenses as deductible medical expenses. And this version no longer taxes women when they use money they have set aside in flexible savings accounts or health savings accounts for abortion services. We welcome the removal of those tax penalty provisions, but these changes are not nearly enough.

This version, unlike the bill considered by House Judiciary, also adds a notice requirement that requires insurance companies to provide a false notice to policyholders that they will be forced to pay a so-called “abortion surcharge” if they are in a plan that covers abortion.

Existing law already requires plans to disclose to consumers whether a policy includes abortion. No further notice is necessary. And there is no surcharge for this coverage, as the new notice provision falsely suggests. The Affordable Care Act requires participating insurance plans to segregate monies for abortion services from all other funds, a measure my anti-choice colleagues insisted was necessary to prevent Federal funding of abortion. The segregation of a private dollar contribution of at least \$1 a month is not a surcharge at all but merely a segregation of the premium. The new notice provision requires insurance companies to mislead consumers into mistakenly believing that they are paying a separate, additional charge for coverage of abortion and that they would pay a lesser premium for insurance that does not cover abortion.

The harms caused by this bill are compounded by the fact that we are being forced to consider it under a closed rule, with no opportunity for amendment.

The potential impact of this bill on the rights of individuals to spend their own funds to purchase comprehensive insurance that cover all of their health care needs (including the potential of an unplanned pregnancy) is significant. Members should have been given the chance to consider amendments and debate the impact of this bill—and, in particular, its untested tax provisions—before taking an up or down vote on the whole package. This bill is too important, the impact on the rights of all Americans to spend their own money in ways see fit too great, simply to close the door to any debate.

I urge all my colleagues to vote no on this bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) for his leadership on this, and I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for sponsoring this bill.

Whether you are pro-choice or pro-life, I think we can all agree on this: it is wrong to spend hard-earned tax dollars to pay for abortions. Yet that is the policy of this administration through ObamaCare and what today’s bill reverses. This commonsense provision ensures tax dollars are used wisely and government policy does not violate Americans’ basic rights.

H.R. 7 brings a stop to government-subsidized abortion created through

ObamaCare, creates transparency by ensuring citizens have the information they need regarding their insurance policy and whether it pays for abortion or not, and, ultimately, lessens the number of lives ended through abortion. This legislation is important for the future of our country and forces our government to no longer be complicit in taking the lives of millions of innocent babies.

We now live in a country that is trending pro-life, and a CNN poll shows that 61 percent of respondents oppose public funding for abortion. Forcing Americans to pay for services that they find morally unconscionable is wrong.

The pro-choice Alan Guttmacher Institute demonstrates that when tax dollars are used, abortions increase by 25 percent. Conversely, by ensuring tax dollars are not used for abortions, we can not only save hard-earned tax dollars, but we can save lives, and that is a policy we can all live with.

I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 7.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), a distinguished Judiciary Committee member.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

H.R. 7 is a dangerous bill, and it is an attack on women's health, particularly women who get subsidies based on their ability to purchase insurance under ObamaCare. This bill is also emblematic of a Republican Party that is utterly and completely out of touch with Americans.

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Americans want to grow this economy. They want jobs. The response of the Republicans, however, is more anti-gay, anti-woman legislation. They have even referred to this as a job-creating bill. Not one job will be created by the bill. Why don't we focus on getting Americans back to work instead of doing everything we can to restrict women's health care choices? Let's focus on helping the 1.3 million Americans whose unemployment benefits lapsed a month ago today.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, may I ask how much time is remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 4 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 6 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. At this time, Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK).

Mrs. BLACK. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding time to me, and I thank Mr. SMITH for bringing this very important legislation here to the House.

I rise today in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act—commonsense, bipartisan legislation that will protect American taxpayers from footing the bill for this barbaric practice of abortion, in turn helping to protect women's health and unborn life.

Now, despite the legislation's bipartisan support, we have heard more than a few mischaracterizations of this bill from our colleagues across the aisle, and as a woman, I reject these false attacks. This legislation is not about taking away anyone's choice. It is about giving choice to the nearly two-thirds of Americans who don't want their hard-earned tax dollars funding the destruction of innocent life.

Madam Speaker, as a nurse for over 40 years, I have seen countless births. I have seen the joy in a mother's eyes as she holds her newborn for the first time, and I have also seen a young woman lose her life to abortion.

Those experiences informed my belief that all life—born and unborn, mother and child—is a precious gift, and I hope to see the day that this truth is reflected in our Nation's laws. Until then, we can, at least, protect the values and conscience of millions of American taxpayers by passing this legislation.

I look forward to voting "yes" on the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, new year, new Congress, but the same old political tricks. H.R. 7, the so-called No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, will not do anything further to stop tax dollars from funding abortions because tax dollars are already restricted from funding abortion and have been ever since the Hyde amendment was introduced in 1976.

As one of the five female members on the Judiciary Committee, I strongly oppose this bill that will undermine women from using their own private funds to buy their own private insurance for health coverage. This is a ploy to drive out abortion coverage in the private market. Millions of women who purchase health insurance in the private market will lose access to comprehensive health insurance.

It is time to end these games once and for all. Decisions about a woman's reproductive health belong between that woman and the doctor she trusts, not with politicians who would interfere with a woman's private decision.

I urge a "no" vote on this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. DELBENE), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. DELBENE. Madam Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to oppose this sweeping anti-choice bill which would deny premium tax credits to income-eligible women and their families if the insurance they obtain under the Affordable Care Act covers abortion—except in cases of rape, incest and when a woman's life is in danger.

What experts in the health care industry predict, and as one of the witnesses at this month's Judiciary hearing testified, is that the burdensome regulatory requirements contained in this bill would have a chilling effect and lead to insurers dropping abortion coverage from their plans.

While this bill provides a narrow exception if a woman's life is in danger, unfortunately, it would not allow any exceptions to protect a woman's health, even in circumstances where she needs an abortion to prevent severe, permanent damage to her health.

Each patient is different, and legislators cannot know the circumstances of every pregnancy. They should not interfere in personal, private medical decisions that should be made between a woman, her family and her doctor. I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 7.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, let me thank the gentleman who has served on this committee of opportunity, equality and justice for his entire career, among other committees, in the United States Congress. Let me thank the manager and chairman of the Judiciary Committee, as well.

We do not come to the floor in argument about each other's conscience. We respect the belief of others and the conscience of others and the integrity of the decision made by those who choose to stand for their positions. As a senior member of the Judiciary Committee, I only stand here on the basis of equal protection under the law and the applying of the Constitution to every single person, which includes a woman's access to health care.

What H.R. 7 does beyond the Hyde amendment, which has been law and in law and adhered to for decades, one, that I would be reminded of the eloquence of Chairman Hyde, who would be on the floor discussing the continuation of his position.

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

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. That is very kind, sir.

If, for example, you have pretax money for health care or a health savings account, you are taken care of, but if you live in the District of Columbia and you want to use local funds, you are left along the highway of

unequalness. If you are in the United States military, you are left along the highway of unequalness. If, for example, you have been the victim of sexual assault that results in a situation that requires access to health care, you are left alone. Federal employees, you are left alone. Poor, you are left alone.

The bill that we have was just submitted to the Rules Committee. It was not before the House Judiciary Committee. We don't know what is in it.

So, Madam Speaker, I do not rise against a person's conscience. I rise and hold the Constitution in my hand, and that is that we have a right to privacy, and we have a right to use local or your own funds, and in this bill, all of that has been denied. I ask the question: Can we pass this legislation and deny Americans equal protection under the law?

Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this legislation which is an assault on women; and ask that my colleagues also vote against H.R. 7, The No Taxpayer Funding For Abortion Act.

What we have before us in H.R. 7 is a dangerous and misleading bill which has one goal—eliminating abortion coverage in all of the insurance markets. And it is the reincarnation of H.R. 3 which was a featured bill in the last Congress.

And although some terrible things were in the bill have been removed—this bill is still an attack on women.

Let me be clear, if H.R. 7 were to become law, all women could either lose insurance coverage that includes abortion or be stigmatized while seeking such comprehensive insurance.

Madam Speaker, I offered an amendment in the Rules Committee last night along with ALL of the women on the Judiciary Committee, which was summarily rejected as were all of the other amendments to this bill.

Our amendment would have corrected a shortcoming in the bill, which only considers a woman's health when she is faced with death.

I would like to thank all four women on the Judiciary Committee, KAREN BASS, JUDY CHU, SUSAN DELBENE, and ZOE LOFGREN who co-sponsored this important amendment.

Every year, 10–15 million women suffer severe or long-lasting damage to their health during pregnancy.

This Congress should not be in business of interfering with a woman's health nor should we ever single out women who choose not to endure a long-lasting health defect or disease due to a pregnancy.

Without this amendment, this Congress would submit millions of women to face serious and long-lasting health issues.

Our amendment reflects the 1978 version of the Hyde Amendment by incorporating an exemption for severe and long-lasting damage to a woman's health in continuing a pregnancy.

This amendment is supported by the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Women must receive the best health care and disease prevention and have access to all medically appropriate legal medical procedures.

And Madam Speaker it must be stated over and over that this is purely partisan and divisive legislation which:

1. Unduly burdens a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy and thus puts their lives at risk;

2. Does not contain exceptions for the health of the mother;

3. Unfairly targets the District of Columbia; and

4. Infringes upon women's right to privacy, which is guaranteed and protected by the U.S. Constitution.

The bill poses a nationwide threat to the health and wellbeing of American women and a direct challenge to the Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade*.

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

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

This condition meant that the fetus likely would be born with a shortening of muscle tissue that results in the inability to move limbs. In addition, Danielle's fetus likely would suffer deformities to the face and head, and the lungs were unlikely to develop beyond the 22-week point. There was less than a 10 percent chance that, if born, Danielle's baby would be able to breathe on its own and only a 2 percent chance the baby would be able to eat on its own.

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

Every pregnancy is different. No politician knows, or has the right to assume he knows, what is best for a woman and her family. These are decisions that properly must be left to women to make, in consultation with their partners, doctors, and their God.

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

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

In *Roe v. Wade*, the Court held that a state could prohibit a woman from exercising her right to terminate a pregnancy in order to protect her health prior to viability.

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

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

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

This right of privacy was hard won and must be preserved inviolate. And again, our amendment would have helped to preserve this hard won right for women.

Let's not turn back the hands of time Madam Speaker—vote "no" on H.R. 7.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), a distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Speaker, no child is unwanted. Let me repeat that. No child is unwanted. There are millions of American couples today that are waiting to give these unborn children a home—a loving home. I don't know all the circumstances, but I do know that a lot of the unborn are little girls and little boys. I don't know about my colleagues, but I believe that God has a plan for each of those unborn children, and I don't believe that that plan includes terminating their life.

Now, that may not be a popular thing to say. But can't we focus on the unborn and the fact that there are millions of families out there, many of them childless, that would love to have these little girls and boys in their home?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 2 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I yield briefly to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to introduce a list of those opposing H.R. 7 into the RECORD.

ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSING H.R. 7, THE "NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION ACT"

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

Feminist Majority; Guttmacher Institute; Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc; Jewish Women International; Joint Action Committee for Political Affairs; Methodist Federation for Social Action; NARAL Pro-Choice America; National Abortion Federation; National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF); National Center for Lesbian Rights; National Council of Jewish Women; National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association; National Health Law Program; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health.

National Organization for Women; National Partnership for Women & Families; National Women's Health Network; National Women's Law Center; People For the American Way; Physicians for Reproductive Health; Planned Parenthood Federation of America; Population Connection Action Fund; Population Institute; Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need; Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

Religious Institute; Reproductive Health Technologies Project; Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS); South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce; Third Way; Unitarian Universalist Association; Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation; United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased now to yield the remainder of the time to the distinguished gentleman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, there has been a lot said today about taxpayer money being used for abortion. I think it is important to note that that does not occur in America today. That decision was made a number of decades ago recognizing that taxpayer funds will not be used. So what are we doing here? What we are doing is making sure that abortion can't be offered in the private insurance market. That is what we are doing here.

It was said earlier that the CBO had indicated there would be a minimal impact from the tax increase on small businesses if a broad insurance plan was offered that included abortion. The reason for that is that it is anticipated that all of those small businesses will avoid the tax increase and drop the abortion coverage. So that is why there would not be a large impact, but there will be a large impact on women because, although there are exceptions for the life of the mother, there is no exception for the health of the mother, something that is required by the Constitution and our Supreme Court. In those cases, this can be a very expensive proposition.

I will just tell you an example of a person whom I know, Vicki, who, unfortunately, her much-wanted child, all of this child's brains formed outside of the cranium. There was no question this wanted child was not going to survive more than a minute or 2. Unfortunately for Vicki, without an abortion, the expectation was that her uterus would be destroyed and she would not be able to have other children—not that she would die, but that she would not be able to have other children that she and her husband wanted to have.

It is very expensive to get some of these procedures when your health is at risk. So, yes, we will not have increases on small businesses because they will drop these coverages, but the women of America are going to be told by this government, yes, we know better than you do. We are going to decide for you.

Vote "no" on this very wrongheaded bill.

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

I would say that the evidence is overwhelming that the American people do not support using taxpayer funds for abortion, and the evidence is very strong that that should not be allowed under ObamaCare, either, and it is also

very strong that individuals have the opportunity with their own private funds to purchase a policy that provides for abortion. It might be a separate policy from the policy that provides their health insurance. It would be probably not very expensive. That is their choice. That is their conscience. That is not what the American people expect to see done with their taxpayer dollars.

In fact, as one of our committee witnesses pointed out, a majority of the public opposes government funding for abortion. Women oppose funding by a few percentage points more than men, and those who are poor and would presumably be those most likely to seek government funding for abortion oppose it more than those who are more affluent.

The bill before us today is supported by all segments of American society, and it should be supported by this House, as well. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. Let's pass it through the House.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7, the "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act." This legislation codifies the longstanding, bipartisan Hyde amendment, which prevents taxpayer funds from being used for abortion-related costs.

The legislation before us today imposes restrictions with respect to two ObamaCare-related tax benefits: the Exchange subsidies and the small business health insurance credit.

These two provisions were included in a broader bill passed in the 112th Congress. The legislation is necessary because the Democrats' health care law included a massive expansion of the IRS's authority and funneled taxpayer funds for various costs and procedures, including abortions.

This legislation will prevent the use of taxpayer funding for abortions—reflecting the spirit and the intent of the Hyde amendment.

However, I want to be clear about what the legislation would not do.

It would not affect either the ability of an individual to pay for an abortion (or for abortion coverage) through private funds, or the ability of an entity to provide separate abortion coverage.

It would not apply to abortions in cases of rape, incest or life-threatening physical condition of the mother.

It would not apply to treatment of injury, infection or other health problems resulting from an abortion.

Simply put, this bill is about making sure taxpayer funds are not used to pay for abortions and does not affect the use of private funds. As such, this legislation takes the necessary steps to codify the Hyde amendment in the tax code so that it appropriately reflects changes that have occurred as a result of ObamaCare.

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

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 7, another thinly veiled attempt to limit American women from being able to access comprehensive health care.

It may be a new year, but 2014 clearly has not inspired new beginnings for the Majority leadership in this House of Representatives. Last year, under Republican leadership, we did not take up immigration reform, we did not overhaul No Child Left Behind, and we did not vote on legislation to create jobs, or help those who have been struggling to find work. In fact, Congress's failure to extend unemployment benefit left millions of Americans, including 90,000 New Jerseyans, without their benefits.

But instead of taking on these critical issues, we are here today considering a radical bill that failed in 2011, but has been resurrected by the Majority so they continue to pursue their war on women and their vendetta against the Affordable Care Act.

This deceptively named "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act" is not about unauthorized use of taxpayer dollars. The purpose of this legislation is to permit the federal government to interfere with a woman's decision to use private dollars on legal health services. This dangerous legislation would jeopardize the availability of safe reproductive health care services for all American women. In addition to intentionally interfering with women's access to health services, this bill would result in higher taxes for small businesses, and permanently bar military service women, civil servants, D.C. residents, and low-income women from abortion coverage.

For 2014, I propose a New Year's resolution for this Congress. Let's cease the tired partisan ploys, and work together on legislation that expands—not limits—Americans' access to quality health care coverage. Let's work together to craft legislation that accelerates job growth, and let's work together to ensure that Americans get their unemployment benefits.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Madam Speaker, thank you for bringing this critical bill to the floor today. I'd also like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. SMITH, for authoring this legislation.

Coming on the heels of the 41st anniversary of Roe v. Wade, this bill signifies our staunch support of life and the importance of preventing taxpayer funds from being used to pay for abortion.

For years, our government has had an uneven approach to federal funding of abortions. This bill would create a single, unified policy across all federal agencies. U.S. taxpayer funds are not to be used to pay for abortions whether it be funding for elective abortion coverage through any program funded through the annual Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Act; funding for health plans that include elective abortion coverage for Federal employees; congressionally appropriated funds for abortion in the District of Columbia; or funding through the Peace Corps or federal prisons or federal immigration detention centers to pay for elective abortion.

The No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act will do just what the title says. It will ban the use of federal funds for abortion or health plans that cover abortion. H.R. 7 prohibits abortions at facilities owned or operated by the federal government, and prevents federal employees from performing abortions within the scope of their employment.

The founding fathers strongly believed that human beings are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which is the right to life, and therefore the right to life of each human being should be preserved and protected by every human being in the society and by the society as a whole. It is our duty as Members of Congress to protect those who cannot speak for themselves.

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

Our Founding Fathers, when writing the Declaration of Independence, listed three rights that this Congress has an obligation to protect, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I believe strongly that life begins at conception and thus it's our obligation to protect the right to life, especially for the most defenseless.

It's unconscionable to me that some would even consider using Federal dollars to perform these heinous acts against the unborn. Unfortunately, there are some who would like this practice to continue even though a majority of Americans don't believe that taxpayer funds should be used to abort a baby.

The bill that we're debating today prohibits taxpayer-funded abortions but leaves exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the mother. This legislation also holds the President's health care law to the same standard by making sure those receiving assistance to participate in the newly formed health care exchanges aren't able to receive abortion on demand.

Like many parents, I will never forget when I first heard my child's heart beat. It was a sign of a healthy, living child of God. It was a defining moment for me as a father knowing that my wife and I were bringing and responsible for another human being.

I strongly urge the House to pass this bill because we cannot and shouldn't accept abortion on demand with taxpayer dollars.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.

Longstanding federal policy explicitly prohibits the use of federal funds for abortions, except for certain narrow circumstances of rape, incest, or severe health complications that threaten the life of the mother. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) maintains this ban and a federal appeals court confirmed that no federal dollars may be used to pay for abortion services under the law.

Far more sweeping in scope than the title implies, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act goes well beyond codifying the Hyde amendment and protecting public funds. This bill intrudes on women's reproductive autonomy and access to health care, manipulates the tax code to put additional financial burdens on many women and small businesses, and unnecessarily restricts the private insurance choices available to consumers today.

The House of Representatives should be spending our time working to improve access to health care for all Americans, instead of deceptive legislation that interferes with a woman's ability to make personal, private medical decisions.

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 7, an unnecessary and intrusive bill that represents a short-sighted attack on the rights of women and families, and undermines access to insurance that covers comprehensive women's health care.

H.R. 7 would diminish meaningful access to healthcare for millions of lower and middle income families by denying them tax credits if the insurance plan they choose through the Health Insurance Marketplaces includes coverage for abortion services. Removing these tax breaks for the most vulnerable members of our society is not only dangerous, it is heartless, and it will return a constitutionally-protected medical procedure to its dark back-alley days. If enacted, this change will likely lead insurers to remove coverage for abortion services from all plans offered in the marketplaces, thus denying access to this coverage for women who wish to purchase such coverage out of their own pockets. Rather than offering real solutions to the problems our nation faces, the other side of the aisle only offers a return to the fights over social issues of the past.

Republicans claim that H.R. 7 merely codifies the Hyde Amendment, a provision prohibiting the use of federal funds for most abortion services, but Title I of the bill actually includes numerous vague provisions that may in some cases modify and expand the funding restrictions relating to abortion currently included in annual appropriations bills. Besides, the Hyde Amendment has been passed every single year for nearly forty years—we already have a law prohibiting the use of federal funds to pay for abortion, we don't need another one.

This legislation threatens women's health by denying access to comprehensive women's health care that includes abortion. That is why I vehemently oppose H.R. 7.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. This bill specifically prohibits the expenditure of Federal funds for any abortion, and clarifies that no federal funds can be used for any health benefits coverage that includes coverage for abortions. While I believe that the Stupak amendment to the health care reform legislation codified the Hyde amendment, I believe that this bill provides extra measures to ensure Federal funds are not used for abortion.

As a society, I believe that we have a responsibility to safeguard the lives of those who are unable to protect themselves. H.R. 7 takes important steps to limiting the instances where the rights of the unborn are violated. This bill ensures that no public funding is used to pay for health care plans that include abortion coverage, and it restricts tax credits from applying to health care plans that include abortion coverage in its benefits package.

The bill does make important exemptions to these prohibitions that protect the health of mothers. The prohibitions will not apply to pregnancies that result from rape or incest or in instances where a mother's life is in danger. I believe that these exemptions provide a good balance in ensuring human life is respected.

As a strong and consistent prolife supporter, I believe that our government has an obligation to protect the lives of our country's most

vulnerable citizens. I strongly support H.R. 7 and I urge my colleagues to pass this bill.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, a Republican bill intended only to exacerbate divisions between Americans and to undermine the rights of American women to access health care.

H.R. 7 would effectively deny women access to health insurance coverage that includes abortion, by taking away important tax benefits such as certain tax deductions and premium tax credits used to help pay for the cost of health insurance coverage. This bill is so misguided and invasive that it does not even allow for coverage when a woman's health is in danger.

Despite the Republicans' "pro-business" stance, this bill would also limit small businesses' ability to claim existing health care deductions or claim the Small Business Health Tax Credit for those businesses that offer their employees comprehensive health insurance that includes abortion.

Limiting access to these tax deductions and tax credits not only adversely impacts the employees and the small businesses, but also harms the American economy. After all, both Democrats and Republicans agree that small businesses are the engines of our economy.

Quite simply, H.R. 7 intrudes upon the relationship between a woman and her doctor by limiting a woman's ability to access health insurance coverage that includes coverage of abortion and in doing threatens a woman's health. The notion that women are incapable of rational decision regarding their own bodies and their own health does not have any place in the Twenty-First Century.

So far this year, we have not even had an opportunity to vote on the extension of unemployment benefits, nor have we had the opportunity to vote on any meaningful jobs bill. Instead, I am ashamed to say that we waste our time on bills such as H.R. 7 that politicizes women's access to health care and takes our focus off what should be our primary goal—creating Jobs! Jobs! Jobs!

I ask my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 7, the deceptively titled "No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act." Let's be clear, federal policy—including the Affordable Care Act—already prohibits the use of taxpayer dollars to fund abortions, except in the cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother.

The bill on the floor today would dramatically restrict the freedom of women to use their own money to purchase health insurance that covers reproductive health services including abortion. Under the bill, women and families would be denied access to tax credits to purchase any health plan in the health insurance Marketplaces that includes abortion services even if they use their own money to pay for coverage for those services. Additionally, the bill would deny small business owners tax credits if they offer coverage that includes abortion to their employees even though large employers can still offer such tax exempt coverage. Under this bill, millions of American women would be denied access to comprehensive reproductive health care—whether they purchase insurance in the Marketplaces or receive it through their employers.

Madam Speaker, a woman's right to choose her own health care is fundamental and today's bill is a direct attack on that right. This bill was a mistake the first time it was proposed, and it remains a mistake today. I urge my colleagues to reject this assault on women and instead I urge House Republicans to focus on extending unemployment insurance for millions of Americans who are out of work through no fault of their own.

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 465, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. MOORE. Yes, Madam Speaker, I am opposed to the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. MOORE moves to recommit the bill H.R. 7 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the bill back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE III—RULE OF CONSTRUCTION

SEC. 301. PROTECTING THE MEDICAL PRIVACY OF WOMEN, INCLUDING VICTIMS OF RAPE AND INCEST.

Nothing in title I, section 201(b), or section 202 of this Act shall be construed to authorize any party to violate, directly or indirectly, the medical privacy of any woman, including the victims of rape or incest, with respect to her choice of or use of comprehensive health insurance coverage.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, the motion to recommit is very simple, as the Clerk stated. It will ensure that nothing in this bill shall be construed to authorize any party to violate the medical privacy of any woman, including the victims of rape or incest with respect to her choice of or use of comprehensive health insurance.

Here we are today, Madam Speaker, on the day of the State of the Union when long-term unemployment insurance has lapsed, debating a recycled bill that attacks women's health care. This is truly an out-of-touch moment for the majority.

The legislation under consideration today fundamentally lacks compassion. Women's health advocates have expressed strong concerns about its impact on women's right to privacy when it comes to their medical care and decisions. This bill could have damaging effects on women who have been raped and victimized by incest, who suffer from debilitating illnesses like the one that the gentlewoman from California described, Vicky, who want nothing more than their right to make their own personal health care decisions with their own private insurance.

I have heard people continuously say that this is a recodification of the Hyde amendment. We all abide by the Hyde amendment. This bill seeks to strip women of their rights to have insurance even in the private insurance market. That is why I invite my colleagues to join me in passing this motion to recommit today, to ensure that we do not unintentionally eviscerate protections that are fundamental to women's health and liberty.

We are greatly concerned about this legislation, that it would force women in private health insurance to have to "justify" their need for a full range of reproductive health care services even if their life is in danger or if they have been the victim of sexual assault or incest. This legislation, again, could remove the option for a health insurance company to choose to offer comprehensive women's health services.

Many of us remember, some of us on a very personal level, the egregious history of this issue. Many of us remember the shame and stigma that women—victims—faced, and still face when they come forward to seek services. Depending on how this bill is implemented, a woman could be required to provide extensive documentation to save her own life or even prove to her insurance company that she was assaulted. What will happen? Will she have to go to court, Madam Speaker? Will there be an IRS audit?

Madam Speaker, there are just so many unanswered questions, and the answers could have meaningful consequences for women across our entire country.

What kind of proof would a woman need to exercise options for health care? Who gets to determine whether or not a woman's sexual assault was a legitimate rape? What kind of intensively private information would be required to establish this proof? Who in the insurance company or other entity would be equipped to make a ruling on the validity laid out in the bill?

Oh, we remember our history as women, of humiliation and public degradation that forced victims of rape or incest to stay in the shadows rather than to get the health care they need and deserve, or to seek justice against their attacker.

This motion to recommit simply makes sure that we uphold our history

of protecting the confidentiality and medical privacy of women, upholding women's constitutional right to health care, particularly those who are victims of terrible crimes. I urge my colleagues to adopt this motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I withdraw my point of order and rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order is withdrawn.

The gentlewoman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, I find it so interesting that we have an MTR when just 2 weeks ago we brought to this floor a bill that Chairman PRTS brought from Energy and Commerce that addressed the privacy issues and concerns of all Americans that have had to go to the healthcare.gov site. I would remind my colleagues that there were 67 Members of their caucus that crossed the aisle and voted with us. Privacy is an important issue, and we are concerned about that issue for all Americans.

I would also remind my colleagues who have inquired about the possibility of an IRS audit that we have seen many of those come out of this administration. I would remind them when they say we are remembering our history as women that we all stand and we remember that the first guarantee, the first right is the right to life. We have a responsibility as Members of the people's House to make certain we do the will of the people, and over 60 percent of all Americans say do not use my money. All money we have is taxpayer money, and do not use it to fund abortions. This is what we are doing.

I would remind all of my colleagues in the House that the bill that is before us today upholds and follows a long-standing principle that the American people and Members from both sides of the aisle have supported for decades, that is, that taxpayer dollars should not be spent on abortions and abortion coverage except in the instance of rape, incest, and life of the mother.

The vast majority of my colleagues, Democrat colleagues, voted for this same principle in last month's appropriations bill; yet this simple fact seems to be eluding most of them who have come to the floor today. I would encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on this motion to recommit and to vote for H.R. 7 and the underlying legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Ms. MOORE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 192, nays 221, answered “present” 1, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 29]
YEAS—192

Andrews	Grayson	Negrete McLeod
Barber	Green, Al	Nolan
Barrow (GA)	Green, Gene	O'Rourke
Bass	Grijalva	Owens
Beatty	Gutiérrez	Pallone
Becerra	Hahn	Pascarell
Bera (CA)	Hanabusa	Pastor (AZ)
Bishop (GA)	Hastings (FL)	Payne
Bishop (NY)	Heck (WA)	Pelosi
Bonamici	Higgins	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Himes	Peters (CA)
Braley (IA)	Holt	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Honda	Peterson
Brownley (CA)	Horsford	Pingree (ME)
Bustos	Hoyer	Pocan
Butterfield	Huffman	Polis
Capps	Israel	Price (NC)
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Quigley
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Rahall
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Rangel
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Cartwright	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Castor (FL)	Keating	Ruiz
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Chu	Kennedy	Sánchez, Linda T.
Cicilline	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schiff
Cleaver	Kirkpatrick	Schneider
Clyburn	Kuster	Schrader
Cohen	Langevin	Schwartz
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Cooper	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Costa	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Loeb sack	Sherman
Cuellar	Lofgren	Sinema
Cummings	Lowenthal	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lowey	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Smith (WA)
DeFazio	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)	Speier
DeGette	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)	Swalwell (CA)
Delaney	Lynch	Takano
DeLauro	Maffei	Takano
DelBene	Maloney,	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maloney, Carolyn	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Maloney, Sean	Tierney
Doggett	Matheson	Titus
Doyle	Matsui	Tonko
Duckworth	McColum	Tsongas
Edwards	McDermott	Van Hollen
Ellison	McGovern	Vargas
Engel	McIntyre	Veasey
Enyart	McNerney	Vela
Eshoo	Meeks	Velázquez
Esty	Meng	Visclosky
Farr	Michaud	Walz
Fattah	Miller, George	Wasserman
Foster	Moore	Schultz
Frankel (FL)	Moran	Waters
Fudge	Murphy (FL)	Waxman
Gabbard	Nadler	Welch
Galleo	Napolitano	Wilson (FL)
Garamendi	Neal	Yarmuth
Garcia		

NAYS—221

Aderholt	Bilirakis	Broun (GA)
Amash	Bishop (UT)	Buchanan
Bachmann	Black	Bucshon
Bachus	Blackburn	Burgess
Barletta	Boustany	Byrne
Barr	Brady (TX)	Calvert
Barton	Bridenstine	Camp
Benishkek	Brooks (AL)	Cantor
Bentivolio	Brooks (IN)	Capito

Carter	Huizenga (MI)	Reed
Cassidy	Hultgren	Reichert
Chabot	Hunter	Renacci
Coble	Hurt	Ribble
Coffman	Issa	Rice (SC)
Cole	Jenkins	Rigell
Collins (GA)	Johnson (OH)	Roby
Collins (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Roe (TN)
Conaway	Jordan	Rogers (AL)
Cook	Joyce	Rogers (KY)
Cotton	Kelly (PA)	Rogers (MI)
Cramer	King (IA)	Rohrabacher
Crawford	King (NY)	Rokita
Crenshaw	Kingston	Rooney
Culberson	Kinzinger (IL)	Ros-Lehtinen
Daines	Kline	Roskam
Davis, Rodney	Labrador	Ross
Denham	Lamborn	Rothfus
Dent	Lance	Royce
DeSantis	Lankford	Ryan (WI)
DesJarlais	Latham	Salmon
Diaz-Balart	Latta	Sanford
Duffy	LoBiondo	Scalise
Duncan (SC)	Long	Schock
Duncan (TN)	Lucas	Schweikert
Ellmers	Luetkemeyer	Scott, Austin
Farenthold	Lummis	Sensenbrenner
Fincher	Marchant	Sessions
Fitzpatrick	Marino	Shimkus
Fleischmann	Massie	Shuster
Fleming	McAllister	Simpson
Flores	McCarthy (CA)	Smith (MO)
Forbes	McClintock	Smith (NE)
Fortenberry	McClintock	Smith (NJ)
Fox	McHenry	Smith (TX)
Franks (AZ)	McKeon	Southerland
Gardner	McKinley	Stewart
Garrett	McMorris	Stivers
Gerlach	Rodgers	Stockman
Gibbs	Meadows	Stutzman
Gibson	Meehan	Terry
Gingrey (GA)	Messer	Thompson (PA)
Gohmert	Mica	Thornberry
Goodlatte	Miller (MI)	Tiberi
Gosar	Miller, Gary	Turner
Gowdy	Mullin	Upton
Granger	Mulvaney	Valadao
Graves (GA)	Murphy (PA)	Wagner
Graves (MO)	Neugebauer	Walberg
Griffin (AR)	Noem	Walden
Griffith (VA)	Nugent	Walorski
Grimm	Nunes	Weber (TX)
Guthrie	Nunnelee	Webster (FL)
Hall	Olson	Wenstrup
Hanna	Palazzo	Whitfield
Harper	Paulsen	Williams
Harris	Pearce	Wilson (SC)
Hartzler	Perry	Wittman
Hastings (WA)	Petri	Wolf
Heck (NV)	Pittenger	Womack
Hensarling	Pitts	Woodall
Herrera Beutler	Poe (TX)	Yoder
Holding	Pompeo	Yoho
Hudson	Posey	Young (AK)
Huelskamp	Price (GA)	Young (IN)

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Lipinski

NOT VOTING—17

Amodei	Hinojosa	Ruppersberger
Blumenauer	Jones	Rush
Campbell	LaMalfa	Sanchez, Loretta
Chaffetz	McCarthy (NY)	Tipton
Clay	Miller (FL)	Westmoreland
Frelinghuysen	Runyan	

□ 1704

Messrs. REED, BENTIVOLIO, DESJARLAIS, MURPHY of Pennsylvania, GOHMERT, RYAN of Wisconsin, and MESSER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. WATERS, Messrs. GARAMENDI, HUFFMAN, Mses. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, SCHA-KOWSKY, Messrs. MCINTYRE, RAHALL, and THOMPSON of Mississippi changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 29, I was unexpectedly detained and just missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 188, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 30]
YEAS—227

Aderholt	Franks (AZ)	McAllister
Amash	Frelinghuysen	McCarthy (CA)
Bachmann	Gardner	McCaul
Bachus	Garrett	McClintock
Barletta	Gerlach	McHenry
Barr	Gibbs	McIntyre
Barton	Gibson	McKeon
Benishkek	Gingrey (GA)	McKinley
Bentivolio	Gohmert	McMorris
Bilirakis	Goodlatte	Rodgers
Bishop (UT)	Gosar	Meadows
Black	Gowdy	Meehan
Blackburn	Granger	Messer
Boustany	Graves (GA)	Mica
Brady (TX)	Graves (MO)	Miller (MI)
Bridenstine	Griffin (AR)	Miller, Gary
Brooks (AL)	Griffith (VA)	Mullin
Brooks (IN)	Grimm	Mulvaney
Buchanan	Guthrie	Murphy (PA)
Bucshon	Hall	Neugebauer
Burgess	Harper	Noem
Byrne	Harris	Nugent
Calvert	Hartzler	Nunes
Camp	Hastings (WA)	Nunnelee
Cantor	Heck (NV)	Olson
Capito	Hensarling	Palazzo
Carter	Herrera Beutler	Paulsen
Cassidy	Holding	Pearce
Chabot	Hudson	Perry
Chaffetz	Huelskamp	Peterson
Coble	Huizenga (MI)	Pittenger
Coffman	Hultgren	Pitts
Cole	Hunter	Poe (TX)
Collins (GA)	Hurt	Pompeo
Collins (NY)	Issa	Posey
Conaway	Jenkins	Price (GA)
Cook	Johnson (OH)	Rahall
Cotton	Johnson, Sam	Reed
Cramer	Jordan	Reichert
Crawford	Joyce	Renacci
Crenshaw	Kelly (PA)	Ribble
Cuellar	King (IA)	Rice (SC)
Culberson	King (NY)	Rigell
Daines	Kingston	Roby
Davis, Rodney	Kinzinger (IL)	Roe (TN)
Denham	Kline	Rogers (AL)
Dent	Labrador	Rogers (KY)
DeSantis	LaMalfa	Rogers (MI)
DesJarlais	Lamborn	Rohrabacher
Diaz-Balart	Lance	Rokita
Duffy	Lankford	Rooney
Duncan (SC)	Latham	Ros-Lehtinen
Duncan (TN)	Latta	Roskam
Ellmers	Lipinski	Ross
Farenthold	LoBiondo	Rothfus
Fincher	Long	Royce
Fitzpatrick	Lucas	Ryan (WI)
Fleischmann	Luetkemeyer	Salmon
Fleming	Lummis	Sanford
Flores	Marchant	Scalise
Forbes	Marino	Schock
Fortenberry	Massie	Schweikert
Fox	Matheson	Scott, Austin

Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman

Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—188

Andrews
Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Galego
Garamendi
Garcia

Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hanna
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Loebsock
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal

Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schradler
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Broun (GA)

NOT VOTING—15

Amodei
Blumenauer
Campbell
Clay
Hinojosa

Jones
McCarthy (NY)
Miller (FL)
Petri
Runyan

Ruppersberger
Rush
Sanchez, Loretta
Tipton
Westmoreland

□ 1712

Ms. SINEMA changed her vote from "yea" to "nay."
So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 30 I was not able to vote because I was home recovering from knee surgery and pneumonia. Had I been present, I would have voter "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, due to being unavoidably detained, I missed the following rollcall votes: No. 26, No. 27, No. 28, No. 29, and No. 30 on January 28, 2014 (today).

If present, I would have voted: rollcall vote No. 26—H. Res. 465, On Ordering the Previous Question, "aye;" rollcall vote No. 27—H. Res. 465, On Agreeing to the Resolution, "aye;" rollcall vote No. 28—On Approving the Journal, "nay;" rollcall vote No. 29—H.R. 7, On Motion to Recommend, "nay;" rollcall vote No. 30—H.R. 7, No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, On Passage, "aye."

SUPPORT FOR UNITED STATES-REPUBLIC OF KOREA CIVIL NUCLEAR COOPERATION ACT

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 1901) to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1901

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Support for United States-Republic of Korea Civil Nuclear Cooperation Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In the 60th year of the alliance, the relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea could not be stronger. It is based on mutual sacrifice, mutual respect, shared interests, and shared responsibility to promote peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and throughout the world.

(2) North Korea's nuclear weapons programs, including uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing technologies, undermine security on the Korean Peninsula. The United States and the Republic of Korea have a shared interest in preventing further proliferation, including through the implementation of the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

(3) Both the United States and Republic of Korea have a shared objective in strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at London, Moscow, and Washington July 1, 1968, and a political and a commercial interest in working collaboratively to address challenges to their respective peaceful civil nuclear programs.

(4) The nuclear energy agreement referred to in section 3 is scheduled to expire on March 19, 2014. In order to maintain healthy and uninterrupted cooperation in this area between the two countries while a new agreement is being negotiated, Congress should authorize the President to extend the duration of the current agreement until March 19, 2016.

SEC. 3. EXTENSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

Notwithstanding section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2153), the President is authorized to take such actions as may be required to extend the term of the Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Korea Concerning Civil Uses of Atomic Energy, done at Washington November 24, 1972 (24 UST 775; TIAS 7583), and amended on May 15, 1974 (25 UST 1102; TIAS 7842), to a date that is not later than March 19, 2016.

SEC. 4. REPORT TO CONGRESS ON PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND REPUBLIC OF KOREA.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter until a new Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Korea Concerning Civil Uses of Nuclear Energy is submitted to Congress, the President shall provide to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the progress of negotiations on a new civil nuclear cooperation agreement.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOOR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 28, 2014.
Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, H-232, United States Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Pursuant to Section 4(b) of House Resolution 5, 113th Congress, I am pleased to appoint the following members to the House Democracy Partnership:

The Honorable David E. Price of North Carolina
The Honorable Lois Capps of California
The Honorable Sam Farr of California

The Honorable Keith Ellison of Minnesota
The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard of California

The Honorable Susan Davis of California
The Honorable Gwen Moore of Wisconsin
The Honorable Jim McDermott of Washington

The Honorable Dina Titus of Nevada
Thank you for your attention to these appointments.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

□ 1715

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After consultation among the Speaker and the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent, the Chair announces that, when the two Houses meet tonight in joint session to hear an address by the President of the United States, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to his left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House. Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly enforced. Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor. The cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of purporting to reserve seats prior to the joint session by placement of placards or personal items will not be allowed. Chamber Security may remove these items from the seats. Members may reserve their seats only by physical presence following the security sweep of the Chamber.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 8:35 p.m. for the purpose of receiving in joint session the President of the United States.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2041

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS
PURSUANT TO HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 75 TO RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 8 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms, Ms. Kathleen Joyce, announced the Vice President and Members of the U.S. Senate, who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the Vice President taking the chair at the right

of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The joint session will come to order.

The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort the President of the United States into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR);

The gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY);

The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN);

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD);

The gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS);

The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX);

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI);

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN);

The gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL); and

The gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

The VICE PRESIDENT. The President of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort the President of the United States into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER);

The Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY);

The Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET);

The Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW);

The Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL);

The Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN);

The Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE);

The Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT); and

The Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO).

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador Hersey Kyota of the Republic of Palau.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court.

The Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 9 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, the Honorable Paul D. Irving, announced the President of the United States.

The President of the United States, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of the Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you the President of the United States.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The PRESIDENT. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress, my fellow Americans:

Today in America, a teacher spent extra time with a student who needed it, and did her part to lift America's graduation rate to its highest levels in more than three decades.

An entrepreneur flipped on the lights in her tech startup, and did her part to add to the more than 8 million new jobs our businesses have created over the past 4 years.

An autoworker fine-tuned some of the best, most fuel-efficient cars in the world, and did his part to help America wean itself off foreign oil.

A farmer prepared for the spring after the strongest 5-year stretch of farm exports in our history. A rural doctor gave a young child the first prescription to treat asthma that his mother could afford. A man took the bus home from the graveyard shift, bone-tired but dreaming big dreams for his son. And in tight-knit communities all across America, fathers and mothers will tuck in their kids, put an arm around their spouse, remember fallen comrades, and give thanks for being home from a war that, after 12 long years, is finally coming to an end.

Tonight, this Chamber speaks with one voice to the people we represent: it is you, our citizens, who make the state of our Union strong.

Here are the results of your efforts: the lowest unemployment rate in over 5 years. A rebounding housing market. A manufacturing sector that's adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. More oil produced at home than we buy from the rest of the world—the first time that's happened in nearly 20 years. Our deficits—cut by more than half. And for the first time in over a

decade, business leaders around the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is.

That's why I believe this can be a breakthrough year for America. After 5 years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better positioned for the 21st century than any other nation on Earth.

The question for everyone in this Chamber, running through every decision we make this year, is whether we are going to help or hinder this progress. For several years now, this town has been consumed by a raucous argument over the proper size of the Federal Government. It's an important debate—one that dates back to our very founding. But when that debate prevents us from carrying out even the most basic functions of our democracy—when our differences shut down government or threaten the full faith and credit of the United States—then we are not doing right by the American people.

As President, I am committed to making Washington work better and rebuilding the trust of the people who sent us here. And I believe most of you are too.

Last month, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, Congress finally produced a budget that undoes some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education. Nobody got everything they wanted, and we can still do more to invest in this country's future while bringing down our deficit in a balanced way, but the budget compromise should leave us freer to focus on creating new jobs, not creating new crises.

In the coming months, let's see where else we can make progress together. Let's make this a year of action. That is what most Americans want—for all of us in this Chamber to focus on their lives, their hopes, their aspirations; and what I believe unites the people of this Nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that, if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead in America.

Let's face it. That belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated a lot of good, middle class jobs and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after 4 years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better, but average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility has stalled. The cold, hard fact is that, even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by,

let alone to get ahead, and too many still aren't working at all.

So our job is to reverse these trends. It won't happen right away, and we won't agree on everything; but what I offer tonight is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class. Some require congressional action, and I am eager to work with all of you; but America does not stand still, and neither will I, so wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that is what I am going to do.

As usual, our First Lady sets a good example. Michelle's Let's Move partnership with schools, businesses, and local leaders has helped bring down childhood obesity rates for the first time in 30 years, and that is an achievement that will improve lives and reduce health care costs for decades to come. The Joining Forces alliance that Michelle and Jill Biden launched has already encouraged employers to hire or train nearly 400,000 veterans and military spouses. Taking a page from that playbook, the White House just organized a College Opportunity Summit where already 150 universities, businesses, and nonprofits have made concrete commitments to reduce inequality and access to higher education and to help every hard-working kid go to college and succeed when they get to campus. Across the country, we are partnering with mayors, Governors, and State legislatures on issues from homelessness to marriage equality.

The point is there are millions of Americans outside of Washington who are tired of stale political arguments and are moving this country forward. They believe and I believe that, here in America, our success should depend not on accident of birth but the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That is what drew our forebears here. It is how the daughter of a factory worker is CEO of America's largest automaker, how the son of a barkeeper is Speaker of the House, how the son of a single mom can be President of the greatest Nation on Earth.

Now, opportunity is who we are, and the defining project of our generation must be to restore that promise.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to hire more people this year, and over half of big manufacturers say they are thinking of in-sourcing jobs from abroad.

So let's make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our Tax Code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that punish businesses investing here and reward com-

panies that keep profits abroad. Let's flip that equation. Let's work together to close those loopholes, end those incentives to ship jobs overseas, and lower tax rates for businesses that create jobs right here at home.

Moreover, we can take the money we save with this transition to tax reform to create jobs rebuilding our roads, upgrading our ports, unclogging our commutes because, in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. We will need Congress to protect more than 3 million jobs by finishing transportation and waterways bills this summer—that can happen—but I will act on my own to slash bureaucracy and streamline the permitting process for key projects so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance right now to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My administration has launched two hubs for high-tech manufacturing—in Raleigh, North Carolina, and in Youngstown, Ohio—where we have connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. Tonight, I am announcing we will launch six more this year. Bipartisan bills in both Houses could double the number of these hubs and the jobs they create. So get those bills to my desk. Put more Americans back to work.

Let's do more to help the entrepreneurs and small business owners who create most new jobs in America. Over the past 5 years, my administration has made more loans to small business owners than any other, and when 98 percent of our exporters are small businesses, new trade partnerships with Europe and the Asia-Pacific will help them create even more jobs. We need to work together on tools like bipartisan trade promotion authority to protect our workers, protect our environment, and open new markets to new goods stamped "Made in the USA." Listen, China and Europe aren't standing on the sidelines, and neither should we.

We know that the Nation that goes "all in" on innovation today will own the global economy tomorrow. This is an edge America cannot surrender. Federally funded research helped lead to the ideas and inventions behind Google and smartphones, and that is why Congress should undo the damage done by last year's cuts to basic research—so we can unleash the next great American discovery. There are entire industries to be built based on vaccines that stay ahead of drug-resistant bacteria or paper-thin material that is stronger than steel, and let's pass a patent reform bill that allows our businesses to stay focused on innovation, not costly and needless litigation.

Now, one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy independence than we have been in decades.

One of the reasons why is natural gas. If extracted safely, it is the bridge fuel that can power our economy with less of the carbon pollution that causes climate change. Businesses plan to invest almost \$100 billion in new factories that use natural gas. I will cut red tape to help States get those factories built and put folks to work, and this Congress can help by putting people to work building fueling stations that shift more cars and trucks from foreign oil to American natural gas.

Meanwhile, my administration will keep working with the industry to sustain production and job growth while strengthening protection of our air, our water, and our communities. And while we are at it, I will use my authority to protect more of our pristine Federal lands for future generations.

It is not just oil and natural gas production that's booming. We are becoming a global leader in solar, too. Every 4 minutes, another American home or business goes solar, every panel pounded into place by a worker whose job cannot be outsourced. Let's continue that progress with a smarter tax policy that stops giving \$4 billion a year to fossil fuel industries that don't need it so that we can invest more in fuels of the future that do.

And even as we have increased energy production, we have partnered with businesses, builders, and local communities to reduce the energy we consume. When we rescued our automakers, for example, we worked with them to set higher fuel-efficiency standards for our cars. In the coming months, I will build on that success by setting new standards for our trucks so we can keep driving down oil imports and what we pay at the pump.

Taken together, our energy policy is creating jobs and leading to a cleaner, safer planet. Over the past 8 years, the United States has reduced our total carbon pollution more than any other nation on Earth. But we have to act with more urgency because a changing climate is already harming Western communities struggling with drought and coastal cities dealing with floods. That's why I directed my administration to work with States, utilities, and others to set new standards on the amount of carbon pollution our power plants are allowed to dump into the air.

The shift to a cleaner energy economy won't happen overnight, and it will require some tough choices along the way. But the debate is settled. Climate change is a fact. And when our children's children look us in the eye and ask if we did all we could to leave

them a safer, more stable world, with new sources of energy, I want us to be able to say, yes, we did.

Finally, if we are serious about economic growth, it is time to heed the call of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement and fix our broken immigration system. Republicans and Democrats in the Senate have acted. I know that Members of both parties in the House want to do the same.

Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficit by almost \$1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason. When people come here to fulfill their dreams—to study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and create jobs for everybody. So let's get immigration reform done this year. Let's get it done. It's time.

The ideas I have outlined so far can speed up growth and create more jobs. But in this rapidly changing economy, we have to make sure that every American has the skills to fill those jobs.

The good news is, we know how to do it. Two years ago, as the auto industry came roaring back, Andra Rush opened up a manufacturing firm in Detroit. She knew that Ford needed parts for the best-selling truck in America, and she knew how to make those parts. She just needed the workforce.

So she dialed up what we call an American Job Center—places where folks can walk in to get the help or training they need to find a new job, or a better job. She was flooded with new workers. And today, Detroit Manufacturing Systems has more than 700 employees.

What Andra and her employees experienced is how it should be for every employer—and every job seeker. So tonight, I have asked Vice President BIDEN to lead an across-the-board reform of America's training programs to make sure they have one mission: train Americans with the skills employers need and match them to good jobs that need to be filled right now. That means more on-the-job training and apprenticeships that set a young worker on a trajectory for life. It means connecting companies to community colleges that can help design training to fill their specific needs. And if Congress wants to help, you can concentrate funding on proven programs that connect more ready-to-work Americans with ready-to-be-filled jobs.

I am also convinced we can help Americans return to the workforce faster by reforming unemployment insurance so that it is more effective in today's economy. But first, this Congress needs to restore the unemployment insurance you just let expire for 1.6 million people.

Let me tell you why.

Misty DeMars is a mother of two young boys. She had been steadily em-

ployed since she was a teenager. She put herself through college. She had never collected unemployment benefits—but she had been paying taxes.

In May, she and her husband used their life savings to buy their first home. A week later, budget cuts claimed the job she loved. Last month, when their unemployment insurance was cut off, she sat down and wrote me a letter—the kind I get every day.

"We are the face of the unemployment crisis," she wrote. "I am not dependent on the government . . . Our country depends on people like us who build careers, contribute to society . . . care about our neighbors . . . I am confident that in time I will find a job . . . I will pay my taxes, and we will raise our children in their own home in the community we love. Please give us this chance."

Congress, give these hardworking, responsible Americans that chance. Give them that chance. Give them the chance. They need our help right now, but more important, this country needs them in the game. That's why I've been asking CEOs to give more long-term unemployed workers a fair shot at new jobs, a new chance to support their families. And, in fact, this week many will come to the White House to make that commitment real. Tonight, I ask every business leader in America to join us and do the same, because we are stronger when America fields a full team.

Of course, it's not enough to train today's workforce. We also have to prepare tomorrow's workforce by guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education.

Estiven Rodriguez couldn't speak a word of English when he moved to New York City at age 9. But last month, thanks to the support of great teachers and an innovative tutoring program, he led a march of his classmates through a crowd of cheering parents and neighbors from their high school to the post office where they mailed off their college applications. And this son of a factory worker just found out he's going to college this fall.

Five years ago, we set out to change the odds for all our kids. We worked with lenders to reform student loans; and, today, more young people are earning college degrees than ever before. Race to the Top, with the help of Governors from both parties, has helped States raise expectations and performance. Teachers and principals in schools from Tennessee to Washington, D.C., are making big strides in preparing students with the skills for the new economy, problem-solving, critical thinking, science, technology, engineering, math.

Now, some of this change is hard. It requires everything from more challenging curriculums and more demanding parents to better support for teachers and new ways to measure how well

our kids think, not how well they can fill in a bubble on a test. But it is worth it, and it is working.

The problem is, we're still not reaching enough kids, and we're not reaching them in time, and that has to change.

Research shows that one of the best investments we can make in a child's life is high-quality early education. Last year, I asked this Congress to help States make high-quality pre-K available to every 4-year-old; and as a parent, as well as the President, I repeat that request tonight. But in the meantime, 30 States have raised pre-K funding on their own. They know we can't wait. So just as we worked with States to reform our schools, this year we'll invest in new partnerships with States and communities across the country in a race to the top for our youngest children. And as Congress decides what it's going to do, I'm going to pull together a coalition of elected officials, business leaders, and philanthropists willing to help more kids access the high-quality pre-K that they need. It is right for America. We need to get this done.

Last year, I also pledged to connect 99 percent of our students to high-speed broadband over the next 4 years. Tonight, I can announce that, with the support of the FCC and companies like Apple, Microsoft, Sprint, and Verizon, we've got a down payment to start connecting more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students over the next 2 years, without adding a dime to the deficit.

We're working to redesign high schools and partner them with colleges and employers that offer the real-world education and hands-on training that can lead directly to a job and career. We're shaking up our system of higher education to give parents more information and colleges more incentives to offer better value, so that no middle class kid is priced out of a college education. We're offering millions the opportunity to cap their monthly student loan payments to 10 percent of their income, and I want to work with Congress to see how we can help even more Americans who feel trapped by student loan debt. And I'm reaching out to some of America's leading foundations and corporations on a new initiative to help more young men of color facing especially tough odds to stay on track and reach their full potential.

The bottom line is, Michelle and I want every child to have the same chance this country gave us; but we know our opportunity agenda won't be complete, and too many young people entering the workforce today will see the American Dream as an empty promise, unless we also do more to make sure our economy honors the dignity of work, and hard work pays off for every single American.

Now, today, women make up about half our workforce; but they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns.

That is wrong and, in 2014, it's an embarrassment. Women deserve equal pay for equal work. She deserves to have a baby without sacrificing her job. A mother deserves a day off to care for a sick child or a sick parent without running into hardship. And you know what? A father does too. It is time to do away with workplace policies that belong in a "Mad Men" episode. This year, let's all come together, Congress, the White House, businesses from Wall Street to Main Street, to give every woman the opportunity she deserves, because I believe when women succeed, America succeeds.

Now, women hold a majority of lower-wage jobs, but they're not the only ones stifled by stagnant wages. Americans understand that some people will earn more money than others, and we don't resent those who, by virtue of their efforts, achieve incredible success. That's what America's all about. But Americans overwhelmingly agree that no one who works full-time should ever have to raise a family in poverty.

In the year since I asked this Congress to raise the minimum wage, five States have passed laws to raise theirs. Many businesses have done it on their own. Nick Chute is here today with his boss, John Sorrano. John's an owner of Punch Pizza in Minneapolis, and Nick helps make the dough. Only now, he makes more of it. John just gave his employees a raise, to 10 bucks an hour, and that's a decision that has eased their financial stress and boosted their morale.

Tonight, I ask more of America's business leaders to follow John's lead. Do what you can to raise your employees' wages. It's good for the economy. It's good for America.

To every mayor, Governor, State legislator in America, I say, you don't have to wait for Congress to act. Americans will support you if you take this on. And as the Chief Executive, I intend to lead by example. Profitable corporations like Costco see higher wages as the smart way to boost productivity and reduce turnover. We should too.

In the coming weeks, I will issue an executive order requiring Federal contractors to pay their federally funded employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour—because if you cook our troops' meals or wash their dishes, you should not have to live in poverty.

Of course, to reach millions more, Congress does need to get onboard. Today, the Federal minimum wage is worth about 20 percent less than it was when Ronald Reagan first stood here. TOM HARKIN and GEORGE MILLER have a bill to fix that by lifting the minimum wage to \$10.10. It is easy to remember—10, 10. This will help families. It will give businesses customers with more money to spend. It does not involve any new bureaucratic program. So join

the rest of the country. Say "yes." Give America a raise. Give them a raise.

There are other steps we can take to help families make ends meet, and few are more effective at reducing inequality and helping families pull themselves up through hard work than the earned income tax credit. Right now, it helps about half of all parents at some point. Think about that. It helps about half of all parents in America at some point in their lives. But I agree with Republicans like Senator RUBIO that it doesn't do enough for single workers who don't have kids. So let's work together to strengthen the credit, reward work, and help more Americans get ahead.

Let's do more to help Americans save for retirement. Today, most workers don't have a pension. A Social Security check often isn't enough on its own. And while the stock market has doubled over the last 5 years, that doesn't help folks who don't have 401(k)s.

That is why tomorrow, I will direct the Treasury to create a new way for working Americans to start their own retirement savings: MyRA. It is a new savings bond that encourages folks to build a nest egg. MyRA guarantees a decent return with no risk of losing what you put in. And if this Congress wants to help, work with me to fix an upside-down Tax Code that gives big tax breaks to help the wealthy save but does little to nothing for middle class Americans.

Offer every American access to an automatic IRA on the job so they can save at work, just like everybody in this Chamber can. And since the most important investment many families make is their home, send me legislation that protects taxpayers from footing the bill for a housing crisis ever again and keeps the dream of homeownership alive for future generations.

One last point on financial security. For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system. And in case you haven't heard, we are in the process of fixing that.

A preexisting condition used to mean that someone like Amanda Shelley, a physician assistant and single mom from Arizona, couldn't get health insurance. But on January 1, she got covered. On January 3, she felt a sharp pain. On January 6, she had emergency surgery. Just 1 week earlier, Amanda said, that surgery would have meant bankruptcy. That is what health insurance reform is all about, the peace of mind that, if misfortune strikes, you don't have to lose everything.

Already, because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 3 million Americans under age 26 have gained coverage under their parents' plans. More than 9 million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage—9 million.

And here is another number: zero. Because of this law, no American—none, zero—can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma or back pain or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she is a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors.

Now, I do not expect to convince my Republican friends on the merits of this law, but I know that the American people are not interested in refighting old battles. So, again, if you have specific plans to cut costs, cover more people, and increase choice, tell America what you would do differently. Let's see if the numbers add up. But let's not have another 40-something votes to repeal a law that is already helping millions of Americans like Amanda. The first 40 were plenty. We all owe it to the American people to say what we are for, not just what we are against.

And if you want to know the real impact this law is having, just talk to Governor Steve Beshear of Kentucky who is here tonight. Now, Kentucky is not the most liberal part of the country. That is not where I got my highest vote totals. But he is like a man possessed when it comes to covering his Commonwealth's families. "They are our neighbors and our friends," he said. "They are people we shop and go to church with, farmers out on the tractors, grocery clerks. They are people who go to work every morning praying they don't get sick. No one deserves to live that way."

Steve's right. And that's why, tonight, I ask every American who knows someone without health insurance to help them get covered by March 31. Help them get covered. Moms, get on your kids to sign up. Kids, call your mom and walk her through the application. It will give her some peace of mind—plus, she'll appreciate hearing from you.

After all, that's the spirit that has always moved this Nation forward. It's the spirit of citizenship, the recognition that through hard work and responsibility we can pursue our individual dreams but still come together as one American family to make sure the next generation can pursue its dreams as well.

Citizenship means standing up for everyone's right to vote. Last year, part of the Voting Rights Act was weakened, but conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats are working together to strengthen it. And the bipartisan commission I appointed, chaired by my campaign lawyer and Governor Romney's campaign lawyer, came together and has offered reforms so that no one has to wait for more than a half hour to vote. Let's support these efforts. It should be the power of our

vote, not the size of our bank account, that drives our democracy.

Citizenship means standing up for the lives that gun violence steals from us each day. I have seen the courage of parents, students, pastors, and police officers all over this country who say "we are not afraid," and I intend to keep trying, with or without Congress, to help stop more tragedies from visiting innocent Americans in our movie theaters, in our shopping malls, or schools like Sandy Hook.

Citizenship demands a sense of common purpose, participation in the hard work of self-government, an obligation to serve our communities. And I know this Chamber agrees that few Americans give more to their country than our diplomats and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces.

Tonight, because of the extraordinary troops and civilians who risk and lay down their lives to keep us free, the United States is more secure. When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq. More than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. Together with our allies, we will complete our mission there by the end of this year, and America's longest war will finally be over.

After 2014, we will support a unified Afghanistan as it takes responsibility for its own future. If the Afghan Government signs a security agreement that we have negotiated, a small force of Americans could remain in Afghanistan with NATO allies to carry out two narrow missions: training and assisting Afghan forces, and counterterrorism operations to pursue any remnants of al Qaeda. For while our relationship with Afghanistan will change, one thing will not: our resolve that terrorists do not launch attacks against our country.

The fact is that danger remains. While we have put al Qaeda's core leadership on a path to defeat, the threat has evolved as al Qaeda affiliates and other extremists take root in different parts of the world. In Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and Mali, we have to keep working with partners to disrupt and disable those networks. In Syria, we'll support the opposition that rejects the agenda of terrorist networks. Here at home, we'll keep strengthening our defenses and combat new threats like cyberattacks. And as we reform our defense budget, we'll have to keep faith with our men and women in uniform and invest in the capabilities they need to succeed in future missions.

We have to remain vigilant. But I strongly believe our leadership and our security cannot depend on our outstanding military alone. As Commander in Chief, I have used force

when needed to protect the American people, and I will never hesitate to do so as long as I hold this office. But I will not send our troops into harm's way unless it is truly necessary, nor will I allow our sons and daughters to be mired in open-ended conflicts. We must fight the battles that need to be fought, not those that terrorists prefer from us—large-scale deployments that drain our strength and may ultimately feed extremism.

So, even as we actively and aggressively pursue terrorist networks—through more targeted efforts and by building the capacity of our foreign partners—America must move off a permanent war footing. That's why I have imposed prudent limits on the use of drones, for we will not be safer if people abroad believe we strike within their countries without regard for the consequence. That's why, working with this Congress, I will reform our surveillance programs, because the vital work of our intelligence community depends on public confidence, here and abroad, that the privacy of ordinary people is not being violated.

And with the Afghan war ending, this needs to be the year Congress lifts the remaining restrictions on detainee transfers and we close the prison at Guantanamo Bay—because we counter terrorism not just through intelligence and military actions but by remaining true to our constitutional ideals and setting an example for the rest of the world.

You see, in a world of complex threats, our security and our leadership depends on all elements of our power, including strong and principled diplomacy. American diplomacy has rallied more than 50 countries to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and allowed us to reduce our own reliance on Cold War stockpiles. American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force, is why Syria's chemical weapons are being eliminated, and we will continue to work with the international community to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve—a future free of dictatorship, terror, and fear.

As we speak, American diplomacy is supporting Israelis and Palestinians as they engage in the difficult but necessary talks to end the conflict there; to achieve dignity and an independent state for Palestinians, and lasting peace and security for the State of Israel—a Jewish State that knows America will always be at their side.

And it is American diplomacy, backed by pressure, that has halted the progress of Iran's nuclear program—and rolled back parts of that program—for the very first time in a decade. As we gather here tonight, Iran has begun to eliminate its stockpile of higher levels of enriched uranium. It is not installing advanced centrifuges. Unprecedented inspections help the world

verify, every day, that Iran is not building a bomb. And with our allies and partners, we are engaged in negotiations to see if we can peacefully achieve a goal we all share: preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

These negotiations will be difficult. They may not succeed. We are clear-eyed about Iran's support for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah, which threaten our allies, and we are clear about the mistrust between our nations, mistrust that cannot be wished away. But these negotiations don't rely on trust; any long-term deal we agree to must be based on verifiable action that convinces us and the international community that Iran is not building a nuclear bomb. If John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan could negotiate with the Soviet Union, then surely a strong and confident America can negotiate with less powerful adversaries today.

The sanctions that we put in place helped make this opportunity possible. But let me be clear: if this Congress sends me a new sanctions bill now that threatens to derail these talks, I will veto it. For the sake of our national security, we must give diplomacy a chance to succeed. If Iran's leaders do not seize this opportunity, then I will be the first to call for more sanctions and stand ready to exercise all options to make sure Iran does not build a nuclear weapon. But if Iran's leaders do seize the chance—and we will know soon enough—then Iran could take an important step to rejoin the community of nations, and we will have resolved one of the leading security challenges of our time without the risks of war.

Finally, let's remember that our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats, but by the enormous opportunities to do good and promote understanding around the globe—to forge greater cooperation, to expand new markets, to free people from fear and want. And no one is better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities than America.

Our alliance with Europe remains the strongest the world has ever known. From Tunisia to Burma, we are supporting those who are willing to do the hard work of building democracy. In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have the right to express themselves freely and peacefully and have a say in their country's future. Across Africa, we are bringing together businesses and governments to double access to electricity and help end extreme poverty. In the Americas, we are building new ties of commerce, but we are also expanding cultural and educational exchanges among young people. And we will continue to focus on the Asia-Pacific, where we support our allies, shape a future of greater security and prosperity, and extend a hand to those devastated by disaster—as we did in the Philippines, when our

marines and civilians rushed to aid those battered by a typhoon, and who were greeted with words like, "We will never forget your kindness," and, "God bless America."

We do these things because they help promote our long-term security, and we do them because we believe in the inherent dignity and equality of every human being, regardless of race or religion, creed or sexual orientation. And next week, the world will see one expression of that commitment when Team USA marches the red, white, and blue into the Olympic Stadium and brings home the gold.

My fellow Americans, no other country in the world does what we do. On every issue, the world turns to us, not simply because of the size of our economy or our military might—but because of the ideals we stand for and the burdens we bear to advance them.

No one knows this better than those who serve in uniform. As this time of war draws to a close, a new generation of heroes returns to civilian life. We will keep slashing that backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned and our wounded warriors receive the health care—including the mental health care—that they need. We will keep working to help all of our veterans translate their skills and leadership into jobs here at home, and we will all continue to join forces to honor and support our remarkable military families.

Let me tell you about one of those families I have come to know.

I first met Cory Remsburg, a proud Army Ranger, at Omaha Beach on the 65th anniversary of D-day. Along with some of his fellow Rangers, he walked me through the program. He was a strong, impressive young man with an easy manner. He was sharp as a tack. We joked around and took pictures, and I told him to stay in touch.

A few months later, on his 10th deployment, Cory was nearly killed by a massive roadside bomb in Afghanistan. His comrades found him in a canal, face down, under water, shrapnel in his brain.

For months, he lay in a coma. The next time I met him, in the hospital, he couldn't speak; he could barely move. Over the years, he has endured dozens of surgeries and procedures and hours of grueling rehab every day.

Even now, Cory is still blind in one eye. He still struggles on his left side. But slowly, steadily, with the support of caregivers like his dad, Craig, and the community around him, Cory has grown stronger. Day by day, he has learned to speak again and stand again and walk again—and he is working toward the day when he can serve his country again.

"My recovery has not been easy," he says. "Nothing in life that's worth anything is easy."

Cory is here tonight; and like the Army he loves, like the America he

serves, Sergeant First Class Cory Remsburg never gives up, and he does not quit.

My fellow Americans, men and women like Cory remind us that America has never come easy. Our freedom, our democracy, has never been easy. Sometimes we stumble; we make mistakes; we get frustrated or discouraged. But for more than 200 years, we have put those things aside and placed our collective shoulder to the wheel of progress—to create and build and expand the possibilities of individual achievement; to free other nations from tyranny and fear; to promote justice and fairness and equality under the law, so that the words set to paper by our Founders are made real for every citizen. The America we want for our kids—a rising America where honest work is plentiful and communities are strong; where prosperity is widely shared and opportunity for all lets us go as far as our dreams and toil will take us—none of it is easy.

But if we work together, if we summon what is best in us, the way Cory summoned what was best in him, with our feet planted firmly in today but our eyes cast towards tomorrow, I know it is within our reach.

Believe it.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet; the Chief Justice of the United States and the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court; the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of medical reasons.

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for January 27 through January 29 on account of attending to family acute medical care and hospitalization.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, January 29, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4578. A letter from the Director, Naval Reactors, Department of Defense, transmitting a report entitled, "Environmental Monitoring and Disposal of Radioactive Wastes From U.S. Naval Nuclear-Powered Ships and Their Support Facilities"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4579. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting a proposal regarding the decision by the United States Court of Appeals in *National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners v. United States Department of Energy* (Nos. 11-1066 and 11-1068; D.C. Cir. 2013); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4580. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a Report to Congress on the Evaluation of the Medicaid Emergency Psychiatric Demonstration; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4581. A letter from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Rural Call Completion [WC Docket No.: 13-39] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4582. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting Periodic Report on the National Emergency Caused by the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979 for February 26, 2013-August 25, 2013; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4583. A letter from the Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Inspector General and the semiannual management report for the period ending September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4584. A letter from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting a semiannual management report to the Congress for the period April 1, 2013 to September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4585. A letter from the Chairman, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting a report entitled "Preserving the Integrity of the Federal Merit Systems: Understanding and Addressing Perceptions of Favoritism", pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 1204(a)(3); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4586. A letter from the Clerk, Court of Appeals, transmitting an opinion of the United States Court of Appeals regarding Katherine

Elizabeth Barnet, docket no. 13-612; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4587. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's report entitled, "2013 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges and Transit: Conditions and Performance"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4588. A letter from the Director, Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Loan Guaranty: Minimum Property and Construction Requirements (RIN: 2900-AO67) received January 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4589. A letter from the Director, Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — VA Compensation Service and Pension and Fiduciary Service Nomenclature Changes (RIN: 2900-AO64) received January 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4590. A letter from the Chief, Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological and Ecclesiastical Ethnological Material from Bulgaria [CBP Dec. 14-01] (RIN: 1515-AD95) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4591. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Prevailing State Assumed Interest Rates (Rev. Rule. 2014-4) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4592. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Current Refundings of Recovery Zone Facility Bonds [Notice 2014-9] received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4593. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Sales-Based Royalties and Vendor Allowances [TD: 9652] (RIN: 1545-BI57) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4594. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Computation of, and Rules Relating to, Medical Loss Ratio [TD 9651] (RIN: 1545-BL05) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4595. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Exclusion from Income of Payments to Care Providers from Medicaid Waiver Programs [Notice 2014-7] received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4596. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Bond Premium Carryforward [TD 9653] (RIN: 1545-BL28) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 3936. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. TERRY):

H.R. 3937. A bill to evaluate and report on the feasibility and effectiveness of using natural gas as a fuel source in long haul trucks; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. TERRY):

H.R. 3938. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to designate natural gas fueling corridors in the United States for long haul truck traffic, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. NEAL:

H.R. 3939. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to jumpstart the sluggish economy, finance critical infrastructure investments, fight income inequality and create jobs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri (for himself and Mr. TERRY):

H.R. 3940. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to weight limitations for natural gas vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3941. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the deduction for mortgage insurance premiums; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3942. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the deduction of State and local general sales taxes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3943. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the above-the-line deduction for qualified tuition and related expenses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3944. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year tax-free distributions from individual retirement plans for charitable purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3945. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the business research credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3946. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the employer wage credit for employees who are active duty members of the uniformed services; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3947. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the work opportunity tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3948. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the 15-year straight-line cost recovery for qualified leasehold improvements, qualified restaurant buildings and improvements, and qualified retail improvements; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3949. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the enhanced charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3950. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the credit for energy-efficient existing homes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3951. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the credit for energy-efficient new homes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3952. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend for one year the credits for energy-efficient appliances; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 3953. A bill to amend title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act concerning the notice requirements regarding the extent of health plan coverage of abortion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 3954. A bill to provide for systemic research, surveillance, treatment, prevention, awareness, development of rules of play, standards, and dissemination of information with respect to sports-related and other concussions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3955. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to establish a pilot program through the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide older individuals with training in computer literacy, advanced computer operations, and resume writing; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3956. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to authorize the Small Business Administrator to make grants for economic growth, business retention and business recruitment to economically underserved communities; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. MEEKS (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KING of New York,

Mr. ISRAEL, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. MENG, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. NADLER, Mr. GRIMM, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. TONKO, Mr. OWENS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. REED, Mr. MAFFEI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. HIGGINS):

H.R. 3957. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 218-10 Merrick Boulevard in Springfield Gardens, New York, as the "Cynthia Jenkins Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

H.R. 3936.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 3937.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8

" . . . to regulate commerce . . . among the several States . . ."

" . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers . . ."

This legislation seeks to promote the use of natural gas in the trucking industry, a vital mode of transporting goods across the country. The use of such a cheap, domestic source of energy will be beneficial to both businesses and consumers. Therefore, it will affect the commerce of the U.S. in a positive way.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 3938.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8

" . . . to regulate commerce . . . among the several States . . ."

" . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers . . ."

This legislation seeks to promote the use of natural gas in the trucking industry, a vital mode of transporting goods across the country. The use of such a cheap, domestic source of energy will be beneficial to both businesses and consumers. Therefore, it will affect the commerce of the U.S. in a positive way.

By Mr. NEAL:

H.R. 3939.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 and the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 3940.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8

" . . . to regulate commerce . . . among the several States . . ."

" . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers . . ."

This legislation seeks to promote the use of natural gas in the trucking industry, a vital mode of transporting goods across the country. The use of such a cheap, domestic source of energy will be beneficial to both businesses and consumers. Therefore, it will affect the commerce of the U.S. in a positive way.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3941.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3942.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3943.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3944.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3945.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3946.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3947.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3948.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3949.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3950.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3951.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3952.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 3953.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 3954.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and within the Indian Tribes, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3955.

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

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3956.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. MEEKS:

H.R. 3957.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution
Congress shall have the power to establish Post Offices and post roads.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

- H.R. 351: Mr. CONAWAY.
- H.R. 366: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. SHIMKUS.
- H.R. 422: Mr. KING of Iowa.
- H.R. 425: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
- H.R. 435: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
- H.R. 436: Mr. MCHENRY.
- H.R. 455: Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. LEWIS, and Mr. LOEBSSACK.
- H.R. 543: Mr. FINCHER.
- H.R. 562: Mr. HINOJOSA.
- H.R. 610: Mr. REED.
- H.R. 611: Mr. REED.
- H.R. 628: Mr. LEWIS, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. VEASEY.
- H.R. 645: Mr. QUIGLEY.
- H.R. 713: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. CAPUANO, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
- H.R. 719: Mr. GRIMM.
- H.R. 792: Mr. COTTON.
- H.R. 809: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
- H.R. 831: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. COOPER.
- H.R. 921: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
- H.R. 924: Mr. MEEKS.
- H.R. 938: Mr. BYRNE.
- H.R. 962: Mr. CAPUANO.
- H.R. 1010: Ms. DUCKWORTH and Mr. COOPER.
- H.R. 1015: Mr. VARGAS.
- H.R. 1078: Mr. SCHOCK.
- H.R. 1089: Mr. POCAN.
- H.R. 1091: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
- H.R. 1129: Mr. BARROW of Georgia.
- H.R. 1130: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
- H.R. 1146: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 1148: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 1209: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
- H.R. 1213: Mr. HONDA.
- H.R. 1254: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
- H.R. 1280: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. FLORES.

- H.R. 1281: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
- H.R. 1339: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 1507: Ms. KELLY of Illinois and Mr. COFFMAN.
- H.R. 1515: Mr. CRENSHAW.
- H.R. 1528: Mr. COBLE.
- H.R. 1666: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 1690: Ms. TITUS.
- H.R. 1701: Mr. CRAWFORD.
- H.R. 1726: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. NUNES, and Mr. RAHALL.
- H.R. 1732: Mr. BARROW of Georgia and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
- H.R. 1750: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. LANKFORD.
- H.R. 1755: Mr. GRIMM.
- H.R. 1812: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
- H.R. 1830: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.R. 1852: Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 1869: Mr. GARCIA.
- H.R. 1918: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. NUNES, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. JONES.
- H.R. 2029: Mr. POCAN.
- H.R. 2037: Mr. POCAN.
- H.R. 2058: Mr. LOEBSSACK.
- H.R. 2123: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
- H.R. 2203: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
- H.R. 2220: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
- H.R. 2235: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.R. 2509: Mr. HONDA and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
- H.R. 2548: Mr. PERRY.
- H.R. 2616: Mr. LIPINSKI.
- H.R. 2643: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri and Mr. BARBER.
- H.R. 2647: Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.
- H.R. 2663: Ms. ESTY and Ms. DEGETTE.
- H.R. 2710: Mr. STEWART.
- H.R. 2737: Mr. NEAL.
- H.R. 2801: Mr. POMPEO and Mr. NOLAN.
- H.R. 2892: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 2907: Ms. KUSTER.
- H.R. 2990: Mr. ENYART, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
- H.R. 3015: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
- H.R. 3077: Mr. COTTON, Mr. PEARCE, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
- H.R. 3303: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
- H.R. 3306: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
- H.R. 3318: Mr. QUTGLE.
- H.R. 3322: Mr. CAPUANO and Mr. POCAN.
- H.R. 3344: Mr. COHEN.
- H.R. 3361: Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. GARRETT.
- H.R. 3367: Mr. MCINTYRE and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
- H.R. 3370: Mr. KIND.
- H.R. 3395: Mrs. ELLMERS.
- H.R. 3461: Ms. BROWNLEY of California and Mr. BISHOP of New York.
- H.R. 3485: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
- H.R. 3489: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 3493: Mr. DENHAM.
- H.R. 3505: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. RUNYAN.
- H.R. 3508: Mr. KIND.
- H.R. 3530: Mr. ROSKAM.
- H.R. 3578: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
- H.R. 3590: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana and Mr. NUNNELEE.
- H.R. 3600: Mrs. ELLMERS.
- H.R. 3635: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, and Mr. NUNNELEE.
- H.R. 3649: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. TAKANO.
- H.R. 3658: Mr. WOLF.
- H.R. 3685: Mrs. ROBY and Mr. NUNNELEE.
- H.R. 3689: Mr. LONG, Mr. JONES, Mr. WEST-MORELAND, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania,

- Mr. CARTER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, and Mr. CRENSHAW.
- H.R. 3718: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
- H.R. 3726: Mr. VARGAS.
- H.R. 3734: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
- H.R. 3738: Mr. LANGEVIN.
- H.R. 3740: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
- H.R. 3741: Ms. NORTON and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
- H.R. 3792: Mr. FLORES.
- H.R. 3810: Mr. VARGAS.
- H.R. 3824: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
- H.R. 3852: Mr. POCAN.
- H.R. 3854: Mr. BARLETTA.
- H.R. 3855: Mr. HOLT, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RIBBLE, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
- H.R. 3857: Mr. LANCE.
- H.R. 3864: Mr. TIBERI.
- H.R. 3865: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CARTER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. NUNNELEE, and Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 3867: Mr. POCAN, Mr. RIBBLE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. PIERLUISI.
- H.R. 3876: Mr. LEWIS.
- H.R. 3878: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. FARR, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
- H.R. 3899: Mr. HONDA, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
- H.R. 3914: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. FARR, and Ms. EDWARDS.
- H.R. 3921: Ms. TITUS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. LEE of California.
- H.R. 3930: Mr. NUGENT, Mr. STEWART, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. WALZ, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. DENT, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. HUNTER.
- H.R. 3931: Mr. MARINO and Mr. PERRY.
- H.J. Res. 34: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
- H. Con. Res. 52: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
- H. Con. Res. 78: Mr. VARGAS and Mr. SERRANO.
- H. Res. 109: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA and Mr. CAPUANO.
- H. Res. 190: Mr. NEAL.
- H. Res. 302: Mr. TERRY and Mr. VISCLOSKEY.
- H. Res. 387: Mr. PITTENGER.
- H. Res. 442: Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. DAINES, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
- H. Res. 447: Ms. DELAURO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. TONKO, Mr. HIMES, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

- H.R. 1094: Mr. PAULSEN.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

68. The SPEAKER presented a petition of Washington Township, Long Valley, New Jersey, relative to Resolution No. R-166-13 urging the Congress to invest additional federal dollars in maintaining the highways and improving the transportation infrastructure in the State of New Jersey; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING TRUDI TERRY AND IRENE DICKERMAN FOR THEIR SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two Clerk of the House employees, Trudi Terry and Irene Dickerman, for their years of service to the House of Representatives. Both Trudi and Irene will be retiring after working in the Clerk of the House's organization for more than 15 years.

Trudi was born in Amarillo, Texas and received a Bachelor of Arts and Science in Secondary Education with certification in English, Speech, and Physical Education from West Texas State University. After college, Trudi became a Certified Reporter Instructor (CRI) and Certified Program Evaluator (CPE) from the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA). As a CPE, Trudi was a member of the national evaluating team tasked with traveling to schools nationwide and determining if those schools met the certification requirements of the NCRA. In 1999, Trudi was hired as a Scopist in the Office of the Official Reporters, a division within the Clerk of the House's organization. As a Scopist, Trudi edited the official transcript, first for House committees and then proceedings of the House floor for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. In 2001, Trudi moved into a new role within the Clerk's organization and assumed the position as the Assistant Chief Clerk of Debates.

In 2004, Trudi became the Chief Clerk of Debates and will hold this position until her retirement on February 3, 2014. During her tenure, Trudi developed a reputation of having a strong work ethic and steadfast dedication to the institution of the House of Representatives. She will be missed by Members of Congress, House staff, and her department colleagues.

Irene Dickerman was born in Los Angeles, California and received a Bachelor of Arts and Science in English Literature from California State University in Northridge, California. After college, Irene also became a CPI from the NCRA. In 1999, Irene was hired as a Scopist in the Office of the Official Reporters. As a Scopist, Irene edited the official transcript, first for House committees and then proceedings of the House floor for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. In 2006, Irene became the Chief Editor and will be in this position until her retirement on February 3, 2014. Irene was well respected as an individual who possessed deep institutional knowledge and maintained a strong level of accuracy in her capacity within the Clerk of the House's organization.

CELEBRATING MR. SCOTT DOWNIE

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Mr. Scott Downie on the occasion of his retirement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Mr. Downie's long commitment to the conservation of fisheries and watersheds of the North Coast has improved the environment for all Californians.

Mr. Downie's service to the North Coast includes 14 years as a commercial fisherman, 10 years as a habitat restoration coordinator for the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, and 23 years as a fish habitat supervisor and senior environmental scientist with Fish and Wildlife. Mr. Downie is also a co-founder of the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project and of the Eel River Watershed Improvement Group.

Mr. Downie's vast experience and understanding of fisheries has helped preserve Northern California's vital salmonid populations and has inspired many others dedicated to this cause. His accomplishments and leadership will undoubtedly leave a legacy for many years to come.

Please join me in expressing deep appreciation to Mr. Scott Downie for his long and impressive career, and his exceptional record of service.

IN MEMORY OF DONA BARBOUR WORRELL

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember a fellow Texan, Dona Barbour Worrell of Brazoria and Spring Branch who passed away Saturday, January 11, 2014.

Dona was the daughter of Susan Louise Poole and Dr. Joel Lane Barbour of Bay City, Texas. She was the youngest of two children. She was also the granddaughter of Thomas Jefferson Poole, the president of the Bay City Bank and Trust from 1909–1929.

Mr. Poole owned a 5,000 acre ranch in Matagorda County, where Barbour spent a lot of her childhood. In 1929 Poole formed a partnership with Allen Ranch, creating the Allen-Poole Cattle Co. They shipped cattle by rail to Oklahoma and Kansas, and at its height, the Allen-Poole Cattle Co. shipped more cattle than any other ranch in Texas except for the King Ranch. The Poole Ranch was very much a part of her life and an integral part of her family.

Dona attended Trinity University, where she met her husband, Thomas Alfred Worrell. The two were married in 1960. Shortly after their marriage, Tommy took a part in the movie, "The Alamo," starring John Wayne.

Dona's life ultimately leads her and her family back to Texas. They split their time between San Antonio and the Poole Ranch in Brazoria, Texas, where they owned and operated shows at various dude ranches.

Dona touched the lives of many people, including close friends and famous Hollywood actors. James Drury, who is best known for his role in The Virginian as well as General Douglas MacArthur and his wife Jean, who arranged for Dona to attend a coalition at West Point, just to name a few.

Dona is survived by her husband Tommy, (Thomas) Worrell; Son, Todd Worrell and spouse, Marty Worrell and children from a previous marriage, Daniel Lane Worrell, Dylan Thomas Worrell and Bethany Kirsten Worrell; Daughter, Heather Worrell and her partner, Kellye McKinna and their children, Thelen Lane McKinna-Worrell and Ella Kathryn McKinna-Worrell; and daughter Sunni Worrell Duncan, her spouse, Daniel Duncan their children from a previous marriage, Austin Thomas Soward, Hunter Brian Soward, and Courtland Shea Duncan.

She is preceded in death by her parents, grandparents, and brother. Dona was a strong Texan, deeply devoted to her husband and family, she will be greatly missed.

BRINGING ATTENTION TO ERADICATING THE BULLYING EPIDEMIC

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the Founder and Chairman of the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus to bring attention to the Be a STAR (Show Tolerance and Respect) Alliance, an anti-bullying initiative co-founded in 2011 by The Creative Coalition and WWE to encourage young people to treat each other with tolerance and respect through education and grassroots initiatives. WWE and The Creative Coalition leverage the power of The Creative Coalition's entertainment industry constituencies and WWE's global brand and platforms to help combat the bullying epidemic plaguing today's youth. This month, for the first time ever, Be a STAR awarded five grants totaling \$125,000 to outstanding non-profit public charities that develop and implement anti-bullying programs.

The five grantees of the inaugural Be a STAR grant program are:

The Armory Foundation, New York, NY: The Armory Foundation, a NYC non-profit, services

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.
Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

more than 125,000 athletes and is home to the premier indoor track and field center in the United States. The Be a STAR grant will help fund the Armory College Prep's Fair Play Program, which reaches more than 300 students in public high schools in New York City, New Jersey and Westchester. The grant will also provide training for The Armory Foundation's staff, who will ensure that Be a STAR's lesson plans are integrated effectively into the program's workshops.

Blue Star Families, Inc., Falls Church, VA: Blue Star serves more than 10,000 military families in 70 locations around the world by supporting, connecting and empowering families through chapter-based programs. The Be a STAR grant will help fund MilKidz Clubs, which connects military kids—regardless of rank, branch of service or military installation—and provides them the resources, mentoring and opportunity to become the next wave of leaders in their communities. Approximately 1.5 million military children are enrolled in United States schools with the average military family moving about every two years. As a result, approximately 750,000 children of military families are the “new kid” each year in their school. In order to help these children, MilKidz will integrate Be a STAR resources into its after-school activities and incorporate Be a STAR's nine lesson plans, including Courage, Responsibility, Dignity, Friendship, Advocacy, Resiliency, Empathy, Identity and Morality into its monthly meetings.

Do Something, New York, NY: Do Something is one of the largest non-profit organizations in the United States that creates opportunities for young people to participate in causes that combat bullying, animal cruelty, homelessness and cancer. The Be a STAR grant will be used to help fund Do Something's “Bully Text” mobile platform. “Bully Text” is a digital experience where kids encounter different bullying scenarios and learn how to respond in various ways. According to Do Something's 2012 “The Bully Report”, cyber bullying is the most pervasive type of bullying with 70 percent of students reporting frequent bullying online and 35 percent reporting bullying through texting.

East LA Boys & Girls Club (BGCELA), Los Angeles, CA: The mission of BGCELA is to enable all young people and their families to realize their full potential as productive, healthy, caring and responsible individuals through life-enhancing programs. The Be a STAR grant will support and fund parent workshops and training taught by local anti-bullying experts during National Bullying Prevention Month. Videos from the Be a STAR resource guide will be shown and discussed using the Be a STAR Student Activity Sheets and students will be taught Be a STAR's nine lesson plans.

National Voices for Equality, Education and Enlightenment (NVEEE), Fort Lauderdale, FL: NVEEE is a community-based non-profit whose mission is to prevent bullying, violence and suicide among youth, families and communities through direct service, mentoring and prevention education. The Be a STAR grant will fund the Peace Ambassadors program, which serves approximately 7,000 students in Ft. Lauderdale who will participate in tailored workshops that have integrated Be a STAR

resources and training. The Peace Ambassador program is a leadership program comprised of students who serve as advocates and leaders to prevent bullying, suicide and violence in their schools and communities. Additionally, through the support of the Be a STAR grant, NVEEE will provide parents and students with information and resources from Be a STAR alliance members.

On behalf of the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus, I congratulate The Creative Coalition, WWE, Be a STAR, and the grant winners.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING AT MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS INCLUDING THE 2014 SUPER BOWL

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, a hearing that I held yesterday focused on the preparations for the upcoming Super Bowl to prevent human trafficking and strategies employed by airlines, busses, trains, and hotels designed to mitigate human trafficking.

In less than a week, New Jersey will be hosting the Super Bowl, and along with welcoming enthusiastic fans, the state also is preparing for a likely influx of both domestic and international traffickers.

Sadly, but almost certainly, they will bring with them sexually exploited trafficking victims—many of them from abroad—in an attempt to cash in on the Super Bowl crowds. We know from the past that any large sporting event—especially the Super Bowl—acts as a sex trafficking magnet. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children reports that more than 10,000 exploited women and girls were trafficked to Miami for the Super Bowl in 2010.

This must not happen again. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has put in place a robust anti-human trafficking plan. For example, his Department of Homeland Security and Preparedness has stepped-up efforts to combat trafficking at the Super Bowl, distributing flyers to emergency medical services, fire department, law enforcement, and other emergency care professions so that these front line professionals will know when to be concerned that someone is a trafficking victim and how to respond appropriately. The transportation and hospitality training concept has proven straightforward, effective—and it is catching on.

On her way to yet another assembly and community awareness conference at St. Elizabeth's College in Morristown, NJ Assistant Attorney General Tracy Thompson, who is spearheading the Christie administration's anti-human trafficking effort, told me that they have trained 10,000 people, including a train-the-trainer initiative. She noted that the Super Bowl creates an increased “breeding ground” for sex trafficking.

She said, “Today's victims can be any race, age or gender. Victims are exploited for prostitution, pornography and forced labor.

Traffickers control victims through force and fraud utilizing physical and psychological abuse, threats and isolation.

Know it. See it. Report it.”

According to Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott, the Super Bowl can be described as “the single largest human trafficking incident in the United States.” Capt. Doug Cain, Louisiana State Police spokesman, said after the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans, “Any time you have a large influx of tourists in town and they're spending a lot of money, there's a criminal element that moves in to take advantage of that.”

Greece, which hosted the Olympics in 2004, saw a 95% increase in trafficking victims in the months leading up to and including the Olympics. Next month, Russia—a country ranked at the lowest Tier by the annual U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report—will host the winter Olympic Games. Since Russia does not have in place any formal national procedures to guide law enforcement in the identification of sex trafficking victims and does not fund trafficking victim care, I am very concerned that the 2014 Winter Olympics may turn out to be a trafficking nightmare.

Later this year, Brazil will host the 2014 World Cup and then the 2016 Summer Olympics. Although Brazil has improved their anti-trafficking laws and is taking steps to mitigate trafficking risks, the fact remains that Brazil will have to do much more if they want to protect their children from sex tourism. Numbers from Brazil's Federal Police indicate that between 250,000 and 400,000 children are forcibly prostituted.

Worldwide, the best estimates are that 600,000 to 800,000 trafficking victims are moved across international borders every year. Millions more victims are moved within national borders. But anti-trafficking efforts have only recently turned to equipping transportation employees to identify victims in transit. The training is easy, inexpensive, and is already saving lives.

In July of 2010, I chaired a conference in Washington, DC, to bring together the relevant U.S. agencies, such as the Customs and Border Patrol, various U.S. airlines, and non-governmental organizations to focus on interdicting traffickers by training commercial transportation employees to recognize the indicators for trafficking. Speakers, including Deborah Sigmund, founder of a non-government organization called Innocents at Risk, explained how flight attendants were the “first line of defense” in the fight against human trafficking.

Flight attendants are in the unique position to observe a potential trafficking in progress and then call a trafficking hotline or inform the pilot to radio ahead so that the proper authorities can intervene.

Former flight attendant Nancy Rivard, President of Airline Ambassadors International and one of today's witnesses, told us how she and other flight attendants compared notes one day and were shocked and dismayed at how often they had noticed what they suspected was a trafficked woman or child on their flight, but had no training or protocol to do something about it. Nancy has been doing a great deal about it ever since, training airline employees around the United States and world. Last year I joined Ms. Rivard at a training seminar in Kiev, Ukraine.

One of the earliest successes of the program was a call Ms. Rivard placed to the U.S.

Department of Homeland Security regarding a child she had observed on her flight from the Dominican Republic to Boston. That tip led to the break-up of a trafficking ring that had transported more than 80 children to the United States.

Just this year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released a similar training initiative, the Blue Lightning program, to domestic U.S. airlines—so far, Delta, JetBlue, Allegiant, and North American Airlines are on board. With minimal modifications, the training is also easily adaptable to bus drivers, station operators, train conductors, trucking associations, and other transportation industry professionals.

The New Jersey Human Trafficking Task Force, which was originally started with seed money from a law I authored—the Trafficking Victim's Protection Act of 2000—is working overtime to mitigate sex trafficking and has released anti-trafficking brochures to bus and train employees in New Jersey, as well as reached out to another major industry on the front lines of spotting traffickers and victims: the hotels.

We had with us yesterday the NGO End Child Prostitution and Trafficking, or ECPAT-USA, which has been conducting hotel training on behalf of the task force in the lead-up to the Super Bowl. Hyatt, Hilton, Wyndham, Carlson, and Accor hotels have been establishing a new industry standard to ensure that their properties are not used for human trafficking.

In addition to reaching out to transportation employees and hotels, the New Jersey Human Trafficking Task Force has increased print and electronic public service announcements and training programs for law enforcement officials, health care workers, lawyers, and others on the front lines of potential interactions with trafficking victims.

In December, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe OSCE, which comprises 57 countries from Europe and North America, endorsed my plan to make anti-trafficking training for airline employees, other public and commercial carriers, as well as hotel employees, a primary goal in the international strategy to combat human trafficking. In an earlier session, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly adopted my resolution to implement such training in each member country.

Any country that competes to host a major sporting event must be fully aware of the human trafficking vulnerabilities associated with such events and the best practices for protecting and rescuing the victims. In fact, the International Olympic Committee and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, or FIFA, should take into consideration a country's anti-trafficking commitment and ability when awarding games. Standard anti-trafficking measures should be included along with the required security measures and stadium specifications.

Finally, the only standard that fits the crime of human trafficking—zero tolerance—must be rigorously and faithfully enforced by arrests of those engaged in this nefarious trade—modern-day slavery. And there can be no higher priority than the liberation and protection of the victims. Combating human trafficking must be continuously prioritized at all levels of government, the faith community, civil society and

corporations, including the National Football League. All of us must do our part to protect the women and girls.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF BLACK
JANUARY

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my condolences to the people of Azerbaijan who, on January 20, remember "Black January."

On January 19, 1990, the Soviet Union declared a "State of Emergency" in Baku and other parts of Azerbaijan, in an attempt to suppress further movements towards independence. In the middle of the night and into January 20, some 26,000 Soviet troops moved into Baku brutalizing and randomly killing the civilian population as they proceeded. Over one hundred Azeris were killed and up to 800 were injured. This brutality, far from crushing the Azerbaijani spirit, steeled their resolve and on October 18, 1991, the Azerbaijan Parliament declared the country's independence, which it retains today.

Azerbaijan had always shown a special desire to be independent. With the fall of the Russian Empire in 1918, Azerbaijan declared its independence and granted voting rights for women, a full year before American women were enfranchised. Today, Azerbaijan is the only former Russian Republic which does not have foreign troops stationed on its soil.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the events of "Black January" and the Azeri determination that led to the independent Republic of Azerbaijan we know today.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF CONGRESSMAN VICENTE
"BEN" GARRIDO BLAZ

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of my good friend, the late Vicente "Ben" Tomas Garrido Blaz, a retired Brigadier General in the United States Marine Corps and former Member of Congress who represented the people of Guam. Congressman Blaz was a hero and leader who inspired generations on Guam. He passed away on January 8, 2014 at the age of 85.

Congressman Blaz was born on February 14, 1928 to Vicente Cruz Blaz and Rita Garrido Blaz from the village of Ordot, Guam, and he was the third of eight children. He married his late wife, Ann Evers Blaz, in 1953, and they had two sons, Thomas and Michael and five grandchildren. Congressman Blaz was predeceased by his wife and parents, and his siblings and in-laws: Rosario and Pedro Cruz, Maria Blaz, Emilia and Alfred Rios,

Brigida Blaz, and Alfred Blaz. He is survived by his sons, Tom and Mike, and their spouses, Shelane and Barbara; his five grandchildren; and his siblings and in-laws: Joaquin Blaz, Patricia and Jose Borja, and Frank and Julie Blaz.

On December 8, 1941, Ben was 13 when Guam was invaded by enemy forces during World War II. He endured the hardships of the 32 months of enemy occupation, and was among those conscripted into forced labor. As a survivor of the occupation, General Blaz had a strong sense of patriotism and duty to our country. He never forgot these experiences and they helped to inspire him to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps and to continue a life of service as a Congressman.

After the war, Ben graduated from George Washington High School and was awarded an academic scholarship to attend the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. Ben was a patriot, and when war broke out in Korea, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and attended Officer Candidate School. In 1951, Ben graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Science degree and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He continued his professional education and earned a Master of Arts degree from the George Washington University in 1963 and graduated from the Naval War College in 1970. General Blaz was bestowed an honorary Doctors of Laws from the University of Guam in 1974; in 1988 he was recognized as a distinguished alumnus of the University of Notre Dame, where he was conferred the Rev. William Corby Award for his notable military service.

As an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, Brigadier General Blaz served our nation with honor and distinction. He served three overseas tours in Vietnam; Okinawa, Japan; and Osaka, Japan. He was appointed as the Commanding Officer of the 9th Marines, and had the honor of commanding one of the Marine Corps regiments which liberated Guam during World War II. In 1977, Ben was promoted to Brigadier General, becoming the first Chamorro to attain flag officer rank. He retired in 1980 after 30 years of distinguished service in the Marine Corps. During his service, his awards and decorations included the Legion of Merit (twice awarded); Bronze Star (with Combat V); Navy Commendation Medal (twice awarded); Combat Action Ribbon; and Vietnam Cross of Gallantry (Gold Star).

Following his military retirement, General Blaz ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1982. He was successful in 1984 when he was elected to the 99th Congress, and he served in the House of Representatives for four terms from 1985 to 1993. At the start of his first term, Congressman Blaz was elected by his peers to serve as the president of his freshman class. Congressman Blaz worked to improve the relationship between the federal government and Guam. As a member of the Armed Services, Natural Resources, and Foreign Affairs Committees, he worked to address Guam's issues, national security issues and Asia-Pacific issues. He promoted improving Guam's political status, advocated for war reparations for Guam, worked to improve education and health programs, and sought the return of excess federal lands to the people of Guam.

Ben never truly retired from public service, and after he left Congress, he became Guam's senior statesman. He was an invaluable mentor to Congressman Robert Underwood and myself, and I would often look to him for counsel and support on issues important to Guam. During his time in Congress, Congressman Blaz often remarked of the territories, "We are equal in war but not in peace," recognizing the inequality between U.S. citizens residing in the territories and those living in the 50 states. During my time in Congress, I too have recognized the sentiment behind this profound statement, and I kept a plaque of Ben's quote on my desk when I first took office. Congressman Blaz was also a strong supporter of the events held in Washington to commemorate the Liberation of Guam. He faithfully attended the wreath laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and the receptions on Capitol Hill that are held every year.

Throughout his life, Ben worked to promote and preserve the Chamorro culture, language, and history. He produced two television series *Nihi Ta Bisita* (Let Us Visit) which centered on Guam's culture, language, and history, and *Nihi Ta Hasso* (Let Us Remember) which centered on the occupation and liberation of Guam during World War II, and was later published as a book. He is also the author of *Bisita Guam: A Special Place in the Sun*, which is an important resource in Guam's schools.

I join the people of Guam in honoring the memory of Congressman Ben Blaz and commemorating his many contributions to our island and our nation. I extend my sincere condolences to the entire Blaz family. While General Blaz is no longer with us, his legacy of selfless service and patriotism inspires our young men and women in the military and throughout our island.

A REPORT ON THE G8 DEMENTIA
SUMMIT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on December 11, the G8 convened a dementia summit in London to examine and presumably harmonize the various national action plans on the growing international crisis of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. The outcome appears to indicate a coalescing around the U.S. plan to make significant headway on addressing dementia by 2025, which would have significant implications globally, particularly in low and middle-income countries where increasing aging populations and numbers of people with dementia strain limited resources.

On January 4, 2011, President Obama signed into law the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA), requiring the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish the National Alzheimer's Project. Among other provisions of that law, the administration was mandated to: create and maintain an integrated national plan to overcome Alzheimer's disease; coordi-

nate Alzheimer's disease research and services across all federal agencies; accelerate the development of treatments that would prevent, halt, or reverse the course of Alzheimer's disease; improve early diagnosis and coordination of care and treatment of Alzheimer's disease; improve outcomes for ethnic and racial minority populations that are at higher risk for Alzheimer's disease; and coordinate with international bodies to fight Alzheimer's globally.

That congressionally-mandated plan apparently found favor with the G8, which endorsed that plan as being comprehensive and forward-looking. But even before the summit, the U.S. national plan on Alzheimer's led nearly a dozen other nations to adopt their own national strategies.

According to the testimony at this subcommittee's November 21, 2013 pre-summit hearing, this comprehensive approach is vital to meeting what is a looming global health crisis.

The World Health Organization and Alzheimer's Disease International 2012 Dementia Report estimates that there were 35.6 million people with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, worldwide in 2010. This number is projected to nearly double every 20 years, increasing to 65.7 million in 2030 and 115.4 million in 2050.

The global cost of this condition totaled \$604 billion in 2010, according to the Alzheimer's Disease International. To put this figure in context, Alzheimer's cost would equal the Gross Domestic Product of the 18th-place country in the world ranked by GDP.

While the other G8 countries may pledge funding to address Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia in the developing world, we are facing an impending global health crisis over Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. The FY2014 federal budget request for U.S.-funded global health programs was \$8.3 billion. The focus is on achieving an AIDS-free generation and ending preventable child and maternal deaths through the Administration's Global Health Initiative. Under this budget, maternal and child health would receive \$680 million, malaria program would receive \$670 million, tuberculosis programs would receive \$191 million, neglected tropical disease programs would receive \$85 million and pandemic influenza and other emerging threats programs would receive \$47 million.

WHO estimates that more than half of global dementia cases are in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) where cases are projected to grow. Across Asia, Latin America and Africa, these developing countries are expected to see the most rapid growth in dementia cases over the next several decades. In 2010, roughly 53% of dementia cases were in low- and middle-income countries. By 2050, WHO expects 70% of all cases to be found in such countries. So how will this impact our foreign aid portfolio, especially as regards global health?

We need to better understand the level of international cooperation our government can expect in the search for early detection techniques, prevention and treatment of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. There has been collaboration among scientists across borders on HIV/AIDS, but how much

can we expect on the various forms of dementia? Many countries in the developing world don't even have surveillance adequate to provide reliable statistics on the incidence of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Given the negative impact of the brain drain, they may not be able to be the active, effective partners we need them to be in this area. However, without their help, it will be difficult to even formulate programs to help such nations cope with this growing health threat.

These are questions we addressed at a recent hearing. The administration was unable to participate in my subcommittee's November 21, 2013 hearing on the subject, but we recently had the head of the National Institute on Aging to provide the administration's view on what the summit produced. We were also joined by two representatives from the NGO community who participated in the London summit to give us a private sector view of those proceedings.

We will need more than rhetoric to deal with this crisis. As more of us live longer worldwide, the threat of developing Alzheimer's or some other form of dementia grows exponentially. We cannot afford to have a robust domestic program to fight this condition and find that our international efforts are undermined by the failure of other donors to play their proper role in this effort.

CELEBRATING MR. GARY FLOSI

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Mr. Gary Flosi on his recent retirement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Mr. Flosi's dedication to the North Coast's fisheries and watersheds has been a tremendous service to the state.

Mr. Flosi began his career as a wildland firefighter with the California Ecology Corps in October 1975, then moved on to work with the California Conservation Corps. When he joined Fish and Wildlife, he helped develop the fisheries technician program with the CCC and led the state's peer review committee for Fish and Wildlife's Fisheries Restoration Grants Program. Mr. Flosi co-founded the AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Project and has served on its Advisory Committee for 20 years.

Through 4-H and FFA, the CCC and AmeriCorps, Mr. Flosi has passed on his understanding of the importance of fisheries to many who follow in his footsteps. His example will continue to inspire those who wish to restore the environment and fisheries that are so vital to California.

Please join me in expressing deep appreciation to Mr. Gary Flosi for his long and impressive career, and his exceptional record of service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on Rollcall #25 for H.R. 3008, I am not recorded because I was absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

ON THE OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INC.

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome the Metro Detroit and Ann Arbor Chapters of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. to Michigan's Fourteenth Congressional District, as they gather to celebrate their One-hundred-and-sixth Anniversary.

Founded in 1908, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA) was the product of a small and dedicated group of African-American college students from Howard University who sought to make the college experience as meaningful as possible for themselves and the generations of young women that followed them. Together, this group of pioneers created our nation's first historically African-American sorority and set out upon a journey to promote and encourage high scholastic achievement, strong ethical standards, improved friendship among college women, as well as to identify and develop solutions to issues that prevented young women from accessing higher education. With the motto of "Service to All Mankind," the sorority quickly took root in campuses and communities across the United States.

In the early years following its inception, the members of AKA engaged in endeavors that both assisted with access to and maximizing of the higher education experience for women of color. By the time AKA celebrated its Twenty-fifth Anniversary in 1933, the sorority had grown into a national organization with over 500 members in 104 chapters from across the United States. Among AKA's first achievements were the creation of a \$2000 scholarship to increase the ability of talented young women to financially afford college and an engagement with the NAACP to remove social barriers that prevented equal access to college education.

As the decades passed, AKA continued to expand both its membership and the scope of its community programs. In support of their sorority's mission to make higher education more accessible, the members of AKA took frontline roles in the Civil Rights movement and the President Johnson's War on Poverty. In addition to its Emerging Young Leader Initiatives, which provides middle school aged girls with leadership development and enhanced academic opportunities, AKA and its members began to tackle issues of community health,

poverty and environmental justice. To support healthier communities, AKA started an asthma prevention program to help families identify and treat childhood asthma before it impacts the educational experience. In fulfillment of AKA's mission, its members undertook the creation of programs to empower their communities with information on the impact of environmental issues affecting them, setup health care forums targeted to women's issues and continue to partner with international leaders like UNESCO to end hunger and poverty across the globe.

Today, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. is a thriving global organization with over 200,000 members worldwide across hundreds of chapters and has affected the future of thousands of young women. AKA's members have been part of key social movements that have seen our nation and the world move closer to equality on all fronts. I thank the members of the Metro Detroit and Ann Arbor Chapters of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. for their tireless dedication and service to Greater Detroit region and congratulate them on celebrating another great milestone in their history. I am proud to represent so many strong and talented Alpha Kappa Alpha women and I wish them well in their future endeavors as they continue making a remarkable impact on communities around the world.

IN RECOGNITION OF MONSIGNOR THOMAS BANICK FOR 50 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AS A CATHOLIC PRIEST

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Monsignor Thomas Banick, who after 50 years of service to the Catholic Church and his community, is retiring. Monsignor Banick was ordained by Archbishop Martin J. O'Connor on December 18, 1963, in the Church of St. Ignatius in Rome. A day later, he celebrated his First Mass at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. In 1964, he was awarded the Degree of Licentiate in Sacred Theology by the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Shortly thereafter, Father Banick returned to the United States and celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at Holy Family Church.

Monsignor Banick was first assigned to Holy Ghost Church in Olyphant as an assistant pastor, where he took up residence after serving as an interim assistant pastor for the summer of 1964 at St. Mary of Mount Carmel Church in Dunmore. In 1967, he was transferred to Gate of Heaven Parish, where he served as assistant pastor until September 1969. From then until 1978, Father Banick held the position of Professor of Theology, Director of Spiritual Life, and Director of Music at St. Pius X Seminary in Dalton. During this time, he also served as Lecturer in Religious Studies and Theology at the University of Scranton, Lecturer in Liturgical Music at Marywood College, Chairperson of the Music Commission of the Diocese of Scranton, and

Director of Music at St. Peter's Cathedral. Father Banick engaged in further studies at Fordham University and Woodstock College in New York, the University of San Francisco, and the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, where he was awarded a Doctorate in Sacred Theology in 1973.

In 1976, he took up residence at Marywood College and was appointed the first Director of the Office for Continuing Education of Priests by Bishop J. Carroll McCormick, the sixth Bishop of Scranton. In September 1976, at the request of the Board of Bishops of the North American College, Bishop McCormick released Father Banick for service to the College as Director of the Advising Program and Director of Music. A year later, he was named Vice Rector of the College, a position he held until 1985. While in Rome, he was also Assistant Professor of Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University of St. Thomas Aquinas. Before leaving Rome to return to the Diocese, he was named a Prelate of Honor by Pope John Paul II, on May 28, 1985.

After returning to Pennsylvania, Monsignor Banick was appointed to his first pastorate at St. Mary's by Bishop James C. Timlin on September 4, 1985. Since then, Monsignor Banick served faithfully as Pastor of St. Mary's Church of the Immaculate Conception in Wilkes-Barre for 28 years. Soon after becoming pastor, he established a Pastoral Team to assist him in the pastoral leadership of the large downtown church and in the ongoing ecclesial renewal inaugurated by the Second Vatican Council. St. Mary's Parish Center, constructed in 1995 to mark the 150th anniversary of St. Mary's founding, provided much needed space for parish ministries and activities, including a Religious Education (CCD) Center, a Music Center and a Reception Hall.

During his pastorate, Monsignor Banick served on the Presbyterian Council of the Diocese of Scranton. He also held membership in ecumenical, inter-faith, and community groups, including the Catholic Youth Center of Wyoming Valley, the Wyoming Valley Council of Churches, the Inter-faith Council of Wyoming Valley, the Children's Service Center of Wyoming Valley, and the Inter-faith Resource Center for Peace and Justice. Monsignor Banick was Chairperson of the Mayor's Task Force on Alcohol and Drugs in Wilkes-Barre, and was Vice-President of VISION (Volunteers in Service in Our Neighborhoods) which operated the shelter for homeless in the Wilkes-Barre area. He also served on the Administrative Board of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, and the Catholic Theological Society of America, and the Board of Directors of the United Way of Wyoming Valley. He also presided over the Board of Directors of the King's College/St. Mary's Early Childhood Learning Center, located at St. Mary's, which he founded in 1995 with Father James Lackenmeier, CSC, President of King's College.

Recently, Monsignor Banick also became pastor of St. Joseph's Slovak Church and St. Therese Church when the reorganization plan of the Diocese of Scranton consolidated them into St. Mary's Church to form Our Lady of Fatima Parish on June 27, 2011.

Today, I am proud to honor Monsignor Banick for a lifetime of devotion to improving

his community, serving the Church he loves through priesthood, and positively touching the lives of countless citizens of Northeast Pennsylvania.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT E. "BOB"
MAGEE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community are exceptional. Lake Elsinore has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Robert E. "Bob" Magee is one of these individuals. On January 25, 2014, Bob will be honored as the 2013 "John Packman Award" recipient at the Lake Elsinore Chamber of Commerce Installation and Awards Gala.

Each year, the Lake Elsinore Chamber of Commerce awards one individual the John Packman Award. This individual is selected based on the criteria that they have given the highest level of service to his or her community in the past year. After evaluating all that Bob has done for our community, it became clear how worthy he is of this honor.

Bob was born and raised in the thriving city of Sacramento, California, to Ed and Lynn Magee as one of four children. Bob went on to graduate high school after his family moved to the sunny Southern California city of San Diego and later attended San Diego State University (SDSU), where he earned his degree in Public Administration with an Emphasis in City Planning. Bob's thriving career began when he interned for Assemblyman Larry Stirling's 77th District Office and later with the Planning Department of the City of Santee during his years at SDSU. Following these experiences, Bob's passion for public service ignited. His first job out of college led him to follow this passion to Lake Elsinore, where he began to work with the city's Planning Department on a wide array of things, including reviewing development applications and supervising the city's Code Enforcement Program.

In 1995, Bob became the Director of Governmental Affairs for Recyc, Inc, where his experience eventually led him to become the Vice President of its parent Company, Gro West. His extensive work and specialization in Mining and Land Development, Heavy Equipment Rentals, and Wholesale Nurseries created an environment for tremendous growth within the region. In 2001, Bob expanded his experience in the field by accepting a position as Executive Officer for Forest Wood Fiber Products. His management style demonstrated through his roles in the business community led him to win a seat on the Lake Elsinore City Council in 2003. He would go on to win a second term in 2008, where he was selected by his colleagues to serve as the Lake Elsinore City Mayor, a position he has held four times.

It is hard to imagine that Bob would have any free time on his hands, yet has he always

found time for his community. Bob was a Little League Baseball coach for virtually a decade during the 1990s, and prioritized public safety by organizing and instituting Neighborhood Watch groups throughout the area. He served as Vice Chairman of the County's Historical Commission, Chairman of the Lakeland Village Advisory Committee, Chairman of the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), and as Chairman of the RCTC's Budget Subcommittee. He is also a dedicated member of the Riverside County Solid Waste Advisory Task Force, the Lake Elsinore Redevelopment Committee, the State Route 91 Advisory Committee, the Wells Fargo Inland Empire Community Board, and the Riverside County Republican Central Committee.

For all that he has done, it is no surprise that Bob has been the recipient of numerous community awards including being named "Citizen of the Year" by the Lake Elsinore Chamber of Commerce in 2005, "Distinguished Citizen of the Year" by the Tahquitz District of the Boy Scouts of America in 2010, and being appointed to the State Board of Fire Services by then Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger.

In his spare time, Bob enjoys off-road racing, riding motorcycles, golf, tennis and walking his dog. He and his wife, Gina, live in Lake Elsinore where they enjoy cheering on their son, Richard, who is serving in the United States Army.

Considering all that Bob has done for Lake Elsinore, the Lake Elsinore Chamber of Commerce named him their 2013 John Packman Award recipient. Bob's tireless passion for service has contributed immensely to the betterment of our community. He has been the heart and soul of many organizations and events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he receives this prestigious award.

CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION
FOR DEBBIE RICH, RECIPIENT OF
THE 2014 PHYLLIS EHLINGER
WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Debbie Rich, chief executive officer of the Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona, who has been named winner of the 2014 Phyllis Ehlinger Women of Excellence Award by the Tucson Chapter of the American Advertising Federation.

This prestigious award recognizes a local woman who is a business owner or executive and who has demonstrated success within her industry, along with a dedication to philanthropy and mentoring.

Debbie is a former Girl Scout herself who today leads an organization that serves more than 15,000 girls and has more than 2,500 adult volunteers in Pima, Cochise, Greenlee, Yuma and Santa Cruz counties as well as southern parts of Graham, Maricopa and Pinal counties.

To meet the demand for services in Southern Arizona's underserved communities, Debbie created an innovative program using women students at the University of Arizona and Pima Community College as troop leaders. This has become a program beneficial both for the young scouts and also for the students who serve as their mentors and role models. To date, it is the only Girl Scout organization in the Nation to use this model.

Also under Debbie's leadership, Girl Scouts in Southern Arizona are addressing serious contemporary issues such as poverty, illiteracy, hunger, homelessness and violence.

Debbie's programs have become so successful and popular that the Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona now requires more space to fulfill its mission. There soon will be an enlarged campus with meeting rooms, science labs, a demonstration kitchen, a digital media lab and a gym.

Debbie has said that her goal is to motivate every girl in our community to be the best that she can be. Debbie herself has set a sterling example for the Girl Scouts who will come after her.

I am proud to recognize Debbie Rich on the occasion of her selection as recipient of the 2014 Phyllis Ehlinger Women of Excellence Award.

HONORING THE NORTH
THOMPSONVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the North Thompsonville Fire Department. The NTFD is led by Chief Earl Provencher and Deputy Chiefs Douglas Maxellon and David Laponese who are all prepared to lead a group of firefighters, or the entire department if necessary, into any situation. Chairman Ralph Jensen heads the board of five fire commissioners. Since its first meeting in the Manning Barn on February 16, 1914, the fire department has grown steadily. Today, the station serves as a second home to the 46 men and women who proudly serve the 10,000 people of their district.

Through the years, the North Thompsonville Fire Department has expanded to better meet the needs of the community. By 1929, they had moved out of the Thompsonville Water Company Pumping Station and into their first fire station. In 1969, with more than 50 active members, the department hired the first part-time employees and named its first Fire Fighter of the Year, Ernest W. Deford. A generous donation from the John Maciolek Post of the American Legion in 1973 revolutionized the way the department responded to motor vehicle accidents. Believed to have the second set of Jaws of Life in the State of Connecticut, the department's use of this life-saving tool made critical rescues safer and more effective.

In 2009, the department proudly honored Deputy Chief Ken "Pops" Provencher for his 50 years of service. In 2012, they also gave

this distinguished honor to Captain Patrick Griffin just before he passed away. The following year, department again had the privilege of honoring Captain Ralph Jensen, Sr. These men started as cadets and worked through the ranks from firefighter all the way up their respective ranks at retirement. All three continued their careers by becoming Fire Commissioners. The district, the members, and the citizens of the North Thompsonville Fire District thanked these men for their combined 150 years of service.

In 2012, the North Thompsonville Fire Department responded to 502 calls including structure, vehicle, brush and incidental fires, hazardous material incidents, mutual aid assignments, and medical emergencies. The department spent over 2,900 hours responding to emergencies and an additional 4,100 hours in training.

I ask that my colleagues join with me in congratulating the North Thompsonville Fire Department on the 100th anniversary and commend them for the work they do each day to keep their community safe.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, due to a flight cancellation and airline delays, I was unable to be present for votes on Monday, January 27. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on rollcall vote No. 24, regarding H.R. 2166, and “yes” on rollcall vote No. 25, regarding H.R. 3008.

REMEMBERING COLONEL (U.S. ARMY RETIRED) WILLIAM EDWARD CALLENDER, SR.

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember the life of Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) William Callender of Mobile, Alabama. Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) Callender, known affectionately to his family as ‘The Colonel,’ passed away on January 17, 2014, and was laid to rest in Pine Crest Cemetery in Mobile on January 22.

An avid Alabama Crimson Tide football fan, Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) Callender, was born in Mobile on September 17, 1937, graduating from Murphy High School in 1956 and the University of Alabama in 1960. He was married to his wife, Jacqueline, in 1958 and began his career in military service directly after his college graduation in 1960.

Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) Callender was sent to serve in Vietnam, earning a Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, the Soldier’s Medal and the Gallatry Cross with Bronze Star Medal. He was truly an American hero, selflessly putting himself in harm’s way to protect the lives of his peers.

But Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) Callender’s service continued even after his multiple tours in Vietnam, becoming known in South Alabama for his work on behalf of America’s military veterans and earning the Gulf Coast Veteran of the Year Award in 2006. After retiring from the U.S. Army, Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) Callender began working at the University of South Alabama in Mobile, as well as serving on the Baldwin County School Board.

Upon his full retirement, he and his wife Jacqueline moved to Orange Beach, Alabama, serving on the Battleship Commission and enjoying his much-deserved retirement fishing. He will be greatly missed by his family—his wife, Jacqueline, his three daughters Ginger Hawkins, Cyndi Callender and Tammy Hadley, and his 12 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

South Alabama lost a great man on January 17 with the passing of Colonel (U.S. Army Retired) Callender. We thank him for his service and remember him for his courageous spirit fighting to defend our country.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during rollcall vote No. 24 and 25 on January 27, 2014, due to a flight delay.

I would like the record to reflect how I would have voted:

On rollcall vote No. 24, I would have voted “yes”; on rollcall vote No. 25, I would have voted “yes”.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained yesterday and missed roll Nos. 24 and 25. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye” on roll Nos. 24 and 25.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE SAN JOAQUIN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

HON. JERRY McNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation for its efforts on AgVenture, an innovative program that teaches students about agriculture and our nation’s food supply.

California’s San Joaquin Valley is one of the most bountiful agricultural regions in the world. From cucumbers to walnuts, from tomatoes to

cherries, the Valley is vital to the United States’ food security. In 2012, San Joaquin County alone produced \$2.8 billion in agricultural revenue, an extraordinary 28 percent increase from the previous year, and is responsible for countless jobs in the region.

To help raise awareness about local agriculture, the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation started AgVenture, which educates 11,000 elementary school students per year in San Joaquin County farming techniques, the history of certain crops, and the food they eat.

AgVenture helps rebuild a sense of community between those who live in urban and suburban cities and people in rural areas. AgVenture and other efforts by the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation promote healthy diets, ensure affordable food, and honor the rich agricultural history of the United States. I am proud to represent San Joaquin County farmers in Congress.

I urge my colleagues to join me in commending the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation, its AgVenture program, and its dedication to improving the education and nutrition of California’s youth.

CONGRATULATING SUSAN ELKINGTON

HON. LARRY BUCSHON

OF INDIANA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Susan Elkington on her selection to receive a STEP Award from The Manufacturing Institute. As she is a fellow Hoosier and an inspiration to young women interested in technical careers, I am pleased to stand before this body of Congress to recognize her contributions to Toyota, the automotive industry, Indiana, and her community.

Manufacturing is revitalizing our economy and making America strong. Investments in manufacturing, particularly in automotive manufacturing, multiply across the economy, creating jobs and growth in other sectors. Manufacturing is the backbone of our Nation’s middle class. Today’s manufacturing offers competitive wages, is high tech, safe, and offers great growth opportunities for women. Yet, over 80 percent of manufacturers still cannot find the skilled workers they need.

Part of this skills gap is due to the lack of women in the industry. While women make up 50 percent of the U.S. workforce, they make up only 24 percent of the manufacturing workforce.

STEP Award Honorees, such as Ms. Elkington, are attracting more women to manufacturing careers by educating young workers. By telling the real stories of these women, we can inspire and encourage the next generation of women to join the manufacturing industry and pursue exciting and meaningful careers.

Ms. Elkington has provided leadership and expertise at Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana in a variety of influential roles as she progressed to become Toyota’s first female vice president of manufacturing for a vehicle assembly plant. She has been a key player in

Toyota's success in Indiana from the beginning.

She joined Toyota as a manufacturing engineering specialist in 1998, serving on a team preparing for the start of production of Toyota Indiana's first vehicle, the Tundra full-size pickup truck. She rose through the ranks into the role of General Manager of Assembly and Stamping/Body Weld, where she oversaw numerous operations of Production, Conveyance, Engineering, Maintenance and new model preparation. She helped to plan and manage production of Toyota's Sequoia, Sienna, Highlander and the Highlander Hybrid models.

Ms. Elkington is committed to diversity and inclusion within manufacturing both at Toyota and in the State of Indiana. She recognized the absence of women in manufacturing early in her career. Consequently, she led Toyota Indiana's diversity and inclusion initiatives as diversity champion, and as Toyota's champion for the Society of Women Engineers.

I am thankful for the years of dedication and hard work by Susan Elkington, and I congratulate her for setting an example of professional excellence and advocacy of women in manufacturing, as well as her commitment to the greater community.

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
WEEK

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO
SABLAN**

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, most Americans would agree on the essential importance of education to a successful and meaningful life. But knowledge in and of itself is insufficient without a moral and ethical context for its appropriate application. Thus, the importance of Catholic schools, which we celebrate this week.

In the Northern Mariana Islands the Catholic schools of Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja on Rota, St. Joseph Catholic School on Tinian, and Mount Carmel School on the Saipan, have been the vanguard not only in educational excellence, but also in the inculcation of spiritual values. Graduates of these schools, who now fill every nook and cranny of leadership in our communities, carry both intellectual skills and a moral compass to their work in our society. We are all better off as a result. And, at least in part, we have Catholic schools to thank.

We have also to thank the parents of every Catholic school student. For, over the years, these parents have chosen to sacrifice, to deploy their limited resources, to send their sons and daughters to parochial schools. Even as the quality of free, public education in the Northern Marianas has continued to improve—and I am sure that faculty and students in our fine public institutions would even proudly argue to surpass our Catholic schools—still have parents found something of extra value in those Catholic schools and continued to pay for their children to receive a Catholic education.

And we have to thank the religious and lay teachers in our Catholic schools. These women and men have chosen to forego material rewards of life in order to serve as the conduit for the moral system that underlies the academic content of their classrooms. Often among the best educated members of our community, rather than using their knowledge to advance their own interests these teachers disseminate what they know, so that many lives may be enriched. Their service and sacrifice, too, we celebrate and recognize during Catholic Schools Week.

Lastly, we congratulate the students in our Catholic schools. You are part of a heritage in the Northern Mariana Islands that we trace back directly to the founding of Mount Carmel School in 1952, but which certainly has its roots with the original Catholic missionaries of the 16th century. That is a remarkable tradition. One to be proud of, as you mark Catholic Schools Week, and to carry on.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, on January 27, 2014, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 24 and 25. My flight to Washington was delayed. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

Rollcall No: 24 "aye."

Rollcall No: 25 "aye."

IN TRIBUTE TO MR. GEORGE
ZLOTNICK

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize George Zlotnick as he reaches his 90th birthday. A member of our "greatest generation," George is a respected Connecticut veteran who participated in the last airborne deployment of World War II in Operation Varsity before embarking on a successful career in the construction industry.

As a young 19-year-old from Willimantic, Connecticut, George enlisted in the Army in 1943. Beginning as an infantryman before joining the Army Air Corps, George's dream of flying a plane became a reality when he was sent to the Pre-Flight Training at Teacher's College in Pennsylvania. After completing his training, George was sent to Germany on March 24, 1945, to participate in one of the largest airborne military assaults in America's history.

Praised as a key tactical success for the Allies in the fight against Nazi Germany, Operation Varsity dropped Allied troops behind enemy lines to secure the Rhine River in Wesel, Germany. As a paratrooper with the 464th Field Artillery Battalion of the 17th Airborne Division, George was tasked with carrying the barrel of a cannon weighing more

than 200 pounds through enemy fire to deliver ammunition to Allied troops. Completing his mission with courage, George was honorably discharged from service in February 1946.

After serving his country, George started his own construction company in Ashford, Connecticut in 1948. Like many great American success stories, George began his business from humble beginnings; assembling small buildings, chicken coops and barns for local farmers. Sixty-five years later, Zlotnick Construction Incorporated remains a respected organization in Mansfield, Connecticut and has won contracts with key multinational firms. George and his wife Zenia have also remained an unwavering part of the business and Orthodox Church communities of Connecticut.

As George prepares to celebrate his 90th birthday on March 9, 2014, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this great American veteran and businessman and thanking him for his contribution to our Nation.

TRIBUTE TO ANTHONY AND
JEANNE PRITZKER

HON. KAREN BASS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, today, I pay tribute to two philanthropists of exceptional dedication and character—Anthony and Jeanne Pritzker. The Pritzkers have been committed to improving the lives of foster youth through the Anthony and Jeanne Pritzker Family Foundation.

For more than a decade the Anthony and Jeanne Pritzker Family Foundation has been making investments to strengthen important institutions that help the residents of Los Angeles. The foundation's grants have helped improve medical care, higher education, the environment, the arts and the foster care system in our city. These investments enrich our communities now, and for future generations.

In 2012, Jeanne Pritzker started the non-profit Foster Care Counts after being inspired by two teenagers they took into their own home, while raising her own children. Foster Care Counts has brought thousands of foster kids and families to their own home to celebrate family with their successful, Foster Mother's Day event.

The Pritzkers recently gave a \$3 million gift to UCLA to create an endowment that covers tutoring, mental health services, summer housing, unforeseen school expenses and other costs for UCLA students who were or are in foster care. They have long been contributors to UCLA's Guardian Scholars program, which provides support to former and current foster-care youth who are students at UCLA. This generous donation is helping ensure the continued success of this vulnerable population.

Today we honor the Pritzkers, for fighting for those who sometimes do not have a voice, and making their lives a little better

CLIMATE CHANGE

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the Safe Climate Caucus to address the issue of climate change.

Global warming means that the planet on average is getting warmer. The evidence here is indisputable.

Global warming is also causing freak weather events that just aren't normal. These include hurricanes, typhoons and droughts. They also include the brutal cold fronts that are sweeping the country.

Some climate deniers have used this as an opportunity to assert that the overwhelming science behind global warming is wrong. The irony in this assertion is that while the U.S. has extreme unusually cold temperatures, current temperatures in the Arctic are above average.

NOAA recently confirmed that 2013 was the fourth warmest year on record. All 13 years of the 21st century rank among the 15 warmest since records began 134 years ago. On average, spring weather arrives ten days earlier than it used to in the Northern Hemisphere. While many states in the Midwest and Northeast have exceptionally cold temperatures, Alaska is experiencing unusually warm weather and California is going through a record-breaking drought. Average daily highs in Alaska are 11 degrees greater than the historical average for January.

These unusual weather events are doing real economic harm and are hurting American families. Congress needs to tackle this problem of man-made climate change head on and not just bury our heads in the snow.

HONORING MONICA DOMINGUEZ

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Monica Dominguez, the lead counselor at Dr. Sue Shook Elementary School in Horizon City, Texas. Ms. Dominguez is in Washington D.C. to be honored as an American School Counselor Association (ASCA) 2014 School Counselor of the Year finalist.

Ms. Dominguez has led Shook Elementary's efforts to close the gap in services for low-income students through a counseling program that supports students' academic, social and emotional development. By reaching out to students beyond the confines of the school day, Ms. Dominguez has earned respect from fellow educators, parents, and most importantly, her students. In addition, Ms. Dominguez has developed effective relationships with local agencies to support the overall well-being of diverse students and families in El Paso County.

Before joining the staff at Shook Elementary, Ms. Dominguez served as the grants

counselor for Project HOPE (Heightened Opportunities for Promoting Excellence) at H. D. Hilley Elementary School, which serves many students and families who experienced the negative impacts of violence in Mexico. Many of these families moved to El Paso to escape violence and the new students were in need of emotional and academic support. Ms. Dominguez set up Hilley's first data-driven, comprehensive school counseling program, where she maintained a low student-to-counselor ratio; decreased disciplinary referrals; increased attendance rates; and helped students and teachers succeed on state assessments.

Horizon City and the entire El Paso community continue to benefit from the positive impacts that Ms. Dominguez has on her students in her third year as a counselor at Shook Elementary. Her leadership skills and comprehensive vision shape the lives of her students and their families. I join the ASCA and the El Paso community in honoring Ms. Dominguez for her dedication to serving students and for the inspiring example she has set for school counselors across the country.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,263,279,883,739.66. We've added \$6,636,402,834,826.58 to our debt in 5 years. This is \$6.6 trillion in debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING JUDGE FRANK CREEDE, JR.

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, Alongside my colleague DAVID VALADAO, I rise today to pay tribute to Judge Frank Creede, Jr., who recently passed away.

Frank Creede distinguished himself at an early age. During World War II, he joined the army at the age of eighteen and served in a heavy machine-gun squad in Europe, where he was taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge. Surviving a forced march and a railroad ride in a boxcar from Belgium to Germany, he was liberated from his POW camp in April 1945 and was later awarded the Purple Heart.

Upon his return to the United States, Frank began his long, eminent legal career. After practicing law for more than two decades and becoming a founding partner of the law firm now called Creede, Dawson, Gillaspay and Ninnis, he was appointed as a Fresno County judge by Governor Ronald Reagan in 1973.

He heard more than 200 jury trials and adjudicated many high-profile cases during his outstanding tenure on the bench, which included service as presiding judge of the Superior Court and several other courts. Judge Creede retired in 1998 after being re-elected to the Superior Court four times. Among his many awards and commendations, the Fresno County Law Library was renamed in his honor.

In retirement Judge Creede remained active as a visiting judge. He also participated in a remarkably wide array of charitable organizations and civic groups including some dedicated to preventing animal cruelty, which was a particular passion of his.

Known for his sense of humor, work ethic, and compassion, Judge Creede was a wonderful asset to the Fresno community. For decades he served his country and his community with distinction. He leaves behind an enduring legacy that his family should look upon with the deepest sense of pride.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state for the record that yesterday, January 27, I missed several rollcall votes. Had I been present I would have voted: "yes"—rollcall vote 24—H.R. 2166—Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act; "yes"—rollcall vote 25—H.R. 3008—To provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, and for other purposes.

HONORING GARY BIXHORN

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Gary D. Bixhorn on his retirement after 35 years of educational leadership and service. As Chief Operating Officer of Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Gary oversaw New York State's largest BOCES, serving more than 50 school districts across an area of 1,000 square miles. Under his guidance, Eastern Suffolk BOCES became a leader in exploring cost-saving opportunities for school districts, and Gary became one of the region's top advocates for Long Island schools.

Gary did an outstanding job during exceptionally challenging economic times for education, testifying frequently before commissions and forums where he shared his vast knowledge and understanding of school finance. He was a key spokesperson in the fight to urge New York State lawmakers to end the Gap Elimination Adjustment, a formula in the state budget that reduces the amount of aid to school districts, and he fought New York's first property tax cap, one of the most stringent in the nation. Newsday called him, "the region's leading analyst of financial trends in education."

Gary understood the unique qualities of Long Island's schools and was a master at forming coalitions to advocate for their most pressing needs and to find creative solutions to save money and provide services. As national economic conditions declined, he advocated for shared services as a means of reducing costs, arguing that BOCES was well positioned to provide these shared services. He embraced and promoted the idea of cost sharing as an alternative to school district consolidation, and he championed the concept known as "functional consolidation," or the pooling of resources to provide such services as business management, food service, software purchases and transportation.

Gary's vision for BOCES went well beyond its traditional role to provide regional educational services such as special education and career and technical education. He saw BOCES as a vehicle for helping school districts join together to meet their collective needs. He once said, "BOCES doesn't exist in a vacuum. It exists as the collective will of our component school districts and our stakeholders in the region." He demonstrated the kind of strategic, regional thinking that could provide effective solutions. Gary also served as president of the Suffolk County School Superintendents Association, SCSSA, and then as chair of its Legislative Committee. He was well versed in the particular needs and characteristics of the region's school districts and saw it as his responsibility to communicate those needs to legislators in Albany and Washington, particularly in pushing for fair distribution of state aid.

I was proud to stand with him and others last June for the unveiling of Long Island's first P-TECH program, a cutting-edge educational partnership with Longwood School District to train Long Island students for high skill technology jobs. Gary also served as a member of my Education Advisory Board and was always looked to for his ability to synthesize information and analyze educational data.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor to work with Gary Bixhorn. He embodies the spirit of the BOCES mission to enable school districts to operate more efficiently by working together. His ability to see the broad picture while analyzing the small details made him a valuable educational resource for our region and a widely-respected leader. On behalf of New York's first congressional district, I would like to thank him for his lasting impact on education and wish him well in retirement.

RECOGNIZING ALCALDESA
SUZANNE BRANGHAM

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Suzanne Brangham, who has been named the City of Sonoma's 2014 Alcaldesa, or Honorary Mayor. The title "Alcalde," or "Alcaldessa" when referring to a woman, is the Spanish word for "Mayor." While the Alcalde was the primary civil authority during the Spanish colonial period in Cali-

fornia, in modern times, it is an honorary title bestowed upon invaluable members of the community.

Ms. Brangham has lived in Sonoma for 25 years, where she has given back to her community as both a businesswoman and philanthropist. She has founded a number of businesses in Sonoma, including the Ramekins Culinary School, the MacArthur Place Hotel & Spa, and the General's Daughter restaurant, which is located in a Victorian home built by the daughters of Mariano G. Vallejo, the Commander General of California and founder of the City of Sonoma. In addition to revitalizing Sonoma through her business ventures, she authored the bestselling book *Housewise*, which earned her national interviews and appearances on the Today Show, Good Morning America, and Oprah.

Ms. Brangham is as equally dedicated to her philanthropic efforts as she is to her business ventures. Her efforts include promoting local arts—she has worked with the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art, the Sebastiani Theatre Alliance, and the Sonoma International Film Festival—and helping the young people of Sonoma Valley through organizations such as Teen Safe Ride, the Mentoring Alliance, and the Sonoma Valley Boys & Girls Clubs. She has also served with the Sonoma Valley Hospital Coalition, the Sonoma Valley Fund, the Lyon Ranch Animal Rescue and Therapy Center as well as Pets Lifeline.

Mr. Speaker, Suzanne Brangham is a beloved and vitally important member of the community and it is appropriate that we acknowledge her today as Sonoma's Alcaldesa for 2014.

HONORING AUBURN UNIVERSITY
FULLBACK JAY PROSCH

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a young man who is representing our community in South Alabama in the Senior Bowl, Jay Prosch. Jay is a fullback at Auburn University, having originally attended UMS Wright in Mobile, AL, before playing college football at Auburn.

Jay is an exceptionally talented young individual. While serving as Team Captain his senior year at UMS Wright, he received the Joe Bullard, Jr. Award, given to the player who displays exemplary leadership and love of the game of football.

In addition, Jay was awarded the Most Valuable Linebacker Award, Mobile Optimist Club Offensive Back of the Year Award, and State of Alabama 4A Lineman of the Year Award. That year, his senior year, he recorded 199 tackles, 114 solo stops, 16 of which were for a loss, five pass interruptions, and one sack. He also rushed five times for 16 yards and one touchdown as a fullback.

Jay has become a standout at Auburn and previously during his time at the University of Illinois as a standout in strength training. He clean lifted more than 400 pounds while weighing just 250. He was also recorded at 4.72 seconds in the 40-yard dash.

CBS Sports named him a "Freak," as well as Gil Brandt listing him as one of the country's Top 100 Seniors this year.

We are all so proud of Jay and his accomplishments on the field of play. He has excelled as a player, a leader, and an individual, and is regarded as a leader by his teammates and coaches. South Alabama is proud to claim him as one of our own, and we wish him luck as he takes the field in the Senior Bowl.

TRIBUTE TO DAVE OSTER

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community are exceptional. Lake Elsinore has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities better places to live and work. Dave Oster is one of these individuals. On January 25, 2014, Dave will be honored as the 2013 "Citizen of the Year" at the Lake Elsinore Chamber of Commerce Installation and Awards Gala.

Dave was born and raised in the small town of Mantua, OH, where the friendly and respectful nature of the community created a family-like atmosphere. Dave grew up watching his father establish a successful career in human resources, and soon, his work ethic and values were formed. Growing up, Dave developed his passion for America's favorite pastime, baseball, and found himself consistently holding a leadership position as captain for many of his teams. Dave went on to graduate high school and attend Bowling Green State University and later Ohio Northern University, where he earned his degree in sports management. He was honored with his first leadership award, the Clyde A. Lamb Award, during his senior year at Ohio Northern.

Dave's thriving career in sports began when he interned for the Cleveland Force, a renowned soccer team based in Ohio. His first job out of college followed suit, as he became the General Manager for the minor league baseball team, the Geneva Cubs. Dave became involved in every facet of the organization, from concessions to clean up, and he established an environment of success and fun. Dave quickly learned how to grow a business and manage a staff, eventually leading him to win the John H. Johnson Award for team recognition and running of an organization.

After 4 years with the Geneva Cubs, Dave took his talent and drive to Delaware, where he began his job as Assistant General Manager for the Wilmington Blue Rocks minor league team. During a time when the organization was just beginning, Dave used his skills and expertise to help build the franchise from the ground up. He made sure the community saw every game as a "must-attend" event, and grew attendance from 800 to 6,000 fans, virtually selling out every home game. Dave soon made another move, ending up in Salem, VA, where he was promoted to General Manager of the Salem Avalanche. For all

of his hard work, he was honored with the Executive of the Year award for the Carolina League.

Following his success on the East Coast, Dave took a huge leap of faith, and moved out West, where he found his new home with the Lake Elsinore Storm as the Owner and President. His contributions as a leader in the area resulted in huge economic growth and community involvement. For this, he was once again honored with the Executive of the Year Award in the California League. Aside from the tremendous work he has done to create success with The Storm, above all, he is most proud of the family he has found in the staff, and the passion he has for the community, the players and the franchise. 2013 marked Dave's 25th year in professional sports, and his 14th season with the Lake Elsinore Storm.

Dave is most known as an effective leader with a natural ability to organize the efforts and goodwill of others. He is an enthusiastic team builder who enjoys encouraging creativity in the staff that he leads. Considering all that Dave has done for Lake Elsinore, the Lake Elsinore Chamber of Commerce named him their 2013 Citizen of the Year. Dave's tireless passion for service has contributed immensely to the betterment of our community. He has been the heart and soul of many organizations and events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American, and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for his service and salute him as he receives this prestigious award.

FERRUM COLLEGE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. HURT. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and Representatives BOB GOODLATTE and MORGAN GRIFFITH, I submit these remarks to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Ferrum College.

A private institution, Ferrum College was founded in 1913 and has a long and storied history that has left an enduring footprint on Franklin County, as well as Virginia and the nation. The 700-acre campus is located in Ferrum, Virginia, the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Ferrum is home to the second oldest environmental science program in the nation. Today, over 1500 students, from 25 states and a dozen countries, are currently enrolled in 33 areas of study. Ferrum offers bachelor's degrees in twenty-eight programs and received accreditation as a four-year college in 1976. The students are active members of the surrounding Franklin County and Rocky Mount communities.

We wish the students, faculty, and staff the best, as they celebrate Founders Day and their 100th anniversary on February 8th. We also look forward to the continued success of Ferrum College as it carries on its mission of educating our young people and preparing them for their future endeavors.

KIM SKUMANICK, PRESIDENT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 28, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Kim Skumanick on her inauguration as president of the Pennsylvania Association of Realtors (PAR).

Ms. Skumanick is a graduate of Penn State University and presently works as an associate broker with Lewith and Freeman Real Estate in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania. Prior to becoming president of PAR, she served as the chair of PAR's Legislative Planning Group and the Legislative Committee. She also held the roles of treasurer of the Realtors Political Action Committee (RPAC) and District 1 Vice President. Today, she is on the Strategic Oversight Committee, Legislative Committee and the Land Use and Local Issues Subcommittee, as well as on the Public Policy & Political Advocacy Coordinating Committee and the Administrative Coordinating Committee. Ms. Skumanick is a National Association of Realtors director and has served for nine years as a Federal Political Coordinator for the 10th Congressional District.

For her hard work and dedication in real estate, Ms. Skumanick has been the recipient of significant recognition. In 2003, she received PAR's Realtor Active in Politics Award. A member of the Greater Scranton Board of Realtors, Kim was president in 2003 and was named Realtor of the Year in 2006.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Skumanick has shown outstanding commitment to the Pennsylvania real estate community. Therefore, I commend her on her inauguration as president of the Pennsylvania Association of Realtors and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, January 29, 2014

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 29, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RANDY HULTGREN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

As You make available to Your people the grace and knowledge to meet the needs of the day, we pray that Your spirit will be upon the Members of this people's House, giving them the richness of Your wisdom.

Bless the Members of the majority party as they gather these next days. May they, with those who accompany them, travel safely and meet in peace.

Bless also the minority party as they prepare their own gathering. May these days be filled with hopeful anticipation.

May the power of Your truth and our faith in Your providence give them all the confidence they must have to do the good work required for service to our Nation. Give all Members the strength of purpose and clarity of mind to do those things that bring justice and mercy to people, and maintain freedom and liberty for our land.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BARLETTA led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

HONORING JAY "BUCK" SWISHER

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jay "Buck" Swisher upon his retirement as a field representative for Pennsylvania's 11th Congressional District.

A lifelong resident of Pennsylvania, Buck graduated from Biglerville High School in 1968 and attended the DeVry Institute of Technology in Chicago, Illinois. He entered the United States Army, serving as an instructor and radar technician in the Signal Corp from 1970 to 1973. After leaving the Army, Buck dedicated 30 years to the telephone industry.

Buck began working as a field representative for Congressman Todd Platts in September 2003 before coming to work in my Carlisle office in January 2013. Throughout more than 10 years of Federal service, he has assisted countless residents of Cumberland County with everything from Medicare to the presentation of Girl Scout and Boy Scout awards.

Outside the office, Buck is an active member of the Cumberland County community. He is a devoted husband to his wife, Diane, and a proud father to four daughters and has three grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, for over 10 years, Buck Swisher has shown outstanding dedication to Cumberland County. I commend him on his hard work and commitment, and I wish him the best on his retirement. He will be greatly missed.

DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I understand our Republican colleagues are about to head off to their annual retreat in Cambridge, Maryland, to discuss their priorities for the year, including whether to raise the debt ceiling or not. My hope is that the majority party listens to Speaker BOEHNER on the debt ceiling. Earlier this month, he said:

All I know is we should not default on our debt; we shouldn't even get close to it.

The Speaker understands that America pays its bills. Good for him. The Speaker also understands that even the threat of default will harm the American economy. And he is right. The Speaker understands that holding hostage America's full faith and credit is a dead-end plan for his party and for America.

Speaker BOEHNER, I surely hope that you prevail on the majority party. America is not a deadbeat Nation. America pays its bills.

REQUESTING MOTOR CARRIER EXEMPTION

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

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, it has been a frigid winter in the Hoosier State. Subzero temperatures and arctic conditions have forced school closings, travel bans, and challenges for the business community. The demand for propane and home heating fuel is at an all-time high.

As a result, Federal officials declared a state of emergency for the Midwest, lifting hours of service limitations for motor carriers to ensure consumers can steadily receive home heating fuel. But this waiver only remains in effect until February 11, 2014.

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

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

Today, I led a letter with Hoosier lawmakers to the U.S. Department of Transportation requesting that the emergency exemption be extended. Winter weather is unpredictable, but if we are ready to act, we can alleviate this stress for our families. This simple extension is a commonsense way to provide some much-needed relief for Hoosiers as we weather this harsh winter.

DON'T CHEAT AMERICAN FARMERS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this is a sad moment as we consider a farm bill that has the least amount of reform possible to secure passage. I am thankful that some of the most hateful and egregious—like the King amendment—have been stripped out, but the savings from direct payments will be swallowed up by enriched crop insurance.

My friend PAUL RYAN is concerned that the safety net for the poor has become too comfortable a hammock. But this farm bill is now a lounge chair for rich agribusiness interests, who need it the least. It should be a scandal that there are more cuts to food stamp benefits while crop insurance is further enriched for wealthy agribusiness.

The time to start is now to avoid another congressional grab bag that cheats the American farmers.

Also, thank you, Trudi, for your years of dedicated service to Congress and the American people.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor in strong opposition to the farm bill conference report.

The farm bill is just more business as usual here in Washington. Last summer, the American people won an important victory for common sense and transparency when we ended this unholy alliance between food stamp and farm programs. Together, in this House, we defeated business as usual by passing the first farm-only farm bill in nearly 40 years. But business as usual fought back, and here we are today.

Not only does this farm bill recombine food stamps and farm programs, it actually spends even more than the first bill the Senate passed. This is exactly the kind of logrolling that we fought to prevent this summer.

Mr. Speaker, Congress works best when we do our work in the full light of day. Unfortunately, this farm bill was written behind closed doors. It has stripped long-term reforms. It spends

money we simply don't have, and it stripped out important policies that negatively affect our livestock industry.

As a farmer and a conservative, I will not vote to take a step backwards.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF RON GREEN

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the public service of Ron Green, a U.S. Navy veteran.

Ron Green is the director of the San Joaquin County Veterans Service Office, advocating for veterans and helping them navigate the Department of Veterans Affairs. After nearly 14 years of service, as the county's VSO director, Ron Green will retire on February 1.

Before his career with the county, Mr. Green worked at the Sharpe Depot and the Defense Distribution Center at Lathrop and as a VA claims examiner. In total, Mr. Green has more than 30 years of service to veterans and the public.

As someone who knows Ron Green personally, I can attest to his commitment and dedication to the veterans in San Joaquin County. Mr. Green has been personally responsible for lowering the number of homeless veterans in San Joaquin Valley. He has supported our local Veterans History Project efforts and has been a valuable partner on veterans' issues over the years, including advocating for the VA to locate an expanded regional outpatient clinic and a new community living center in San Joaquin Valley.

He will be missed by the veterans of San Joaquin County, and I wish him all the best in the years ahead. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the public service contributions of Ron Green.

SUPPORT THE CONFERENCE REPORT ON THE FARM BILL

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, ag producers have waited nearly 3 years for a long-term farm bill, and I would like to thank my colleagues for their efforts thus far. Policy certainty will help our country be competitive.

Last year, conferees were appointed to negotiate and resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the farm bill. The House bill included language meant to encourage compromise on a fix to avoid trade retaliation from Canada and Mexico and bar individual States with unscientific

laws from disrupting interstate commerce, something which will only burden producers and increase costs for consumers.

I tend to believe if we are going to call a piece of legislation the farm bill, the measure ought to recognize that farmers and ranchers are the primary stewards of our natural resources, as well as the animals in their care.

This farm bill does include important reforms, such as eliminating direct payments, and it helps hardworking taxpayers in finding an estimated \$23 billion in savings.

Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, I support this return to regular order. For these reasons, I will support the conference report before us today, but it is my hope this body will act quickly to find solutions to the outstanding issues not addressed in this bill.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

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

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, a critical law that championed the principle of equal pay for equal work.

While this law made strides in closing the wage gap, across the country, women still earn 77 cents for every dollar a man makes for the exact same work. This gap results in more than \$11,000 less that a woman makes every year. That means women are essentially working 84 days for free while a man takes home a paycheck.

In the district of Illinois that I serve, women make even less than that. They make approximately 70 cents on the dollar. Keep in mind that number is figured for the same work, just with much, much less income.

Equal pay is not simply a women's issue; it is an issue for the middle class and working families. When women bring home more, they are able to provide better for their families.

Because equal pay for equal work would benefit hardworking families across my region, across the State of Illinois, and across the country, it is time that Congress pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

LET'S GET TO WORK

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, last night, the President addressed America and reminded us that America is a Nation of opportunity where, if you work hard and play by the rules and take responsibility, you can succeed. But he also recognized that many Americans don't feel that, in fact, this is working for them right now. He made very specific proposals to invest in infrastructure or innovation economy, early

childhood education, additional manufacturing hubs, raising the minimum wage, fixing our broken immigration system, and extending unemployment benefits.

The President expressed his willingness to work with Congress to achieve these goals. What I thought was particularly significant is these were specific proposals that are achievable if we work together.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's get to work. Let's enact these proposals. Let's move our economy forward and put the American people back to work.

As well, I wish to extend my gratitude to Trudi for her service.

□ 0915

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

JANUARY 28, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 28, 2014 at 6:07 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1302.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2642,
FEDERAL AGRICULTURE RE-
FORM AND RISK MANAGEMENT
ACT OF 2014

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 465, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 465, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of January 27, 2014, at page 1854.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) each will control 30 minutes.

For what purpose does the gentleman from Massachusetts seek recognition?

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, is the gentleman from Minnesota opposed to the conference report?

Mr. PETERSON. No, I am not, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XXII, the gen-

tleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, this has been a long and seemingly epic journey that the House Agriculture Committee has been upon, and Mr. PETERSON, myself, our colleagues, literally 3 years, actually 4, when you consider the beginning hearings under then-Chairman PETERSON to start this process.

We have all discussed the details. We will discuss the details more in greater length in just a moment on this final conference report that reflects the net result of both the Senate and House work.

But I would say this. Whatever your feelings might be about the policy issues involved within the bill, understand, this formal conference that has now come to a conclusion, soon, I hope, to be ratified by the body, reflects at the committee level, at the floor level in the House, and, I think, in the conference level, how legislation should be put together.

Many people criticize us and this body as dysfunctional. But if they look at all of the amendments we considered, every time we took the farm bill up in the committee, all of the debate, all of the discussion, if they consider the amazing amount of amendments we considered on the floor of the United States House and all the debates and the discussion and the votes, if they take note of how long and how much effort the principals and the conferees put into putting this conference report together, they would understand that this bill, while everyone may not agree with every line, every word, every policy in it, this bill reflects, unlike almost any that have been done for years, how it should be done—good men and women of different opinions working to get to a final product.

I hope this reflects a change in how we will do our business here across the board. I am proud of what we have done, and I am proud of how we have done it. I am proud of the reforms and savings. I am proud of my ranking member, and all my colleagues who have been involved.

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

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

Today, as the chairman said, after nearly 4 years of work, the House is finally considering the 2014 farm bill conference report. It has been a challenging and, at times, frustrating process, I think everybody will agree, but through it, the Ag Committee has persevered, and we did what we have always done. We worked together.

The report before us today represents a compromise. I know this is rare in Washington, but that is what is needed to actually get something done around this place. I didn't get everything I wanted. The chairman didn't get everything he wanted. That is how the compromise works.

For example, there has been a lot of discussion about dairy, but we are moving away from the old dairy program to a new program that I think is much more sensible, that has market signals in it to deal with overproduction. The only question I have is whether they are going to be strong enough. We will find out as we go through the process.

In the commodity title, I am still disappointed we didn't vote on planted acres. I think that would have been a smart thing to do, but it wasn't to be.

At the end of the day, I believe my reservations are outweighed by the need to provide a long-term certainty for agriculture and nutrition programs and the many positive improvements and reforms included in the final bill.

Among other things, the conference report will protect and improve the crop insurance system. That is probably the most important safety net. It continues current sugar policy, streamlines conservation programs so that we can continue to preserve our natural resources, provides disaster assistance for livestock producers, applies conservation protections to crop insurance, and recognizes the growing consumer demand for fresh fruits, vegetables, local foods and organics.

In closing, I want to thank the chairman for his work and congratulate him for working with us to get to a final conclusion here. Also, for his Members, our Members, for their support and hanging in there to get to this point.

I also want to thank the Agriculture Committee staff who have been working so hard over these last years, night and day, through all these different situations we have been in, and I will submit their names for the Record.

Again, Mr. Speaker, this process has gone on too long. We need to conclude it today. I urge my colleagues to support the conference report.

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

COMMITTEE STAFF

Agriculture Committee Democratic Staff: Andy Baker, Nathan Fretz, Liz Friedlander, Keith Jones, Mary Knigge, Rob Larew, Clark Ogilvie, Lisa Shelton, Anne Simmons, Faye Smith; USDA Detailee: Robert Stephenson; Intern: Lauren Becker.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON for all their hard work on this very difficult bill. I admire their tenacity, and I admire their passion on issues dealing with agriculture.

There are some good things in this bill, to be sure, but there are some

things that I simply cannot accept. I think as we discuss this farm bill, that we should remind ourselves of a few simple facts, facts like this:

Hunger exists in the United States of America. Not a single congressional district in this country is hunger-free. Our food banks, our food pantries, the people who are on the front lines in the fight against hunger simply cannot do any more. They are stretched to the limit.

One final fact. This bill will make hunger worse in America, not better. If this bill passes, thousands and thousands of low-income Americans will see their already meager food benefit shrink.

And for what? Why? To meet some arbitrary deficit reduction goal? To pay the costs of the giveaways and the crop insurance program? To pay for the sweetheart deals for the sushi rice growers and the peanut farmers and God knows who else?

I know many of my colleagues would just like this whole farm bill issue to go away. They want to pass a bill and forget about it and move on to something else.

But, Mr. Speaker, the people who will be hurt by this bill aren't going away. They can't forget about it and move on to something else because they will suffer. They will have to make do with less food tomorrow than they have today.

I have heard all the arguments trying to justify this \$8.6 billion cut in SNAP. Well, it is just a loophole, or it could have been a lot worse, or the States should pick up the slack, or local governments or churches or food banks or the tooth fairy.

Those arguments are easy to make from the comfort of our warm homes and our full bellies, but they ring hollow to an elderly person who will have to take their medicine on an empty stomach, or a child who will have to skip a breakfast before going to school.

I think it is wrong, and I cannot support it.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD), one of my outstanding subcommittee chairmen.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON for putting in so much hard work and dedication and getting where we are today, and I echo the ranking member's sentiments to the staff. Thank you very much for everything that you have done.

After more than 3 years of being involved in the farm bill process, I am proud to support a final product that not only greatly benefits producers but deploys investments and jobs to rural America. Despite our sharp regional differences, we prevailed in crafting commodity programs that promote re-

gional fairness by providing a strong safety net that protects all producers from market risk.

We can finally provide relief to our cattlemen by permanently reauthorizing disaster assistance programs after years of hardship. Rural development funding will bring critical investments to our rural communities, while conservation and forestry programs will preserve our natural resources for years to come.

While I am pleased with the farm bill before us today, I am disappointed that we left some important issues on the table like reforming harmful GIPSA regulations and fixing Country of Origin Labeling for the meat industry.

We could have gone further in relieving burdensome EPA regulations on small farmers, and I believe that the environmental activists in the Senate had far too much input.

Even though I believe we could have done more, I am proud of the conservative reforms we made to the food stamp program by eliminating waste and loopholes, setting the stage for work requirements. The Agriculture Committee accomplished the tough goal of cutting billions from our budget by repealing or consolidating dozens of programs.

I appreciate the patience of all of our Arkansas producers and rural communities through this process.

I strongly urge a "yes" vote on this farm bill conference report.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference committee report. There are a lot of reasons why, but first I would like to commend the chairman and the ranking members of both the House and the Senate Ag Committees and my fellow conferees and the staff for all the hard work that went into reaching this agreement.

While this is not a perfect bill—there never is—this agreement is the result of more than 4 years of bipartisan negotiations, two marathon committee meeting markups, multiple floor debates. As a matter of fact, this bill almost reminds me of the movie "Groundhog Day" because it seems to come back again and again.

For my home State of California, the leading agricultural State in the Nation, this farm bill is a dramatic investment in many of the specialty crops for research, for market production and the development programs which benefit our vegetable and fruit producers, which produce over half the Nation's supply.

These programs not only help my constituents produce the safest and most nutritious fruits and vegetables that we eat throughout the Nation, but also throughout the world.

Just as important for my district are the disaster relief programs that help

farmers, ranchers, dairymen, and producers through these difficult times. Many may not be aware, but California is facing the driest year on record, which jeopardizes both food production and jobs in my district.

This bill contains programs that provide help when disaster strikes, from drilling wells to providing seed or direct assistance to growers or cattlemen who have been hurt by this devastating drought.

While I support the conference committee report, I am disappointed that we did not take the opportunity to resolve the meat labeling issues that threaten our beef and poultry producers, and our important trading partners, Canada and Mexico, who are deemed critical and are dealing with us in the World Trade Organization. I have currently drafted legislation on a bipartisan basis to try to fix this labeling issue once and for all.

This debate, though, has dragged on for way too long. Let's give farmers and ranchers and dairy producers the certainty that they deserve through a 5-year farm bill. Now is the time to get this farm bill done by passing this conference committee report.

□ 0930

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from Massachusetts for yielding me this time and for the leadership that he has shown on the nutrition title and for the plight of hunger throughout our country. It is commendable.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here for a few farm bills in the past. I used to be a member of the Agriculture Committee. I certainly appreciate how very difficult it is to put together a bipartisan farm bill with so many different moving parts.

I have all the respect and admiration for the leadership on the committee, but I also sense that we have reached a point of fatigue and exhaustion. People just want this farm bill to go away after years of it being worked on, and I appreciate that, too.

But we are only given one opportunity every 5 or, in this case, 7 years to reform farm policy to make it better, to make it better for our family farmers, to make it more responsible for the American taxpayer, to make production agriculture work for all Americans, and I am afraid that this farm bill, yet again, pulls up short.

I would beseech my colleagues to take a little additional time to work on reform measures that do make sense. Rather than looking at another \$8.6 billion in cuts to the nutrition title on top of previous cuts that have already been had, let's look at some of these subsidy programs.

I am afraid that the bill before us today maintains huge taxpayer subsidies that go to a few but very large

agribusinesses at the expense of our family farmers around the country. It is going to lead to greater consolidation and production agriculture. It is going to continue to drive up land values. It is going to make it harder for new beginning farmers to enter the occupation. It is not responsible to these family farmers, and it is certainly not responsible to the American taxpayer.

We have got historically high commodity target prices in this bill so any slight dip is going to mean huge payments going out in the future. We have got the multiple entity rule now that we worked on in the previous farm bill being rolled back in this one. We have got payment limitation caps now being increased rather than brought down to where the will of this Congress was last year when we had that debate on the floor.

And while it is commendable that we are getting rid of the direct payment program, which was not justifiable, most of that money is being shifted now into the crop insurance program which, what I feel, is overly generous premium subsidy crop insurance subsidies to producers, which has the potential of taking further risk out of production decisions.

But we are also telling private crop insurance companies, We are going to guarantee you a 14 percent profit margin. We are going to pay your entire administrative and operating expenses. And, by the way, you are going to bear very little risk in offering these policies. The American taxpayer will still bear that risk. There is not a business in the world that wouldn't sign up for that offer. So why are we doing that in this farm bill?

Representative PETRI and I last year offered a commonsense modicum reform of the crop insurance program, asking these crop insurance companies to put a little more skin in the game. We understand it is a valuable risk management tool that needs to be there for producers, but this goes overboard with it.

Then finally, we have got a domestic cotton program that has gotten us into trouble with Brazil. If the average taxpayer knew that we, for the last 4 years, have funneled out \$150 million worth of taxpayer subsidies going to subsidize Brazilian cotton farmers they would be livid. And yet this bill does not fix that cotton problem, and now it is up to Brazil whether they want to level economic sanctions against us.

More work needs to happen, and, unfortunately, this bill pulls up short.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), one of our hardest working subcommittee chairmen.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the farm bill. This legislation provides much-needed reforms. It is fiscally responsible, saving

billions in mandatory spending, promoting market-based solutions, and streamlining and consolidating more than 100 programs.

We have eliminated direct payments, which farmers received whether there were good times or bad, and replaced them with a safety net that provides help only when farmers need it.

The bill includes the most significant reform to the food stamp program since welfare was reformed in 1996.

While I am personally disappointed that we didn't fix the COOL and GIPSA issues—and I am committed to continuing to work on those—I do believe that this bill provides a balance of opportunity and security, and it strengthens our Nation's agriculture safety net for years to come.

I would urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the safety net, vote "yes" for these modest reforms to food stamps, pass this conference report. Give our farmers and ranchers across this country the 5 years of stability and security they need to execute their business plans to allow them to continue to provide the American people with the most affordable and abundant food and fiber supply in the developing world.

Vote "yes" on the conference report.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER).

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I guess for some people, you just can't do enough. I would argue, respectfully, to a lot of my colleagues that the work that has gone on on both sides of the aisle over the last 2 years is actually pretty exemplary.

The farm bill is always a difficult bill to pass. I believe the last one was vetoed a couple of times, and it had to be overwritten.

This bill, we are not at that point. But we have had a lot of bumps along the road, and it could be better. It could be better. But I have never yet seen legislation as exactly what I would preferably like to be voting on at the end of the day.

We make huge strides in this bill. There were draconian cuts to the SNAP and food stamp program that are no longer in here. There were onerous requirements and incentives to get people off food stamps that are no longer in here.

And for those that say people are automatically going to be cut as a result of this, that is not accurate. If the States step up and actually put \$20 towards the heating assistance for these low-income folks that hopefully need that, they don't get a reduced benefit. And, yes, it is a reduced benefit. They still qualify for their base benefit in this bill. Moreover, if they just bring their heating and cooling bills in, they can still get the expanded benefit; it just requires a little more diligence. Hopefully, it puts some faith in America that their food stamp and SNAP

programs are going to those who really need it.

As far as the subsidies go—hey, maybe we should change that; we should work on that some more. There will be another farm bill in 4 or 5 years. But we have made huge strides. We get rid of the direct payments program. That is monumental, folks. We have been trying to do that for 20 years.

The subsidies, the milk program, it is a totally new one. We are on a marginal insurance program. I think America understands that type of thing.

We have made huge strides here, and there are so many good things. For some of my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle, I mean, at the end of the day, it is pretty imperative that we have made huge strides in the specialty crop provisions, the organic provisions. We have done great with market access promotion programs. We have made it so that American farmers continue to produce the best food and fiber with a safety net that makes sure that the people in this country get the food they need and deserve and can do the best economically on the global trade scene.

I think this is a great opportunity. People here should be voting "yes" on this bill after all the hard bipartisan work.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, while I deeply respect my friend and colleague from Oregon, I have a slightly different perspective on this because I think the bill that is before us today is absolutely the least that could be done to get the bill passed. It has a number of items I do support, like specialty crops, which I have been working on for some time. I am pleased that organics have an opportunity to get to crop insurance.

But this bill, as I say, takes, allegedly, the savings from direct payments that have been opposed for years and plows them back into an enriched crop insurance program. It cuts \$6 billion for conservation. Yes, there are some improvements in terms of administration, but at the end of the day, it cuts \$6 billion when land and water is under pressure and needs it the most. This is shortsighted.

It is very likely going to cost a lot more in the long run for the reasons my friend from Wisconsin pointed out in terms of setting these targets higher. It is more generous in terms of rejecting a provision that was included in both the House and the Senate version to limit payments to individual farms to \$50,000. The conference committee increases the limit to \$125,000 and reopens a loophole closed in both the House and Senate bills, allowing the payments to be collected by multiple people.

It is just one more example of where the conference committee that I think

had one meeting and sort of massaged these things to put the pieces together to secure a majority on the floor, is not, in any stretch of the imagination, in the best interests of most farmers, certainly not for the environment, and nor is it for the American taxpayers.

I respectfully urge its rejection.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK) who has been very focused on these critical issues, especially those involving livestock.

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to offer my congratulations to the chairman, to his ranking member, and to my colleague from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD), one of the committee members, for their diligent work and for coming up with this committee report. This was not easy, to say the least.

That said, Mr. Speaker, because of the Senate's "my way or the highway" attitude, we are considering a conference report that does nothing to address an out-of-control agency, GIPSA, from imposing on American companies regulations that go well beyond congressional intent. Because of the Senate's all-or-nothing approach, we are considering a conference report that will subject American industries and companies to retaliatory tariffs.

For me, it would be easy to vote against this conference report. But unlike my Senate counterparts, I recognize that, in a divided government, each side must work to find common ground. Ultimately, this report, like many of the other bipartisan agreements that have been signed into law, moves the ball forward by making much-needed reforms to Federal programs and reducing spending. That is why, in the end, I will support it.

I am hopeful, however, Mr. Speaker, that the House Appropriations Committee will do everything in its power to fix some of these mistakes. I, as a member of that committee, will fight to rein in GIPSA, and I will work to fix the Country of Origin Labeling requirements.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE).

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking Democratic Leader PELOSI for her confidence in me in appointing me as her representative to the farm bill committee.

I thank Representatives PETERSON and LUCAS and Senators STABENOW and COCHRAN for their leadership in negotiating this conference report.

Throughout this process, it was my goal to ensure a fair and balanced farm bill. While I do not agree with some of the provisions of this conference bill, I firmly believe it is a good compromise.

Given how far apart we were when this conference began, I am pleased Members on both sides of the aisle and across the Chamber were able to reach

a consensus and show the American people Congress can work together.

The agreement rejects categorical eligibility, something that we have talked about for some time. The \$8.6 billion savings in SNAP over 10 years—over 10 years—comes from a change in LIHEAP policy that would shrink benefits for approximately 850,000 households in 16 States. It does not eliminate a qualified household from access to SNAP, which was an important consideration on the difficult road to reach a compromise that prevents devastating cuts and changes to this critically needed program.

This agreement also expands economic investment in low-income, urban, and rural communities. It provides certainty and sound agricultural policies for America's farmers and ranchers.

Passing the farm bill has always been a bipartisan endeavor, and this conference committee report proves it is still possible for Congress to work through its differences and produce a balanced bill that meets the needs of the American people.

We have negotiated the farm bill for the last 2 years. It is now time to move forward. I strongly encourage my colleagues to join me and vote "yes" on this bipartisan, bicameral conference agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the nutrition title in the Conference Report for the 2014 Farm Bill is truly a compromise. It's not the bill I would write on my own. It fails to adequately tackle the hunger and poverty that stalks our country from inner cities to rural towns and suburbs across America. However, it is a genuine compromise and represents important improvements to our federal nutrition programs. We have kept SNAP intact and rejected every one of the harsh House provisions that would have ended food assistance to nearly 4 million people.

I am still deeply disappointed we were not able to make new investments in SNAP to help the struggling families in my district and around this country put food on the table. Millions remain unemployed and unable to provide for their families, and others who work in low-wage jobs or live on retirement income rely on SNAP to afford barely enough food.

Despite this, I believe this legislation will strengthen and improve SNAP and the many other nutrition programs authorized under the Farm Bill. SNAP has been vital in assisting millions of families and countless communities cope with the Great Recession. Not only has the program responded quickly to increased needs, but it has also delivered benefits with ever-increased accuracy despite higher case-loads and strained State administrative budgets. While we look forward to a strengthening economy, which provides more jobs, we expect a strong SNAP will remain critically needed.

This bill reauthorizes the program and makes some modest improvements. Despite expanding to respond to the increased need arising from the Great Recession, SNAP maintained historically low payment error and traf-

ficking rates. The farm bill tightens eligibility in response to concerns about the way some States calculate benefits and media reports of unusual circumstances involving SNAP recipients, invests in fraud detection and prevention activities, improves retailer operations, and makes a number of small but important program changes.

I would like to take this opportunity to review some of the key provisions of the nutrition title. First, I want to address the one significant cut in SNAP benefits that is included in the title. We have curtailed a practice that about a third of the States use to raise SNAP benefits for some families and simplify administration of the program. CBO says that about 850,000 families in those States will lose about \$90 a month because of the cut. Though a painful loss for these families, the change fixes an oversight in the SNAP benefit calculation that has allowed some States to let households deduct more income than warranted by their actual expenses. They do this by giving SNAP households with no heating or cooling expenses a token LIHEAP payment of \$1 or less in order to leverage a heating and cooling deduction, which raises their SNAP benefits. For decades, the receipt of LIHEAP has automatically qualified households for a standard utility allowance within the shelter deduction calculation. This is the right thing to do when the LIHEAP program already has determined that the household pays heating or cooling bills. But these States with very small LIHEAP payments have allowed some of these families to receive larger benefits than their circumstances warrant under the SNAP formula.

Congress, however, did not intend to give households without heating or cooling expenses a deduction for such expenses. While I would strongly prefer to reinvest all of the savings from ending this practice back into meeting the needs of struggling households, it is reasonable to address this issue. This bill does so by requiring that a LIHEAP payment must be at least \$20 for the State to use the LIHEAP connection to confer the SUA.

This change will lower SNAP benefits to 850,000 low-income households by \$8.55 billion over ten years. This will not be an easy adjustment for these households, but it will establish a stronger and more credible link between the traditional LIHEAP program and SNAP benefits. As a conferee, it was very important for us that the people who really deserve to deduct heating or cooling costs have a chance to do so, and the change we are making to fix a narrow problem not disrupt the original purpose of the LIHEAP linkage in promoting efficiency and ensuring households get all the benefits for which they qualify.

This is why we gave the Secretary some flexibility here. I expect that the Department will work closely with State agencies to ensure households that now receive the SUA on the basis of a negligible LIHEAP payment will have the opportunity to clarify they actually do pay for heating or cooling, and this process will not be burdensome. Some States have targeted these small LIHEAP payments to households in public housing that are highly unlikely to incur a separate charge for home heating or cooling. But other States have given a one dollar payment to most, if not all SNAP households. We know that a large proportion of these households actually do pay a

separate charge for utilities and need the SUA to get an adequate level of benefits.

I also want to make clear this change is designed to affect only households in the 16 States that have provided a nominal LIHEAP benefit for purposes of qualifying households for a larger deduction. We got assurances from USDA that in the States that do not use the current rule in this way, SNAP participants would neither experience a cut in benefits, nor would there be a change in the way their income, shelter deduction, and benefits are calculated. This is an important implementation issue. States that, like my own State of Ohio and the majority of all States, do not provide a nominal LIHEAP benefit should be able to continue the way they determine eligibility for the SUA. Nor should low-income Ohioans be asked to do or verify anything differently from what they do now. None of the savings in the bill comes from reducing benefits for households that have LIHEAP payments that exceed the new \$20 threshold, so USDA must ensure State implementation of the changes does not result in a benefit loss to a household legitimately receiving LIHEAP.

Finally, I am concerned we may not have given States enough time to make the change and protect households. States will have flexibility in phasing in the provision for most participating households, but for new applicants and households who need to reapply for SNAP in the coming months, the provision is effective just 30 days after enactment, which is a very quick time-frame for States to implement. Under SNAP regulations, States will be protected from being cited for errors during the first few months after enactment. I urge States and USDA to not hold households accountable for receiving slightly higher benefits because the short implementation timeframe has not given their State ample opportunity to adjust their benefits properly. I'm proud of what we have been able to accomplish as conferees to improve the program without unduly burdening the struggling families that turn to SNAP in times of need. We focused our reforms on the administration of SNAP, and I'd like to highlight some of the areas where we tightened eligibility to respond to some uncommon cases.

Over the last several years, there have been two reported instances of SNAP participants winning the lottery and remaining on the program. While a rare occurrence, and one that in many States already results in disqualification, we included a provision to make sure it does not happen again. We're focused on people winning a million dollars or some other life-changing amount, not someone who nets a few hundred dollars in scratch-off tickets that could very quickly be spent by paying overdue bills or paying for overdue auto or home maintenance. In implementing this provision, the Department should consider "substantial" to be truly extraordinary windfalls that will change lifestyles rather than provide more modest gains. Another key implementation issue is how the State discovers such winnings. Rather than clog application and report forms with questions that will apply to a negligible number of people, the bill requires State SNAP agencies to establish relationships with any in-State gaming commissions, so that the commissions will report any winnings that meet the

threshold USDA will establish. The State agency will apply the regular income and asset tests to these households and the households will remain ineligible until they meet these tests. We do not see any need for any additional reporting by applicants or households, as the State-level reporting should be accurate and sufficient.

The farm bill also clarifies rules around eligibility for felons. People with criminal records fleeing from law enforcement and violating their parole are not eligible for SNAP. The farm bill reiterates people convicted of certain felonies such as murder and armed robbery who violate their parole or probation are ineligible for benefits. And it imposes a hard penalty on the families of those who do not comply—the household of the ex-offender will see a significant drop in benefits because the income and resources of the non-eligible member would still be counted. While harsh to innocent family members who may have helped their family member rehabilitate successfully by providing a place to live, it represents no change in the law and is the way other offenders, such as drug felons and those intentionally violating SNAP rules are treated now. Ex-offenders who have served their time and continue to comply with the conditions placed on their release, and who are otherwise eligible for food assistance through SNAP, will be able to apply for and receive assistance. Program participants should not experience any change from our desire to reiterate current policy with respect to fleeing felons. The SNAP eligibility and enrollment process already solicits information from applicants about their fleeing felon status and we anticipate those efforts will be not be disrupted or changed as a result of this re-articulation of current rules.

Another area where the conferees worked hard to make improvements is in the area of program integrity and fraud prevention.

The bill contains an important program integrity enhancement for multiple requests for EBT card replacements. Participants can lose cards. The cards may also be stolen or malfunction. Without a working card, households can't buy food. We've become aware of a very small number of households with more frequent requests for card replacement and this raises program integrity issues. The bill requires USDA to set a standard for excessive requests for card replacement and requires States to seek explanations from households that exceed this threshold as to why another card is needed prior to re-issuing a card. Similarly, States may not require households to provide their explanation in person or withhold the card based on the household's explanation. That requires following the procedures for an intentional program violation. Because of the critical importance of maintaining access to food assistance, the bill requires that States promptly give individuals a chance to explain. We expect USDA to monitor this closely; any delay in working with the household is a day they do not have benefits to purchase food.

There are many reasons why replacement cards are legitimately and urgently needed—people may not understand the card was reusable, they may confuse a PIN problem with a card problem, they may be victims of theft, or

they may simply lose their card. These things can happen to anyone, but some people are particularly vulnerable. Accordingly, this bill requires protections for vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities, homeless persons, and crime victims.

This provision does not empower States to use this process to terminate participation or impose undue new burdens on households. SNAP rules set out procedural standards for acting on evidence of intentional program violations—standards that balance the pursuit of program integrity with fundamental legal rights of accused persons. If a State believes its evidence indicates an intentional program violation in this area, it must replace the card and use its disqualification process to take any further action.

We've provided additional resources to USDA to improve integrity efforts. We applaud USDA's strong commitment to rooting out fraud in the program, but with a significant increase in the number of stores accepting SNAP, USDA must continue to improve its retailer monitoring efforts. This bill gives the Department additional resources to improve its technology to take advantage of innovations like data mining, which can reveal retailer redemption patterns and help identify stores that may be abusing the program. We expect USDA to focus on data analysis and other smart tools to maintain the high standards of compliance in the program. Again, this is an example of the conferees focusing on the improving the administrative side of the program, rather than placing onerous burdens, like photo identification requirements, on retailers or participants.

We've also provided funds to encourage State and federal partnerships to address retailer fraud through pilot projects. States selected for the pilot need to show they have committed resources to recipient trafficking and have a proven record of accurate determinations of fraud. In other words, States that have been successful in identifying and reducing documented fraud should be given a priority in partnering with USDA on retailer fraud.

There has been a lot of attention given to the relationship between SNAP and work. We know many households on SNAP have a working member and some States operate promising employment and training programs. Earlier versions of the farm bill in each house had widely differing approaches to the issue of work and, as a conferee, I'm proud we worked diligently to find areas of agreement and come up with some important reforms in the program without cutting people off for failure to find a job or imposing some other hardship on households.

While the majority of SNAP participants who can work are working, we want to do what we can to help those who are able to work but cannot find a job. SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) has allowed States to provide services to adults facing the three month time limit as well as individuals seeking to improve their employability, but it is time to evaluate what really works and encourage States to build upon successes.

So we have improved and increased funding for SNAP E&T. The bill provides \$200 million to pilot and evaluate innovative and promising State employment and training programs.

These pilots can be drawn from SNAP E&T components, but can also include efforts to help those who already are working by providing the kinds of supportive services, like child care or transportation assistance, that often are insurmountable expenses to those with low-paying jobs. The conferees expect that States will expand their SNAP E&T activities or test new ideas, not use the funds to fund what they already are doing, or remove State dollars from their SNAP E&T programs.

Over time, SNAP E&T has served 3 different goals: a test of the willingness of the able-bodied to perform work activities as a condition of assistance, a means for some childless adults to exceed the 3-month time limit via workfare, and a way to enhance the employment prospects of SNAP recipients by improving their skills and abilities. Pilots will test approaches to meeting each of these goals and provide us with crucial information about the most effective approaches.

As conferees we thought a rigorous evaluation is a critical component of the pilot projects. With so many SNAP recipients who find jobs on their own, a key question is how do we know if the program and services the State offered made a difference. States that cannot guarantee they will participate fully in the evaluation and provide the necessary data for the evaluation should not be selected to participate. To ensure we learn something, we also have made the new money we provide available to the evaluation and for the State and federal costs of running the pilot. I am especially interested in learning about the most effective ways for States to assess the needs of SNAP participants upfront and to match those needs to the right education and training programs and other supportive services that will make a difference for that individual. This is information we do not have now and could help States to target limited resources to really make a difference in peoples' lives.

Finally, I applaud the conference committee leadership for designing a pilot project that gives States resources without creating punitive incentives to force people who cannot find work off the program. I know, however, some States may choose more punitive approaches under a theory that exposing a family to the possibility of losing their benefits will spur additional work effort. I do not support this view, but States are allowed under the pilots to sanction individuals who fail to comply with any work requirements under the same rules and terms as under the current SNAP E&T program. In addition, because we have added unsubsidized work as an allowable activity under the pilot, we have asked the Secretary to issue guidance about the very limited circumstances under which a person who is working could be sanctioned for losing his or her job. The last thing we intend is for people who are already doing what we want—that is, working—to face losing some or all of their SNAP benefits because they lose that job.

Beyond the pilot projects, we are very interested in learning what works in all States in getting SNAP participants the skills and training they need to get and keep a well-paying job. That's why we will require States to report on the results of their E&T efforts. USDA is charged to use this new information to look at how this program can achieve more lasting

gains in self-sufficiency. The conferees also recognize SNAP participants are among the poorest and least skilled members of society. We do not expect it will be easy for all of them to quickly find employment, especially in the aftermath of the recession. We expect a study would consider some interventions—such as career and technical education or GED programs—may yield more gains over the long haul, but participants would not immediately find those jobs because they are gaining the credentials needed to get them. To that end, USDA's study needs to recognize getting better jobs may require getting more training, so delayed, but enduring improvements, are important.

I've been focused on changes to the program that affect participants. But SNAP is a program that helps both hungry households and the food industry. This farm bill continues to modernize the program, with a number of improvements for retailers.

One thing we were able to do is take important steps to ensure SNAP remains compatible with the evolving food retail landscape. To this end, we authorize the Secretary to test the use of mobile technologies in SNAP—things like smart phone apps that have become increasingly common in the larger retail world. This may be especially important to farmers markets and vegetable stands that are unable to install traditional EBT-processing machines. But allowing additional ways to accept benefits must not come at the expense of program integrity. We all share a deep commitment to ensuring only authorized retailers participate in the program and sufficient protections are in place to prevent trafficking. This provision reflects that priority. For example, we start with a pilot project to test the idea of using mobile technology, include protections for recipients, and prohibit any food price markups. We expect USDA to take ironclad measures to prevent fraud and require a report on the feasibility of the technology before allowing it to be used more widely than the pilot. USDA is to be commended for the good work it has done in reducing fraud in the program, and we expect the same attention to program integrity to be employed in testing new technologies before embracing them in SNAP.

This bill also allows pilot projects to test the feasibility of allowing the online purchase of food with SNAP benefits, reflecting a growing food industry trend toward online transactions with delivery. While allowing the ordering and purchase of food online is one way to make the program accessible to individuals who may have trouble getting to a store that can redeem benefits, again we worked hard to ensure the high program integrity standards apply to any new way of redeeming benefits. We expect USDA to aggressively address fraud for the same reasons set out above and require, in the bill, the agency halt any expansion of online transactions if integrity issues cannot be resolved. While the provision makes clear that delivery fees associated with online purchases may not be paid with SNAP benefits, I also expect USDA to set standards for the fees to ensure no adverse effect on food security. After all, low-income households rely on SNAP because they are unable to purchase enough food—to divert other scarce fi-

nancial resources to pay delivery fees undermines the accessibility offered by the online option.

I would like to point out these new mobile and online technologies, common in the food retail world, do not rely on photo identification or other biometric information to authorize payments and maintain integrity. For both the customer and the retailer, the SNAP retail transaction should look like any other debit card transaction. Thus, I urge USDA to stop approving misguided efforts at the State level to require photos on SNAP cards or to be presented at the point of purchase. Technology has made these conditions on the use of benefits obsolete in the retail environment, and so they should be eliminated from the SNAP retail environment as well.

Benefits have been issued successfully on electronic cards for years, but there have been rare occasions when the cards, or the processing systems that deduct benefits from the cards, fail to operate. In these cases, program participants may be in even greater need of assistance and must be able to use their benefits to purchase food. This requires the capacity to quickly and efficiently issue manual vouchers to affected individuals. We expect USDA to issue rules that make it quick and easy to switch to manual vouchers for automated systems failures or natural disasters. Critical to successfully providing an alternative is establishing clear criteria that allow State officials to apply immediately in a variety of particular situations. The threat to program integrity posed by physical vouchers stems from vouchers issued when individual cards fail to work, not when there is an intelligible, systemic reason for the problem.

I commend my fellow conferees for working in a bipartisan way to identify areas of the program that could be strengthened in a way that minimizes administrative burden and does not impose a hardship on participating households. We've made some changes that will improve eligibility determinations and the quality of our research.

For example, we've taken steps to ensure federal funds used to inform Americans about SNAP cannot be used in inappropriate ways. Let's be clear, USDA has done a fine and necessary job getting information about SNAP to low-income households struggling to put food on the table. The program cannot be effective if those who may need it are unaware of its existence or believe they are not eligible. With the program's name change from the Food Stamp Program to SNAP, there was a great need for accurate information to be disseminated. Almost all of USDA's efforts have been appreciated and appropriate, but there have been reports of some ill-advised efforts, such as collaborating with the Mexican consulate and reimbursing community members who sign up eligible people on a per person or "bounty" basis. These were neither best practices, nor were they widespread, so we prohibited them in the farm bill. But in reality, many low-income households that are eligible are not signing up, and we know that is because, in part, individuals are unaware of the program or have misconceptions about it. For example, seniors often fear if they apply for assistance, they are taking away assistance from someone else. But that is just not true,

and we need to be able to give these seniors truthful information so they can make the choice that is right for them. In this bill, Congress continues to support this kind of information sharing, while clarifying aggressive recruitment, including recruitment outside of the United States, is not permissible. Recruitment is trying to persuade or convince someone who has made an informed decision not to apply to change his or her mind. That hasn't been a permissible activity and the bill simply codifies that practice. Providing people with positive information about the program and the benefits of applying or assisting them to navigate the complicated application process is not recruitment and is still allowed. We expect the agency will continue to provide necessary information while ensuring education funds are used appropriately.

Another change we made to strengthen SNAP was to give States access to more tools to double check the information SNAP applicants provide. The Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Child Support Enforcement oversees such a tool: the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH), which primarily is for State child support agencies to learn important information about the employment of noncustodial parents who live or work in other States. Currently States are allowed to use this database for some other purposes, including verifying employment and earnings of SNAP recipients. We have, in this bill, required States make use of the data available through the NDNH at the time a household is certified for SNAP, to help the State determine eligibility and the correct level of benefits for households applying for SNAP. We expect the Secretary to issue guidance to help States determine the most cost-effective and efficient ways to make use of this data source. For example, it makes no sense for States to pay to match every individual in every applicant household. There is no reasonable chance an 80 year-old disabled person or a four year old child has unreported earnings. The Secretary should work with the Secretary of Health and Human Services to explore ways to limit the cost of the match to State agencies and maximize payment accuracy.

The bill also codifies the existing State practice of verifying immigrant participation in the program by using the federal Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements program (SAVE). It's a commonsense way for States to determine eligibility that does not require a household to track down paperwork or fill out unnecessary forms. We expect this to have no impact on client eligibility or responsibility since the data match is an administrative procedure. No other changes to immigrant eligibility have been made.

We fully expect State and local agencies, institutions and organizations that receive funding through USDA to study, evaluate or otherwise engage with SNAP will cooperate with USDA's own researchers. Some of these entities may have justifiable concerns in this day and age about sharing some data, especially private information about participant households. This bill includes a provision that explicitly requires cooperation, but ensures that it does not violate any important existing requirements, such as the personal privacy of SNAP participants.

I'd like to turn for a moment to other nutrition provisions in the bill.

Since 2001, Puerto Rico has been allowed to issue to 25 percent of households' SNAP benefit as cash, rather than in a form that can only be spent on food. While program rules require the cash also be spent for food, some cash is spent on other household necessities, though there is little evidence that any cash is spent on non-essential items. This is because the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) plays a unique role in Puerto Rico's safety net because other programs available in States (such as TANF and SSI) do not play a significant role on the island. Puerto Rico is already shortchanged on nutrition assistance—if NAP operated as SNAP does in the States, participation would be 15 percent higher and federal costs would be over 22 percent higher. Some have argued this cash allotment should be eliminated, a change that would be disruptive, and over which there has been little engagement with local stakeholders or affected parties. So the farm bill requires a study on the impact of eliminating the cash portion of the nutrition grant, and assuming such a change is feasible, gradually phases it out. But, we included an important protection for poor Puerto Ricans. The Secretary can exempt categories of participants if he or she has determined the elimination of the cash portion would cause undue hardship. The entire NAP caseload could be exempted if the study shows the policy change would have significant adverse effects.

Another provision in the bill requires USDA to pilot different ways to deliver food assistance to needy people in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Here we expect USDA to look at different ways to structure food aid based on the structure of SNAP, but recognizing many of the SNAP administrative requirements may not be appropriate for such a small government and isolated population.

There is a wide range of options between the current block grant and full SNAP implementation. For example, we expect any program would be run with integrity, but this does not necessarily mean the SNAP quality control review process—one of the most rigorous to which any public program is subject—is the only way to review payment accuracy in the CNMI. In the area of benefit issuance, SNAP has highly detailed standards for Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) systems. This approach works well in the United States, but may not be appropriate for the CNMI. SNAP has very explicit rules about how benefits are determined and recognizes assorted expenses as deductions from income. CNMI may be better able to run a program with greater standardization of benefits. None of this is to argue for any specific approach. Rather, we expect USDA to look for ways to improve nutrition assistance to the residents of the CNMI in a manner that its government can deliver.

As I said at the start, Mr. Speaker, this bill is not perfect. I'm not pleased we had to reduce food assistance to any low-income households. But overall, we have continued the long tradition in the Agriculture Committee of bipartisan support for the program. It has taken us two years and countless hours to come to a compromise over a wide range of

complex agriculture and nutrition issues while still contributing to reducing the federal deficit. This farm bill is an important step in dealing with the most important food and agricultural issues facing the Nation today. I again, voice my support for this language and urge my colleagues to support it as well.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this compromise bill, although I congratulate the people for working very hard on it. But the change in the heat and eat option is not just a little technical change; it is a change that has a freezing, chilling impact on every single SNAP recipient in Wisconsin. It not only increases bureaucracy, it decreases SNAP benefits to Wisconsin families whose benefits were cut already in November.

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I am deeply concerned about the concrete hurt, hunger, and, quite frankly, the frigid cold that we impose today on thousands of low-income American households, including seniors, children, and the disabled. As many as 255,000 SNAP cases in Wisconsin will be affected by this change.

How do I explain this to the women, children, seniors, and disabled in households how this "technical change" is minor when they stand to lose \$90 a month in benefits? When you consider what they lost in November, \$90 a month to a poor family is not a "technical change." It is a lot of money. It is more than \$1,000 a year.

The price of food is not going to go down, nor is the price of fuel, nor is the purchasing power of the poor going to go up. SNAP benefits already do not meet nutritional needs throughout the month, and this change will mean that real food will be off real tables and out of the stomachs of current recipients. The proposed cut on top of ARRA resulted in a 9 percent drop in benefits allocation to Wisconsin. It is just too much.

In the heat or eat States, that is as much as 11 percent of all beneficiaries. In one step, we imposed new administrative costs on those States and make it harder to keep SNAP more responsive. Kids were off school 2 days—2 days—this week because of the frigid, dangerous cold. And throwing these families back to heat or eat is the wrong thing to do.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT), another one of my outstanding subcommittee chairmen.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to first say thank you to Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON. The Ag Committee has some of the most conservative Members of the House and some of the most liberal Members of the House, and I will tell you we have a lot of different

opinions about what could and what should be done, but we had respectful discussion across the aisle and across the philosophical debates.

I have said many times from this podium that the foundation of our economy in this country is based on two things, one of them being manufacturing and the other one based on agriculture.

This bill does the things it needs to do to ensure that foundation for our agricultural producers to help with that part of the economy. It also ensures that, as those farmers go forward and do the things that they do in providing the food, the nutrition, and the fiber, not only for America but for the rest of the world, that Americans—Americans—when they go to the grocery store, will get more for their dollar than any other country as they seek to feed their families.

We found agreement to clean up waste and abuse within many of the systems, including the food stamp system. We have given more money to food banks, which I think is extremely important in making sure that the most needy of American citizens have a place to go and make sure that they can get the nutrition that they need.

We have put some new policies in place, and I am confident that this bill is a move in the right direction. Where we have got those areas where we did not find the agreement, I am confident we will be able to come back and work on those.

I am proud to support this bill, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, thank you to the chairman and the ranking member for your incredible hard work. The folks of Oklahoma and Minnesota should be proud of the representatives that they have sent here.

I am proud of this piece of legislation. I stand in support of it. It has been 2 years. I feel like we have been at it most of our lives. And while I hear people pointing out problems, I am certainly there. If we had each written this bill, it would look different. I hear people say it is not perfect. We had a former colleague once who said, Of course it is not perfect. If you want perfect, you will get that in Heaven. And at times, this place is closer to Hell.

So this is a pretty good compromise that we have come up with. It certainly does things, and I am proud to say it makes bold new investments in clean and renewable, American-made energy. This is a tough decision in a tough budgeting time; and of the commitment of this committee to make that happen, I could not be prouder.

It also takes bold steps moving the country forward on conservation measures. One piece in here, protecting our

native prairies in the Midwest, is fabulous. And I want to thank the gentle lady from South Dakota (Ms. Noem) for her unwavering effort on this.

I would say this: we reject the false choice that you have to choose between sportsmen's conservation and producing food on the land. You can have all things. And as the folks over at Ducks Unlimited said, this is one of the best pieces of conservation legislation in decades. We come out and do that. So we have struck a balance here, producing the food, feeding the world, clothing the world, and empowering the world, and at the same time providing for the heritage of our sportsmen and the pristine beauty of our country. So it can happen.

As a veteran, I am proud that we took a bold step in here trying to figure ways to get returning veterans back on the land. The average age of a farmer in this country is 57 years old. We need new folks on the land, and that comes with high land prices and access to capital.

Mr. PETERSON, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and I worked on some beginning farmer and rancher legislation. Senator KLOBUCHAR on the Senate side and the chairman made sure it happened here. It is going to work. It provides some of that access, and it keeps our family farms continuing on.

So there are things to point out that you are frustrated with. I understand that. But there is a lot of good in this bill. It is a compromise. We came together. We tried to find and strike those balances. We continue to feed those folks who need the safety net, and we continue to make sure that our producers have the certainty that they need.

I have to tell you, all across this country this morning, producers woke up and quietly went about their business feeding, fueling, and powering America. We can say "thank you" by passing this bill.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am happy now to yield 3 minutes to my colleague from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, rather than producing a farm bill that meets our traditional responsibilities as a Congress to support working families and farmers, this bill will do great damage to the Nation's most vulnerable citizens. This bill slashes \$8.6 billion from food stamps, our Nation's most important antihunger program—this is in addition to the \$11 billion already cut—while it goes out of its way to reopen the loopholes that benefit millionaires and billionaires.

Interesting enough, this bill increases the deficit this year, and the Congressional Budget Office has said that it doesn't save the \$23 billion that it claims to save. This bill results in winners and losers.

Winners—wealthy farmers and agribusinesses who will be able to pocket

crop insurance subsidies and other government handouts beyond the already generous limits passed earlier by both the House and the Senate. The Congressional Budget Office, again, says it increases spending on crop insurance by \$5.7 billion.

The Senate passed a bipartisan amendment to reduce the level of Federal premium support for crop insurance participants who make over \$750,000, but the conference raised it to \$900,000—winners.

Against the expressed wishes of both Houses, the bill's drafters reopened a loophole which was closed in both the House and the Senate bills which allows farming enterprises to overcollect on commodity payments—winners.

But then who are the losers? And there are losers in the farm bill. The losers are the 850,000 low-income households all over America, 1.7 million Americans who will lose 66 meals a month because of these cuts to food stamps.

Who are we talking about? Children who will go hungry and spend all the next day at school. They will go to bed hungry, spend the next day at school unable to concentrate because they are thinking about food. Veterans, roughly 900,000 of whom receive food stamps, and working families who will face an empty fridge and a gnawing pain in their stomach for weeks and weeks. Seniors have to choose between food or warmth, whose health will deteriorate for want of sustenance.

These are our own people we are consigning to this fate, hardworking people in our districts and in our communities. And if you vote for this bill, you will have to look them in the eye and tell them to go without food, that they have to endure hunger because we had to give more handouts to millionaires and to billionaires.

That is what this farm bill is about. Make no mistake. It increases hunger rather than decreases hunger in America. It picks winners and losers rather than ensuring we are supporting those that grow and those that consume the food we produce in this Nation of plenty.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. DELAURO. It picks winners and losers rather than ensuring that we are supporting those that grow and those that consume the food that we produce in this Nation of plenty, which is what farm bills have been about in the past.

I have negotiated nutrition titles in farm bills. This is a farm bill that undermines the health and the well-being of the most vulnerable in our society.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), who has worked extremely diligently early on on this bill and through the entire process.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, thank you to Chairman LUCAS for the leadership he has shown in getting this conference report to the floor.

I rise in strong support of this conference committee report. It is a commonsense piece of legislation that deals with things such as overregulation. That is a silent job killer that this administration is implementing through our agricultural industry. I am proud that many of the provisions that I helped craft are in this final farm bill to reduce that opportunity for this administration to continue to kill jobs in this country.

We see some commonsense reforms to the SNAP program. Our goal should be to get people off of SNAP and into jobs. But, Mr. Speaker, this bill is a lesson in fiscal responsibility. It is one of the single largest cuts in mandatory spending that this Congress has done, which is putting our country on a path to complete fiscal responsibility. These are some of the decisions that we need to make. Most of those cuts are in the agricultural side.

We need to understand that this is a commonsense piece of legislation. It is going to continue to reduce our deficit in this country, put us on a path to paying down our national debt, and putting excellent long-term farm policy in place for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), a former member of the committee.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, we serve in an imperfect Congress, and we are voting on an imperfect farm bill. In some cases, we spend far too much needlessly and irresponsibly, and in some cases we spend far too little unwisely and irresponsibly. But a 5-year farm bill is absolutely crucial to America, and it is crucial to Vermont dairy farmers.

This bill takes three important steps for dairy farmers in Vermont and throughout the country:

One, it creates a modern-day insurance program which protects farmers against the wild swings in feed prices which are totally out of their control;

Two, it protects taxpayers, as well as farmers, by limiting insurance to a farmer's base production; and

Three, finally, it gives USDA the tools to intervene if dairy prices drop dramatically.

Mr. Speaker, with its faults and imperfections, America does need a new farm bill. Agriculture is changing all around us. Local food is a growing sector in my State. The organic sector is booming, and people are much more aware of their food and farms. This farm bill invests in local foods, provides insurance to small farmers, and puts organic farming on a strong footing for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the nutrition title in the Conference Report for the

2014 Farm Bill. I served on the House Agriculture Committee through the 112th Congress, when the Agriculture Committee began its farm bill deliberations and wrote its first version of the farm bill, including the nutrition title. I am very familiar with the changes to the nutrition title in the final conference agreement. This bill represents an imperfect but bipartisan and bi-cameral compromise. While I am disappointed that the Conferees were not able to make new investments in SNAP to help the struggling families in Vermont and around this country put food on the table, the bill makes some modest improvements and has wisely rejected many of the cuts in the House bill.

In fact, the nutrition title reflects the success SNAP has had providing nutrition assistance during the historic rise in need as a result of the Great Recession. Not only has the program been responsive to need, but it's maintained historically low payment error and trafficking rates. The farm bill makes some improvements to keep the program operating efficiently and to remain the lifeline that it is for so many of our neighbors. It also modestly invests in anti-fraud efforts and promising employment and training programs.

I would like to address the one significant cut in SNAP benefits in the bill that affects households in Vermont. The farm bill cuts about \$90 a month to about 850,000 families nationwide by increasing the level of federal energy assistance required to trigger higher benefits among recipients. This provision changes the SNAP benefit calculation for households receiving very small LIHEAP payments in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program benefits. This cut will cause pain for the households that will see their benefits reduced. Despite the change, it's important for people who have heating or cooling expenses to maintain the deduction they are eligible for. The conferees have assured us that the provision will maintain the fundamental link between traditional LIHEAP programs and SNAP.

For this change to be executed properly, it is essential that USDA work closely with states to ensure that no SNAP household who also participates in LIHEAP inadvertently lose benefits. Many of those that currently receive the SUA due to a \$1 LIHEAP benefit may still pay for heating or cooling, and so they need a chance to show that they have those expenses. The process to do so should be designed to minimize the burden on these households.

More important is to ensure that households that do not receive smaller LIHEAP benefits are not adversely affected by any aspect of this provision's implementation. The Agriculture Committees debated several approaches to resolving this issue, and savings were never attributed to states that did not provide a smaller LIHEAP benefit. USDA must ensure that this provision's impact is limited only to household that receive a minor LIHEAP payment, such as \$1. I do not envision that states will need to make changes to their forms or verification policies.

The farm bill also includes a number of improvements in the SNAP operation and administration. Like with the SUA provision, it's clear from these provisions that the conferees were

committed to focusing on changes that placed the burden on state agencies, not households applying for or participating in the program. For example, there's a requirement that states check state lottery and gaming records to make sure no lottery winners who are ineligible, due to their winnings, stay on the program. It's a reasonable policy, and the conferees wisely require the state to rely on records to identify the rare instance rather than ask demeaning questions of every SNAP applicant. There are other examples—such as use of the national New Hire Database—where the bill charges USDA and state agencies to use databases, technology and back office functions to improve the program without burdening SNAP applicants and participants. I do not expect states to have to add questions to their applications seeking information on whether applicants were ever convicted of a heinous crime in response to the provision that reiterates current policy with respect to fleeing felons. Asking low-income families and seniors in need whether they have won the lottery or are a convicted murderer compromises the programs' image and would denigrate people for needing its help.

There are also some promising changes to the program for the retailers that participate. The farm bill authorizes pilot programs to test the use of mobile technologies in SNAP—things like smart phone apps that have become increasingly common in the larger retail world. This may be especially important to farmers markets and vegetable stands that are unable to install traditional EBT processing machines. While expanding potential options for retailers is important, it is critical to the long term success of the program that bad actors looking to take advantage of new approaches are kept out of the program. I urge USDA to set high retailer integrity standards and carefully monitor the pilots to prevent fraud. There's a similar provision that tests the feasibility of allowing the online purchase of food with SNAP benefits, reflecting a growing food industry trend towards online transactions with delivery. This can help make the program accessible to individuals who may have trouble getting to a store, but rigorous anti-fraud standards must apply to any new way of redeeming benefits, and it will require USDA to be actively engaged in monitoring the pilot.

I would like to point out that these new mobile and online technologies, common in the food retail world, do not rely on photo identification or other biometric information to authorize payments and maintain integrity. For both the customer and the retailer, the SNAP retail transaction should look like any other debit card transaction. Thus, I urge USDA to stop allowing misguided efforts at the state level to require photos on SNAP cards or to be presented at the point of purchase. USDA must increase its scrutiny of such efforts to ensure that all household members and authorized representatives can use purchase food on behalf of the household. Technology has made these conditions on the use of benefits obsolete in the retail environment, and so they should be eliminated from the SNAP retail environment as well.

I commend the work of the Agriculture Committee conferees to identify areas of bipartisan agreement that improve without imposing

undue hardship on participating households. The Agriculture Committees have a long standing history of working together to solve difficult complex food and agriculture issues facing the nation. This farm bill is a solid step in the right direction and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I want my colleagues to understand why those of us who are opposing this bill because of the SNAP cuts are so concerned.

On November 1, when the ARRA moneys ran out, all 47 million people who are on SNAP received a cut. For the average family of three, that was about a \$37 reduction per month, which is a lot of money when you are struggling to put food on the table, because, quite frankly, the SNAP benefit in and of itself is not adequate. People end up going to food banks anyway.

If this bill passes, for over 800,000 families, well over 1 million people, for the average family of three, an additional \$90 cut will go into effect. That is \$120. I don't know where they are going to make that up. I don't know where they are going to go to get help. We can say, yeah, let the States pick it up. Well, the States aren't rushing to pick anything up. Well, let the charities pick it up. Read the newspaper. Last week, The New York Times said that all of our food banks are at capacity. They can't do it.

So what is going to happen to these people? In the United States of America, the richest country in the history of the world, we ought to all pledge that nobody—and I mean nobody—ought to go hungry. That is what this fight is about.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire how much time the three of us have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma has 11½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Minnesota has 8½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM), who understands the diversity of weather and understands the challenges that producers have.

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Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding, and for his leadership on the farm bill, and also Ranking Member PETERSON for all of his hard work and diligence in finding some common ground on a bill that has been under negotiation for far too long.

I am so happy to be standing here with all of our Members and our colleagues from the farm bill conference committee, which I was honored to be a part of, and also with everyone else who is going to support this bill. It is extremely bipartisan.

It has taken a lot of hard work to get to this point. I am proud of the fact that we have a product in front of us that is not only good for producers, it is good for consumers. It secures our food supply into the future, which is one of the safest in the world.

We make reforms. We save billions of tax dollars. It is accountable to the taxpayer in this country. We conserve wildlife habitat. We provide a viable safety net for those who grow our food and for those who rely on food assistance as well.

While Congress was writing this bill, my home State got hit with droughts and blizzards that cost us tens of thousands of livestock. The livestock disaster programs that I authored are in this bill and will provide much-needed relief to those who are struggling so hard during this difficult time.

Our Black Hills National Forest is going to gain some regulatory relief and additional tools to combat the pine beetle that is destroying our Black Hills and our forests across this country.

The nine tribes in South Dakota are going to get a permanent Office of Tribal Relations—a real victory for all of our tribes across this country who really need to have better communication within USDA.

Thousands of hunters in South Dakota and across the country every year are going to be glad to know that they have got a provision in place that will help protect grasslands.

Whether you grow corn, wheat, soybeans, or cotton, producers are going to have more choices, which really at the end of the day is going to help them cover their risk that they take every year. I am proud of the bill, I am proud of our work, and I urge our colleague to support the bill.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE).

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this farm bill. This is a strong, reform-minded bill with bipartisan support. It will grow our economy, create jobs, provide certainty, reduce our deficit, and save the American taxpayers \$16 billion.

The bill reforms the farm safety net, strengthening crop insurance and commodity programs. These risk management tools assure farmers that help is there when they need it.

The bill also encourages conservation and develops export markets to help our farmers sell their products worldwide. Rural communities depend on the farm bill too. Through critical rural development programs, small towns can build hospitals, schools, fire departments, and police departments. This bill helps create jobs and economic development.

Water and wastewater programs, the most basic of public services that allow

industries to come to rural areas, give access to healthy drinking water, and sanitary sewers, are part of this as well.

This bill has important tools for new farmers, and I can tell you, as one in the State of North Carolina, where one out of every five jobs are dependent upon agriculture or agri-related business, this bill is about jobs and our economy and ways that it helps States throughout America.

There is still some work to do, like bringing Country of Origin Labeling rules into compliance with WTO and reducing the GIPSA rules. However, our farmers, their families, and small towns all across America have waited too long for a new farm bill.

Our citizens in rural America are taxpayers just as much as those who live in urban and suburban areas. They deserve the respect of this Congress. They deserve a farm bill that works for our citizens who live in rural areas. They deserve the passage of this bill.

We all as Americans enjoy our wonderful supply of food and fiber that the good Lord has blessed us with and that our farmers work so hard to supply. We ought to work with our farmers and with agriculture and have a strong farm bill that our citizens in all of America deserve to have passed.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time at this point.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), another one of our outstanding subcommittee chairmen.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this farm bill, and also to thank Chairman LUCAS and Congressman PETERSON for their leadership on agriculture.

As many of my House colleagues have already said this morning, this legislation is long overdue. This bill is truly worthy of its name, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act, because of the historic reforms it legislates.

Overall, the bill repeals or consolidates about 100 programs. Along with sequestration reductions, it cuts mandatory spending by nearly \$23 billion.

In the conservation title alone, we reduced programs from 23 down to 13. This change alone saves \$6 billion, and I believe does so without undercutting the effectiveness of the needed programs.

We reform food stamps, and we do so through thoughtful, targeted changes, ensuring that those who truly need the assistance will receive it.

We finally get positive changes for our dairy farmers who work so hard 7 days a week providing milk for this Nation.

With the 2008 farm bill expiring nearly a year and a half ago, I urge my colleagues to vote for this legislation and

finally give our farmers and rural constituents the support and certainty they deserve.

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

Mr. LUCAS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't take that much.

Overall, this farm bill also assures that all Americans have access to affordable, high-quality, and safe food.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, this farm bill is bipartisan legislation that is good for our farmers and families. It is an accomplishment that will create jobs, help our farmers, and preserve access to healthy food.

This bill includes unprecedented funding for specialty crops and organic farms. It is no understatement to say that this is the best farm bill yet for specialty crop farmers.

I am proud the farm bill includes \$200 million to fund my proposal to expand job training programs for SNAP recipients to find self-sustaining jobs.

Make no mistake: no one got everything they wanted. I am disappointed that nutrition assistance is reduced at a time when the need is high. However, this bill will not eliminate SNAP eligibility for anyone still in need. In addition, the removal of the dairy stabilization program is disappointing. This reform would have helped farmers and protected consumers. This bill is an improvement but falls short of solving the entire problem.

Overall, this bill provides the certainty needed to grow our economy and bolster America's agriculture industry. I strongly urge a "yes" vote.

Mr. Speaker, the 2014 farm bill is an important example of how Congress can produce meaningful bipartisan compromise. Overall, this Farm Bill represents years of hard work from a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers, farmers and stakeholders from across the country to put together a bill that is good for our farmers and families. It's a major accomplishment that will create jobs, help our farmers and preserve Americans access to quality, healthy food.

As in all compromises, no one got everything they wanted. I'm disappointed that the bill includes reforms that will reduce nutrition assistance funding at a time when hunger and poverty remain too high in our country. However, unlike the original House Republican proposal, which was a \$40 billion cut and would have removed nearly 4 million people from SNAP, the compromise agreed to today will not eliminate SNAP eligibility for anyone still in need. This outcome will garner bipartisan support not just because of what it excluded but also for the important reforms and program improvements that it includes. I would like to discuss the SNAP provisions in the nutrition title in greater depth to ensure my col-

leagues have a richer understanding of the outcome of the Conference Committee agreement and what it will mean for the program and its participants.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP here in Washington, DC and as Basic Food in Washington State, is the backbone of our federal nutrition assistance safety net. The program has more than proven itself during the economic down-turn of the last several years. With its help, millions of struggling families and seniors are able to put food on the table each day. The program efficiently and accurately delivers benefits that have a significant impact on low-income Americans. Nevertheless, I saw it as my role as a member of the Agriculture Committee and as a conferee to search for ways in which the program could continue to improve. This farm bill represents the conferees' shared vision for ways to improve several aspects of SNAP's basic operations.

One of the changes that we are making, of which I am most proud, is the plan to test promising strategies to connect more SNAP participants to employment. This legislation includes pilot programs to test innovative means of supporting SNAP recipients' efforts to improve their lives. This was an aspect of the original House bill that I worked on with Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON. Unfortunately, the House passed nutrition title also included work pilot provisions that had elements that were of serious concern to me. As a result, I did not support that bill's final package. As conferees, however, we worked to overcome those differences. Many of us worked long hours to help craft these pilots, and I think the final provision shows the impact of those efforts.

The farm bill provides \$200 million to pilot and evaluate innovative and promising state employment and training programs. States can test activities that are currently allowed under SNAP's employment and training program, activities that are allowed under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant and supportive services that SNAP offers to enrollees in SNAP employment and training programs such as child care and help with transportation costs. We wanted to be sure that states were able to create innovative programs for volunteers such as the Job Training Initiative in Seattle which focused on skills building or education programs that might improve an individual's employability. Moreover, it was very important to us to ensure that states could try interventions that have not been permitted in SNAP in the past—such as offering child care assistance to an underemployed or unemployed parent whose primary barrier to work may simply be safe affordable child care. The same approach could be taken with transitional housing or other innovative strategies to support individuals' ability to increase their earnings. By including TANF activities, we were able to ensure that states could test strategies around subsidized and unsubsidized employment. We were inspired by the effective subsidized employment programs states ran through the TANF program during the economic downturn with federal funds made available through the Recovery Act. States like Florida and Mississippi were major champions of these efforts

and we wanted to be sure the pilots would support further efforts.

One of the changes that is potentially most important is the inclusion of unsubsidized employment, including private-sector employment, as a component to which states could assign individuals. Obviously, unsubsidized employment is the goal to which almost all workers aspire. On the other hand, because state agencies will not have full control over, or even full information about, how these workplaces operate, we felt the need to include significant safeguards. Longstanding protections against the displacement of other workers remain, as do workplace protection laws such as those for health and safety, wage and hour standards, family leave, workers' compensation, and the like. We expect the Department will promulgate extensive standards in this regard and will supplement those standards as experience shows necessary. In addition, the agreement ensures that individuals who participate in employment activities in the work pilots should not be subject to sanctions unless clear evidence shows that the individual wilfully refused to take actions that she or he could safely and properly take. If the employer does not give the individual as many hours as expected, or if the employer finds the individual's skills lacking, or if the employer asks the individual to work at a time when the individual lacks child care or transportation, no sanction should apply. Where the state is uncertain what happened or has no clear evidence of wilful refusal to comply, no sanction is appropriate. Often, states just will not be entirely sure what happened because they do not have the oversight over private employers in the way that the usually do over work programs the states themselves operate.

The inclusion of private-sector employment as a component to which workers could be assigned does not in any way disparage states' existing authority to treat jobs that SNAP applicants and recipients have found for themselves as allowable work activities, obviating the need for other placements and allowing the state to provide supportive services the way it would to applicants and recipients in activities to which the state had assigned them. We have no reason to value, or support, a job that an enterprising recipient has found for her or himself any less than we do a work assignment or training program to which the state has assigned her or him. In each case, SNAP E&T's single-minded goal should be for the applicant or recipient to succeed.

While the pilot projects are the work-related aspects of the title that have gotten the most attention, the conferees included other important reforms to SNAP employment and training. Consistent with the original House bill, we felt it is very important for states and USDA to do a better job of tracking outcomes for the services that they offer SNAP participants. For their part, USDA must use this information to assess whether SNAP employment and training can do better and achieve more lasting long-term outcomes. That information will be crucial to us when we reauthorize the program in another five years. Of course, we understand that SNAP participants are often poor and low skilled. We were very clear that expectations and outcomes for these services

need to be appropriate. Not everyone will find employment immediately, especially in this economy. We expect that these measures will consider that some employment and training services—such as career and technical education or GED programs—may yield more gains over the long haul but participants would not immediately find those jobs because they are gaining the credentials needed to get them. To that end, USDA's study needs to recognize that getting better jobs may require getting skills first, so delayed but enduring improvements are important to monitor. We also believe, informed by the great work of the Basic Food Employment and Training Program in my home state of Washington, that connecting individuals to the right activity to help them move forward is half the battle. We have called for USDA to increase their monitoring of states' employment and training programs and we expect them to make individual assessment of SNAP work registrants, which is already a requirement, a key feature of their state reviews.

Another key provision of the package is the effort to address the relationship between SNAP and the Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program or LIHEAP. Of course, I am disappointed that the final legislation includes any benefit reductions at all. Washington is one of the states that had been using this option to leverage additional benefits to our low-income households. I am satisfied that the conferees did the best they could in narrowly targeting those reductions to impact only those households who are claiming a standard utility allowance by virtue of their receipt of a very small LIHEAP benefit and, as a result, receiving a larger SNAP benefit. I wanted to be sure that we would not impact households who receive more traditional LIHEAP benefits. USDA assured us that individuals who currently claim the SUA as a result of their participation in or expected participation in LIHEAP will continue to be able to do so. This change is meant to have its desired effect by states dropping their nominal LIHEAP programs and informing USDA that they no longer provide token payments. In that way, no one in the 34 states that have not adopted this practice will see additional verification requirements or barriers to claiming the SUA. At the same time, in my own state, households that participate in our regular LIHEAP program should not experience any change in their certification process as a result of this change.

Moreover, nothing in this legislation will have any negative effect on those households that have energy costs. We understand that, across the country, a wide range of billing arrangements exist between landlords and tenants. Even if a tenant does not pay utility bills directly, if the landlord imposes a surcharge for utilities, the tenant should be entitled to the standard utility allowance. States have the capacity to look into and understand the various arrangements that exist, and we should honor their determinations. A token one dollar LIHEAP payment will not trigger eligibility for the SUA, but if the state commits real money to energy assistance for a household because it believes that household is vulnerable to utility costs, we should continue to honor that judgment. The final legislation appropriately

honors that principle, unlike some earlier drafts.

Although on a much smaller scale, the bill includes several other provisions where our intent was to tighten up or to clarify program rules in a way that addresses concerns, but that does not increase application burdens on the millions of law abiding low income individuals who participate in this program. Our goal wherever possible, was for state SNAP agencies to bear the burden of implementing these changes so that we would maintain the same level of access for SNAP households. Take for example the provision to require that all states verify immigrant eligibility through the Citizenship and Immigration Service. That requirement ensures that all states are taking advantage of this high quality third party information to verify immigration status. Nothing about this change, however, will change the way that immigrants provide information about their immigration status. The same is true of the prohibition on households with individuals who win significant lottery or gambling winnings from participating in the program. The conferees agreed that this prohibition should not be implemented by requiring all 47 million individuals on SNAP to report whether they had or had not recently won the lottery. To ask extremely poor individuals that question would border on offensive. Instead, states will have to work with their state level lotteries to obtain a list of lottery winners against which they can match to the SNAP caseload. We also took the same approach on the reiteration of the current law restriction on fleeing felons. Some of the conferees felt strongly that we reiterate that individuals convicted of particularly heinous crimes who fall out of line with the terms of their parole are not eligible for SNAP. As that is the current policy, there is no need to make changes to states' application or verification systems to implement this provision. We also included several provisions that are consistent with current USDA rules and guidance governing SNAP. Our goal was to codify these rules into federal law. As such, we banned household expenditures on medical marijuana as an allowable expense under the medical expense deduction. We codified the rules regarding students participate in employment and training. Similarly, our efforts to clarify that SNAP outreach workers may not earn a bounty for each application they help an individual complete or may not pressure someone who doesn't wish to apply to do so are consistent with current USDA guidelines and rules governing outreach. None of these provisions should have any impact on current clients our state outreach programs.

Finally, we included several provisions that will help to improve access to healthy food options by requiring stores to stock more perishable foods, allowing community supported agriculture programs to participate as authorized SNAP retailers, and testing new ways for clients to make purchases with their SNAP benefit card (for example, by swiping SNAP cards on mobile devices at farmers' markets) that could open up the program to more retailers with healthy options. In testing these new technologies, we have urged USDA to take every precaution to ensure that these advances do not compromise program integrity. We anticipate they can overcome any chal-

lenges on this front and successfully implement these options. The bill includes many other provisions that affect other nutrition programs. I am very pleased that we are increasing funding for food banks and emergency food providers. These organizations are on the front lines of hunger and merit all the support we can provide. We've also included support for community food program grants and created a new national healthy food incentive program modeled after private and foundation efforts to incentivize health food purchases for SNAP participants by providing participants with vouchers to purchase foods at local farmers markets. These efforts will complement our efforts to address hunger through the major federal nutrition programs.

As I said before, this bill is not perfect. However, the farm bill conference report successfully addresses the most important food and agricultural issues facing our country today while contributing to deficit reduction. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman. I just wanted to reiterate one thing. Some may view that I represent the State of Connecticut, the Third Congressional District in Connecticut, and, in fact, what do we know about farming? The fact is that we do. We have dairy farmers, people with specialty crops, and included in my history in this great body, I served as chair of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Appropriations. I also served as the ranking member, and, as I mentioned earlier, I had the opportunity to be part of the conference committee on the farm bill in 2008 and helped to negotiate the nutrition title.

If I can make one or two more points. This farm bill says that it is going to save \$23 billion. They count savings from over a year ago. They talk about \$16.6 billion. The Congressional Budget Office says that even as we cut that \$8.6 billion from the food stamp program, taking meals away from 1.7 million of the most vulnerable in our society, we are increasing spending on crop insurance by \$5.7 billion in the farm bill.

In case folks do not know, the fact of the matter is that Americans subsidize crop insurance. We pick up over 60 percent of the cost of the premiums on crop insurance. We pay 100 percent of the administrative costs in terms of crop insurance. We have 26 individuals who get at least \$1 million in a crop insurance subsidy, and we can't find out who they are.

While the cuts in food stamp benefits are going to be felt immediately across those 850,000 households, primarily made up of children, the elderly, disabled, and veterans, few if any of the Congressional Budget Office projected commodity programs savings may ever be realized if crop prices continue to fall. This is reflected in that CBO score that the deficit would be increased this

year with this bill. Only food stamps would be cut this year. We should vote against this bill.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, it is with the greatest of pleasure that I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK) who is so focused on these issues.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and the ranking member, who had to do a lot of work on this bill over the years, and I rise today in support of the Agriculture Act of 2014. This measure is important for farms and hardworking families in northern Michigan.

Northern Michigan is home to a number of centennial family farms, meaning they have been in the family for over 100 years—farms like the Bardenhagen's in Suttons Bay, where they grow asparagus, apples, cherries, and potatoes. Take a short drive down the road, and you will find another centennial family farm at the Wagner's in Grawn. They grow corn, wheat, soybeans, and raise beef cattle for their neighbors. These family-owned operations are a vital and growing part of northern Michigan's economy, and it has been an honor to get to know them.

These growers work hard to produce quality products—like tart cherries, apples, and asparagus—that feed northern Michigan and families around the world.

This bill represents the hard work and input of stakeholders from northern Michigan and across the country. While not perfect, it reflects the needs of our rural agricultural economy that is vital to Michigan's First Congressional District. I urge my colleagues to support passage of this bill.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT).

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member.

Agriculture, ladies and gentlemen, is the heart and soul of our Nation. It provides the food we eat. It provides the clothes we wear. It provides the material to build our homes and our shelters. No committee is as engaged in the entire nooks and crannies of the fabric of this Nation as the Agriculture Committee. This farm bill is a product of what makes America great. What makes America great is our democratic Republic, the anchor of which is compromise.

I want to commend Mr. PETERSON, our ranking member, for his job; Mr. LUCAS, the chair of our committee, for his job. It has been 5 years we have been on this. I particularly want to thank Mr. PETERSON. It was a pleasure working with Mr. PETERSON on an issue very dear to him, which is dairy, as we worked out the fabric of that. I commend the leadership on our committee.

However, there is yet work to be done. The gentlewoman from Con-

necticut (Ms. DELAURO) was right. Mr. MCGOVERN was right. Ladies and gentlemen of this committee and this House and in this Nation, we have got a serious problem with hunger in this country, and it is not going away until we realize the gravity of it. Our veterans, our seniors, the most vulnerable—we must address this issue.

My position on this bill is that I will vote for it. We have worked on it. Is it a perfect bill? No, it is not. Are we a perfect Nation? No, we are not. But we are constantly striving, striving for that, and we will get closer to this perfect position as we bring all Americans involved and let no American go hungry in this country. I urge everyone to please vote for the bill.

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Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Massachusetts for yielding me this time.

This legislation is commonly referred to as the "farm bill," but it is also a "food bill." On that note, it falls short.

To be clear, this is miles ahead of where we started with what I consider a truly heartless Republican proposal, and I know that our conferees worked hard to make improvements to this bill. In particular, I want to thank COLLIN PETERSON and the Members of the Democratic side of the aisle who are dedicated to work to improve this bill.

But it still leaves too many families behind. The SNAP cut in this bill may seem small on paper, but it is not to the families that it will affect. It is not to the food banks that are already stretched well beyond their means.

In New York City, 280,000 households are expected to see their benefits drop under this bill. Those are benefits that don't go anywhere near far enough to begin with.

We see every day in New York City how deep the need for food assistance is. Our food banks and community hunger organizations are doing everything they can to provide food to hungry families. They are joined by citizen heroes like Jorge Munoz, who I was honored to host last night as my guest to the State of the Union.

Jorge has been called "an angel in Queens" for his work in feeding the hungry. He saw a need on the streets of Queens and he jumped in to fill it, serving home-cooked meals out of his truck to what started as a small group of homeless and unemployed New Yorkers. As word grew of his generosity, so did the crowds eager just for something to get through that night.

Since 2004, Jorge has served over 225,000 meals on the streets of Queens, New York. He and I know there are more people out there who are hungry, who are cold, and who are in need of every bit of assistance that they get.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. CROWLEY. We should be doing more, not less. What is really troubling is that I know there are some on the other side of the aisle who think this doesn't cut food assistance enough. Imagine that—there is \$8 billion—\$8 billion worth of cuts in this bill, and still that is far less than they wanted to cut.

The fact that in some ways this bill can be considered a compromise option just shows how unreasonable the cuts proposed by the other side were. What have we come to when we argue about how much of a cut to hungry children and families is reasonable?

Yes, this bill is not as bad as it could be, but it is not as good as it should be. That is why I will be voting "no" against this bill today.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), who has some of the most productive agricultural land and some of the most amazing farmers and ranchers.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great personal privilege and pleasure for me to come down here on behalf of 14,000 farmers and ranchers in my district and 75,000 farmers and ranchers in the State of Oklahoma, and goodness knows how many tens of thousands of people beyond that in various phases of agriculture and ag industry, and thank my good friend, Chairman LUCAS, for what he has accomplished.

I think it is easy to be the critic; but I think all of us on this House floor know how long and how arduous this struggle has been to bring all the competing interests together, to bring both sides of the aisle together, to bring both Chambers together, and to bring the administration together in support of this legislation.

It is easy to see why you would support it if you actually step back and take a look at what it does. First, it does save \$23 billion. Frankly, those cuts largely don't come out of the safety net programs, where actually there is simply relatively modest, but important reforms. They actually come out of the production end of this business. Changes need to be made there, but we ought to recognize those are tough changes in and of themselves.

Second, it preserves the capability of this country to continue to produce more food and fiber than anybody else in the world—not just for our people, but for all over the world—and to deliver that at a cheaper price than anybody else in the world. It is worth reflecting that Americans pay a lower percentage of their income for food than any other country in the world. Guess what? With the additional income, they are able to do other things, invest in other things, and go on.

Finally, I am particularly pleased that the safety net has been preserved and that important programs are in place. We ought to recognize that wouldn't have been possible without my friend Chairman LUCAS, all he has done to bring us together and how hard he has worked.

This bill, frankly, deserves the support of every Democrat and every Republican on this floor. I urge my colleagues to be supportive when the time to vote comes.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers. I believe I have the right to close. I reserve the balance of my time, unless we are ready to close.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts will be recognized first to close.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close if there are no other speakers, but my understanding is that Mr. PETERSON may have one other speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, we had one Member that wanted to speak, and we are trying to ascertain his whereabouts at this point.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Let me give an update on the times remaining. The gentleman from Oklahoma has 5½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Minnesota has 3½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 2 minutes remaining.

The gentleman from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I know that Members want to get out of here and get on planes and so forth, so after Mr. MCGOVERN closes, I will yield back the balance of my time.

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

First of all, let me say that I am grateful to Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON. I appreciate their hard work. I appreciate their dedication on these issues. It is a privilege to be on the Agriculture Committee, and I am proud to serve with them, as with the other members of the committee on both sides of the aisle.

Unfortunately, I cannot support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by speaking to my fellow Democrats.

Last night, we sat in this Chamber and we listened to the President give his State of the Union address. When he talked about raising the minimum wage, we all stood up and cheered. When he talked about the need to address income inequality, we all applauded. But cheers and applause aren't enough.

I ask my colleagues to think back, to remember listening to their parents or their grandparents talk about how

Franklin Roosevelt always stood up for the little guy. Remember those pictures of Bobby Kennedy touring through Appalachia and touching the cheeks of hungry children.

That is why we became Democrats in the first place. Those are the people that got us into politics. Those are our people.

Don't throw that away just to be able to say you voted for a farm bill. Don't turn your backs on our heritage and on our history by giving bipartisan cover to what I believe is a flawed bill.

We don't have to do this. The price of admission to pass a farm bill should not be more cuts to SNAP. Make no mistake about it, my friends on the Republican side are not through when it comes to SNAP. They are going to come back after this program again and again and again.

We need to push back. We need to say enough.

Some have rationalized these cuts; some have tried to explain them away as being nothing but closing a loophole. They are wrong. People are going to be hurt. People all over this country—1.7 million people—are going to be impacted by this. There should be nobody in this country—the richest country in the history of the world—who should ever go hungry. That should be a nonpartisan issue.

But to my fellow Democrats, in particular, this is an issue that we have championed time and time again over the many years of the existence of this country.

I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on this conference report. Vote your conscience.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close as well.

I want to again thank the chairman and all of the Members on both sides of the aisle for their work and hanging in there for all these months and years to get to this point, and congratulate the chairman on what I expect to be a successful outcome in a little bit of time here.

With that, I would ask everybody to support this conference report, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

First, I would also like to join my colleague in adding to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a list of the majority staff members.

I must say in all fairness, while there was cooperation among the members of the committee itself, the cooperation among House and Senate Members was exemplary.

I would also note the work of our staff, those good men and women, R and D, House and Senate, over the course of these years cannot be underestimated or underappreciated. The hours, the spirit of comity, the focus on accomplishing things, trying to do

good policy, it just cannot be overstated how important all those good folks have been.

With that, Mr. Speaker, let me simply close by saying this: no one cares more about agricultural policy, farmers and ranchers, consumers and everyone in the process that takes it from the seed to the plate or the bowl than I do. But I think in good faith I can say my colleague Mr. PETERSON cares just as much as I do. The members of our committee care just as much as we do.

This bill, done in what I would like to define as regular order through the committee process and the floor and the conference, may not have exactly everything my friends on the right would want or my friends on the left would want, but it represents making the process work, achieving consensus, putting into place policies that are better than what were there before to drive this effort forward.

I know that we sincerely disagree on many things, and I know some of my friends don't sometimes act like they care about what happens out on the farm or the ranch. I know that is not the case. They do care.

But I would simply say this: no matter how much money we spend on supplemental programs to make sure our fellow citizens have enough to eat—and that is important—never forget if there is not a product on the shelf, if there is not meat in the case, if there are not vegetables or fruit available, it doesn't matter how much you subsidize. The food has to be there.

That is why I have said all along a farm bill still has to have farm in it. This Agriculture Act of 2014 lives up to that. It makes a commitment to our fellow citizens who are in tough times, but it will also ensure the food will be there.

Don't take us down the path that many other countries have gone through in the last century of people lined up at empty shelves, people hoarding particular ag products because it is available that day because they will trade it the next day when something might be available.

Let's continue to do this miracle called American agriculture. Oh, by the way, depending on how you define “miracle” in the environment we have worked together in, this farm bill might not be quite defined by most people as a miracle, but it is amazingly close.

Mr. Speaker, let's pass the conference report, let's complete our responsibilities, let's show the rest of this place how it is supposed to be done.

I yield back the balance of my time.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE STAFF LIST

Majority Staff: Brent Blevins, Caleb Crosswhite, Mike Dunlap, Bart Fischer, Jason Goggins, John Goldberg, Tamara Hinton, John Konya, Kevin Kramp, Brandon Lipps, Alan Mackey, Brian Martin-Haynes,

Josh Mathis, Josh Maxwell, Merrick Munday, Danita Murray, Mary Nowak, Riley Pagett, Matt Schertz, Nicole Scott, Debbie Smith, Skylar Sowder, Patricia Straughn, Pelham Straughn, Pete Thomson, Margaret Wetherald.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

I want to congratulate all the conferees on getting to this point.

Even though the bill is not perfect, it is needed.

I am confident that this legislation will serve Nebraska farmers well.

My main concern with the bill was making meaningful reforms to SNAP so that it serves those who really need it without the rampant waste, fraud, and abuse that currently plagues the system.

I am pleased that the conferees included the establishment of a 10-state pilot program to empower states to engage able-bodied adults in mandatory work programs.

This is a commonsense reform and it's my hope my home state of Nebraska chooses to participate in this pilot.

This farm bill is a step in the right direction.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate all of the work of the Agriculture Committee and especially Chairman LUCAS, to bring this very long farm bill negotiation to a conclusion. Agriculture and all of its supporting industries desperately need a five-year farm bill and the stability it brings.

I am profoundly disappointed, however, that the bill does not take the opportunity to resolve some very important issues affecting livestock. The Country of Origin Labeling rule proposed by the Administration is unworkable and puts our livestock industry at a significant disadvantage. It will invite punitive trade sanctions. That requirement should have been repealed, and I will continue to work to repeal it.

Similarly, Congress has regularly prevented the implementation of the controversial provisions of the GIPSA marketing rule through the appropriation process. I assume we will continue to do so, but it would have been better to remove that threat permanently.

There was also an opportunity missed to resolve the issue related to horse processing, and so the needless suffering of old and unwanted horses will continue, as will the effects on the value of horses across the country.

At the same time, the biggest issue facing agriculture in my district and throughout most of Texas has been the drought. I appreciate the permanent livestock disaster program in this bill, which will be very welcomed by livestock producers of all sizes throughout our region of the country.

I believe that the reforms made to commodity programs are needed and will strengthen the political viability of those programs into the future. Having additional risk management tools available to producers who are increasingly competing in a global market should be quite helpful.

Finally, I would strongly prefer to make greater reforms in food stamps and other nutrition programs, such as were contained in the House passed version, but given the realities of the political situation in Washington, I believe that the savings in this bill are a step, at least, in the right direction.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have joined the

majority of Democrats and Republicans who unilaterally alike passed a bill that will fund our Nation's most important anti-hunger program which touches nearly 1 out of 7 Americans by a vote of 251–166. The bill now heads to the President's desk who has indicated he will sign it into law in a matter of days.

In these tough budgetary times, we should not signal to our constituents that helping those most in need is no longer a priority. I am pleased that the bipartisan, bicameral five-year farm bill contains major reforms including eliminating the direct payment program, streamlining and consolidating numerous programs to improve their effectiveness and reduce duplication, and cutting down on program misuse. Additionally, this bill excludes the drastic \$40 billion cut in the House-passed version of the farm bill, but makes progress in addressing hunger and poverty by investing new resources in other nutrition programs.

The bill also renews critical investments in important programs for beginning farmers, local food systems, organic agriculture, and healthy food access, and also adds conservation requirements to the receipt of crop insurance premium subsidies. The final bill also rejected proposals to eliminate market and contract protections for livestock and poultry farmers.

Congress first enacted the farm bill in response to the Great Depression in order to foster growth in our Nation's economy and to protect those who were most in need. Today, we are still recovering from what some economists call, "the Great Recession." We find ourselves at a crossroads where we must decide how to manage our fiscal priorities while still protecting those who were hardest hit by the recent recession. President Eisenhower once said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

This bill is far from a perfect one. However, given a lengthy two-and-a-half-year process and the importance of renewing funding for the most innovative programs for the future of agriculture and nutrition, I supported this carefully negotiated package in an effort to do more good than harm. I have received letters from numerous groups including several of the largest general farm organizations in the country which have voiced support for this bill. I am pleased this bill maintains the long-standing bipartisan fashion in which urban and rural members unite to support this package.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON for their work on this issue.

Although I have deep concerns about this bill, I understand that in divided government, no party will get everything it wants.

That said, this bill lays the foundation for a fundamental reform of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP—namely, it will allow states to require work in exchange for benefits. Before the 1996 welfare-reform bill, several states experimented with work requirements, and the evidence gathered from those experiments led to the most expansive reform of the welfare state ever.

This bill also partially closes a loophole in the SNAP program known as "heat and eat"—a reform included in previous House Budgets.

Finally, this bill eliminates Direct Payments, excludes supply-management provisions in the dairy program, and reduces the deficit by \$16.6 billion over the next ten years. This bill would save more money than doing nothing.

I wish this bill included more reforms to our agricultural programs. It did not include crop insurance reforms supported by both the House and the Senate. We should have a safety net for our farmers. We should help the little guy—the family farm that's in need. We shouldn't bankroll the big guys. So we should tighten the eligibility standards for crop subsidies. I'm disappointed we didn't use this opportunity to make fundamental changes to business as usual.

But on the whole, I think this bill will do some good. It will save more money than if we did nothing. It will provide some much-needed certainty to family farmers. It is an improvement over the status quo, and so I support it.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall 31 on the Conference Report to accompany H.R. 2642, "The Farm Bill."

This conference report has made great improvements in reducing the draconian cuts to the SNAP program proposed in the House passed version of the Farm bill. While I appreciate the reduction in cuts, we should do more to help those most in need. The Conference report also eliminates the King Amendment, which would have destroyed critical state safety and labeling laws. The bipartisan bill includes strong conservation provisions that will help protect our nation's soil, water and wildlife resources. Most notably, the bill makes federal crop insurance subsidies contingent on basic soil and wetland conservation practices. While not perfect, this conference report is a fair compromise that will hopefully lay the groundwork for finding additional common ground in the future.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of Chairman LUCAS and his determination to get the Farm Bill across the finish line. The Chairman and his staff have put tremendous work into this bipartisan, bicameral bill.

This bill is not perfect. There are several areas we could have done more on. I wish we could have implemented more reforms in the food stamp program.

I am also very disappointed that this farm bill does not address important issues for livestock and poultry producers—my constituents back in North Carolina. As you know, the House-passed Farm Bill did include language on the Country of Origin Labeling law and on USDA's ability to write regulations related to the buying and selling of livestock and poultry.

Yet, neither is included in this conference report.

More importantly, as my constituents have pointed out they now face retaliation from our trading partners. Also, USDA's livestock regulations now threaten to dictate the terms of their private contracts.

Both can cause severe economic harm to North Carolina's farmers and ranchers and to the U.S. economy and both must be addressed. I look forward to continuing our work

on these important issues and getting a resolution quickly.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my reluctant support to the Conference Report on H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act, also known as the Farm Bill. This conference report presents us with a difficult choice. On the one hand, it contains numerous provisions that benefit our agriculture communities and it represents another bipartisan accomplishment from both chambers. On the other hand, it makes ill-advised changes in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that, had they been presented in a separate bill, I would have strongly opposed.

The agricultural policy contained in this conference report is a positive step forward for our nation's farmers and rural communities, including those I represent in Northwest Oregon. Strong funding authorizations for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative and Specialty Crop Block Grant Program will help a wide variety of food producers in my district, from blueberry and hazelnut farms to vineyards in the world-renowned Willamette Valley wine region. The commitment to pest and disease research in the bill is key to a healthy nursery industry in Oregon, and the conference report includes language that will allow organic producers and Christmas tree farmers to establish check off programs that are critical to their long-term success.

For Oregon's struggling counties, this bill includes an essential extension of the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. PILT helps the budgets of counties with large expanses of un-taxable federal land, and its reauthorization in this bill is welcome news to the cash-strapped rural areas of Oregon. For the environmental community, the conference report represents an important commitment to responsible farming practices, with crop insurance premium assistance tied to conservation compliance measures that will help protect soil quality and fragile wetlands.

Unfortunately this bill comes up short in one vital area: nutrition policy. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is a pillar of this nation's social safety net, providing food assistance to those in need, including many seniors and children. I do not support the changes to SNAP in this conference report, but they are preferable to the previous Farm Bill proposal considered by this chamber, which I voted against. Although I am pleased that the bill provides additional funds for food banks under the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), I am troubled by the impact that the SNAP cuts will have on Oregon families.

I will reluctantly support this conference report because the investments in our rural communities included in this bill will help many of our constituents continue the long climb back from the lingering effects of the economic down-turn. We must invest in these communities to ensure that still more of our constituents don't come to rely on federal assistance programs like SNAP. And despite unfortunate cuts to the SNAP program, this bill is a vast improvement on the devastating SNAP cuts that the House bill originally contained. Congress must now commit to assisting those individuals who rely on federal nutrition pro-

grams in other ways, and I will continue to work with my colleagues on this issue.

The Farm Bill conference report is far from perfect, but it contains several provisions that will benefit Oregonians. I urge its adoption.

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the House on the passage of a new farm bill. I know that the Chairman, the Ranking Member and many other members of this body have worked diligently for a very long period of time to reach this point. I am glad that this body has finally passed legislation that can bring some certainty to Iowa producers and allow them to plan for their economic futures. While I know that we would all agree that this process has taken far too long, I appreciate the endless hours of work to bring us to this significant accomplishment. I trust the legislation will soon make it to the President's desk.

However, no farm bill is perfect and I would be remiss if I did not point out that this bill does not address all of the serious issues of concern to the agricultural community. Congress must address the serious issues related to Country of Origin Labeling in the meat industry. Our livestock producers are quite appropriately concerned that they may face trade retaliation from some of our closest trading partners if these issues are not properly addressed. There are also legitimate concerns regarding USDA's ability to write regulations related to the buying and selling of livestock, which are not addressed in this farm bill. While I am very pleased with what has been accomplished here today, I urge my colleagues to join me in making sure that we complete the work on those issues which were not included in today's legislation.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, today is a monumental day for our nation's agriculture policy. After three years of hard work, today the House of Representatives finally approved a final Farm Bill that provides certainty for our nation's farmers and institutes money-saving reforms to agriculture and nutrition policy that we've needed for some time.

Agriculture is our top industry in Alabama, employing more than 580,000 Alabamians. Agriculture alone is worth around \$70 billion to our state's economy. That is why this bill has been one of my top priorities since being elected to Congress in 2010.

This bill is a win for Alabama farmers and foresters. It is also a win for taxpayers. The Farm Bill replaces outdated policies left over from the Pelosi-led Congress and represents a positive step toward fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members of my Agriculture Advisory Panel who have proved so beneficial to my staff and I throughout this process. This group includes a representative from each county in Alabama's Second Congressional District and representatives from a wide variety of commodities and industries. We have held numerous meetings in the District to share ideas, listen to concerns, and discuss a way forward on agriculture policy. I cannot say enough about how much I appreciate these individuals for sharing their time, knowledge, and ideas.

One of the provisions included in this Farm Bill is a direct result of a brainstorming session of our Agriculture Advisory Panel. The Farm Bill includes a provision to reduce the amount

of land allowed into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), restricting the increasingly-frequent practice of paying landowners to let fertile cropland go unplanted for years.

Members of my Agriculture Advisory Panel are: Andy Wendland, Walt Corcoran, Kenny Childree, Tom Duncan, Carl Sanders, Andy Sumbly, Josh Carnley, Salem Saloom, Ricky Wiggins, Rhett Johnson, Tony Beck, Monica Carroll, Albert Curry, Andy Bell, Neil Outlaw, Cindi Fain, Ed White, Gary Mattox, Dale Armstrong, George Jeffcoat, Richard Holladay, Hassey Brooks, Edwin Marty, John Dorrill, and Ed Berry.

I also want to mention the hard work of Mike Albares on my personal staff who put in countless hours of work to help me through this process. Mike, a native of Dothan, is well aware of the importance of agriculture to South Alabama, and I appreciate his dedication to our local farmers.

I want to thank Chairman FRANK LUCAS and his staff for their diligent work throughout what has, at times, been a challenging process. I want to recognize Ranking Member PETERSON and his team for all that they have done to work across the aisle to get this bill finished. Agriculture policy has almost always been a bi-partisan issue, and this final product is no different.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that this bill isn't perfect. I would have liked to have seen more reforms to nutrition programs, but we will continue to work toward that goal. Undoubtedly, the reforms contained in this Farm Bill are a major step in the right direction.

Thank you again to the countless individuals who helped make this Farm Bill happen. I look forward to continuing to be a strong advocate on behalf of Alabama's farmers.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, today, the House will consider the Agriculture Act of 2014. While I appreciate the work that has gone into the crafting of this legislation, and the delicate compromise that this bill represents, I will not support the bill before us today because I refuse to support a bill that will increase hunger in America.

Throughout this process I have stood fast with many of my Democratic colleagues in strong opposition to attempts by the House majority to bleed as much money as possible from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The first draft of the House farm bill, which failed, would have cut \$20 billion from SNAP. In the next iteration of the legislation, the Republican response was to simply remove SNAP from the House bill and pass it without a single Democratic vote. When a Republican stand-alone nutrition bill finally came up it was no surprise that the bill proposed a cut of \$40 billion to SNAP.

The bill before us today would cut \$8.6 billion from SNAP. Significantly less than the House Republican proposal, but still more than twice what was proposed in the Senate farm bill initially. Rather than working with Democrats to craft a real strategy to address hunger in America, my Republican colleagues are insistent on stripping funds from this country's most comprehensive and successful anti-hunger program.

According to the most recent USDA data, about 47 million people benefit from SNAP nationally. Last year, on average, 876,266 people in New Jersey participated monthly in

SNAP. In New Jersey's 12th Congressional District more than 40 percent of households receiving SNAP have children under 18 and more than 40 percent have at least one person over 60.

Since November 1, 2013, these families have been dealing with cuts to SNAP benefits because of an expiring provision of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that had provided for a benefit increase. The SNAP cuts we are debating today come from ending a policy called "Heat and Eat." New Jersey is one of 17 states that choose to participate in "heat and eat" which can help states improve access to SNAP while reducing administrative burdens by allowing states to link a beneficiary's receipt of low-income heating assistance to their SNAP benefit. What this means is that New Jersey's SNAP beneficiaries will be among those principally affected by the changes to SNAP that are proposed in this farm bill.

As a country we must end our obsession with debt and deficits, especially when these reductions are coming at the expense of the less fortunate and the hungry. This legislation continues to favor the largest farmers and agri-business over family farms. The bill achieves significant savings by ending direct commodity payments, but then redirects these savings to fund new subsidized programs to pay the same farmers when crop prices or revenues fall below certain levels—continuing wasteful programs that benefit the largest farms and agri-businesses. We should be doing more to find greater savings by strengthening caps on commodity support programs and federal crop insurance subsidies that, under this bill, continue to enable some of the largest farms and agri-businesses to receive millions of taxpayer dollars year after year. While the bill moves us towards an agricultural safety net based primarily on crop insurance, we fail to make any real reforms to the crop insurance system. Agri-business is still heavily subsidized while the federal government guarantees very favorable profit margins for insurance companies while continuing to pick up the tab for all administrative and operating costs.

While some policy improvements are made for conservation, funding for these programs is still cut by about \$6 billion dollars as acreage in the Conservation Reserve Program is reduced steadily over the next 5 years. Additionally, the lack of reform to the U.S. sugar program threatens manufacturing jobs in New Jersey and around the U.S. This program cost taxpayers almost \$300 million last year alone, and will continue to create artificially high prices for consumers on the foods we enjoy every day. New Jersey farmers deserve a better farm bill. If we made real reforms to crop insurance and commodity support programs we could invest further in conservation, specialty crops, organic agriculture, small and beginning farmers, and of course, nutrition.

Following passage of the House farm bill I urged my colleagues in Leadership and in the Agriculture Committee to work towards a compromise that would eliminate the SNAP cuts and allow for the passage of a farm bill that supports agriculture without hurting hungry families. The Agriculture Act of 2014 is a success in many ways. The bill ends direct com-

modity payments to farmers, includes conservation compliance for crop insurance, and invests in specialty crops, organic foods, and sustainable agriculture. Unfortunately, the bill fails to complement these policies with a similar investment in the people who could use it most, the children, seniors and veterans who rely on SNAP for one of the most basic of needs—something to eat.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I voted against the farm bill conference report because it represented a missed opportunity to enact necessary and long-overdue reforms. Supporters of this legislation claim \$23 billion in savings, but by setting commodity target prices at today's high prices, independent experts expect that as prices drop, this legislation would cost us more in the long run.

The bill does have some bright spots. The removal of the King amendment and the inclusion of language cracking down on animal fighting are victories for animal welfare. The SNAP cuts are not as draconian as the version that passed the House last year. I am thrilled that the amendment I worked on with Representatives POLIS and MASSIE easing restrictions on the cultivations of industrial hemp was included, which shows we are ready to look at hemp as an agricultural commodity, and not a drug. There are welcome investments in renewable energy and organics in this bill as well.

On the whole, however, the bill falls short of enacting necessary reforms, and maintains the pattern of cutting SNAP benefits for our most vulnerable while spending taxpayer dollars on wasteful agriculture subsidies. In Oregon alone, 78,000 households will face cuts to their nutrition assistance as a result of this bill, while simultaneously the bill adds to the already-bloated crop insurance program and creates even more subsidies that benefit large agribusinesses and encourage farmers to farm the system, not the land. It continues loopholes that allow one farm to claim multiple subsidy payments despite the fact that both the House and Senate passed farm bills eliminating these loopholes.

I am also disappointed that this legislation cuts overall funding for conservation programs, and fails to enact many important reforms that I have put forward in my legislation—the Balancing Food, Farm and the Environment Act of 2013—that would strengthen the conservation title. I was pleased to see the inclusion of language establishing conservation compliance, as well as enactment of a Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which will help encourage farmers to work together to protect water quality, water supplies or wildlife habitat at watershed or regional scales. Overall, however, conservation language could and should have gone much further to provide adequate funding while optimizing results and making it easier for farmers to apply their conservation knowledge to their land.

On balance this bill represents the minimum effort that enabled its passage. It is fiscally irresponsible and continues the alarming trend of subsidizing large agribusiness while cutting benefits for our most vulnerable Americans. We can and should do better, and I will continue working to reform our federal agricultural policies to that end.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to H.R. 2642, a bill that will starve millions of families and children and further add to the economic instability of American families.

Cutting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, referred to as "SNAP," by eight billion dollars (\$8 billion) over the next ten years, H.R. 2642 will undermine access to healthy food for the many children, disabled people, and senior citizens who account for eighty-three percent of the beneficiaries of the program.

It is estimated that eight hundred and fifty thousand (850,000) households, of which three hundred thousand (300,000) are New Yorkers, will lose on average ninety (\$90) dollars per month in SNAP benefits.

While I am glad that the far larger cuts were rejected by the Conference Committee, the loss of ninety (\$90) dollars per month is deeply harmful to these households, which are already teetering on the brink of economic catastrophe.

What are we thinking? We are literally taking the food out of the mouths of babes, while continuing to provide generous subsidies to large agri-businesses.

It is for these reasons that I will vote no on this bill and I ask my colleagues to oppose this bill with me.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 465, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the conference report.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on adoption of the conference report will be followed by a 5-minute vote on approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 251, nays 166, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 31]

YEAS—251

Aderholt	Bustos	Culberson
Bachus	Butterfield	Daines
Barber	Byrne	Davis (CA)
Barletta	Calvert	Davis, Rodney
Barr	Camp	Delaney
Barrow (GA)	Cantor	DeBene
Barton	Capito	Denham
Beatty	Capps	Dent
Benishek	Carney	Diaz-Balart
Bera (CA)	Carson (IN)	Dingell
Bilirakis	Carter	Duckworth
Bishop (GA)	Cassidy	Duffy
Bishop (NY)	Castor (FL)	Ellmers
Bishop (UT)	Chaffetz	Enyart
Black	Cleaver	Farenthold
Bonamici	Clyburn	Farr
Boustany	Coble	Fincher
Brady (TX)	Cole	Fitzpatrick
Braley (IA)	Collins (NY)	Flores
Brooks (AL)	Conaway	Forbes
Brooks (IN)	Costa	Foster
Brown (FL)	Cramer	Frankel (FL)
Brownley (CA)	Crawford	Fudge
Buchanan	Crenshaw	Gabbard
Bucshon	Cuellar	Gallego

Garamendi Luján, Ben Ray
 Garcia (NM)
 Gardner Lummis
 Gerlach Maffei
 Gibbs Maloney, Sean
 Gibson Marchant
 Goodlatte Marino
 Granger Massie
 Graves (MO) Matsui
 Griffith (AR) McAllister
 Griffith (VA) McCarthy (CA)
 Grimm McCaul
 Guthrie McCollum
 Hall McHenry
 Hanabusa McIntyre
 Hanna McKeon
 Harper McKinley
 Hartzler McMorris
 Hastings (FL) Rodgers
 Hastings (WA) McNeerney
 Heck (NV) Meadows
 Heck (WA) Meehan
 Herrera Beutler Messer
 Hinojosa Michaud
 Horsford Miller (MI)
 Hoyer Mullin
 Hudson Murphy (FL)
 Huffman Murphy (PA)
 Huizenga (MI) Negrete McLeod
 Hultgren Neugebauer
 Hurt Noem
 Issa Nolan
 Johnson (GA) Nugent
 Johnson (OH) Nunes
 Johnson, E. B. Nunnelee
 Johnson, Sam Olson
 Joyce Owens
 Kaptur Palazzo
 Kelly (IL) Paulsen
 Kelly (PA) Pearce
 Kildee Pelosi
 Kilmer Perlmutter
 King (IA) Peters (MI)
 King (NY) Peterson
 Kingston Petri
 Kinzinger (IL) Poe (TX)
 Kirkpatrick Price (NC)
 Kline Rahall
 Kuster Reed
 Labrador Reichert
 LaMalfa Renacci
 Larsen (WA) Ribble
 Latham Rice (SC)
 Latta Richmond
 Lipinski Rigell
 Loeb sack Roby
 Long Roe (TN)
 Lucas Rogers (AL)
 Luetkemeyer Rogers (KY)
 Lujan Grisham Rogers (MI)
 (NM) Rokita

NAYS—166

Amash Davis, Danny
 Andrews DeFazio
 Bachmann DeGette
 Bass DeLauro
 Becerra DeSantis
 Bentivolio DesJarlais
 Blackburn Deutch
 Blumenauer Doggett
 Brady (PA) Duncan (SC)
 Bridenstine Duncan (TN)
 Broun (GA) Ellison
 Burgess Engel
 Capuano Eshoo
 Cárdenas Esty
 Cartwright Fattah
 Castro (TX) Fleischmann
 Chabot Fleming
 Chu Fortenberry
 Cicilline Foxx
 Clark (MA) Franks (AZ)
 Clarke (NY) Frelinghuysen
 Coffman Garrett
 Cohen Gingrey (GA)
 Collins (GA) Gohmert
 Connolly Gosar
 Conyers Gowdy
 Cook Graves (GA)
 Cooper Grayson
 Cotton Green, Al
 Courtney Green, Gene
 Crowley Grijalva
 Cummings Gutiérrez

Rooney Matheson
 Ros-Lehtinen McClintock
 Roskam McDermott
 Ross McGovern
 Runyan Meeks
 Ryan (WI) Meng
 Schneider Mica
 Schock Miller, Gary
 Schrader Miller, George
 Schwartz Moore
 Scott (VA) Mulvaney
 Scott, Austin Nadler
 Scott, David Napolitano
 Sessions Neal
 Sewell (AL) O'Rourke
 Shea-Porter Pallone
 Sherman Pascarell
 Shimkus Pastor (AZ)
 Shuster Payne
 Simpson Perry
 Sinema Peters (CA)
 Sires Pingree (ME)
 Smith (MO) Pittenger
 Smith (NE) Pitts
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Terry
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tonko
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Vela
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walden
 Walorski
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Webster (FL)
 Welch
 Whitfield
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IN)

Matheson
 McClintock
 McDermott
 McGovern
 Meeks
 Meng
 Mica
 Miller, Gary
 Miller, George
 Moore
 Mulvaney
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 O'Rourke
 Pallone
 Pascarell
 Pastor (AZ)
 Payne
 Perry
 Peters (CA)
 Pingree (ME)
 Pittenger
 Pitts

Amodei
 Campbell
 Clay
 Doyle
 Edwards

NOT VOTING—14

Jones
 Lynch
 McCarthy (NY)
 Miller (FL)
 Moran
 Ruppertsberger
 Rush
 Tipton
 Westmoreland

□ 1059

Messrs. HIGGINS, HUNTER, ISRAEL, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

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

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 31, had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Stated against:

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, due to being unavoidably detained, I missed the following rollcall vote: No. 31 on January 29, 2014.

If present, I would have voted: rollcall vote No. 31—H.R. 2642—Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 Conference Report, On Passage, "nay."

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, due to attending a previously scheduled event with President Obama in the 4th Congressional District of Maryland, which I have the honor of representing in the House of Representatives, I was absent from votes in the House this morning (Wednesday, January 29th) and missed rollcall vote 31. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote 31 (final passage of the Conference Report on H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013).

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

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

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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BRITISH-AMERICAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCALLISTER). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276(1), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Members on the part of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. MCINTYRE, North Carolina
 Mr. DELANEY, Maryland

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642.

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

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT TO FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 2014

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 3 p.m. on Friday, January 31, 2014; and when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet on Monday, February 3, 2014, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1635

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1635, the National Commission on Federal Marijuana Policy Act of 2013.

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

There was no objection.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF TRUDI TERRY, CHIEF CLERK OF DEBATES

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to rise today and extend my sincere thanks, on behalf of all of

us, to a distinguished public servant, Chief Clerk of Debates Trudi Terry, that humble lady who sits behind us.

After 15 years of serving the United States House of Representatives and the American people, it is with sadness that we see such a fine and dedicated public servant retiring.

Trudi began her tenure in the House in 1999 as a transcriber in the Office of the Official Reporters. Her diligence and commitment to her duties saw her promoted to Chief Clerk of Debates in January of 2004.

Trudi's outstanding contribution to the smooth running of this institution over the past decade has been substantial, and her warm demeanor will be missed by all of us who work in this Chamber.

I will remember Trudi as a bubbly and energetic and warm personality who always went out of her way to help. I hope that Trudi enjoys the added time so she can now commit to her hobbies of attending the theater and bird-watching, much better than watching Members of the House.

So I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in thanking Trudi Terry for all that she has done for all of us in the House of Representatives, and to truly wish her the best in the years to come.

Congratulations, Trudi.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF TRUDI TERRY, CHIEF CLERK OF DEBATES

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, what a joy it is to rise and join my colleague, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and to applaud the long career and the great contributions of a woman who has listened to countless speeches and addresses on this floor over the years, our House Chief Clerk of Debates, Trudi Terry.

She will soon retire, but she came to this House in 1999 as a transcriber, and she has served as Chief Clerk of Debates for the past decade. For 10 years, through early morning 1-minute and midnight debates, she has sat on the dais behind this lectern, kept a record of all of our conversations and colloquies, and been of invaluable service to all of us in this body.

No matter how heated it got down here, Trudi has been helpful and patient and kind to each and every one of us.

She has lived an amazing life. Before coming to Washington, her experiences have run the gamut. Born in Amarillo, Texas; teacher in Alaska, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Virginia; an office manager in Honolulu; and a preschool director at Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan.

Trudi, we say thank you to you for your hard work, for your service, both

here on the House floor and across this great Nation.

We congratulate you on your retirement. Many years of health and happiness, so that you can travel, take the photos, go to the theater, and, yes, bird-watch. Do the things that we kept you from doing while we debated and tried to legislate.

You will be missed, my friend. You will be missed. And if you miss us too, you can always find us on C-SPAN.

But get a life, Trudi, and enjoy it.

THE FARM BILL CONFERENCE REPORT

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. We are not going to let Trudi get off that easy because she is going to have to listen to some 1-minute speeches.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the farm bill conference report. As Illinois farmers look forward to spring planting season, this bill provides them with a stronger crop insurance program and gives them a choice of commodity programs that work best for their farm.

It takes important steps to end direct payments, streamline conservation programs, close food stamp loopholes, and save \$24 billion over the next decade.

However, one issue the bill does not address is Country of Origin Labeling, or COOL. Current COOL regulations could potentially put American livestock producers in violation of our trade obligations and could put the U.S. meat under retaliatory tariffs from Canada and Mexico.

The WTO announced just last week that they will be holding hearings on this issue. I have been told by the leadership of the House, who had this provision in the House part of the bill, that the bill would be filed, hearings will be conducted, and we will move legislation to address this concern.

I want to thank Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON for all the hard work that the Ag Committee has done to provide Illinois farmers certainty.

□ 1115

MARY PAKOS' UNEMPLOYMENT

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

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, Mary Pakos of Villa Park, Illinois, is one of my neighbors; and she needs Congress to extend unemployment insurance now. Mary has 16 years of experience in human resources, with seven of those as a manager. Yet she has been unemployed now for 3 years,

but it is not for the lack of trying. She has sent out more than 500 resumes and has gone through interview after interview after interview with no success.

She worries about losing her house and how she will support herself in retirement. You see, she recently turned 60, and she knows how tough it can be to find work at her age.

But that doesn't stop Mary from looking for jobs for hours every day. It does not stop her from spending hours every week volunteering at her local church in Elmhurst, Illinois, because she cares so much about her community. Mary is not giving up, and we shouldn't give up on her either.

Many Americans like her want to find work and simply can't. Punishing them by taking away unemployment benefits is a terrible mistake. Let's put our partisanship aside and extend unemployment insurance now for our families and our businesses.

THE FARM BILL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today the House passed a new 5-year farm bill reauthorization with bipartisan support. The Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act will provide food security for our Nation's citizens, ensuring that Americans have access to affordable, high-quality, and safe food.

For my State of Pennsylvania and many others, the farm bill is actually a jobs bill. In Pennsylvania, we have approximately 62,000 farms, and agriculture supports hundreds of thousands of jobs. One in seven Pennsylvanians owes their job directly or indirectly to agriculture.

The dairy sector is our largest single contributor, with about 7,100 farms as of last year. Pennsylvania ranks fifth in overall dairy production among States, but Pennsylvania agriculture is very diverse. We have beef and cattle, mushrooms, corn, poultry, and so much more. Our forest products and timber industry is also critical in Pennsylvania and provides jobs and needed forest management.

This farm bill is critical in providing support and certainty to our farmers and rural communities in each of these areas. As a member of the House Agriculture Committee and as a supporter of agriculture in Pennsylvania, I was proud to support the passage of this important jobs bill.

HUNGER IS NOT AN OPTION

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, hunger is not an option. And although

there were many elements of the farm bill that, over the years, I have supported enthusiastically as a Representative from Texas—and I thank all of those who produce food—it is a question of taking a stand. First, \$40 billion, then \$11 billion, then \$8 billion. It is not an option in terms of the closing off of the opportunity for food stamps.

For those who are working, as Maggie, a young lady in Austin, Texas, and the 48 million women who are living in poverty and the 22 million children living in poverty, I took a stand today, and I am proud of it—not because the work was not there for the farm bill, but we have got to protect those who need us most. Hunger is not an option.

I take this time as well to thank Trudi Terry, my dear friend, for her service to this Nation. She is professional and distinguished. And as we refer to each other on the floor, “the distinguished gentlelady from Texas,” “the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts,” you are the distinguished gentlelady from Virginia, along with Irene. We thank you for sharing with us.

And I appreciate one thing: thank you for being our friend and my friend. God bless you and continue in prosperity and service. God bless you.

INACCESSIBLE PUBLIC LANDS

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

Mr. DAINES. As a fifth generation Montanan and sportsman, I know the importance of protecting and preserving Montana’s outdoor heritage. Hunting, fishing, and hiking on our public lands are important parts of many Montanans’ way of life. It is something that my grandpa and dad passed on to me and something we are passing on to our kids.

But almost 2 million acres of public lands in Montana are inaccessible to the public. Three other States—Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico—have more than 500,000 acres of inaccessible land to the public, and that is simply unacceptable. I strongly believe we must ensure the public has access to the public lands we already have.

There is strong bipartisan agreement that the Land and Water Conservation Fund can play an important role in increasing access to these lands, and that is what the Making Public Lands Public Access Act will do. My bill seeks to increase Montanans’ opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation and ensure that our public lands are truly public. I urge support for my bill.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM AND CORPORATE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, it has been 4 long years since the Supreme Court’s awful Citizens United decision; and, sadly, this Republican leadership has failed to take action to address the increasing influence of big corporations and big money in our elections and our political discourse.

The House has repeatedly voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act which, quite frankly, helps millions and millions of our fellow citizens get health care. We have voted to weaken financial regulations and environmental protections; and while I am pleased that most of this legislation has not become law, I find it troubling that we have not addressed an issue so fundamental to our democracy—the empowerment of everyday Americans over special interests.

I am proud to be the sponsor of two constitutional amendments, H.J. Res. 20, which empowers Congress and the States to regulate political spending, while my people’s rights amendment puts a stop to the growing trend of corporations claiming First Amendment rights.

Sixteen States, including my home State of Massachusetts, and hundreds of cities and towns across the country have taken action to support a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United and the fabricated doctrine of corporate constitutional rights.

Our democracy is of the people, by the people, and for the people. We endanger that most sacred value when big money, special interests, and corporations have unlimited power to buy and influence elections.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to act.

THE PRESIDENT’S ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, the President, on the heels of the State of the Union, is traveling to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, today. Well, I have invited the President to travel 50 miles south to Greene County, Pennsylvania, in my district, a rural county, a struggling county, a county that produces coal.

The President’s wrong policies, his out-of-control EPA regulations, have shut down the Hatfield’s Ferry coal-fired electric plan in Greene County, Pennsylvania. Over 100 good-paying jobs are gone.

But to make matters worse, the small community in East Dunkard and East Dunkard Valley, their water authority, the rate payers are going to have to pay more because the largest user of that system was the Hatfield’s Ferry electric plant. So these 2,000

folks are going to have to pay more money for their water and their sewer because of the President’s wrong energy policy. The President’s energy policy is wrong, and it is hurting hard-working Americans.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, in action on climate change will be more costly in the long run than an investment in curbing emissions now. The nonpartisan Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently urged policymakers—that is us in Congress—to take immediate action on climate change to avoid not only costly damages to our planet but, really, the costly impact to our economy.

The report indicates that if strong action to curb greenhouse gas emissions does not take place in the next 15 years, our last resort to avoid catastrophic global changes will be to rely on expensive technologies to remove harmful greenhouse gases, and that would be unbelievably expensive.

The report also estimates that the longer we wait, the cost goes up, and the impact on the economy is more devastating. If we wait until 2030, we reduce our ability to produce goods and services by up to 4 percent. If we wait until 2050, it is up to 6 percent; and if we wait until 2100, it is up to a 12 percent loss of goods and services. The time to act is now.

THE FARM BILL SAVES MONEY

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I represent the northeastern suburbs of Atlanta, but I voted in favor of a large farm bill today. We don’t have too many farmers in our district, but we have folks who care about their children and their grandchildren and moving this country away from debt and back towards prosperity.

I serve on the Budget Committee, and in my 3 years in this body, I have never been able to send a bill to the President that changes mandatory spending in the direction of savings as large as this bill does that we did today, over \$3 billion in the first year.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are tired of broken promises, and they are tired of folks who promise the Moon and can’t deliver. Today we took a small step in the right direction, and you will see me back here tomorrow looking for one more.

I was proud to vote in favor of the farm bill today.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN GEORGE WORTLEY

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

Mr. MAFFEI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor one of my predecessors, former Congressman George Wortley, who served as central New York's Representative during the 1980s for four terms. Mr. Wortley passed away on January 21 at the age of 87.

Mr. Wortley was very well known as being a very friendly, kind, and personable man, an outstanding member of our community in central New York, a real neighbor to so many.

He was born and raised in Tully, New York. He graduated from Syracuse University in 1948. He served in the Navy and then began his career as a newspaper man, serving as president and publisher of seven weekly newspapers, spanning more than four decades.

He won his congressional seat in 1980 and went on to be a dedicated public servant throughout his time in the House. He was known for working with others in the best interest of our community. And while he served on the House Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee, he was known for the development of the reverse mortgage annuity for seniors and was a significant force in reforming anti-money laundering laws to fight drug trafficking. He also served on the Ethics Committee, which is a service to all.

He will be remembered across central New York for his genuine dedication to service. Services will be held Monday; and if any colleagues want any information on that, please see my office.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask to have a brief moment of silence for Congressman George Wortley.

THIRD AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-89)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the house the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)) (the "Act"), the text of a proposed Third Amendment to the Agreement for Co-operation Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (the "Amendment"). I am also pleased to transmit

my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the Amendment, and an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Amendment. (In accordance with section 123 of the Act, as amended by title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), a classified annex to the NPAS, prepared by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information, will be submitted to the Congress separately.) The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretaries of State and Energy and a letter from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stating the views of the Commission are also enclosed. An addendum to the NPAS pursuant to section 102A of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 403-1), as amended, is being submitted separately by the Director of National Intelligence.

The proposed Amendment has been negotiated in accordance with the Act and other applicable law. In my judgment, it meets all applicable statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States.

Pursuant to the proposed Amendment, the Agreement for Co-operation Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency, signed at Vienna May 11, 1959, as amended and extended February 12, 1974, and January 14, 1980 (the "Agreement"), would continue to provide a comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation with the IAEA and facilitate our mutual objectives related to nonproliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The primary purposes of the Agreement are to enable exports from the United States of nuclear material and equipment to IAEA Member States for research reactors and, in certain cases, for power reactors, and to enable transfers from the United States of small samples of nuclear material to the IAEA for safeguards and research purposes.

Under the proposed Amendment, the term of the Agreement will be extended an additional 40 years for a total term of 95 years.

The Agreement permits the transfer of material, equipment (including reactors), and facilities for nuclear research and nuclear power production. It does not permit transfers of Restricted Data, sensitive nuclear facilities, or major critical components of such facilities, or, unless specifically provided for in a supply agreement or an amendment thereto, transfers of sensitive nuclear technology. In the event of termination of the Agreement, key nonproliferation conditions and controls continue with respect to material, equipment, and facilities subject to the Agreement.

A more detailed discussion of the IAEA's nuclear nonproliferation and peaceful uses activities is provided in the NPAS and in a classified annex to the NPAS submitted to you separately.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed Amendment to the Agreement and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the Amendment and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Act. My Administration is prepared to begin immediately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30 days of continuous session review provided for in section 123 b., the 60 days of continuous session review provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, January 29, 2014.

□ 1130

THE SLAVE TRADE OF CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, before I get into my official remarks this afternoon, I, too, want to thank Trudi Terry for her service to the House. A lot of folks don't know, especially folks throughout America, that as Chief Clerk of Debate—and all the clerks—they get here in the morning before we ever get here, and they don't go home until long after Congress is over because they have got to make sure that everything we say is appropriately recorded in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that is prepared by the clerks during the night before the sun rises the next day. It is a tremendous job, and our clerks do a tremendous job.

Trudi, when you told me you were leaving yesterday, I told you, It can't be. Just say it isn't so. We depend on you. Now, you know, you sit right in the middle of the House, right between the Republicans, right between the Democrats, right down the center of the aisle making sure that you take care of all of us. I personally appreciate what you have done for me over the last 9 years since I have been in the House of Representatives, and I know that all Members appreciate the House staff for what you do.

If people ever watch C-SPAN, occasionally they will see the clerks are always here, Mr. Speaker. They are always here. They are never sick. They

never miss. Even when the House is closed down because of bad weather, there the clerks are. They are still here.

So I appreciate their service. I know all Members of the House appreciate the service of all of you. And you don't get near the credit. You make us all look good, and I appreciate that very much.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk and address the House on a more serious note this afternoon, and it has to do with not the economy, it doesn't have to do with money or the debt, all those things that all Americans are concerned about, but it is dealing with something that, to me, is really serious, if not more serious, because it has to do with people—children, primarily. What I am talking about is something that we thought doesn't happen in this country anymore, and that is slavery.

Yes, we still have slavery throughout the world today in 2014. It is called human sex trafficking. And what we are talking about, and what I am talking about, has consequences throughout the United States. It is not just happening in foreign countries. It is not just isolated and happening a little bit. The scourge is happening throughout the world and, yes, has even come to the United States. That is one reason why this is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

It is vital that mothers and fathers understand the crime of human trafficking. I have four kids and I have 11 grandkids. Children are the greatest resource that the country has, and things are happening to them that a lot of Americans are unaware of, and it happens in our neighborhoods.

Here is how it happens, a small example that happened in Houston. A young girl goes to the mall, like teenagers do, middle schoolers. Parents drop kids off at the mall on a Saturday, for example, and then come pick them up later in the day. The young girl was there with some others. She got to talking to a young male. When you think of sex traffickers, a lot of them think of the old guy in the trench coat. No. Many of them are young people.

A good-looking guy in his early twenties starts talking to this young girl, and before you know it, they hit up a good conversation and he starts telling her things that she wants to hear. He buys a few things for her there in the mall. Before you know it, she is picked up, and he and this young girl, this middle schooler, go somewhere in a car. But they disappear into the Houston community, because now she has been kidnapped and is used, unfortunately, in the sex trade, in the sex slavery trade as a young teenage girl.

These traffickers will find young girls anywhere. They will find them at salons. They will go to massage parlors. Human trafficking occurs in many different places. Sometimes there are

storefronts that are for one business, but it is nothing more than an outlet of sex trafficking, and traditional businesses, unfortunately, are nothing more than fronts for forced prostitution of minors. They are held and forced to have sex with others for money so the trafficker can get money, and that filthy lucre goes to the slave trader. It happens in far-off places, and it happens in America.

The victims are the ones I want to talk about today. There are domestic victims in the United States like the girl I mentioned in Houston, and there are international victims in other countries, and they are trafficked into the United States or throughout the United States for two purposes: for sex or for labor, forced labor.

I have recently been to Central America and South America—Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, and even Peru—and I have been able to see the sex trade, the sex trafficking business in those countries. It happens domestically in those countries as well as other countries throughout the world, but some of those girls are forced to come to the United States—not all of them, but some of them are. And be mindful, we do have girls in the United States who are transported throughout the country, domestic sex trafficking.

I got to talk to some of these young girls in the shelters about their lives. I met one girl. I asked her, How did this happen to you? And she said, Well, when I was 9 years old, my mother sold me to a trafficker for a cell phone. And she got sold for a phone for mom, and then she goes into the sex trafficking business. After they reach a certain age, then they just disappear into the society. This girl was rescued in Guatemala. There are shelters that help these young girls.

I got to talk to several of these girls. And we are talking about the youngest that I met was 7, and they go all the way up to 17 to be minors. But I got to talk to some girls, five of them in one shelter, that were 12 years of age or younger—five of them. There were other girls in the shelter. These five girls I talked to, Mr. Speaker, all had children that were the product of forcible rape by one of the customers that had abused them.

It is sex slavery, and it is sex trafficking throughout the world. They are forced into terrible, abusive conditions, whether it is work slavery or whether it is prostitution, forced prostitution.

There are also young women—and males, too, but primarily young women—that are trafficked in our own neighborhoods for sexual servitude. As many as 100,000 children in the United States a year are at risk for sexual exploitation. And worldwide, Mr. Speaker, trafficking is a billion-dollar business. It is a \$32-billion business a year. That is just a number, but what does

that mean? That trafficking criminal activity is second only to narcotics trafficking in the United States or in the world. The difference between trafficking or selling drugs is that, when you sell drugs, the product is sold one time; but when you traffic young children, the trafficker sells that young child numerous times, numerous times a day.

And the consequences are much less for trafficking children than they are for trafficking drugs. That is another issue we need to resolve. But the consequences are something that keeps this dastardly crime operating.

Mr. Speaker, these traffickers are so bold that they brand these young girls with tattoos so that other traffickers, or pimps, whichever you want to call them, know that this property belongs to this trafficker. They will brand them somewhere on their body.

The New York Times, Mr. Speaker, has reported that a girl in New York City was branded with a barcode so that her trafficker could keep up with her whereabouts. Barcodes. Barcodes are put on property. And I think this should be disturbing that this is happening to young children in the United States.

Where do traffickers operate? They operate wherever there is a business. Unfortunately, they operate at big sporting events like the Super Bowl. New Jersey and New York have done an excellent job preparing for this year's Super Bowl by warning parents, warning children, and warning people who come to New York about the issue of sex trafficking, especially of children.

So what can we do? What should we do about this issue that is taking place in other countries and the United States? The first thing we need to do is to treat these children like victims rather than criminals. They are treated like criminals.

When the police go out and they go into an area and they raid that area, they take these girls who are forced into prostitution. Many times they file criminal charges on them. Now, in all fairness to the police, there are not places to put trafficking victims. There are just not enough shelters. But they are treated and observed by the community as criminals as opposed to victims. So we must change the mindset and laws in this country to treat them as victims, because that is what they are. They are victims of criminal conduct. They are not criminals themselves.

The second thing we need to do is to prosecute those that are involved, and that includes not just the trafficker, but that includes the demand, that includes the customer, that includes, as it is said in the trade, the john, who seems to get away with this miserable conduct.

And the third thing we need to do is to raise awareness in all communities about this scourge.

It is unfortunate that my hometown of Houston, Texas, has become a major hub of this crime because of our interstates, our ports, our airports, and our proximity to the southern border. So young girls are smuggled into this area of Houston and then farmed out throughout the United States as property.

Of course, it is something that people are aware of in our Houston community, and law enforcement is doing a good job to make folks aware of this crime and working together to close these places where these young children are trafficked. Other communities throughout the country are following the example of law enforcement—the media, government officials, nonprofits, churches, and communities working together—to stop this type of conduct.

We need to be aware that it occurs. Denial seems to be the biggest problem in the United States. People I have talked to of all backgrounds don't believe that this is an issue, don't believe that this is a problem and do not want to believe that this criminal conduct is occurring. And it is. It is occurring right in the United States.

I have recently introduced some legislation along with CAROLYN MALONEY from New York, bipartisan legislation. It certainly is bipartisan if it is CAROLYN MALONEY, who is from New York and a Democrat, and, of course, I am a Texas Republican. We get through the language barrier, but we have been able to file this legislation that is excellent. It is the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. It is also bipartisan. The Senate has filed our same bill over there. Senator CORNYN from Texas and Senator WYDEN from Oregon have filed the same bill in the Senate.

This bill looks at this problem in a broad scope. Hopefully, we will pass this bill because it will go a long way to solving this problem that we have. What it does is it focuses first on rescuing the victims of the crime.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding, according to Shared Hope International, that in the United States there are 220-plus beds for minor trafficking sex victims—220-plus. That is all. The SPCA says there are 5,000 animal shelters in the United States, as there should be.

□ 1145

There are no shelters, not even that many shelters for the young women that are trafficked throughout the country. So we need to focus on the victims, take them out of the criminal justice system and put them in shelters, and find an avenue and funds to do that. We need to rescue the victims. That is our most important job. No matter where that victim is from, we must rescue them out of that environment that they have been forced into, into this modern day slavery.

What it does to create revenue—because we are always talking about money; where are we going to get money—this doesn't create new funds, in the sense that it is a tax requirement. What it does is it allows Federal judges, when they have these people before them, they not only have the ability to put them in prison, where they should, but in similar crimes like trafficking, prosecution and trafficking, and other types of crimes, Federal judges can impose a fee on the defendant, and that money goes into a special fund that helps victims of crime. It gives them the resources for those shelters. It gives law enforcement resources to investigate this criminal conduct. So it makes those criminals pay the rent on the courthouse, pay for the system that they have created by imposing judges, imposing fines and fees on them, and that money is specifically used not to bring down the debt, but it is specifically used to help victims of criminal conduct. I think that is something that is important that we do.

It also goes a little bit further, and it starts enforcing our punishment for these criminals. What I mean by that, the law in the country is pretty good to punish the trafficker, but the person who is getting away with all of this conduct is the demand. The customer is getting away. If there wasn't a demand, this act wouldn't be happening, but the system lets that person, unfortunately, get away with it.

Now the law will be changed, if it passes, that the demand, the customer, the john, can get the same punishment as the trafficker. Not only that, we apply the RICO statute, the racketeering statute, to let it be used in organized crime. In other words, you have the hotel clerk, the cab driver, the pimp, the john, all working together to have this victim abused, and the RICO statute can be applied to all of those people involved in that criminal conduct, and they can all be punished accordingly. So hold all of those individuals accountable for their conduct because it is important that they be treated and punished for the conduct of sex slavery against victims of children.

Mr. Speaker, slavery was supposed to end in the United States in 1865, but this new form of slavery deals with destroying the dignity, the self-worth, the hope, the soul of certain people; women primarily, young women primarily.

If we don't do anything else in this country in this congressional session, we need to understand that this problem, this scourge, is affecting the quality of life of people—females, young children. We have an obligation to rescue them, let them understand that we are on their side, and let them once again have some dignity, have some self-worth, and have some hope because that is what we are supposed to do in life, to take care of people.

So I thank the Speaker for allowing me to make these comments on the House floor. Let's rescue the victims, treat them like they should be treated, and then punish the traffickers and those that seek the demand for this, and treat them like they should be treated, and that means put them in the jailhouse for a long time because that is where they belong.

And that's just the way it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 40 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor and a privilege and a pleasure to work with Trudi Terry here in the House. I really hate to see her retire. She has put up with me more times than most people have had to, and kept a wonderful spirit and cooperative atmosphere in this body, in this Chamber, and I will be forever grateful. Thank you. I really hate to see you retire. So I guess to add to the bad news of Trudi Terry retiring, there are other things going on.

One story that hits home for me as someone with other friends like DANA ROHRBACHER and STEVE KING, who have met with Baloch leaders from the Balochistan area of Pakistan—it is the area where most of Pakistan's minerals are located. It is an area where Pakistan has, for many years, terrorized the Baloch people, persecuted them mercilessly. They want the Baloch area's minerals and assets to keep Pakistan going and basically radicalized, but they don't want to let the Baloch people live in peace.

I proposed in a previous op-ed a couple of years ago that perhaps it is time to look at encouraging a new Baloch state, a new country of Balochistan as independent of Pakistan so that the people can live in peace, so they don't have to be worried about Pakistan officials and military coming through and committing, really, crimes against these people. After I wrote that op-ed and included a statement that perhaps it is time to join in the encouragement for a new Balochistan state, there was an article in a Pakistani daily paper that said in essence maybe it is time to quit persecuting the Baloch, reach out to them and figure out a way to let them live in peace because to Pakistan that area was important. The op-ed from the Pakistan paper also indicated that perhaps they needed to quit funding and helping the Taliban defeat the Americans in Afghanistan and just concentrate on their own country. That would have been wonderful, and would still be.

This story is out from the Toronto Sun, and it regards the Balochistan

province in Pakistan. By the way, I have heard from numerous members of our American military and from others in Afghanistan that most of the supplies to the Taliban are coming from Pakistan through the southern Baloch area of Pakistan, and that is why the thought was triggered, maybe if Balochistan was independent of Pakistan, that would cut off the supply to the terrorist Taliban in Afghanistan and would save a lot of American lives. Since that has been said, we have lost hundreds more American soldiers. More American blood has been shed because we have failed to neutralize the Taliban, and they have continued apparently to grow in their efforts to take over Afghanistan shortly after we leave.

This article, though, says:

It would have been inconceivable that any U.S. official, let alone a Secretary of State, would host a delegation from Serbia the day after mass graves were discovered in Srebrenica in 1995. Yet on Sunday, a day after bullet-ridden bodies were discovered in suspected mass graves in Pakistan's military-controlled province of Balochistan, Secretary of State John Kerry was toasting a delegation of Pakistan security officials at the State Department. Balochistan and human rights officials say 169 bodies have been uncovered so far. Pakistani officials put the number at 15. Victims and families of Baloch youth who have disappeared and who are feared to be among the decomposed bodies being unearthed from the mass graves had hoped that Kerry would raise the issue with his Pakistani counterpart.

Instead, they heard Kerry say to the Pakistanis, "We are really delighted to have you back, and I look forward to our continued conversation." America looked the other way in 1971 when the Pakistan Army slaughtered a million of its own citizens in what is now Bangladesh.

What emerged was a country that hosted the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, allowed Osama bin Laden to operate on its soil for more than a decade, and whose terrorists have been involved in numerous jihadi attacks around the world ever since the bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa and the attack on USS *Cole* off Yemeni waters.

Yet America continues to give Pakistan billions of dollars in aid, which is then turned around to generate more hatred toward the West and produce more jihadi terrorists.

Inserting parenthetically into this article is my oft-quoted statement that you don't have to pay people to hate you; they will do it for free. We continue to send billions of dollars to nations that hate us and want us gone from the map. They want to see us suffer, and we keep sending them money to hate us. We can use that money here. We could save raising some taxes. We could get some roads and some of the infrastructure that the President promised if we gave him \$900 billion, basically, in a stimulus package right after he took office, and that was going to fix all of the infrastructure, but maybe 6 percent of \$900 billion went for infrastructure, and so the President is back out saying we have got to build these roads.

I mean, we have been talking about this for 5 years. He has. So you didn't do it with the stimulus money—why don't we just save some of the billions that we are giving to people who hate us, and then we don't help them kill Americans. We don't continue, as this administration is doing, to assist Syrian rebels who are killing Christians.

For anyone who happens to believe that there is a God as reflected in the Bible, the question will have to be asked: If there is such a God as reflected in the Bible, which I believe, is it going to bode well for a Nation which is funding and helping nations that are killing, torturing, kidnapping Christians around the world?

□ 1200

This article goes on:

Now the U.S. is giving the same Pakistan army another pass as it carries out the ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Baloch people from their homeland.

In response, the Baloch have taken up arms and are fighting their fifth war of independence since 1948, when the Pakistan army invaded and captured the independent and sovereign state of Kalat.

The article goes on.

But the fact is we have people in this administration demanding that what they say are indigenous people—despite the fact that the children of Israel occupied the promised land 1,600 years or so, 1,700 years at least, before a man named Muhammad was born. There are people who say: Oh, but these Palestinians—a name that arose as Newt Gingrich pointed out in the last 40 or so years—these Palestinians are indigenous, so you have got to give them their land.

Yet they are not saying it about Balochistan. They are not saying it about the Baloch people that are being killed and persecuted by Pakistan. Oh, no. We are helping kill and persecute the Baloch people by giving aid and assistance to a government that is killing and persecuting them.

If there is a just God in the universe, would there not be a price for a country as powerful as the United States that continues to support those who kill, maim, torture, horrify innocent people, Christians, Jews, secularists, and oftentimes they are even more brutal to moderate Muslims that are not as radical as they think they should be?

That is why in Egypt, for those who really have eyes and really have ears to hear, we had an incredible event last summer. This was the real Arab Spring, but it came in summer. This is when moderate Muslims, Christians, Jews, secularists rose up, some reports of 30 to 33 million people, larger than any demonstration in the history of the world. They rose up and said: We don't want radical Islamists running Egypt. The radical Islamists, the Muslim Brotherhood that were controlling Egypt—as we knew they would if they

had election too quickly—the Muslim Brotherhood became desperate because they knew, to have a new Ottoman Empire running around the Mediterranean that would become a worldwide caliphate, they could not afford to lose Egypt from under their iron fist.

So what do they do? They immediately start burning down churches, killing Christians particularly, and so many others. That is why I was so encouraged. Over 90 percent of the people voting—which was a higher percentage than we have voting here in the United States—came out and voted for the new constitution that has been drafted under the chairmanship of Amr Moussa.

I was very pleased that Chairman Moussa was willing to come on the Sean Hannity radio show a few weeks ago when I was guest hosting for Sean Hannity. It is really encouraging what is going on in Egypt by those who want a democratic form of government and who do not want terrorists running Egypt, who don't want a worldwide caliphate, who don't like the goal of the Muslim Brotherhood, who are not as blind to the goal of the Muslim Brotherhood as the leaders of this administration are.

If one will just go look at one of the symbols used by the Muslim Brotherhood these days, you find the crossed swords, the signs and wording in their language denoting the Muslim Brotherhood, and that is fixed over a globe of the world. It is not just Egypt, Iraq, Iran, not just in the former Ottoman Empire. Oh, no. This is fixed over a globe that is revolving, and the United States of America passes under those swords of the Muslim Brotherhood.

It is true that the Muslim Brotherhood here in the United States does not want to utilize violence right now because they have made so much progress in this administration that they are afraid violence right now might do damage. Violence in Egypt, the same Muslim Brotherhood feels it was necessary because they had just been caught. They had been rejected by moderate Muslims—the majority of Egyptians—and they became desperate. So their violence had to occur. Christians, according to these radical Islamist Muslim brothers, had to die.

Once America starts figuring out that the goal is global caliphate—including the United States—then they will be participating in horrendous violence here, as they have in other places in the world.

Some of our moderate Muslim friends in the Middle East asked some of us last September: What is wrong with you in America? Don't you understand? You call it al Qaeda, but that is really just an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood. They are the ones that attacked you on 9/11/2001. These are moderate Muslims asking these questions.

Why do you not understand? Yes, it was the Taliban, but it is really the

Muslim brothers behind it that you were at war with in Afghanistan? They are the ones that did more killing of Americans in Iraq, and yet you are helping the Muslim Brotherhood, you are running to their aid and assistance; and in Egypt you are demanding that either they put the radical Islamists back in charge of Egypt or we are not going to provide them the Apache helicopters, the tanks, and the jets that we were going to provide to the Muslim Brother leaders of Egypt.

They asked: What is wrong with you people? What are you not getting? You are helping the people that want to destroy you. People can see that around the world, but here in Washington, D.C., it is apparently one of the hardest things to find and see.

We hear people saying: Well, we really need all the people's most private information about phone calls, every phone call they make; we need to have that as part of the government because one time we believe it may have stopped a bombing.

Well, if this administration would do their homework, they wouldn't need the logs of every phone call of every American. We could go back to what the Constitution does require and the Court should require, and that is probable cause, before you start giving out personal information, before you let the government start monitoring every email of every person in America.

We were promised my freshman term that if the PATRIOT Act were extended, specifically section 206 and 215, that that would only apply if someone were in contact with a foreign terrorist, but Americans would never have to worry unless they were in touch with foreign terrorists. Then after Edward Snowden, we find out that actually what they promised was not true. And yes, that was during the Bush administration. I don't care. I don't care if it was a Republican or Democrat. I don't care where it started. When we find out it is still going on, it has got to stop. We are supposed to have some privacy in this country.

Those Democrats that were suspicious of the Bush administration wanting that much power were right. Where have my friends gone now that it is a Democrat administration? I certainly don't have a problem calling out a Republican administration when they are not doing the right thing. I wish my friends across the aisle would do the same thing and join me.

What about the Boston bombing? The Russians took a huge risk in giving this administration information and saying: Look, Tsarnaev, this guy has been radicalized and you are letting him back in America. You are headed for trouble. This is a bad guy. They took a risk in giving us that information because, when any country gives intelligence to another country, then sometimes it allows that country that

gets the information to figure out how that other country is getting intelligence just by the information they get.

So now we have people here in this administration saying: Oh, the Russians, shame on them. They didn't give us enough information.

Are you kidding me? They told you a person had been radicalized.

When I asked the Director of the FBI in our hearing about not even going to the mosque to investigate, he says, ultimately: Yeah, we did go to those mosques—and I didn't hear it at the hearing. I didn't hear it until the replay. And he said: Under our outreach program.

Under the outreach program? Well, that is the FBI's ridiculous former program where they have special outreach to Muslim communities to try to be friends with them. It is not the FBI's job to be friends with people. It is the FBI's job to enforce the law and, in so doing, protect us.

When Tsarnaev, the older brother, came back into this country from a place on the globe where we know radicalization is occurring—and as I understand it, he didn't even have his passport; he had his legal permanent resident card—he wasn't even pulled aside for extra questions when there should have been bells and whistles going off everywhere. The best I can find out, all they did, basically, was talk to him and his mother, and he said: No, I am not radicalized.

No, my son is not radicalized.

They didn't go to the mosque and start asking questions that would tell them has he been reading Qutb, which is the author, the Muslim brother from the sixties that was involved in trying to commit assassinations and other terrorist activities, and he wrote a booklet called "Milestones" that Osama bin Laden credits with helping turn him radical.

If you know about the people that hate you and want to destroy you, then you can ask intelligent questions to find out if someone is your enemy. But because of the purge of training materials at the FBI, the intelligence departments, at the State Department—as one intelligence officer told me, we are blinded to our ability to see our enemy, because there was a young man named Tsarnaev who wanted to kill innocent Americans at a Boston Marathon and they got a heads-up from the Russians. They got all the information right before them that they could possibly need, and we don't even stop him coming into this country after he has been radicalized. What more did you need? We shouldn't have needed a heads-up from the Russians. All the signs were there for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

But we were so busy in our outreach program to a mosque that was founded by the Islamic Society of Boston, the

founder of which is a man named al-Amoudi, who is in prison today for 24 years, I believe, for supporting terrorism, despite all the assistance he allegedly gave to the Clinton administration helping them find good Muslims to help in that administration. After 9/11, a couple of years or so after 9/11, it has been determined that he has been supporting terrorism, and now he is in Federal prison.

A man named al-Awlaki, who this President ordered a drone strike on in Yemen, though he was an American citizen, because his parents came over on a visa to study, had him, he is an American citizen. They take him back to Yemen. He learns to hate America, comes back and works on radicalizing Americans, except, of course, when he led prayers of Muslim staff members here on Capitol Hill.

□ 1215

Otherwise, this President determined that he needed to be killed without a trial because he radicalized Americans, and he was a threat to this country. al-Awlaki had attended the Boston mosque where the Tsarnaevs attended.

I mean, how many heads-up notices do you need to figure out there is a problem, and innocent Americans are going to be killed and maimed as they were in Boston? It is time to wake up. Yet we get this story from Matt Apuzzo. The picture was from the Associated Press, January 15: "U.S. to Expand Rules Limiting Use of Profiling by Federal Agents."

The Attorney General, who came here last night, sat here for the State of the Union address while he is in contempt of Congress, while he is being lawless in not following the law and providing information. They wouldn't even give me all of the documents that they provided to convicted terrorists in the Holy Land Foundation trial in Dallas. I asked repeatedly. We finally got a letter many months after the request, basically saying, We will give you the 500-or-so documents that were entered into evidence in the trial, and we have got some others you can come look at.

I still don't understand, Mr. Speaker. If they will give boxes and boxes of information to the terrorists who are convicted ultimately as terrorists, why can't you give that to Members of Congress? Is it because the convictions occurred in 2008 under the Bush administration?

Then this Justice Department came in and stopped any further prosecutions from going forward even though there were a couple-hundred-or-so named coconspirators in that case who were unindicted. My understanding from former Justice Department folks is that the plan was, if they could get the first convictions, then they would move forward with more and continue to follow up until they got this network that was allegedly supporting

terrorism. We know five of them were supporting terrorism.

Could it be that this Justice Department doesn't want us to see all of the documents that they provided to the terrorists that actually show they are terrorists? Could that be the reason they don't want Members of Congress to see?

It is because then we might realize, wow, they convicted those five in 2008 under President Bush. They could surely have gotten a lot more convictions if they had just used this same evidence. Oh, sure. Congressman GOHMERT, come over here, and we will show you some of the documents. We will let you see some of the electronic versions.

You gave them to terrorists for heaven's sakes. You can't give them to me so I can look at them in my office? It is unbelievable what is going on here.

Then there is a story from Kerry Picket from Breitbart. The story starts:

Senator Dianne Feinstein—a Democrat from California, chairman of the Senate Select Intelligence Committee—told Breitbart News on Monday that she did not know a CIA annex existed in Benghazi, Libya, before the deadly September 2012 attack—which took the lives of four Americans—on the U.S. compound happened. Feinstein could also not confirm if other Members of Congress knew about the CIA annex prior to the attack.

Senator FEINSTEIN and I disagree on many things, but I know she wants what is best for America even though we have staunch political disagreements on how we do that and what that is. My understanding is that, with anything of that nature, it would have been required that the Super 8, as they are sometimes referred to, would be briefed—the top Republican and Democrat on the Intelligence Committee in the House and in the Senate and the Republican leader in the House and the Democratic leader in the House and the Democratic leader in the Senate and the Republican leader in the Senate. Yet Senator FEINSTEIN said, I didn't know there was a CIA annex at the Benghazi consulate.

What else is this administration doing to help rebels, who include al Qaeda—as it did in Libya? What else is it doing that it is not following the law and briefing the people who are required to be briefed in Congress?

I heard the President, who was standing right here last night, get applause when he, in essence, says, If Congress doesn't change the law, then I will do it—and he got applause. To thinking people, when you hear somebody say, "if Congress doesn't do what is necessary," which is required by the Constitution, "I will do it," it sounds like I am going to chuck the Constitution and do what I think is best.

Now, I have read about those situations, of countries that had a fair and representative form of government. Ancient Greece and ancient Rome had

senates that were somewhat representative. There have been types of representative governments, and you would always find that, eventually, people had that desire for one rock solid leader. They would get tired of the disagreements because, as one of the English leaders had said—and it may have been Churchill—democracy is the worst form of government except for all of the others. It isn't a pretty thing to watch, as has been said. It is like watching sausage being made. Yet when you strip away the checks and balances that the Founders put in place to keep one executive officer from just doing whatever he wanted, then you don't have a democratic Republic as we are supposed to have; you have one man making the rules or one woman making the rules. It is time America woke up and realized their constitutional rights are at severe risk, and we are at risk as a result.

I wanted to mention something else that happened here at the State of the Union. A wonderful young man got the longest, best applause of the evening here as the President recognized Cory sitting up there.

In addition to Cory—the hero that that dear man is—I could see other uniformed people. In fact, there were some uniformed people up in that section up there, one of whom was not Cory but was Alonzo. The President didn't recognize Alonzo because Alonzo was a staff sergeant at Fort Hood. With Nidal Hasan, people kept looking the other way. They kept giving him good officer evaluation reports because they didn't want to be deemed to be profiling or doing something that was considered racist when the man made clear over and over that he was going to have to take action—violent action—against his country if they tried to ship him over and order him to fight Muslims overseas.

I did not get to meet Alonzo last night. I looked up and waved a few times, but I have great respect for that man, and he deserves so much better than he has been treated. He was shot six times; and apparently, while he is lying with six bullets in him, he realizes, as the shooting continues by Major Hasan, that he is not going to be able to pass off as dead because he is sweating profusely. As he says, dead people don't sweat, so he figured he had better get out of there, as I understand, and he took off. That is when he got shot and lost one of his eyes.

This administration has prevented Alonzo from getting the benefits he deserves because of an act of war, an act of terrorism. He is not even considered at the level of the 9/11 victims. He heard, Allah akbar, and he knew it was not going to go well. Everybody who heard that radical Islamist yell before the murders began knew this was not workplace violence, that this wasn't a postal employee going postal. This was

a radical Islamist who was carrying out a war against what they consider to be infidels in America. They deserve to be treated as victims of an act of war—an act against them as uniformed military—and to get the benefits coming to them. That is what should have happened.

We heard the references last night to health care, and it kind of sounded like applause started when he was talking about how they were helping to reform health care, and then it died so quickly they must have realized, ooh, I don't want to be on camera clapping for the reform of health care when people are hurting across America who have lost their insurance—people like me, who liked my insurance, but ObamaCare said your insurance policy is not good enough. So I lost it. Thank you very much. There are people in really tough shape around America who deserve better health care than what ObamaCare is doing to them.

There were so many things in the State of the Union address. He was talking about raising the minimum wage with Federal contractors with a stroke of the pen. I mean, how many other laws does the President want to pass with a stroke of the pen? It is not constitutional to make laws with one man's pen. That is not the democratic Republic we are supposed to be. There was even, it sounded like, some snickering when he said that. He didn't talk about the millions who have lost their insurance as a result of ObamaCare. If it were only about trying to ensure the 30 million people who reportedly didn't have health insurance—they had health care; they didn't have insurance—then let's direct it at those. Let's don't take millions and millions of Americans' insurance away in the process.

As far as illegal immigration, one of the newspapers in my district—Longview—had an article, an op-ed, in which they were saying I was opposed to immigration reform. Obviously, they read left-wing blogs and don't read and talk to me and understand what I have said repeatedly.

We desperately need immigration reform in America, but every time anybody here starts talking about legal status—amnesty—the ICE agents and the ICE union representatives tell us repeatedly that more people try to rush into the United States, that more people die trying to come across the desert, that more people fall into human trafficking and a horrible life. My position has been clear for anyone who cares to see or hear, and it is supported by so many other Republicans.

Mr. President has the money; he has got the wherewithal; he has got the manpower to secure our border. As soon as it is secured, as verified by the border States, we will come to an immigration reform bill so fast that people won't be able to believe it; but until

the President enforces existing law, there is no sense in talking about it and luring more people to their deaths, more people in here. Control the border. Secure it. Don't close it. We need that water continuing to flow into this pond, but secure it so we know who is coming in, and when people are here without valid visas, we need to pick them up.

□ 1230

Nearly 40 to 50 percent of the people that are here illegally came legally and overstayed their visas. Enforce the visas.

And so when a guy has been radicalized, do your homework. Don't let Tsarnaev back in when he doesn't have a passport and there are all kinds of indications he is now a terrorist. Don't let him in. We could have done without that one.

Secure the border. We will get an immigration bill done immediately after that. But before that, there is no reason to expect the President will ever secure the border.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of medical reasons and weather.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, January 31, 2014, at 3 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4597. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8315] received January 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4598. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRA, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans [Docket No.: OCC-2013-0009] (RIN: 1557-AD70) received January 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4599. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Registration of Municipal Advisors; Temporary Stay of Final Rule [Release No.: 34-71288; File No. S7-45-10] (RIN: 3235-AK86) received January 16,

2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4600. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Medicaid Program; State Plan Home and Community-Based Services, 5-Year Period for Waivers, Provider Payment Reassignment, and Home and Community-Based Setting Requirements for Community First Choice and Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers [CMS-2249-F; CMS-2296-F] (RIN: 0938-AO53; 0938-AP61) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4601. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Control of Military Training Equipment, Energetic Materials, Personal Protective Equipment, Shelters, Articles Related to Launch Vehicles, Missiles, Rockets, Military Explosives, and Related Items [Docket No.: 120201082-3709-02] (RIN: 0694-AF58) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4602. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Person from the Entity List Based on a Removal Request [Docket No.: 131121982-3982-01] (RIN: 0694-AG03) received January 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4603. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Final Rule to Allow Northeast Multispecies Sector Vessels Access to Year-Round Closed Areas [Docket No.: 130319263-3823-02] (RIN: 0648-BD090) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4604. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska Management Area [Docket No.: 120918468-3111-02] (RIN: 0648-XC975) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4605. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska Management Area [Docket No.: 120918468-3111-02] (RIN: 0648-XC976) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4606. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Available for the State of New Jersey [Docket No.: 111220786-1781-01] (RIN: 0648-XD012) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4607. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer [Docket No.: 121009528-2729-02] (RIN: 0648-XD025) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4608. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Closure of the 2014 Gulf of Mexico Recreational Season for Red Snapper [Docket No.: 130212129-3474-02] (RIN: 0648-XC967) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4609. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer [Docket No.: 121009528-2729-02] (RIN: 0648-XD021) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4610. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trimester Closure for the Common Pool Fishery [Docket No.: 120109034-2171-01] (RIN: 0648-XD024) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4611. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures [Docket No.: 130702583-3999-02] (RIN: 0648-BD40) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4612. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: 130214139-3542-02] (RIN: 0648-XD027) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4613. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Extension of Emergency Fishery Closure Due to the Presence of the Toxin That Causes Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning [Docket No.: 131212999-3999-01] (RIN: 0648-BD84) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4614. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final

rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Several Groundfish Species in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD028) received January 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4615. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Operation of Offshore Oil and Gas Facilities in the U.S. Beaufort Sea [Docket No.: 100217096-1059-02] (RIN: 0648-AY63) received January 15, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4616. A letter from the Branch Chief, Publications and Regulations, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Service's final rule — Exclusion of gain from sale of principal residence (Rev. Rul. 2014-2) received January 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2798. A bill to amend Public Law 106-206 to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to require annual permits and assess annual fees for commercial filming activities on Federal land for film crews of 5 persons or fewer (Rept. 113-335, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2799. A bill to establish the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee to advise the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, hunting, recreational shooting, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-336, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2798 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2799 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BROUN of Georgia:

H.R. 3958. A bill to provide for a one-year extension of the Department of Veterans Affairs pilot program on assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injury; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself and Mr. KILDEE):

H.R. 3959. A bill to establish a Pay It Forward model for funding postsecondary education; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 3960. A bill to provide for an exchange of administrative jurisdiction between the Secretary of the Army and the Secretary of Agriculture involving certain Federal property administered as part of the Chattahoochee National Forest, but permitted to the Secretary of the Army for Camp Frank D. Merrill, and certain Army Corps of Engineers property adjacent to Lake Lanier in Gainesville, Georgia; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3961. A bill to provide Israel a license exception to the Export Administration Regulations currently made available to 36 other nations; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. DAINES:

H.R. 3962. A bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to ensure that amounts are made available for projects to provide recreational public access, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 3963. A bill to provide for the upgrade of the vehicle fleet of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. VALADAO (for himself, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. COOK, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. NUNES, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. HUNTER):

H.R. 3964. A bill to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 3965. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude major professional sports leagues from qualifying as tax-exempt organizations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PIERLUISI (for himself, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. FALCOMA, Ms. GRAYSON, and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 3966. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for equitable treatment of residents of the territories with respect to low-income subsidies under the Medicare prescription drug benefit program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PIERLUISI (for himself and Mr. GRAYSON):

H.R. 3967. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the increased

limitation on the cover over of the tax on distilled spirits to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PIERLUISI (for himself and Mr. GRAYSON):

H.R. 3968. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the deduction allowable with respect to income attributable to domestic production activities in Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio (for himself and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa):

H.R. 3969. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prevent the abuse of dextromethorphan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 3970. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the denial of deduction for certain excessive employee remuneration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Mr. FARR, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 3971. A bill to authorize a national grant program for on-the-job training; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 3972. A bill to prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of an individual's status or history of unemployment; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DESANTIS (for himself, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. SALMON, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. STEWART, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. POSEY, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. LANKFORD, and Mr. STUTZMAN):

H.R. 3973. A bill to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 3974. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve the TRICARE Program for adult children of members and former members of the uniformed services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OWENS:

H.R. 3975. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage for low vision devices under Medicare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUIZ (for himself, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. STEWART, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. HONDA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BENISHEK, Ms. CHU, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. WALZ, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 3976. A bill to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural

Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3977. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow 529 tuition programs with respect to elementary and secondary education expenses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SIREs (for himself, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART):

H.R. 3978. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to establish a pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure credit assistance pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. JENKINS (for herself and Mr. POMPEO):

H. Con. Res. 79. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 155th anniversary of the House of Representatives' rejection of the Leecompton Constitution of the Territory of Kansas; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself and Ms. LEE of California):

H. Con. Res. 80. Concurrent resolution expressing support for designation of January 2014 as "National Blood Donor Month"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. LEE of California (for herself and Mr. SERRANO):

H. Res. 466. A resolution supporting a moratorium on the sale of historic post office buildings; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HOLT (for himself, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. HONDA):

H. Res. 467. A resolution expressing support for designation of February 12, 2014, as "Darwin Day" and recognizing the importance of science in the betterment of humanity; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Ms. ESTY):

H. Res. 468. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that gun violence is a public health issue and Congress should enact by the end of the 113th Congress comprehensive Federal legislation that protects the Second Amendment and keeps communities safe and healthy, including expanding enforceable background checks for all commercial gun sales, improving the mental health system in the United States, and making gun trafficking and straw purchasing a Federal crime; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SIREs (for himself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. SARBANES):

H. Res. 469. A resolution supporting the scope and objectives of Greece's Presidency of the Council of the European Union; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consider-

ation of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BROUN of Georgia:
H.R. 3958.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution (Clauses 12, 13, 14, and 16), which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; and to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia.

By Ms. BONAMICI:
H.R. 3959.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 3960.

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

Article IV, §3, Clause 2, The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Mr. GRAYSON:

H.R. 3961.

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

Article I, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. DAINES:

H.R. 3962.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 3963.

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

Clause 7 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. VALADAO:

H.R. 3964.

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

Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of section 8 and clause 7 of section 9 of article I, of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 3965.

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

Article 1 Section 8 US Constitution

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 3966.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 3967.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises and to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 3968.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises and to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 3969.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 3970.

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

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 3971.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1:

"Congress shall have Power To [. . .] provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . ."

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 3972.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. DESANTIS:

H.R. 3973.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 3974.

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

Article 1 Section 8

" . . . and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States . . ."

" . . . to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers . . ."

This legislation seeks to extend the TRICARE eligibility of military dependent children to age 26. Therefore, it will affect the common defense and general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. OWENS:

H.R. 3975.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 3976.

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

Clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3977.

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

Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution as well as the 16th Amendment.

By Mr. SIRES:

H.R. 3978.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

- H.R. 38: Mr. HANNA and Mr. NUGENT.
- H.R. 164: Mr. WELCH, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. YARMUTH.
- H.R. 352: Mr. JONES.
- H.R. 455: Mr. NOLAN and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
- H.R. 477: Mr. DESJARLAIS.
- H.R. 543: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
- H.R. 609: Mrs. BUSTOS.
- H.R. 658: Mrs. ELLMERS.
- H.R. 666: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
- H.R. 676: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
- H.R. 721: Mr. JOYCE.
- H.R. 831: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. VIS-CLOSKY.
- H.R. 863: Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. DELBENE, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
- H.R. 942: Ms. DELBENE and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
- H.R. 1000: Ms. KAPTUR.
- H.R. 1010: Mr. POLIS and Mr. GALLEGO.
- H.R. 1339: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
- H.R. 1397: Mr. KILDEE.
- H.R. 1462: Mr. RUNYAN.
- H.R. 1554: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
- H.R. 1593: Mr. VEASEY.
- H.R. 1690: Mr. MCINTYRE.
- H.R. 1717: Mrs. BACHMANN.
- H.R. 1774: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

- H.R. 1835: Ms. KUSTER.
- H.R. 1984: Mr. GUTHRIE.
- H.R. 2037: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
- H.R. 2149: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. RUSH.
- H.R. 2195: Mr. TAKANO.
- H.R. 2220: Mr. MARCHANT.
- H.R. 2291: Mr. KING of New York, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. GRIMM.
- H.R. 2333: Mr. HECK of Washington and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
- H.R. 2429: Mr. BROWN of Georgia, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. COFFMAN.
- H.R. 2475: Mr. PETERS of California.
- H.R. 2511: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
- H.R. 2553: Ms. KAPTUR.
- H.R. 2566: Mr. TAKANO.
- H.R. 2567: Mr. TAKANO.
- H.R. 2607: Mr. LOEBBESACK, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. YARMUTH.
- H.R. 2682: Mr. COFFMAN.
- H.R. 2692: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
- H.R. 2841: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
- H.R. 2863: Ms. LEE of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. RUSH, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. RICHMOND.
- H.R. 2955: Ms. DELAURO.
- H.R. 3086: Mr. HARPER, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. RAHALL.
- H.R. 3097: Mr. HIMES.
- H.R. 3116: Mr. SESSIONS.
- H.R. 3179: Mr. GUTHRIE.
- H.R. 3243: Mr. TAKANO.
- H.R. 3334: Ms. TITUS and Ms. LOFGREN.
- H.R. 3361: Mr. LYNCH.
- H.R. 3395: Mr. CAPUANO.
- H.R. 3486: Mr. COFFMAN.
- H.R. 3494: Mr. McDERMOTT, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
- H.R. 3505: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
- H.R. 3530: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
- H.R. 3549: Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
- H.R. 3555: Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. GALLEGO.
- H.R. 3578: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. COBLE.
- H.R. 3635: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. LATTA, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. COBLE, Mr. SEN-SENRENNER, Mr. LANCE, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. COTTON, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. BOUSTANY.
- H.R. 3689: Mr. LATTA and Mrs. HARTZLER.
- H.R. 3717: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. DENT.
- H.R. 3722: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee and Mr. GUTHRIE.

- H.R. 3724: Mr. DEFAZIO.
- H.R. 3725: Mr. HONDA and Mr. CHABOT.
- H.R. 3732: Mr. WOMACK.
- H.R. 3870: Ms. CHU and Ms. LOFGREN.
- H.R. 3891: Mr. HECK of Nevada.
- H.R. 3896: Mr. HUNTER.
- H.R. 3899: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. COOPER, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
- H.R. 3902: Mr. RUSH.
- H.R. 3912: Mr. MICHAUD.
- H.J. Res. 56: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. SARBANES, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H. Con. Res. 27: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
- H. Res. 19: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
- H. Res. 447: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. PASCRELL.
- H. Res. 457: Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. SPEIER, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. SHUSTER

H.R. 3590, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. GOODLATTE

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Judiciary in H.R. 3590 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

H.R. 1635: Ms. BASS.

SENATE—Wednesday, January 29, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, ultimate judge of the universe, You have been our dwelling place in all generations, and we are sustained by Your steadfast love. Today, surround our Senators with the shield of Your favor as they labor to keep America strong. Lord, teach them to be obedient to Your commands, doing Your good will as Your presence fills them with joy. Manifest Your power through their labors so that this Nation will be exalted by righteousness. Help our Senators to put their trust in You and to recapture their trust in one another as Your angels guard them in all their ways.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 29, 2014.

To the Senate:

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

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was happy to move this on behalf of Chairman SANDERS, who has put together this bill which is supported by 25 different service organizations.

Following my remarks this morning and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with the majority controlling the first half and Republicans the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 1926, the flood insurance legislation.

We were able to reach an agreement for several amendments. All amendments must be offered by 3 p.m. today.

Multiple rollcall votes are possible today. Senators will be notified when these votes are scheduled.

OUR ECONOMY

Mr. President, over the last 45 months America's private sector has added more than 8 million jobs. We heard that from the President last night. The stock market has soared. Productivity has never in the history of our country been higher, and Americans have even started building and buying homes again. But while the economy is gaining momentum, for far too many Americans the hopeful headlines don't match the grim reality.

For the last decades middle-class Americans have seen their paychecks shrink even as corporate profits climb and the wealthiest are doing better and better. As the President said last night, there is nothing wrong with people making money. We are all happy they are doing well. But the average CEO's income is multiplied 250 times, and the people who work for that CEO are making less and less every year. That has happened during the last years. The richest 1 percent have had their wealth increased by three times while during that same period of time the middle class has had its earning capacity drop 10 percent. Average Americans are working even longer and harder than they were 30 years ago and receiving less in the way of remuneration.

The difference is this. Their hard work isn't paying off the way it used to. We must change that, and we can change that. It is not too late to ensure that Americans' success is determined by the strength of their spirit instead of the size of their bank account.

Fifty years ago, in his first State of the Union Address, Lyndon Johnson declared unconditional war on poverty. We have seen a lot of news accounts on that anniversary during the last month or so. But here is what Lyndon Johnson said 50 years ago:

Unfortunately, many Americans live on the outskirts of hope . . . because of their poverty. . . . Our task is to help replace their despair with opportunity.

Thanks to the innovative programs created five decades ago, including Medicare and school lunch programs, the poverty rate has fallen 40 percent since the 1960s. But there is so much work to do.

The 67 richest Americans' net worth increased \$2 billion on average last year. But during that same time, 1 million more American children dropped into poverty.

So there is much more to do. Too many American families still live on the outskirts of hope, struggling to survive, and falling well short of the American dream.

Last night President Obama laid out a plan to breathe new life into this country's struggling middle class. The President charted a course to build on the economic progress we have made over the last 45 months and to guarantee that progress is felt by every hard-working American. He challenged us—the Congress—to work with him to replace despair with opportunity. President Obama called for common-sense investments in our future—in investments that have been deferred for too long.

If America hopes to rebuild and maintain a world-class economy, we must build the 21st century infrastructure to support that economy and a cutting-edge energy supply to power it. We must prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs by ensuring a higher education is within reach for every promising student. We must give small businesses and manufacturers the support they need to thrive, and we must ensure every American earns a living wage during their working years and has the opportunity to retire comfortably.

I support the President's action to raise the minimum wage for private contractors who do work for the government, such as janitors, food servers, dish washers, and construction workers. But no American working a full-

time job should live in poverty, and Congress must act to raise the minimum wage for all our Nation's workers.

A strong middle class—and an opportunity for every American to enter that middle class—is the key to this Nation's prosperity.

Last night the President also asked us to renew our commitment to the principles on which this country was founded—the principles which made this country great: Fairness—basic fairness. We must make certain that every American, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race or income, has the opportunity to a full and equal participation in the workplace.

There are no guarantees in life. Not everyone succeeds. But every American deserves a fair shot at that success.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to say a word this morning about the President's State of the Union speech. Let me say that I think Congresswoman McMORRIS RODGERS did a great job representing our party and the people of Washington State's Fifth District last night.

Frankly, I wish the President had laid out an agenda half as hopeful as the one she did because the State of the Union address is always an important moment for our country. It is an opportunity for the two parties to come together with the President, members of the Supreme Court, and other government officials to show a kind of unity even in the midst of the great debates we have here every single day. It is a worthy tradition.

Last night the President had a real chance to unite the Nation around a forward-looking agenda. He had a huge opportunity to reach to the middle and chart a new path—at a time when nearly 70 percent of Americans say the country is either stagnant or worse off now than when the President took office—that we are on the wrong path. It could have been a legacy-making moment. Instead, it was the same tired boilerplate we hear year after year.

When you peel back all the adjectives and the anecdotes, all the platitudes and nods to the left, what remains for the middle class? Largely, the same tired policies that led us to this point—the same failed agenda with its legacy of stagnant unemployment, lower incomes, growing inequality, and crumbling pathways to the future. The only difference is that now the President wants to keep doing the same old thing, but without as much input from the people's elected representatives in Congress.

It is basically all of the same policies, less of that pesky democratic accountability. The President didn't talk

about embracing a positive new agenda last night. He didn't talk about reforming our Tax Code in a way that would drive private-sector growth and job creation. He didn't talk about finding serious ways to start reducing a massive \$17 trillion debt that threatens to suffocate our economy and crush the dreams of our children. He didn't talk about saving Social Security and Medicare or about streamlining and slimming the size of government or about setting America's entrepreneurs and small businesses free to dream and to succeed.

As for energy, the President's plans seem to boil down to more regulation and new taxes on energy production.

For all of his talk of phones and pens, he didn't even mention using his pen to sign off on the Keystone Pipeline. It is the single, simplest action he could have taken to create jobs soon, and it is actually a project which would create jobs right away. It still can, if the President will just lead. Unions support it; powerful members of his own party support it. The American people overwhelmingly support it. But there is one small group that doesn't support it: Special interests on the far left. The special interests on the far left won last night, and the middle class lost.

There is another big issue where the President turned his back on the middle class, and that of course is ObamaCare. The State of the Union was the President's opportunity to finally admit his mistakes and the painful consequences which have affected so many in Kentucky and around the country. It was a chance to call for a fresh, bipartisan beginning and to start over with true health reform that could really help middle-class families. Instead, he simply doubled down on failed policies.

I know he tried to paint a rosy picture of life under this law in his speech, and I suppose that is natural. But he must know it is not a picture that reflects reality. He must know that Americans suffering under this law aren't going to buy the spin, and he must know that trying to sell Kentucky's ObamaCare bureaucracy as some kind of success story is, to the thousands and thousands of Kentuckians being hurt by it—well, it is, frankly, insulting.

It is insulting to the quarter-million Kentuckians who have had their plans canceled because of this law. It is insulting to the families struggling to afford premiums that have on average increased by almost half across Kentucky. It is insulting to the taxpayers who have been forced to subsidize—to the tune of about \$250 million in Kentucky alone—ObamaCare's restricted access to doctors and hospitals. It has a crushing effect on families and skyrocketing costs.

So look. It is clear. President Obama missed the mark last night.

On some issues he actually said the right things, such as on Trade Promotion Authority. That is a place where we can work together to create more American jobs, as long as the President can convince his own party to work constructively with us to do that. What he didn't say last night is that the only thing stopping us from creating more trade jobs is his own party. So we will see if he actually follows through on trade.

But overall, the President mostly refused to budge from his failed policies. He refused to reach across the aisle in a way that would lead to immediate job growth opportunities. That is distressing news for our country. It is especially disheartening for the middle class, and it is disappointing for those of us who actually want to get big things done for our constituents, for those who do want to work with the President, who want to collaborate on smart, bipartisan policies that could finally—finally—get Americans back to work after years of this failed Obama economy. But we cannot do it without President Obama. He has to lead on trade, jobs, energy, the economy—whatever the issue.

We are not going to give up. We are not going to stop trying to help him to see that Americans are calling for a new direction, for a forward leaning agenda that actually puts the middle class first and leaves tired leftwing ideas where they belong—in the history books. And when the President is ready to work with us, he should know we will be here waiting for him. We have always been here, actually, and many Members of his party, with other helpful ideas, have been here too, waiting for him—Democrats with smart ideas the President has not been willing to consider so far.

All he needs to do is pick up the phone. If he is willing to actually work in a serious way with Members of both parties, we will send him some things to sign with that pen too.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, earlier this month we commemorated the 50th anniversary of President Johnson's declaration of "unconditional war on poverty." That war on poverty was a massively successful initiative. It helped tens of millions of Americans lift themselves out of poverty, reduced hardship, empowered people to build new opportunities for themselves and their future.

We see some of the residue of this. Today, food stamps ensure that children do not go to bed hungry at night. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act insisted that all children, regardless of background, can learn and have an equal opportunity for education. Legal Services helps people with limited resources seek protection from exploitation. Low-income families fight poverty in their own communities by helping to lead community action agencies. The war on poverty and the Great Society encompassed a tremendous list of achievements that I cannot even begin to do justice to today.

However, we know we still have more work to do. Too many of those successful programs and policies have been reduced or rolled back under subsequent Presidents and Congresses. What is more, our economy has changed and in fundamental ways, with decades of waste, stagnation, and rising income inequality.

Now we must urgently turn our attention to policies that will ensure that working families can still get ahead in America. We must recognize that tens of millions of working Americans struggle to put food on the table, a roof over their head, and pay their bills every month. This is a fundamental failing of our economy. It is something we not only have a moral obligation to fix but we have the ability to fix. We can do so first by raising the minimum wage, one of our Nation's simplest and most effective means of lifting working families out of poverty.

I am so pleased President Obama has taken the first step in this effort. Last night at the State of the Union, he announced he would issue an Executive order that will require future Federal contracts to provide wages of at least \$10.10 an hour to our Nation's contract workers for the Federal Government. I applaud President Obama's bold step to ensure that the Federal Government is a leader in promoting good jobs that pay fair wages. I think most Americans would agree that taxpayer dollars should not support companies that pay

poverty wages. This Executive order is a strong step in the right direction. But now we in the Congress have work to do, to raise the minimum wage for the rest of American workers.

Again, I am so grateful for President Obama taking a strong leadership position, as he did last night, in calling for Congress to expeditiously work to increase the minimum wage.

We need to agree in this country that if you work hard and play by the rules you can earn enough money to support your family, keep a roof over your head, put some money away for a rainy day, have a secure retirement. The minimum wage played a critical role in doing that, which is why Presidents and elected leaders from both parties in the past have supported fair increases in the minimum wage. From time to time, we adjusted the minimum wage on a bipartisan basis to help working families keep up with inflation and the changing economy. But recently we have heard a new and disturbing set of talking points from our friends on the other side of the aisle. They claim that raising the minimum wage does not actually reduce poverty. They argue the minimum wage workers do not come from poor families or that no one stays at a minimum wage job long enough to be trapped in poverty.

Those all sound good on the talk shows, but the facts simply prove those statements are not true. The fact is a majority of people who would benefit from an increase in the minimum wage come from low-income households. Many of them have been trapped in jobs at or near the minimum wage for years and years at a time. Indeed, when you listen more closely, the offensive underlying premise of all these arguments is that anyone can rise out of poverty if they just work harder.

Tell that to Nereida Castro of Des Moines. She and her husband both work minimum wage jobs in the fast food and construction industries. They have five children to support. But Nereida says they live day to day because of their bills and expenses. She said her family "has to limit many things to give to our kids to only make rent, to cover expenses. We have to limit everything."

A raise in the minimum wage would allow her to "live a life where I don't feel like I'm drowning."

Tell that tale about "you just have to work harder" to Nancy Salgado, 27-year-old single mother with two kids, ages 2 and 7. She worked at McDonald's for the past 10 years but makes only \$8.25 an hour. That is the minimum wage in her own State of Illinois. She struggles to be able to pay for necessities such as milk and shoes for her kids. She recently confronted the president of McDonald's USA, saying:

I'm a single mother of two. It's really hard for me to feed my 2 kids and struggle day to

day. . . . Do you think this is fair, that I have to be making \$8.25 an hour when I have been working at McDonald's for 10 years?

For Senators and Representatives sitting comfortably here in Washington to preach to working mothers such as Nancy, struggling hard to get ahead, working 10 years at McDonald's—to tell them they are not working hard enough, that is beyond offensive.

No one disputes that hard work is a big part of the path out of poverty, but you also need a basic foundation of economic security to start building that better life. How are you supposed to pay for a community college course on \$7.25 an hour? How are you supposed to find a better job when you are standing in line at a food bank because your wages won't cover all your household expenses, and neither will your food stamps? How are you supposed to build a better life for your kids when you can't even find them safe childcare while you are at work? They just can't get ahead if their job traps them in poverty.

It has not always been this way. We used to agree that minimum wage works. People who perform some of the most difficult and essential jobs in our society should not have to live in poverty. The minimum wage kept families above the poverty line in the 1960s and 1970s. In today's dollars, a minimum wage worker in 1968—when the minimum wage was 120 percent of the poverty line—took home \$10.71 an hour or \$22,000 a year working full time.

Since the 1980s, the minimum wage has not kept up. Today the minimum wage is about 80 percent of the level of poverty. This is how far we have come down. The same family whose breadwinner worked at a job making minimum wage in 1968—look at where they are—would be way below the poverty line today. It is no wonder working people have to turn to the safety net of food stamps and all other kinds of things just to help them get by.

A recent study found that our taxpayers have to pick up the tab for millions of working families to the tune of about \$240 billion a year for food stamps, Medicaid/CHIP, earned-income tax credit, and temporary assistance to needy families. I wish to make it clear that these are not people sitting at home watching TV. These are people who work, but they are making minimum wage. What we want and what they want is not to have the Government and the taxpayers pick up the tab. They want to be able to support themselves with the jobs they have.

We have to rectify this. My legislation, the Minimum Wage Fairness Act, which I introduced—along with Majority Leader REID and Congressman GEORGE MILLER on the House side—will raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three annual steps and will get it above the poverty line by 2016 for the first time in over 20 years. That is

what we are talking about—getting this minimum wage up.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle sometime soon so we can bring this bill forward. I hope we can do it on a bipartisan basis and recognize it is indeed time to get families—working families—out of poverty by paying them a decent minimum wage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Washington.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, last night President Obama laid out an optimistic vision for a great nation that must never stop working to become even greater.

When the President gave his first State of the Union in February of 2009, our economy was losing over 700,000 jobs a month. Wall Street firms had collapsed and taken Main Street businesses with them and economists were not sure how deep it would go or if it would tip from a great recession into a true depression.

Families across the country were huddled around kitchen tables talking late into the night trying to figure out how they were going to stay in their homes or send their kids to college or even put food on their table. People who had gone to work every single day of their adult lives and had not had to update their resume in 20 years didn't know how they were going to pull their lives together if they got that pink slip. Workers who had jobs they thought were secure were panicking knowing that if things continued to go wrong, nobody was truly safe.

A lot has changed in 5 years. It has not been perfect. It certainly has not been smooth. We were not able to do nearly enough, and we still need to do far more.

Last night President Obama was able to talk about the progress we have made since he inherited the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression. He was able to talk about the 46 months of straight private sector growth, about an unemployment rate that has come down from dangerous heights. He talked about the work that still remains to help millions of workers still trying to get back on the job.

He articulated a vision not just for bolstering our still fragile economic recovery but also for continuing the great American tradition of leaving our children with a stronger nation than the one we inherited from our parents—a vision of a country that makes sure every child has an opportunity to work hard, contribute to their community, and succeed to the best of their ability. He spoke of a country that doesn't just have economic growth at the top that may or

may not trickle down but that has broad-based prosperity built from the middle out and a vision of a country that offers workers and families the stability and security they expect when they put in a lifetime of hard work.

President Obama talked about ways he is going to make this year a year of action, and I know that is what the American people are expecting. Some of that will come through executive action and public-private partnerships, but a lot of what we need to do depends on us in Congress.

Over the past few years Congress has been lurching, as we all know, from crisis to crisis, stumbling from one artificial deadline to the next, and too often engaging in petty partisan bickering instead of solving problems for the families we all represent.

At the end of last year, House Budget Committee Chairman PAUL RYAN and I worked together to show the American people it didn't have to be this way. When we sat down together in a budget conference that Democrats had been trying to start for 7 months, we faced an awful lot of skepticism. Many people were hoping we could reach a deal and avoid another crisis. However, they were far more confident that this budget group would not succeed where so many others had failed.

Chairman RYAN and I decided to listen to each other. We searched for common ground and we made some compromises. We knew we were never going to agree on everything, but we didn't think that should mean we couldn't agree on anything. We wanted a deal, not a fight, and we were able to put partisanship aside to do the right thing for the American people.

Our 2-year budget deal was a step in the right direction. We proved that bipartisanship was possible in this divided government, that Democrats and Republicans could break through the bitterness and rancor and work together and reach an agreement. That deal rolled back the damaging across-the-board cuts and prevented a government shutdown. It moved our country forward, but we can't stop now because the vast majority of Americans understand our economy simply is not working the way it needs for people like them.

We need to do more to expand economic opportunities for the families and small business owners and communities across the country who are looking to us to get this right. They see the wealthiest Americans and biggest corporations continue to take advantage of an unfair Tax Code filled with special interest loopholes and giveaways. They see fewer and fewer opportunities for workers to find a job or earn enough for a stable middle-class life or send their kids to college. They watch as their government cuts back on critical investments in long-term and

broad-based economic growth, and they want more than partisan bickering from their elected representatives. They want real action.

We will spend a lot of time over the next few months talking about many of the policies President Obama talked about last night, but I wish to focus on a few he mentioned that impact women and their economic opportunities in particular.

We need to face the reality that working women across the country—and working moms in particular—are struggling to find work that pays a living wage at a time when they are balancing being both the breadwinner and caretaker in so many families. When we talk about creating opportunity in America, we need to focus on the fact that women continue to be paid 77 cents for every \$1 a man earns, and they make up two-thirds of all minimum-wage workers. We need policy changes that focus on all workers but also help women catch up if we are truly going to create economic opportunity that expands the middle class and strengthens all of our families.

I was very glad to hear President Obama announce last night that he will be raising the minimum wage for Federal contractors. We need to build on that to give millions more women and men in this country access to a raise and make sure that working hard and having a job is rewarded. This is something we will be moving on in Congress in the near future, and I am hoping Republicans decide to put politics aside on this and work with us to get this done.

I was also very glad to hear President Obama double down on his commitment to a national preschool initiative that would not only help our youngest children and pay dividends in future economic growth but would empower millions of women who would be able to go to work and give back to their communities. This is not just a policy for me, it is personal. It is what got me into politics in the first place, and it is something that has driven me ever since.

As a former preschool teacher, I saw in my own classroom that when young children get the attention they need early, they will be miles ahead of their peers on the path to success. I saw the students I had who had been taught to simply raise their hand to ask a question or stand in line to go to recess; they were the ones who were more prepared to tackle a full curriculum when they got to school.

It is not just my personal experience. Study after study after study has made it clear that beginning to educate our children at an early age means they will be less likely to be held back, less likely to require special education, less likely to engage in criminal activity, and ultimately they will be more likely to graduate from high school and earn more.

Investing in preschool is overwhelmingly supported, and it is supported by the American people. In fact, the most recent polls show that over 80 percent of Americans believe we should pursue this across the country. It is strongly supported by the many people who truly understand the impact it will have on the ground.

I have talked to law enforcement officials who said they believe that early education is the key to reducing crime. Business and innovation and education leaders have seen the long-term impact that investing in early education has on our children and on our communities. We have to make these investments in our children and our future and Congress needs to act. Every day we wait is another opportunity lost. These are just a few of the policies President Obama talked about that I am ready to get work on.

The President also talked about the clear need to reform our immigration system, support our veterans and our wounded warriors, reform our bloated and unfair Tax Code, and invest in our Nation's infrastructure priorities. The American people are now expecting their elected officials to work together to tackle those issues, and many more, over the coming months and years.

I am at the table. I am ready to build on that bipartisan foundation we laid with the budget deal, but I am very worried that while the President and many of us in Congress are talking about working together to move the country forward, we have some Republicans who are already talking about dragging us backward into another needless crisis. That is absurd. We went through this just a couple of months ago. There is no reason for Republicans to put this country through this again.

Republican leaders proved at the end of last year that they were not going to actually follow the tea party off the cliff and let the government default. After a lot of drama and partisan posturing and economic pain for millions of families, Republicans dropped their demands and joined Democrats to reopen the government and avoid a default.

Republican leaders have said they are not going to let the country default this time either, but they now seem unable to stop playing games with this issue to make the tea party happy.

I will be very clear on the floor: Democrats are not going to negotiate over whether the government should pay its bills. If the Republicans continue down this path of empty threats and taking hostages and dangerous demands, they will get exactly what they got last time they tried to play politics with our economic recovery—nothing.

I call on my Republican colleagues to stop working on a wish list of debt limit demands and hostages and stop thinking about the new threats they are going to make to our economy and

to the American people and join us at the table to work on the real issues we need to address.

Democrats want to work with Republicans to tackle our challenges fairly and responsibly. That is what the President talked about last night. It is what we are here to talk about today. But as Chairman RYAN and I showed just a few months ago, the way for both sides to get what they want is through compromise and negotiation, not hostage-taking and not threats.

The American people expect us to work together. They want more deals and fewer fights, and I know Democrats are ready to get to work. I am hopeful Republicans will work with us to make this year of action in Congress a reality.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I was privileged to be in our capital city of Des Moines 2 days ago, on Monday, January 27, and I was privileged to visit a lot of my friends in the Iowa legislature. I was in the Iowa House on Monday morning when a resolution was brought up by Representative Dan Muhlbauer and read and adopted unanimously. It was a resolution requesting the U.S. Congress to immediately enact a new Federal food, farm, and jobs bill. I won't read it all, but ultimately I will ask unanimous consent to have this resolution printed in the RECORD. The resolution basically points out how much a farm bill means to our fellow Iowans.

The resolution states:

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives—

That is the Iowa House of Representatives—

that with the reconvening of the United States Congress after its holiday recess, the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate should enact a new food, farm, and jobs bill with all possible speed but no later than January 31 of 2014.

I guess the good news I have now for Representative Muhlbauer and his colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the Iowa legislature is that we heard them. Under the great leadership of Senator STABENOW, we now have a farm bill ready to come to the floor after the House passes it, I hope sometime today. We hope to have it on the Senate floor maybe as early as tomorrow—if not, the first of the week—to get the job done. I think everybody has signed off on it. It is a good farm bill. It has taken a long time and a lot of hard work to get there, but a lot of good people worked together on both sides of the aisle in both the Senate and in the House to get it done. So I thank Representative Muhlbauer and his col-

leagues for holding our feet to the fire and sending us this resolution.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD House Resolution No. 102.

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

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 102

Whereas, the United States Congress regularly establishes agricultural and food policy in an omnibus farm bill in a bipartisan spirit of cooperation, exemplified by the federal Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-246 which originally was to expire in 2012, but was extended by the 112th Congress in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, Pub. L. No. 112-240; and

Whereas, a new food, farm, and jobs bill is critical to maintaining a strong agricultural economy and an abundant food supply that benefits all Americans, including by providing programs relating to farm commodity support, horticulture, livestock, conservation, nutrition assistance, trade and international food aid, agricultural research, farm credit, rural development, bioenergy, forestry, and innovative strategies to revitalize this nation's rural economy by creating jobs in small towns and rural communities; and

Whereas, in Iowa, agricultural producers have faced a multitude of disasters, including drought, flood, and blizzard conditions which have been alleviated by disaster assistance under farm bill programs; and

Whereas, during 2013, the United States Senate and House of Representatives have been engaged in prolonged negotiations to enact a new food, farm, and jobs bill that is now in conference committee which is considering differences between the Senate version, titled the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013 (S. 954), and the House version, titled the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management (FARRM) Act of 2013 (H.R. 2642); and

Whereas, without the passage of a new food, farm, and jobs bill the United States will be subject to previously enacted permanent law, including commodity price support statutes effective in 1949; and

Whereas, the prolonged delay in passing a new food, farm, and jobs bill has created uncertainty for agricultural producers and will negatively impact the nation's overseas trade; and

Whereas, without the immediate passage of a new food, farm, and jobs bill consumers will increasingly suffer economic consequences; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That with the reconvening of the United States Congress after its holiday recess, the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate should enact a new food, farm, and jobs bill with all possible speed but no later than January 31, 2014; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate and the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Honorable Debbie Stabenow, Chairwoman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the United States Senate, and the Honorable Frank Lucas, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture of the United States House of Representatives; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to each member of the

Iowa congressional delegation; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Mr. HARKIN. I thank the Chair and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, as someone who has practiced medicine in Wyoming for about a quarter of a century, and as medical director of the Wyoming health fairs to bring low-cost blood screenings to people all around Wyoming, I have been very involved in the health care issue and in actually helping to provide health care for people.

It was ironic last night during the State of the Union Address to listen to the President talk about health care as if he had some understanding of how it all worked. It became evident to me, sadly, that the President put forth some bold proposals and then came out with a 2,700-page bill that I think many people who voted for never read, didn't understand, didn't know the harm it was going to do to American families, and then the President last night was talking about it in the State of the Union Address in ways that it is actually helping people. It may be helping some, but it is hurting many more. It is not just the Web site. The Web site is the tip of the iceberg. There is huge damage being done to families.

Today I have a letter with me that just came in from a family in Wyoming to talk about how much this is harming this person's individual family. A man from Upton, WY, a small community, somebody who tries to get up every day, go to work, take care of his family, put food on the table. Yet his whole family is being harmed by this law the President has put into place, forced down the throats of the American people on a party-line vote.

So let me start with the letter:

Opening up my insurance letter today has lead me to write you this letter. I'm usually the type of person that just keeps trudging along—

I think all of us have constituents who are like this—

and take things as they come. I'm a long-time resident of this beautiful state and graduated from the University of Wyoming—as so many people have done—

I'm married and have 4 young kids from ages 9 to 3.

He has four young kids ages 9 to 3. He said:

We're a healthy and active family. Non-smokers. Go to doctors for emergency care only. Go to the chiropractor and dentist regularly. I have a high deductible insurance plan.

It is a \$10,000 deductible, which is high. He says he is paying \$584 a month

for that. I wish the President of the United States would get letters such as this and read them and understand the impact he is having on people's lives and how much his plan is hurting American families.

Justin writes:

Now, due to the current healthcare climate, I'm going to have to pay \$945 a month.

So he will be paying a lot more. He was paying \$584, now \$945 a month. He says:

And they conveniently raised my deductible to \$11,000.

He had a \$10,000 deductible, which is high. They have raised that, and raised his premiums from \$584 to \$945 a month. He says:

How does Obama expect the middle class to stretch their budgets every month to get healthcare coverage?

That is what middle-class Americans want to know. How does this President expect the middle class to stretch their budgets every month to get health care coverage?

He goes on:

How can we get rid of ObamaCare?

That is a question I was asked repeatedly around the State of Wyoming last week.

This gentleman goes on to say:

Every chance you get, please vote to repeal ObamaCare.

The President last night ridiculed people such as Justin—ridiculed him—saying, Well, sure, vote over and over and over. This man from Wyoming is saying: Every chance you get, vote to repeal ObamaCare.

He also said:

Every chance you get please help the middle class.

Every chance you get, please help the middle class. We are not seeing that from this President, this administration, and those who supported these policies which have hurt the middle class.

He said:

Thank you and I appreciate your leadership for the state of Wyoming. Now I'll go back to working hard to pay my insurance bill, (and probably some for the people that Obama is trying to help.)

Finally he says:

Obama stated to the public that our premiums were not going to rise. Thanks for listening to me rant.

I don't consider what we are hearing from my friend Justin from Upton, WY, a rant. I hear it as a cry for help due to a health care law the President and the Democrats forced down the throats of the American people against their will. Many people who voted for it never read it, didn't understand it, and I really have strong doubts the President himself understands the health care law, what is in it, and the damage it continues to do to middle-class Americans and families all across this country.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, last night in the State of the Union Message, the President looked at the Congress again and said: You need to be for my plan unless you have another plan, and suggested once again that we have never had other plans. I don't know in a handful of minutes that I can do justice to the other plans out there, but I can tell my colleagues there were other alternatives that were filed in legislation and that were debated in 2009. Clearly, today's experiences, one of which has been shared by a family from Wyoming, would be different experiences if we had looked at those other plans.

Let me very quickly respond to the President when he asked, What are your ideas, and remind him again of what the ideas were that were proposed by people who thought we had the best health care system in the world but thought it could be improved. Some thought there were people who did not have the access they needed and there were rules that could be changed to make a difference. Here is what some of them are.

One idea is to allow small business health plans. Most people get their insurance at work and they like what they have. Eighty-five percent of the people who had insurance last year got insurance at work and well over 90 percent of them thought what they had at work was good and met their needs. For years we have talked about ways to try to expand that so people, whether their association is the farm bureau or some other group they are associated with, where they can, through small businesses or associated health plans, get their health care plan that way, so they too become members of a bigger group that competes for health insurance through that group.

No. 2, expand coverage for young adults. The President said last night that 3 million of the people have been added of the—he thought maybe 12 million; I haven't seen that figure yet. A few days ago Senator REID said it was 9 million people, and a third of the people who had been added did so by staying on their parent's health care a little bit longer. That was the most uninsured group. The only person who filed that legislation in the House as the principal sponsor was me—to let people stay on their insurance. We said age 25, not 26. So I suppose the President added that 1 year to it, or whoever wrote the Affordable Health Care Act. But if that is right—I got the bill out the other day here on the floor—it was 3 pages and 4 lines. If 3 pages have solved 25 to 33 percent of the problem, I guess maybe our side should have come up with 12 pages of legislation and solved the whole problem. This was not something that took 2,600 pages that nobody understood.

If we had that debate today, it would be a much better debate, because people have begun to understand how dangerous it is to deal with the health care of individuals and families.

Medical liability reform makes a big difference in how costs and insurance are impacted and how health care is done.

Increasing insurance flexibility lets people buy insurance across State lines. This is something that was out there as a significant idea that didn't minimize the choices people have, it maximized the places people could look to find out what their family needed.

As to preexisting conditions, we had a system that was dealing with that pretty effectively if a person could get into it—the State high-risk pools. We talked about ways to expand those. Why would that be better than where we are now? If an insurance company, a government—if in some way an entity is making that high-risk pool better—they know they are dealing with individuals who had a preexisting condition. It is not necessary to try to structure everybody else's costs so they pay a lot more just in case people with a preexisting condition become an unreasonable part of an insurance group that an entity is trying to provide for. These programs have been closed as of December 31 in most States. And in every case we have been contacted on, people who had preexisting conditions, were in a high-risk pool, are paying more for insurance with less coverage and, in many cases, can't get their doctor. And these are people who had a preexisting condition so who their doctor was mattered to them. In many cases, they no longer can have that doctor.

Clearly, I don't have time today to respond fully to the President. Whether it is high-risk pools that work better, wellness programs, preventing insurance companies from being able to cancel policies—that didn't require millions of taxpayer dollars; it just requires a rule that said they can't cancel a policy because somebody gets sick. The same as limits on coverage.

As for encouraging health savings accounts, the Affordable Care Act eliminates one of the real tools that was working for families.

As far as more transparency, how do health care providers do and how much do they charge to do it? What are their results and what are their costs?

And income tax treatment so that everybody who buys insurance buys that with dollars that are treated the same way. If the biggest company in America can buy an insurance policy and have it nontaxed, have it tax deductible, so should the individual who buys insurance on their own.

There are all kinds of alternatives out there that would work better that are not nearly as complicated and not nearly as expensive. The President

needs to at least understand there are plenty of competing ideas. His ideas are not the only ideas that will work to make the system work better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, surprisingly, the President didn't talk much about ObamaCare, his signature achievement. The people of Arkansas, the people of America certainly are talking a great deal about it and they are writing a great deal about it also. The reason is because they are so concerned that health care has become an absolute mess.

The President talked about a single mom who was able to resolve the problem of her preexisting conditions. I think we all agree that is something that was desperately needed. I am an optometrist, an eye doctor, and very much aware of the situations people have been put in, in the past. Although the reality is we can fix this problem—problems such as this—without creating a massive bureaucracy, without creating a situation where we have thousands of pages of regulations, and the reality is the unintended consequences of the situation we are in now with ObamaCare is that we have made it unaffordable. We have made it such that millions of Americans simply cannot afford the health insurance they are being offered.

Let me talk about a few people who have written to me to talk about their situation. Jack from Springdale writes:

I just found out recently from my current health insurance provider that my current health insurance policy will be discontinued effective the first of next year, and a replacement policy will be approximately double which will be around \$1,200 per month. My question is, is this what ObamaCare was supposed to do? And if not, what can be done about it?

Leonard and JoAnne write:

This letter comes to you to ask for your needed support to defeat/defund the Affordable Care Act in any way possible.

We recently received notification from Health Advantage of Arkansas that our 2014 monthly premiums increased \$173.70 for a total of \$1,360.06. Our out of pocket max increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000, the primary care physician co-pay increased from \$25 to \$35 and the specialist co-pay increased from \$35 to \$70. If either of us has to visit the ER, that co-pay increased from \$100 to \$250 dollars. The drug co-pay also increased. We are insulted to have to pay for benefits such as maternity, pediatric dental, and drug rehab which we have no need for since we are in our 60s and do not use drugs or alcohol. Health Advantage of Arkansas explained that these changes to our policy and increased costs were due to compliance to ACA.

We have supported you in the past and would like to know what your plan is to relieve Arkansans and other Americans from these additional financial burdens imposed upon us by the Affordable Care Act.

Mary in Little Rock writes that she received a notice that her Medi-Pak

Advantage plan was canceled at the end of last year. She explains:

I had no idea that Obamacare was going to also affect Medicare. Now, to receive comparable coverage for 2014, I will have to pay an additional \$500+ in premiums. This additional cost will definitely place an unfair burden on my finances. What are you & the Senate going to do to correct this situation?

I think Mary asks a very fair question. What are we going to do to correct her situation and the situation of so many others? I think the answer is we need to repeal ObamaCare. We need to put in place a system that does take care of the problems we have but without the bureaucracy, without the tremendous expense, and make health care affordable for all Americans.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague from Arkansas and prior to him those of my colleagues from Missouri and Wyoming—we will be hearing in a minute from my colleague from Nebraska—all of whom are expressing sentiments that are conveyed to them by their constituents in their individual States about the very real and very personal impacts ObamaCare is having on them.

Last night, in the President's State of the Union speech, he sort of glanced over that issue. It is kind of the equivalent of a driveby. He sort of acknowledged the law. He said it is not going to change and if Republicans have better ideas, then come forward with them.

We just heard the Senator from Missouri, Mr. BLUNT, list 10 or 12 things that we think could be done that would be dramatically different and would be a dramatic improvement in a very different approach from what is included in ObamaCare, which is a heavyhanded, government-driven solution to health care, which essentially puts the health care in this country, which is one-sixth of our economy, under political control here in Washington, DC.

As a consequence, what we are seeing out there are higher premiums, higher out-of-pocket costs in the form of deductibles and copays, canceled coverages, and fewer choices when it comes to doctors and hospitals. That has been the real-world impact of the passage of ObamaCare. The President said when he was running for office he was going to reduce health care costs by \$2,500 per family. We now know they have gone up, since he has taken office, by about \$2,500 per family, and they continue to go up all the time.

We hear consistently from our constituents in our individual States, and those stories that are being shared this morning are good examples again of the real-world impact of this law and why it is so important we go back, start over, and do this the right way,

with reforms that actually address the issue of creating more competition, more choice for individuals, allowing market forces in the world of health care as opposed to having this overreaching government approach, which clearly has not worked.

The one thing I and many of us got up and talked about when ObamaCare was being debated was the fact that there was not anything in there that constrained utilization or that put downward pressure on costs. So costs keep going up. That keeps getting passed on. Taxes keep going up. They keep getting passed on. What does that mean? For middle-class families it means higher premiums and higher deductibles, higher copays, and in many cases fewer jobs because that is the impact it is having on the economy, and it worsens the very thing the President says he is most concerned about; that is, the issue of income inequality. Because when you are driving up the cost for consumers in their daily lives—and I would say health care for most people is a very significant cost and I would add energy to that—but those are a couple of things where we have seen policies that have made it more expensive for middle-class Americans to make ends meet. Health care is certainly an example of that.

I would like to share a couple examples from my State. Of course, as has been mentioned earlier by my colleagues, we hear these stories in the form of emails, letters, phone calls coming into our offices. Lest anybody think what we do is done in a vacuum, these are not abstract issues. These are very real personal experiences that people across this country are having.

This is a letter from a constituent in Harrisburg, SD, which is a growing community near Sioux Falls, SD. It is a growing, vibrant community. The letter says:

My wife and I have been fortunate to have become small business owners and entrepreneurs. So far, we have been successful of living the American dream for the last 3 years and have seen great success at what we do.

Unfortunately, with ObamaCare, we are needing to make choices I never thought we would have to make.

Based upon the rates for health insurance, we would be paying approximately \$800 out of pocket per month. Essentially, we are thrown in to make an additional house payment per month, or face a penalty at the end of the year and not have health insurance.

This constituent goes on to say:

Needless to say, I am very disappointed and upset right now. I feel I am being taken advantage of because I am a small business owner and wanted to live the "American Dream."

This next statement is from another constituent who is from Rapid City, and this is in the form of a letter regarding the President's broken promises. He says:

Bottom line is the president lied to us. He said if we like our policy we can keep it. He

said we would be saving around \$2,500 a year. Wrong on both Accounts.

He then concludes:

When our policy expires it will be cancelled and we will have to pay almost triple what we're paying now.

Those are examples from my State of South Dakota, and my colleague from Arkansas shared some examples from his State. I know my colleague, my neighbor from Nebraska, Senator JOHANNNS, hears many of those same stories coming from his State. He represents people very much like those I represent in South Dakota who in many cases make their living the same way and are experiencing the economic consequences of a bad policy, a failed policy, a bad law that was rushed through here, and they now—the American people—unfortunately, are experiencing the adverse impacts of that in their own personal economic lives and, in a broader sense, on our economy nationally. Higher costs, canceled coverages, fewer choices in the form of doctors and hospitals, and fewer jobs for American workers whom we want to get back to work, that is the real-world experience.

There is a better way. The Senator from Missouri talked about many of those ideas. I hope the President would work with us to repeal this bad law and start over in a way that makes sense for the American people and for our health care economy in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNNS. Mr. President, I wish to express my appreciation to Senator BOOZMAN and Senator THUNE for being down here this morning to talk about an issue that is extremely important and an issue we certainly are hearing a lot about in our Senate offices and hearing a lot about when we travel back to our home States; that is, the whole issue of ObamaCare.

The President, of course, mentioned this in his State of the Union last night, and I think he truly hopes he can change the subject here. But the reality is he cannot because so many people are being hurt by this legislation.

Over 4 years ago, when the health care law was being debated, there was one concern that dominated the discussion when we talked to our constituents back home. That concern was cost. They talked about the rising cost of health care and wanted to see what we thought in terms of this law's impact on that. But since this year's rates were posted, it has become absolutely obvious that this law did not hold true to its promise to reduce costs.

Our Nebraska insurance director was asked to comment about this when the rates were coming out. He said: "Basically, the rates are going up." No truer words could have been spoken.

A CNBC headline read: "Consumers say they're shelling out more for health insurance."

But it is not just those headlines or the opinion of our director of insurance. It is what is happening to real people in their lives.

A father from just outside Omaha, NE, wrote a letter to me, and he said this: In 2013, his family's flexible spending account was cut from \$5,000 a year to \$2,500 a year as a result of the health care law.

If there was one thing people appreciated, it was the flexible spending account. Why you would want to cut this does not make any sense, but that is what the health care law did to him. He goes on to say that his wife's employer-sponsored insurance premiums have increased by an incredible 50 percent and their deductible and maximum out-of-pocket costs—well, they have not gone down—have gone up too, and these increases have been the worst they have seen in 14 years of employment, all due to the health care law.

His sons who are struggling to pay for college had their work hours restricted to 28 hours a week. Why? Because of the law. So as a result they are applying for more financial aid, they are going further in debt, and even taking on part-time jobs so they can stay in school.

But that is not the only person who has written to me. A Nebraskan from the south central part of the State reports this: He spent 27 hours trying to enroll on healthcare.gov only to find out he could not afford coverage, even with a premium subsidy. Under the best option, his deductible would increase by \$7,000.

To a middle-class family, \$7,000 out of pocket is bankruptcy. They do not have it. It is not like that money is going to fall out of the sky.

A young traveling nurse from northeastern Nebraska also faced sticker shock and reached out to me. Under a new plan, her premium more than doubled and her deductible went from \$3,500 to \$6,500. She wrote to me and said: "This is not affordable when I have student loans to pay for and I'm trying to support myself."

It is possible some Nebraskans have temporarily renewed their old policy under the delay that was announced by the President, but that just means they have delayed the pain until next year, and we will see more of these stories of skyrocketing costs and deductibles.

Let's face it. Americans did not get what they were promised when the law was passed. They expected a bill that would deliver on the promises and address the cost of health care. Instead, they are stuck with the very real consequences of a poorly crafted policy.

I think it is time we show Americans we can do better. I believe the place to start is to repeal the law and start

working on step-by-step solutions that draw down health care costs for American families.

Those of us on the floor today are ready to tackle the challenge. I hope we find willing partners.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1926, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back and the motion to proceed is agreed to.

The clerk will report the bill by title. The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1926) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2702, 2704, 2705, AND 2698

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, Amendments Nos. 2702, 2704, 2705, and 2698 are considered proposed and agreed to.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2702

(Purpose: To exempt certain loans from the escrow requirement under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973)

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking “(A) or (B), if—” and inserting the following: “(A)—

“(i) if—”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(E) by adding at the end the following

“(ii) in the case of a loan that—

“(i) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

“(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

“(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

“(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

“(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

“(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

“(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

“(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

“(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(i) the terms “Federal entity for lending regulation”, “improved real estate”, “regulated lending institution”, and “servicer” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(ii) the term “outstanding loan” means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(iii) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as

amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower’s payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

AMENDMENT NO. 2704

(Purpose: To require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to make publicly available data that provide the basis for risk premium rates for flood insurance, to allow monthly installment payments for premiums, and to ensure that mitigation activities completed by an owner or lessee of real property are accounted for when determining risk premium rates for flood insurance)

At the end of section 103, add the following:

(h) DISCLOSURE.—

(1) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER BIGGERT-WATERS.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from the amendment made by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 919) is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(2) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER THIS ACT.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(3) REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(i) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(ii) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National

Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the "Privacy Act of 1974").

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(ii) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the "Privacy Act of 1974").

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 110. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS FOR PREMIUMS.

Section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended by striking "either annually or in more frequent installments" and inserting "annually, monthly, or in other installments that are more frequent than annually".

SEC. 111. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)) is amended by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

"(A) based on consideration of—

"(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

"(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures."

AMENDMENT NO. 2705

(Purpose: To clarify that communities that successfully appeal flood elevation determinations based on errors by the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the Scientific Resolution Panel are eligible for reimbursements for expenses incurred in such appeals)

In section 106, strike subsection (a) and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after "as the case may be," the following: "or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community,"; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: "The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection."

AMENDMENT NO. 2698

(Purpose: To increase the amount of substantial improvement to a property that triggers the loss of flood insurance subsidies)

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1 . HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking "30 percent" and inserting "50 percent".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

AMENDMENT NO. 2708

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to call up my

amendment No. 2708 and ask for its consideration.

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

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New York [Mrs. GILLIBRAND] proposes an amendment numbered 2708.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to issue guidelines for methods, other than building elevation, that owners of certain urban residential buildings may implement to mitigate against flood risk)

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1 . FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR URBAN BUILDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidelines for property owners that—

(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to urban residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

(A) types of building materials; and

(B) types of floodproofing; and

(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.

(b) CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under subsection (a) of this section.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I first wish to thank Senator MENENDEZ, Senator LANDRIEU, and Senator ISAKSON for their tremendous leadership on the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, of which I am a very proud cosponsor, and for working with me and my staff on an amendment that is so critical to so many New Yorkers who are still recovering from Superstorm Sandy.

My amendment is quite simple and common sense. It is aimed to help homeowners who are currently stuck in a bureaucratic ditch that is impossible for them to climb out of due to the immovable reality of the buildings in which they live.

Under today's FEMA policy, flood insurance premium rates are based on the elevation of the house relative to the base flood elevation, which is the elevation that FEMA calculates that floodwaters have a 1-percent chance of rising to in any given year.

Under normal circumstances, homes can be elevated to avoid high insurance rates that are assessed on homes that are built below the base flood elevation in special flood hazard areas, but in places such as New York and New Jersey this is impossible for owners of older urban homes, such as brownstones, row houses, and multi-family buildings, which can predate the Civil War, which in many instances cannot be raised due to structural characteristics and were built before flood maps were in place.

When their homes are mapped in a flood zone, they are simply left without any option to lower their flood insurance premiums, which can be as high as tens of thousands of dollars each year. To fix this, my amendment would require FEMA to provide a uniform set of guidance that provides FEMA-approved methods of mitigation for homeowners who simply cannot elevate their homes. This amendment would require FEMA to look at whether a homeowner has implemented any of the prescribed alternatives and take that into consideration when calculating a home's flood insurance risk premium. By providing a clear set of mitigation alternatives to these homeowners, this amendment will help New Yorkers and homeowners across the country who cannot elevate their homes to reduce their flood risk. It will help homeowners prevent costly damage to their homes during the next storm or flood and save money and potential disaster recovery costs in the long term.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll

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

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

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the flood insurance fix bill on the floor today. I urge my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to come together and pass this first crucial step toward getting it right with the National Flood Insurance Program. It is important for America. It is important for millions upon millions of American homeowners, not just in Louisiana, not just in Florida, but in every State. Every State in the country is absolutely affected.

I also specifically urge my colleagues to defeat the Toomey amendment, which I think is very well intended but will not get the job done, and to waive the budget point of order, which is a largely technical point of order. I will explain each of those in turn.

First of all, I will explain the need for this bill to get things right. All of us came together over a year ago and passed the so-called Biggert-Waters

Act, to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program and to reform it in important ways. We needed to do that broad-brush. The program needed to be continued, and not just in short-term fits and starts, which had been the pattern for many years. In fact, in 2010 it was so bad that we actually let the program lapse four different times by inaction, shutting down thousands upon thousands of real estate closings that we needed to build our economy, shutting those down every time. So we needed that reauthorization. We needed and still need reforms of the program. We need to build up the program to make it fiscally sustainable, to make sure that over time we get revenues, premiums coming in that cover the full cost of the program. There is no debate about that. That is why we passed that bill.

What was not foreseen was that in some significant number of cases, those reforms, once they were put into effect, would actually lead to completely unaffordable rate increases—a completely unsustainable path forward that would not even get us toward the goal of building up the fund and building up the program to make it fiscally sustainable. No expert predicted that beforehand. No one from FEMA said: You will have some rates that are completely unaffordable. No outside insurance experts said that. But once the details of the reauthorization began to be put in place, that became very apparent. We do not know exactly how many cases we would have like this, but we know they are not just isolated cases. We know they are not just in coastal communities. They are in every State, to some extent or another, around the country. Over time, Members of both parties from every State have begun to understand that, which brings us together hopefully in a constructive way on the floor today.

Certainly, that situation is dire and the threat is very real in Louisiana. Months ago, for instance, I visited a neighborhood in St. Charles Parish, which is part of southeast Louisiana, right on the Mississippi River. I visited a very nice, solid middle-class neighborhood. I met with many homeowners there. They presented me with a box—a box this big, at least—full of keys, house keys. They were these folks' actual house keys. They were saying: If this is not fixed, if this is not done right in time, we are going to have to turn these keys in to the banks, to the government, to whomever, because we would face not only premium increases. We had all accepted premium increases as part of the reform and as part of the reauthorization, but these would be completely unaffordable, unsustainable increases—literally going to \$12,000, \$18,000 or \$27,000 a year—not on a millionaire's home but on a modest middle-class home. That just doesn't work.

These folks were saying very sincerely, very directly: Here are my

home keys because that is where this is headed.

That is not right on so many different levels. First and foremost, it is not right for those Americans who have lived by the rules every step of the way, who built to the right elevation when they built their home, who got the flood insurance required by law, required by prudence, and paid all of their premiums. They went through mitigation programs, if they could, to raise their homes in many cases.

These are folks who are not living right on the coast, who are not choosing highly dangerous areas, and who do not have second homes, beach homes. We are not talking about that at all. We are talking about a solid middle-class neighborhood way off the gulf coast.

These are people who followed the rules every step of the way who still failed the prospect of those completely unaffordable increases. That is not right, and it is not fair.

On a second level, that reality threatens whole communities and it threatens our economy because if that were allowed to happen in any significant number of cases, it would be an economic spiral downward. Banks would be burdened with foreclosures. Local businesses would be hurt significantly. Whole communities would be in an economic spiral downward.

We are not just talking about second homes on a beach. We are not talking about that at all in Louisiana. This bill does not give any relief regarding second homes, for instance. We are talking about a lot of communities and a real and unsustainable hit to our economy.

On a third and final level, that reality would ensure we don't even get to the goal of these reforms, which is to make the system whole and fiscally sustainable. To do that we need more folks in the National Flood Insurance Program, not folks leaving and turning in their keys. That will kill any effort to make the program solid fiscally and sustainable fiscally. So on every level we cannot allow this to happen.

The Menendez-Isakson bill, with the help of many other Members, including myself, was put together to get us to the right place. It takes the important first step to make sure we get it right, FEMA does the mapping correctly—which they are not doing in some cases now—and FEMA does the affordability study mandated in the original Biggert-Waters, but which FEMA has not even begun yet. We do all those things to get this right and avoid completely unaffordable rate increases.

I urge my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to support this good bill.

We also need your support in defeating the Toomey amendment and in waiving the budget point of order. Let me speak about those briefly.

Senator TOOMEY's amendment is very well intended, but it falls short, in my opinion. It limits any delay in rate increases to 2 years, and some rate increases continue for those 2 years. Most importantly, it doesn't mandate and ensure that FEMA ever gets through this affordability study, ever makes recommendations to Congress for the ultimate fix, and doesn't give us any time to react and legislate in that area. It doesn't ensure in any way that FEMA gets its mapping right based on true sound science and engineering methodologies.

That is just kicking the can down the road and not ensuring in any meaningful way that we are going to get it right. That simply isn't good enough.

We need to tie in any delay to figuring out the ultimate fix by having FEMA complete its affordability study, by making FEMA make recommendations to us, by giving us 6 months to act on those recommendations, by mandating that FEMA do its mapping correctly and not have rate increases before it rushes forward with incorrect mapping, which is going on right now in some cases.

That is what the underlying bill does. That is what the Toomey amendment does not do—as well intended as it is.

Secondly, there will be a budget point-of-order vote, and we do need 60 votes to waive that budget point of order. I will vote "yes" to waive it—as a strong fiscal conservative—because this is necessary to get this national flood insurance system right and to make it fiscally sustainable.

In fact, over the 10-year budget window that we normally use in scoring, this bill has no score over those 10 years. It only has some scores in some intermediate periods of time, which gives rise to the budget point of order.

I urge my colleagues to vote to waive that point of order, knowing there is no score over 10 years and also knowing that, quite frankly, the fiscal assumptions about the current law are enormously flawed. The notion that we are going to make the National Flood Insurance Program more stable and more fiscally sustainable by having a bunch of premiums go up to \$27,000 a year on a modest middle-class home is crazy. That is not going to get us to a better place. That is going to get to us a worse place. That is going to shrink the program and have people leave the program—paying no premiums, not paying higher premiums.

Yet raising insurance premiums has to be part of the solution, but unaffordable premium increases aren't part of the solution because people can't afford to pay them. So they will pay zero instead of something substantial. They will leave the program instead of putting more homeowners and properties in the program, which is essential to get to a strong and stable fiscal situation.

Again, on a bipartisan basis, I urge my colleagues to support this bill—it is a very important step to stabilize and fix the situation—to defeat the Toomey amendment and to waive the budget point of order, which is absolutely necessary in this process to support a good bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I thank the Senator from Louisiana for his input into the legislation, his work, and his advocacy. I agree with him on the other underlying statements that he made, particularly as it relates to the necessity for the legislation, as well as the opposition to the Toomey amendment.

I understand what Senator TOOMEY is trying to do, but I agree it doesn't meet the ultimate challenge. I agree as well on the budget point of order for the reason Senator VITTER says.

I thank the Senator for his support.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time that takes place during any subsequent quorum calls—or the subsequent quorum call that I am going to ask for—be equally divided on the Gillibrand amendment.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO HADIYA PENDLETON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Hadiya Pendleton, lost to gunfire 1 year ago today, January 29, 2013. She was 15 years old. She was gunned down while she was standing with friends at a park in Chicago's South Side.

She was a very talented, caring girl with a bright future. She was a sophomore at King College Prep, an honor student, and a majorette in the school band. This is her photograph. Those who knew her talk about her warm heart, her big smile, and what a great friend she was to all of those around her.

A week before her death, Hadiya was in Washington, DC, performing with

her school band for President Barack Obama's inaugural celebration. She was absolutely thrilled that as a high school student she could come out and perform for the President she loved.

Days afterwards she was gunned down, murdered by men who allegedly mistook Hadiya and her friends for members of a rival street gang. I join with those in Chicago and across America who mourn this grim anniversary and I extend my condolences to her family.

This last week or two—even longer now—it has been pretty cold in Chicago, bitter cold: snow, ice, with people not going outside much. But I wanted to make a trip Saturday morning to visit Hadiya's mom and dad on the occasion of this sad anniversary. Her mom Cleo, her father Nate, and her 11-year-old brother Nate, Jr., as well as the extended family, are mourning her loss.

We sat in their apartment Saturday morning and talked a little about her. We talked about what it meant, what the reaction had been. The parents were heartened that King College Prep had not forgotten their daughter, that today they were having a special observance and ceremony to remember her. It meant a lot to her mom and dad.

They have been here before my judiciary subcommittee when we discussed issues involving gun violence. They have been on television. They have made the rounds. But when you are there with them in their apartment, you know that after the cameras are gone and all the visitors are gone, it is still a sad remembrance of a beautiful young girl whose life was cut short.

No family should have to experience what they went through, but like so many families who have lost loved ones to sudden violence, the Pendletons have decided to dedicate themselves to turning their pain into purpose. They are working to reduce the scourge of gun violence so that other families can be spared. They have established the Hadiya Pendleton Foundation in Chicago to create a safe space for city youth and provide afterschool enrichment programs to help kids avoid the violence on the streets.

Incidentally, Hadiya was once featured in a public service announcement video where she said: It is your job as students to say no to gangs and yes to a great future. The foundation named after her will help other students reach that goal. I commend the family for their work on this foundation. I believe it will make a difference.

Hadiya's family, as I mentioned, traveled to Washington to talk about our laws and how to change them to avoid future violence. In particular, they have spoken out about the need to crack down on the gun supply to gang members. The current Federal laws on what we call straw purchasing and gun

trafficking are an embarrassment. They are too weak. They need to be strengthened. I have joined with my colleague Senator MARK KIRK, my Republican colleague, in a bipartisan effort, and a number of our colleagues have joined us to introduce tough legislation to crack down on the straw purchasing and trafficking. We call this bill the "Stop Illegal Trafficking in Firearms Act." MARK KIRK likes to call it the Hadiya Pendleton Act. We agreed to name that key section after her since we believe this legislation just might reduce the senseless gang shootings such as the one that took her life.

Straw purchasing, for any who don't understand it, is when a thug's girlfriend, who has no criminal record, goes to buy the gun and then hands it to him to commit a crime. He can't buy it. He couldn't walk in the store and buy it. He could never pass the background check, but she does. And when she passes it, she hands him the gun, and unfortunately violence and death can be the result.

Last April, our antitrafficking legislation got 58 votes on the floor of the Senate—58 votes—to stop the trafficking of guns into the hands of criminals. That was a few votes short of what we needed. We are close. Our job is to convince just two or three more Senators to join us.

The Pendleton family understands that even though this law seems so obvious, so reasonable, and can save the lives of innocent people, it is going to be hard to come by. There is a gun lobby here in this town. They are very powerful. Their allies will do everything they can to fight even the most popular commonsense reform, such as cracking down on illegal gun trafficking.

The gun lobby says we shouldn't pass any new gun laws and that we should just enforce the laws already on the books. Actually, the gun lobby is in court every day trying to strike down the laws already on the books. But the bottom line is the gun lobby always seems to oppose laws that might reduce gun sales. They just want volume—volume of firearms sold. If they had their way, no questions would be asked.

It is time to crack down on the sale of guns that end up in the hands of criminals and gang members. We need to push forward in Congress and statehouses and in the law enforcement community with strong efforts to cut off the supply of straw-purchased, illegally trafficked guns. The path may not be easy but it is the right path. And if we succeed, we will prevent crimes and save lives.

I want to commend the Pendleton family for the courage they have shown in the face of their tragic loss. I commend them for their efforts to try to spare other families. I hope lawmakers will reflect for one brief moment about

this good family, who lost this great daughter and now has dedicated a big part of their lives to preventing shootings in the future. We owe Hadiya and her mom and dad and her memory our best efforts to make this a safer America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2700

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside and that I be allowed to call up amendment No. 2700.

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

The clerk will report the amendment. The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. HELLER] proposes amendment numbered 2700.

Mr. HELLER. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify that any private flood insurance policy accepted by a State shall satisfy the mandatory purchase requirement under the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973)

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 1. AUTHORITY OF STATES TO REGULATE PRIVATE FLOOD INSURANCE.

Section 102(b)(7) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(b)(7)) is amended to read as follows:

“(7) PRIVATE FLOOD INSURANCE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘private flood insurance’ means an insurance policy that—

“(A) provides flood insurance coverage;

“(B) is issued by an insurance company that is—

“(i) licensed, admitted, or otherwise approved to engage in the business of insurance in the State or jurisdiction in which the insured building is located, by the insurance regulator of that State or jurisdiction; or

“(ii) eligible as a nonadmitted insurer to provide insurance in the State or jurisdiction where the property to be insured is located, in accordance with section 524 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (15 U.S.C. 8204); and

“(C) is issued by an insurance company that is not otherwise disapproved as a surplus lines insurer by the insurance regulator of the State or jurisdiction where the property to be insured is located.”

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about the Heller-Lee amendment to the flood insurance legislation we are currently considering. One of my core beliefs is that in order for Americans to succeed, regardless of the issue, we need more choices, we need higher competition, and we also need less cost. So let us talk about the NFIP.

Right now, the National Federal Insurance Program has a near monopoly on the flood insurance market. In fact, I think if you ask most Americans if they knew there were other flood insurance policies other than through NFIP, you would probably get a blank stare. What most people don't know is that since the passage of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, private flood insurance has been understood to satisfy requirements and mandates to purchase flood insurance. In fact, when Congress passed the last flood insurance reform package under Biggert-Waters, Congress reaffirmed the intent that private primary flood insurance should satisfy requirements and those of mandatory purchase.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of legislative language, there have been pervasive rejections of private primary flood insurance by most lenders. This is due to the fact that lenders are unsure about the validity of private-issue flood insurance, despite the fact this insurance has been issued and accepted in the past. For this reason, I, along with Senator LEE, have worked on an amendment that would provide clarification and hopefully eliminate this uncertainty.

The Heller-Lee amendment provides a simple and clear definition of what is acceptable private flood insurance. Our amendment would define acceptable private flood insurance as a policy that provides flood insurance coverage issued by an insurance company that is licensed, admitted, or otherwise approved to engage in the business of insurance in the State or jurisdiction in which the insured building is located.

Private insurers are already subject to statutes and regulations in each and every State. State insurance commissioners are the best regulators to allow and disallow any policy they deem proper or improper, and they have significant ability to assure fair and equitable settlements of claims.

Further encouragement of private sector participation in the flood insurance market will help reduce the risks to which U.S. taxpayers are currently exposed. In fact, I would like to share some statements I just received from FEMA, after I asked FEMA if private flood insurance is a viable tool for some consumers to find lower cost options. FEMA stated:

Private flood insurance would create competition. It is possible some homeowners could find lower-cost options for flood insurance as a result of privatized market competition.

So I ask my colleagues to support the Heller-Lee amendment so we can give the American public more choices, higher competition, and less cost when it comes to flood insurance.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FISCHER. I ask to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has the floor.

OBAMACARE

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today on behalf of the 18,000 Nebraskans who have contacted me to express their concerns with the negative impacts of Obamacare.

Rather than addressing these problems in last night's State of the Union address, the President doubled down on the failed policy.

Well, the President has had his chance to speak. Now it is time for my constituents to have their voices heard.

The law is hurting my constituents. It is hurting middle class families. We now know that millions of Americans have lost their private health insurance.

Many who have successfully enrolled in the exchange have been forced into plans that do not meet their families' needs. These plans often cost more but cover less.

Treatments, even for those battling cancer, have been delayed.

We learned this month that a woman named Josie Gracchi—who was diagnosed with breast cancer—recently lost her doctors. She was forced to postpone her scheduled biopsy and follow-up treatment. The reason: Josie's insurance rolled over into a new plan in an exchange under Obamacare at the start of the New Year.

Seniors are losing their trusted doctors, too.

Americans are disclosing deeply personal information—including their health care histories and Social Security numbers—to a flawed website ripe for hacking.

If truth in advertising rules applied to Obamacare, it would be banned as an unfair and unreliable product. Let me give you an example. We were all told that this massive law would dramatically expand coverage for the uninsured. Yet a recent Wall Street Journal article cites a McKinsey study that undermined this promise.

Only 11 percent of consumers who bought new coverage under the law were previously uninsured, according to a McKinsey & Co. survey of consumers thought to be eligible for the health-law marketplaces.

One reason for people declining to purchase plans was affordability. That was cited by 52% of those who had shopped for a new plan but not purchased one in McKinsey's most recent sampling, performed in January.

As it turns out, the “Affordable Care” Act is hardly affordable, and the vast majority of those who purchased

insurance through the exchanges already had health insurance.

Last week the CEO of Aetna, a major insurance company, said Obamacare was not attracting enough uninsured people to work. He said more premium increases are on the horizon.

"Are they going to be double-digit," he said, "or are we going to get beat up because they're double-digit or are we just going to have to pull out of the program?"

And recently Moody's downgraded health insurers from stable to negative based on uncertainty related to Obamacare. The downgrade is a result of the administration's series of unilateral changes, which only invite even more uncertainty.

This pervasive uncertainty is also plaguing our small business owners, who are struggling with the onslaught of new regulations. Americans see selective delays for some, but not all. Hardworking men and women—our entrepreneurs—are the backbone of our economy. Any sort of meaningful economic recovery will only come when they have the confidence to grow and expand their businesses and that requires certainty.

Obamacare robs them of that certainty, and as a result the unemployed are robbed of jobs.

It's not just those searching for work who suffer from Obamacare's heavy regulatory hand. Our senior citizens are at a loss as well. The Washington Post recently described challenges facing Medicare Advantage patients because of Obamacare.

Obamacare has cut over half a trillion dollars from Medicare. Now, insurers are terminating physician networks.

According to The Post:

Insurers say they must shrink their physician networks because they face billions of dollars in government-payment cuts over the next decade—reductions that are being used partly to fund insurance coverage for millions of people under the federal Affordable Care Act.

And it is not just our seniors, it is also the young.

A recent study by the American Action Forum found that it would be cheaper for 86 percent of young adults to forgo coverage.

The study concluded:

Even after mandate penalty is fully implemented, a majority of young adult households will find that it is financially advantageous for them to forgo health insurance, pay the mandate penalty, and personally cover their own health care expenses.

Without the participation of young, healthy people, we are told the whole system will collapse. Then what?

To add insult to injury, some Obamacare proponents want taxpayers to pick up the tab for insurance companies assuming the whole system might, in fact, collapse.

Instead of calling this a "bailout"—which is what it is—they use terms

that could only be coined in Washington—terms like "risk-corridors," "reinsurance funds," or "risk-sharing protection."

The White House may even preemptively alter portions of this program for big insurance companies before the law falls apart. I believe American taxpayers have paid enough. That is why I cosponsored Senator MARCO RUBIO's Obamacare Bailout Prevention Act.

The President and big insurance companies should not be permitted to force taxpayers to pay for the mess they created. Nebraskans have no interest in any more bailouts. And they certainly cannot afford to pay for these skyrocketing premium spikes. Just ask my constituent from Lincoln, who wrote me recently to share her story.

She said:

I spent 2 hours on the phone with Healthcare.gov. The Supervisor said she was going to try and reapply and reinstate my plan beginning January 1, 2014. . .

After an hour long process everyone but my 15 year old son was approved for healthcare. So, then she tried to apply again. . . An hour later the system 'crashed' and she asked me to call back later.

So I called back yesterday. I had to go through an hour long process again for signing up. . . at that point, all THREE of my children were completely denied coverage.

My husband and I are seriously scared. . . if something catastrophic happens our family will be ruined without healthcare for our children.

These hardworking middle class families need relief. They are over-taxed and over-burdened. People are scared. The law has not brought what the President promised. The cost of this flawed law is depriving Nebraskans the opportunities to build their own futures and pursue their dreams. Scrapping this law should be a priority for the Senate, the White House, and the country. It certainly is a top priority for me. We must repeal and replace this failed law now. Anything short of that is just irresponsible. Our constituents are counting on us—let's not disappoint them.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I am here to say hallelujah, that it looks as if we are finally coming to the point at which we can grant the homeowners and businesses of America some relief from the huge, gargantuan—tenfold sometimes—increases in flood insurance premiums. We are going to be able to pass this legislation today, with a vote cutting off debate yesterday of over 80 votes. I mean, there were times we were just hoping to get to 60 votes.

I think that overwhelming number finally tells the story Senator LANDRIEU has told. She has told this story from the housetops, from the basements, from the riverbanks, and from the gulf shores: Enough. She has told this story along with Senator MENENDEZ, who has shouted it from Cape May, NJ, all the way to the Port of New Jersey at the mouth of the Hudson. This Senator has shouted this from the State with the longest coastline of any State—save for Alaska—a State whose highest point in the entire State is about 350 feet, along riverbanks and lakes, as well as the coastal waters. Therefore, naturally, it is something we have to be concerned with, the flood protection, and therefore protecting the financial assets of folks—their homes and their businesses. They simply cannot take a tenfold increase all at once.

Now we are going to pass it. Unfortunately, there are still some folks who are trying to do us in. They are trying to do us in with subtle amendments that are going to try to seduce some Senators: Oh, doesn't this sound good? But they are going to cut the heart out of it, and we have to reject those amendments.

At the end of the day, we will have the votes here in the Senate and we will pass it. The question is, What will happen down there at the other end of the Capitol? Let's just get a real big vote here, and that will send a message to our colleagues in the House of Representatives that this is "no fooling" time, that these rate increases are already in effect as of January 1, and we need to stop the rate increases in order to have time for FEMA to do the affordability study and therefore to see what is consumable among consumers, homeowners, business owners, and then have that be a consideration along with the actuarial soundness.

I will conclude my remarks, before I thank Senator LANDRIEU, by saying that one of the toughest jobs I have ever had in public service—and I have been blessed with a lifetime of public service—was the elected insurance commissioner of Florida. I learned something about insurance during those years. This thing called actuarial soundness is a mathematical proposition whereby the expected risk and the expected loss—you want to charge enough, if you are an insurance company, to handle that. That is the theory of actuarial soundness.

We know that part of the angst here about the Federal Flood Insurance Program is that it, in essence, has been subsidized by American taxpayers because it was never charging enough. But the question is: What is the real risk? The 2005 flood losses in the Flood Insurance Program as a result of Katrina—which was not the garden variety category 3 hurricane because the counterclockwise winds came on to Mississippi, not on to Louisiana.

The back end of the hurricane on the counterclockwise rotation came across Lake Pontchartrain and filled the canals in New Orleans. The water pressure became so great as the water level rose, and what you had were some faulty dikes. When the dikes were breached, part of New Orleans flooded, which caused massive financial loss.

The other unusual event, which Senator MENENDEZ can tell you about, happened 1 year ago as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Again, that was a very unusual occurrence. We could talk about climate change, but that is an issue for another day. It is very unusual for a category 1 hurricane to hit the northeast coast of the United States in the late months when it is cold. Because the water is cold, it is not hot enough to fuel a hurricane, but this one did.

The northeastern coast is not exactly as accustomed to hurricanes as we are in Florida, and as a result we saw massive losses not so much from the wind but from floods.

The damage was not just along the coast. Look at what happened on the inland areas all the way through New England. So those were two unusual climatic events which resulted in huge losses.

As you are calculating the actuarial soundness in order to adjust a flood insurance premium, should those be considered in what ordinary people—over 2 million policies just in my State alone, 40 percent of all the flood insurance policies in the State of Florida. That is why we also need that recalibrated and calculated so we can find out what is affordable in the affordability study.

Finally, I can't say enough about Senator LANDRIEU. This would not have happened without her. She has been dogged in her determination. She has been unyielding in her attempts to get this to where we are actually going to pass it in the Senate. I just want to express my personal appreciation for Senator LANDRIEU on behalf of the people of Florida, and, indeed, on behalf of the people of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed for up to 10 minutes as if in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Mr. NELSON pertaining to the introduction of S. 1970 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I yield the floor, and if no one else is seeking recognition, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2706

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside so I may call up amendment No. 2706.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. WHITEHOUSE] proposes an amendment numbered 2706.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To exempt natural resource agencies from fees for flood insurance rate map change requests)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR CERTAIN MAP CHANGE REQUESTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a requester shall be exempt from submitting a review or processing fee for a request for a flood insurance rate map change based on a habitat restoration project that is funded in whole or in part with Federal or State funds, including dam removal, culvert redesign or installation, or the installation of fish passage.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I wish to say a few words about this amendment which I hope we can pass. I think it is an amendment that will find strong bipartisan support.

I am from New England and across New England—and I suspect in Wisconsin and across the country as well—communities are trying to restore old rivers to their healthy state. What we see in New England, particularly in Rhode Island with our history of the Industrial Revolution, is that our early industrial history was powered by hydropower. It was powered by damming rivers and then diverting some of the flow through a wheel that then drove the engines of industry—the mills, for instance, that were so important to Rhode Island's industrial history. That is not true just of Rhode Island; it is true across New England, and I suspect it is true in a lot of places across the country.

As local communities are restoring these old rivers—they tend to be small rivers, particularly in New England, and these tend to be old dams—what we want to do is remove the old dams so the original flow is restored or we want to rebuild or maybe even redesign culverts so the flow of the river through the culvert permits the passage of fish. In some cases, we want to fully keep the dam but build a fish passage, so the fish that are working their way upstream to their traditional breeding grounds find a passage and aren't blocked by dams. Again, this is part of bringing these old rivers back

to life. When we do that, in my State, it is usually towns—small towns often—and local community organizations that have to apply in order to make those changes.

Part of the application process is a flood map revision to show what a change—removing the dam or changing the culvert or adding the fish ladder—will make on downstream conditions and so the flood map gets redone. The flood map gets filed with FEMA, and FEMA requires a processing fee of more than \$5,000 in order to review and accept the flood map revision.

What actually happens in practice is that the town or the local organization that is filing the flood map revision, because they are repairing or replacing the dam or providing fish passage for it, will apply to waive that fee. Virtually always—at least in Rhode Island, and I think around the country—FEMA is willing to waive that fee.

But the problem is, these are small organizations and these are small towns, and it takes actually a considerable effort to put together the fee waiver application. So you may save \$5,500 in the form of the FEMA fee, but you will spend maybe close to that much on your lawyers and engineers and on time and trouble in working together to get that application done.

So since these fees usually get waived anyway, this amendment would just cut to the chase and say there is no fee. And because there is no fee, now you do not have to apply for a fee waiver. That will help the small towns and the small organizations that are often behind these small projects; and I mean dams that are only just 4 or 5 feet tall sometimes. The redesign of a culvert is not a major effort. It is very important to local communities, very important to local fishermen, very important to local canoers and outdoorsmen, but not a terrifically big deal.

I hope we can agree to eliminate that bureaucratic requirement. Neither NOAA nor FEMA have expressed any objection whatsoever to this amendment.

If I can close, I will read a statement by Chris Fox, who is executive director of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association. The Wood River and Pawcatuck River run through western Rhode Island, and they are wonderful rivers. I have actually canoed and kayaked them both and enjoyed it immensely. He had to go through this fee waiver process for a set of projects on the Upper Pawcatuck River, and he writes:

This Amendment will avert lengthy project delays and reduce the cost of these environmentally beneficial projects nationwide. . . . On behalf of the wildlife, water, and people who reside in, and depend upon the health of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed, I thank you and all those who support this Amendment.

I hope all my colleagues will join together to earn Chris Fox's thanks for

this, I hope, noncontroversial and beneficial amendment.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, I rise today in opposition to S. 1926. In July of 2012, after over 7 years of negotiations in the Congress, the Congress finally passed the Biggert-Waters Act, the first significant flood insurance reauthorization bill since the creation of the National Flood Insurance Program in 1968.

One of the goals of the reform at that time was to ensure—yes, to ensure—that the 5.6 million flood insurance policyholders in this country could collect on their policies if they were ever to suffer a flood loss, something that cannot be guaranteed by the Flood Insurance Program that is currently \$25 billion in debt.

The program basically is bankrupt and only operating by the grace of the American taxpayer. Historically, the flood insurance premiums have not covered costs because the program was not designed to be actuarially sound. Essentially, it was flawed from the beginning when it was created in 1968.

The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 authorized subsidized rates to encourage participation in the Flood Insurance Program, especially for properties in high-risk locations. The Biggert-Waters legislation changed all this by requiring that the program be actuarially sound, that flood insurance rates reflect actual risk, and that the program eliminate its debt.

The sponsors of the legislation before us now have said that the moment Biggert-Waters was signed into law by the President they began working to roll back the reforms. Before they had any clear knowledge of how the changes in that legislation would be implemented, how mapping would affect homeowners, how flood insurance rates would change or whom might be pulled into the program and whom might be pulled out.

If my colleagues are hoping to dismantle the Flood Insurance Program, then they should support this legislation because that is exactly what it will do. However, if they are looking to address the unintended consequences of Biggert-Waters, then we should take a more measured approach like we do on most legislation. If there are affordability concerns that they are seeking to address, then I think we should find a way to address them.

If they are attempting to address economic impacts that were not con-

templated in the Biggert-Waters Act, then we should find alternative approaches that minimize those impacts. If they believe that the rate at which Biggert-Waters phases in risk-based premiums needs to be reconsidered, then we should discuss alternative increases.

Unfortunately, this legislation does not specifically address those issues. S. 1926, coupled with the provisions that the sponsors included in the recently passed omnibus appropriations act, will stop all changes in the Federal Flood Insurance Program. Those efforts will ensure that mapping revisions which we desperately need do not move forward, that premium increases are halted, and, even more disturbing, that homeowners never truly learn their real flood insurance risk.

I believe people in America deserve to know the cost and risk of where they live. Taxpayers deserve to have those who choose to live in harm's way assume their own risk. The proponents of this legislation want to continue to burden, I believe, an already over-burdened and bankrupt Federal insurance program. They are not seeking to address a few discrete problems with the flood insurance reforms passed in 2012.

Make no mistake, they want to stop it all. I concede, like any legislation, there were issues with the implementation of Biggert-Waters that were not anticipated. But those can be addressed in other ways that do not require the "stop everything" approach that the proponents of this legislation are basically advocating.

Congress is often criticized for being unable to fix anything. In 2012, we took a very significant step toward fixing the National Flood Insurance Program after 7 years of work. Now we have a bill before us that will undo virtually every reform that was enacted less than 2 years ago.

I urge the proponents of the bill today to follow regular order and to take this bill through the committee process where it can be debated and amended and where people can be heard. Absent that, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this legislation in favor of a more measured approach which will preserve what is needed in the Biggert-Waters legislation and change only that which needs to be changed.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TESTER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my speech, Senator REED

of Rhode Island be the next Democratic speaker.

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

Mr. TESTER. I come to the floor to speak against the Coburn amendment.

I know the good Senator from Oklahoma hasn't brought up this amendment yet, but this is the time I have available to speak about it. If he doesn't bring it up, God bless him, but if he does bring it up, hopefully these comments will be able to impact some of the Members of this body.

Before I talk about the Coburn amendment, I thank Senators MENENDEZ, LANDRIEU, and ISAKSON for including legislation that is very important to Senator JOHANNIS and me in this important flood insurance bill.

Title II of the underlying bill is actually the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act or, as I refer to it, NARAB. NARAB is legislation Senator JOHANNIS and I introduced last year. It creates a non-profit association to provide one-stop licensing for insurance agents and brokers operating outside of their home States, while also fully preserving the authority of the State insurance regulators to supervise these markets.

Currently, an insurance agent or broker seeking to operate in multiple States must meet different State-specific licensing requirements for each State and seek approval for each State's jurisdiction. This process can be time-consuming, costly, redundant, and sometimes contradictory—without providing any greater consumer protection. That is a big disincentive for agents and brokers who try to grow their business.

This is not a new issue for the insurance industry. Congress recognized the need to reform the insurance licensing system 15 years ago in 1999 when it incorporated the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers subtitle into the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. Unfortunately, during consideration of the act, Congress did not provide for the immediate establishment of NARAB. Instead, it included provisions to simply encourage State reciprocity for licensing. As a result, Gramm-Leach-Bliley wasn't able to achieve the level of reciprocity and uniformity Congress had hoped for, and these efforts became something of a dead end. That is why we are considering this important legislation today.

Title II would provide insurance agents and brokers with the option of becoming a member of NARAB, provided that they meet the professional standards set by the association and undergo a criminal background check.

NARAB will streamline the licensing process for agents and brokers, enabling them to be licensed once under a single high national licensing standard rather than follow different State standards. This will save time, and it

will save money. The association will set rigorous professional and consumer protection standards, including the requirement that all association members undergo criminal background checks, and, for the first time, continuing education standards for non-resident producers. In addition to setting rigorous professional standards, the association will let agents and brokers renew their licenses all at once and fully preserve the ability of regulators to protect consumers, supervise and discipline agents and brokers.

Currently, on average, insurance agents sell their products in eight States, with many of them serving even more. A one-stop licensing compliance mechanism will benefit all agents and brokers but particularly the smaller agents and brokers who must spend time and money dealing with different standards in different States. A one-stop shop for insurance licensing will help smaller players compete against their larger competitors. More opportunity is good for small businesses, and more competition is good for consumers. However, the amendment I referred to in my opening that may be offered by the good Senator from Oklahoma would render NARAB meaningless by giving States the ability to ignore NARAB's cross-State licensing abilities.

The concept of NARAB was first developed when Congress passed Gramm-Leach-Bliley in 1999, but, again, the measure wasn't able to achieve the measure of uniformity and reciprocity it hoped for. Title II represents decades of efforts and will finally achieve the goals laid out in Gramm-Leach-Bliley in a way that ensures that regulators can continue to protect consumers.

I appreciate and understand the concerns of my friend from Oklahoma, and I share his interest in making sure we preserve States rights, but I also want to make clear that we tried to provide an opt-out for States when Gramm-Leach-Bliley was implemented 14 years ago. With all due respect, it simply did not work. That is why we are debating this bill today.

I would like to take a minute and talk about how this legislation protects States rights. Every State would retain all authority to license its resident agents and brokers. The association would be required to notify States when agents and brokers apply for membership, letting States notify NARAB of any reason membership should not be granted for a producer.

Additionally, because the association would be in communication with all State insurance regulators, this notification measure will prevent bad actors with violations in one State from simply moving to another State because their record would now follow them.

States will also have significant control over NARAB. The nonprofit association would be governed by a board of

directors dominated by State insurance regulators and chaired by a State insurance regulator.

The amendment of the Senator from Oklahoma also implies this legislation somehow imposes unfunded mandates on States or compels States to take some action, and this simply isn't the case.

The legislation also ensures States remain responsible for the oversight and day-to-day regulation of the insurance marketplace. States will maintain exclusive control over the regulation and marketplace activities, consumer protection requirements, unfair trade practices, and other important areas.

Under this bill, we preserve the longstanding authority of States to supervise insurance producers. Any agent or broker who obtains the authority to operate in a jurisdiction through NARAB is still subject to the full regulatory authority of that State and must comply with all marketplace requirements.

Under our proposal we ensure States will continue to receive insurance licensing fees, which will be collected by NARAB and remitted to the States.

This legislation is strongly supported by the National Association of State Insurance Commissioners, the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisers, the Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers, and the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America. Its purpose is thwarted if the amendment of the good Senator from Oklahoma is adopted.

If NARAB cannot offer producers the ability to fulfill their licensing obligations in all jurisdictions, then NARAB offers very little value for those agents and brokers who would otherwise participate and would create uncertainty about whether individual States might opt out in the future.

So I urge my colleagues, if the good Senator from Oklahoma decides to bring up his amendment, to oppose that amendment.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

AMENDMENT NO. 2697

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I am waiting on Senator MENENDEZ to come to the floor on a point of order, but I do ask unanimous consent that we temporarily set aside the pending amendment so I may call up my amendment No. 2697.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] for himself and Mr. MCCAIN, proposes an amendment numbered 2697.

Mr. COBURN. I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To allow States to opt-out of participation in the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers)

At the end of section 330 of subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, as added by section 202(a), insert the following:

“(c) STATE OPT-OUT-RIGHTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any State, as described in section 333(9)(A), may elect not to participate in the Association, and insurance producers doing business in that State shall be subject to all otherwise applicable insurance-related laws, rules, and regulations of that State.

“(2) PROCEDURE.—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that elects not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) shall do so by enacting legislation indicating such election.

“(3) EFFECTIVE DATE OF OPT-OUT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the effective date of an election by a State, as described in section 333(9)(A), not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) is 2 years after the date on which the State enacts legislation under paragraph (2).

“(B) IMMEDIATELY EFFECTIVE OPT-OUT.—An election by a State, as described in section 333(9)(A), not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) shall take effect upon the enactment of legislation under paragraph (2) if such legislation is enacted not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

“(4) EXCLUSION OF INSURANCE PRODUCERS.—No insurance producer, the home State, as described in section 333(9)(A), of which has made an election not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1), may become a member of the Association.

“(5) NOTIFICATION OF OPT-OUT.—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that elects not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) shall notify the Board and the primary insurance regulatory authority of each State of such election.

“(6) CHANGE IN ELECTION.—

“(A) OPT-IN.—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that has elected not to participate in the Association under paragraph (1) may elect to participate in the Association by enacting legislation indicating such election.

“(B) EFFECTIVE DATE OF OPT-IN.—An election by a State, as described in section 333(9)(A), to participate in the Association under subparagraph (A) shall take effect upon the enactment of the legislation indicating such election.

“(C) NOTIFICATION OF OPT-IN.—A State, as described in section 333(9)(A), that has elected to participate in the Association under subparagraph (A) shall notify the Board and the primary insurance regulatory authority of each State of such election.

In section 334 of subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, as added by section 202(a), strike paragraph (9) and insert the following:

“(9) STATE.—The term ‘State’—

“(A) means any State, the District of Columbia, any territory of the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands; and

“(B) does not include any State (as described in subparagraph (A)) that has made an election not to participate in the Association under section 330(c)(1).

Mr. COBURN. I see Senator MENENDEZ is now on the floor, and what I wish to do is talk a little about this bill.

This bill is going to add \$900 million in additional budget authority and outlays over the next 5 years with no offsets, period. The sponsors claim the bill is offset over 10 years but relies on a budget gimmick that assumes Congress would not raise the NFIP borrowing authority once it hits the cap. That has never happened. And in the absence of sufficient borrowing authority, the program would delay payments of insurance claims until additional resources became available. So in reality this bill will add another \$2.1 billion in debt to the NFIP while making no substantive changes to address affordability issues.

Even the administration states that delaying implementation of these reforms would further erode the financial position of the NFIP, which is already \$24 billion in debt. This delay would also reduce FEMA's ability to pay future claims made by all policyholders. NFIP is unaffordable to the American people as the program is currently already more than \$24 billion in debt.

The pending measure, S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes, would violate the Senate pay-go rule and increase the deficit. Therefore, I raise a point of order on this measure, pursuant to sections 201(a) of S. Con. Res. 21, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that Act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of the pending bill, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The motion to waive is debatable.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, this country is in serious trouble with its debt, its unfunded liabilities, and its continual habit by its elected representatives to not live within its means.

Waiving the Budget Act so that we can delay a reform on something that needs to be reformed does not make sense. I have no doubt I won't win this budget point of order, but the American people need to be paying attention. Here we go again, not doing this

hard, tough work of making choices about priorities.

We passed a bill, the Biggert-Waters bill, it was signed into law, and now, because it is starting to come into effect, we are going to delay it for 4 years. It is going to cost billions. Then we are not going to solve the problem. And don't forget, this is not about keeping Biggert-Waters intact, it is about making it go away. That is what it is about.

I am adamantly opposed to the waiver of the Budget Act and I will await the call of the Chair on the vote.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, briefly, I appreciate the longstanding views of my colleague from Oklahoma on a variety of fiscal issues, but on this one I must say I have a disagreement with him. This isn't about doing away with Biggert-Waters, because the reality is that of the 1 percent of properties that equal 33 percent of all claims, there is nothing set aside for that 1 percent that creates 33 percent of all the claims. It remains as it existed in Biggert-Waters.

As a matter of fact, overwhelmingly, we keep most of the Biggert-Waters reforms in the legislation. The one thing we are doing is creating a pause for those property owners who have obeyed the rules, followed their responsibilities, built in new standards and now find themselves, notwithstanding having done all those things, in the midst of a lot of hurt and rate shock.

In fact, some of us foresaw this, evidenced by the fact that I raised these issues as a member of the Senate banking committee, where this bill was heard, and when I couldn't achieve any affordability elements, I got an affordability study included, which study should be completed before we actually put into force skyrocketing premiums that are going to what, create greater stability for the fund? No.

What is insurance about? Insurance is about spreading risk over a wider pool. So what happens when people simply can't meet those skyrocketing premiums, as evidenced by the many stories our colleagues on both sides of the aisle have come to talk about on the floor? What happens when they, in essence, have to say: I can't have insurance or I am going to turn my house over to the mortgage company because I can't sustain that policy or I will have to sell the property at a fire sale? What happens then? The pool grows smaller. What are the consequences of the risk pool growing smaller? Prices rise. And when prices rise even more for everybody else, what happens again? The risk pool grows smaller. And when the risk pool grows smaller, the prices rise again.

So this isn't about undoing Biggert-Waters. On the contrary, this is about

getting it right. This is about fulfilling the element of the law that said there must be an affordability study so we can determine what type of affordability mechanism would exist in the law so that ultimately we make sure we have a solvent program and, at the same time, be able to keep the single most significant asset any family has in this country, which is their home.

That is what we are trying to do here, and that is why I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the waiver of the budget point of order.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I understand Senator REED has been waiting to speak about his amendment and the unanimous consent agreement allows for that. I would like 30 seconds to respond to the Coburn amendment. I see the Senator from Tennessee, and I am not sure what brings him to the floor, but if I can have 30 seconds to respond to the Coburn amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I want to underscore what the Senator from New Jersey just said. If our efforts were to repeal the Biggert-Waters bill, we would have drafted one to do so. This is not repealing Biggert-Waters. This is an honest, good-faith attempt to make the flood insurance program work. So we are insisting the affordability study be done first, we are insisting the maps be accurate, and we are insisting that FEMA recognize levees that taxpayers have built with their own money. Is that too much to ask? I mean, think about that: An affordability study, to recognize levees that are built, and to make sure people can afford these rates.

I know my 30 seconds is up. I urge my colleagues to vote against the Coburn point of order and to help us move this important bill to the House of Representatives with a strong vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

AMENDMENT NO. 2703

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside and that I be permitted to call up my amendment No. 2703.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. REED] proposes an amendment numbered 2703.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be waived.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to conduct a study to assess voluntary community-based flood insurance options)

At the end, add the following:

SEC. —. STUDY OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY-BASED FLOOD INSURANCE OPTIONS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall conduct a study to assess options, methods, and strategies for making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into consideration and analyze how voluntary community-based flood insurance policies—

(i) would affect communities having varying economic bases, geographic locations, flood hazard characteristics or classifications, and flood management approaches; and

(ii) could satisfy the applicable requirements under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a); and

(B) evaluate the advisability of making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies to communities, subdivisions of communities, and areas of residual risk.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Administrator may consult with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Administrator determines is appropriate.

(b) REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains the results and conclusions of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations for—

(A) the best manner to incorporate voluntary community-based flood insurance policies into the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) a strategy to implement voluntary community-based flood insurance policies that would encourage communities to undertake flood mitigation activities, including the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of levees, dams, or other flood control structures.

(c) REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the report required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(A) an analysis of the report submitted by the Administrator;

(B) any comments or recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(C) any other recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to community-based flood insurance policies.

Mr. REED. Madam President, my amendment would require the Federal

Emergency Management Agency—FEMA—to study and report on the advisability of establishing voluntary community-based flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program—NFIP. The Government Accountability Office would be required to review and comment on FEMA's study.

The study will help answer important questions about how such voluntary community-based policies could be implemented within the National Flood Insurance Program. It does not commit FEMA, the Congress, or local communities to take any action. It simply calls for fact-finding and analysis that could provide the basis for improvements to the flood insurance program.

The idea of community-based flood insurance is to assess the risk for all properties within a community and collect premiums from the community rather than from individual property owners. By purchasing insurance at the community level, willing local governments—and I emphasize willing and voluntary—may be able to spread the cost of premiums equitably among property owners. In addition, they may be able to increase participation in the flood insurance program, including among property owners who are within the 100-year flood plain but who are not subject to the mandatory purchase requirement because they do not carry a federally backed mortgage. Expanding participation would ensure that all properties in the flood plain have coverage from risk.

Beyond increasing coverage and participation, community-based insurance may also offer new opportunities and incentives for communities to deal with affordability, including by undertaking mitigation efforts that will reduce risk and insurance costs. Indeed, the amendment specifically requires FEMA to develop a strategy that incorporates mitigation into its recommendations for community-based policies.

For communities in Rhode Island and along the east coast that are dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy and the reality of sea level rise and climate change, this could offer another tool to prepare.

There are important questions to be answered about the feasibility of such an option and how it might be offered. That is what this amendment seeks to do. A study of this option has been included in separate amendments and bills sponsored by proponents and opponents of the underlying bill, and it has been approved by the House twice as a freestanding bill.

Indeed, it has been part of bills or amendments sponsored or cosponsored by Chairman JOHNSON, Senator CRAPO, Senator SHELBY, and Senator LANDRIEU.

I thank the managers and authors of the underlying bill—Senators MENEN-

DEZ, LANDRIEU, and ISAKSON—for their work. They have done an extraordinary job in working to ensure my amendment could be considered. I believe this amendment will add to the goals of the underlying bill of which I am a cosponsor. Given the bipartisan support for this concept, I hope it could be adopted by a voice vote.

Before I yield the floor, one point. We have another emergency that is facing us, not only floods and rising waters, but unemployment insurance. I ask if we could continue the bipartisan dialog we have had. I salute my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who have been principled in their pursuit of this objective, and we can move on that issue also.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I rise to address the amendment I have. I will formally ask to call it up in a few moments, but I wish to say a few words about it. I would like to start with a little bit of background and a reminder of how we got here and the circumstances that brought us to this point.

It all started, of course, with a completely unsustainable National Flood Insurance Program. I don't think there is any dispute that this program is massively in debt, it has been completely under water, it was insolvent, and there was no prospect for this to right itself because of the massive subsidies for homeowners of all stripes.

By the way, in addition to being fiscally insolvent and therefore a huge drain for taxpayers, it has a lot of very bad incentives. When you subsidize homes built in dangerous places, you subsidize and encourage homes to be rebuilt there, homes to be bought in places that are dangerous and costly. So there are problems inherent. The CBO was very clear about this. This program was not going to be able to honor its commitments. That is what happens when a program like this is insolvent and is unreformed: People who think they have insurance for their home end up discovering one day that they don't because of its insolvency.

So along came the Biggert-Waters approach to reform the National Flood Insurance Program and to put it in a position where it would actually be solvent and would actually be able to honor the policies people are paying for.

It was September of 2011 that the Senate banking committee took up the reforms, and they passed it with a voice vote. In other words, there was no dissent. There was no objection to the Biggert-Waters reforms. That was, of course, after many hearings. This had been discussed at length for many years before we got to that point. But we did. We passed it in the banking committee.

In June of 2012—so less than 2 years ago—Biggert-Waters, the flood insurance reform program—was wrapped into another bill. It was wrapped into the MAP-21 Transportation bill and it passed—and it passed with overwhelming support. As a matter of fact, as it happens, every single Democratic Senator who was in the Chamber voted in favor of the Biggert-Waters reforms I think in part because they understood this program needed to be reformed, and I think we all believe this program needs to be in a fiscally sustainable place.

So the final passage of that bill less than 2 years ago required the reforms of Biggert-Waters, which includes as central to those reforms that over time everybody who participates in the National Flood Insurance Program will eventually be paying actuarially sound rates—rates that actually reflect the risk of their home, so taxpayers wouldn't be on the hook and they wouldn't be subject to the worry about whether this program is going to go away altogether.

That is where we were when, lo and behold, we start to discover that for some people premium increases are going to be very dramatic. I have heard a lot from Pennsylvanians. This is a problem with the Biggert-Waters reform.

One of the problems I suspect a lot of folks did not anticipate was that the premium spikes would be quite substantial and happen over a pretty short period of time. There is a phase-in under the Biggert-Waters reforms, but it is quick, and it is very problematic for that relatively small handful of people who would be adversely affected, because it turns out that the remapping determines that they are in a higher risk profile than had previously been understood or, if they had built their home prior to the initial mappings, they wouldn't be subject to the premium increase. But upon sale of their homes, the premium increase would go into effect, and it would go into effect immediately. And that of course can have a devastating impact on the value of a person's home.

I want to be very clear. There is no question in my mind that if we don't do anything, if we simply leave Biggert-Waters alone, that has an unacceptable impact on people who are adversely affected in the form of premium increases that are way too big way too quickly. And that is not the right outcome. We shouldn't settle for that.

I know cases in Pennsylvania where people are facing thousands of dollars in increase. In some cases it is immediate. In a case where they are going to be selling their home, the new buyer would face that immediately. In other cases, it is phased in quickly.

The Menendez approach—the underlying bill we are debating today—deals

with this, but it deals with this in the wrong way. It deals with this by completely suspending all the reforms. It completely dispenses with the idea that we should move toward an actuarially sound program. It says for 4 years there will be no change in premiums.

It is hard not to see this as a measure designed to kill the reform. I understand it is painful to have any premium increase, but to say that the response should be to abandon any effort to move to a fiscally sound, actuarially based program can't be right. To do that is to completely throw out the reforms that took so many years to get.

And, by the way, it doesn't provide any certainty for the homeowners it is meant to protect—where for 4 years nothing happens, and after the fourth year nobody knows what happens. I know it is the intent of some to continue indefinitely without making any changes, but that is not a solution. This is an insolvent program.

What that means is we will get to the day—relatively soon, according to CBO—when the National Flood Insurance Program will simply be unable to honor the commitments it has made. It will not have the resources. It will not have the borrowing authority. It will run out of money. And people who then get their homes flooded will find it of little comfort that their premium was a little lower when it turns out there is no benefit to be paid, there are no resources for them to rebuild.

So this doesn't work. And it is not just me who observes this problem with the underlying Menendez bill. As a matter of fact, the President of the United States has weighed in on this. I have a quote here from a Statement of Administrative Policy they put out 2 days ago directly referring to this bill, identifying it by number. This is the bill they are talking about, the Menendez bill. One of the things they say is:

Delaying implementation of these reforms would further erode the financial position of the NFIP, which is already \$24 billion in debt. This delay would also reduce FEMA's ability to pay future claims made by all policyholders.

This is the President of the United States. His administration has looked at the Menendez bill, and this is their conclusion: This doesn't work. This doesn't work for the policyholders. It doesn't work for taxpayers. It doesn't work for anybody.

There is another problem I would point out with the Menendez bill: It wouldn't work if it were to become law for these reasons, but it is not going to become law. The administration has made it clear they don't support it. The Speaker of the House has made it abundantly clear he will not put a bill on the House floor that guts the reforms of Biggert-Waters. The House chairman of the banking committee, who has jurisdiction over this, has

made it abundantly clear: He is not going to move a bill that does away with these fiscal reforms.

If your goal is to do something to help homeowners who are facing premium increases, a vote for the Menendez bill does nothing, because that bill is going nowhere. The administration doesn't support it. They have said so. The House is not even going to take it up. So if your goal is to do something for constituents who are facing a big premium increase—and, frankly, that is a big part of my goal—the Menendez bill doesn't cut it. That is going nowhere.

What the administration said would work and what House leadership is willing to work with us on would be to phase in these premium increases more gradually, because everybody acknowledges the premium increases are occurring too quickly, and that needs to change.

This is another quote from that same Statement of Administration Policy on the same bill. What they said was:

The administration strongly supports a phased transition to actuarially sound flood insurance rates.

They didn't refer to my amendment, but this is exactly what my amendment does. It phases this in gradually so as to minimize the pain, allow people an opportunity to adjust, allow people the time to maybe mitigate the risk and still maintain the integrity—the fiscal integrity—of the program so it actually can pay the claims that surely will be submitted.

Let me run through quickly exactly what the amendment does and doesn't do, because there has been some confusion about this.

Our amendment actually retains very significant portions of the underlying Menendez bill because parts of it made a lot of sense. Section 1 is the title. Section 2, definitions. Unchanged. Section 3 is where we phased the premium increases in gradually rather than suspending them altogether. That is the big difference. Section 4 of the Menendez bill is an affordability study and report, requires FEMA to complete this study—as Biggert-Waters does—within 2 years of the enactment of the bill. We leave that intact. I think that is a good idea. We need that. My amendment would not affect that whatsoever.

The Menendez bill also provides some additional funding for the affordability study. It lifts the cap that was set before. My amendment wouldn't change that. I think we need to lift that cap.

Section 6. This is a measure that provides funds to reimburse homeowners when they challenge the redraw. So when a new map comes out and someone's house is deemed to be in a more risky place and therefore the premium is higher, a homeowner can challenge that. If the homeowner wins, under the Menendez language—which I support

and stays in this bill under my amendment—the homeowner would be reimbursed the cost of that challenge.

Senator KING from Maine had a very good suggestion, which is: If a community chooses to challenge the mapping because they think there was a mistake made, they think it was inaccurate and it adversely affects them, that community too would be reimbursed for its costs if it turns out to be successful in its challenge. I agree with that. We have incorporated that into our amendment.

Section 7 addresses the flood protection system. This is a very important part of what the Menendez bill does and I fully support it, and that is this: Under current law, one of the problems is in order for a community or a homeowner to fully benefit from risk mitigation that they may have done—a levee that may have been built or a dam or some other risk mitigation. In order to fully benefit from that, the Federal Government has to have paid for some portion of it. That is ridiculous. What difference does it make who paid for it? If it has been built and it is providing protection, that is all that should matter. This language would achieve that, the Menendez bill achieves that, and my amendment incorporates that. We keep that intact as well.

Section 8 addresses floodproofed residential basements, addresses that. Our amendment doesn't change that.

Section 9 creates a designation of a flood insurance advocate. Again, my amendment makes no change to that.

Section 10. Senator BLUNT had an amendment that would change the remodeling trigger for loss subsidies from 30 percent to 50 percent of a home's value. We incorporate Senator BLUNT's amendment into our own, so that is there.

Senator HAGAN had an amendment to exempt escrow requirements for flood insurance payments. We fully incorporate that into my amendment as well.

Senator RUBIO had an amendment also that was accepted by the managers. It is in ours.

What it comes down to, the difference between my amendment and the Menendez approach is one keeps us on a path of reform, keeps us on a path to an actuarially sound, fiscally responsible flood insurance program, whereby the flood insurance program is actually able to pay its claims, and the Menendez bill dispenses with it. It dispenses with the most important, most fundamental reform. The other part that we do is we soften the blow. If your concern is with these homeowners who are facing these huge premiums, my amendment is the only way we are actually going to achieve that help for those folks because this is the only legislative approach that has a chance of actually legislatively becoming law.

By the way, in addition to its problems with the other body and the administration, the Menendez bill is subject to a budget point of order because it increases our deficit and forces more government borrowing. It is subject to a point of order. I don't know that it can sustain that. I don't know it can defeat a budget point of order and that is an important issue.

Because our approach is fiscally sound, we are not subject to a budget point of order. What we do is we say the longer delay in the phase-in of the premium increases costs the flood insurance program some money until you get to the point where people have reached the level where they are paying actuarially sound rates, but we fully offset that with a very modest surcharge on all flood insurance policies in the country. It is about \$40 per year in the first year, the most expensive year, unless your income is over one-half million dollars a year, in which case it is about \$80, and that is it. It goes down after that because over time, when the higher premiums phase in, the loss to the program is diminished and therefore the surcharge goes down with it.

But let's be very clear. The maximum that anybody would be paying is about \$40 a year unless their income is over one-half million dollars a year, in which case it would be \$80 a year.

I will wrap up. I think we cannot continue to ignore all of the fundamental mandatory spending problems we have. When we actually go through a long and painful and deliberative systematic process to reform a program, for us to then walk away within 2 years and say never mind, we are not going to have any reform, is just so disappointing and irresponsible. We have bigger challenges facing us. If we cannot deal with this, I don't know what we are going to do.

I fully acknowledge we have to soften the blow for people who are going to face much higher premiums and my amendment does that. The way we do that is by ensuring nobody's premium could go up by more than 25 percent. In the case of people who would face a big increase, under my approach it will take many years of gradual phasing in before they would actually be forced to pay that higher actuarially sound rate. If they think the rate is unfairly high, they can challenge it or they can leave the program and buy private insurance. They can do that. But to suggest we are going to just do nothing after having put the reforms in place I think would be a big mistake.

There are a lot of groups that are supporting my amendment. I have a list I am going to run through quickly:

Natural Resources Defense Council, National Wildlife Federation, the Nature Conservancy, Taxpayers for Common Sense, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, Reinsur-

ance Association of America, American Rivers, National Fire Protection Association, the R Street Institute, American Consumer Institute, Americans for Prosperity, Americans for Tax Reform, the Coalition to Reduce Spending, the Cost of Government Center, Council for Citizens Against Government Waste, Freedom Works, National Taxpayers Union, Taxpayers for Common Sense, Taxpayers Protection Alliance.

You can see there is a combination of fiscal watchdogs, folks who are very concerned about fiscal prudence, as well as people who are concerned about environmental integrity. There are other groups coming on continuously.

As I mentioned, every Democrat who voted on the Biggert-Waters reform voted in favor of it. What my amendment does is it preserves the integrity of the reform while softening the blow for the people who will be affected by it.

I think this is a very important, although modest, step in doing these two things.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707, AS MODIFIED

I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment so I may call up my amendment, No. 2707, with the modification at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows.

The Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. TOOMEY] proposes an amendment, No. 2707, as modified.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To adjust phase-ins of flood insurance rate increases)

Strike sections 103 through 109 and insert the following:

SEC. 103. PHASE-IN OF FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES.

(a) MAP CHANGES.—Section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)) is amended—

(1) in the second sentence, by striking “shall be phased in over a 5-year period” and all that follows and inserting the following: “shall be implemented by increasing the risk premium rate by 25 percent each year following such effective date until the risk premium rate accurately reflects the current risk of flood to such property.”; and

(2) in the third sentence, by striking “shall be phased in over a 5-year period” and all that follows and inserting the following: “shall be phased in by increasing the risk premium rate by 25 percent each year following the effective date of such issuance, revision, updating, or change.”

(b) HOME SALE TRIGGER.—

(1) PHASE-IN.—Section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following: “(3) described in section 1307(g)(2) that are principal residences shall be increased by 25 percent each year, beginning in the year

after the first sale of such a property that occurs after the date of enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and continuing in each successive year regardless of any further sale or resale of the property, until the risk premium rate charged for the property accurately reflects the current risk of flood to the property.”

(2) APPLICATION OF PHASE-IN TO PRINCIPAL RESIDENCES PURCHASED BETWEEN JULY 7, 2012 AND APRIL 1, 2013.—

(A) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term “eligible policy” means a flood insurance policy—

(i) that covers a principal residence that was purchased during the period beginning on July 7, 2012 and ending on April 1, 2013; and

(ii) for which the risk premium rate charged was increased, after the purchase described in clause (i), to the full risk premium rate estimated under subsection (a)(1) of section 1307 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014) as required under subsection (g)(2) of such section (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act).

(B) APPLICATION OF PHASE-IN TO RISK PREMIUM RATE UPON POLICY RENEWAL.—The risk premium rate charged for an eligible policy shall—

(i) on the date on which the policy is first renewed after the date of enactment of this Act, be adjusted to be the rate that would have been charged as of that date if the phase-in provision under paragraph (3) of section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)), as added by paragraph (1) of this subsection, had been in effect when the property covered by the eligible policy was purchased; and

(ii) be increased by 25 percent each year thereafter, in accordance with paragraph (3) of section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)), as added by paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(C) PROMULGATION OF REGULATIONS AND RATE TABLES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall promulgate such regulations and make available such rate tables as necessary to implement subsections (a) and (b) and the amendments made by those subsections, as though those subsections were enacted as part of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916).

(2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—To ensure community, stakeholder, and expert participation in the promulgation of regulations and the establishment of rate tables under this subsection, the Administrator shall—

(A) publish the regulations and rate tables in the Federal Register; and

(B) before promulgating final regulations and making available final rate tables, provide a period for public comment on the regulations and rate tables published under subparagraph (A) that is not shorter than 45 days.

(3) TIMING OF PREMIUM CHANGES.—To allow for appropriate implementation of subsections (a) and (b) and the amendments made by those subsections, the Administrator may not implement any premium changes with respect to policy holders, including charges or rebates, that are necessary to implement subsections (a) and (b) and the amendments made by those subsections until the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Administrator promulgates final regulations and makes available final rate tables under this subsection.

(d) FLOOD INSURANCE FEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) FEE TO OFFSET PHASE-IN OF CERTAIN PREMIUM RATE INCREASES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall charge an annual fee to each holder of a flood insurance policy issued under this Act to offset the costs of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 and the amendments made by that Act.

“(2) AMOUNT.—In establishing an amount of the fee to be charged under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall charge a policyholder with an annual household income that is not less than \$500,000 twice the amount that the Administrator charges a policyholder with an annual household income that is less than \$500,000.”

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The Administrator shall charge the fee required under section 1308(j) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as added by paragraph (1), with respect to any flood insurance policy that is issued or renewed on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(e) DISCLOSURE.—

(1) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER BIGGERT-WATERS.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from the amendment made by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 919) is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(2) CHANGE IN RATES UNDER THIS ACT.—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(3) REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(i) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(ii) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”).

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(ii) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”).

SEC. 104. AFFORDABILITY STUDY AND REPORT.

Notwithstanding the deadline under section 100236(c) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957), not later than 2 years after

the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the affordability study and report required under such section.

SEC. 105. AFFORDABILITY STUDY FUNDING.

Section 100236(d) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended by striking “not more than \$750,000” and inserting “such amounts as may be necessary”.

SEC. 106. FUNDS TO REIMBURSE HOMEOWNERS AND COMMUNITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL MAP APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after “as the case may be,” the following: “or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community,”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1310(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) for carrying out section 1363(f).”

SEC. 107. FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) ADEQUATE PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.—Section 1307(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting “or reconstruction” after “construction”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator shall find that adequate progress on the construction or reconstruction of a flood protection system, based on the present value of the completed flood protection system, has been made only if (1) 100 percent of the cost of the system has been authorized, (2) at least 60 percent of the cost of the system has been appropriated, (3) at least 50 percent of the cost of the system has been expended, and (4) the system is at least 50 percent completed.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in determining whether a community has made adequate progress on the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a flood protection system, the Administrator shall consider all sources of funding, including Federal, State, and local funds.”

(b) COMMUNITIES RESTORING DISACCREDITED FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.—Section 1307(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(f)) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting the following: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this subsection shall apply to riverine and coastal levees that are located in a community which has been determined by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be in the process of restoring flood protection afforded by a flood protection system that had been previously accredited on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as

providing 100-year frequency flood protection but no longer does so, and shall apply without regard to the level of Federal funding of or participation in the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of the flood protection system.”

SEC. 108. TREATMENT OF FLOODPROOFED RESIDENTIAL BASEMENTS.

In implementing section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)), the Administrator shall rate a covered structure using the elevation difference between the floodproofed elevation of the covered structure and the adjusted base flood elevation of the covered structure.

SEC. 109. DESIGNATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE ADVOCATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall designate a Flood Insurance Advocate to advocate for the fair treatment of policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners in the mapping of flood hazards, the identification of risks from flood, and the implementation of measures to minimize the risk of flood.

(b) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—The duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate designated under subsection (a) shall be to—

(1) educate property owners and policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program on—

- (A) individual flood risks;
- (B) flood mitigation;

(C) measures to reduce flood insurance rates through effective mitigation; and

(D) the flood insurance rate map review and amendment process;

(2) assist policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners to understand the procedural requirements related to appealing preliminary flood insurance rate maps and implementing measures to mitigate evolving flood risks;

(3) assist in the development of regional capacity to respond to individual constituent concerns about flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions;

(4) coordinate outreach and education with local officials and community leaders in areas impacted by proposed flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions; and

(5) aid potential policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program in obtaining and verifying accurate and reliable flood insurance rate information when purchasing or renewing a flood insurance policy.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year such sums as may be necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

SEC. 110. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking “30 percent” and inserting “50 percent”.

SEC. 111. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking “(A) or (B), if—” and inserting the following: “(A)—

“(i) if—”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following

“(ii) in the case of a loan that—

“(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

“(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

“(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

“(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

“(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

“(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

“(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

“(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

“(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms “Federal entity for lending regulation”, “improved real estate”, “regulated lending institution”, and “servicer” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term “outstanding loan” means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions

Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower’s payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

SEC. 112. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS FOR PREMIUMS.

Section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended by striking “either annually or in more frequent installments” and inserting “annually, monthly, or in other installments that are more frequent than annually”.

SEC. 113. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)) is amended by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) based on consideration of—

“(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

“(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures.”.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2709, AS MODIFIED

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside so I may call up amendment No. 2709, and that the amendment be modified to correct a typographical error.

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

The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oregon [Mr. MERKLEY] proposes an amendment numbered 2709, as modified.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish limitations on force-placed insurance)

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 110. LIMITATIONS ON FORCE-PLACED INSURANCE.

Section 102(e) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(e)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (6) as paragraphs (4) through (7), respectively; and

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

“(3) **LIMITATIONS ON LENDERS AND SERVICERS.—**

“(A) **PAYMENTS FROM INSURANCE COMPANIES.—**An lender or servicer, or an affiliate of a lender or servicer, may not receive a commission or any other payment from an insurance company in connection with securing business under paragraph (2) from the insurance company.

“(B) **PURCHASE FROM AFFILIATED INSURANCE COMPANIES.—**

“(i) **IN GENERAL.—**Except as provided in clause (ii), a lender or servicer, or an affiliate of a lender or servicer, that purchases insurance under paragraph (2) may not purchase the insurance from an insurance company that is affiliated with the lender or servicer.

“(ii) **EXCEPTION.—**Clause (i) shall not apply to the purchase of insurance under paragraph (2) by a lender or servicer, or an affiliate of a lender or servicer, that is a bank, or a Federal credit union or State credit union (as those terms are defined in section 101 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1752)), with assets of not more than \$10,000,000,000.”

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I will take this occasion to make a couple of remarks about the content of this amendment.

This amendment is about a predatory practice that is involved in the flood insurance world, and that predatory practice occurs when a servicer of mortgages places flood insurance on a property—be it a home or a business. They sometimes arrange a very expensive policy to be placed on the property. The reason they do this is that the insurer—the insurance company that has prepared the policy—is charging many times the market rate, but in exchange they pay the servicer a large bonus.

We remember how bonuses in the subprime world were used to steer families from prime mortgages into subprime mortgages. In this case the bonus is being paid to the servicer so the servicer will steer the family into an expensive insurance policy rather than a fair market rate policy.

My amendment takes a very simple approach and says that these bonus payments or incentive payments—or whatever name you would like to give to them—from the insurer to the servicer in order to utilize their very expensive, above market rate product rather than a fair market rate product will not be allowed. That eliminates this conflict of interest and will enable the servicer to provide a fair service of placing flood insurance on a property if it is required under the terms of the mortgage, but not to do so in a predatory manner.

I hope that all of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle will take a look

at this practice and realize that the overall scope of this bill is about a fair deal for families who are in the situation of being required under their mortgage to obtain flood insurance. Part of that fair deal should involve ending this particular predatory premium practice on force-placed flood insurance.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2707

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I wish to speak very briefly on the Toomey amendment. I know we have on the floor a bill that basically, let's face it, puts off for about 4 years reforms we put into the Flood Insurance Program. It is a \$24 billion program. It is a very small, in essence, entitlement program we have in this country.

I am very despondent over the fact that we passed these reforms unanimously out of the Banking Committee in 2011. That took place in October of 2013.

Our Nation is facing incredible entitlement problems, and we all know it. People on both sides of the aisle have been down here ad nauseam talking about the fact that as a nation, the No. 1 threat we have is our inability to deal with the fiscal issues we know we have throughout the entitlement programs we have in this country. Here we have a situation where, unanimously, out of the Banking Committee, we passed reforms to deal with the flood insurance program which we know is moving quickly towards insolvency.

So what do we do? Maybe instead of being the most deliberative body in the world, we might be described as the most pandering body in the world. What we are doing instead is punting on these reforms. I am discouraged by that. It is amazing. I think we have not shown the ability to really address any of the bigger issues that our Nation has to deal with.

Obviously, I would be more responsive to a bill that maybe made tweaks or did some things to make this work in a way that was not quite as draconian. But the fact is we all know the way the program works. It is just not sustainable, and we know that, in essence, taxpayers all across this country are subsidizing folks who are participating in a national program that called for them to have insurance relative to their own property.

So in an effort to try to deal with this in a more thoughtful way, PAT TOOMEY from Pennsylvania has offered

an amendment to ensure that the increases in premiums people are facing are done in a way that obviously dramatically reduces the impact on people. Again, I applaud that. I appreciate that. I think there are some homeowners in this country, as well as property owners, who are having—the way the program now works, these increases would take place over the next 4 to 5 years. Instead, the Toomey amendment causes them to not increase—especially for those who make under a certain amount of money—more than 25 percent a year. So if someone has a \$200 bill for flood insurance next year, it would go up 50 percent.

I think it is a thoughtful effort to try to cause this bill to still be actuarially sound. It has no negative impact on our deficits. I think it is a way for us to deal with this in a much better way than, let's face it, putting our heads in the sand and not taking on this issue.

I want to go back one more time and say this is one of the few reforms—it may be the only reform that I am aware of—that has actually become law that has come out of the Banking Committee in several years. It did so unanimously. This is in essence an entitlement program. It is a small entitlement program. I understand it is very important to some property owners around our country. But if we as a body are going to turn away from reforms and not replace those reforms with other reforms but instead delay—in essence what most people believe because of the way FEMA operates—delay this for 4 years, then I think it speaks to a body that just really has no desire whatsoever to take on the issues that are so important to our Nation's citizens.

So I think the Toomey amendment is a thoughtful approach to try to deal with the issue, which I think is affecting many people in this body who have people they represent who are going through substantial increases in a way that they feel to be too draconian. So if that is a Senator's issue, I urge people to strongly support the Toomey amendment.

By the way, with the passage of the Toomey amendment, which leaves the rest of the reforms in place, I will then believe we have done something in this body that is thoughtful. We will have attempted to make this Flood Insurance Program actuarially sound and, at the same time, we will have solved the issue that I think so many people here are concerned about. Without the passage of the Toomey amendment as a part of this bill, I wish to say one more time, this body will have failed once again. With a very, very, very small entitlement program, we will have failed to rise to the occasion, to put our country, minimally, on a course toward solvency, and instead turned away from this effort which speaks to

the fact that there is almost no likelihood that we will ever, within the short period of the midterm anyway, be able to address the bigger issues we all know are looming and are affecting our country in such a big way.

I urge strong support for the Toomey amendment. Without the Toomey amendment, I hope this body will vote down this bill which undoes the only real reforms the Banking Committee has put in place in the last several years.

With that, I yield the floor, and I thank the Presiding Officer for the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and friend from Tennessee for his, as usual, thoughtful presentation, even though I disagree with it. His positions are always thoughtful, carefully thought out, and I appreciate his thoughts and efforts.

The need to pass the Menendez-Isakson-Landrieu bill is extremely important. In New York we have seen the follies of the present flood insurance law. We have seen follies in a variety of ways. Most of all, we have seen homeowners charged a fortune which they can't afford. We have seen homeowners told that even if they are not going to be charged, immediately when they sell their home, the rate will go up so high that they can't sell their home, so the value of the home decreases.

We have seen people—victims of Sandy—whose homes were destroyed or badly damaged, rebuild their homes and then be perhaps forced to lose them because of ridiculous flood insurance rates. We have seen the problems with the maps—areas 5 miles from the nearest flood somehow get called a flood zone and they have to pay more insurance.

We have seen FEMA overreaching in terms of drawing maps. In fact, in my State, they used Suffolk County's flood maps and flood levels and just transposed them on Nassau County—a different place with different elevations and different tides, and we had to get that undone. So a moratorium, going back to the drawing board and holding rates in place while that happens, makes eminent sense.

It is true it will cost the government some money. But what is our job here? Is it to let thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands default, lose their homes while we stand here and twiddle our thumbs? I don't think so. I don't think the vast majority of Americans think that. We have to figure out how to deal with flood insurance and the Menendez-Isakson-Landrieu bill does that. But while we are doing it, we have to make sure people don't lose their homes. There are many more storms out there. We know that. We have had a Katrina and a Sandy, creating unprecedented damage. It cer-

tainly means that the old flood insurance program probably has to be changed. But to just eliminate it, basically, by not passing this bill or by passing the Toomey amendment which, in effect, would eliminate it, makes no sense and would cause huge damage.

I rise in opposition to the Toomey amendment. If a person believes there should be some level of affordability before we impose rates, then a person can't vote for the Toomey bill. Because the Toomey bill basically has mandatory rate increases before any affordability study is concluded. It repeats the mistake of Biggert-Waters. Biggert-Waters actually called for an affordability study. FEMA didn't complete the affordability study and still had the rates go into effect.

If affordability is one of our hallmarks, and I believe it is, then it certainly makes no sense to do what FEMA has done under Biggert-Waters, which is put rate increases in effect before affordability is studied or do what Toomey does, which actually explicitly says rate increases shall go into effect before the affordability study is completed.

Furthermore, the Toomey amendment, in my judgment, means we may as well have nothing at all; we might as well go back to the old, because it establishes an uncapped annual fee on all 5.6 million NFIP policyholders for an unspecified period of time until the identified costs of this bill are offset.

There is no guarantee that homeowners would be protected from a \$30,000 premium, if that is what the actuaries think. Speaking for my State of New York, they say it is people on the water. It is second homes. It is rich people. Not in New York, it is not. We have all seen the pictures of homes damaged in Staten Island, in the Rockaways, Queens, in southern Brooklyn, on the southern shore of Long Island—modest homes, some of them even called bungalows, where people live full-time. In Long Beach, average folks—firefighters, teachers, cops, clerks, secretaries, small business people who struggle—double or triple or quadruple their insurance rates, their flood insurance rates, and they can't get by.

One other point I wish to make. Some of my colleagues said: This doesn't effect me. It is going to because FEMA is remapping across the country. They have done a lot of the remapping in New York. I have talked about how irresponsible what they have done is. Once they come to other Members' States and maps, they will see that the mapping is almost nonsensical, mapping people into flood zones who have never had a flood, charging rates that average folks cannot afford. From what I am told, Pennsylvania is the State with the highest percentage of new mapping activity; 14 percent of all new mapping activity, 1,400 maps. So I

think even for my good friend from Pennsylvania—and I know he is a true believer in these things and I don't doubt that and I respect his integrity, but it is sure going to affect the people of Pennsylvania.

Guess which State is second in terms of new maps? New York: 625. That is why I feel so strongly and have worked so hard with Senators MENENDEZ and ISAKSON and LANDRIEU, who have done such a fabulous job on this legislation to get it passed.

So I urge defeat of the Toomey amendment. The Toomey amendment is almost a mirror image of the bill itself, the Biggert-Waters bill, which we are trying to counteract and because FEMA did not implement it correctly.

If the Toomey amendment is defeated, and if our flood insurance bill, which I am a proud cosponsor of, is passed, homeowners will be able to breathe a sigh of real relief while FEMA goes back to the drawing boards and figures out a way to have a flood insurance program that does not bankrupt thousands of middle-class, working-class people.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2697

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I believe when I left the floor my amendment was pending, amendment No. 2697. I would like to spend a few minutes to talk about that amendment. I know somebody else has come to the floor here rather quickly and I have about 5 minutes, I have been told by the cloakroom.

Congressional creation of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, the bill that has been attached to the flood bill, usurps the rights of States' authority over insurance licensing and regulations.

Congress established the McCarran-Ferguson Act that States should retain the regulatory authority over insurance laws.

While NARAB II was crafted to retain primacy of insurance regulations and enforcement actions within the States, this bill will nevertheless compel States to accept a national license within their jurisdictions.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office stated:

... the association's authority would exist only through a preemption of states' power to regulate the licensing of insurance producers. This preemption would stem from an exercise of the sovereign power of the federal government.

NARAB II provides the President and his or her appointee the authority to

nullify the decisions made by the NARAB board but does not extend any of the same rights to the individual States.

My amendment will provide a State the opportunity to opt out of participation in NARAB only through the passage of legislation by the State legislature and signature of the Governor, and it will not allow State insurance commissioners to opt out on a whim.

To prevent a disruptive transition, this amendment requires a 2-year delay between passage of State legislation and the effective date of an opt-out. So you cannot get out just like that. It is 2 years.

In order to maintain the foundation of reciprocity and prevent States from gaming the provision for a competitive advantage, insurance producers located within a State that opts out of NARAB would be ineligible from participating in the NARAB system. So if your State opts out, you lose the privilege of going to other States.

The inclusion of this provision would accomplish the bill's goal of streamlining and cost-savings without the continuation of Congress infringing on activities that should be left to the States.

The amendment will still allow for the benefits provided by a multistate licensing process to reduce the bureaucracy involved for producers to access customers in other States, which will help increase competition and lower consumer costs—things I am totally for. Actually, I am for this bill, but only with preserving the Tenth Amendment rights of States.

The provision will also provide a safeguard from NARAB if 10 years from now it is not working as well as the current consensus has hoped and a State or States no longer wish to participate.

As the bill's proponents have already pointed out, NARAB has the support of every State and every insurance producer. They all agree. If that is the case, and this is so popular and such a needed reform, then no State will opt out, and the opt-out provision would be mute, while still protecting the States' rights.

I understand the opposition to this, that they think this will not get off the ground. But the very statements that have been made both in the committee and on the floor—that everybody wants this, all the insurance industry wants this, all the State insurance commissioners want this—if that is the case, nobody will opt out and we will have met our constitutional duty of protecting the Bill of Rights for the States.

I finish by saying this: One of the reasons we are in extreme difficulty—what physicians would call extremis—is that we have ignored States rights, we have ignored the Bill of Rights, and we have said we are primal.

So as CBO said, we are stepping all over this. I understand I probably will not be able to stop it, but it is another indication of why we need the Enumerated Powers Act. That is simply a bill sponsored by 44 Senators that says if you bring a bill to the floor, you have to give the authority under which the enumerated powers would justify you bringing this bill to the floor—to make us pause, just to think about it.

I do not think it is unreasonable. People may disagree about whether States ought to have the right to opt out, but if the program is such as has been designed by the authors of this bill and the statements by the people who have spoken on this bill on the floor—if that is the case—putting this amendment in will not harm it at all; it will not ever be used.

So it is simply saying, if they want to opt out, it is 2 years after they vote in their legislature and it is signed by the Governor before they can, so there is no disruption. Nobody is going to do that, if it is true what everybody who is supporting this bill has said.

It is peculiar and curious to me why anybody would oppose this amendment if, in fact, the facts are as stated by those supporting NARAB II. And I support it. But I think we ought to protect the States' constitutional rights.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I know the distinguished Senator from North Dakota is going to speak, but if she would withhold for 1 moment, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 4:45 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that at 4:45 p.m. today the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the following: Menendez motion to waive budget points of order against S. 1926, Reed amendment No. 2703, Whitehouse amendment No. 2706, and Gillibrand amendment No. 2708—I would expect those amendments would go by voice—and, finally, there be 2 minutes of debate in between the votes, equally divided in the usual form.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, thank you so much for this opportunity to stand and support a bill that has taken a long time to get to the floor of the U.S. Senate. I remember back when Members such as Senator MARY LANDRIEU stood and sounded the alarm—sounded the alarm even before we saw the problem coming. As a result of that initial effort, and as a result of the great effort of the gentleman who just left the floor, Mr. MENENDEZ, we now have a bill on the floor where we

can truly say we are actually listening to the middle class.

How many times do you think in this body we talk about the working folks, who go to work every day, doing everything they can to put food on the table, and they just need us to not cause more problems for them? We hear about the middle class, and last night during the State of the Union speech, again more discussion about the need to pay attention to the financial struggles and the challenges of working families.

Well, let me tell you, this is a bill that for so many working families in North Dakota and across the country can mean the difference between home ownership or no home ownership, can mean the difference between actually having equity in their home or having a house that is under water.

I am not exaggerating. This is a critical part of the housing market. It has created uncertainty in the housing market while we are trying to achieve some success and some continuing momentum. Housing is 20 percent of what we do in this country in our economy, but yet this is throwing a monkey wrench into the housing market for so many families and for so many States.

I want to not tell anything new here maybe but to kind of give a different perspective because I think all too often people think flood insurance is about the coast or it is about the gulf or it is about what is happening maybe along a major river, whether it is the Mississippi. But let me tell you, in my State flooding is a reality for way too many people. It is a problem we have experienced during these wet cycles that has led to devastation, has led to loss of equity in folks' homes, and it has led to uncertainty.

I want to talk a little bit about two places you may not think of because you have all heard about the massive Grand Forks flood, and you, of course, watched television as we were looking at what could have potentially happened in our largest city, the city of Fargo, ND.

But what you may not know is we have a city called Minot, ND, that experienced a devastating flood, an absolutely devastating flood, to a tremendous amount of affordable housing—that housing that was along the bodyway. They thought they were protected from a hundred-year flood. Many did not have flood insurance, and the hundred-year flood came and devastated and wiped out literally hundreds and hundreds of good, hard-working families and retired folks.

They are looking to rebuild, but right now the uncertainty of flood insurance and what is going to happen with the new flood maps has slowed down that effort. It has created uncertainty. I just had a meeting in the city of Minot, where I talked to the mayor, talked to the city officials, and asked

the questions about whether they were seeing this uncertainty. They certainly are getting lots of questions. I would love to tell those hard-working North Dakotans that we actually, in Washington, DC, can hear what they are saying.

I also wish to talk about another place way off from Minot. It is in the Red River Valley. It is a place called Grafton, ND, where a great North Dakota family, Allison and Kyle, purchased their home 1 year ago. At the time, the flood insurance rate on their home was \$900 a year.

They knew that when they bought the house.

They said: OK. Fine. We have this extra expenditure in order to meet our mortgage requirement. They built that into their budget. This is coverage for \$100,000. It seemed reasonable. It seemed like they were paying their fair share. But when the policy recently came up after the changes in the Biggert-Waters law, their flood insurance rate skyrocketed to \$4,200 a year—\$4,200 a year. That is a 375-percent increase.

In an email to me, Allison expressed a desire to raise their children in Grafton, but unfortunately they no longer can afford to live there with those rates because in Grafton we do not have flood protection. As a result, the entire community is probably in the 100-year flood plain. You are going to buy a house. You are going to get a mortgage. You are going to be required to get flood insurance.

So not only is Allison devastated by this news, the whole community of Grafton is now struggling with this increase in flood insurance. In the community of Valley City, a home has a flood insurance bill that just went from \$700 to more than \$10,000 a year. Think about that. A lot of people who hear that amount would say: Is that your mortgage payment? No. They say: It is flood insurance. Get this. That flood insurance is for \$60,000 worth of coverage.

We have an opportunity here to act as a body that actually listens to the challenges of the American people and actually reforms and looks back when we make decisions, decisions such as Biggert-Waters, and as Senator MENENDEZ has so often said, the concerns about affordability were raised at the time. They assumed those would be taken into consideration as they moved forward with the rate reduction. It did not happen and these rates went up.

But we also have a unique issue in North Dakota; it is called the basement exemption. When you think about at what level your house is protected, you think about your foundation, to that level where your yard basically meets your foundation. Because we waterproofed our basements along the Red River Valley in a lot of our

communities we were given an exemption. Lots of money went into waterproofing and making those basements flood-proof.

One might ask: Why do you need a basement? Just put it on a slab. North Dakota, unbeknownst to a lot of people, suffers from tornados. In fact, Fargo was devastated in the 1950s by a tornado. So people take very seriously that emergency shelter that is provided in basements, and frequently those basements get rehabbed and as a result were used as flood control back when those homes were built.

But now we have a basement exemption. People have made the investment. FEMA has, in fact, suggested that the basement exemptions will no longer be valid for all of those communities that have relied on that to provide affordable housing in their communities. So this bill retains and says clearly that the basement exemption, after people made investments and reliance on the government—reliance on the government's word, that we will, in fact, have protection. Without this provision, without the basement exemption, flood insurance rates in these areas that rely on basements could go up again \$10,000 a year.

The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act provides a balanced, targeted approach. This bill gives FEMA the authority needed to implement reforms included in Biggert-Waters in a thoughtful way, to improve the program's solvency, and phase out certain subsidies without pricing people out of their homes and out of the program.

It delays the premium increases until FEMA completes that all-important affordability study required under Biggert-Waters and proposes regulations that allow time for Congress to review. There have been some positive steps since many of my colleagues have come to the floor, including myself, to sound the alarm so many months ago. But we need still to pass this bill.

I think the time is now. What better way—what better way for us to respond to the call of looking at and improving the condition of the middle class than to say: We heard. We listened. We understood the challenges and today we acted. We heard that you want to own your home. We heard that the Federal Government ought not get in the way of you owning your home.

I would encourage all of my colleagues—all of my colleagues—to send a message, send a message that we are putting our votes where our mouths are; that we are, in fact, voting to improve the condition of very many working-class and middle-class American citizens who have had great uncertainty created as a result of flood insurance.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last night during the President's State of the Union speech, I felt as though I was watching another rerun of one of my favorite movies, "Groundhog Day" with Bill Murray. Of course, we all remember that movie. Bill Murray, the principal character, relives exactly the same 24 hours over and over and over again.

Of course, that is what the President's State of the Union reminded me of, because what we heard is a replay of a lot of the ideas we have heard in previous State of the Union speeches. But, unfortunately, the President's speech and his claims in many respects did not reflect reality for most people.

It is apparent the President has not changed in this respect. He still thinks slow economic growth and high unemployment, that the answer to that is more government spending and more government control over the economy. I would say in the debates we have had in this Chamber and elsewhere and that Americans have had throughout the course of our history since our country's founding about the size and the role of the Federal Government, usually we end up debating philosophy, ideology, and theory.

But the last 5 years have given us the proof we need that big government does not work; not to deny that people do not have the best of intentions, but we know promise after promise has been made, whether it is for the trillion-dollar stimulus—what it would do to unemployment. The President later said, in a moment of candor: Well, I guess shovel ready was not all that shovel ready. NANCY PELOSI talked about timely, targeted, and temporary stimulus. Again, this was borrowed money. This is money we did not have which was added to our debt, which simply did not work. Then of course there is the example of ObamaCare. But let's just review. For the last 5 years, the President pushed through this trillion-dollar stimulus, a \$1.8 trillion dollar health care law, a \$1.7 trillion increase in new taxes, and about one-half trillion dollars in new regulations.

That is what happens, for example, when I go home to Texas. My community bankers and credit unions say: We have hired new people, but the people we have hired are the ones to fill out the paperwork that is required by the new regulations that are the result of Dodd-Frank.

This is another example of where Wall Street perhaps was the target but Main Street was the collateral damage.

So all these new regulations have a cost to them because businesses, if they are going to be in business, are going to have to hire people to comply with those regulations, but that doesn't help grow the economy. That doesn't help make us more productive, and it doesn't put as many people back to work as we would hope would be going back to work in productive jobs.

Let us consider some of the results of some of these items: the stimulus, the health care bill, the new regulations, and new taxes.

Between 2009 and 2013, we have seen median household income fall by more than \$2,500, so that is \$2,500 less than an average family has to spend on everything from their food to their heating or air-conditioning bill—\$2,500 less.

Then we know that the labor participation rate—that is a fancy name for the percentage of people actually in the workforce—has fallen to a three-decade low. It has fallen by 3 percentage points since 2009, meaning that many fewer people are actually in the workforce looking for work. If they were still in the workforce looking for work, the employment rate would actually be much higher, but they aren't counted once they drop out of the workforce. Then we know that long-term unemployment has increased dramatically as a total share of unemployment.

Of course, all of this happened after the recession was over. The technical definition of a recession, I believe, is two consecutive terms of negative economic growth. But amazingly a poll conducted only last week reflected that 74 percent of the respondents thought we were still in a recession. Whether it is a technical recession, people still feel as if we are in one. That is a remarkable number, an unfortunate but yet scathing indictment of the President's economic policies which have not delivered what he had hoped and had promised to deliver.

What is the big idea that the President has to solve this problem or to address these concerns of average hard-working American families? The big idea is let's raise the minimum wage. Superficially, I admit raising the minimum wage has some appeal, but the fact is, when employers have to pay more for their workers, overall that is less money to hire new people. One study estimated that raising the minimum wage to \$9.50 an hour—that is less than the \$10.10 the President has proposed—would destroy no fewer than 468,000 jobs. Think about it. There is some money with which to hire people, but rather than hire more people, the government sets the wages, meaning they can't hire these other people. That is how it has an either/or effect in terms of jobs. One study calculated that raising the minimum wage to \$10 an hour could potentially destroy as many as 2.3 million jobs.

The President chose to ignore this reality last night in his speech. He was eloquent, as always, and gives a great speech. But he said once again—or reiterated once again—if he can't get what he wants from Congress, he is prepared to go it alone.

Last night he said he was going to issue an executive order giving a 40-percent pay raise to Federal contractors, even though the White House cannot tell us how many workers would actually be affected because they don't know.

But who will end up paying more? The Federal Government.

We are talking about raising spending by the Federal Government by 40 percent for these Federal contractors. Somebody has to pay that money, so it is either going to be the taxpayers or it is going to be added to our deficits and debt.

I don't want to be a wet blanket, so let me end on a more positive note, something we could actually do together that would actually make a difference on those long-term unemployed, on people stuck in jobs that are dead end or which they are frustrated with because they are not able to earn the income they want for their family and to live their dream.

One of the debates we should have had earlier but for the majority leader denying us an opportunity to offer any amendments, debate, and vote on the unemployment insurance extension—but I believe we will see that again—is how could we help people learn the skills they need to qualify for the good, high-paying jobs that exist. But there is not enough trained workforce with the skills they need in order to pay for those good, high-paying jobs.

We know there are a lot of workforce training initiatives. Our friend and colleague from Oklahoma tells us there are some 40 different worker training programs, and he has proposed they ought to be consolidated and perhaps streamlined so more of that money could be focused on giving people the education and the tools they need in order to qualify for these good jobs.

I saw a glimpse of what could happen, and thankfully is happening back in Houston, TX, at San Jacinto College, where I had the opportunity to meet some of these inspiring Texans, people who are pursuing their dream.

I met an Iraq war veteran named Jordan Chauvette, who went back to school with the help of the Hazlewood Act. The Hazlewood Act is a State law that provides tuition benefits to veterans and their families. His goal was to learn the skills he would need in order to live a better life and earn a better income for his wife and family.

He recently graduated from San Jacinto College and now is working at an engineering and construction company based in the city of La Porte. If I might interject, one of the reasons

there is so much construction, manufacturing—an economic boom taking place in this part of our State—is because of the shale gas revolution. This is one of the brightest spots in our economy, our energy sector, domestic production producing cleaner natural gas. The President talked about that a little bit last night. It is creating these manufacturing jobs because natural gas happens to be feedstock necessary for the petrochemical industry.

Many of the jobs that exist that need these technical skills are the sorts of jobs these young men and women are training for at San Jacinto College. Everything is connected to everything else, but this is how domestic energy production—some of which the President talked about last night—is so important in terms of bringing that manufacturing back on shore. Then we need to have the job training in order to teach people the skills they need in order to qualify for these good, high-paying jobs.

Let's look at the case of Deanna Harper, who received a cosmetology degree from San Jacinto and then went back to school and earned a degree in something called process technology. I don't pretend to understand everything that process technology involves, but all I know is she is a wife, a mother, and she is earning a six-figure salary working in the energy industry. It is a terrific story.

I remember a few years ago in Amarillo, TX, meeting a young Hispanic woman, a single mother, who had been working as a prison guard—a dangerous, tough job. But thanks to the degree she received from Amarillo College, she was able to go to work on the B-22 Osprey assembly line making in excess of, I believe, \$25 an hour and with a great career ahead of her.

What it took was the opportunity for her to go back to school, learn those skills, match those skills with the job, and lift herself up by her own bootstraps.

So many other Texans—Jordan, Deanna, and this young woman I mentioned from Amarillo—have benefited from the recent surge of private investment into petrochemicals and manufacturing, which I mentioned a moment ago. The skills they acquired and the job training they had at San Jacinto prepared them not only for a good job but for an upwardly mobile career in a fast-growing industry.

At a time of stubbornly high national unemployment and people giving up and dropping out of the workforce, we should be doing everything we possibly can to ensure that such jobs and careers are available to all Americans who want them. In that sense we should be doing everything possible to bring this sort of example to Washington, DC, and to spread it nationally.

The truth is there are stories such as this occurring everywhere, but there is

more we could do. Certainly, one is take up one of the suggestions of our friend from Oklahoma when he talks about the duplication, the waste, the inefficiency built into our job-training programs—to make them more efficient, to deliver it more streamlined, and to deliver better value to the people who need that training so they can qualify for these kinds of good, high-paying jobs.

That is a much better idea than the Federal Government trying to make a political fix by fixing wages between an employer and a worker that artificially elevates those wages beyond what the market will bear and, in the process, limit the number of new people whom that employer can hire.

These are only some of the ideas I think any reasonable person would say are not completely over the top, are not a crazy ideas, that kind of make sense. But that is exactly the sort of debate we are not having as a result of the restrictive way under which the majority leader is letting us take up consideration of some of this legislation such as the unemployment insurance bill.

Soon, I predict, he will bring a minimum-wage increase bill to the floor. The question is, Is he going to allow amendments from this side of the aisle and the Democratic side of the aisle too? When he cuts off amendments from the floor of the Senate, it doesn't only hurt the minority. We don't like it, but it doesn't only hurt us. It hurts our friends on the other side of the aisle because they are not allowed to offer their constructive suggestions for what could improve the legislation. I thought that is why we are in the Senate, to try to produce the best product we can for the American people.

We don't do it by writing bills in the majority leader's conference room, bringing them out here, and then trying to shove them on through. That is why we have the debate, the checks, the balances, and the deliberative process we have in the Senate. That is what we have not been having.

I wished to raise a few examples of what we could be doing that would be enormously constructive and would help a lot of these struggling workers during a time of high unemployment and low labor participation to help them get back on track.

I came away from that experience at San Jacinto College rejuvenated and encouraged that there is a lot we can do. We do know that people don't want to collect unemployment—maybe some do, but most people, the vast majority of people, want a job.

Again, to repeat what the President talked about last night, he talked about the dignity of work. That is what the vast majority of people want; they want a good job. If we give them the opportunity to learn the skills and we give them a growing economy that is

creating jobs, not fewer jobs, then they will be able to find that. I came away even more committed to adopting progrowth economic policies that will make it easier for all Americans to find work when they finish school.

I close on this note. The press leading into the President's speech last night sounded as if it was going to be a whole lot more like he was going to go it alone. But he did at least offer an olive branch of trying to do things more constructively in the legislative branch, recognizing that our Constitution doesn't authorize the executive to do this all by himself. That is what checks and balances are all about, and that is what doesn't happen when he tries to "go it alone." There is danger in trying to go it alone when things are poorly thought out and rammed through without adequate legislation.

But there is one area where that President can use that phone and pen he talked about. He could use that pen to sign the authorization for the Keystone XL Pipeline and connect the pipeline to Canadian oil reserves that would extend from Canada all the way through the United States down to Port Arthur, TX, into what we call the Golden Triangle, where we have a lot of refineries that would turn that crude oil into jet fuel and gasoline. In the process a lot of jobs would be created.

For those of my friends who say: Oh my gosh, we can't build another pipeline, I would invite them to go on Google or Bing or any other search engine and just type in oil and gas pipelines and see what they get. You will be astonished at the number of pipelines that crisscross this country and that safely transmit their product without our even knowing about it, by and large.

I realize occasionally there are accidents, and those are to be deplored and regretted, and we should try to prevent those. But the idea should not be to cut our nose off to spite our face and deny ourselves this safe source of energy from a friendly country such as Canada, so we don't have to get it from dangerous volatile regions of the world and also take with it the jobs that are created as a result of this great renaissance in American and North American energy.

So I would say to the President, in conclusion, after listening to him last night, and really trying to listen to his words: Look at the States that actually are the successful laboratories of democracy. That is the phrase Louis Brandeis coined. That is the great thing about our Federal system, where we have 50 States that are sovereign. They conduct their own business, subject to those matters that are delegated to the Federal Government under the Constitution. But the States are a great place to see what works and what doesn't work. I might add that the two lowest unemployment rates in the

United States are Bismark, ND, and Midland, TX, and not unrelated to the shale gas renaissance I mentioned a moment ago.

We should look at what works, from the Tax Code—making it less burdensome, more logical and more conducive to economic growth—to how we address the unkept promises of things such as ObamaCare, which has created uncertainty, increased cost, and caused a lot of disruption in the lives of Americans, and replacing it with patient-centered reforms that actually reduce the cost, expand quality coverage, and improve access to care.

I believe that is the kind of debate we should be having, and that is the type of agenda the American people are asking for and the type of agenda they deserve.

Mr. President, I yield floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the floor of the Senate today to speak on the importance of passing the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. I am a cosponsor of this legislation because without it millions of homeowners across the country will see significant increases in their flood insurance premiums.

Homeowner insurance protects a family's investments from damages and losses that come as a result of accidents or tornadoes or burglaries, but that same homeowner policy, as we all know, does not cover damage resulting from floods. Sadly, too many Americans learn of this gap in their policy after it is too late.

In recognition of this major gap in coverage, Congress created the National Flood Insurance Program in 1968 to give homeowners and businesses protection in the event of a flood, and this program has helped them to protect their property, their families, and their livelihoods.

All regions of America are susceptible to flooding. We see it with seasonal rains, hurricanes, and thunderstorms, and it is a powerful force of nature we cannot escape. When you have flood insurance, you have the peace of mind that the tools to help you rebuild will be there for you. For Minnesotans who live in areas susceptible to flooding, the flood insurance program is absolutely vital.

Each spring in northwestern Minnesota, we know the Red River of the North will top its banks and the flood waters will threaten Moorhead, MN, and Fargo, ND. Leading up to the flood event last spring, I visited the region twice to watch the flood preparations, to urge on our volunteers, and to ensure the residents were receiving the Federal assistance and cooperation they needed. Just as I have seen each and every year since 2007, I saw once again how hard friends and neighbors work to prepare for the potential flood.

These people aren't idly sitting by. In fact, I would bet that if towns and other areas of the country saw the kind of floods these folks have faced in certain years of the last decade, I am not sure they would have been saved. In this case, the residents of Moorhead and Fargo incessantly would create sandbags. They have huge warehouses filled with volunteers. Everyone from teenagers to seniors to inmates would be stuffing those bags full of sand. Residents fought heroically to save not only their homes but their businesses and their families.

Across the Red River, we always say the rising river doesn't divide the two States of Minnesota and North Dakota, it unites us. This is not the first time the Red River has risen, and it certainly won't be the last. As honorable, tireless, and commendable as these efforts are, homeowners can't do it alone, and they deserve our help. That is why we need a National Flood Insurance Program that offers affordable premiums for homeowners who are trying to do the right thing.

I would say that on the Minnesota side, many homeowners have relocated—dozens and dozens. In fact, across our State, hundreds of houses have literally been moved or been destroyed because they are too close to flooded areas, but still the need for flood insurance remains.

So what are these people seeing? FEMA is increasing premiums to levels that do not fairly reflect the risks associated with the flood coverage that is being provided, and the consequences of these increases can't be understated. There are 1.1 million homes and businesses across the country that were built before FEMA published a flood map of their community, and now they might not be able to sell their property. Another 2.9 million homes and business owners across the country who have followed the rules but were remapped into a higher-risk area are now seeing significant spikes in their premiums.

Rate increases are not just numbers. They can have a substantial impact on real families and even price them out of their homes. Sharp increases in premiums are devastating for a place such as Roseau, MN, where 75 percent of the homes are located in the floodplain. One Roseau resident who recently wanted to purchase flood insurance for a home valued at \$75,000, was shocked with the changes in the premiums. This individual's new annual policy would cost \$3,726, not the \$985 it had been previously. That is nearly four times as much, and that is sticker shock. When calculated for 30 years, the length of a typical home loan, the flood policy on that \$75,000 home would cost more than \$110,000—more than the value of the home itself.

Crookston, MN, residents are similarly seeing premiums they can't af-

ford. One resident, who recently purchased a home for around \$100,000, was stunned to learn his annual flood insurance program would be \$5,800, not the \$800 he had anticipated based on the past.

This isn't the way the National Flood Insurance Program is supposed to work. Our National Flood Insurance Program should provide peace of mind, but, instead, these changes create a disincentive for families and businesses in flood-prone areas to do the right thing.

Roseau recovered from a flood in 2002 that caused widespread damage and is working on permanent flood protection to reduce the flood stages in the city. Once complete, the project will include a restriction structure to the city from the 100-year regulatory flood plain and reduce future flood damages by nearly 86 percent.

It makes no sense that FEMA would be pushing these premium increases on consumers before the congressionally required study on affordability has even begun. The bill the Senate is considering today, and which I support, supports these priorities. It stops the proposed rate increases until the affordability study is done and the flood maps being used are verified as being accurate. Only after all of this critical information is reviewed should FEMA move forward and consider the cost of premiums that encourage participation in the flood insurance program while ensuring its long-term stability.

The National Flood Insurance Program has given protection to homeowners and businesses from catastrophic flood losses for more than 45 years. We shouldn't hit them now with an outrageous premium increase.

I commend Senators MENENDEZ, ISAKSON, and LANDRIEU on their great work on this legislation and urge my colleagues to support it.

THE FARM BILL

Now, Mr. President, I would like to discuss another critical priority for my home State of Minnesota, and that is the farm bill.

I rise today to speak in support of the farm bill conference agreement. I was a member of the conference committee. This bill is good for farmers, it is good for rural economies, and it is good for taxpayers, which the House recognized earlier today when they voted to pass the farm bill by a strong vote of 251 to 166. Now it is the Senate's turn to pass this critical legislation and get it to the President's desk as soon as possible.

I thank Chairwoman STABENOW for her determination to get us to this point. She has been tireless in her advocacy for America's farmers and ranchers and has made it a priority to work in a bipartisan way with Ranking Member COCHRAN to put together a farm bill that strengthens the safety net for our Nation's family farmers,

ranchers, and preserves critical food and nutrition programs and brings down the deficit. Senator STABENOW couldn't have been a better partner in this effort, and the same goes for Senator COCHRAN. I greatly appreciate the expertise they both bring to agricultural policy, and I thank them for their leadership.

I thank the ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, COLLIN PETERSON. No one knows more about agriculture than COLLIN PETERSON, who serves as a representative from my State. He has the longest district in the United States of America, stretching literally from the Canadian border nearly down to the Iowa border. I guess that is why he flies his own plane when he visits the towns. There is no other way to visit many places in one day. It has been a privilege for me to work with Congressman PETERSON on this issue. It is the second farm bill we have worked on together.

I also want to thank my other Congressman TIM WALZ for his service on the conference committee. We worked hard to make sure this bill is strong for our country, for our State, and for the people of America.

Farmers, ranchers, and rural communities in Minnesota have been waiting for this farm bill for more than 2 years. It is a good bill for our State, and it is a good bill for the country. It provides the certainty family farmers need to succeed and thrive, and that is why it has the strong support of both the National Farmers Union and the American Farm Bureau.

That is not to say everyone got everything they wanted in this bill. Some concerns remain about potentially retaliatory actions regarding exports. As the Senator from the State that is first in turkey, second in pork, and sixth in agricultural exports, I will continue to work with the administration and producers to ensure our agricultural policies are implemented in a manner that avoids potential disruptions and ensures agricultural exports remain an American success story.

As a member of the conference committee, I worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the House and the Senate to build on the strong farm bill the Senate passed last year. In the conference report, we first of all eliminated direct payments and transitioned to crop insurance to help manage risk. We provided \$880 million in mandatory funding to promote homegrown energy. We maintained the successful sugar program that is so important to the sugar beet producers in the Red River Valley. We reduced the deficit by \$23 billion, making this an important bill for all Americans. We kept nutrition programs strong for Minnesota families. We provided permanent disaster relief for our Nation's livestock producers. We streamlined the conservation programs and still managed to

come out with a proconservation bill that is supported by environmental and conservation groups across the country.

I wanted to focus on the disaster provisions of the bill. The disaster provisions are all the more critical when we consider just how much our farmers and ranchers have been through recently—the worst drought since 1956, a devastating blizzard that killed thousands of cattle in my neighboring State of South Dakota, and a wet spring that led to a shortage of alfalfa that hurt beef and dairy producers in Minnesota.

In this farm bill, we ensure that permanent disaster relief will be there for livestock producers that were left stranded when the farm bill expired last September. This assistance will be there for producers when they face the next disaster.

The farm bill also includes an amendment that I led with Senators HOEVEN and HETKAMP that addresses critical priorities by providing an additional \$300 million. This came out of our committee in the Senate before we passed it in the Senate. This \$300 million will boost agricultural research, address the backlog of water and wastewater projects, and support energy projects in rural areas.

The amendment also supported funding for conservation projects that can help reduce flooding while protecting wildlife habitat.

The farm bill authorizes a joint study by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Transportation to examine rural transportation issues, including captive shipping, something I pushed for—seeing what I am seeing with some of our producers, with our agricultural producers, with our manufacturers that are at the end of the line and are finding they don't have a lot of choice over what rail rates are for that last leg. They many times are being charged outrageously high rates, which makes it difficult for them to produce goods.

Today families and farmers are facing a severe propane shortage in my State. I believe it is more important than ever that we understand the vulnerabilities and shortcomings of our transportation infrastructure so we can ensure that the fuels we need to keep our homes and barns warm are available and affordable.

I fought to include each of these provisions because I believe that if we want to recruit a new generation of farmers and ranchers, then we must take action to improve the quality of life in rural communities. That is why I authored a number of the provisions specifically to recruit beginning farmers and ranchers.

The first would reduce the cost of crop insurance for beginning farmers by 10 percent. The second would make it easier for beginning producers to graze livestock on Conservation Reserve Program acres.

In this bill we put in place a new dairy program that helps dairy farmers in Minnesota and across the country who have struggled with low milk prices and high feed costs. We have probably seen that sector of the agriculture community hit harder than any other. Crops have had their droughts. We have seen wet springs that have hurt many of our farmers. We have seen the blizzard I mentioned in South Dakota which killed our cattle. We have seen trade barriers put up in other countries which shut down the markets. But I would still say the hardest hit of any sector of our agricultural economy in the last few years has been our dairy producers, specifically our small dairy producers. Anyone who has driven through the backroads of Minnesota or Wisconsin understands how important that is to our economy and our way of life.

While this compromise wasn't exactly the deal we had reached in the Senate, it is still a strong deal. It still contains new protections for dairy farmers. I specifically thank COLLIN PETERSON for his leadership in being the architect of this change, as well as the work in the Senate by specifically Senator LEAHY and Senator STABENOW.

The farm bill also streamlines conservation programs from 23 to 13, including the provisions I worked on to help communities in the Red River Valley address flooding. It extends conservation compliance rules to the Crop Insurance Program—something that came out of the Senate bill—and also includes the sodsaver provision that I worked on with Senator THUNE in South Dakota for five or six States—really, the Prairie Pothole States. It protects native lands, native prairie, and helps to preserve our conservation efforts for hunting and for our way of life, particularly in the upper Midwest.

These critical provisions, with the conservation compliance and our sodsaver amendment, are the reason the bill is supported by wildlife organizations including Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever, and environmental groups such as the Natural Resources Defense Council and The Nature Conservancy.

I believe we do right by ourselves when we work to strengthen the farms and rural communities which sustain us every day. Our prosperity depends on it, and this farm bill helps us to do just that. I urge my colleagues to support this very bipartisan farm bill.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. COONS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1973 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. COONS. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, yesterday at the State of the Union Address by the President, I asked to join me—each Member of the Senate gets a pass, a gallery pass for a spouse or constituent or someone—I asked Elizabeth Dandridge, a Head Start teacher from Cincinnati, to join me and she sat in the gallery—the first time she had actually been in the Capitol. She taught at Head Start for 10 years.

Mrs. Dandridge isn't paid a lot of money. Unfortunately, we don't pay Head Start teachers and Head Start teaching assistants a whole lot more than minimum wage. It is important that people understand that there are a number of low-wage workers in this country.

There is one thing I want to say before I yield to Senator SESSIONS. One of the reasons to increase the minimum wage is that it matters so much to those families who work so hard and get so little for it. President Obama said no one who works full time in this country should live in poverty, and he is absolutely right.

The lesson of history is that 100 years ago this month Henry Ford made an announcement that he would pay every one of his workers—from the sweeper of the factory floor to the worker who assembles the autos—\$5 a day. A lot of his business friends were outraged. They couldn't believe he was doing this. He wasn't necessarily doing it out of the goodness of his heart. I certainly don't know his heart. It was a good business decision.

He knew that if he would put \$5 a day into his workers' pockets, they would begin to spend that money, it would create more prosperity for the community, a number of those workers might be able to buy cars that Ford assembled, and we would all be better off. That is really what the minimum wage debate is about. It is not only about increasing the minimum wage for those hundreds of thousands of families in my State who work at such low-income levels. It is also going to help the economy in the State of Delaware, the State of Alabama, and the State of Ohio.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the flood insurance program is important to a lot of Americans. It is important for my constituents in Alabama, and they are concerned about it. The reform that has been passed into law is fundamentally the right approach to fixing the difficulties that we have, in my opinion. It moves this program from a big subsidy to a program that is actuarially sound and self-sustaining. I think that is the appropriate goal.

I think at some point a person living in the interior of the United States should not be required to have money extracted from him or her or from their family to pay for somebody who built their house on shifting sands on a beach somewhere. That is my view of it. There are people who might find themselves unexpectedly in a dangerous circumstance where floods may occur rapidly or may not occur for decades.

In my hometown of Mobile, a number of years ago they had a big flood problem. A lot of homes were damaged. They said it was the 100-year flood, and there was a lot of concern for everybody. I think a lot of people didn't have flood insurance. The next year it flooded again so they had two 100-year floods in two consecutive years. I say that because it is very difficult to manage a program like this in a sound way and to fully anticipate all of the dangers.

What I am hearing from my constituents is that premiums are going up rapidly—very high for some people. It has gone up multiple times from what the present premiums are currently. There is little time to protest or get a clear review of it, and they think this ought to be more thoughtfully done and phased in in a more effective way.

I tend to believe that, but I do not intend to support legislation that would fundamentally undo, reverse or retreat from the principle that was established when we passed legislation in 2012 that provided for the sustainability of this government program—the Flood Insurance Program. I think that is the right principle. It doesn't have to be done overnight. But, it does have to be done more carefully. It doesn't need to be done in a way that hard-working Americans who are struggling to get by find their flood insurance premiums—which they must have before they can get a loan to buy a house in a flood-prone area—doubles, triples or quadruples, and it can be virtually as much as their house payment. This is the problem we are facing.

My colleague Senator COBURN has raised a budget point of order against the legislation, and I think the budget point of order is well taken. The chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator PATTY MURRAY, and her staff, have agreed that the legislation violates the

budget, and I, as the ranking Republican on the Budget Committee, certainly agree with that.

There are two aspects of the budget point of order. Maybe I can summarize it. There is probably more to it than this, but in essence we can say two things about it. One, the bill spends more than the Banking Committee was authorized to spend; that creates a violation of the budget in itself. The other violation is that the underlying bill adds to the debt. It spends more money than we have, and the result would be to add to the debt of the United States.

What the bill's supporters have done is come before the Presiding Officer and moved to waive all budget violations. They say this legislation is so important that we should just waive the violations and not worry about it. I believe we need to worry about the budget, and we need to think about it. There may be occasions when the budget point of order should be waived when we go forward, and there will be points in time when it should not be waived.

My view is that we should not waive all budget points of order. I do not believe that is the appropriate vote at this time. We imposed a budget. We promised to limit spending to certain amounts, and we should stay within that and not add to the debt. I feel strongly that we ought to adhere to the budget and not go around waiving it any time somebody wants to spend more money and thereby weaken the commitment we made to the American people when we established certain limits on spending.

Both Houses of Congress have adopted it, and we passed it by law. The President signed the legislation that sets spending limits. This bill violates those limits.

I have given thought to this, and maybe good people will disagree. This is my view of it. We should not spend more on the flood insurance program than was projected and agreed to and add to the debt of the United States of America. We absolutely should not do that.

We should not reduce the constraints we placed on the Federal flood program so we can spend more money and then borrow the money to pay for that extra cost. That is not what we should do. This budget point of order would allow that to happen. The motion to waive the budget objection raised by Senator COBURN—waiving that and all objections to the bill would waive that.

There appears to be a second violation, and that violation is that it spends more than the Banking Committee was authorized to spend. I think that is a somewhat different issue. Some might disagree under these circumstances. I think that aspect of a budget point of order could be waived, and this is why. Under the law adopted by this body in 2012, the flood insurance program is to be moved to a fully

self-sustaining actuarially sound program where all the premiums that come in are sufficient to pay all of the claims that go out—like any other insurance company in America tries to operate. That is the principle that Congress—both Houses—established when they passed the reform in 2012.

I don't think it is necessarily to be considered a tax increase or a violation of the budget if this insurance program, which is part of the Banking Committee's jurisdiction, results in increased premiums to ensure that the program, while it is transitioning, remains sound and is ultimately paid for. I think that is the kind of waiver that may be justified.

I am really impressed with Senator TOOMEY and how hard he has worked on his legislation to create an alternative to the base legislation that is before us today, which I don't think can be justified because it adds to the debt of the United States. We don't need to add to the debt. Every time somebody has a problem and then proposes a solution, the tendency is to not find reductions in spending somewhere to fix the problem that they have. They look around and see if they can just borrow the money and not pay for the extension.

I support Senator TOOMEY's approach to solving this problem. I mean, his amendment would require a surcharge on all new NFIP policies, but it would not add to the debt because the additional spending is paid for by the surcharges that are in turn paid for by NFIP policy beneficiaries. It is not taxing the American citizens to subsidize a group of people who have flood insurance when the general citizenry does not have flood insurance.

It is an increased fee on the people who benefit from flood insurance in the short term to transition this flood insurance program to the more rigorous self-sustaining program from the one that is not self-sustaining or is rather draconian in the way it is being implemented.

I think Senator TOOMEY's legislation may not be perfect, but I believe his legislation is actuarially sound. It raises sufficient revenue from the people who benefit from the flood insurance program to transition in a more gentle and logical and reasonable way to the new program. It would transition it in an effective way.

It does not—according to the people who really understand this—threaten the integrity of the reforms that have been voted into law.

I think a good case can be made that the base legislation before us today violates several budget points of order and is drafted in a way that threatens the very integrity of the reforms we approved in 2012. We should not do that. We should not weaken the commitment we made as a Congress in any way that would lead us in a situation in which we don't follow through on

the commitment we had to make sure that flood insurance becomes actuarially sound and self-sufficient.

For what it is worth, I will share with my colleagues my belief that we should not waive all budget points of order, although there may be a possibility that we can waive the budget point of order with regard to the spending limit because, should we adopt the Toomey amendment, the flood insurance program's indebtedness would be alleviated by placing a fee on the insurance policies which benefit the very people who receive the flood insurance subsidies.

I appreciate my colleagues Senator MENENDEZ and others who are striving to alleviate some of the harsh results of the transition of the current law, but I think their proposal runs a risk of abandoning the commitments that we made, and I believe their plan would add to the debt.

I think the Toomey amendment would be the preferable way for us to meet the problems of this very rough transition period we are in without adding to the debt and without threatening to abandon the good goal of an actuarially sound flood insurance program.

I yield the floor.

LOWER RATES

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the State of Michigan has traditionally been a donor State with regard to the National Flood Insurance Program. Over the life of the program, Michigan residents have paid far more in premiums than they have received in benefits. It was my understanding that the flood insurance reform measure that was passed last year was designed to make the program more appropriately reflect the true flood risks for insured properties. With the phaseout of subsidies for some high-risk properties, many Michigan residents expected last year's reforms to lead to a better balance between donor and recipient States and potentially lower rates for Michigan residents whose properties are lower risk.

I ask, is it correct that the bill before us, S. 1926, if passed, would not prevent rates from decreasing if that rate would have decreased under current law?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Yes, the Senator is correct. This bill will freeze the eligibility for some subsidized properties that are required, under current law, to move to risk-based rates. But freezing the eligibility for some properties will not prevent any property owner from obtaining an elevation certificate and having their rate lowered to account for a lower risk reflected in the elevation certificate.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you for your assurances.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the motion to waive.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: The Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 64, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 15 Leg.]

YEAS—64

Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Baucus	Heinrich	Pryor
Begich	Heitkamp	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Reid
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Blunt	Isakson	Sanders
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Boxer	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	King	Scott
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cochran	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Collins	Markey	Vitter
Cooms	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wicker
Franken	Murkowski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murphy	
Hagan	Murray	

NAYS—35

Alexander	Fischer	McConnell
Ayotte	Flake	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Chambliss	Heller	Roberts
Coburn	Inhofe	Rubio
Corker	Johanns	Sessions
Cornyn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Crapo	Kirk	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Enzi	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Coats

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 64, the nays are 35. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion to waive is agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are going to have three more votes tonight. I understand they are going to be voice votes. We have made significant progress with this important piece of legislation. The next vote will be at 11:15 tomorrow. We expect to have the final vote on this bill tomorrow at 2 o'clock.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2703

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided on amendment No. 2703 offered by the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand pending amendment is the Reed amendment. I also understand it will be accepted by voice vote. I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2703) was agreed to.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2706

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided on amendment No. 2706 offered by the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I hope my colleagues will vote enthusiastically for this amendment. Across the country, communities and local organizations are trying to revive rivers that have been dammed and blocked. When they go forward to remove a dam, when they go forward to put in a fish ladder, when they redesign a culvert to allow for water passage, they have to file a flood plan.

FEMA requires them to pay a fee to have that flood plan assessed. The fee is almost always waived. But they still have to go through the waiver process, which costs money and frankly can be as burdensome as simply paying the fee. This eliminates that fee. It eliminates that part of the process and allows towns and small organizations more readily to come to the aid of our old small rivers.

I think this is something we should be able to agree on with great strength. It is noncontroversial. I urge my colleagues to vote yea.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate? If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2706) was agreed to.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I call up my amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is pending.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2708

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, my amendment is very simple and common sense. Many homeowners who live across the United States live in homes that simply cannot be elevated in order to protect or reduce flood risk because of their inherent structure. This is a problem that is true for cities in New York, cities in New Jersey. In reality, if you live in a brownstone or you live in an apartment building, you cannot raise them to protect against flood damage.

To fix this problem, all my amendment does is require FEMA to provide a uniform set of guidelines describing FEMA-approved methods of mitigation such as flood-proofing or using flood-proof building materials to help those homeowners reduce their risk of flood damage. For example, do not leave

computers and electrical equipment in your basement. Bring them to the first and second floor.

Those kind of simple flood mitigation changes can easily save enormous amounts of money and the risk of flood damage from flooding. The amendment also requires FEMA to consider any actions taken by homeowners to implement the methods identified in those guidelines when calculating flood insurance premium risk rates. By providing a clear set of mitigation guidance for homeowners, this amendment will help homeowners with more options to reduce their flood risk.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. I believe it is non-controversial.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2708) was agreed to.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I move to reconsider and move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I know we are scheduled to take the final votes on this bill tomorrow morning and final passage at 2. I just wish to thank all of the colleagues who were so cooperative today discussing and moving through these amendments. I appreciate the cooperation—bipartisan cooperation, open debate process. I think it has been very helpful. I think we are building a better flood insurance program for the country, which is our aim.

I thank Senator MENENDEZ and Senator ISAKSON for their leadership today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this is the 56th time, the 56th consecutive week that we have been in session in the Senate that I have come to the floor to sound an alarm about carbon pollution and the harm it is causing to our oceans and to our coastal communities—the 56th time. Frankly, I am getting a little sick of it. I am getting sick of the Republican Party being completely the tool of the polluters. I am sick of the phony denial and of not getting anything done. I am sick of what it is going to say about American democracy if we keep failing at this.

But I am going to keep pounding away because it is so vital to my ocean State. We are a little State with a lot

of coast. Our sea level is rising, driven by faraway melting glaciers and everywhere expanding sea water. As oceans warm, the water expands. That is what liquids do. Deniers look up thermal expansion of liquids and deny that.

The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report projected that sea level will likely rise 1½ to 3 feet by 2100 if we do what the polluters prefer and ignore the clear scientific evidence. By the way, that is a conservative number.

These rising sea levels hit coasts hard, particularly when storms beat those seas against our shores. It is not just me saying that, we are supposed to listen to the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office around here. A 2013 GAO report on climate change effects said this:

Storm surge, combined with sea level rise, is projected to generate a wide range of negative impacts on roads and bridges. For example, storm surges are projected to increasingly inundate coastal roads, cause more frequent or severe flooding of low lying infrastructure, erode road bases, and “scour” bridges by eroding riverbeds and exposing bridge foundations.

People from polluting States may think that is funny, may think that does not matter, but to a coastal State such as mine this is a serious threat. This chart shows the worldwide measured change in sea level. This is not some theory—measured change in sea level—as well as a number of different models projecting future sea levels.

We can see that sea level has been steadily rising over the past 130 years, generally consistent with human fossil fuel use. Between 1901 and 2010, sea level rise was estimated at 1.7 millimeters per year. Recently updated satellite measurements from the University of Colorado Sea Level Research Group show a rise of 3.2 millimeters per year from 1993 to 2013.

The rate of increase has already nearly doubled. According to the IPCC, that rate is likely to accelerate. In Rhode Island, our tide gauge in Newport shows an increase in average sea level of nearly 10 inches since 1930. Consistent with the global trends, measurements at our Newport tide gauge show that the rate of sea level rise has also increased in the past two decades.

Local coastal erosion rates have doubled from 1990 to 2006, and some freshwater coastal wetlands are already transitioning to salt marsh from freshwater as they are inundated by the sea.

Our Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council has documented 160 feet of shoreline lost to erosion in the town of South Kingstown since 1951, a rate of 3 feet per year. A steady 3 feet per year is one thing, add a storm and surges can wipe up whole swaths of land at once, as we saw with Superstorm Sandy.

We can see the erosion here. Back in 1994, this beach pavilion was set back a

good way from the water. By 2012, here, the ocean was just a few feet from the structure. This is the roof that is here. This is the framing that is here. This is the very beginning of this walkway back here. There is the ocean. The ocean has moved from here essentially to there. Roads and other infrastructure that were once a safe distance from the shoreline were also battered by this terrible storm surge and wind.

The small, vibrant coastal town of Matunuck, RI, is under siege from the advancing ocean. This chart shows how far the shoreline has shifted since 1951. Here is the 1951 shoreline. This is the 2012 photo, showing how much the sea has risen and eaten against the shores. In the last dozen years, beaches have eroded 20 feet.

The community now faces difficult decisions. The only road connecting Matunuck to neighboring towns is protected by only about 10 feet of sand now. The road provides access for emergency vehicles residents may need. Underneath it lies their water main. If carbon dioxide emissions continue unchecked, another 5 feet of projected sea level rise is a real possibility after the year 2100.

Matunuck’s projected coastline with 5 feet of sea level rise can be seen in red. These are all houses. This is Roy Carpenter’s Beach. These houses have been here in some cases for generations and they are tumbling into the sea as the ocean encroaches on them.

This is famous Newport Harbor. In Newport, 5 feet of sea level rise would inundate large portions of our vibrant downtown area, including America’s Cup Avenue, right here; including the Long Wharf Shopping Center, which would be about here; and including the famous and historic Cardines Field, a great old baseball field.

Goat Island will be only a few specks of land. This is what 3 feet of sea-level rise would look like in Newport. Perrotti Park is gone. The Ann Street Pier is gone, not to mention the Newport Harbor Master’s office. He will be a lot closer to the harbor when it is pouring through his windows than he is right now. Wherever Rhode Island meets the sea, our homes, communities, and our very economy are at stake.

Yet in Congress we sleepwalk, lulled by the narcotic influence of the polluting special interests. No wonder I am frustrated.

When my colleagues say they are worried about job loss in the polluting coal and oil industries, I am willing to listen. I am even willing to help, but I am not willing to stand by while this is happening in my home State and have us pretend it is not even real.

Rhode Island, of course, is not the only region experiencing sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and economic disruption. Rising seas concern coastal regions across the country. With over

1,000 miles of coastline, Florida is at grave risk from sea-level rise.

According to the World Resources Institute and an article published in "Environmental Research Letters," of all the people and housing in America threatened by sea-level rise, 40 percent is in Florida. That is because in Florida the flooding won't just be along the coast; low-lying inland areas are also at risk. That is because Florida is built on porous limestone.

In New England, on our rocky shores, we could perhaps build levees and dams in some places to hold the oceans back. In Miami, they would be building those structures on geological sponge. The water will seep right under. Using the best available science, the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact assessed the risk to four south Florida counties of sea-level rise. In those counties, 1 foot of sea-level rise would endanger approximately \$4 billion in property. In Monroe County, three of the four hospitals, two-thirds of the schools, and 71 percent of emergency shelters are endangered by a 1-foot sea-level rise.

Go to 3 feet of sea-level rise in these counties. That would endanger approximately \$31 billion worth of property. That is a lot of infrastructure at risk.

This map shows 3 feet of sea-level rise in Miami-Dade County. The map on the left shows current elevation in southern Miami-Dade compared to 3 feet of sea-level rise on the right. These blue regions go underwater. They have lost acres upon acres of that city.

This nuclear power station, Turkey Point, and this sewage treatment plant are virtually cut off from dry land. Yet what do we hear from our Republican colleague from Florida? Denial, right along the polluter party line.

Louisiana is teed up for the worst storm surge by the warming, rising waters of the Gulf of Mexico. According to a U.S. Geological Survey-led study, between 1985 and 2010, Louisiana lost a football field an hour of land and wetlands to coastal erosion.

A recent poll shows that Louisiana voters understand and want action on climate change. Seventy-two percent of Louisianans believe climate change is a serious problem that threatens everyone. It is hitting their lives and yet our Republican colleague from Louisiana offers streams of denial.

The State with the most coastline is Alaska. Another U.S. Geological Survey study shows that coastal erosion of a 40-mile stretch along the Beaufort Sea has climbed from 20 feet per year between the mid-fifties and late seventies to 28 feet per year between the late seventies and two thousands and now has doubled to more than 45 feet per year between 2002 and 2007.

Climate change is one of several factors at play and is contributing to this accelerating loss.

Earlier this month our Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, which I

lead with Chairman WAXMAN, welcomed Alaskans from the town of Shishmaref, an Inupiat Eskimo village located on a small barrier island 5 miles from mainland Alaska, to hear from them how climate change is affecting their homes. Their houses are literally falling into the sea thanks to sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Their centuries-old culture is crumbling away with each wave. This is a house in Shishmaref. This is a house at Roy Carpenter's Beach in Rhode Island. We can see how we sympathize with the town of Shishmaref.

In Alaska, Shishmaref is not alone. A recent GAO report showed that 31 Alaskan villages are at risk. The 12 red dots shown are villages that are now considering relocating completely. According to the U.S. Corps of Engineers, relocation costs are estimated at \$100 million to \$200 million for Shishmaref, and other villages could face similar costs.

Stanley Tocktoo is the former mayor of Shishmaref. He came to our hearing and said:

No matter your politics, you can't ignore the facts. The facts are that our village is being impacted by climate change on a daily basis. And we need you to do something about it.

He said:

No matter your politics, you can't ignore facts.

The painful truth, Mayor Tocktoo, is that in Congress, if you have certain politics, you are actually obliged to ignore the facts. You are required to ignore the facts. Your big-money people—the big polluters, the Koch brothers—insist on it. They demand that you ignore the facts.

Citizens United, that God-awful Supreme Court decision, means that the big polluters' big money can drown out in elections—particularly in Republican primary elections—every reasonable person, Republican, Independent, or Democrat, who understands that we need to act. The party on the other side is stuck, trapped by the campaign finance rules and the big money of the big polluters.

We could, in Congress, be awake, helping and meeting the call of duty. We could be working with the President to implement his climate action plan.

The Environment and Public Works Committee, under the strong leadership of Chairman BARBARA BOXER, recently held an oversight hearing on the President's climate action plan. What did we get in that hearing from our Republican colleagues? Denial, quarreling, and obfuscation—the polluter party line.

They actually brought in, as a Republican witness, a person whose organization took money from the Koch brothers, Exxon, and from other far-right and denier foundations, including the notorious Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund, which launders money

from big donors who want to remain anonymous.

If people have not heard of this Donors Trust and Donors Capital group, a recent report out of Drexel University described this group as the "black box that conceals the identity of contributors," the "central component," and "dominant funder" of the denier apparatus. This was who they chose as their witness.

We could, in Congress, be figuring out how a carbon pollution fee—one that returns all of its proceeds back to the American people—could best boost our economy, as some prominent Republicans have suggested. But I sent a letter to my Republican colleagues summarizing the Republican case for a carbon fee and not one responded.

The polluters have the Republican Party at their heels. It is a tragic state of affairs for a great political party.

Carbon pollution from the burning of fossil fuels is altering the atmosphere and oceans. It is changing our climate. The scientific consensus around this fact is overwhelming. Denial at this point is propped-up polluter-paid nonsense. Where carbon pollution hits the oceans, denial requires people not only to reject science but to reject measurement. We measure sea-level rise. We measure ocean warming. We measure ocean acidification. It is not complicated. We measure sea-level rise, more or less, with a yardstick. We measure ocean warming with a thermometer; we measure ocean acidification with simple litmus tests that everyone with an aquarium is familiar with.

Yet despite that incontrovertible evidence from our oceans, we sleepwalk on in Congress, thanks to a great political party's captivity by polluters. It is a disgrace. It will go down in history as a disgrace.

We could strengthen our economy, we could save our great coastal cities and our age-old island villages, and we can leave things better, not worse, for the generations that will follow us, but we have to pay attention to reality. We have to pay attention to the real evidence. We can't be swept up in the toxic polluter-paid politics that infect Washington.

This matters immensely to Alaska. It matters immensely to the citizens of Shishmaref. It matters immensely to the residents of Florida who are looking at their cities; and it matters immensely to Rhode Island, the Ocean State, because the undeniable changes from sea-level rise and warming are upon us and will only worsen. For once and for all, it is time for us to wake up.

Mrs. BOXER. Would the Senator yield through the Chair for a colloquy?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I yield to the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. First I wish to say how proud I am to listen to the Senator's

words, to have him on the committee I am so honored to chair.

To learn today that the Senator made over 50—

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Fifty-six.

Mrs. BOXER. Fifty-six presentations on the floor of the Senate, regardless of the hour, regardless of his other pressing needs, the Senator is making the record that we must act to prevent the worst and most catastrophic occurrences from climate change.

I wish to ask of the Senator a few questions because we have gone through a lot of these battles in the committee, and I think it is time that people knew what happened. I am going to see if we can put something in the RECORD.

The Senator pointed out putting a price on carbons as the way we need to move. The Senator also pointed out that many countries outside of the United States support it. Would the Senator please tell us, because he has mentioned this before, who are some of the leaders of the Republican Party?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. One of the most prominent ones is George Shultz, who served with great distinction, I believe, under three Republican Presidents.

Mrs. BOXER. True.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ran into him in the last 10 days and I said: Thank you for your work on carbon. It is important. He said: It is important. I said: We have to do a carbon fee. He said: Revenue neutral. I said: Yes, we have to do a revenue-neutral carbon fee.

Revenue-neutral carbon fee means that the money that is generated by the polluters pays for the harm they do to do to all the rest of us, which they otherwise get away with for free, and it goes back to the American people. It is revenue neutral. It doesn't go into the government and raise the size of government. It goes right back. We could do it by lowering taxes, by paying off every student loan in the country. We could do it by giving seniors on Social Security a raise. What a good discussion that would be, to be having right here. But we can't have that discussion because the other party is trapped by the polluters—trapped in their politics, trapped by their money.

Mrs. BOXER. The point I am making is the Senator points out one very prominent Republican, but there are many more. I remember when I started out in politics, I was a county supervisor. The environment was the one issue—one or two, the other one was a woman's right to choose. Those two issues were so bipartisan that we all came together. When we ran for county supervisor, we didn't have a label. We ran just as an independent person. But everyone backed the constitutionally protected right to choose and everyone backed cleaning up the environment.

So the Senator has described what has happened and he has used some very colorful language from time to

time, but I thought one of the things he recently said—and I want to make sure I quote it right—is that it is like this Capitol is surrounded by the lies of the polluters and we can't get the truth into this Chamber.

The Senator actually says it better.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. They have erected a barricade of lies, Madam Chairman. They have erected a barricade of lies, and it is supported by an avalanche of money. If you go outside that barricade, you see enormous support for getting something done about climate.

Just to give the example of our corporate community—Coke and Pepsi, the Mars corporation, which makes M&Ms and Mars bars, Ford and GM, Apple, Nike, Walmart, on and on—we can go through the signal American corporations, the heraldry of the American corporate world, and they are ready to get something done. But there is enough money that gets thrown by the polluters and enough threats made by them in Republican primaries that our colleagues are trapped. Unless we build a coalition that gets them a way out, that barricade will continue to inhibit progress on this issue in this building.

Mrs. BOXER. Right. The dilemma we face is the window to act is closing in on us. The Senator showed some extraordinary photos. One is up there now. We see that already climate change is creating climate refugees.

There was a movie done called "Climate Refugees," and it went out to the island nations of the world that many people never even knew existed. The folks there, because of the sea level change and the change in the weather and the fact that they can't grow the crops they used to and they can't rely on water, et cetera, have to be leaving their homes they have lived in for generations.

What the Senator is saying is so sad and shocking. It looks to me as though he is having that in his own State.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. My colleague's point, that this used to be a bipartisan issue, is actually illustrated by this photograph. This is Roy Carpenter's Beach. It is a beach that got probably hit the hardest. There were some bigger, older houses that got washed away down the shore, but this has a lot of these smaller houses that families have held onto for generations. After Sandy, with the sea level rise and then the storm, together, they knocked them into the water this way.

This individual right here is Lincoln Chafee. That is Governor Chafee. He served in this body as a Republican, and he was one of the staunchest environmentalists in this body. If you go back further, his father John Chafee served as the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. He was one of my colleague's predecessors, and he helped lead the passage of the

Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, a Republican, and he was proud of it. He didn't hide from it.

It wasn't something the Republican Party had to run away from in those days. Try to find that in the modern Republican Party. It is embarrassing what has happened to a great political party.

Mrs. BOXER. Senator WHITEHOUSE raises the name of John Chafee and Lincoln Chafee. I was friendly with both of those Chafees, John being my chairman, a role model for me. I literally learned from him. Not only was he a leader on the environment, he was a leader on so many other issues: sensible gun laws—sensible gun laws.

Something has happened to the Grand Old Party. Somebody once said maybe they are the formerly Grand Old Party. But I have hope they will return and be the Grand Old Party, because I was here when we had leadership on the other side for a climate bill. We fell just a few votes short. If we hadn't had a filibuster, we would have nailed it.

Putting a price on carbon is the only way to go, and my colleague makes the case because there is a cost. What is the cost? We see it. This is the cost. Yet those who are putting this dangerous pollution in the air don't pay anything for it. As a matter of fact, they get subsidies still.

The Senator and I sometimes talk offline here, and we say we are very calm when we speak here because we know we have to have a sense of decorum, but inside a lot of us are churning, because we love our children and we love our grandchildren and we love this Nation and we want to be leaders and we want our Nation to lead. Yet we are having a terrible time. We have a situation where 97 percent of scientists say climate change is happening and we know exactly why. It is human behavior.

Our friend ANGUS KING gave a remarkable presentation to the caucus the other day, making the point that Senator WHITEHOUSE made, which is that this isn't conjecture, this is science. This is measurement. You measure it. You see it. You know what is happening. This isn't like when you are hit with a tragedy and you don't want to look at it; you lose somebody and you are in denial about it. We understand that, how the human mind would do that. But this is science, and it is very difficult.

I wanted to ask a couple more questions. I am truly enjoying this colloquy. It reminds me of the old days when this used to happen more in the Senate.

My friend mentioned the President's Climate Action Plan, and he talked a little bit about it yesterday. He said some very good important things about it. But I want to know if my friend is aware there has already been filed by

the minority leader here, the Republican leader, a CRA—that is the Congressional Review Act—to overturn a rule that would in fact put in place some very important pollution controls on new powerplants.

Does my friend, A, know he has filed this? Does my friend also know the rule isn't even finalized, yet the Republican leader has filed this? What does the Senator make of that?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. If the underlying problem weren't so serious, it would be laughable that they are already challenging a rule that has not even been promulgated yet. They are sort of prechallenging it. It just shows what a pell-mell tumble our Republican colleagues will subject themselves to in order to keep in the good graces of the polluting industries. Again, it is embarrassing. It ought to be embarrassing.

But I think there is hope. One of the signs of hope is the polling information among young Republican voters. Young Republican voters under the age of 35—not very young but young Republican voters under the age of 35—when asked about climate denial and asked what their view is of people who espouse climate denial say they think they are ignorant, out of touch or crazy. That is the young cohort of the Republican Party. That is what it believes.

So time, obviously, is on the side of reason and science and the plain evidence people see in front of their noses across this country, whether they are farmers, fishermen, hikers or skiers. Anybody who has contact with the outdoors understands this is absolutely real. It is only people in this little hot house of polluter-paid intrigue that the denial strategy still stands up, and it is our job to knock it back down.

Mrs. BOXER. Absolutely. I think the other point the Senator made is tying this all to Citizens United and the fact that these polluters are only focused on this: They do not want competition. Let us be clear. These multinationals do not want competition. The fact is they see solar on the horizon, wind, geothermal, clean energy. They even see natural gas, which has, if it is done right, half of the carbon pollution, and they are holding on through this ride of the century. They will not work with us. It is more than sad.

But I will say this in closing my remarks tonight. We have a new energy, if you will, in this body. We have more than 20 percent of this Senate that has formed together in our action task force that Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are heading. We are going to take action. We are going to be heard. We are going to wake the Congress, which is what has to happen.

I want to say to my friend how much it means to me—someone who felt pretty much isolated on these issues for a while—and how important it is that

even though my colleague said—and I quote him—you were sick of coming down and speaking, I hope you will not get sick of it. I hope you will not get tired of it. I will predict, and the Senator knows I am right, a lot of us are going to be joining him pretty soon. So not only will my colleague's voice be heard but many other voices will be heard and that will echo around this Nation.

There are so many issues we have to deal with. Lord knows, we so agree with the President on strengthening the middle class. We so agree that we need to confront the challenges of deficits and jobs and education and health care. By the way, from my State, that is going gang busters—the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare. We are signing up thousands of people a day. It is moving the country forward. But with all these issues we have to deal with, we have to save the planet. We have to save the planet.

I do have another question for my friend. Some of our colleagues say: Oh, you see this freezing cold and all the snow, this proves there is no climate change. There is no global warming. It is freezing. Of course, the scientists I talk to are telling me they predicted extreme weather. That is what they predicted.

Look at what happened in poor Atlanta today, where there is this school bus that has been sitting out on the road, somebody said, from 4 yesterday until 8 this morning. These people are stuck because of an unexpected icy snowfall. Here is the thing. It is called a vortex. The reason it happens, as explained to me by the scientists—and one of them just came onto the floor now—is that the jet stream has changed so much because of the warming in the Arctic so that instead of holding up that cold air in the Arctic, the cold air is turning around and coming back down, and we haven't seen that in a while.

So you can't just say it is cold today, there is no climate change. If there is extreme weather—and we have it in California. We have a drought we have never, ever, ever seen. I went through the one in the 1970s. I remember that, where we used the water in the tub to flush the toilets and we tried to recycle the water from our dishwashers and washing machines. But we have a worse situation, and it was predicted.

So I wish to ask my friend, because he has done so much reading, is it not true this extreme weather was predicted in the U.N. reports and in many other reports?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Absolutely. Indeed, years ago one expert in this area wrote that, in terms of the experience that people would have—yes, the planet is warming—but the experience that people would have wouldn't be just of warming. It would be of weirding weather—weird weather—and truly the

better name would be not global warming, but it would be global weirding. That is because, very simply, when you add energy—heat energy in this case—to a closed system by trapping it with more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, you speed things up. You make storms stronger, you change weather patterns, and you see things that you have not seen before.

So the things people are seeing now—not specifically and not that storm, but the patterns that people would see more extreme weather of various kinds—were indeed predicted. The fact that it is happening is exactly consistent with what the scientists have been warning us about.

Mrs. BOXER. It is so because it was 7 years ago when I took the panel. I think it was 7 years ago that I took the gavel—I don't even remember; time goes so fast when you are having fun—I took that gavel and the first thing we did is we had a hearing on climate.

By the way, I urge my colleague, you should see—we put together a Green Book of all of my colleagues' statements—how many Republicans were with us then. Olympia Snowe had a great piece in there. JOHN MCCAIN had a great piece in there. Judd Gregg had a great piece.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. John Warner.

Mrs. BOXER. John Warner had a great piece in there, and others. It made me so proud.

At that hearing we had all these experts talk about the fact that, over time, temperatures would go up. But in between, as you say, it is not a matter of the weather that day, but it is the pattern over time and what happens over time. You have these extremes but over time the warmth kicks in. We are seeing it happening. The American people are smart. They get it.

We are just not going to let up. As calm as we sound now, that belies what we feel inside and the obligation that we have to act. I guess this is as good a time as any to tell the American people they will see more of us, and more colleagues will work on this.

I thank Senator REID because Senator REID has elevated this issue in our caucus, devoting more time to this issue. He cares about this. He is a wonderful family man with a lot of grandchildren. He wants to give them what so many of us have had—the beauty of this country, the livability of this country. There will be more of this to follow.

I ask my colleague if he wants to close, and I yield to him.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the chair for her staunch leadership. She is such an ally and leader for us. It really is very exciting, and, yes, you will see considerably more activity.

I will close by telling one personal story because very often you are dealing with statistics, and you are dealing with figures, and you are dealing with

things that are happening on a large scale when you talk about climate change.

I remember this day. I remember this day, walking along and meeting with these homeowners whose houses these were. I remember talking to the lady whose house—I think this one was right here—the Governor is looking into.

She remembers, as a child, being in that house. In front of this house she had a lawn, a lawn where they could throw Frisbees and play Wiffle ball.

On the other side of the lawn was a road that gave access along the shoreline, a sand road. On the other side of the road was a parking lot where people would come and bring their cars, and on the other side of the parking lot was the beach that was so long down to the water, and she could remember running as a kid. You know, when the summer Sun beats down on the beach and the sand gets so hot that it hurts your feet, and you have to dash to get your feet into the water because they are hot, hot, hot as you run when you are a little kid? And she would make that long run and think what a long run it was to get down that hot sand and into the cool, clear waters of Narragansett Bay.

That beach is gone. That parking lot is gone. That road is gone. Her lawn is gone, and this is what has happened to her house.

If people want to know why we are not going to give up—yes, I am sick of it. I am sick of having to come here and do this. It is tiresome to have no progress and have people not listen and have it be because of, frankly, scandalous polluter-paid interference and influence in this building. Yes, I am sick of it. But I am not going to stop, not while this is happening to my home State of Rhode Island.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1926

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Thursday, January 30, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1926, with the time until 11:15 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the final 10 minutes equally divided between Senator MENENDEZ or his designee, and Senator TOOMEY or his designee, with Senator TOOMEY controlling the final 5 minutes; that at 11:15 a.m., the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the following amendments: Toomey amend-

ment No. 2707, as modified; Coburn amendment No. 2697; Merkley amendment No. 2709, as modified; and Heller amendment No. 2700; further, that upon disposition of the Heller amendment, the Senate recess until 2 p.m.; at 2 p.m. when the Senate reconvenes, the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended; finally, there be 2 minutes of debate prior to each vote, equally divided in the usual form; and that all after the first vote be 10-minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CONGRATULATING MARVIN H. SIMPSON, SR.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Marvin Simpson, Sr., on his nearly five-decade service to the United States Senate and the Capitol Hill community.

Marvin began his career 48 years ago in the Office of the Architect of the Capitol as a temporary messenger. He quickly rose to a permanent position as messenger for the Senate Office Building. He held many positions within the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, including laborer foreman and the head of the Furniture Division. In 1998, Marvin was promoted to assistant superintendent, Tenant Services Division where he served with distinction until his retirement.

His leadership overseeing paint, upholstery, wood crafting, masonry, sheet metal and furniture branches has been exemplary. Marvin has been called an ambassador to the Senate office buildings and has provided Senators, our staffs, and the entire Senate family unmatched craftsmanship.

His institutional knowledge and work ethic will be greatly missed. I join with my colleagues in wishing Mr. SIMPSON all the best in his well-earned retirement.

EQUAL PAY ACT ANNIVERSARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to recognize an important anniversary. Five years ago today, President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Act into law. This important law has kept courthouse doors open to allow women to address pay inequality by correcting a misinterpretation by the Court on the statute of limitations when women seek redress. But

the fight for equal pay continues, and we need to take action to fix the pay gap, which is what I want to discuss today.

On June 10, 1963, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law. This landmark legislation prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in the payment of wages by employers. The goals of the legislation were groundbreaking. It was the first time Congress acted on this issue, addressing what was a real and growing problem as more women entered the workforce. But it has been over 50 years since the Equal Pay Act became law, and since then, a lot of things have changed.

A recent Pew Research study found that women are the primary earner in 40 percent of households today. Additionally, many of these women are the sole earners. But what is often missed in the discussion about equal pay is the impact the pay gap continues to have on these households who are dependent on the salaries of women.

The pay gap results in \$4,000 less per year for working families, and \$434,000 less over a lifetime. Imagine what these families could accomplish if they simply got what they were owed. With the rising costs for child care, medical care, and filling up the family car, these families are held down by unfair and unjust pay policies.

While these are the day-to-day impacts of the pay gap, there are also even greater consequences over a lifetime. The pay gap affects your income, your pension, and your Social Security. Women's Social Security benefits are only 71 percent of men's benefits. The average income for women from private pensions is only 48 percent of men's. The consequences of our inaction on pay equity are following women out of the workplace and further impacting their lives down the line.

For years I have fought for a solution to this—the Paycheck Fairness Act. The Paycheck Fairness Act builds on the Equal Pay Act to help close the pay gap. Under the Paycheck Fairness Act, employers will no longer be able to retaliate against workers for sharing information about wages. Right now, if you ask someone what they get paid you can get fired. For years, Lilly Ledbetter was humiliated and harassed because she tried to find out what she was making compared to her colleagues. Women will also no longer be able to only seek back pay when they are discriminated against. Under this legislation they are also able to seek punitive damages.

Under the Paycheck Fairness Act, employers will no longer be able to use almost any reason imaginable to justify paying a woman less than a man. And under this legislation, women will no longer be on their own in fighting for equal pay for equal work. This bill

includes education and training so women can strengthen their negotiation skills and learn about wage discrimination.

In this country, they say: Work hard, play by the rules, and you will get ahead. We work hard every day but we find the rules are different for women and men. In 1963, women made 59 cents for every \$1 made by men. And more than 50 years later, we have made an 18-cent gain. In 2012, women made 77 cents for every \$1 earned by men. Fifty-two years and 18 cents—that is not rewarding hard work, and it is certainly not playing by the rules.

Today, on the 5th anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Act, I call on my colleagues to join me in stepping up to the plate and fixing the pay gap by supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act. Let's end pay inequity and end the policies that keep women uneducated and unequipped to fight for their fair share.

It is not just for our pocketbooks—it is about the family checkbooks and getting it right in the law books. It is also about the generations of women to come. Let's finish what we started, and let's make sure it doesn't take another 50 years to end pay inequity.

UKRAINE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, in 1991 the free world cheered as Ukraine and other former Soviet republics gained their independence. Unfortunately, Ukrainian democracy is now under siege, as peaceful antigovernment protests have been met with brutal violence.

Over the past few years, reports of popular protests against oppressive regimes have become commonplace. Yet the frequency of such events does not obviate our moral responsibility to stand shoulder to shoulder with freedom-loving people around the world who seek to throw off unjust and despotic regimes in pursuit of liberty, democracy, and the rule of law.

The United States has been a strong supporter of the Ukrainian people's efforts to create a strong nation, built on democratic and free market principles. Ukraine made a significant step toward achieving these goals when it adopted its first democratic constitution in 1996. But under the Yanukovich Administration, the basic liberties of the Ukrainian people have been trampled. Recent elections have fallen short of international standards, and the government has used the courts to neutralize opposition leaders, sending former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko to prison for 7 years on trumped-up, politically motivated charges. Meanwhile, President Yanukovich continues to pursue closer ties with Russia, in spite of the Ukrainian people's clear preference for closer ties with Europe.

In addition to the moral imperative we have to support basic human rights, the United States must also recognize that Ukraine—with a population of 45 million and a territory comparable in size to that of France—occupies a unique, sensitive, and strategically important position between Russia and our NATO allies Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania. The future of Ukraine will be determined by what happens in the days ahead, and it will have a direct bearing on U.S. interests for years to come.

On occasion, protesters have clashed with police, with reports of many injuries and several deaths. Although recent reports from Kiev indicated that protesters had seized the Ukrainian Justice Ministry, they voluntarily gave up the building to avoid creating difficulties in negotiations between the Ukrainian Government and the opposition. Opposition leaders have said they will continue pressing for democratic concessions, including free and fair elections and the abolition of sweeping new antiprotest laws. Their efforts to avoid violent confrontation should be encouraged, and their valid demands supported.

It is imperative that the United States send an unequivocal message to the Ukrainian people that we support their efforts to restore democracy and the rule of law. At the same time, we must make clear to President Yanukovich that the only hope for a strong, peaceful, and independent Ukraine lies in building ties with Europe, the United States, and other freedom-loving countries around the world.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

VERMONT ESSAY WINNERS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD finalist essays written by Vermont High School students as part of the Fourth Annual State of the Union Essay contest conducted by my office. These 7 finalists were selected from over 380 entries.

The essays follow:

RAIHAN KABIR, SOUTH BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12 (FINALIST)

How a country collects and allocates its resources takes precedence in outlining the foundation of equality and general welfare. We as individuals rely on a revenue of both incomes and loans, which makes for a crude economic model of spending. This holds true for our government. As the nation dives deeper into debt and countries around the world experience protests and riots over austerity measures, it is clear that additional tax dollars are necessary to reduce debt, support society, and give rise to the economy.

Tax increases will put the definition of taxation back into its actuality. The United States tax rates are theoretically graduated by income level, meaning that lower income ranges pay a lower rate than higher income ranges. However, those in a higher tax

bracket often have more deductions to further equalize their effective rate with that of the middle or lower brackets. A decline in tax rates for the most wealthy is a disproportionate advantage for the already financially capable members of our society, which further instigates the income disparities that threaten our democratic ideals. The top percent of Americans possesses more wealth than the entire bottom 90 percent; the 400 wealthiest Americans have a greater combined net worth than the entire bottom 150 million; and yet, everyone is paying a similar effective rate. Not everyone is currently contributing their fair share to society, and living in a nation with the largest amount of debt in the world, this matter of fact is unacceptable. Tax increases will make the theory of taxes a reality and restore economic equality.

Though our current fiscal path is unstable, increasing taxes will reduce national debt and put us on the right track back to recovery. With a 16 trillion dollar debt that is rising at the rate of 6 billion dollars a day (4 million dollars every minute), every family in America would owe about \$50,000 to various countries around the world if the burden trickled down to the general public. When the government needs money, it sells treasury bills (similar to savings bonds) to investors, who cash them in after an average of ten years for the original amount plus interest. Though a certain amount of debt is arguably helpful for the economy, consistently high deficits force the government to offer higher, more appealing interest rates; investors eventually realize that the country is unlikely to pay back the money it borrows and they stop lending, which crushes the economy, as most recently witnessed in Greece. Our current national debt is greater than the economies of the United Kingdom, Australia, and China, combined. Stopping this vicious economic cycle requires less foreign-reliance and more self-sustenance, which is feasible if and only if we increase taxes.

Tax increases will ensure the funding and availability of certain social programs and necessary expenditures on infrastructure without the need to excessively issue bonds. Taxes currently fund public services of insurance, such as Social Security and Medicare, of welfare, such as the Pell Grant and Food Stamp programs, and of infrastructure, such as the scholastic and interstate highway systems. Nobel laureate of economics Paul Krugman affirms a current necessity for increased taxes in his following statement:

[Regarding] proposals to raise the age of Medicare eligibility to 67 . . . outlays would fall only by \$125 billion over the next decade . . . and even when fully phased in, this partial dismantling of Medicare would reduce the deficit only about a third as much as could be achieved with higher taxes on the very rich . . . don't believe anyone who claims otherwise.

Taxes pay for important programs that go unpaid by spending cuts. The Bureau of Economic Statistics reports that the average standard of living, determined by comparing adjusted incomes and poverty rates, has increased in years with a higher annual budget and decreased in years on the contrary. According to the New York Times and the Board of Economic Advisors, there is a direct correlation between the amount of money provided to the government in the national budget and the quality of life in the United States, as determined by the rate of poverty. This makes logical sense; our standard of life escalates as we make fiscal contributions to

society. Yet we continue to have the lowest tax rate in the world. Taxes are imposed so that roads get fixed, so we get an education, and so people don't invade our country. Taxes are imposed to protect our rights. The government imposes taxes on us for our own benefit, and by raising them, we will improve the living conditions and quality of life in America.

Tax increases will lead to economic growth and prosperity. In 1990 and again in 1993, President Clinton enacted deficit-reduction legislation that raised taxes for high income taxpayers; as a result, economic growth and job creation were strong. Within this period of a sensational economy, capital gain rates were cut, and there was a 20% increase in job availability for a total of 21 million new jobs. However, after the Bush Tax Cuts of 2001 and the Bush Recession, job growth lagged behind GDP growth, there was 0% net job growth, and with continuous population growth, there were record high unemployment rates. Tax increases have helped society and the economy in the past, and they will help again.

In any case of regulatory action, the value to be upheld is the quality of life. By reducing debt, supporting society, and giving rise to the economy, the nation will better ensure a standard of well-being for its citizens. The government of these United States is to assure life, liberty, health, and happiness, in our pursuit of the American dream. Lincoln said it best in his Gettysburg Address: "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." The prioritization of tax increases over spending cuts is essential to future policy in the United States of America to sustain the American public.

FIONA HIGGINS, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12 (FINALIST)

There are many issues facing the United States. Personally, I believe one of the most critical domestic issues is reproductive rights.

Every step back to pre-Roe v. Wade is sensationalized in the media, and rightfully so. The issue is much more far reaching than pro-life versus pro-choice; it is both a human rights issue and an economic issue.

Firstly, it is a human rights issue. It is a matter of women having control over their own decisions, their bodies, and their lives. Western women strive to liberate women who they view as oppressed, but these same western women don't realize that their freedoms are also disappearing. Women and men alike have the right to decide what happens to their bodies. Restricting access to contraception and health services violates this human right for both genders.

Secondly, it is an economic issue. Children cost money. When parents cannot support their family, they are prone to apply for welfare and other government programs that were put in place to help low-income families. These programs are needed, but the federal government could decrease the need and the cost of these programs if it focused on education and access to contraception. In low-income neighborhoods, people are often not able to access contraception. This takes away lower-income women's autonomy as well as perpetuating the cycle of poverty. If there were more accessible systems in place, these systems (rather than chance) would help families plan for the future, and allow them to decide to have children (rather than chance). In addition, a decreased level of government spending would curb the growth of the debt, which would aid the struggling economy.

A woman rarely thinks to herself, "I'd like to have an abortion instead of using contraceptives this time." That is lunatic. Abortions happen out of necessity. If they were illegal or severely restricted, women would still get them, but the procedures would be unsafe and deadly. If members of Congress truly want to protect the unborn and create a diminished welfare-dependent state, they must focus on education and accessibility; this strategy will also lower government spending in the long run.

Instead of going backwards, the United States should be moving forwards. Members of Congress must recognize that women have an inalienable right to privacy with regard to their bodies, a right that we should not have to fight for. Education and access to contraceptives needs to be more widespread, thereby improving our dire economic situation and our quality of life.

OWEN DEFFNER, THETFORD ACADEMY, GRADE 7 (FINALIST)

2013, America has had quite a year, with many ups and downs. Everything from the government shut down, to what I'd call: an official economic recovery. We have witnessed a terrible civil war in Syria where tremendous bloodshed has occurred. America has hosted many natural disasters too, everything from intensely cold temperatures to violent tornadoes. In these tragic times America has stepped up its game and delivered, helping our neighbors when they are struggling. This is the America that our allies look up to; the friendly, hospitable, welcoming America that we all contribute to every single day. Let's keep that good, positive America in our hearts this year.

11 million people are in America illegally. These people have come to this great nation in search of a better life. These people are trying to achieve the American dream. Immigrants are trying to send money home to their family in another country, some are trying to provide for their family here in the US. All the while they are constantly worried that our government will deport them back to their home country. This is not right, it's not okay that we don't welcome them into our nation. I want the path to citizenship easier for them so that they can get what they wanted to get by coming here. Let's be a bit more hospitable to people who are just trying to help their family.

Our status on the issue of the environment is not looking up. America has the great opportunity to help lead the fight against climate change. America must set high standards concerning the environment so that other countries will follow to help reduce the risk of the world's surface covered in water. Inside America to confront this issue head on we need to educate Americans on what is okay and not okay to recycle and how to compost or break down food into soil for our farms and gardens. This is a plan that will work and that we must initiate this year.

Our country is very behind on a major issue. America's education system is well behind many other well developed global powers. We need to fix that issue from the bottom up starting in our pre and elementary schools, with more emphasis on math and science. At higher levels, more affordable college and university opportunities for the lower and middle-class. We need to invest more time and education in our education and we need to now!

All of these ideas I am proposing are simple and should be easy to carry out with a bit of willingness from both parties. I am not asking to overhaul anything just some easy doable requests that all of us can help to ac-

complish. America should look to the future, to the next generation growing into adulthood. Let's get back on track for these young men and women who have high hopes for themselves and their country.

EMILY MARTIN, VERGENNES UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10 (FINALIST)

The United States of America is an amazing country to call home. However, in the modern day we as a nation face problems that challenge our ingenuity and integrity. The world today is one of war, whether that is physical, or political. We struggle to find resources to continue on living the way we have for as long as we can remember, yet forget that the earth which we walk on is a fragile one. The United States is no exception. We often find ourselves between a rock and a hard place; dealing with complex issues such as health care for all, or additional billions of dollars in debt; the Continuation of fighting a war which is not ours, or withdrawing our troops and allowing innocent people to face an uncertain future. Spend billions in foreign oil to keep companies in business, or convert to clean energy and watch the economy crumble. The list of hard choices goes on and on. The reality is, we no longer live in a time when decisions are cut and dry and each decision resonates into our future with force.

As a nation, we face an increasingly unpredictable future, and without reassurance of our outcome, fear can cause bitterness and ignorance. Education, the economy, politics, and the fate of an ever-changing climate put an enormous amount of stress on us as a people. There is no certain cure for the issues we deal with a nation, but the first step towards solution and unification. As a country, it's time that we put aside our grudges, opinions, and preferences and work as a whole to support America's path towards growth, safety, security and stability. The United States of America has been a country that others look to as a role model and to some as a beacon of freedom and safety. We have more than ourselves to work for; there are millions of people around the world who rely on our help and support. We need to shed the selfish shells, and work as a people, not as a political party or organization. Whether you are a Republican, Democrat, and Libertarian it doesn't matter, because America is your home, and at the end of the day we all have to learn to coexist and benefit from each other's support. This is how we will help to secure America's future, America's education, industry and healthcare. Unification is the first step towards solution.

If we need reminding of the impact of dissention and fracturing of our political system, the Civil War looms in the hearts and from the pages of our history, when compromise not only failed, but conversation stopped. The State of the Nation in America is painful obvious even to the young people and the children. If we don't remember how to talk to each other, work together and accomplish the majority rule established as a framework in the US Constitution, we stand to lose more than a budget. We stand to lose our democracy.

NICK MAJESKI, WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11 (FINALIST)

Bribes from Fast Food: A State of Corruption

In the year 2014, the union is majorly corrupt; the country is run by a capitalist nightmare of over-powerful healthcare, tobacco, and food industries. From their very beginnings at the turn of twentieth century, the fast food industry has steadily become

more and more powerful and influential. Spawning from this growth in influence, the union has steadily declined into a state of corruption at the hands of the fast industry, with these major food chains bribing government workers in high positions.

Government agencies controlling food, such as the FDA, USDA, and EPA may have been created with good intentions, but when a higher up does not believe they are being paid enough money for their job, they are known to be tempted to accept bribes and submit to being the puppets of fast food corporations, looking to exploit their power to lower the standards of their products. An article on Naturalnews.com explained how, in a survey given to workers at the FDA and USDA, one fourth of the survey takers admitted to have changed policies for corporate gain. On one hand this is not morally right both in the way that our government officials—who were elected by the people—are accepting bribes, and also that they are changing policies allowing even less healthy food that causes diseases—more money to health care; another corrupt industry in the United States.

Corrupt FDA, USDA, and EPA fat-cats obviously do not want to break their ties with fast food puppeteers; this brings more corruption directly into the government organizations themselves. In the Naturalnews.com article the writer explains that many innocent workers at organizations like the FDA and USDA are demoted or even fired for trying to do their job and not keeping their mouths shut about corruption they have witnessed. The higher-ups in charge of these huge organizations influence immoral decisions that bring dirty money to their own pockets; they change state standards to very low standards and do not require food companies to tell customers when the food was made, processed or cooked.

Despite all this—mostly widely known information—this corruption is still going on and growing. According to Fastfoodnationhonorsproject.weebly.com ties between congress and fast food are too strong to vote against certain policies. This means that the way to lower corruption in the food industry would have to be to take direct action.

Despite knowledge of corruption being well known in America—Supersize Me is a mainstream movie—there is not very much motivation to stop bribes from the food industry. This is a problem that should not only be addressed, but worked towards solving as well. HOLLY THAYER, MILTON HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12 (FINALIST)

My fellow Americans, I stand here before you to evaluate the state of our great nation. Over the past year our economy has risen as the Gross National Product increased 4.1% in the third quarter, and the National Deficit went down \$1.8 Billion. As of November, the national unemployment rate has dropped to 7% and personal income has risen, proving that our nation is moving out of the recession, and America is once again becoming a nation of economic growth and wealth.

2013 saw an increase in revolutions around the world, from Syria to Egypt, many countries around the world are experiencing the same revolution the United States and our ancestors endured in order to gain our individual freedoms. Through the government and all of our national forces, we must work together to give aid in the form of resources and money, to assist the new governments that are the result of these revolutions, and ensure that there is smooth turn over of power. The United States must also create a

coalition of our allies, along with the United Nations, to create an agreement that delegates the responsibilities and costs of helping these nations form new governments, and ensures that the re-created states are not intruding on an individual's human rights.

The production of Genetically Modified Organisms, GMOs, that are then placed in processed foods or on crops and used as an insecticide, have created a serious health risk for myself, and all my fellow Americans. It has been proven that GMOs can lead to serious health issues and impose high health risks. We must work together with the agricultural farmers and corporations that use GMO's to research the other options that these businesses have in order to ensure plant safety, without endangering the public health at the same time. Then we must create a grant program that would give states and localities money to allocate to farmers and organizations that agree to not use GMOs. For companies that still use GMOs, we must toughen the regulations on the use of them, through only allowing a regulated amount to be present in foods, and make it mandatory that this presence is labeled on every package of a product.

Educated masses lead to innovations and improvements in every aspect of life. Currently, around 30% of Americans have obtained a college degree. In order to have an educated citizenry, we need to make federal aid for students planning on going to college more available. To do this, we need to restructure the system that is used to disperse federal financial aid. If we create a formula, based on family income, and reduce the importance and use of merit based scholarships, while increasing the use of incentive programs, then allocate the money based on this system, we could effectively make financial aid more available and abundant, and therefore increase the percentage of Americans who have a college degree, creating an educated citizenry.

Thank you, God Bless America.

DELANEY SPINK, SOUTH BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12 (FINALIST)

I can't claim to know a lot about politics. In fact, I make a point to stay as uninvolved in it as possible. In a nutshell, all I know is that Obama is our president, and that I should never bring up politics with my grandfather, unless I'm willing to spend the next three or four hours listening to him denounce every decision our government has made since the 1920's. When our class was told we had to write this essay, my first thought was, "I have no idea what the state of our union is. How am I supposed to write about how to fix it?"

I'd bet that every single other student in my classroom was having the same thought, save the one or two kids that are really into politics, and, as we all know, are going to win this competition. This got me thinking, and I've come to a conclusion. The problem with our country is that not enough young people know what the problem is. Ironic, isn't it?

When I think of our government, I think of old white men. Now, I know this is a very stereotypical generalization that I'm making. Women are getting involved, and, hey, our president is black. We seem to be doing better, based on the limited information that I have. But, whether they're diverse or not, the people making decisions for our country are old. This isn't entirely a bad thing; older people have more experience, confidence, and knowledge. All I'm saying is that that wisdom needs to be balanced with the fresh per-

spectives of our country's younger generations. Younger people need to start getting more excited about politics, myself included. We need to start looking at it as an exciting opportunity to change what we think should be changed, instead of as a boring subject that our uncles argue about over Thanksgiving dinner.

Now, I know there are probably many kids out there that are interested in politics. That's great, but I also know that the vast majority of kids, like myself, are simply uninterested. The solution lies with us, and we need to motivate ourselves. It can't come from the adults. If this essay somehow makes it to anyone important, please don't take this as a sign that you need to launch a national "Politics are Cool, Yo!" campaign. It won't work. It needs to be started by the kids. We need to start clubs, be in our school governments, or even just watch the news.

I don't have a perfect solution, seeing as I am, for now, one of the aforementioned uninterested students. But, I know this: If politics can become more accessible to young people in any way, shape, or form, we will take notice, and, eventually, get involved. It's our country too. We want to be just as involved as Grandpa Bill and Senator Sanders. One of us just needs to lead the way. ●

TEXT OF A PROPOSED THIRD AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY—PM 28

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

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)) (the "Act"), the text of a proposed Third Amendment to the Agreement for Co-operation Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (the "Amendment"). I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the Amendment, and an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Amendment. (In accordance with section 123 of the Act, as amended by title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), a classified annex to the NPAS, prepared by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information, will be submitted to the Congress separately.) The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretaries of State and Energy and a letter from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stating the views of the Commission are also enclosed. An addendum to the

NPAS pursuant to section 102A of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 403-1), as amended, is being submitted separately by the Director of National Intelligence.

The proposed Amendment has been negotiated in accordance with the Act and other applicable law. In my judgment, it meets all applicable statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States.

Pursuant to the proposed Amendment, the Agreement for Co-operation Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency, signed at Vienna May 11, 1959, as amended and extended February 12, 1974, and January 14, 1980 (the "Agreement"), would continue to provide a comprehensive framework for peaceful nuclear cooperation with the IAEA and facilitate our mutual objectives related to nonproliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The primary purposes of the Agreement are to enable exports from the United States of nuclear material and equipment to IAEA Member States for research reactors and, in certain cases, for power reactors, and to enable transfers from the United States of small samples of nuclear material to the IAEA for safeguards and research purposes.

Under the proposed Amendment, the term of the Agreement will be extended an additional 40 years for a total term of 95 years.

The Agreement permits the transfer of material, equipment (including reactors), and facilities for nuclear research and nuclear power production. It does not permit transfers of Restricted Data, sensitive nuclear facilities, or major critical components of such facilities, or, unless specifically provided for in a supply agreement or an amendment thereto, transfers of sensitive nuclear technology. In the event of termination of the Agreement, key nonproliferation conditions and controls continue with respect to material, equipment, and facilities subject to the Agreement.

A more detailed discussion of the IAEA's nuclear nonproliferation and peaceful uses activities is provided in the NPAS and in a classified annex to the NPAS submitted to you separately.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed Amendment to the Agreement and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the Amendment and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Act. My Administration is prepared to begin imme-

diately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30 days of continuous session review provided for in section 123 b., the 60 days of continuous session review provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, January 29, 2014.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1901. An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 7. An act to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 7. An act to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions; to the Committee on Finance.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4465. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program: Election Opportunities for Pathways Participants" (RIN3206-AM98) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4466. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Collection by Offset From Indebted Government Employees" (RIN3206-AM14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4467. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program: Eligibility for Pathways Programs Participants" (RIN3206-AM97) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4468. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule

entitled "Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program: Eligibility for Pathways Programs Participants" (RIN3206-AM97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4469. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Collection by Offset From Indebted Government Employees" (RIN3206-AM14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4470. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program: Election Opportunities for Pathways Participants" (RIN3206-AM98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4471. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, "Certified Business Enterprise Expenditures of Public-Private Development Construction Projects for Fiscal Year 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4472. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Performance and Accountability Report Fiscal Year 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4473. A communication from the Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4474. A communication from the Acting Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4475. A communication from the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4476. A communication from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-188. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorializing the Congress of the United States to support the Forest Products Fairness Act of 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 223

Whereas, The Forest Products Fairness Act of 2013 proposes to include forest products in the definition of "biobased product," as well as the USDA Biobased Markets Program; and

Whereas, Including forest products in the USDA Biobased Markets Program will provide the opportunity for forest products to receive increased consumer attention and Federal Government procurement preference; and

Whereas, Forestry is a vital industry in this Commonwealth; and

Whereas, The timber and forest products industry provides more than 100,000 jobs in Pennsylvania; and

Whereas, The industry produces more than \$5 billion worth of products annually; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania hardwood products are exported around the globe and are famous for their beauty and quality; and

Whereas, Forestry material, a biobased product, can be utilized for recycling purposes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize Congress to support Congressman Glenn Thompson of Pennsylvania's efforts to add to the Farm Bill or his efforts to introduce new legislation known as the Forest Products Fairness Act of 2013; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-189. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan memorializing the Congress of the United States to amend the Communications Decency Act of 1996 to allow the prosecution by state and local governments of individuals who promote prostitution and child sex trafficking through online advertisements; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 244

Whereas, As many as 2 million children are subjected to prostitution in the global commercial sex trade. Websites that promote prostitution and sex trafficking through classified ads have become more commonplace, facilitating the organized prostitution of children and providing a facade for sex traffickers to hide behind; and

Whereas, Websites involved in posting ads for prostitution, involving both adults and children, claim protection under the federal Communications Decency Act of 1996 to avoid prosecution. However, the Communications Decency Act was passed to protect Internet Service Providers from defamatory statements made by online users. It was not intended to protect websites involved in criminal activity; and

Whereas, State and local governments are currently unable to take enforcement action against these sites. The state of Washington enacted legislation that criminalizes aiding the sale of sex with a child to force online prostitution sites to verify ages or shut down their adult sections entirely. A preliminary injunction has been issued against the law stating, in part, that potential First Amendment issues may be involved; and

Whereas, Action at the federal level is needed. The National Association of Attorneys General has lobbied Congress to amend the Communications Decency Act of 1996 to allow regulation by state and local governments: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the

United States to amend the Communications Decency Act of 1996 to allow the prosecution by state and local governments of individuals who promote prostitution and child sex trafficking through online advertisements; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-190. A concurrent resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio memorializing the Congress of the United States to oppose any legislation that requires Social Security coverage for members of any of Ohio's state retirement systems; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 19

Whereas, Ohio has a long history, predating the creation of Social Security, of providing retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to its state and local public employees through its own state retirement systems; and

Whereas, These state retirement systems, the Public Employees Retirement System, Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund, State Teachers Retirement System, School Employees Retirement System, and State Highway Patrol Retirement System, have combined assets of over \$165 billion and provide retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to over 1.5 million members, retirees, and beneficiaries; and

Whereas, The state retirement system plans are offered in lieu of Social Security; and

Whereas, Ohio's state retirement systems are required by Ohio law to accumulate and maintain, through employer and employee contributions and investments, the necessary funds to pay all benefits promised by the Ohio General Assembly; and

Whereas, The state retirement systems are well-managed and free of the financial problems facing Social Security; and

Whereas, Any federal mandates that require Ohio public employee participation in Social Security or other federal pension programs would devastate Ohio's state retirement systems, weaken the retirement security of its public employees, and jeopardize their retirement benefits: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we, the members of the 130th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, in adopting this resolution, urge the Congress of the United States to oppose any legislation containing provisions that would require Ohio's public employees who are members of a state retirement system to participate in Social Security or any federal pension program; and be it further

Resolved, That we, the members of the 130th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, either in whole or in part, will meet with the members of the Ohio Congressional delegation whenever feasible to express our opposition to any federal legislation that would require Ohio's public employees who are members of a state retirement system to participate in Social Security or any federal pension program; and be it further

Resolved, That we, the members of the 130th General Assembly of the State of Ohio, encourage our fellow members to personally meet with each Senator and Representative in the Ohio Congressional delegation to further express our opposition to any federal legislation that would require Ohio's public employees who are members of a state re-

tirement system to participate in Social Security or any federal pension program; and be it further

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, the President Pro Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, each member of the Ohio Congressional delegation, and the news media of Ohio.

POM-191. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorializing the Congress of the United States to pass and the President of the United States to sign the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 571

Whereas, As the result of a series of United States Supreme Court cases dealing with state taxation of mail order catalog retailers, including *Quill Corp. v. North Dakota*, 504 U.S. 298 (1992) and *National Bellas Hess, Inc. v. Department of Revenue of Illinois*, 386 U.S. 753 (1967), a state is generally unable to require a retailer without a physical presence in that state to collect sales and use tax on its behalf; and

Whereas, Pennsylvania has long imposed a sales tax on each sale at retail of tangible personal property or taxable services within this Commonwealth, with the retailer required to collect the tax from the purchaser and to remit the collected tax to the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, If the retailer does not collect the sales tax on a taxable sale at retail, and the purchaser uses the purchased item or service within this Commonwealth, the purchaser is legally required to pay use tax directly to the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, The burden on individual purchasers or consumers to track, calculate and remit the correct amount of use tax is significant, resulting in low rates of compliance and reduced state tax collections; and

Whereas, A 2011 study by Robert Strauss, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University, projected that Pennsylvania would lose between \$254 million and \$410 million in sales and use taxes in 2012 due to the inability to require retailers without a physical presence in this Commonwealth to collect sales and use taxes; and

Whereas, The Pennsylvania Department of Revenue has taken measures to improve the collection of this tax, including the addition of a section for the use tax on the standard Pennsylvania tax return form (PA-40) and by clarifying the nexus standard for retailers with physical presence in this Commonwealth through a subsidiary, representative or agent; and

Whereas, While the recent measures by the Department of Revenue to improve collections have resulted in increased compliance, much remains uncollected; and

Whereas, The inability to collect sales and use tax on purchases made from retailers that do not have a physical presence in this Commonwealth has created a disadvantage for this Commonwealth's brick-and-mortar retailers that are required to collect the sales and use tax; and

Whereas, The 2011 study by Professor Strauss projected that uniform collection of the sales and use tax across all retailers would result in job growth by Pennsylvania-based brick-and-mortar retailers of between 1,530 and 2,766 jobs, which would generate between \$66 million and \$119 million in wages; and

Whereas, The growth of retail sales on the Internet has exacerbated the problem for taxpayers and the Commonwealth far beyond the circumstances considered when the Quill case was decided; and

Whereas, Congress is in the best position to standardize the nationwide collection of sales and use taxes from retailers that do not have a physical presence in the state where the tax is due; and

Whereas, The United States Supreme Court stated in Quill that the problem "is not only one that Congress may be better qualified to resolve, but also one that Congress has the ultimate power to resolve"; and

Whereas, On May 6, 2013, the United States Senate passed the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013, which would provide nationwide standards for the collection of sales and use taxes from out-of-state retailers, by a vote of 69 to 27; and

Whereas, The Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013 is currently being considered by the Committee on the Judiciary in the United States House of Representatives; and

Whereas, On September 18, 2013, Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) and Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial and Antitrust Law Chairman Spencer Bachus (R-Ala.) issued a statement outlining the framework the committee will follow when considering the legislation; and

Whereas, The Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013 would simply standardize the collection of existing taxes that are already due; it would not expand an existing tax nor would it create a new tax; and

Whereas, The additional revenue that is already due to the Commonwealth that would be collected under the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013 could be used to prevent future tax increases and to provide tax relief to all Pennsylvanians; and

Whereas, A 2013 study by economists Arthur B. Laffer and Donna Arduin projects that over the next ten years the enactment of the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013 could empower states to implement pro-growth tax policies that would result in a nationwide increase in gross domestic product (GDP) of \$563.2 billion and add over 1.5 million new jobs, with \$15.1 billion in GDP growth and 43,000 new jobs in Pennsylvania: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives memorialize the Congress of the United States to pass and the President of the United States to sign the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013, or a similar act, to provide uniform measures for the collection of states' sales and use taxes; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, to the presiding officers of each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from Pennsylvania.

POM-192. A resolution adopted by Washington Township, Morris County, New Jersey urging Congress to dedicate additional federal funds for highway maintenance and infrastructure improvements; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

POM-193. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature petitioning the United States Congress to amend the Radiation Exposure Act of 1990; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-194. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Northern

Mariana Commonwealth Legislature requesting the United States Congress to eliminate Section 2109 of S.744 and similar legislation which will allow thousands of alien workers, their families, and persons of other ethnic origin who are in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to become permanent residents and subsequently become U.S. citizens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. HARKIN for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Michael Keith Yudin, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

*David Weil, of Massachusetts, to be Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor.

*James H. Shelton III, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Education.

*Theodore Reed Mitchell, of California, to be Under Secretary of Education.

*Ericka M. Miller, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

*France A. Cordova, of New Mexico, to be Director of the National Science Foundation for a term of six years.

*James Cole, Jr., of New York, to be General Counsel, Department of Education.

*Steven Joel Anthony, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Railroad Retirement Board for a term expiring August 28, 2018.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 1969. A bill to provide for higher education reform; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1970. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify safe harbor requirements applicable to automatic contribution arrangements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1971. A bill to establish an interagency coordination committee or subcommittee with the leadership of the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior, focused on the nexus between energy and water production, use, and efficiency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. MURPHY):

S. 1972. A bill to prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of an individual's status or history of unemployment; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1973. A bill to improve management of the National Laboratories, enhance technology commercialization, facilitate public-private partnerships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. Res. 341. A resolution observing the 100th birthday of civil rights leader Daisy Bates and honoring her legacy as an American heroine; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. COBURN):

S. Con. Res. 31. A concurrent resolution designating January 2014 as "National Blood Donor Month"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 489

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 738

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 738, a bill to grant the Secretary of the Interior permanent authority to authorize States to issue electronic duck stamps, and for other purposes.

S. 942

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 942, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1297

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1297, a bill to establish the Government Transformation Commission to review and make recommendations regarding cost control in the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

S. 1467

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 1467, a bill to establish the Office of the Special Advocate to provide advocacy in cases before courts established by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 and for other purposes.

S. 1517

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1517, a bill to amend the Public Health Services Act and the Social Security Act to extend health information technology assistance eligibility to behavioral health, mental health, and substance abuse professionals and facilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1687

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1687, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to ensure that employees are not misclassified as non-employees, and for other purposes.

S. 1821

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1821, a bill to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

S. 1823

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1823, a bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to better enable State child welfare agencies to prevent human trafficking of children and serve the needs of children who are victims of human trafficking, and for other purposes.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of

cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1869

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1869, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes.

S. 1916

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1916, a bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to provide for an application process for interested parties to apply for a county to be designated as a rural area, and for other purposes.

S. 1920

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1920, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the research and development credit to encourage innovation.

S. 1926

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

S. 1950

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from

Utah (Mr. HATCH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 2699

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2699 intended to be proposed to S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2707 proposed to S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1970. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify safe harbor requirements applicable to automatic contribution arrangements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Retirement Security Act of 2014, legislation I am sponsoring with my good friend, the senior Senator from Florida and the chairman of the Special Committee on Aging. Our bill would encourage small employers to offer retirement plans, encourage employees to save more for their retirement, and ensure that low- and middle-income taxpayers are able to claim tax benefits for retirement savings already authorized in law.

I thought it was interesting last night that the President, in his speech, highlighted what is a growing problem in this country; that is, that people who have not saved sufficiently to have a comfortable retirement.

The legislation we are introducing today is an outgrowth of our work together on the Special Committee on Aging. Last fall, the committee conducted a hearing on retirement security, where we heard from witnesses that far too many American seniors have real reason to fear that they will outlive their savings. According to the nonpartisan Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, there is an estimated \$6.6 trillion gap between the savings American households need to maintain their standard of living in retirement and what they actually have. That is an enormous gap that speaks to the fact that we need to shine a light on this problem.

Nationally, one in four retired Americans has no source of income beyond Social Security—in Maine, the number is one in three. Four in ten seniors rely on that vital program for 90 percent of their retirement income. Yet Social Security provides an average benefit of just \$1,294 per month—less than \$16,000 per year. It is hard to imagine stretching those dollars far enough to pay the bills—certainly a “comfortable retirement” is out of the question.

According to a Gallup survey published in 2012, more than half of all Americans are worried they will not be able to maintain their standard of living in retirement, up sharply from 34 percent two decades ago. They are right to be concerned: Projections published in 2010 by the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) show that nearly half of “Early Boomers”—those between the ages of 56 and 62 when the study was conducted—are at risk of not having enough money to pay for basic costs in retirement, including uninsured health care costs.

There are many reasons for the decline in retirement security facing American seniors, including the severity of the recent financial crisis, rising health care costs, the need for long-term care, and the fact that Americans are simply living far longer than they did in the past. The shift from employer-based “defined benefit” plans—pensions—to “defined contribution” plans like 401(k)s, also has played a role.

Another contributing factor we found is that employees of small businesses are much less likely to participate in employer-based retirement plans. According to a recent GAO study, more than half of the 42 million Americans who work for businesses with fewer than 100 employees lack access to a work-based plan to save for retirement. Cost and complexity are among the reasons plans are not more widely offered by small businesses.

Chairman NELSON and I believe that making it easier for smaller businesses to provide access to retirement plans for their workers would make a significant difference in the financial security for many Americans. That is why

the bill we are introducing today focuses on reducing the cost and complexity of retirement plans, especially for small businesses, and on encouraging individuals to save more for their retirement. Let me describe some of the provisions of our bill:

First, our bill would allow small businesses to enter into multiple employer plans (MEPs) to jointly offer retirement programs to their employees. This allows small companies to share the administrative burden of a retirement plan, which helps to lower costs. Current law discourages the use of MEPs because it requires a connection, or “nexus,” between unrelated businesses in order to join a MEP, such as membership in the same trade association. Our bill would waive the nexus requirement for businesses with fewer than 500 employees. So as not to discourage growth, our bill provides a long phase-out, under which businesses are not automatically disqualified from a MEP when they hire their 500th employee.

Second, our bill makes joining a MEP a more attractive option for small businesses. Under current law, if one employer in a MEP fails to meet the minimum criteria necessary for retirement plans to obtain tax benefits, all employers and their employees could lose their tax benefits. These benefits are substantial. For employees, they include delaying the taxation of income contributed to a plan until funds are withdrawn. For employers, plan disqualification could result in limited deductions and a higher tax burden. Our bill directs Treasury to issue regulations to address this uncertainty, and protect members of a MEP from the failure of one bad apple to meet its obligations.

Third, our bill reduces the cost of maintaining a retirement plan. Current law requires that participants in a retirement plan receive a variety of notices. Our bill would direct Treasury to simplify, clarify, and consolidate these required notices, which creates savings that can be passed on to employers.

As ranking member of the Special Committee on Aging, I have heard countless stories of retirees whose savings did not go as far as they anticipated. Adequate savings reduce poverty among our seniors during what should be their golden years. As the HELP Committee noted in a July 2012 report, elder poverty also increases Medicare and Medicaid costs and strains our social safety net. Giving those not yet at retirement age more opportunities to save, and to save more, may help to ease this additional burden on entitlement programs that already are projected to be unsustainable.

The Retirement Security Act of 2014 encourages those still in the workforce to save more for retirement. Retirement plans are often designed to comply with existing safe harbors to pre-

vent the IRS from challenging the tax benefits that flow to employees and employers. The existing safe harbor for so-called “automatic enrollment” plans effectively caps employee contributions at 10 percent of annual pay, with the employer contributing a “matching” amount on up to 6 percent. Our bill creates an additional safe harbor for these plans that would allow employees to receive an employer match on contributions of up to 10 percent of their pay. Employees would be able to contribute more than 10 percent, albeit without an employer match for contributions above 10 percent.

I recognize that businesses that choose to adopt a plan with this new optional safe harbor may face additional costs due to the increased employer match. That is why our bill helps the smallest businesses—those with fewer than 100 employees—offset this cost by providing a new tax credit equal to the increased match.

I wish to emphasize that the new retirement plan options for businesses included in our bill are just that—options. No business, large or small, would be required to offer a retirement plan under the Retirement Security Act of 2014. Some firms, facing an uncertain economy and rising health care costs, may choose to spend their limited resources elsewhere. Accordingly, our bill ensures that current measures to encourage savings are functioning as they were intended. One such measure is the so-called “saver’s credit,” which reduces the tax burden on low- and middle-income individuals who contribute to retirement plans, including IRAs and 401(k) plans. Yet this credit cannot be claimed on a Form 1040EZ, which is used by individuals with income under \$100,000. A 2013 survey found that only 23 percent of people with household incomes of less than \$50,000 per year, the group most likely to qualify, was even aware of the saver’s credit. To address this, our bill directs Treasury to make the credit available on Form 1040EZ.

In light of the positive effects this bill would have in strengthening retirement security for millions of Americans, I urge my colleagues to join Chairman NELSON and me in supporting the Retirement Security Act of 2014. I am very pleased we have a number of groups that have endorsed our bill. I expect to have more to say about that next week. But at this point I encourage my colleagues to take a look at the hearing that Chairman NELSON and I held in the Special Committee on Aging that focused the spotlight on this problem. We simply have too many of our seniors who are in their retirement years without sufficient funds for a comfortable retirement, and that can and should change.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, first of all, I thank my coleader of the committee, the great Senator from the State of Maine, who has been not only a great leader but also a terrific copartner as we try to offer leadership to the Special Committee on Aging.

We are literally trying to make bipartisan work. It is only because of folks such as Senator COLLINS that this is working and, as a result, we have a terrific committee. The members participate, they come, they are engaged, they ask the questions of the witnesses. As Senator COLLINS said, as a result of one of these hearings, under her leadership, she suggested putting together this important piece of legislation.

Our committee held a hearing last fall called "The State of the American Senior." We wanted to look at the financial security of the average senior in retirement. We didn't like what we heard. Fewer than half of the workers even have access to a retirement plan, and those numbers shrink when we talk about employees who work for small businesses. One-third of the private sector employees work at small businesses, and nearly 72 percent of businesses with under 100 employees offer no savings plan. I will repeat that: Of businesses under 100 employees, 72 percent do not offer a savings plan.

So what do seniors then end up with? They rely on Social Security to get by in retirement, and that is simply not enough money to pay for housing and medical care and other expenses. Take, for example, my State of Florida, where more than three in five people get half of their retirement income from Social Security. Here is a shocker: One-third of Floridians only receive Social Security income—one-third of all of the 20 million people in Florida receive Social Security income. That is all they receive is their Social Security.

So there is a problem that needs to be fixed. Too many people are getting by with too little. So Senator COLLINS and I have come together on this legislation aimed at increasing access to savings plans and creating more opportunities for those in retirement, to put more money aside ahead of their retirement.

Senator COLLINS explained it: We are going to try to pool all the small businesses together with their resources to take advantage of the economies of scale to create one plan, and it increases safe harbors for things such as automatic enrollment and escalation contributions, which have been shown as ways to get people to save more.

This is commonsense legislation. It is bipartisan. It is a great privilege for me to work with Senator COLLINS on this legislation and on our committee work.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1971. A bill to establish an inter-agency coordination committee or subcommittee with the leadership of the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior, focused on the nexus between energy and water production, use, and efficiency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, vast amounts of water are used every day to produce vital fuels and to cool powerplants in the United States. Without this water supply, most of our electricity would stop flowing and our economy and other essential functions would come to a complete stop. At the same time, a great deal of electricity is needed to treat, transport, and convey water across the country not only to support economic growth and well-being but also to sustain basic life. These inseparable links of "water for energy" and "energy for water" comprise the energy-water nexus.

I believe that the Federal agencies can and must do more to ensure that we have the best possible data, technology, and know-how to ensure that this nexus is well understood and continuously optimized to sustain quality of life and promote economic growth. To that end, I am introducing a bill today entitled "The Nexus of Energy and Water for Sustainability Act of 2014" or the "NEWS Act of 2014" for short.

The NEWS Act instructs the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy to establish a committee or a subcommittee under the National Science and Technology Council to coordinate and streamline the activities of all Federal departments and agencies on energy-water nexus issues. This new panel will be cochaired by the Secretaries of Energy and Interior and will be tasked with identifying all relevant energy-water nexus activities across the Federal Government; enhancing the coordination of effective research and development activities, both ongoing and in the future; working to gather and disseminate data to enable better practices; and exploring relevant public-private collaboration. The bill also calls for the Office of Management and Budget to submit to the relevant congressional committees a so-called crosscut budget soon after enactment of this act. The cross-cut budget will detail various expenditures across the Federal Government related to energy-water activities and will greatly assist in our coordination and streamlining efforts.

I believe this is a strong bill that deserves to be considered and passed in this Congress. I am grateful to Senator WYDEN for sponsoring it with me, and look forward to working with every member in this Chamber to address these important issues.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1971

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nexus of Energy and Water for Sustainability Act of 2014" or the "NEWS Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) DIRECTOR.—The term "Director" means the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

(2) ENERGY-WATER NEXUS.—The term "energy-water nexus" means the link between—
(A) energy efficiency and the quantity of water needed to produce fuels and energy; and

(B) the quantity of energy needed to transport, reclaim, and treat water.

(3) NSTC.—The term "NSTC" means the National Science and Technology Council.

(4) COMMITTEE OR SUBCOMMITTEE.—The term "Committee or Subcommittee" means the Committee on Energy-Water Nexus for Sustainability or the Subcommittee on Energy-Water Nexus for Sustainability, whichever is established by section 3(a).

SEC. 3. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director shall establish either a committee or a subcommittee under the NSTC, to be known as either the Committee on Energy-Water Nexus for Sustainability or the Subcommittee on Energy-Water Nexus for Sustainability, to carry out the duties described in subsection (c).

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) CHAIRS.—The Secretary of Energy and Secretary of the Interior shall serve as co-chairs of the Committee or Subcommittee.

(2) MEMBERSHIP; STAFFING.—Membership and staffing shall be determined by the NSTC.

(c) DUTIES.—The Committee or Subcommittee shall—

(1) serve as a forum for developing common Federal goals and plans on energy-water nexus issues;

(2) promote coordination of the activities of all Federal departments and agencies on energy-water nexus issues, including the activities of—

(A) the Department of Energy;

(B) the Department of the Interior;

(C) the Corps of Engineers;

(D) the Department of Agriculture;

(E) the Department of Defense;

(F) the Department of State;

(G) the Environmental Protection Agency;

(H) the Council on Environmental Quality;

(I) the National Institute of Standards and Technology;

(J) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(K) the National Science Foundation;

(L) the Office of Management and Budget;

(M) the Office of Science and Technology Policy; and

(N) such other Federal departments and agencies as the Director or the Committee or Subcommittee consider appropriate; and

(3)(A) coordinate and develop capabilities for data collection, categorization, and dissemination of data from and to other Federal departments and agencies; and

(B) engage in information exchange between Federal departments and agencies—

(i) to identify and document Federal and non-Federal programs and funding opportunities that support basic and applied research, development, and demonstration proposals to advance the state of energy-water nexus related science and technologies;

(ii) if practicable, to leverage existing programs by encouraging joint solicitations, block grants, and matching programs with non-Federal entities; and

(iii) to identify opportunities for public-private partnerships, innovative financing mechanisms, and grant challenges.

(d) REVIEW; TERMINATION.—At the end of the 10-year period beginning on the date on which the Committee or Subcommittee is established, the Director—

(1) shall review the activities of the Committee or Subcommittee and determine the relevance and effectiveness of the Committee or Subcommittee; and

(2) based on the determination made under paragraph (1), may terminate the Committee or Subcommittee.

SEC. 4. CROSSCUT BUDGET.

Not later than 30 days after the President submits the budget of the United States Government under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(1) an interagency budget crosscut report that—

(A) displays the budget proposed, including any interagency or intraagency transfer, for each of the Federal agencies that carry out energy-water nexus projects for the upcoming fiscal year, separately showing funding requested under both preexisting authorities and under the new authorities granted by this Act; and

(B) identifies all expenditures since 2011 by the Federal and State governments on energy-water nexus projects;

(2) a detailed accounting of all funds received and obligated by all Federal agencies and State agencies responsible for implementing energy-water nexus projects during the previous fiscal year;

(3) a budget for the proposed energy-water nexus projects (including a description of the project, authorization level, and project status) to be carried out in the upcoming fiscal year with the Federal portion of funds for energy-water nexus programs; and

(4) a listing of all energy-water nexus projects to be undertaken in the upcoming fiscal year with the Federal portion of funds for those projects.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1973. A bill to improve management of the National Laboratories, enhance technology commercialization, facilitate public-private partnerships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a bill introduced today—a bipartisan bill—a bill that will strengthen America's innovation economy.

Over the last 60 years our national laboratories have served as leading

centers of research and discovery in America. Today we have 17 DOE labs charged with three broad research missions: science, energy, and national security. Although they have grown and changed since their founding to encompass much broader ranges of work and are successful in carrying out their primary missions, labs are not fully optimized to take part in today's innovation culture. That is a problem, because in this century of rapid change, America's best competitive advantage remains our capacity to innovate.

Over the coming months, I will be talking more about a few things Congress can do to streamline and jumpstart our Nation's hubs of discovery so that we can thrive as a 21st-century innovation economy.

At the top level, it will mean reauthorizing the America COMPETES Act to reaffirm our commitment to the robust national strategy for science and technology programs that will continue to be a critical underpinning of American prosperity.

And one part of that is how our national labs operate, which is why today Senator RUBIO and I have introduced the America INNOVATES Act.

Already, our labs have incubated many groundbreaking innovations.

Their research has led to breakthroughs from new Melanoma and HIV/AIDS treatments to IED detonators that can save the lives of our troops in combat. And that research is critical because although the private sector will continue to be a key source of innovation, the Federal Government has and will continue to play a central role in advancing innovation.

Why is that? Private markets, historically speaking, tend to underinvest in R&D relative to the potential benefits to society. This is especially true in the energy sector.

But, if there is a problem that I have heard since coming to Congress, it is that too often, the great work of our scientists doesn't translate to the marketplace.

Right now, too much groundbreaking science and too many innovative ideas never leave the walls of our national labs, squandering enormous potential in the commercial market.

Now, in our bill, we continue to support our labs' core mission. We are not proposing anything drastic. What we are doing is modernizing the labs for the 21st century—so ideas in the lab can more effectively become innovations in the market. Luckily, we need only look to the labs themselves for inspiration on how to do this.

We make two broad proposals.

First we are integrating the management of the Department of Energy's science and energy programs to improve the linkages between basic and applied sciences. This will allow the early stages of research and development to be translated more efficiently,

and it is something that Secretary Moniz has signaled he supports and is moving forward on.

Second we are giving the national labs more power to work with the private sector to ensure that more scientific discoveries can turn into commercial breakthroughs.

Together, these steps would allow us to streamline the labs' work so it can move quickly and effectively translate into the transformative innovations that can create jobs and grow our economy.

Now, to explain what our proposals intend to achieve, I will walk through what is known as the innovation pipeline, which shows how basic science research can become a world-changing innovation.

First, I will use the example of the great work that scientists at the National Renewable Energy Lab in Golden, CO, are doing to advance cellulosic ethanol technologies.

One of our country's big challenges today is reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and to do that we need new fuel options that we can create here in America.

Cellulosic ethanol is an advanced biofuel with a lot of promise because it is produced from abundant materials like grasses and wood chips as well as other types of biomass and waste. And because these materials are so abundant, cellulosic ethanol has the potential to replace a significant portion of our Nation's petroleum consumption.

The challenge comes, however, because, unlike corn, these cellulosic materials are made of complex starches that are harder to break down into ethanol.

To make the promise of cellulosic ethanol a reality, we needed to develop the enzymes and micro-organisms that could break down and then ferment those complex starches.

That is where the innovation pipeline comes in. At the NREL in Colorado, scientists started at this first step here—basic science. Basic science is very fundamental, it is the study of the elementary principles of the universe—really discovery level science.

Enzymes are large biological molecules that are nature's catalysts—accelerating metabolic processes that sustain life.

To develop enzymes and micro-organisms capable of converting starchy biomass into cellulosic ethanol, you need to start at the fundamentals of biology and biochemistry. This includes studying the intricate details of the relevant biochemical processes, as well as probing the proteins and amino acids that form the building blocks of enzymes down to the submolecular level.

At this point, scientists can move into the applied science stage of the pipeline. Applied research generally concerns translating those basic, fundamental principles into an application.

In this example, scientists apply the insights gained from the fundamental basic science stage to develop new enzymes with desired performance traits such as high selectivity, specificity, and stability to enable effective and efficient conversion of the complex starches into ethanol.

Applied research can also include controlled lab-scale demonstrations to test how effectively these newly developed enzymes and micro-organisms can turrijisay, wood chips, into fuel.

Still in the lab and far from full commercial scale production, the kinds of small discoveries that happen at the applied science level act as an early demonstration that something new is possible.

At the applied research stage, we are still far away from creating something ready for the market, but between these two stages our scientists have gone from the basic science of how an idea may work to actually demonstrating that it could work in practice.

At this point now, the private sector is more likely to see its potential value. Our scientists have shown that the technology is possible, and next we move to the commercialization and scaling and deployment phases, where private investors and companies take the technology our lab scientists have developed and make it a product that can succeed in the market.

During the applied research stage at NREL, scientists were hard at work showing that they really could produce cellulosic ethanol efficiently and cheaply—eventually meeting their goal to make it price competitive with conventional fuels in today's commercial market.

That is where we are right now with cellulosic ethanol. Companies across the country, such as DuPont, Poet, and others, are currently building plants to produce cellulosic ethanol at large scale and at competitive prices.

So that is one model of public-private partnerships for innovation—where the basic and applied science research can begin in the lab and then be transferred to private sector companies who can create a commercial product.

I had the opportunity last year to witness another model of public-private partnerships for innovation at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, which is home to the Advanced Light Source, or ALS. The ALS serves thousands of researchers—from private sector scientists to university researchers—who use light sources such as soft x-rays, ultraviolet light, and infrared light to conduct a wide range of scientific experiments. Experiments at the ALS are performed at nearly 40 beam lines that can operate simultaneously around the clock and year-round.

The facility's resources would be too expensive for any one company to in-

vest in alone, but by building a public facility that then is partly sustained by fees and targeted infrastructure investments by users, the ALS becomes a place where many different partners can come to test new ideas and approaches.

In terms of the innovation pipeline, what the Berkeley Lab and its ALS do is allow a diverse range of researchers to engage in various stages of research under one roof. The unique capabilities offered at the ALS also attract many industry partners and encourages productive public-private collaboration.

A good example of this is the partnership between the lab and the semiconductor industry.

Semiconductor technology is one of the most transformative scientific breakthroughs of the 20th century. Semiconductors are at the heart of what makes a computer work. Their constant advancement is what allows us today to hold the computing power of last generation's supercomputer in our pockets.

However, the manufacturing techniques previously used to produce new, smaller, and more powerful semiconductor products aren't adequate to build the next generation of nano-electronic devices.

So what has happened is a consortium of companies including Intel, IBM, HP, and Dow Chemical—called SEMATECH—came together to leverage the unique capabilities at the lab to advance semiconductor manufacturing technology for next-generation electronics.

As the lab reports, “[By] tapping into the Center's long term expertise in short wavelength optics and the unique properties of the ALS Synchrotron facility, SEMATECH funded the development of the world's highest resolution projection lithography tool and highest performance [extreme-ultraviolet] microscope”—developments that were only possible because of the facilities and expertise at the lab.

Having then developed new tools capable of manufacturing the next generation of semiconductor devices, a company like Intel can take the new technology and scale it up in their own plants.

Of course, there are many variations of public private partnerships that our labs can and have utilized to take ideas from the lab to the market. These two examples—cellulosic ethanol and the advancement of semiconductor manufacturing technology—show us what is really possible by working in partnership with our national labs.

In our bill Senator RUBIO and I are trying to expand the flexibility and freedom of all our labs to innovate and build productive partnerships so that every research project has the potential and opportunity to eventually enter the market.

As we see here on the innovation pipeline, the payoff for all this work

doesn't come until the very end, so one of the best things we can do is focus our policies to make the movement of ideas through the pipeline as efficient as possible.

While there are plenty of areas where Senator RUBIO and I disagree, we have come together on the America INNOVATES Act because we both agree that government has a role to play investing in the early scientific research that can lead to innovations that change our world.

In this bill, we aren't talking about expanding government or calling for new spending or regulation, we are talking about the early science work that only government can fund because there isn't yet a clear payoff for the private sector and finding out how to connect the national labs and the private sector along this innovation pipeline in a better and stronger way to deliver more products to the American marketplace and the world markets.

Once again, I thank my Republican colleague Senator MARCO RUBIO. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in supporting this bipartisan innovation jobs bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 341—OBSERVING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER DAISY BATES AND HONORING HER LEGACY AS AN AMERICAN HEROINE

Mr. PRYOR submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 341

Whereas Daisy Lee Gatson Bates was born on November 11, 1914, in Huttig, Arkansas;

Whereas in 1941, Daisy Bates and her husband, Lucious Christopher “L.C.” Bates, founded the Arkansas State Press, a weekly African-American newspaper that promoted awareness of social injustice and championed civil rights;

Whereas Daisy Bates took a leadership role in the civil rights movement and became president of the Arkansas State Conference of NAACP Branches in 1952;

Whereas in 1957, Daisy Bates became an advisor to the Little Rock Nine and was a champion for public school integration;

Whereas on September 23, 1957, and September 25, 1957, Daisy Bates courageously led members of the Little Rock Nine from her home to their first days at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas;

Whereas in the face of mounting opposition, death threats, harassment, arrests, and violence, Daisy Bates continued her work in advising the Little Rock Nine and fighting for them to attend Central High School;

Whereas after completing her work with the Little Rock Nine, Daisy Bates continued her work in public service as a community organizer and by working on anti-poverty programs;

Whereas in 1990, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton recognized Daisy Bates as the “most distinguished Arkansas citizen of all time”;

Whereas on November 4, 1999, Daisy Bates died in Little Rock, Arkansas;

Whereas in 2001, the Arkansas General Assembly designated the third Monday in February as “Daisy Gatson Bates Day” to celebrate her contributions to civil rights; and

Whereas generations of Americans can look to Daisy Bates as an example of determination, courage, and leadership for promoting social justice and equality: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) observes the 100th birthday of civil rights leader Daisy Bates; and

(2) commemorates the legacy of Daisy Bates by encouraging all people of the United States to promote social justice, equality, and the principles of the Constitution.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 31—DESIGNATING JANUARY 2014 AS “NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH”

Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. COBURN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 31

Whereas America’s Blood Centers, AABB, and the American Red Cross unite to designate January 2014 as “National Blood Donor Month”;

Whereas donating 1 unit of blood saves as many as 3 lives;

Whereas blood donors are an integral part of the health system and national public health preparedness initiatives in the United States;

Whereas blood and blood products are critical national resources and vital public health assets that must be readily available at all times;

Whereas every 2 seconds, a person in the United States needs blood for lifesaving treatment in an emergency or a disaster, a routine surgery, a blood transfusion to help treat a serious disease like cancer, or an organ or bone marrow transplant;

Whereas 1 in 7 patients who enter a hospital in the United States needs blood;

Whereas more than 20,000,000 blood components are used in transfusions every year in the United States;

Whereas over 41,000 units of blood are needed each day in the United States to maintain a safe and adequate blood supply;

Whereas 9,200,000 donors give blood each year in the United States;

Whereas approximately 38 percent of the United States population is eligible to give blood, but less than 10 percent of the eligible population donates blood on an annual basis;

Whereas blood transfusions require generous and altruistic volunteer donors;

Whereas it is vital that the blood donation policies, including donor deferral policies, in the United States keep pace with medical science to ensure that the United States has a robust, eligible population of donors to maintain a safe and adequate blood supply; and

Whereas America’s Blood Centers, AABB, and the American Red Cross support and perform critical services collecting, processing, and distributing lifesaving blood and blood products to hospitals and health providers, and are instrumental in ensuring the safety of the blood supply and promoting the need for blood donations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes January 2014 as “National Blood Donor Month”;

(2) acknowledges the important role of volunteer blood donors in protecting the health and emergency preparedness security of the United States;

(3) recognizes the need to promote a safe, stable blood supply and to increase volunteer participation of blood donors;

(4) endorses efforts to update blood donation policies in a safe and scientifically sound manner to maintain an adequate blood supply; and

(5) recognizes the roles of America’s Blood Centers, AABB, and the American Red Cross in ensuring the safety of the blood supply in the United States and delivering lifesaving blood and blood products to health providers and patients.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2710. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2711. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2710. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1926, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 9, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

(F) The estimated cost to the Federal Government of operating the National Flood Insurance Program during the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, including the cost of any claim payments that the Administrator would make for claims resulting from predicted changes in construction activity in floodplains, if, during that period, the Administrator were to prescribe chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance—

(i) in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916);

(ii) in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) as amended by the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916); or

(iii) that are not less than the applicable estimated risk premium rates under section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)).

SA 2711. Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. BLUNT) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1926, to delay the im-

plementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 15, between lines 9 and 10, insert the following:

SEC. 110. PRIVATE NONPROFIT FACILITIES.

(a) DEFINITION OF PRIVATE NONPROFIT FACILITY.—Section 102(11)(B) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122(11)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

“(B) ADDITIONAL FACILITIES.—In addition to the facilities described in subparagraph (A), the term ‘private nonprofit facility’ includes any private nonprofit facility that provides essential services to the general public (including museums, zoos, performing arts facilities, community arts centers, community centers, houses of worship, libraries, homeless shelters, senior citizen centers, rehabilitation facilities, shelter workshops, and facilities that provide health and safety services of a governmental nature), as defined by the President.”.

(b) REPAIR, RESTORATION, AND REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED FACILITIES.—Section 406(a)(3) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5172(a)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) TREATMENT OF HOUSES OF WORSHIP.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A church, synagogue, mosque, temple, or other house of worship, and an otherwise eligible private nonprofit facility operated by a religious organization, shall be eligible for contributions under paragraph (1)(B), without regard to the religious character of the facility or the primary religious use of the facility.

“(ii) LIMITATIONS.—Notwithstanding clause (i), in spaces used primarily for religious worship services, contributions under paragraph (1)(B) shall only be used to cover costs of purchasing or replacing, without limitation, the building structure, building enclosure components, building envelope, vertical and horizontal circulation, physical plant support spaces, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems (including heating, ventilation, air-conditioning, and fire and life safety systems), and related site improvements.”.

(c) APPLICABILITY.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall apply to the provision of assistance in response to a major disaster or emergency declared on or after October 28, 2012.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 29, at 10 a.m. in SD-430.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to

meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 29, 2014, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 29, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting to consider the following legislation and nomination: S. 1448, to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydro-power by the Grand Coulee Dam, and for other purposes; and the President's nomination of Vincent G. Logan to be Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Department of the Interior.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 29, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a legislative hearing to receive testimony on the following bill: S. 919, to amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to provide further self-governance by Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 29, 2014, at 10:00 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Oversight of the U.S. Department of Justice."

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

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 29, 2014, at 10:00 a.m., to hear testimony on the SENTRI Act (S. 1728), "Improving Voter Registration and Voting Opportunities for Military and Overseas Voters."

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 29, 2014, at 10 a.m. to hold a hearing.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, January 29, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. in order to conduct a hearing entitled "The Annual Report and Oversight of the Office of Financial Research."

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Patrick Miller-Bartley, Kyle Brewster, and Danielle Corley of my staff be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of today's session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ellen McLaughlin, a fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for this session of the 113th Congress.

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

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 282, S. 1417.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1417) to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1417) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013".

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Improved newborn and child screening and follow-up for heritable disorders.

Sec. 3. Evaluating the effectiveness of newborn and child screening and follow-up programs.

Sec. 4. Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children.

Sec. 5. Clearinghouse of Newborn Screening Information.

Sec. 6. Laboratory quality and surveillance.

Sec. 7. Interagency Coordinating Committee on Newborn and Child Screening.

Sec. 8. National contingency plan for newborn screening.

Sec. 9. Hunter Kelly Research Program.

Sec. 10. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 11. Reports to Congress

SEC. 2. IMPROVED NEWBORN AND CHILD SCREENING AND FOLLOW-UP FOR HERITABLE DISORDERS.

Section 1109 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-8) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "subsection (j)" and inserting "section 1117"; and

(ii) by striking "and in consultation with the Advisory Committee" and inserting "and taking into consideration the expertise of the Advisory Committee";

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking "screening and training" and inserting "screening, counseling, and training";

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking "and" at the end;

(D) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking "treatment" and inserting "follow-up and treatment"; and

(ii) by striking the period and inserting "and"; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

"(5) to improve the timely collection, delivery, receipt, and screening of specimens, and the timely diagnosis of heritable disorders in newborns.";

(2) in subsection (h), by striking "subsection (c)(2)" each place that such appears and inserting "subsection (c)"; and

(3) by striking subsection (j) (relating to authorization of appropriations).

SEC. 3. EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NEWBORN AND CHILD SCREENING AND FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMS.

Section 1110 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-9) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting "AND FOLLOW-UP" after "CHILD SCREENING";

(2) in subsection (a), by striking "of screening," and inserting "including with respect to timeliness, of screening, follow-up,";

(3) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "counseling, testing" and inserting "treatment, counseling, testing, follow-up,"; and

(ii) by inserting before the semicolon the following: "including, as appropriate, through the assessment of health and development outcomes for such children through adolescence";

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking "counseling, testing" and inserting "treatment, counseling, testing, follow-up,"; and

(ii) by striking "or" at the end;

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

"(4) methods that may be identified to improve quality in the diagnosis, treatment, and disease management of heritable disorders based on gaps in services or care; or

"(5) methods or best practices by which the eligible entities described in section 1109 can achieve the timely collection, delivery, receipt, and screening of newborn screening specimens, and the timely diagnosis of heritable disorders in newborns.";

(4) by striking subsection (d) (relating to authorization of appropriations).

SEC. 4. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HERITABLE DISORDERS IN NEWBORNS AND CHILDREN.

Section 1111 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-10) is amended—

- (1) in subsection (b)—
 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (5) through (7), respectively;
 (B) by inserting after paragraph (3), the following:

“(4) provide technical assistance, as appropriate, to individuals and organizations regarding the submission of nominations to the uniform screening panel, including prior to the submission of such nominations;”;

(C) in paragraph (5) (as so redesignated), by inserting “, including the cost” after “public health impact”; and

(D) in paragraph (7) (as so redesignated)—
 (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “achieve rapid diagnosis” and inserting “achieve best practices in rapid diagnosis and appropriate treatment”;

(ii) in subparagraph (D), by inserting before the semicolon “, including information on cost and incidence”;

(iii) in subparagraph (J), by striking “and” at the end;

(iv) in subparagraph (K), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(v) by adding at the end the following:

“(L) the timely collection, delivery, receipt, and screening of specimens to be tested for heritable disorders in newborns in order to ensure rapid diagnosis and follow-up.”;

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “180” and inserting “120”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following: “If the Secretary is unable to make a determination to adopt or reject such recommendation within such 120-day period, the Secretary shall notify the Advisory Committee and the appropriate committees of Congress of such determination together with an explanation for why the Secretary was unable to comply within such 120-day period, as well as a plan of action for consideration of such pending recommendations.”;

(B) by striking paragraph (2);

(C) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2); and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **DEADLINE FOR REVIEW.**—For each nomination to the recommended uniform screening panel, the Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children shall review and vote on the nominated condition within 9 months of the date on which the Advisory Committee referred the nomination to the condition review workgroup.”;

(3) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as subsections (g) and (h), respectively;

(4) by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection:

“(f) **MEETINGS.**—The Advisory Committee shall meet at least 4 times each calendar year, or as subject to the discretion of the Designated Federal Officer in consultation with the Chair.”;

(5) in subsection (g) (as so redesignated), by striking “Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act of 2008” and inserting “Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013”; and

(6) by striking subsection (h) (relating to authorization of appropriations), as redesignated by paragraph (3).

SEC. 5. CLEARINGHOUSE OF NEWBORN SCREENING INFORMATION.

Section 1112 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-11) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking “data” and inserting “information”; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(4) maintain current information on the number of conditions for which screening is conducted in each State; and

“(5) disseminate available evidence-based guidelines related to diagnosis, counseling, and treatment with respect to conditions detected by newborn screening.”;

(2) in subsection (b)(4)(D), by striking “Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act of 2008” and inserting “Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “developing the clearinghouse” and inserting “carrying out activities”; and

(B) by striking “clearinghouse minimizes” and inserting “activities minimize”; and

(4) by striking subsection (d) (relating to authorization of appropriations).

SEC. 6. LABORATORY QUALITY AND SURVEILLANCE.

Section 1113 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-12) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “**AND SURVEILLANCE**” before the period;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking the subsection enumerator and heading;

(B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “and in consultation with the Advisory Committee” and inserting “and taking into consideration the expertise of the Advisory Committee”;

(C) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “timeliness for processing such tests,” after “newborn screening tests”; and

(ii) by striking “and” at the end; and

(D) in paragraph (2), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by striking subsection (b) (relating to authorization of appropriations) and inserting the following:

“(b) **SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and taking into consideration the expertise of the Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children established under section 1111, may provide, as appropriate, for the coordination of surveillance activities, including—

“(1) through standardized data collection and reporting, as well as the use of electronic health records; and

“(2) by promoting data sharing regarding newborn screening with State-based birth defects and developmental disabilities monitoring programs.”.

SEC. 7. INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON NEWBORN AND CHILD SCREENING.

Section 1114 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-13) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking “the Administrator, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality” and inserting “the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs.”; and

(2) by striking subsection (e) (relating to authorization of appropriations).

SEC. 8. NATIONAL CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR NEWBORN SCREENING.

Section 1115(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-14(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “The plan shall be updated as needed and at least every five years.”.

SEC. 9. HUNTER KELLY RESEARCH PROGRAM.

Section 1116(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300b-15(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (E); and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

“(C) by providing research findings and data for newborn conditions under review by the Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children to be added to the recommended uniform screening panel;

“(D) conducting pilot studies on conditions recommended by the Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children to ensure that screenings are ready for nationwide implementation; and”.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Part A of title XI of the Public Health Service Act is amended by adding at the end, the following:

“SEC. 1117. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR NEWBORN SCREENING PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

“There are authorized to be appropriated—

“(1) to carry out sections 1109, 1110, 1111, and 1112, \$18,334,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018; and

“(2) to carry out section 1113, \$7,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

SEC. 11. REPORTS TO CONGRESS.

(a) **GAO REPORT ON TIMELINESS OF NEWBORN SCREENING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives concerning the timeliness of screening for heritable disorders in newborns.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An analysis of information regarding the timeliness of newborn screening, which may include the time elapsed from birth to specimen collection, specimen collection to receipt by laboratory, specimen receipt to reporting, reporting to follow-up testing, and follow-up testing to confirmed diagnosis.

(B) A summary of any guidelines, recommendations, or best practices available to States and health care providers intended to support a timely newborn screening system.

(C) An analysis of any barriers to maintaining a timely newborn screening system which may exist and recommendations for addressing such barriers.

(b) **REPORT BY SECRETARY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

(A) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2013, submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a report on activities related to—

(i) newborn screening; and

(ii) screening children who have or are at risk for heritable disorders; and

(B) not less than every 2 years, shall submit to such committees an updated version of such report.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under this subsection shall contain a description of—

(A) the ongoing activities under sections 1109, 1110, and 1112 through 1115 of the Public Health Service Act; and

(B) the amounts expended on such activities.

OPM IG ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of

H.R. 2860 which was received from the House and is now at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H. R. 2860) to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that the Inspector General of the Office of Personnel Management may use amounts in the revolving fund of the Office to fund audits, investigations, and oversight activities, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H. R. 2860) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

MEASURES DISCHARGED

PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF JOHN FAHEY AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF RISA LAVIZZO-MOUREY AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 28 and S.J. Res. 29, and the Senate proceed to their consideration en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the committee is discharged and the measures will be considered en bloc.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the joint resolutions be read a third time and passed en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The joint resolutions were ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, were read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 28

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of Roger W. Sant of the District of Columbia, on October 24, 2013, is filled by the appointment of John Fahey of the District of Columbia. The appointment is for a term of 6 years, beginning on the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

S.J. RES. 29

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of Patricia Q. Stonesifer of Washington, DC, on December 21, 2013, is filled by the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey of Pennsylvania. The appointment is for a term of 6 years, beginning on the later of December 22, 2013, or the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

DESIGNATING JANUARY 2014 AS "NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH"

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 31 which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) designating January 2014 as "National Blood Donor Month."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be

agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 31) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions."

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 2014

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., on Thursday, January 30, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1926, the flood insurance bill, under the previous order.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am advised to inform my colleagues that there will be up to four rollcall votes beginning at 11:15 a.m. tomorrow in order to complete action on the flood insurance bill. The vote on final passage of the bill will occur at approximately 2 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:24 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF GEORGE TOUART

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and dedicated service of Northwest Florida's George Touart who passed away on January 24, 2014, after a courageous battle with cancer. Throughout his long career in public service, George Touart mentored and inspired many individuals throughout Escambia County, Florida. The loss of a passionate and hardworking man is truly felt among the Northwest Florida community for which he cared so deeply.

George graduated Pensacola High School in 1966. At the University of Southern Mississippi, he earned his Bachelor of Arts in Community and Regional Planning and was an active member of the Kappa Alpha fraternity. He then received his Master's degree in Public Administration from Troy State University. Before returning home to Florida, George served as a city councilman in Pascagoula, Mississippi, a public information officer for the Mississippi State Highway Department, and as county administrator for two Mississippi counties.

In April 2002, the Escambia County Board of Commissioners appointed George as the Escambia County Administrator. He served in this capacity until December 2007 and then later served as the Interim County Administrator from December 2012 to January 2014. It was during George's role as County Administrator of Escambia County that his admirable dedication proved instrumental in helping the citizens of Northwest Florida recover from the devastating effects of Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Under George's unwavering and efficient leadership in working with both FEMA and the State of Florida, repairs were made to infrastructure, communication was restored, and grants were obtained, all contributing to the county's overall recovery. His hard work garnered national recognition for Escambia County by FEMA. Not only did George exhibit great strength in a time of adversity, but he also provided personal comfort and reassurance to many affected citizens of the community.

During his tenure in office, George also worked with the Pensacola Chamber of Commerce to bring several economic initiatives to Escambia County, such as Navy Federal Credit Union Expansion, Project Evergreen, and Project Pearl. He can also be credited for completing the Escambia County Jail transition under budget as well as negotiating the Interlocal Agreement between Escambia County and the City of Pensacola.

Resonating from within, George had a true sense of community and civic duty. Aside from

his leadership with the county, he was involved in a myriad of civic organizations throughout his life, including: Conquistadores, the Masonic Lodge and the Hadji Shrine, Five Flags Rotary, Irish Politician's Club, Moss Point Young Men's Business Club, Pensacola Chamber of Commerce, United Way of Escambia County, and Baptist Hospital Board of Directors. Additionally, George was a member of Perdido Bay United Methodist Church. In his spare time, he enjoyed golfing, fishing, and hunting. Those whose lives were touched by George mourn the loss of a devoted man with an unwavering commitment to service.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the life of George Touart. My wife Vicki joins me in extending our sincerest condolences and prayers to his wife, Barbara; sons, Matthew and Jacob; daughters, Christy and Amber; seven grandchildren, Meagan, Zackary, Brennan, Ivey, Jack, Mylah, and Carter; and parents, Clyde and Mary. He will truly be missed.

CONGRATULATING THE NEWMAN-COWETA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS 2013

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of the Coweta County Board of Commissioners and to congratulate the members for receiving the 2013 Prosperity Award. This award—presented by the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce—honors contributions the commissioners have made toward promoting prosperity in their community. Since 2007 this award has been presented in recognition of 30 different companies and organizations that have made a similar outstanding impact.

The Coweta County Commissioners have demonstrated a clear and enduring commitment to protecting small businesses and encouraging economic growth—most recently through their decision to eliminate impact fees on development in the county. These commissioners are critical to the economic growth in their area and have shown a great lasting commitment to promote the prosperity and betterment of their community. I am proud to have the opportunity to stand before you today to highlight the achievements of my fellow Georgians and to congratulate them on earning the 2013 Prosperity Award.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my thanks to the hard working people of the Coweta County Board for their leadership role in the community, and congratulate them on receiving the 2013 Prosperity Award.

HONORING AARON DARRAH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Aaron Darrah. Aaron is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 362, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Aaron has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Aaron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Aaron has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Aaron Darrah for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall Votes 24 and 25. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on both.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize National School Choice Week. Designated from January 27–31, 2014, National School Choice Week serves to raise public awareness of the importance of making educational opportunities available to all students.

No student should have a darker future or a limited educational horizon based upon the neighborhood they call home. Every student should have access to their own American dream, and the key to their dream is a quality education.

I have advocated for educational reform and expansion of educational opportunity to all throughout my years of service in the Florida State Legislature and in the U.S. Congress. I

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

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

have advanced initiatives that include home schooling, building a Florida online high school, creating magnet programs, establishing charter schools, and establishing scholarships that allow students from failing schools to attend high performing schools. I believe that good educational policy provides choices to families and local educators who understand the unique needs of their children and students. Through providing choice, educational quality increases, which will ensure that all students are able to excel in their academics and rise to meet their full potential.

I am pleased to recognize National School Choice Week.

HONORING JIM CACCIOTTOLO,
PRESIDENT OF THE CHIEF ENGINEERS
ASSOCIATION OF
CHICAGOLAND

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jim Cacciottolo, who was sworn in January 25 as the new President of the Chief Engineers Association of Chicagoland. Mr. Cacciottolo, a resident of Chicago's Bridgeport community, previously served on the organization's board of directors for the last 16 years.

Mr. Cacciottolo grew up in Chicago's Archer Heights and Garfield Ridge communities on the city's Southwest Side. He worked for the City of Chicago for 25 years before retiring in 2008. When he retired, Mr. Cacciottolo was the chief operating engineer for the Chicago Police Department, overseeing nearly 100 buildings and facilities for the Chicago Police Department, the Chicago Fire Department and other City of Chicago properties. He currently serves as a chief engineer in the private sector, helping to oversee the operations for the buildings that make up the University of Illinois Medical Center in Chicago.

Mr. Cacciottolo is the proud father of two grown children, Kristin and Anthony.

As president of the Chief Engineers Association of Chicagoland, Mr. Cacciottolo will lead a not-for-profit fraternal organization comprised of more than 800 men and women in leadership positions within the field of power engineering and real estate asset management. For over 90 years, the Chief Engineers Association of Chicagoland has brought educational services, information and camaraderie to its members through the publication of "The Chief Engineer" magazine, educational meetings and social gatherings throughout the Chicago area. The organization's motto: "Anything that can be done, can be done better."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Jim Cacciottolo, whose commitment to public service and dedication to his profession will serve him well in his new role as President of the Chief Engineers Association of Chicagoland. His expertise and knowledge as a chief engineer will be a tremendous benefit and resource for other chief engineers throughout Northeastern Illinois.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICE
OF UNITED STATES ARMY SER-
GEANT FIRST CLASS WILLIAM K.
LACEY

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Army Sergeant First Class William K. Lacey, or Kelly, as his family wants him to be remembered, who was killed in action on January 4, 2014 after a rocket propelled grenade attack by insurgents hit his unit in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. He leaves behind his mother, father, stepmother, two daughters, three step daughters and many friends.

Born at Eglin Air Force Base where his father, Master Sergeant John H. Lacey, was stationed, Kelly spent most of his childhood in Florida. He attended Niceville High School before joining the Army in 2003. While in the Army, he attended Meridian Community College and received an Associate Degree. Sergeant First Class Lacey was assigned to the F Company, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, based in Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Kelly was on his second deployment to Afghanistan, and he had already completed three previous deployments to Iraq: the first a 5 month deployment, the second a 14 month deployment and the other a year-long deployment. From April 2011 until March 2012, Kelly served in Afghanistan.

From his earliest time in the Army, Sergeant First Class Lacey was considered a great soldier. Over his career he earned more than a dozen honors including three Army Commendation Medals, four Army Achievement Medals, three Army Good Conduct Medals, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Star and two Iraq Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars. For his bravery in action, Sergeant First Class Lacey was awarded a Bronze Star with combat distinguishing device "V", two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart posthumously.

We remember Kelly and offer our deepest condolences and prayers to his family. Everyone in our great nation owes Sergeant First Class Lacey and his family a debt of gratitude for his selfless sacrifice and courage. It is vital that we keep our men and women in uniform who are in harm's way in our thoughts and prayers. I call on my colleagues and all Americans to remember Kelly and the many others who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending our freedoms and all that we value as a nation.

McKINNEY, "AMERICA'S CRAPE
MYRTLE CITY"

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Crape Myrtle

Trails of McKinney Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created to elevate and preserve the beauty and appeal of one of the fastest growing cities in North Texas, McKinney.

Established in 1998, the Crape Myrtle Trails of McKinney Foundation began with the vision of showcasing the premier flowering plant of the south, the crape myrtle, throughout our community in a deliberate and meaningful manner. After the foundation gained official 501(c)(3) status, the foundation in partnership with the City of McKinney established the World Collection Park to feature every variety of crape myrtle on seven acres of city parkland. The World Collection Park officially opened for enjoyment in 2011, and as of 2013, nearly 22,000 crape myrtles have been planted by the foundation, City of McKinney, and other partners.

Not only does the Crape Myrtle Trails of McKinney Foundation serve as an agent to enhance the aesthetics of the city, it has established programs, such as an annual Run the Trails of McKinney Fun Run and "McKinney Crape Myrtles and Me—Watch Us Grow!" an annual science and art contest for McKinney ISD elementary schools, to further involve the community in its city's development.

I commend the City of McKinney on their time, energy, and efforts in making McKinney a better place to live for my fellow Texans. Promoting a higher quality of life is something we simply can't put a price on. That's why I support the City of McKinney to officially register as "America's Crape Myrtle City" and press forward towards their goal of planting 50,000 crape myrtle trees throughout McKinney.

God Bless all your efforts and God Bless Texas. I salute you.

HONORING ALEXANDER R.V.
BATTLES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alexander R.V. Battles. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 360, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alex helped bring awareness to his local blood bank after receiving a blood transfusion himself that saved his life.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alexander R.V. Battles for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING GEORGE LES, THE OAK LAWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor George Les, a longtime restaurateur and community institution in Oak Lawn, Illinois. For the last 40 years, Mr. Les and his brother, Angelo, have run the famous Les Brothers restaurant at 87th Street and Ridgeland Avenue. On January 18, Mr. Les was recognized by the Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce as its "Business Person of the Year."

Mr. Les embodies the quintessential American success story. In 1968, when he was just 10 years old, he came to the United States with his family from Greece. He grew up in Chicago's Marquette Park community, landing his first restaurant job bussing tables at age 12. In 1974, he and Angelo went to work for their father, Bill, when he opened the original Les Brothers at the same Oak Lawn location the restaurant is at today.

Anne Marie Casey, past president of the Oak Lawn Chamber of Commerce, noted in her remarks before Mr. Les was awarded "Business Person of the Year" that Les Brothers is an "Oak Lawn institution" and "a place where George treats every customer that comes into his business like they are friends and family, even if they are first-time customers."

Through hard work and perseverance, Mr. Les has opened other Les Brothers restaurants in Hickory Hills, New Lenox and Homer Glen—all in Chicago's south suburbs.

Mr. Les and his family are active in all of the communities they serve, sponsoring and supporting many local causes and events. In Oak Lawn, he is particularly passionate about Westside Baseball, the league his sons Bill and Jim played in growing up.

THE RETIREMENT OF BISHOP RUDOLPH W. MCKISSICK, SR.

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bishop Rudolph W. McKissick, Sr., the Pastor of Bethel Baptist Institutional Church.

For over 50 years, Bishop McKissick has served the Bethel community as its pastor. But previous to that, he helped the community as a choral member, music director, and Deacon prior to being called to succeed Rev. Robert Wilson in 1966 as Bethel's tenth pastor.

Throughout his tenure, Bishop McKissick, Sr.'s exemplary teachings and spiritual guidance have inspired more than fifty servant leaders to accept God's calling to the ministry. Among them is his son Bishop Rudolph McKissick, Jr., Co-Pastor, Bethel Baptist Insti-

tutional Church. In addition, Bishop McKissick, Sr., demonstrating his commitment to meeting and supporting the ever-changing needs and growth of congregants, has established more than fifty ministries. A Christian Mission (The Help Center), marriage ministry, church basketball league, youth retreats, and missionary outreach program are among the initiatives long recognized for its innovation and excellence. Most notably and characteristic of the passion Bishop McKissick, Sr. and his wife of forty-nine years, Estelle Williams McKissick, share for education, is B.E.S.T. (Bethel Enhancing Students Totally) Academy, a program established in 1993 to support the academic needs of elementary and secondary students. Under their leadership, B.E.S.T. has become a valuable resource earning Bethel recognition as an approved summer school site for Duval County's most academically challenged students.

This high level of commitment to quality education is evident throughout Bishop McKissick, Sr.'s journey, as evidenced by his own educational achievements and affiliations. Bishop McKissick, Sr. holds a bachelors degree for Edward Waters College (EWC) and has received training at a number of other leading institutions including Tuskegee Institute, the Music Institute, the Music Institute of Columbia University, Princeton University and Luther Rice Seminary. He also has conferred doctoral degrees from EWC and Bethune Cookman University. He has held membership on a number of boards and commissions including appointment to the first Board of Trustees at the University of North Florida, the Jacksonville Urban League, the YMCA James Weldon Johnson branch, and The Help Center. Bishop McKissick, Sr. has launched partnerships across the globe with Bethel's adoption of churches in South Africa and Panama. He was chosen by Fresh Ministries to participate in a 1999 tour of South Africa, and a tour of Turkey, hosted last year by the Amity Turkish Cultural Center.

Recognized as a community stalwart, Bishop McKissick, Sr. has earned a host of awards and accomplishments. A few include recipient of the 1992 Humanitarian award presented by the National Conference for Christian and Jews; City of Jacksonville's Human Relations Award; National Association for Equal Opportunity Award; Bernard Gregory Servant Leader Award; and the Meritorious Leadership Award presented by Dr. Martin Luther King, Sr. In September 2011, was elevated to Bishop of Marriage and Family in the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship International.

A member of the NAACP and Omega Psi Phi fraternity, Bishop Rudolph McKissick, Sr. is married to Estelle Williams McKissick and they have one son, Bishop Rudolph McKissick, Jr. (Kimberly) and three grandchildren; Jocelyn, Janai and Joshua.

Bishop McKissick gave his final sermon as Senior Pastor of Bethel Baptist Institutional Church on Sunday January 5, 2014. He ended the sermon saying "there is no more powerful congregation than this congregation. For 175 years, God has blessed this church."

"Lord bless you and keep you . . ."

Thank you, Bishop McKissick. May the Lord Bless you and Keep you.

CONGRATULATING EDWARD M. MURPHY

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Edward M. Murphy as he steps down after a decade as Chief Executive Officer of The MENTOR Network—a national network of local health and human services providers based in Boston, Massachusetts—and assumes the role of Executive Chairman. Ned has dedicated his career to leading public and private sector organizations that provide quality-of-life enhancing services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, children at-risk and their families, and people with brain and spinal cord injuries—including our nation's wounded warriors. In particular, in response to the establishment of the Veteran's Health Administration Assisted Living Pilot program by this body, Ned's leadership was instrumental in The MENTOR Network's development of innovative programs to serve Veterans with brain injury in the communities of their choosing.

Ned began his career working with young offenders in community reintegration programs and was appointed commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services in 1979. This began a sixteen-year period during which he held senior positions in state government, including commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and executive director of the Health and Educational Facilities Authority. After a successful career in the public sector, Ned moved on to the non-profit and private sectors, where among his notable accomplishments, he founded Alliance Health, before joining The MENTOR Network as CEO in 2004.

Ned accomplished all this as he helped raise a wonderful family; Owen, Meghan, Brendon and Jay; grandchildren, Rosa, Oona, Nora and Marlo. Ned and his wife, Ann Ellen Hornidge, continued to make a positive difference in Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for Ned's contributions to enhancing the lives of our nation's most vulnerable citizens and thank him for his continued leadership on behalf of these individuals.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical issue, I was unable to be in Washington, DC for votes on Monday, January 27, 2014. I support H.R. 2166, the Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act, and H.R. 3008, which authorizes the Forest Service to exchange a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on both.

TRIBUTE TO KATHY SNYDER

HON. JON RUNYAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Speaker, I stand here today deeply saddened by the recent news of the passing of Kathy Snyder, a long-time teacher and coach at Southern Regional High School in Manahawkin, New Jersey. Kathy devoted her entire professional life to the students of Southern Regional, and was beloved by everyone throughout the community.

Kathy, a breast cancer survivor, began teaching physical education at Southern Regional in 1977 and coached both the girl's varsity basketball and field hockey teams. Before she passed away, Kathy was in the midst of her 35th season coaching the girl's basketball team, and had hit the 500-win milestone in 2010. On the field hockey field, Snyder won more than 300 games and was named The Press Coach of the Year in 2011.

Kathy was a resilient, competitive coach who fought for women's equality in sports, and it was she who helped pave the way for the thousands of female athletes who competed in the Shore Conference. Kathy's colleagues, students and athletes loved and respected her as a coach, role model, and friend.

Mrs. Snyder was a legend at Southern Regional High School and my thoughts and prayers go out to her family and friends. Kathy is survived by her husband Ken, three children—Brandon, Erin and Morgan, and granddaughter, Waverly. This is a devastating loss for the Southern Regional community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in remembering the amazing life and legacy of Mrs. Kathy Snyder.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, on January 28, 2014, I was incorrectly recorded as "not voting" on rollcall 30, final passage of H.R. 7—No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. I intended to vote "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 27, 2014, my flight was cancelled and I was absent for rollcall votes 24 and 25.

Had I been present for rollcall vote 24, on passage of H.R. 2166, I would have voted "yes" and had I been present for rollcall vote 25, on passage of H.R. 3008, I would have voted "yes."

RECOGNIZING THE 13TH ANNUAL NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the importance of recognizing January as National Mentoring Month. Since 2002, National Mentoring Month has served as an opportunity for our country to reflect on the benefits of youth mentoring and to highlight the positive impact it has on the development of our youth.

The theme of this year's mentoring month is "Mentoring Works"! It allows us to proudly and openly discuss mentoring as a vital academic and social development strategy for our youth.

The fact is that in many regions mentoring helps young people achieve academic success; it also serves to help young people make responsible decisions for their futures.

According to a recent report released by MENTOR: the National Mentoring Partnership, some of the benefits of mentoring include:

The creation of higher educational goals. It is more likely for a youth with a mentor to attend college than for a youth without a mentor.

Participation in productive and beneficial activities. It is more likely for youth with mentors to engage in leadership positions, extracurricular activities and sports, and community service than youth without mentors.

Another added benefit of mentoring is Upward Mobility. Integrated with other national initiatives, mentoring has the capacity to reduce poverty and increase the economic mobility of young people.

NATIONAL

Youth report that formal mentoring programs provide a variety of benefits, and most commonly offer that they receive advice about school, get help with school issues and/or schoolwork. They also make reference to receiving help to address life problems, assistance in getting a job, choosing a career and getting into college.

Youth in informal mentoring relationships commonly offer that their mentors provided developmental, more than academic, support.

Mentoring does not only provide immediate positive effects for young people in our community, but it also fosters growth and a continuation of this type of leadership.

Nearly nine in ten respondents who were mentored report they are interested in becoming mentors. In addition to confirming the value of mentoring, this desire to become a mentor also strengthens the earlier finding that mentoring is linked with higher rates of leadership and volunteering and offers a pool of future mentors to be activated.

HOUSTON

In Houston, the Boys and Girls Club is a wonderful medium for mentoring.

The club works on supporting youth to become life-long learners by emphasizing academic success and setting goals of higher education. By providing access to tools and technology, this organization also prepares our youth for the 21st century.

Career development through literacy and tutoring is stressed as well as cultural aware-

ness, creativity, the arts, and photography to ensure well-rounded knowledge.

This broad reaching mentoring program has yielded incredible measurable results:

Club members graduate from high school at a rate of 87 percent compared to the national average of 66 percent.

They finish college at a rate of 25 percent, exceeding the national average of 16 percent.

And they show an overall improvement of 12 percent in their grades at school.

Although we know that mentoring provides all these great benefits, 1 in 3 young people in the United States are still without a mentor. Therefore, in acknowledgement of these benefits, and in an effort to raise awareness and participation, I would like to commend all of the mentoring organizations that exist nationwide and especially those within the 18th district of Texas.

Therefore, I join the National Mentoring Month initiative to encourage local mentoring programs and organizations to plan activities in our communities that increase mentoring efforts.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No. 24 regarding the "Good Samaritan Search and Recovery Act" (H.R. 2166). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

RECOGNIZING MS. MYRON WEBB

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and unparalleled service of Ms. Myron Webb, a 28-year NASA veteran who devoted her time at the agency to Stennis Space Center, and was recently awarded the prestigious NASA Distinguished Service Medal.

The Distinguished Service Medal is a rare honor, recognizing individuals who have made a profound and indelible impact on NASA mission success. Ms. Webb joins such luminaries as Neil Armstrong, James Webb, and John Glenn.

Ms. Webb's profound commitment to Stennis, NASA, and her community are exemplified throughout her distinguished career and volunteer accomplishments. Among her incredible achievements, Ms. Webb is responsible for instituting viewing of the Space Shuttle Main Engine tests at Stennis, marketing and expanding Mississippi's Travel Attraction of the Year, the StennisSphere, and serving on the Board of Directors for both the Gulf Coast and Hancock County Chambers of Commerce.

The success of Stennis Space Center is inseparable from the leadership and service of Myron Webb. Her extraordinary contributions

to NASA and Mississippi deserve this highest recognition of the Distinguished Service Medal. Myron, on behalf of the United States Congress, I thank you for your remarkable contributions to our national space program.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STEVE PILIBOS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Steve Pilibos who lived a long and fulfilling life of 102 years. Steve was a pillar in the community, and his support, dedication, and commitment to the success of the Central Valley region will be greatly missed.

Steve grew up in Fresno, California and was the youngest of six children. His parents, Yeprem and Mary, were first generation immigrants from the Ottoman Empire. Growing up in an immigrant family with five siblings, Steve quickly developed fundamental values and principles. Most everyone would agree that Steve was an extremely courteous and fair businessman. He understood the importance of treating others with respect, compassion, and consideration.

From a young age, Steve recognized the significance of hard work. As an adolescent, Steve would sell produce to local businesses before school each day. Prior to Steve becoming a successful entrepreneur, he earned degrees in philosophy and poetry from Fresno State College, and he continued his education at the University of Southern California where he earned his law degree.

In the 1950s, Steve and his older brother, Alex, began what would soon become one of the largest cantaloupe operations in California. They experimented with new varieties of melon seeds from Syria, and ultimately produced a sweet melon with a thinner rind and smaller seed cavity that quickly became popular.

In addition to his contributions to the agriculture industry, Steve worked tirelessly to redevelop the City of Fresno's downtown. He opened the Hilton Hotel in the heart of downtown. Steve hosted many famous singers and bands, and it was a place where people wanted to be. Steve made many investments in downtown Fresno, but he also established developments throughout the entire city.

In 1949, Steve married the love of his life, Lucille. They raised five children: Sarah, Catherine, Barbara, Mary, and Alex. Steve valued spending time with his family and enjoyed reciting poetry to his children. He had a love for the outdoors and would spend his free time hunting or horseback riding. Steve's children, six grandchildren, relatives, and friends have an outstanding role model that they will hold in their hearts forever.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to honor the life of Steve Pilibos. His presence will be greatly missed, but his legacy will surely live on in the City of Fresno.

SUPPORT FOR THE CIRCASSIAN PEOPLE

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concerns regarding the Sochi Olympics. A number of issues have been raised regarding the misguided decision to host the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, from LGBT rights to the real threat of terrorism. However, I would like to discuss an issue which has not received the same level of attention: the historical mistreatment of the Circassian people by Russia.

The Circassians are an ethnic group originating in the North Caucasus region. Sochi is located in the historical nation of Circassia, which was conquered by the Russian Empire in a series of wars during the 18th and 19th centuries. In fact, Sochi served as the last capitol of Circassia.

Following their defeat in 1864, 90 percent of the Circassian population was forcibly deported or killed and Circassia was annexed by Russia. Hundreds of thousands of Circassians were exiled from their homeland, never to return.

Millions of Circassians are now spread around the world in diaspora communities, while only about 700,000 Circassians remain within their ancestral homeland, now a part of the Russian Federation.

Given this history, it is deeply disrespectful to the Circassian community for the Russian government to use Sochi as a stage to promote themselves to the world. Although I condemn the decision to hold the Olympics in Sochi, this year's Winter Olympics present the opportunity to raise the world's awareness of the historical injustices perpetrated by Russia against the Circassian people and homeland.

Today, Circassians worldwide strive to achieve the right of return to their homeland, and seek to gain self-determination and a revival of their language and culture. I am proud to represent a large and active Circassian-American community within New Jersey's Ninth Congressional District.

Colleagues, I urge you to join me in condemning the Sochi Olympics and celebrating the contributions of the Circassian people to the United States of America.

IN HONOR OF THE STUDENT LEADERS' VON NIEDA PART TASK FORCE

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Student Leaders' Von Nieda Park Task Force for their efforts in continuing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy by coordinating their 5th annual MLK Day of Community Organizing.

These South Jersey students choose to celebrate the life of Dr. King not simply through

remembrance, but by following in his footsteps. These leaders honor the memory of Dr King engaging their fellow youth in community organizing. Thanks to their hard work, the Student Leaders' Von Nieda Park Task Force has transformed Von Nieda Park into a cleaner, safer, more beautiful park through community organizing, and regular meetings with public officials.

For this reason, it is my honor to submit the names of the student leaders to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD: Jenaya Aide, Jessica Aldana, Alejandro Bernal, Eloisa Colon, Karelys Cruz-Bermudez, Samantha Fontanez, Elinio Javier, Sergio Martinez, Ashley Melendez, Janeliz Muniz, Jose Reyes, Rodrigo Reyes, Alex Rosario, Dean Rosario, Lea Rosario, Ziani Sanchez, and Itzel Tapia.

Mr. Speaker, these students exemplify the commitment to community and justice championed by Dr. King. I join all of South Jersey in honoring their dedication to the memory of one of our country's greatest leaders.

RULE GOVERNING DEBATE ON H.R. 3547 "OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR FY 2014"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 3547, the bipartisan "Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2014."

I want to thank Chairman RODGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY for their constructive work in fashioning this bipartisan and bicameral legislation to fund the government for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2014.

The bill before us is not perfect—far from it—but it is a modest and positive step toward preventing Republicans from shutting down the government again and manufacturing crises that only harm our economy, destroy jobs, and weaken our middle class.

As with any compromise there are some things in the agreement that I support and some things that I do not.

The bill abides by all the terms set by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (the "Ryan-Murray Agreement"), providing a total of \$1.012 trillion for the operation of the federal government, a substantial and necessary increase over the inadequate \$968 billion spending limit contained in the House budget resolution which led to the shutdown of the federal government last October.

The bill contains all 12 regular appropriations bills for fiscal year 2014, with no area of the government functioning under a Continuing Resolution, thus allowing every program to be considered on its own merits and prioritized, rather than be subject to arbitrary across the board cuts.

The bill also provides increased funding for several programs that I strongly support. Let me list just a few of the more important ones.

Agriculture and Related Agencies: \$6.7 billion for Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), sufficient to meet expected need in 2014.

Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies:

\$17.65 billion for NASA, which is \$154.8 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$376 million for Byrne-JAG grants, which is \$8.3 million less than the 2013 enacted level and \$11 million more than the post-sequester level.

\$214 million for the COPS program, which is \$4 million less than the 2013 enacted level and \$4 million more than the post-sequester level.

\$417 million for Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs, which is \$9.1 more than the 2013 enacted level.

The bill rejects House proposals to prohibit the Department of Justice from using funds to challenge state immigration laws; and prohibit grants from being awarded to "sanctuary" cities.

Defense:

Multiple provisions focused on eliminating sexual assault in the Department of Defense and supporting victims, including: (1) Fully funds request of \$156.5 million for Sexual Assault and Prevention Office (SAPRO) services; (2) \$25 million above request to implement a Sexual Assault Special Victims Program; (3) Prohibition on obligation of funds contravening more severe penalties for perpetrators established in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Fully funds Peer Reviewed Medical Research Programs and includes \$125 million above the request for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Psychological Health research and \$4 million above the request for alcohol and substance abuse research.

The final agreement repeals last year's cut to cost of living adjustments for disabled military retirees and survivors.

Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies:

\$1.912 billion for Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy, which is \$102 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$5.467 billion for the Army Corps of Engineers, which is \$495 million more than the 2013 enacted level (excluding emergency funding for Hurricane Sandy relief).

\$1.11 billion for water resources projects within the Department of Interior, which is \$46 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

The agreement eliminates the majority of riders proposed in the House bill, including those related to Waters of the United States, guns on Corps lands, Clean Water Act agriculture exemptions and ceiling fan standards.

Financial Services and General Government:

\$673.3 million for the District of Columbia, which is roughly equal to the 2013 enacted level.

Homeland Security:

\$10.6 billion for Customs and Border Protection, \$220.4 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$4.93 billion for the Transportation Security Administration, which is \$225.8 million less than the 2013 enacted level.

\$923.8 million for Cybersecurity and Communications, an increase of \$27.5 million above the 2013 enacted level.

\$4.35 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, \$3.8 million above the 2013 enacted level.

\$1.5 billion for State and Local Grants, an increase of \$35.4 million above the 2013 enacted level; and

\$680 million for Firefighter Grants, an increase of \$5.7 million above the 2013 enacted level.

Controversial House riders related to abortion services and immigration enforcement are not included in the bill.

Among the contentious riders dropped was a provision to prohibit ICE from adhering to enforcement guidance, including a June 15, 2012, memo prioritizing enforcement actions against dangerous criminals ahead of DREAM Act children.

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies:

\$3.938 billion for wildland fire, which is \$417 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$4.4 billion for the Indian Health Service, which is \$78 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

A total of \$2.35 billion for the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Funds, which is only \$4.7 million less than 2013 enacted levels but \$119 million more than the post-sequester level.

\$2.6 billion for the National Park Service, which is \$29 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$146 million each for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, which is equal to their 2013 enacted levels.

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies:

\$8.6 billion for Head Start, which is \$612 million more than the 2013 enacted level, sufficient to both fully restore the cuts to Head Start and to invest in the Administration's Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.

\$2.6 billion for job training through WIA Training and Employment Formula Grant program, which is \$10 million less than the 2013 enacted level but \$121 million more than the post-sequester level.

\$815 million for Seniors' Nutrition programs, which is equal to the 2013 enacted level and \$46 million more than the post-sequester level, allowing full restoration of meals.

\$2.36 billion for Child Care & Development Block Grants, which is \$36 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

The agreement abandons the futile but wasteful effort by House Republicans to repeal the Affordable Care Act and provides the Department of HHS roughly the same amount as it had last year for implementation of the Affordable Care Act, and some additional funds will become available through existing fees on policies sold on the exchanges.

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies:

\$63.2 billion in discretionary funding for Veterans Affairs, which is \$2.3 billion more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$585.6 million for prosthetic research, which is \$3.5 million above the 2013 enacted level.

The Omnibus provides new tools and resources to address the backlog of veterans disability claims by increasing personnel, enhancing training and quality oversight, and strengthening accountability.

State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies:

The final agreement does not include a policy rider codifying the 'Global Gag Rule,' which prohibits non-governmental organizations (NGOs) receiving federal funds from providing women information about certain health services.

I would have preferred that the bill provide more than \$2.67 billion for Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance, an amount that is \$224 million less than the 2013 enacted level. Our diplomats who risk their lives serving in dangerous outposts around the world deserve all the resources required to keep them safe.

Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies:

\$600 million for National Infrastructure Investments (TIGER), which is \$100 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$17.4 billion for Section 8 Tenant Based Rental Assistance renewals, which is \$123 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$9.6 billion for Section 8 Project Based Rental Assistance renewals, which is \$596 million more than the 2013 enacted level.

\$1 billion for HOME Investment Partnerships, which is equal to the 2013 enacted level.

The bill does not include any funds for high-speed rail. I believe this decision is short-sighted and shortchanges our nation's future. Highspeed rail will save energy, create jobs, and increase our nation's global competitiveness.

As I stated, this bill is not perfect. But on balance it is a significant improvement over the spending bills considered in the House last year and is worthy of our support.

SUPPORTING THE DEMOCRATIC
ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE
OF UKRAINE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the people of Kyiv and so many cities and towns throughout Ukraine are right now struggling, praying, and risking—some of them really risking their lives on the Maidan for justice and human dignity.

The government's violent crackdown has led to the deaths of at least four protestors, and countless beatings, arrests, detentions, kidnappings or harassment of activists, journalists, medics and lawyers.

I want to join many of my colleagues in calling on the Ukrainian government to stop, now, these attacks on human life and the basic human rights of free expression, assembly and association—and immediately to release those detained for peaceful actions and account for missing persons.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we should urge Ukrainians to find a peaceful, political settlement of the crisis through meaningful negotiations between the government and the opposition in order to get Ukraine back on the road to democracy. As to association with Europe, it is not our government's place to say what the Ukrainian government or people should do

either way on this point, above all since we don't know what arrangements are on offer. But we do stand up for the right of the Ukrainian people to determine this according to their own constitution and laws, free from coercive pressures by any foreign government.

While the current Ukrainian government has committed grave injustices in the course of this crisis, I am encouraged by signs that it is taking steps to resolve the crisis, including the revocation of the onerous January 16 anti-protest laws and the resignation of the government.

The people of Ukraine have endured tremendous suffering over the course of the last century including two world wars and 70 years of Soviet brutality, most starkly illustrated by Stalin's genocidal famine which resulted in the deaths of millions. With independence came new-found freedoms, but these have been challenged by corruption of grotesque proportions. The long-suffering Ukrainian people deserve better—they deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

Given the heroic strength and character and democratic maturity the Ukrainian people are showing in this crisis, I am confident that they will not be denied a more democratic future.

HONORING NANCY HEIMBAUGH

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the outstanding contributions made by Ms. Nancy Heimbaugh, who will retire from the Defense Logistics Agency in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, on February 3, 2014.

Ms. Heimbaugh's distinguished government career spans 37 years, and her record of achievement during this period reflects greatly upon herself and upon the organizations at which she has served, including her most recent role as DLA's Senior Procurement Executive/Component Acquisition Executive (SPE/CAE). Her contributions to the national defense were significant and she will be missed as she moves on to new and exciting opportunities.

Ms. Heimbaugh, originally from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, entered the Federal service working for the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, in 1976. There, she held a series of positions in purchasing and supply. In 1984 she became a contracting officer for the Naval Supply Center in Charleston, South Carolina. Ms. Heimbaugh attended Strayer University, and the National Defense University, Industrial College of the Armed Services, and is the recipient of special achievement and performance awards, including the Exceptional Civilian Service Award in 2012, Meritorious Civilian Service Award in 2007 and Vice President Gore's National Performance Review's Heroes of Reinvention Hammer Award for Electronic Commerce in 1996. In 1999, she was selected into the Defense Leadership and Management Program, a program designed to provide a Department of Defense framework for developing future civilian leaders.

In 1991, Ms. Heimbaugh joined the Naval Supply Systems Command Headquarters as a senior procurement analyst providing contracting expertise and guidance to field contracting activities. Ms. Heimbaugh joined the Defense Logistics Agency in 2001 as a senior procurement analyst.

Ms. Heimbaugh reached a career benchmark in 2007 with her selection into the Senior Executive Service as Director of Contracting and Acquisition Management at Defense Supply Center in Philadelphia; the first PLFA-level Acquisition Executive appointed in the Agency. She was responsible for managing an acquisition workforce generating \$14 billion in awards across four supply chains. Ms. Heimbaugh then served as the Director of Contracting and Acquisition Management in 2009. Her leadership was epitomized by the Defense Logistics Agency's performance during Hurricane Sandy, when she personally cut through the red tape in the contracting process to ensure needed supplies and services were delivered to our fellow citizens in New Jersey and New Jersey in record time.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Nancy Heimbaugh's contributions to the Defense Logistics Agency and the American people, and I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating her on her retirement from civil service. She epitomizes the dedication and professionalism that make our Federal civil service a model all over the world.

CONGRATULATING DR. STEPHEN
KLEINSMITH AND ZAC RANTZ

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Stephen Kleinsmith, superintendent, and Zac Rantz, director of communication, of Nixa Public Schools, on receiving the 2014 Leadership Through Communication Award.

It is important to keep the channels of communication open and the Leadership Through Communication Award recognizes a school district for their outstanding efforts in communicating with the families and communities they serve. It is jointly awarded by Blackboard, the National School Public Relations Association, and the American Association of School Administrators. This award is open to all school districts throughout the United States and Canada.

The Nixa Public Schools have engaged with their community to create a two-way street of communication. They have created a constant cycle of school administration transparency and community feedback.

When he joined the school district in 2000, Dr. Stephen Kleinsmith made communications a top priority. He has worked closely with Zac Rantz in revamping the Nixa Public Schools' communication systems. They have utilized social media, technology, direct messaging, and face-to-face interaction to engage with the Nixa community. They not only reach out to the parents of their students, but the local business community and taxpayers without

children in the schools as well. The Nixa Public Schools have served as an example to school districts all throughout the State of Missouri.

I am proud of the initiative that Dr. Kleinsmith and Mr. Rantz have taken to make the Nixa Public Schools the best in communicating with their community. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating them on this tremendous honor.

COMMENDING ASSEMBLY MEMBER
JUNG CHEONG RAE AND KOREAN
AMERICAN CIVIC EMPOWERMENT
(KACE) FOR LEADING EFFORTS
IN WASHINGTON, DC, TO OPPOSE
ONLINE WHITE HOUSE PETITION
CALLING FOR REMOVAL OF COM-
FORT WOMAN STATUE IN CALI-
FORNIA

HON. ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Assembly Member Jung Cheong Rae of the Republic of Korea for the outstanding work he is doing in cooperation with Mr. Kim Dong-suk, founder of Korean American Civic Empowerment, KACE, to spearhead efforts in Washington, DC, to oppose the online White House petition calling for removal of the "Comfort Woman" statue in Glendale, CA, which was submitted on the White House's open petitioning website, "We the People."

The petition includes the following text: "Please remove the statue in a public park in Glendale, California. It is a statue of a Comfort Woman masquerading as a peace statue while in essence after reading the inscription it is promoting hate towards the people and nation of Japan." The petition was signed by 125,261 people and it is estimated that most of the signees are Japanese nationals who do not reside in the United States.

This absurd petition shows why the House of Representatives had to unanimously pass the "Comfort Woman" Resolution of 2007 (H. Res. 121), which urges Japan to formally acknowledge and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces' coercion of as many as 200,000 young women into sexual slavery during World War II, to clearly and publicly refute any claims that the sexual enslavement and trafficking of the Comfort Woman never occurred, and to educate current and future generations about this horrible crime.

Once the U.S. House of Representatives had spoken on the issue, it was hoped that this issue could be put behind us so that we could work with our Pacific allies to face the challenges of a rising China and a nuclear North Korea. However, Japan totally disregarded what we have recommended and is trying to whitewash its war crimes.

The movement to deny the painful realities of World War II history in the Pacific represent not only a lack of progress but are, in fact, moves toward regression away from that limited level of reconciliation that has already been achieved.

Today, over 120,000 Japanese people are totally unaware, if not ignorant, of the atrocities that were perpetrated by Japan during World War II. This number will grow every day if Japan keeps disregarding H. Res. 121, the Comfort Woman Resolution.

I strongly urge the Government of Japan to formally acknowledge and apologize in order to begin the reconciliation process and to create better relationships in the future. Japan cannot move forward by erasing the past and it is of the utmost importance that Japan follows through on H. Res. 121.

A formal apology from Japan as called for in H. Res. 121 is the answer to the White House online petition. And so, once more, I commend Assembly Member Jung Cheong Rae, who is a personal friend of mine, for taking the time to be in Washington, DC, this week and for calling upon Members of Congress and others to also exercise their first amendment rights by speaking out against the White House online petition.

It is my sincere hope that President Obama will respond soon, and make clear that he supports justice for the more than 200,000 women from Korea, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, and other countries from the Pacific who were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army during WW II.

On a personal note, I offer my deepest love and appreciation for these women, though many of them have already passed from this life. What was done to them is unconscionable, and I will stand in support of them forevermore.

I bear no animosity or ill-will towards the people of Japan and I must emphasize that our economic, strategic, and military alliance with Japan is important. However, regarding this issue, there can be no reconciliation without proper acknowledgement. The recognition of this dark chapter of Japan's history of the atrocities and sexual slavery operations authorized and implemented by the Japanese Imperial Army before and during World War II cannot be denied, and the White House must not be complicit by remaining silent.

AZERBAIJAN—BLACK JANUARY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, every four years, on January 20th, all Americans celebrate the inauguration of a new President. It is a time of hope and a quadrennial reminder of the enduring nature of our democracy and the peaceful transition of power from one administration to the next.

January is also a time for celebration and commemoration for a friend and ally, the Republic of Azerbaijan. This January marks the 24th anniversary of the events that marked the beginning of the end of Soviet rule over Azerbaijan, an occupation that existed for much of the 20th Century.

This time period is referred to in Azerbaijan as "Black January," when violent conflict erupted in Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku on January 19–20, 1990 Soviet troops killed over

100 nationalist demonstrators and wounded another 700 Azeri citizens. When Soviet troops fired on innocent civilians, including old people and children, demanding freedom, it became a defining moment in recent Azeri history.

Azerbaijan eventually declared its independence from the U.S.S.R. on October 18, 1991. In the report, "Black January in Azerbaijan," Human Rights Watch put the events into a larger perspective: "the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19–20 was . . . an exercise in collective punishment . . . intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other Republics of the Soviet Union."

I ask the House of Representatives to join me in commemorating—with our friend and ally, Azerbaijan—the events of Black January in 1990, events which began in tragedy but culminated in the birth of an independent nation and ally of the United States. May God bless this nation as it continues to move forward.

RECOGNIZING TARYN WILCOX

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Taryn Wilcox of Robbinsville, New Jersey for her tireless advocacy on behalf of those suffering from diabetes.

As you will read in her statement submitted for the RECORD, fourteen-year-old Taryn was diagnosed with Type I diabetes at the age of five. Serving as the American Diabetes Association's Teen Ambassador and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's Advocate, Taryn has chosen to make a meaningful difference by raising awareness of diabetes and joining the fight to find a cure.

I had the opportunity to meet with Taryn in my office and hear first-hand her testimony—and could not have been more impressed with her passion and focus. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 26 million Americans—roughly 8.3% of the population—suffer from diabetes. Diabetes is a leading cause of heart disease and stroke, hypertension, blindness and eye problems, kidney disease, nervous system damage, and amputations, among other ailments. I've worked with diabetes advocates in the past on such things as legislation I authored to extend Medicare coverage for therapeutic shoes for elderly diabetics. This commonsense solution has helped countless numbers of senior diabetics over the last twenty years.

Many young Americans—an estimated 215,000 under the age of twenty, like Taryn—are suffering from diabetes. The relative rarity at this age bracket only leads to common misconceptions about those affected by juvenile diabetes. As Taryn states, she cannot simply take a break from diabetes—it is constant. She must monitor her disease twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, both checking her blood glucose and giving herself insulin injections up to twelve times a day.

Taryn writes about teachers and swim coaches who became frustrated with her need to monitor and manage her blood sugar and publicly questioned her ability to compete. But Taryn has refused to quit, using these all-too-common incidents as motivation to succeed and accomplish her goals. She has achieved straight A's and has become one of the best swimmers in the State. Through her accomplishments, Taryn has shown that while diabetes is a daily struggle, increased awareness can assist those suffering from diabetes—providing them with positive support and enabling them to achieve their goals.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Taryn Wilcox of Robbinsville, New Jersey for her personal testimony and leadership in the fight against diabetes, and encourage all of you to read her testimony. Her efforts and her passion are an inspiration to us all.

CONGRESSMAN SMITH, I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to you about how diabetes affects me and the importance of finding a cure.

I am 14 years old and was diagnosed with Type I Diabetes at the age of 5. I was hospitalized, during my diagnosis, two months prior to entering kindergarten. I have had diabetes for as long as I can remember . . . for most of my life.

To be honest, it has been challenging managing my diabetes, a disease requiring 24/7 monitoring! I count carbohydrates in everything I eat, check my blood glucose up to 12 times a day as well as give myself up to 12 insulin injections a day. My parents check my blood glucose 2–3 times every night while I sleep! I've had over 68,000 needle sticks since my diagnosis. If I stacked all the needles I've used, it would reach the top of the Washington Monument 26 times!!!!

Although I try to stay positive, I'm fearful of the many complications and challenges which can result from diabetes such as blindness, amputations, cardiovascular disease, kidney failure and the arduous task of maintaining my blood sugar in a normal range. Sometimes my blood sugar will drop too low or go too high and I feel HORRIBLE. My legs shake . . . I can't think well . . . my heart beats rapidly and sometimes my vision is blurred. There are times I have to sit out during fun activities or miss class time and sit in the nurse's office. It can be a very lonely feeling. Once, soon after my diagnosis, I had a seizure while visiting my grandmother in Arizona. It was an extremely scary experience. It's frustrating not being able to have any time away or vacation from diabetes, it always comes with me.

Managing my diabetes isn't the only challenge I've had to face since my diagnosis. In 6th grade I asked my teacher to go to the nurse's office to give myself an insulin injection to lower my high blood glucose. She clearly wasn't happy about me missing class time and said loudly in front of my class. . . . "You make diabetes convenient don't you!" Trust me there's nothing convenient about having diabetes.

Years ago while in 2nd grade, I had to change schools because my teacher started treating me differently from my peers. No matter HOW much information was given to her about the disease, she became frustrated with me whenever I needed to manage my diabetes in her classroom. She couldn't understand why I had to check my blood sugar several times during school hours, leave class to go to the nurse's office when my blood sugar was too high or low and told me

how unfair it was to drink juice in front of my peers. Looking back, I don't understand why she didn't think how unfair it was for a 7 year old kid to live with diabetes.

A similar challenge arose in when one of my competitive swim team coaches thought it was RIDICULOUS I had to stop swimming laps during swim practice to manage my blood sugar. One day she crouched down and looked me in the eye in front of my team mates and said, "If you can't manage to swim continuously during the 1 1/2 hours of practice, you will NEVER make a state swim team!"

The good news is . . . I became a straight "A" student at my new school and I placed 5th and 14th in State with my new swim team! It's a frustrating feeling knowing I have to work TWICE as hard as everybody else to achieve my goals because of trying to balance my diabetes with everyday life. It makes it even harder when some people around me don't have the patience to try to understand my disease. I can't take a "break" from diabetes—it's constant.

Although, I face many challenges every day, living with diabetes, I stay positive by spreading awareness and above all, supporting the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the American Diabetes Association and other organizations in their mission to finding a cure and promoting advocacy. There are over 26 million people in the U.S. who have diabetes so it is important for Congress to fund diabetes research at the highest level as possible. Hopefully, by working together Congressman Smith, we can make a difference in the lives of people living with diabetes to live a happy and healthier life and one day soon, be cured.

TARYN WILCOX.

TRIBUTE TO PETE SEEGER, LEG-
ENDARY FOLK SINGER AND
CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad duty to announce to the House that America has lost one of its greatest voices championing the cause of civil rights, social and economic justice, and peace. Pete Seeger, the legendary folk singer and prolific songwriter, who helped popularize the beloved "We Shall Overcome" as the anthem of the Civil Rights Movement, died yesterday in New York City. He was 94 years old.

For more than 60 years, Pete Seeger's was a powerful voice, unafraid of speaking out against what was wrong with our country, while always promoting that people stand up and speak just as fervently for things that are right.

Pete Seeger had a vision of America's potential and that idea flowed through his music to impact so many people in the United States and around the world.

Pete Seeger's humility kept us rooted as a people by reminding us of our common humanity while his songs challenged us to realize the full promise of country. The author of such iconic songs as "If I Had A Hammer," "Turn, Turn, Turn," and "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?," Pete Seeger touched chords deep in the American heart and inspired many

of the great songwriters of succeeding generations, including Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen.

Mr. Seeger sang about the labor movements of the 1940s and 1950s, confronted with his music the Vietnam War, civil rights and the environment. From roots residing in spirituals, songs like "We Shall Overcome," spoke to activists in the civil rights movements and became a rallying cry for their efforts.

Pete Seeger was elected to the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1972, and in 1993 received a lifetime achievement Grammy Award. In 1994 he received a Kennedy Center Honor and, from President Bill Clinton, the National Medal of Arts, America's highest arts honor, awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1996. At the age of 89, Mr. Seeger won a Grammy Award in the children's music category in 2011 for "Tomorrow's Children," and another in 1997, for the traditional folk album "Pete."

With Pete Seeger's passing, the nation has lost a great champion for jobs and justice for working people. It is up to us, the living, to carry on the struggle for the causes to which Peter Seeger devoted his life.

I ask a moment of silence in honor of Pete Seeger.

RECOGNIZING VALLEY CRIME
STOPPERS FOR THEIR 20TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Valley Crime Stoppers as they celebrate their 20th anniversary. The tremendous efforts they have made to help crime victims in our Central Valley deserve to be commended.

Valley Crime Stoppers has built strong relationships with the city of Fresno, local media, and law enforcement. Citizens are encouraged to call the police or Valley Crime Stoppers if they have any information concerning a crime they witnessed. Victims and bystanders have a safe place to turn in Valley Crime Stoppers because it is an anonymous tip line. It is an unfortunate truth that victims are often fearful to share information with law enforcement because they have been threatened by their offender. Valley Crime Stoppers provides victims with an alternative, so they can tell their story without fear of retribution.

Educating and bringing awareness to residents are important missions of Valley Crime Stoppers. They have put together several campaigns that aim to lower crime in the Central Valley, including a television promotion that brings awareness to the very negative consequences of children being exposed to domestic violence. In addition, Valley Crime Stoppers has a poster campaign that aims to keep neighborhoods safe by getting guns out of the hands of criminals. Residents have been given the tools to act as change agents to keep the entire San Joaquin Valley safe.

As Co-Chairman of the Victims' Rights Caucus, it is my honor to recognize the good work

of Valley Crime Stoppers and to thank the board members and staff at Valley Crime Stoppers for their support and activism.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Valley Crime Stoppers as they celebrate their 20th anniversary. Valley Crime Stoppers has truly made a difference in our Valley, and it will continue to do so for many decades to come.

H.R. 7

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, due to a medical issue, I was unable to be in Washington, DC for votes on Tuesday, January 28, 2014. I strongly oppose H.R. 7 and had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "no."

H.R. 7 is a thinly veiled attempt to insert politics into the doctor's office and private market, and to continue the GOP assault on women. It would effectively ban abortion coverage in new plans available under the Affordable Care Act, even for women purchasing plans in the state-based marketplaces who use their own, private funds to pay for their insurance. This bill would also place an undue burden on small businesses, which would have to carefully examine every health care plan they offer to find out if it covers abortion services, and imposes a tax penalty on small businesses who choose such private plans.

Finally, H.R. 7 would permanently block abortion coverage for low-income women, civil servants, DC residents, and military women by codifying anti-choice provisions throughout federal law.

Not only are these alarming policy goals, but I would note that they contradict the Republican view of government by importing government intervention directly into the doctor-patient relationship. It's bad for women, bad for families, and bad for business.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, January 30, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 3

3 p.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance

To hold hearings to examine safeguarding consumers' financial data.

SD-538

FEBRUARY 4

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, and Janice Marion Schneider, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Mineral Management, both of the Department of the Interior.

SD-366

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife

To hold hearings to examine the safety and security of drinking water supplies following the Central West Virginia drinking water crisis.

SD-406

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine negotiations on Iran's nuclear program.

SD-419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight

To hold hearings to examine fraud and abuse in army recruiting contracts.

SD-342

10:15 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine privacy in the digital age, focusing on preventing data breaches and combating cybercrime.

SD-226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine moving from constant crises to broad-based growth, focusing on the 2014 outlook.

SD-608

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Vivek Hallegere Murthy, of Massachusetts, to be Medical Director in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service, and to be Surgeon General of the Public Health Service.

SD-430

12 noon

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider S. Res. 333, strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq, S. Res. 270, supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio, and the nominations of Rose Ellene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, Frank A. Rose, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary (Verification and Compliance), Puneet Talwar, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Political-Military Affairs), Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland, George James Tsunis, of New York, to be Ambassador

to the Kingdom of Norway, Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador to Hungary, and Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the UN Human Rights Council, all of the Department of State.

S-116

3 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Bathsheba Nell Crocker, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, Michael Anderson Lawson, of California, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization, and Robert A. Wood, of New York, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, all of the Department of State.

SD-419

FEBRUARY 12

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight to examine the report of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board on Reforms to the Section 215 telephone records program and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

SD-226

Special Committee on Aging

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold a joint hearing to examine the challenges and advantages of senior entrepreneurship.

SD-562

SENATE—Thursday, January 30, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, we don't know all that this day holds, but we know that You hold this day in Your sovereign hands. Lord, we praise You, that even though we only have a feeble hold on You, You have a mighty grasp on us.

Guide our lawmakers across their toiling hours, illuminating their moments with the light of Your wisdom. Lord, empower them to live with integrity and wisdom amid the corruption that seeks to keep them from glorifying You. May they be unafraid to contend steadfastly for truth, as You give them the ability to see it. Use their labors to hasten the day when justice and understanding will encompass our world.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2014.

To the Senate:

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

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

PROPOSED IRS REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this week President Obama explained to the American people what he hopes to accomplish in the year ahead, and I think it is safe to say that despite the hype, there was not a whole lot in this year's State of the Union that would do much to alleviate the concerns and anxieties of most Americans. There was not anything in there that would really address the kind of dramatic wage stagnation we have seen over the past several years among the middle class or the increasingly difficult situation people find themselves in trying to find stable, good-paying jobs. There was no creative proposal for increasing mobility or opportunity for folks who need it most.

Even more remarkable, the President completely ignored the serious hardship that folks in Kentucky and just about everywhere else in the country are dealing with right now as a result of his health care law. He just blew right past it like it was not even happening.

There are serious issues that demand a serious response, and if for some reason the President doesn't want to face up to them or offer meaningful solutions, Republicans certainly will. We have a lot of creative ideas on our side that speak to the day-to-day concerns of middle-class Americans. In the months ahead we will keep talking about them. In fact, just this morning the House Republican leadership reached out to the President in an effort to solicit his help in encouraging the Democratic leadership in the Senate to take up House-passed bills that do the types of things the President said the other night he supports. Maybe that would be a good use of the President's phone and his pen.

This morning I would like to take a moment to address something else the President did not address on Tuesday but that his administration is already quietly planning to do in the months ahead. I am referring to the administration's radical new proposal to codify the same kind of targeting of grassroots groups that an independent in-

spector general determined that the IRS engaged in in the run up to the 2012 election. I realize it just doesn't seem possible to a lot of people that the Obama administration would even think of touching an issue this radioactive after last year's scandal, but those who think that underestimate the extent to which this administration and its allies are willing to go to keep those who disagree with them from speaking out or participating in the political process. They underestimate the extent to which they are willing to go to hold onto power, and they forget how speech is usually stifled.

James Madison once wrote:

I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments by those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.

That was James Madison, and that is what is going on. The fact is that right now the Obama administration is getting ready to codify the same kind of intimidation and harassment of its political opponents that stunned the Nation last year, and hardly anybody is talking about it—certainly not the President on Tuesday night. It is time we start talking about it because what the administration is planning is nothing less than declaring a war, not just on its opponents but on free speech itself.

Here is their plan. The administration proposes to redefine political activity so broadly that grassroots groups all across the country that exist for the sole purpose of speaking out on issues of liberty or limited government or free enterprise or anything else that the administration doesn't want to hear about will be forced to literally shut down. Just by speaking out on these issues of broad public concern, they would be ruled out of bounds under new IRS rules—just in time, by the way, for the midterm elections.

If you think this kind of speech is precisely what the First Amendment was written to protect, you would be entirely right. This is exactly what the First Amendment was about. So this is a hugely important issue, and that is why groups all across the political spectrum and the folks who support them are increasingly concerned.

As usual, the folks who are pushing this new assault on speech tell us that it is some kind of good-government proposal that increases transparency, but the truth is that the only transparency here is the administration's thuggish attempt to shut down its critics. It is really incredible, when you think about it. Democrats think that

2014 is shaping up to be a tough year for them politically. So instead of trying to persuade the public that they have the best answers to the problems we face, they try to shut everything else out of the political process. They try to shut them up, and they have no problem using the powers of the government itself to do it—less than a year after presiding over one of the biggest abuses of government power in the modern memory. The arrogance here is literally breathtaking.

But we have seen this kind of thing again and again from our liberal friends over the years. They just cannot accept a public that disagrees with their plans for the country. They just cannot seem to accept a society in which “we, the people,” establish the rules—not them. Whether it is the fairness doctrine or the DISCLOSE Act, they want those who disagree with them to sit down and shut up. Their view is you can fight for your ideals, you can speak out, but only if you agree with me. If you are on the other side, you don’t have a right to speak out; not only that, but I am going to put you out of business. I am going to use the IRS—for goodness sake, the IRS—to identify anybody who disagrees with me and shut them up. I am doing it through regulation because I cannot pass it through legislation.

This is just one way the President plans to go around the people’s elected representatives this year and every American needs to know about this abuse of power. Let me be clear. What the administration is proposing poses a grave threat to the ability of ordinary Americans to freely participate in the democratic process. Rather than reform the IRS and root out any hint of corruption or targeting of political opponents, they are now proposing to codify it. Fearful of losing the Senate, they have decided to double down. Instead of getting the IRS out of the business of policing speech, they want to make it the final arbiter of political speech.

Some may ask, why is the IRS, an agency whose purpose is to collect taxes, even involved in muzzling speech? How did that happen?

That is a very good question. It should not be. The administration needs to start explaining to the American people why it is engaging in this abuse of power, especially after last year. The administration may believe the smoke has cleared, but I do not believe the American people see it that way at all. I think that if the American people knew what the administration was really up to, they would react with the same kind of outrage they did last year about the targeting of conservatives by the IRS, and that is why the new IRS commissioner has a simple choice.

We have a new IRS commissioner over there. He has a simple choice. He

can either restore the public’s trust in an agency whose reputation was already in doubt or he can allow himself to be used as a political pawn by an administration that now seems willing to do anything to keep those it disagrees with from fully exercising their constitutionally protected right to free speech.

After recent scandals the IRS should not be getting more involved in what people can and cannot say but less involved. Commissioner Koskinen must take a stand against this kind of thugery and make it clear to a nervous public that his agency will not engage in any more government-sanctioned crackdowns on speech.

You know, the President made what I think was a pretty revealing comment in a recent interview when he talked about his inability to break through with certain Republicans. Rather than concede that they may have a different world view or that they disagree with his approach to the issues of the day, the President blamed FOX News and Rush Limbaugh of somehow convincing folks that he is something he is not.

I think a far more likely explanation is that the President does stuff like this. I think a more likely explanation is that in the sixth year of his Presidency he would rather blow kisses to his liberal base than work with Republicans to create jobs and increase opportunity and prosperity for the millions of Americans who are really struggling out there. Rather than let people from one end of the political spectrum to the other duke it out through robust public debate, he wants to use the IRS to drive conservatives right off the playing field. That is a better explanation for why ordinary conservatives across the country are not buying the idea that you are some kind of pragmatic problem solver, instead of a liberal ideologue who seems more interested in shutting down your critics than working with us in facing the Nation’s most urgent problems.

Just 3 months ago the President sought to unite the country around the argument that as Americans we never give up. What I am saying this morning is that even as he is saying that, he is also busy kicking the ladder out from under anybody who disagrees with him. That is just what this new IRS proposal does, and Republicans plan to fight it every step of the way.

Mr. President, I say to my friend the majority leader, who deferred to me this morning, that I have two more statements. I am sorry to detain him.

Mr. REID. No problem.

REMEMBERING STAFF SERGEANT RYAN D. AUSTIN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, it is my sad duty to report to my colleagues on a young Kentuckian who has been lost while serving his country. SSgt

Ryan D. Austin of the U.S. Air Force passed away on August 6, 2013, in Maidstone, in the United Kingdom. He had been stationed at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, and he was 25 years old.

For his service in uniform, Staff Sergeant Austin received several medals, awards, and decorations, including the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Meritorious Unit Award, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon, the NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon, the Small Arms Expert Marksman Ribbon, the Air Force Training Ribbon, and the Cyberspace Support Badge.

Ryan enlisted in the Air Force in January of 2010. He was deployed to Germany with the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing, First Communications Maintenance Squadron.

Ryan’s brother Nathan said:

Being with [the Air Force] was the best career move he ever made. The Air Force gave him the chance to go overseas, learn new cultures and serve his country just like our father did. It made him feel he gave something back to his country, as well as protect America.

Ryan was raised in Laurel County, the son of Karen Long and Doug Austin, who also served in uniform. He graduated from South Laurel High School in 2006. Friends remember that he enjoyed golf, cooking, working for charities, and traveling.

Nathan remembers:

When Ryan was around, he was fun to be with. We included each other in our hobbies like tennis, basketball and video games. We had our friends and we always had great times . . . it’s really a heavy burden on my heart to know that I have lost a brother.

While in high school, Ryan worked as a teacher’s aide for Joey Marcum, a science teacher. Joey remembers:

Ryan was such an awesome young man. He was honest, hardworking and dependable. You could depend on him for literally anything. He was just a really good guy.

Ryan leaves behind his wife Jessica. The two of them were married on December 6, 2009. At the time of Ryan’s death, Jessica was pregnant with their first child. She had a boy, named Brayden Kaine Austin. Ryan “was really looking forward to being a father,” his brother Nathan said.

Christa Koeller is a friend of Ryan and Jessica’s who lived across the street from them when Ryan and Christa’s husband were both stationed at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha. She remembers the couple’s joy at learning they would have a baby:

When he found out and Jessica found out that they both would be parents, they were so overjoyed to start that new segment of their lives. Ryan was a family man, devoted to his job, and he was very dedicated as an airman. . . . A baby son lost his father, and will never know him.

Ryan's funeral service in Corbin, KY, was officiated by Pastor Daniel Carmack of Hawk Creek Church. Firefighters, policemen, county health care workers, friends, family, and even those who did not know Ryan but wished to pay their respects literally lined the town streets as the funeral procession passed by. Ryan received full military honors from the Honor Guard of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Pastor Carmack said:

Ryan Austin was not only a soldier, but a leader that has left an indelible mark on this generation.

The Pastor continued:

Ryan will long be remembered as . . . a devoted husband, loving son, leader to his generation, and always a friend. Although he was only 25, he have proved the statement true that "life is not measured in quantity, but in quality," and he lived his life to the full with integrity and honor.

Pastor Carmack, who was Ryan's youth pastor and watched this young man grow up, remembers that "Ryan was a kid that always served others." I think it is clear that as an adult, a husband, a father, and an airman, Ryan's commitment to serving others only grew stronger.

We in the Senate are thinking today of Ryan Austin's loved ones, including his wife Jessica; his son Brayden; his father Doug; his brothers Nathan Austin and Dylon Wall; his sister Rachel Austin; and many other beloved family members and friends. Ryan was laid to rest next to his mother Karen Long.

I would like Ryan's family to know that the Senate honors Sergeant Ryan D. Austin's life of service. We are saddened by this very tragic loss, and we are grateful for his supreme sacrifice, which reminds us all of the meaning of valor.

GREENVILLE, KENTUCKY, FIRE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly on a tragedy that happened this morning in Kentucky.

News reports are still developing, but we do know that a large house fire occurred in Greenville, in Muhlenberg County, in western Kentucky. Fire officials reports say multiple lives were lost in the fire, including children. There are two survivors who have been flown to Vanderbilt University Medical Center for treatment.

Personnel from three fire departments—Greenville Fire, Graham Volunteer Fire, and Beechmont Volunteer Fire—responded to the blaze. I thank these brave firefighters, as well as the emergency medical technicians, police officers, and other responders who heroically leapt in to save lives.

Elaine and I are hopeful for a speedy recovery for the two victims who are still alive, and we extend our prayers and condolences to the families of the souls lost in this destructive fire. I will

pay close attention to this story as events further develop. The entire Commonwealth stands behind Muhlenberg County right now, and we will do whatever we can to help recover from this horrific loss.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

STAFF-PREPARED MATERIALS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am sure not many people care, but the reason I didn't go first today is that those of us who serve in office depend on other people to prepare materials for us so we can make a reasonably good presentation. Well, I came here today and looked at my stuff—it was yesterday's. So I figured I would be better off waiting until I got the right one—which reminds me of something I heard as a very young Lieutenant Governor. This story may be true; it didn't happen to me, but I have always remembered it. It has always made me aware of the great work my staff does.

A man is used to his staff preparing his remarks, flowery remarks, and always so very, very well. He has a long speech he has to deliver. He gets to page 5, and it says, "OK, you SOB, you are on your own" and the rest is blank. I remembered that today, and figured I had better wait until my office had the right speech.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950. The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks the time until 11:15 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled dealing with flood insurance. At 11:15 a.m. there will be up to four rollcall votes in relation to amendments to that bill.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following those votes the recess which was originally scheduled until 2 p.m.—and that will still be the case, except I ask unanimous consent that on the passage of S. 1926, as amended, the votes start at 1:50 p.m., with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Additionally, we expect to receive momentarily the conference report to accompany the farm bill today, and we will work on getting an agreement to move forward on this today.

RETIREMENT OF JOEL BREITNER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, here in the Senate we work closely with so many people, but no one do we work more closely with than the court reporters. They are right here in our face every time we talk, taking down a verbatim transcript of what we say, and they work extremely hard.

We went through a period of time when we were working through all these nominations, and they went for days without going home. They had a cot in their office, and they never missed a beat.

I always watch very closely the court reporters because my brother—who is 22 months younger than I am—was a court reporter. He retired from doing that, but I watched him work so hard.

Court reporting is extremely difficult. It is very intense. In court we rarely have court reporters who take what we call a daily. They will have a couple of court reporters during a trial and they will transcribe their notes sometime later. But here in the Senate they transcribe their notes now—immediately.

The reason I mention that today is one of our reporters is going to retire. Joel Breitner has been here for three decades in the Senate. Prior to coming here, he was a court reporter. He has this designation now—as this young woman in front of me is reporting what I say—as an Official Reporter for the United States Senate.

Joel began working here in this body in 1987, after having been a court reporter already for 23 years. During his time in the reporters office, he has witnessed both innovation and a lot of history. He was one of the first reporters to use computer-aided transcription, which is a modern miracle—it really is—because the stenographic notes at the same time they type them, are already translating into English. That isn't the way it used to be.

I can remember my brother—and, of course, Joel, who was one of the first here in this body to use the computer-aided transcription and did what my brother did—you took down what people said with your machine, and then you would go back to your office, look over your notes, and transcribe them, and then either you would type them up or have someone do so. So it was a lot of work. It is still a lot of work, but it is a lot different than it used to be.

He is one of the first, if not the first, in this body to use this computer-aided transcription, and it really helped modernize the Office of Official Reporters.

He has reported historic events, countless numbers of them—President Clinton's first inaugural address, his impeachment. Over the years he has

been a friend and resource to the Senate pages. Joel is a very nice, quiet person whom I will miss.

When we cross—I always see them—I say: “Saddling up again”—putting on the heavy equipment they wear during the time they are here. They work very, very hard, and they transcribe every word we say. There are times I wish they hadn’t, but they did.

Mr. President, it is no surprise, with the affection that Joel has shown for the pages, that Jamie, one of his children, has been a Senate page.

So I thank him on behalf of the entire Senate for his years of service not only to Senators but everybody, for his years of service in the reporters office, and I congratulate him on a very distinguished career. I wish him the best in retirement. I know he will enjoy spending more time with his children and with Carol, his wife of almost three decades.

WORKING TOGETHER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I need to comment on part of what my Republican counterpart said. The President gave a good State of the Union Address to the country on Tuesday night. It was a dramatic speech, and he called upon us to work together. You would never know that from what the Republican leader said today.

He also said, as President of the United States, he has the power to do things when the Senate finds itself bogged down, as we have been with countless filibusters. During the years I have been leader of the Senate, there have been more than 470 filibusters conducted by the Republicans. Is it any wonder the President is going to do some things administratively because of the logjam we have here? Hopefully we can do better than we have done. I hope that is the case.

This country has been hurt by the constant obstruction we have had. I am surprised—but not too much—that my Republican colleague would say the President has to do something to help create jobs. One need only reflect on when President Obama took office. We were losing 700,000 jobs a month at that time. But because of his patience and wisdom and the fact that he had a Democratic Senate and Congress for the first 2 years of his Presidency, we were able to do some terrific things for the country.

Since then, as we know, the Republican leader has said his No. 1 goal was to defeat Obama for the reelection, and that is how the Republicans have legislated. Over the last 3 years, they have done everything they could to stop the country from moving forward. They actually did it during the first 2 years he was President, but they didn’t have the power to do much then except obstruct, and we had enough votes to overcome their obstruction.

I don’t know if my friend the Republican leader understands that in spite

of his No. 1 goal to defeat the President that he was reelected overwhelmingly because the American people agreed with his view of the country.

I am not going to go into more detail about how I believe my Republican colleague is wrong on what has happened with bogging down the Senate, but I will comment on one aspect of his presentation: Because of the U.S. Supreme Court case called *Citizens United*, there has been some really untoward stuff going on in the political world. We have two brothers who are actually trying to buy the country. Last year the Koch brothers made billions of dollars. They are spending their billions of dollars by going into State legislatures, Governors races, and secretary of state races on a State level, and, of course, spending huge amounts of money around the country in an attempt to defeat Democrats both in the House and the Senate.

The Republican leader has long been an opponent of campaign finance reform. This has been part of his career. So it is no surprise that he opposes the administration’s effort for greater disclosure. The abuse here is not the administration enforcing the law, but folks like the Koch brothers pretending to be social welfare organizations.

The Presiding Officer has dedicated much of his life to improving the social welfare of people from his State. These social welfare organizations are extremely helpful for people who have problems. The Koch brothers are not a social welfare organization. They are plainly acting as a political organization. They are spending tens and hundreds of millions of dollars on political activities. They have not contributed to anything that deals with social welfare. Folks who act as political organizations should have to disclose where the money comes from.

As the Presiding Officer knows, the Koch brothers hide all of their campaign efforts. They disguise themselves, with rare exception, as social welfare organizations. They have all these fancy names and go after people who are trying to improve the country.

We have an important piece of legislation we are going to pass today to improve the ability of our country to prosper. The bipartisan measure called the flood insurance bill will protect the Nation’s recovering housing market and save consumers money.

I thank Senator MENENDEZ, the chairman of the banking committee, and Chairman LANDRIEU, who is chairman of the small business committee. They have done a wonderful job—these two working together with Senator ISAKSON—with their leadership on this issue.

I look forward to a strong bipartisan vote on this measure this afternoon. I would note that the bipartisan agreement to vote on a reasonable number of relevant amendments and on final

passage of the flood insurance measure is exactly the kind of agreement that Republicans have rejected on other legislative priorities.

For example, when Democrats offered to vote on 20 relevant amendments to a full offset extension of unemployment insurance a couple of weeks ago, the Republicans refused. Since then, 150,000 more Americans have lost emergency benefits that were helping them to stay above water while they look for work. In all, more than 1.6 million out-of-work Americans have lost benefits to help them put food on the table and gas in the tank so they can focus on their job search.

I hope in the coming week Democrats and Republicans will be able reach a bipartisan agreement to have an up-or-down vote on the extension of unemployment insurance as well. I hope it is not again bogged down with obstruction. I am confident that we have the opportunity to do that, and we should do it. Millions of fellow Americans are counting on us to do this on an affirmative basis.

While we work toward an agreement to restore unemployment benefits, the Senate will also, as I mentioned earlier, consider the farm bill conference report. America’s farms and ranches are the most productive in the world. They support 16 million private sector jobs. Smart farm policies will help American farmers thrive. That is an important part of our work to keep the economic recovery rolling. The farm bill will create jobs and cut taxpayer subsidies and save \$23 billion which will be used to reduce the deficit.

I would also note that we have done an admirable job of reducing the debt. Do we need to do more? Of course we do. We have already reduced the debt during the Obama years by almost \$3 trillion, and if we could get the Republicans in the House to agree on the bill we passed dealing with immigration reform, it would be another \$1 trillion toward reducing the debt.

I would also note, as I indicated earlier, that when President Obama first took office, we were losing 700,000 jobs a month. We have now created more than 8 million jobs. We need to do more and the farm bill will help that. The farm bill will create jobs and cut taxpayer subsidies and save \$20 billion which will be used to reduce the debt and deficit. The bill includes important reforms to farm programs, and while this measure doesn’t include as much funding for programs to reduce hunger as a number of us would like, it is a good compromise and it will protect needy families.

Senator STABENOW from Michigan has been the chairman of this committee. She has worked so hard for years to get this done. We have passed it twice here in the Senate. We have struggled to get something done in the House, and we were finally able to get this done under her leadership.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

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

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1926, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1926) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Heller/Lee amendment No. 2700, to clarify that any private flood insurance policy accepted by a State shall satisfy the mandatory purchase requirement under the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973.

Coburn/McCain amendment No. 2697, to allow States to opt out of participation in the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

Toomey modified amendment No. 2707, to adjust phase-ins of flood insurance rate increases.

Merkley modified amendment No. 2709, to establish limitations on force-placed insurance.

SCHEDULE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:15 a.m. shall be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senators MENENDEZ and TOOMEY or their designees controlling the final 10 minutes.

The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise today in very strong support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act and urge my colleagues to vote today to pass this legislation that will help millions of Americans across the country.

First, I want to recognize the admirable leadership of Senators MENENDEZ, ISAKSON, and LANDRIEU for helping to put together such a strong coalition amidst some challenging political headwinds.

Senator LANDRIEU, in particular, has been like Paul Revere in the night for not only calling our attention to the detrimental elements of the Biggert-Waters bill but for continuing to emphasize this bill's importance to States from coast to coast.

Senator MENENDEZ and I share the New York-New Jersey coast, as does the Presiding Officer, and that, of course, has been devastated.

I will briefly say what has happened here. Literally tens of thousands of Americans will lose their homes—middle-class Americans, working-class Americans, and poor Americans—if we don't pass this legislation. Very sim-

ply, Biggert-Waters was not followed. Before increases were to go into effect, an affordability study was to be done. It was not. As a result, homeowners are having to pay thousands of dollars more. Homeowners who paid \$500 a year for flood insurance—it is mandatory—now pay \$4,000 or \$5,000. There are some who pay as much as \$30,000. Even worse, many more will lose their homes when they sell them because the flood insurance for the next owner will go up so much they will lose tremendous value on their homes.

A home is the middle class's piece of the rock. People struggle long and hard to pay that mortgage, and when they are in their later years, fifties, sixties, seventies—I guess fifties isn't later years these days—this is what they have. Their nest egg is their home. To all of a sudden pull the rug out from under them and say when you sell your home, the next person is going to have to pay \$15,000 or \$20,000 a year in flood insurance, which makes the value of that home plummet, is so unfair.

We have additional unfairness in our State of New York, as well as the neighboring State of New Jersey. People who were devastated by Sandy and struggled to rebuild their homes are all of a sudden getting walloped with huge flood insurance bills which they cannot afford. They are already in debt. So to allow this to go on makes no sense. If Americans ever want the Government to act, it is in these types of situations where there is an unfairness that is unrelated to any individual action by these homeowners which clobbers them. It takes away their financial security, it takes away their home, and makes life miserable.

It should come as no surprise that if people cannot afford flood insurance policies, we will see more and more homeowners decide to drop out of the program, or communities that decide not to adopt new flood maps proposed by FEMA. On top of that, as rates go higher and higher, those folks who are not required to buy flood insurance but wanted to do the prudent thing, may drop out of the program as well.

So, let me emphasize one point for my colleagues that may still have reservations about our bill: If folks start dropping out of the National Flood Insurance Program en masse, that would be a much larger drag on the system than a simple delay of rate increases. Without flood insurance, when future disasters hit, these families and communities will be entirely dependent on Federal aid to help them rebuild.

I fully support efforts to put the National Flood Insurance Program on a path to solvency, but it will not happen overnight, and attempting to do so in a manner that raises premiums too high too quickly, without consideration for broader affordability concerns, will end up being a decision that they come to regret.

We have to prevent the most devastating rate hikes from going into effect until FEMA and Congress can figure out a way to ensure the solvency of the National Flood Insurance Program without breaking the bank for middle-class homeowners.

It's illogical for homeowners to pay higher premiums based on the risk-zone of their home before FEMA accurately determines the actual risk. Yet, that is exactly what is happening today.

Currently, millions of policyholders who built to code and whose homes have been subsequently remapped into a higher risk area are facing significant rate increases with no assurance that the FEMA flood maps are accurate.

Prematurely forcing individuals and families out of their homes with astronomical increases of flood insurance premiums before even guaranteeing the reliability of rate maps is asinine.

But the legislation before us today delays these rate increases until an overseer can certify that FEMA has implemented a flood mapping approach that utilizes sound scientific and engineering methodologies that accurately determine varying levels of flood risk. Not a day goes by that I don't think about the impact that Sandy had on the millions of families across New York. Their stories and the struggles they face motivate me each day to do whatever I can to make their lives better.

As my colleagues can attest these are not isolated events. Storms are becoming more prevalent and more ferocious. And they are not just in coastal New York, New Jersey and Louisiana, but Montana, Colorado and central States as well.

New Yorkers and families across the country aren't thinking about whether the next natural disaster will impact them, they are thinking about when. This body can act now and prevent a manmade disaster from burdening them as well.

This bill, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, will protect homeowners across the country, many of whom have only just begun to recover, from potentially huge flood insurance premium hikes and loss of property value. We must pass this bill today.

To reiterate, my colleagues Senator LANDRIEU, Senator MENENDEZ, Senator ISAKSON and others have worked tirelessly to advance this bill and help all our constituents who have built back after seemingly insurmountable loss. I implore my colleagues to stand together, in a true bipartisan effort, to make this program fairer for middle class families struggling to hold onto the homes they rebuilt in the communities they call home.

The bottom line is we have to pass this bill. It makes no sense. We required a study before imposing devastating rate increases on homeowners

to see what the effect would be to put the rates into effect. It is putting the cart before the horse. If it is not backward thinking, I don't know what it is. It makes no sense to do this.

The Toomey amendment will come forward, and it basically is not passing any bill. The Toomey amendment says we should put all the costs on these middle-class and working-class homeowners quickly. It doesn't have any limits, and it would do the same exact thing. So anyone who thinks the Toomey amendment is palliative, you may as well vote against the bill.

The good news here: Democrats and Republicans have come together. This is how this body should work. We have allowed a limited number of amendments on each side. I was glad to hear the minority leader talk the other day about how this is how the Senate should work. We agree, and I hope this will set the precedent for future bills where we can come together on the floor, have a reasonable number of amendments—hopefully relevant and germane that relate to improving the legislation—and then we will have the bill be given an up-or-down vote.

This bill will pass this afternoon. When this bill passes—and when it passes the House—millions of homeowners across America will breathe a sigh of relief. They will be able to keep their homes. They will be able to sell their homes, and they will know there is a process to put flood insurance on an even keel that won't be all on their backs.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I understand Senator TOOMEY and Senator MENENDEZ will be coming to the floor to have the last 10 minutes of this debate, so I wish to take a moment to come to the floor to thank all of my colleagues who helped so much, particularly in the early days—a year and a half ago—to help make this bill possible today. This truly was a team effort, and I really appreciate the compliments from my colleagues about the leadership I provided, and I am happy to do so. Believe me, this never would have happened without a great team that was built to spread the word about the disastrous consequences of a law that had good intentions but with horrific ramifications on people all over the country. Because this is not just a coastal issue that affects New Jersey, the State of the Presiding Officer, and my State of Louisiana, we had some

extraordinary Senators step up, such as Senator HEITKAMP, such as Senator JOE MANCHIN from West Virginia—not an ocean around or in sight. We had other Senators step up who do not have coastlines but who have States and subdivisions and communities and cities and rural areas that are in desperate need of a strong, good, solid, affordable, and sustainable flood insurance package for this country—a flood insurance program.

Some people thought that is what we were getting with Biggert-Waters, but it soon became clear, literally before the ink was dry, that it wasn't going to work. Sometimes mistakes are made and when they are, we have to step up and fix them as quickly as possible. It has taken us longer than it should have because some Senators have not had an open mind or an open heart. They have not dealt in the best of faith, but despite all of that, we are here today because a number of Senators stood up.

I wish to read their names into the RECORD: Senator THAD COCHRAN from Mississippi, Senator JEFF MERKLEY from Oregon, Senator JOHN HOEVEN from North Dakota, Senator TIM SCOTT from South Carolina, Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP from North Dakota, Senator ROGER WICKER from Mississippi, Senator VITTER from Louisiana, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER was a particularly strong leader, Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND from New York, Senator ED MARKEY from Massachusetts, as well as ELIZABETH WARREN from Massachusetts, who were early supporters of this bill; Senator BILL NELSON of Florida, Senator RUBIO of Florida—and particularly Senator NELSON who got on this bill early and began educating people not only in Florida but around the country; Senator AL FRANKEN from Minnesota, Senator JOE MANCHIN, Senator BOB CASEY from Pennsylvania, another Senator who has no ocean, but Pennsylvania has I think the most new FEMA maps of any State in the Union. The people of Pennsylvania would really be affected if our bill doesn't pass. Even the amendment that is being offered by one of the Senators does not solve their problem and it is unfortunate, and I hope people will vote strongly against the Toomey amendment; Senator KAY HAGAN from North Carolina; of course, yours truly in the Chair, Senator CORY BOOKER, who came on early and was a huge supporter as soon as he got here. I think this was one of the first bills he cosponsored and I couldn't be more grateful, and I know the people of New Jersey are grateful for his leadership; Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina, Senator BRIAN SCHATZ of Hawaii, Senator RICHARD BLUMENTHAL of Connecticut, Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island, Senator LISA MURKOWSKI from Alaska, Senator RON WYDEN from Oregon, Senator SUSAN COLLINS from

Maine, and Senator DEBBIE STABENOW from Michigan; obviously, Senator MENENDEZ has been our leader on the Democratic side, and we would not be where we are today without his leadership.

We would not be where we are today without the commitment of Senator HARRY REID who recognizes he has a flooding problem as well and that this is not just a coastal issue. He stood up early to tell us that if we could build a strong coalition, if we could build 60-plus votes, he would help us get to a point where we could actually have a debate on amendments, vote them up or down, and then move this bill, with the strongest vote possible, to the House of Representatives, where I am proud to say there are 131 cosponsors on this bill. That number is growing every day. As people hear about what is happening and begin to understand, as they get notices from their insurance companies—which, by the way, are taking 30 percent of every policy off the top and assuming virtually no risk, which is an issue we have to address; it is not addressed in this bill—but as people begin to understand, they are going to be clamoring for real change. They will want something that helps taxpayers for it to be sustainable, that addresses the climate issues that are affecting this program, that helps middle-class homeowners be able, as Senator SCHUMER said, to stay in their homes and not lose all the equity they have literally worked for not only their entire lives but potentially for two generations of work which has gone into building equity—sometimes three generations of work have gone into building equity in homes—just for a misguided piece of legislation to swipe away from them, in the blink of an eye, their homes' value.

So I hope people will vote strongly against the Toomey amendment. A vote for the Toomey amendment will signal a vote against our efforts for reform. He will say his efforts are to reform, that it will only allow raises of 25 percent a year. There is no cap on his bill. There are no requirements for an affordability study. There are no requirements for accurate FEMA mapping. His bill is a red herring and a distraction from what we are trying to do.

Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON on the Republican side deserves so much credit for organizing his team.

I also recognize the minority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, for his help in getting us to this point, and I thank him.

I also want to thank a very important group which is GNO, Inc.—Greater New Orleans, Inc.—which is a 16-parish economic coalition in our State, made up of parish presidents and elected officials and university presidents, that really focuses on the economic vitality of our region. Michael Hetch is the executive director—an extremely talented young leader. They recognized

immediately, as I brought to their attention the problems with Biggert-Waters, the disaster it would be to the 16 parishes they represent. Not only did they step up and help us organize all of our 16 parishes, but they began immediately to reach out to New Jersey and to New York and to Pennsylvania and to California and to Oregon—to reach out to the bankers and the realtors. That began an extraordinary development of a very strong coalition. I thank them for their leadership.

I thank the National Association of Realtors and the National Homebuilders Association, NACo. The president of NACo—the National Association of Counties—was in my office on several occasions working very hard with elected officials all over the country to raise the flag about this issue and to say it is time to take a pause on Biggert-Waters—not a complete repeal; not moving back on our reforms, but to take a pause to get it right.

It is important to get this right. There are too many homes that will be lost, too many families impacted, too many businesses hurt, too many communities that will see a downward spiral from a housing market that is just now recovering after a very difficult national recession.

I thank the National League of Cities, the American Bankers Association, the Independent Community Bankers of America, and the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America. I really want to thank them.

There are hundreds of other smaller organizations—neighborhood groups, I am sure, from New Jersey to New York, including Louisiana homeowners groups, that have spoken and are educating people about this challenge. But in a Congress where it is hard to come to a consensus on singing happy birthday to one of our Members, which is unfortunate today, this is a real accomplishment for such a broad, deep, and strong coalition—bipartisan, bicoastal—to come together and pass a bill that will bring relief to millions and millions of families.

This will be a great victory today. I believe we will have a strong vote in the Senate. I am confident of that. But we have work to do. This bill has to go to the House. MAXINE WATERS and Congressman GRIMM from New York are leading this effort. We need all the Senators to talk with their delegations in the House and get them to really step up. We need a lot of communication to the Speaker to say: Mr. Speaker, this cannot wait. There is already too much time, too much anxiety, too many real estate agents being put out of business, too many for-sale signs coming down, too many people making decisions because they have lost equity in their home. It is time to fix this problem now, and we can.

I thank Senator MERKLEY, who will be the subcommittee chair as this sort

of new reform is written. And finally, I thank again Senator MENENDEZ and Senator ISAKSON for their extraordinary knowledge of this subject, their leadership, and helping us get to the point where we are.

I do not see any other colleagues on the floor. When I do, I will yield the floor. I understand Senator TOOMEY and Senator MENENDEZ are going to come to close out this debate. But I do want to say again that the Biggert-Waters bill was built backwards and upside down. It authorized immediate rate increases on responsible homeowners without any understanding of how it would impact their individual policies.

I want to also say this, Mr. President—and I think you have heard me speak about this both publicly and we have talked privately—the people in Louisiana who have been the victims and survivors of massive hurricanes and storms and levee breaks are well aware of the weather changes. We accept it as a reality. We are building our levees as fast as we can, with very little help over time. Now, after emergencies, the Federal Government comes in with a lot of money, but year in and year out we are having a very hard time getting any infrastructure from the Corps of Engineers budget, which is woefully underfunded for the whole country. And the Presiding Officer knows that because his communities suffer as well.

We are building levees as fast as we can with a lot of our own money and a lot of our own tax dollars. We are raising our homes as fast as we can, elevating them. We are putting in new zoning, and people are very mindful of not developing low-lying areas. But we have to have policies that are well thought out and well balanced to accommodate communities that have literally been here for 300 years.

New Orleans will be celebrating its 300th birthday in just a few years from now, in 2018. This is not about a group of people who went down there 20 years ago for Sun and for vacation. This is about people who came 300 years ago to secure the mouth of the greatest river system in North America and one of the greatest river systems in the world.

This is not fun and games. This is work and empowerment and wealth building and opportunity that the President talked about the other day. That is what this bill is about.

We need to start with building a flood program, partnershiped with the private sector, that works for average, middle-class families. We do not have that, and we are going to get the first step toward that today.

I see my colleagues on the floor, so I am going to yield the floor. I know the time has been set aside. When we vote on the Toomey amendment, please vote a strong no. When we vote on final passage, please vote a strong yes. There

are a few other amendments Senators ISAKSON and MENENDEZ will speak to more directly, as we wrap up this debate today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, it is good to see my colleague from New Jersey presiding.

I rise in support of this legislation we are about to consider, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which, again, is unique insofar as it is a bipartisan, bicameral piece of legislation, to ensure families will be able to afford flood insurance so they can stay in their homes, so that businesses can stay open, and property values will not plummet.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707

I also rise in opposition to the Toomey substitute amendment, which would completely undermine our bill and perpetuate a failed policy. While we support putting the National Flood Insurance Program on a path to solvency, current law hikes rates so fast and so high that it will actually undermine the solvency of the program. These drastic increases will act as a de facto eviction notice for homeowners who have lived in their homes and played by the rules their entire lives. That is going to drive down property values, as the housing market is struggling to recover.

What is most alarming is the fact that FEMA does not even know the size or scope of this problem. They were supposed to complete a study on the affordability of rate increases mandated by Biggert-Waters by last April, but they failed to do so. That is simply unacceptable.

While there is no question we need to put the flood insurance program on a more solvent trajectory, we first need to understand the impact these dramatic changes in Biggert-Waters will have on the housing market and be sure the mapping process they use to set these rates is accurate.

That is why our bill would impose a moratorium on the phaseout of subsidies and grandfathered included in Biggert-Waters for most primary residences until FEMA completes the affordability study that was mandated in Biggert-Waters and proposes a regulatory framework to address the issues found in the study.

Whether FEMA does that in 6 months, 1 year—whatever periods of time—as soon as they do that and propose that regulatory framework, we are ready to go. So those who say this is somehow an inordinate amount of time, that is going to be determined by FEMA's promptness in getting the affordability study that was supposed to have been done under law by last April.

It would also require FEMA to certify in writing that it has implemented a flood mapping approach that utilizes

sound scientific and engineering methodologies before certain rate reforms are implemented.

The reason that is important is because, for example, we saw in New Jersey where FEMA maps were put out, and we ultimately heard a hue and cry from communities and counties across the State that said: Look, that can't be right. We have had properties that have never flooded. Even in Sandy they did not have virtually any flooding, and now they are in the zone, and particularly in the most difficult zones, called V zones, where the consequence of being in a V zone may very well be whether you can keep your house. When we challenged and brought municipal and county engineers to bear, what did we find? In some counties we had an 80-percent reduction. Had we not challenged those maps, where would those families be today? So we want the basis of these maps to be scientific, using engineering methodologies that are sound.

Also, this new legislation would reimburse qualifying homeowners for successful appeals of erroneous flood map determinations. If we are going to say these maps are somehow sacrosanct, and you go and challenge them, and find out they were wrong, you should be able to not have to bear that burden.

It would give communities fair credit for locally funded flood protection systems. It would continue the fair treatment afforded to communities with floodproof basement exemptions. It would provide for a FEMA ombudsman to advocate for and provide information to policyholders. It would streamline the registration process for insurance brokers and agents so they can provide better timely services to policyholders during a disaster.

Just as important as what this bill does is what it will not do. The legislation would not stop the phaseout of taxpayer-funded subsidies for vacation homes and homes that have been substantially damaged. It would not stop the phaseout of taxpayer-funded subsidies for properties that have been repetitively flooded, including the 1 percent riskiest properties that account for over a third of all claims. It would not encourage new construction in environmentally sensitive or flood-prone areas. And it would not stop most of the important reforms included in Biggert-Waters.

This legislation reaches a delicate balance that recognizes the need to improve solvency and phase out certain subsidies but tries to do so without discouraging program participation.

Finally, Senator TOOMEY acknowledges that Biggert-Waters, I think, is totally flawed and must be changed, but basically his amendment falls far short of what all of us who have come together in support will do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss briefly my amendment and the underlying bill. But first I want to thank my cosponsors—Senators COATS, MCCONNELL, COBURN, HATCH, KIRK, and JOHANNIS—and I want to thank the bipartisan coalition of Senators who are supporting my approach.

There is a real problem with our flood insurance program as a result of the reforms, and it needs to be addressed. The problem is that, in the process of reforming this program so it would actually be sustainable—so that it actually could become solvent—in the process of making those changes, some people's premiums go up very dramatically and pretty suddenly. The phase-in is very quick and the increase is very high. That is a huge problem, and it needs to be addressed.

The Menendez bill addresses it the wrong way. What this bill does is it does kill the meaningful reform. It completely suspends for 4 years. There is no adjustment of premiums toward an actuarially sound market-based level of premiums that do not require taxpayer subsidy. So we will be going back—oh, it busts the budget, by the way—we will be going back to a system where literally Warren Buffett can buy a home, and as long as he makes it his primary residence, he can continue to have taxpayers subsidize his cost of flood insurance. I just do not know how that is even remotely defensible. But that is what we would be heading back to if we adopt the Menendez bill.

In addition, by throwing out the reform, by throwing out the movement toward an actuarially sound system, we go right back to the insolvent, unsustainable program we had before, which means the NFIP, under the Menendez bill, will that much sooner reach the day when it cannot honor its claims, when the people who have been paying their insurance premiums discover there is no money to honor their claim when the flood occurs because it does not have the reforms that put it on a sustainable basis.

Finally, it is flawed because it cannot become law. This approach is not going to become law. We know that. It is not just me who opposes this approach. The administration does not accept this approach. This is what the Statement of Administration Policy said that was put out this week by the President of the United States about this bill. He referred to this bill specifically and said:

Delaying implementation of these reforms—

referring to the Biggert-Waters reforms—

would further erode the financial position of the NFIP, which is already \$24 billion in debt. This delay would also reduce FEMA's ability to pay future claims made by all policyholders.

The Speaker of the House and the leadership in the House feel the same way. They are not willing to throw out the reforms and leave us with an NFIP that cannot honor its claims. They are not going to do it.

So if you really want to do something for the people who are facing these big premium increases, you have to support a program, an approach that actually works. That is why I have offered this amendment. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

What we do is simple. We phase in the premium increases gradually. For people facing a big premium increase, we phase it in very gradually. It gives people time to adjust, time to mitigate, time to challenge if the map is drawn wrong. They can do that. We preserve the important, valuable ideas in the Menendez bill, such as the ability to recoup the cost of a successful challenge to a mapping problem for an individual homeowner, also for a community. That is there. That is important.

We preserve the opportunity to have the benefit and force NFIP to recognize the benefit of mitigation measures that have been taken by others. So if your community has built a levee or a dam or some kind of flood mitigation system, with or without Federal money, that needs to be acknowledged, that needs to be reflected. If your community, your home is safer because of that investment, your premium needs to reflect the fact that you have a safer situation. We cover that as well.

Finally, the administration supports this approach. In the very same Statement of Administration Policy, President Obama's administration stated this:

The Administration strongly supports a phased transition to actuarially sound flood insurance rates.

The Menendez bill absolutely does not do this. My amendment absolutely does because this is what makes sense. This is how we soften the blow. We create a reasonable transition and we maintain a fiscally sound, actuarially sound program that does not bust the budget. That is what my amendment does.

Finally, let me just conclude with this. There are a lot of Members of this body on both sides of the aisle who have spent a lot of time, especially in recent years, in sincere, concerted ongoing efforts to address one of the biggest challenges we face as a country; that is, the fiscally unsustainable position of our Federal Government, driven by mandatory spending.

We have cut discretionary spending significantly as a percentage of our budget, as a percentage of our economy. Any way you measure it, discretionary spending has been squeezed. Mandatory spending has been almost completely untouched. It is growing far too fast. Recently this body, including

every Democrat who supports this Menendez bill, voted for a reform, a reform of one mandatory program that makes it sustainable, makes it viable.

We should not be walking away. If we were at all serious about getting our mandatory spending under control, we should not walk away from this reform. Please, I urge my colleagues, support the Toomey amendment.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there be will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on amendment No. 2707, as modified, offered by the Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. TOOMEY.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: Is my understanding correct that Senator TOOMEY has used his minute as part of his presentation or is there a minute still pending for each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is a minute still pending for each side.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I think I made my case. I will yield back the remainder of my last minute.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, first of all, let me clear up some things. No. 1, the administration has not come and said it supports Senator TOOMEY's amendment. So let's be clear about that. As a matter of fact, my understanding is the administration has called him out and said they do not oppose our legislation.

I think we do transition ultimately to a place where we have an actuarially sound flood insurance program. There is a CBO score out there of over 10 years of zero. Look. The reality is, if you want the real estate markets to take a real hit, if you want families to be displaced from their homes, you adopt the Toomey amendment.

If you want to do what on a bipartisan basis has been the focus of this legislation, to keep an actuarially sound flood insurance program but at the same time make sure we do not drive people out of their homes and make sure that we get the study done before we get the actions done, then you will oppose the Toomey amendment and support the underlying bill.

I yield the floor and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 34, nays 65, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 16 Leg.]

YEAS—34

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	
Cruz	McCain	

NAYS—65

Baldwin	Hagan	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson
Begich	Heinrich	Paul
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Blunt	Hoever	Reid
Booker	Isakson	Rubio
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Landrieu	Stabenow
Casey	Leahy	Tester
Cochran	Levin	Udall (CO)
Collins	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wicker
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Graham	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 2707), as modified, was rejected.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2697

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to the vote on amendment No. 2697 offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, what the sponsors claim about my amendment is factually incorrect. Their statement is that all the States and everybody wants to do the NARAB bill. I agree, we should do it, but if all the States really want to do it, my amendment has no effect whatsoever because it allows an opt-out for a State that doesn't want to do it. So either it is true that they all want to do it or it is not true that they all want to do it, and we are going to force some States to not do it.

An opt-out protecting 10th Amendment privileges of the State is highly required to make sure we do not go outside the bounds of our legal obligations.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, we have been here before. Fifteen years ago, Gramm-Leach-Bliley offered what the good Senator from Oklahoma is offering, and it is why NARAB has never been successful.

What this does is it empowers our State regulators, and that is why they support this bill. Notice you haven't heard a lot from States about taking away their rights here because it does not. It empowers them, it brings more competition in the marketplace, and it helps consumers. This is good.

I kick it over to my cosponsor and the good Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I thank my cosponsor Senator TESTER, and he is 1,000 percent right. We have been down this road. We have worked so hard to get everybody on board. States are on board. It does empower States. It does allow them to do what they need to do.

I urge my colleagues to be a "no" vote on the Coburn amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, if this is true, with no opt-out, then why not do it for lawyers? Why not do it for doctors? Why not do it for every other thing that is licensed that would be better for consumers? To not give an opt-out is not right to the individual States.

I support the bill; I just think we need to have a protection for the States. And the reason there is opposition to this is because there is obviously some people who don't agree that everybody is on board.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

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

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 24, nays 75, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 17 Leg.]

YEAS—24

Alexander	Cruz	Manchin
Barrasso	Enzi	McCain
Burr	Flake	Merkley
Chambliss	Graham	Paul
Coburn	Hatch	Risch
Cochran	Inhofe	Rubio
Cornyn	Isakson	Sessions
Crapo	Lee	Vitter

NAYS—75

Ayotte	Boozman	Collins
Baldwin	Boxer	Coons
Baucus	Brown	Corker
Begich	Cantwell	Donnelly
Bennet	Cardin	Durbin
Blumenthal	Carper	Feinstein
Blunt	Casey	Fischer
Booker	Coats	Franken

Gillibrand	Leahy	Sanders
Grassley	Levin	Schatz
Hagan	Markey	Schumer
Harkin	McCaskill	Scott
Heinrich	McConnell	Shaheen
Heitkamp	Menendez	Shelby
Heller	Mikulski	Stabenow
Hirono	Moran	Tester
Hoeven	Murkowski	Thune
Johanns	Murphy	Toomey
Johnson (SD)	Murray	Udall (CO)
Johnson (WI)	Nelson	Udall (NM)
Kaine	Portman	Warner
King	Pryor	Warren
Kirk	Reed	Whitehouse
Klobuchar	Reid	Wicker
Landrieu	Roberts	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 2697) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2709, AS MODIFIED—WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2709, as modified, offered by Senator from Oregon, Mr. MERKLEY.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, in a moment I will ask unanimous consent to withdraw this amendment. I think there is a better way to tackle this particular issue. But I will use this moment to note for my colleagues that I appreciate all the Senators who have come to me to say they share the outrage at the exploitative, predatory pricing of force-placed insurance on our homeowners. This drives homeowners into foreclosure, which is not good for families, not good for the communities, and it is certainly not good for the U.S. Government because we insure the vast bulk of these mortgages. Therefore, if we are going to be responsible from an accounting sense for the investment of the U.S. taxpayer, this needs to be addressed.

I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my amendment No. 2709, as modified.

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

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, very briefly, I wish to thank the Senator from Oregon both for driving the issue and for working with us in the process to get to where he wants to be and where we can maximize our votes on this bill. I appreciate his courtesy and cooperation and look forward to working with him.

AMENDMENT NO. 2700

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to a vote on amendment No. 2700, offered by the Senator from Nevada, Mr. HELLER.

The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, let me be clear that my amendment simply clarifies existing law. I am trying to provide some clarity that private flood insurance can be a viable option

for homeowners and businesses. Private insurers are already subject to regulations in each and every State by their insurance commissioners, and those insurance commissioners are the best regulators for ensuring proper consumer protection.

So I ask my colleagues to support the Heller-Lee amendment so we can provide the American people with more competition, higher quality, and less cost when it comes to flood insurance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I have to oppose the Heller amendment. This amendment would weaken consumer protections and completely remove minimum standards with respect to private flood insurance policies. In particular, the amendment strips the requirement that the private policy has to be comparable to a national flood insurance policy, meaning that companies would be able to offer inadequate policies to consumers across the country without any requirements as to what is in the policy. For all of those who have talked about solvency, if you have insurance that doesn't meet a minimum standard to ensure that the consequences of flooding can be paid for by the policy, you want to vote against this amendment.

I urge a "no" vote on the Heller amendment, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 18 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Flake	Moran
Ayotte	Graham	Paul
Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hagan	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heinrich	Rubio
Chambliss	Heller	Scott
Coats	Hoeven	Sessions
Coburn	Inhofe	Shelby
Cochran	Isakson	Tester
Collins	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	King	Vitter
Crapo	Kirk	Warner
Cruz	Lee	Wicker
Enzi	McCain	
Fischer	McConnell	

NAYS—50

Baldwin	Booker	Carper
Baucus	Boxer	Casey
Begich	Brown	Coons
Bennet	Cantwell	Donnelly
Blumenthal	Cardin	Durbin

Feinstein	Manchin	Reid
Franken	Markey	Sanders
Gillibrand	McCaskill	Schatz
Harkin	Menendez	Schumer
Heitkamp	Merkley	Shaheen
Hirono	Mikulski	Stabenow
Johnson (SD)	Murkowski	Udall (CO)
Kaine	Murphy	Udall (NM)
Klobuchar	Murray	Warren
Landrieu	Nelson	Whitehouse
Leahy	Pryor	Wyden
Levin	Reed	

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 2700) was rejected.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote and lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I support S. 1926, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

While the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act improved many aspects of the National Flood Insurance Program, it also resulted in a dire situation for a number of American families who suddenly found that their insurance rates would be doubled, tripled, or more. And it locked some families into homes they couldn't afford to insure but also couldn't afford to sell.

Today's bill will fix many of these problems by allowing the use of the rate structure in place before passage of Biggert-Waters for some properties. In 4 years, when the Flood Insurance Program will be up for reauthorization, Congress will be able to look to the results of two new studies, called for in today's bill, for ways to make the Flood Insurance Program more equitable.

While I am pleased that this fix is being implemented, I still have concerns about the Flood Insurance Program in general. Since the program's inception, Michigan residents have paid about six times more in premiums than they have received in claims. This inequity isn't fair for Michigan homeowners, and I believe we need to take action to resolve this issue.

I had this inequity in mind in 2012 when we passed Biggert-Waters. I was hopeful that the bill's provisions allowing for the development of private flood insurance markets would result in lower, more equitable rates for Michigan residents. So it was important to me that any action we took today wouldn't make Michigan residents worse off than they are under current law. After consulting with my colleagues and FEMA, I have been assured that the bill before us would not prevent a homeowner's flood insurance rates from decreasing if that rate would have decreased under current law. I thank Senator MENENDEZ for his assurances on this matter, and I appreciate him engaging in a colloquy with me that will be made part of the RECORD.

Again, the bill before us provides some relief for homeowners facing huge

rate increases, while preserving rate decreases for homeowners that are currently eligible for them, and I am therefore supportive of this bill.

RECESS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess until 1:50 p.m. today.

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

Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 1:50 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 1:50 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. HIRONO).

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014—
CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642), to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its amendment to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment, and the Senate agree to the same, signed by a majority of both conferees on the part of both Houses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding with the conference report?

Without objection, the Senate will proceed.

(The conference report is printed in the House Proceedings of the RECORD of Monday, January 27, 2014.)

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion that I ask be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act.

Harry Reid, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Bill Nelson, Tom Harkin, Tammy Baldwin, Jon Tester, Michael F. Bennet, Patrick J. Leahy, Max Baucus, Amy Klobuchar, Heidi Heitkamp, Joe Donnelly, Richard J. Durbin, Mark

Udall, Martin Heinrich, Sherrod Brown.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived; that the cloture vote occur at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 3; that if cloture is invoked, there be 20 minutes remaining postcloture at 2:15 p.m., Tuesday, February 4, to be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, all postcloture time be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE
AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014—
Continued

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that we resume consideration of S. 1926.

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

Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on passage of S. 1926.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I will be brief in our 1 minute just to express my thanks to Senator MENENDEZ from New Jersey, as well as Senator LANDRIEU and Senator VITTER and all of those who came together to put together a great bill for the people of the United States of America for Federal flood insurance. It was a team effort, a bipartisan effort, an equally divided effort between Republicans and Democrats.

I urge everybody to vote for the bill, and I again thank the Senator from New Jersey for his cooperation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I urge all of our colleagues to cast a "yes" vote on the final passage of the homeowner flood insurance act.

I think this has been an excellent week for the Senate. We were able to break through what sometimes is partisan gridlock and far too often pervades this auspicious Chamber. We have had an honest and open debate on this issue that is critical to the American people. We have had a respectable debate on good-faith amendments that were germane to the bill and lived up to the ideals of the Senate, and now we are poised to pass a critical piece of legislation which I believe enjoys overwhelming bipartisan support which will provide real relief to millions of American families.

I thank all of our cosponsors and their staffs, including a very large list of Republican colleagues who support the bill. I particularly thank my lead Republican cosponsor, Senator ISAK-

SON, for his efforts and the partnership on this issue and many others. I have had the pleasure to work with Senator ISAKSON on a number of issues and have come to respect his honesty and his desire to come together and get things done, regardless of the issue. I think he is one of the most well-respected Members of the Senate. Together, working with our colleagues, I think we are poised to give some real relief to families and to send a strong message to the House and hope they will follow suit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 67, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 19 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Baldwin	Harkin	Nelson
Baucus	Heinrich	Pryor
Begich	Heitkamp	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Reid
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Blunt	Isakson	Rubio
Booker	Johanns	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Burr	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Scott
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Landrieu	Stabenow
Chambliss	Leahy	Tester
Cochran	Levin	Udall (CO)
Collins	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wicker
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Graham	Murphy	
Hagan	Murray	

NAYS—32

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Carper	Hatch	Risch
Coats	Heller	Roberts
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Toomey
Cruz	McCain	

NOT VOTING—1

Brown

The bill (S. 1926), as amended, was passed, as follows:

S. 1926

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

SECTION 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.

TITLE I—HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Sec. 103. Delayed implementation of flood insurance rate increases; draft affordability framework.

Sec. 104. Affordability study and report.

Sec. 105. Affordability study funding.

Sec. 106. Funds to reimburse homeowners for successful map appeals.

Sec. 107. Flood protection systems.

Sec. 108. Treatment of floodproofed residential basements.

Sec. 109. Designation of flood insurance advocate.

Sec. 110. Exceptions to escrow requirement for flood insurance payments.

Sec. 111. Monthly installment payments for premiums.

Sec. 112. Accounting for flood mitigation activities in estimates of premium rates.

Sec. 113. Home improvement fairness.

Sec. 114. Study of voluntary community-based flood insurance options.

Sec. 115. Exemption from fees for certain map change requests.

Sec. 116. Flood mitigation methods for urban buildings.

TITLE II—NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS

Sec. 201. Short Title.

Sec. 202. Reestablishment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

TITLE I—HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014”.

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) **ADJUSTED BASE FLOOD ELEVATION.**—For purposes of rating a floodproofed covered structure, the term “adjusted base flood elevation” means the base flood elevation for a covered structure on the applicable effective flood insurance rate map, plus 1 foot.

(2) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(3) **AFFORDABILITY STUDY.**—The term “affordability study” means the study required under section 100236 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957).

(4) **APPLICABLE FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT MEASURES.**—The term “applicable flood plain management measures” means flood plain management measures adopted by a community under section 60.3(c) of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations.

(5) **COVERED STRUCTURE.**—The term “covered structure” means a residential structure—

(A) that is located in a community that has adopted flood plain management measures that are approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and that satisfy the requirements for an exception for floodproofed residential basements under section 60.6(c) of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(B) that was built in compliance with the applicable flood plain management measures.

(6) **DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.**—The term “draft affordability framework” means the draft programmatic and regulatory framework required to be prepared by the Administrator and submitted to Congress under section 103(d) addressing the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under the National Flood Insurance Program, including issues identified in the affordability study.

(7) **FLOODPROOFED ELEVATION.**—The term “floodproofed elevation” means the height of floodproofing on a covered structure, as identified on the Residential Basement Floodproofing Certificate for the covered structure.

(8) **NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM.**—The term “National Flood Insurance Program” means the program established under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

SEC. 103. DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES; DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.

(a) **DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE RATE INCREASES.**—

(1) **GRANDFATHERED PROPERTIES.**—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator may not implement section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)).

(2) **PRE-FIRM PROPERTIES.**—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator may not implement—

(A) section 1307(g)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(1)); or

(B) section 1307(g)(3) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(3)) with respect to any policy described in that section, provided that the decision of the policy holder to permit a lapse in flood insurance coverage was as a result of the property covered by the policy no longer being required to retain such coverage.

(3) **EXPIRATION.**—The prohibitions set forth under paragraphs (1) and (2) shall expire 6 months after the later of—

(A) the date on which the Administrator proposes the draft affordability framework; or

(B) the date on which the Administrator certifies in writing to Congress that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has implemented a flood mapping approach that, when applied, results in technically credible flood hazard data in all areas where Flood Insurance Rate Maps are prepared or updated.

(b) **PROPERTY SALE TRIGGER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1307(g)(2) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) any property purchased after the expiration of the 6-month period set forth under section 103(a)(3) of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014;”.

(2) **PROTECTION OF SUBSIDY FOR PROPERTIES PURCHASED ON OR BEFORE EXPIRATION DATE.**—Notwithstanding paragraph (1) or (3) of section 1307(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(1) and (3)), the Administrator may not reduce the risk premium rate subsidy for flood insurance for a property purchased on or before the expiration of the 6-month period set forth under subsection (a)(3) of this section based on the fact that—

(A) the property was not insured by the flood insurance program as of the date of enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insur-

ance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916); or

(B) on or before the expiration of that 6-month period, the policy for the property had lapsed in coverage as a result of the deliberate choice of the policy holder, provided that the decision of the policy holder to permit a lapse in coverage was as a result of the property no longer being required to retain such coverage.

(c) **TREATMENT OF PRE-FIRM PROPERTIES.**—Beginning on the date of enactment of this Act and ending upon the expiration of the 6-month period set forth under subsection (a)(3), the Administrator shall restore the risk premium rate subsidies for flood insurance estimated under section 1307(a)(2) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)) for any property—

(1) with respect to which the Administrator may not, under subsection (a)(2)(A) of this section, implement section 1307(g)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968;

(2) with respect to which the Administrator may not, under subsection (a)(2)(B) of this section, implement section 1307(g)(3) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968; or

(3) described in section 1307(g)(2) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)(2)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) **DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall prepare a draft affordability framework that proposes to address, via programmatic and regulatory changes, the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under the National Flood Insurance Program, including issues identified in the affordability study.

(2) **CRITERIA.**—In carrying out the requirements under paragraph (1), the Administrator shall consider the following criteria:

(A) Accurate communication to consumers of the flood risk associated with their property.

(B) Targeted assistance to flood insurance policy holders based on their financial ability to continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(C) Individual or community actions to mitigate the risk of flood or lower the cost of flood insurance.

(D) The impact of increases in risk premium rates on participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(E) The impact flood insurance rate map updates have on the affordability of flood insurance.

(3) **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION.**—Not later than 18 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the affordability study, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the draft affordability framework.

(e) **INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.**—The Administrator may enter into an agreement with another Federal agency to—

(1) complete the affordability study; or

(2) prepare the draft affordability framework.

(f) **CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS.**—The Administrator shall clearly communicate full flood risk determinations to individual property owners regardless of whether their premium rates are full actuarial rates.

(g) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to provide the Administrator with the authority to provide

assistance to homeowners based on affordability that was not available prior to the enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916).

(h) **DISCLOSURE.**—

(1) **CHANGE IN RATES UNDER BIGGERT-WATERS.**—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from the amendment made by section 100207 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 919) is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(2) **CHANGE IN RATES UNDER THIS ACT.**—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(3) **REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(i) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(ii) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”).

(B) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(ii) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the “Privacy Act of 1974”).

SEC. 104. AFFORDABILITY STUDY AND REPORT.

Notwithstanding the deadline under section 100236(c) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957), not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the affordability study and report required under such section.

SEC. 105. AFFORDABILITY STUDY FUNDING.

Section 100236(d) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended by striking “not more than \$750,000” and inserting “such amounts as may be necessary”.

SEC. 106. FUNDS TO REIMBURSE HOMEOWNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL MAP APPEALS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after “as the case may be,” the following: “or, in

the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community;” and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1310(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) for carrying out section 1363(f).”.

SEC. 107. FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) **ADEQUATE PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.**—Section 1307(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting “or reconstruction” after “construction”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator shall find that adequate progress on the construction or reconstruction of a flood protection system, based on the present value of the completed flood protection system, has been made only if (1) 100 percent of the cost of the system has been authorized, (2) at least 60 percent of the cost of the system has been appropriated, (3) at least 50 percent of the cost of the system has been expended, and (4) the system is at least 50 percent completed.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in determining whether a community has made adequate progress on the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a flood protection system, the Administrator shall consider all sources of funding, including Federal, State, and local funds.”.

(b) **COMMUNITIES RESTORING DISACCREDITED FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.**—Section 1307(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(f)) is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting the following:

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this subsection shall apply to riverine and coastal levees that are located in a community which has been determined by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be in the process of restoring flood protection afforded by a flood protection system that had been previously accredited on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing 100-year frequency flood protection but no longer does so, and shall apply without regard to the level of Federal funding of or participation in the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of the flood protection system.”.

SEC. 108. TREATMENT OF FLOODPROOFED RESIDENTIAL BASEMENTS.

In implementing section 1308(h) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(h)), the Administrator shall rate a covered structure using the elevation difference between the floodproofed elevation of the covered structure and the adjusted base flood elevation of the covered structure.

SEC. 109. DESIGNATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE ADVOCATE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall designate a Flood Insurance Advocate to advocate for the fair treatment of policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners in the mapping of flood hazards, the identification of risks

from flood, and the implementation of measures to minimize the risk of flood.

(b) **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate designated under subsection (a) shall be to—

(1) educate property owners and policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program on—

(A) individual flood risks;

(B) flood mitigation;

(C) measures to reduce flood insurance rates through effective mitigation; and

(D) the flood insurance rate map review and amendment process;

(2) assist policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners to understand the procedural requirements related to appealing preliminary flood insurance rate maps and implementing measures to mitigate evolving flood risks;

(3) assist in the development of regional capacity to respond to individual constituent concerns about flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions;

(4) coordinate outreach and education with local officials and community leaders in areas impacted by proposed flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions; and

(5) aid potential policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program in obtaining and verifying accurate and reliable flood insurance rate information when purchasing or renewing a flood insurance policy.

(c) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated for each fiscal year such sums as may be necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate.

SEC. 110. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking “subparagraph (C)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking “(A) or (B), if—” and inserting the following: “(A)—

“(i) if—”;

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(E) by adding at the end the following

“(ii) in the case of a loan that—

“(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

“(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

“(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

“(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

“(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative,

homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

“(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

“(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

“(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

“(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months.”.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) REQUIRED APPLICATION.—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms “Federal entity for lending regulation”, “improved real estate”, “regulated lending institution”, and “servicer” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term “outstanding loan” means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(i) OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower’s payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

SEC. 111. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS FOR PREMIUMS.

Section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended

by striking “either annually or in more frequent installments” and inserting “annually, monthly, or in other installments that are more frequent than annually”.

SEC. 112. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)) is amended by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) based on consideration of—

“(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

“(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures.”.

SEC. 113. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking “30 percent” and inserting “50 percent”.

SEC. 114. STUDY OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY-BASED FLOOD INSURANCE OPTIONS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Administrator shall conduct a study to assess options, methods, and strategies for making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into consideration and analyze how voluntary community-based flood insurance policies—

(i) would affect communities having varying economic bases, geographic locations, flood hazard characteristics or classifications, and flood management approaches; and

(ii) could satisfy the applicable requirements under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a); and

(B) evaluate the advisability of making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies to communities, subdivisions of communities, and areas of residual risk.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Administrator may consult with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Administrator determines is appropriate.

(b) REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains the results and conclusions of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations for—

(A) the best manner to incorporate voluntary community-based flood insurance policies into the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) a strategy to implement voluntary community-based flood insurance policies that would encourage communities to undertake flood mitigation activities, including the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of levees, dams, or other flood control structures.

(c) REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 6 months after the date on

which the Administrator submits the report required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(A) an analysis of the report submitted by the Administrator;

(B) any comments or recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(C) any other recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to community-based flood insurance policies.

SEC. 115. EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR CERTAIN MAP CHANGE REQUESTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a requester shall be exempt from submitting a review or processing fee for a request for a flood insurance rate map change based on a habitat restoration project that is funded in whole or in part with Federal or State funds, including dam removal, culvert redesign or installation, or the installation of fish passage.

SEC. 116. FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR URBAN BUILDINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall issue guidelines for property owners that—

(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to urban residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

(A) types of building materials; and

(B) types of floodproofing; and

(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.

(b) CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under subsection (a) of this section.

TITLE II—NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014”.

SEC. 202. REESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title III of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6751 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

“Subtitle C—National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers

“SEC. 321. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGISTERED AGENTS AND BROKERS.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers (referred to in this subtitle as the Association).

“(b) STATUS.—The Association shall—

“(1) be a nonprofit corporation;

“(2) not be an agent or instrumentality of the Federal Government;

“(3) be an independent organization that may not be merged with or into any other private or public entity; and

“(4) except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, be subject to, and have all the powers conferred upon, a nonprofit corporation by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act (D.C. Code, sec. 29-301.01 et seq.) or any successor thereto.

“SEC. 322. PURPOSE.

“The purpose of the Association shall be to provide a mechanism through which licensing, continuing education, and other non-resident insurance producer qualification requirements and conditions may be adopted and applied on a multi-state basis without affecting the laws, rules, and regulations, and preserving the rights of a State, pertaining to—

“(1) licensing, continuing education, and other qualification requirements of insurance producers that are not members of the Association;

“(2) resident or nonresident insurance producer appointment requirements;

“(3) supervising and disciplining resident and nonresident insurance producers;

“(4) establishing licensing fees for resident and nonresident insurance producers so that there is no loss of insurance producer licensing revenue to the State; and

“(5) prescribing and enforcing laws and regulations regulating the conduct of resident and nonresident insurance producers.

“SEC. 323. MEMBERSHIP.

“(a) ELIGIBILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Any insurance producer licensed in its home State shall, subject to paragraphs (2) and (4), be eligible to become a member of the Association.

“(2) INELIGIBILITY FOR SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF LICENSE.—Subject to paragraph (3), an insurance producer is not eligible to become a member of the Association if a State insurance regulator has suspended or revoked the insurance license of the insurance producer in that State.

“(3) RESUMPTION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Paragraph (2) shall cease to apply to any insurance producer if—

“(A) the State insurance regulator reissues or renews the license of the insurance producer in the State in which the license was suspended or revoked, or otherwise terminates or vacates the suspension or revocation; or

“(B) the suspension or revocation expires or is subsequently overturned by a court of competent jurisdiction.

“(4) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUIRED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An insurance producer who is an individual shall not be eligible to become a member of the Association unless the insurance producer has undergone a criminal history record check that complies with regulations prescribed by the Attorney General of the United States under subparagraph (K).

“(B) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUESTED BY HOME STATE.—An insurance producer who is licensed in a State and who has undergone a criminal history record check during the 2-year period preceding the date of submission of an application to become a member of the Association, in compliance with a requirement to undergo such criminal history record check as a condition for such licensure in the State, shall be deemed to have undergone a criminal history record check for purposes of subparagraph (A).

“(C) CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD CHECK REQUESTED BY ASSOCIATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall, upon request by an insurance producer licensed in a State, submit identification information obtained from the insurance pro-

ducer, and a request for a criminal history record check of the insurance producer, to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

“(ii) PROCEDURES.—The board of directors of the Association (referred to in this subtitle as the Board) shall prescribe procedures for obtaining and utilizing identification information and criminal history record information, including the establishment of reasonable fees required to perform a criminal history record check and appropriate safeguards for maintaining confidentiality and security of the information.

“(D) FORM OF REQUEST.—A submission under subparagraph (C)(i) shall include such identification information as is required by the Attorney General concerning the person about whom the criminal history record check is requested, and a statement signed by the person authorizing the Attorney General to provide the information to the Association and for the Association to receive the information.

“(E) PROVISION OF INFORMATION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Upon receiving a submission under subparagraph (C)(i) from the Association, the Attorney General shall search all criminal history records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including records of the Criminal Justice Information Services Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that the Attorney General determines appropriate for criminal history records corresponding to the identification information provided under subparagraph (D) and provide all criminal history record information included in the request to the Association.

“(F) LIMITATION ON PERMISSIBLE USES OF INFORMATION.—Any information provided to the Association under subparagraph (E) may only—

“(i) be used for purposes of determining compliance with membership criteria established by the Association;

“(ii) be disclosed to State insurance regulators, or Federal or State law enforcement agencies, in conformance with applicable law; or

“(iii) be disclosed, upon request, to the insurance producer to whom the criminal history record information relates.

“(G) PENALTY FOR IMPROPER USE OR DISCLOSURE.—Whoever knowingly uses any information provided under subparagraph (E) for a purpose not authorized in subparagraph (F), or discloses any such information to anyone not authorized to receive it, shall be fined under title 18, United States Code, imprisoned for not more than 2 years, or both.

“(H) RELIANCE ON INFORMATION.—Neither the Association nor any of its Board members, officers, or employees shall be liable in any action for using information provided under subparagraph (E) as permitted under subparagraph (F) in good faith and in reasonable reliance on its accuracy.

“(I) FEES.—The Attorney General may charge a reasonable fee for conducting the search and providing the information under subparagraph (E), and any such fee shall be collected and remitted by the Association to the Attorney General.

“(J) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as—

“(i) requiring a State insurance regulator to perform criminal history record checks under this section; or

“(ii) limiting any other authority that allows access to criminal history records.

“(K) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General shall prescribe regulations to carry out this paragraph, which shall include—

“(i) appropriate protections for ensuring the confidentiality of information provided under subparagraph (E); and

“(ii) procedures providing a reasonable opportunity for an insurance producer to contest the accuracy of information regarding the insurance producer provided under subparagraph (E).

“(L) INELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Association may, under reasonably consistently applied standards, deny membership to an insurance producer on the basis of criminal history record information provided under subparagraph (E), or where the insurance producer has been subject to disciplinary action, as described in paragraph (2).

“(ii) RIGHTS OF APPLICANTS DENIED MEMBERSHIP.—The Association shall notify any insurance producer who is denied membership on the basis of criminal history record information provided under subparagraph (E) of the right of the insurance producer to—

“(I) obtain a copy of all criminal history record information provided to the Association under subparagraph (E) with respect to the insurance producer; and

“(II) challenge the denial of membership based on the accuracy and completeness of the information.

“(M) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term criminal history record check means a national background check of criminal history records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

“(b) AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA.—The Association may establish membership criteria that bear a reasonable relationship to the purposes for which the Association was established.

“(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF CLASSES AND CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP.—The Association may establish separate classes of membership, with separate criteria, if the Association reasonably determines that performance of different duties requires different levels of education, training, experience, or other qualifications.

“(2) BUSINESS ENTITIES.—The Association shall establish a class of membership and membership criteria for business entities. A business entity that applies for membership shall be required to designate an individual Association member responsible for the compliance of the business entity with Association standards and the insurance laws, rules, and regulations of any State in which the business entity seeks to do business on the basis of Association membership.

“(3) CATEGORIES.—

“(A) SEPARATE CATEGORIES FOR INSURANCE PRODUCERS PERMITTED.—The Association may establish separate categories of membership for insurance producers and for other persons or entities within each class, based on the types of licensing categories that exist under State laws.

“(B) SEPARATE TREATMENT FOR DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS PROHIBITED.—No special categories of membership, and no distinct membership criteria, shall be established for members that are depository institutions or for employees, agents, or affiliates of depository institutions.

“(d) MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association may establish criteria for membership which shall include standards for personal qualifications, education, training, and experience. The Association shall not establish criteria that unfairly limit the ability of a small insurance producer to become a member of the Association, including imposing discriminatory membership fees.

“(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—In establishing criteria under paragraph (1), the Association

shall not adopt any qualification less protective to the public than that contained in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (referred to in this subtitle as the NAIC) Producer Licensing Model Act in effect as of the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014, and shall consider the highest levels of insurance producer qualifications established under the licensing laws of the States.

“(3) ASSISTANCE FROM STATES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Association may request a State to provide assistance in investigating and evaluating the eligibility of a prospective member for membership in the Association.

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF INFORMATION SHARING.—A submission under subsection (a)(4)(C)(i) made by an insurance producer licensed in a State shall include a statement signed by the person about whom the assistance is requested authorizing—

“(i) the State to share information with the Association; and

“(ii) the Association to receive the information.

“(C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not be construed as requiring or authorizing any State to adopt new or additional requirements concerning the licensing or evaluation of insurance producers.

“(4) DENIAL OF MEMBERSHIP.—The Association may, based on reasonably consistently applied standards, deny membership to any State-licensed insurance producer for failure to meet the membership criteria established by the Association.

“(e) EFFECT OF MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) AUTHORITY OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERS.—Membership in the Association shall—

“(A) authorize an insurance producer to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance in any State for which the member pays the licensing fee set by the State for any line or lines of insurance specified in the home State license of the insurance producer, and exercise all such incidental powers as shall be necessary to carry out such activities, including claims adjustments and settlement to the extent permissible under the laws of the State, risk management, employee benefits advice, retirement planning, and any other insurance-related consulting activities;

“(B) be the equivalent of a nonresident insurance producer license for purposes of authorizing the insurance producer to engage in the activities described in subparagraph (A) in any State where the member pays the licensing fee; and

“(C) be the equivalent of a nonresident insurance producer license for the purpose of subjecting an insurance producer to all laws, regulations, provisions or other action of any State concerning revocation, suspension, or other enforcement action related to the ability of a member to engage in any activity within the scope of authority granted under this subsection and to all State laws, regulations, provisions, and actions preserved under paragraph (5).

“(2) VIOLENT CRIME CONTROL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1994.—Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to alter, modify, or supercede any requirement established by section 1033 of title 18, United States Code.

“(3) AGENT FOR REMITTING FEES.—The Association shall act as an agent for any member for purposes of remitting licensing fees to any State pursuant to paragraph (1).

“(4) NOTIFICATION OF ACTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when an insurance

producer has satisfied the membership criteria of this section. The States (including State insurance regulators) shall have 10 business days after the date of the notification in order to provide the Association with evidence that the insurance producer does not satisfy the criteria for membership in the Association.

“(B) ONGOING DISCLOSURES REQUIRED.—On an ongoing basis, the Association shall disclose to the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC a list of the States in which each member is authorized to operate. The Association shall immediately notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when a member is newly authorized to operate in one or more States, or is no longer authorized to operate in one or more States on the basis of Association membership.

“(5) PRESERVATION OF CONSUMER PROTECTION AND MARKET CONDUCT REGULATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—No provision of this section shall be construed as altering or affecting the applicability or continuing effectiveness of any law, regulation, provision, or other action of any State, including those described in subparagraph (B), to the extent that the State law, regulation, provision, or other action is not inconsistent with the provisions of this subtitle related to market entry for nonresident insurance producers, and then only to the extent of the inconsistency.

“(B) PRESERVED REGULATIONS.—The laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions of any State referred to in subparagraph (A) include laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions that—

“(i) regulate market conduct, insurance producer conduct, or unfair trade practices;

“(ii) establish consumer protections; or

“(iii) require insurance producers to be appointed by a licensed or authorized insurer.

“(f) BIENNIAL RENEWAL.—Membership in the Association shall be renewed on a biennial basis.

“(g) CONTINUING EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall establish, as a condition of membership, continuing education requirements which shall be comparable to the continuing education requirements under the licensing laws of a majority of the States.

“(2) STATE CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.—A member may not be required to satisfy continuing education requirements imposed under the laws, regulations, provisions, or actions of any State other than the home State of the member.

“(3) RECIPROCITY.—The Association shall not require a member to satisfy continuing education requirements that are equivalent to any continuing education requirements of the home State of the member that have been satisfied by the member during the applicable licensing period.

“(4) LIMITATION ON THE ASSOCIATION.—The Association shall not directly or indirectly offer any continuing education courses for insurance producers.

“(h) PROBATION, SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION.—

“(1) DISCIPLINARY ACTION.—The Association may place an insurance producer that is a member of the Association on probation or suspend or revoke the membership of the insurance producer in the Association, or assess monetary fines or penalties, as the Association determines to be appropriate, if—

“(A) the insurance producer fails to meet the applicable membership criteria or other standards established by the Association;

“(B) the insurance producer has been subjected to disciplinary action pursuant to a

final adjudicatory proceeding under the jurisdiction of a State insurance regulator;

“(C) an insurance license held by the insurance producer has been suspended or revoked by a State insurance regulator; or

“(D) the insurance producer has been convicted of a crime that would have resulted in the denial of membership pursuant to subsection (a)(4)(L)(i) at the time of application, and the Association has received a copy of the final disposition from a court of competent jurisdiction.

“(2) VIOLATIONS OF ASSOCIATION STANDARDS.—The Association shall have the power to investigate alleged violations of Association standards.

“(3) REPORTING.—The Association shall immediately notify the States (including State insurance regulators) and the NAIC when the membership of an insurance producer has been placed on probation or has been suspended, revoked, or otherwise terminated, or when the Association has assessed monetary fines or penalties.

“(i) CONSUMER COMPLAINTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall—

“(A) refer any complaint against a member of the Association from a consumer relating to alleged misconduct or violations of State insurance laws to the State insurance regulator where the consumer resides and, when appropriate, to any additional State insurance regulator, as determined by standards adopted by the Association; and

“(B) make any related records and information available to each State insurance regulator to whom the complaint is forwarded.

“(2) TELEPHONE AND OTHER ACCESS.—The Association shall maintain a toll-free number for purposes of this subsection and, as practicable, other alternative means of communication with consumers, such as an Internet webpage.

“(3) FINAL DISPOSITION OF INVESTIGATION.—State insurance regulators shall provide the Association with information regarding the final disposition of a complaint referred pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), but nothing shall be construed to compel a State to release confidential investigation reports or other information protected by State law to the Association.

“(j) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Association may—

“(1) share documents, materials, or other information, including confidential and privileged documents, with a State, Federal, or international governmental entity or with the NAIC or other appropriate entity referenced in paragraphs (3) and (4), provided that the recipient has the authority and agrees to maintain the confidentiality or privileged status of the document, material, or other information;

“(2) limit the sharing of information as required under this subtitle with the NAIC or any other non-governmental entity, in circumstances under which the Association determines that the sharing of such information is unnecessary to further the purposes of this subtitle;

“(3) establish a central clearinghouse, or utilize the NAIC or another appropriate entity, as determined by the Association, as a central clearinghouse, for use by the Association and the States (including State insurance regulators), through which members of the Association may disclose their intent to operate in 1 or more States and pay the licensing fees to the appropriate States; and

“(4) establish a database, or utilize the NAIC or another appropriate entity, as determined by the Association, as a database,

for use by the Association and the States (including State insurance regulators) for the collection of regulatory information concerning the activities of insurance producers.

“(k) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The provisions of this section shall take effect on the later of—

“(1) the expiration of the 2-year period beginning on the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014; and

“(2) the date of incorporation of the Association.

“SEC. 324. BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a board of directors of the Association, which shall have authority to govern and supervise all activities of the Association.

“(b) POWERS.—The Board shall have such of the powers and authority of the Association as may be specified in the bylaws of the Association.

“(c) COMPOSITION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall consist of 13 members who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with the procedures established under Senate Resolution 116 of the 112th Congress, of whom—

“(A) 8 shall be State insurance commissioners appointed in the manner provided in paragraph (2), 1 of whom shall be designated by the President to serve as the chairperson of the Board until the Board elects one such State insurance commissioner Board member to serve as the chairperson of the Board;

“(B) 3 shall have demonstrated expertise and experience with property and casualty insurance producer licensing; and

“(C) 2 shall have demonstrated expertise and experience with life or health insurance producer licensing.

“(2) STATE INSURANCE REGULATOR REPRESENTATIVES.—

“(A) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Before making any appointments pursuant to paragraph (1)(A), the President shall request a list of recommended candidates from the States through the NAIC, which shall not be binding on the President. If the NAIC fails to submit a list of recommendations not later than 15 business days after the date of the request, the President may make the requisite appointments without considering the views of the NAIC.

“(B) POLITICAL AFFILIATION.—Not more than 4 Board members appointed under paragraph (1)(A) shall belong to the same political party.

“(C) FORMER STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If, after offering each currently serving State insurance commissioner an appointment to the Board, fewer than 8 State insurance commissioners have accepted appointment to the Board, the President may appoint the remaining State insurance commissioner Board members, as required under paragraph (1)(A), of the appropriate political party as required under subparagraph (B), from among individuals who are former State insurance commissioners.

“(ii) LIMITATION.—A former State insurance commissioner appointed as described in clause (i) may not be employed by or have any present direct or indirect financial interest in any insurer, insurance producer, or other entity in the insurance industry, other than direct or indirect ownership of, or beneficial interest in, an insurance policy or annuity contract written or sold by an insurer.

“(D) SERVICE THROUGH TERM.—If a Board member appointed under paragraph (1)(A)

ceases to be a State insurance commissioner during the term of the Board member, the Board member shall cease to be a Board member.

“(3) PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES.—In making any appointment pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (1), the President may seek recommendations for candidates from groups representing the category of individuals described, which shall not be binding on the President.

“(4) STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term State insurance commissioner means a person who serves in the position in State government, or on the board, commission, or other body that is the primary insurance regulatory authority for the State.

“(d) TERMS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under paragraph (2), the term of service for each Board member shall be 2 years.

“(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

“(A) 1-YEAR TERMS.—The term of service shall be 1 year, as designated by the President at the time of the nomination of the subject Board members for—

“(i) 4 of the State insurance commissioner Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(A), of whom not more than 2 shall belong to the same political party;

“(ii) 1 of the Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(B); and

“(iii) 1 of the Board members initially appointed under paragraph (1)(C).

“(B) EXPIRATION OF TERM.—A Board member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term to which the Board member was appointed for the earlier of 2 years or until a successor is appointed.

“(C) MID-TERM APPOINTMENTS.—A Board member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the predecessor of the Board member was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term.

“(3) SUCCESSIVE TERMS.—Board members may be reappointed to successive terms.

“(e) INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.—The appointment of initial Board members shall be made no later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers Reform Act of 2014.

“(f) MEETINGS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall meet—

“(A) at the call of the chairperson;

“(B) as requested in writing to the chairperson by not fewer than 5 Board members; or

“(C) as otherwise provided by the bylaws of the Association.

“(2) QUORUM REQUIRED.—A majority of all Board members shall constitute a quorum.

“(3) VOTING.—Decisions of the Board shall require the approval of a majority of all Board members present at a meeting, a quorum being present.

“(4) INITIAL MEETING.—The Board shall hold its first meeting not later than 45 days after the date on which all initial Board members have been appointed.

“(g) RESTRICTION ON CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.—Board members appointed pursuant to subparagraphs (B) and (C) of subsection (c)(1) shall not have access to confidential information received by the Association in connection with complaints, investigations, or disciplinary proceedings involving insurance producers.

“(h) ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.—The Board shall issue and enforce an ethical conduct code to address permissible and prohibited activities of Board members and As-

sociation officers, employees, agents, or consultants. The code shall, at a minimum, include provisions that prohibit any Board member or Association officer, employee, agent or consultant from—

“(1) engaging in unethical conduct in the course of performing Association duties;

“(2) participating in the making or influencing the making of any Association decision, the outcome of which the Board member, officer, employee, agent, or consultant knows or had reason to know would have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the person or a member of the immediate family of the person;

“(3) accepting any gift from any person or entity other than the Association that is given because of the position held by the person in the Association;

“(4) making political contributions to any person or entity on behalf of the Association; and

“(5) lobbying or paying a person to lobby on behalf of the Association.

“(i) COMPENSATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no Board member may receive any compensation from the Association or any other person or entity on account of Board membership.

“(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES AND PER DIEM.—Board members may be reimbursed only by the Association for travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates consistent with rates authorized for employees of Federal agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from home or regular places of business in performance of services for the Association.

“SEC. 325. BYLAWS, STANDARDS, AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

“(a) ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS AND STANDARDS.—

“(1) PROCEDURES.—The Association shall adopt procedures for the adoption of bylaws and standards that are similar to procedures under subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Administrative Procedure Act).

“(2) COPY REQUIRED TO BE FILED.—The Board shall submit to the President, through the Department of the Treasury, and the States (including State insurance regulators), and shall publish on the website of the Association, all proposed bylaws and standards of the Association, or any proposed amendment to the bylaws or standards of the Association, accompanied by a concise general statement of the basis and purpose of such proposal.

“(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Any proposed bylaw or standard of the Association, and any proposed amendment to the bylaws or standards of the Association, shall take effect, after notice under paragraph (2) and opportunity for public comment, on such date as the Association may designate, unless suspended under section 329(c).

“(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to subject the Board or the Association to the requirements of subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Administrative Procedure Act).

“(b) DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY THE ASSOCIATION.—

“(1) SPECIFICATION OF CHARGES.—In any proceeding to determine whether membership shall be denied, suspended, revoked, or not renewed, or to determine whether a member of the Association should be placed on probation (referred to in this section as a

disciplinary action) or whether to assess fines or monetary penalties, the Association shall bring specific charges, notify the member of the charges, give the member an opportunity to defend against the charges, and keep a record.

“(2) SUPPORTING STATEMENT.—A determination to take disciplinary action shall be supported by a statement setting forth—

“(A) any act or practice in which the member has been found to have been engaged;

“(B) the specific provision of this subtitle or standard of the Association that any such act or practice is deemed to violate; and

“(C) the sanction imposed and the reason for the sanction.

“(3) INELIGIBILITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES.—Board members appointed pursuant to section 324(c)(3) may not—

“(A) participate in any disciplinary action or be counted toward establishing a quorum during a disciplinary action; and

“(B) have access to confidential information concerning any disciplinary action.

“SEC. 326. POWERS.

“In addition to all the powers conferred upon a nonprofit corporation by the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act, the Association shall have the power to—

“(1) establish and collect such membership fees as the Association finds necessary to impose to cover the costs of its operations;

“(2) adopt, amend, and repeal bylaws, procedures, or standards governing the conduct of Association business and performance of its duties;

“(3) establish procedures for providing notice and opportunity for comment pursuant to section 325(a);

“(4) enter into and perform such agreements as necessary to carry out the duties of the Association;

“(5) hire employees, professionals, or specialists, and elect or appoint officers, and to fix their compensation, define their duties and give them appropriate authority to carry out the purposes of this subtitle, and determine their qualification;

“(6) establish personnel policies of the Association and programs relating to, among other things, conflicts of interest, rates of compensation, where applicable, and qualifications of personnel;

“(7) borrow money; and

“(8) secure funding for such amounts as the Association determines to be necessary and appropriate to organize and begin operations of the Association, which shall be treated as loans to be repaid by the Association with interest at market rate.

“SEC. 327. REPORT BY THE ASSOCIATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the close of each fiscal year, the Association shall submit to the President, through the Department of the Treasury, and the States (including State insurance regulators), and shall publish on the website of the Association, a written report regarding the conduct of its business, and the exercise of the other rights and powers granted by this subtitle, during such fiscal year.

“(b) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) with respect to any fiscal year shall include audited financial statements setting forth the financial position of the Association at the end of such fiscal year and the results of its operations (including the source and application of its funds) for such fiscal year.

“SEC. 328. LIABILITY OF THE ASSOCIATION AND THE BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES OF THE ASSOCIATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Association shall not be deemed to be an insurer or insurance

producer within the meaning of any State law, rule, regulation, or order regulating or taxing insurers, insurance producers, or other entities engaged in the business of insurance, including provisions imposing premium taxes, regulating insurer solvency or financial condition, establishing guaranty funds and levying assessments, or requiring claims settlement practices.

“(b) LIABILITY OF BOARD MEMBERS, OFFICERS, AND EMPLOYEES.—No Board member, officer, or employee of the Association shall be personally liable to any person for any action taken or omitted in good faith in any matter within the scope of their responsibilities in connection with the Association.

“SEC. 329. PRESIDENTIAL OVERSIGHT.

“(a) REMOVAL OF BOARD.—If the President determines that the Association is acting in a manner contrary to the interests of the public or the purposes of this subtitle or has failed to perform its duties under this subtitle, the President may remove the entire existing Board for the remainder of the term to which the Board members were appointed and appoint, in accordance with section 324 and with the advice and consent of the Senate, in accordance with the procedures established under Senate Resolution 116 of the 112th Congress, new Board members to fill the vacancies on the Board for the remainder of the terms.

“(b) REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBER.—The President may remove a Board member only for neglect of duty or malfeasance in office.

“(c) SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS AND STANDARDS AND PROHIBITION OF ACTIONS.—Following notice to the Board, the President, or a person designated by the President for such purpose, may suspend the effectiveness of any bylaw or standard, or prohibit any action, of the Association that the President or the designee determines is contrary to the purposes of this subtitle.

“SEC. 330. RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW.

“(a) PREEMPTION OF STATE LAWS.—State laws, regulations, provisions, or other actions purporting to regulate insurance producers shall be preempted to the extent provided in subsection (b).

“(b) PROHIBITED ACTIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—No State shall—

“(A) impede the activities of, take any action against, or apply any provision of law or regulation arbitrarily or discriminatorily to, any insurance producer because that insurance producer or any affiliate plans to become, has applied to become, or is a member of the Association;

“(B) impose any requirement upon a member of the Association that it pay fees different from those required to be paid to that State were it not a member of the Association; or

“(C) impose any continuing education requirements on any nonresident insurance producer that is a member of the Association.

“(2) STATES OTHER THAN A HOME STATE.—No State, other than the home State of a member of the Association, shall—

“(A) impose any licensing, personal or corporate qualifications, education, training, experience, residency, continuing education, or bonding requirement upon a member of the Association that is different from the criteria for membership in the Association or renewal of such membership;

“(B) impose any requirement upon a member of the Association that it be licensed, registered, or otherwise qualified to do business or remain in good standing in the State, including any requirement that the insurance producer register as a foreign company

with the secretary of state or equivalent State official;

“(C) require that a member of the Association submit to a criminal history record check as a condition of doing business in the State; or

“(D) impose any licensing, registration, or appointment requirements upon a member of the Association, or require a member of the Association to be authorized to operate as an insurance producer, in order to sell, solicit, or negotiate insurance for commercial property and casualty risks to an insured with risks located in more than one State, if the member is licensed or otherwise authorized to operate in the State where the insured maintains its principal place of business and the contract of insurance insures risks located in that State.

“(3) PRESERVATION OF STATE DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section may be construed to prohibit a State from investigating and taking appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension or revocation of authority of an insurance producer to do business in a State, in accordance with State law and that is not inconsistent with the provisions of this section, against a member of the Association as a result of a complaint or for any alleged activity, regardless of whether the activity occurred before or after the insurance producer commenced doing business in the State pursuant to Association membership.

“SEC. 331. COORDINATION WITH FINANCIAL INDUSTRY REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

“The Association shall coordinate with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority in order to ease any administrative burdens that fall on members of the Association that are subject to regulation by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, consistent with the requirements of this subtitle and the Federal securities laws.

“SEC. 332. RIGHT OF ACTION.

“(a) RIGHT OF ACTION.—Any person aggrieved by a decision or action of the Association may, after reasonably exhausting available avenues for resolution within the Association, commence a civil action in an appropriate United States district court, and obtain all appropriate relief.

“(b) ASSOCIATION INTERPRETATIONS.—In any action under subsection (a), the court shall give appropriate weight to the interpretation of the Association of its bylaws and standards and this subtitle.

“SEC. 333. FEDERAL FUNDING PROHIBITED.

“The Association may not receive, accept, or borrow any amounts from the Federal Government to pay for, or reimburse the Association for, the costs of establishing or operating the Association.

“SEC. 334. DEFINITIONS.

“For purposes of this subtitle, the following definitions shall apply:

“(1) BUSINESS ENTITY.—The term business entity means a corporation, association, partnership, limited liability company, limited liability partnership, or other legal entity.

“(2) DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION.—The term depository institution has the meaning as in section 3 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1813).

“(3) HOME STATE.—The term home State means the State in which the insurance producer maintains its principal place of residence or business and is licensed to act as an insurance producer.

“(4) INSURANCE.—The term insurance means any product, other than title insurance or bail bonds, defined or regulated as insurance by the appropriate State insurance regulatory authority.

“(5) INSURANCE PRODUCER.—The term insurance producer means any insurance agent or broker, excess or surplus lines broker or agent, insurance consultant, limited insurance representative, and any other individual or entity that sells, solicits, or negotiates policies of insurance or offers advice, counsel, opinions or services related to insurance.

“(6) INSURER.—The term insurer has the meaning as in section 313(e)(2)(B) of title 31, United States Code.

“(7) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS.—The term principal place of business means the State in which an insurance producer maintains the headquarters of the insurance producer and, in the case of a business entity, where high-level officers of the entity direct, control, and coordinate the business activities of the business entity.

“(8) PRINCIPAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE.—The term principal place of residence means the State in which an insurance producer resides for the greatest number of days during a calendar year.

“(9) STATE.—The term State includes any State, the District of Columbia, any territory of the United States, and Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

“(10) STATE LAW.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term State law includes all laws, decisions, rules, regulations, or other State action having the effect of law, of any State.

“(B) LAWS APPLICABLE IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.—A law of the United States applicable only to or within the District of Columbia shall be treated as a State law rather than a law of the United States.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act is amended by striking the items relating to subtitle C of title III and inserting the following new items:

“Subtitle C—National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers

“Sec. 321. National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

“Sec. 322. Purpose.

“Sec. 323. Membership.

“Sec. 324. Board of directors.

“Sec. 325. Bylaws, standards, and disciplinary actions.

“Sec. 326. Powers.

“Sec. 327. Report by the Association.

“Sec. 328. Liability of the Association and the Board members, officers, and employees of the Association.

“Sec. 329. Presidential oversight.

“Sec. 330. Relationship to State law.

“Sec. 331. Coordination with Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.

“Sec. 332. Right of action.

“Sec. 333. Federal funding prohibited.

“Sec. 334. Definitions.”.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. CARDIN. I move to lay that motion upon the table.

The motion to lay upon the table was agreed to.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014— CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

INCOME INEQUALITY

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, on Tuesday evening, President Obama, in his State of the Union Address, made the point that America must be the land of opportunity for all. He acknowledged, quite frankly, that for many families in this country the American dream is just that, a dream.

Many families have lost hope that their children or grandchildren will be able to achieve the American dream. President Obama made the point that if we all work together, the outlook for this country is strong and that we can make not only the American dream something people can continue to believe but it can become a reality for more and more American families.

But he also expressed the reality of where we are. The facts indicate that intergenerational mobility, that is, for a child born into poverty, their ability to move up the economic ladder has not changed in the last several decades. The American dream has become just that for too many families.

Let me point out some of the income disparity we have seen grow in the United States. Some of this is very understandable. It is understandable that people get paid differently. Some people work a lot harder, some people come up with an incredibly ingenious way of doing something, the American way of developing new technologies, people are willing to take greater risks than others. Yes, the reward will be greater. We do expect and we do appreciate, we do look up to people who can be very successful in our economic system.

But what is not understandable is how we have seen a growth in the income disparity among Americans during good times and bad times. Between 1979 and 2007, the top 1 percent in income in America saw their income go up 275 percent, whereas the three middle quintiles—this is what we usually consider to be the middle class, those from 20 percent to 80 percent—saw their income go up only 40 percent. This is in a period of economic growth in this country from 1979. To see your income go up only 40 percent, whereas the wealthiest are going up close to 300 percent, should be of concern to people of this country.

As we all know, in 2007 we went through a recession. Since that recession, median income in this country has declined. It went down 31 percent during the recession. But for the wealthiest, it actually went up. It went up 31 percent. The median income went down for most Americans.

We have a problem. During good times, we are seeing the income of the wealthiest get larger, in bad times we see wealthy people protected, whereas middle-income families are doing worse. We even have what is known as the birth lottery. If you are born into poverty, we know you have a hard time

getting out of poverty today. If you are in certain communities, it is even much more difficult.

So President Obama was right to concentrate on America as opportunity for all. How can we get a growing middle class in this country? What can we do to help everyone do better in our country? Many countries are doing much better than we are. This disparity strikes at the heart of who we are as a nation. We believe that if you work hard, you play according to the rules, you should be able to succeed in this country. For too many families, that is not the reality.

What can we do to make a difference? I know there has been a lot of talk as to what we can do to help in that regard, what we can do to make it better. It is very important to do that for the values of our country. It is important for the families who are affected. But it is also important for our economy.

So, yes, we need to increase opportunity for middle-income families so more people can live the American dream. We need to do that because that is what we stand for as a country. Those are our values. But we also need to do this for our economy. It is very interesting that the companies that are making money today are ready to invest in the growth of our economy. They need consumers. They need people who will buy the automobiles. They need people who will eat in the restaurants. They need people who will go on vacations. They need people who will buy the clothing in the stores. If they do not have the income to do it, they do not buy the products, our economy does not grow. So a growing middle class is critically important to our economy.

What steps can we take? First, we have already taken one very important step with the passage of the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act dealt with health care costs. We have seen a reduction in the rate of health care costs over the past couple of years. It is a major cost among American families. It has been growing and growing every year. We are now starting to see a slowdown in that. Why? Because we are dealing with health delivery. We are trying to make the health care system more efficient by looking at the total care of an individual rather than just looking at a specific episode.

We are trying to reduce readmissions. We are dealing with healthy lifestyles. The Affordable Care Act rewards all of those issues. We make quality affordable insurance available to all Americans.

Last year, nearly 2 million families had to go through bankruptcy in America because of health care costs. Last year it was estimated that 56 million American families struggled to pay their medical bills. So this is an issue we need to look at from the point of

view of helping middle-income families.

Alan Krueger, the economist, observed:

We helped the middle class and those struggling to get into the middle class by lowering the growth of health care costs, by preventing those with pre-existing conditions from being denied health insurance coverage, by creating exchanges for small businesses and lower income families to obtain health insurance at competitive rates, and by providing tax subsidies to small businesses and lower income workers to purchase insurance.

The point Mr. Krueger was making is when we eliminate preexisting conditions, when we have health exchanges that allow individuals and small businesses to be able to get competitive rates, we are helping with middle-income growth in America.

There is a lot more we need to do in addition to the health care problems we have in this country. The President mentioned during his State of the Union Address that Americans need a pay raise. I could not agree with him more. In 1968—that was 46 years ago—the minimum wage in this country was set at \$1.60 per hour. If you adjust that for inflation, the minimum wage would be \$10.77. The minimum wage in America is not \$10.77, it is \$7.25 per hour. The tipped employee minimum wage is \$2.13. For a full-time worker at the minimum wage, \$7.25 per hour wage, they would be making a little over \$15,000 a year. You cannot support your family on \$15,000 a year.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition has done a study. There is not a single State in the Union where you can afford affordable housing. They defined that as a two-bedroom housing unit on the rental market. There is not a single State in the Nation where the \$15,000-a-year income allows you to be able to afford that housing for your family.

The American dream is on life support. We need to do more about that. One thing we can easily do in this Congress this year is raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour.

We also need to adjust it for inflation. What does that mean? We have only adjusted minimum wages maybe three times in the last 30-some years. We need to have the minimum wage keep up with inflation. That way we do not have to deal with abrupt increases. We will have gentle increases, which I think is better for our economy to start off with, but it also keeps the minimum wage at where we want to set it. It does not erode the year after we pass it.

I think that makes sense. Let me dispel some of the myths about the minimum wage.

I hear frequently: Well, we are only talking about teenagers or those in their early twenties, it is their first job, and it is not so serious.

Let's look at the facts. The average age of a person earning minimum wage

is 35. The median age is 31; 36 percent are over 40 years of age, 40 years of age or older; 56 percent are women—now only 56 percent of our workforce is women, but at minimum wage it is much more likely to be a woman than a man earning minimum wage; 28 percent of people who are earning the minimum wage have children. These are families trying to live on minimum wage.

Increasing the minimum wage will help to grow the middle class. It will help our economy. A \$10.10 per hour minimum wage will generate about \$34 billion in wages into our economy, \$34 billion. Do you know what that means for the local businesses that are there? Do you know what that means for our economy? I know our economy is on the right path, but we have to help it along. We don't have enough jobs in America, and \$35 billion will allow that local supermarket or that restaurant or that business owner to hire some more people, creating more jobs, helping our economy continue to grow.

People who work full time shouldn't live in poverty. Today, with the current minimum wage, and even with the tax credits we have available, most individuals will live in poverty. That is unacceptable. At \$10.10 per hour, we will be above the poverty line with the tax credits.

That is what we should do. If we play according to the rules, we should be able to succeed; work 40 hours a week, we shouldn't have to live in poverty, not in the United States of America.

Americans understand this. Polls have shown over and over that the overwhelming majority of Americans support a reasonable adjustment in the minimum wage. The Gallup poll found that 76 percent of Americans believe Congress should pass an increase in the minimum wage. President Obama has already taken action, and I applaud him for that. He is going to be signing an executive order. So those people who are Federal workers, from a contractor, Federal contract worker, someone who is getting money from the Federal Government and hires people, they are going to have to pay the minimum of a \$10.10 minimum wage. We should do the same for all workers in this country, and we have it in our power to do it.

There are a lot of other things the President mentioned. There are many other issues that I think we need to deal with for our agenda for a growing middle class. We clearly need to do a much better job in education. Education is the key to opportunity in America. It truly does open doors. We want to open up jobs, but we need people who are trained to be competitive for these jobs, particularly in a global economy. We need people trained.

The President is right to say it starts at a very early age, pre-K. In the pre-K through 12, we have to insist on qual-

ity education. We have some great schools in America, but not all children have access to those good schools. We need to do a better job at educating our children in all fields—all fields. STEM is very important, but so are the humanities, so are the arts. We have to do a better job in our pre-K through 12. In higher education, we have to make it much more affordable.

How do we expect to get a growing middle class when so many families are looking at tens of thousands of dollars of educational bills but they don't have any idea of how they are going to be able to pay for it—or our young workers saddled with these large debts affecting what career they are going to go into.

We have to invest in quality education but also affordable higher education. That is why it is important for us to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, to demand that there be value given for the money that we invest in higher education but that we also make it affordable for American families.

We need a modern infrastructure, and the President talked about that. Good jobs go to where there are good roads, good bridges, and good transit systems. Any morning today, try to get around this region; we know how important the transit system is in the Washington area.

In my own State I know we have three major transit projects that we need to get funded so people don't spend hours in gridlock every morning.

We need modern infrastructure in Maryland. In my own State of Maryland we have had tremendous problems with our water infrastructure. We have had roads flooded and homes damaged. We need to rebuild our water infrastructure and assure that people get clean, safe drinking water and that we take care of our water infrastructure in America.

We need a modern energy grid in this country, which is critically important for economic growth. As President Obama said, good jobs go to where there is good infrastructure, and we need to do a better job with the infrastructure in America.

We will have a chance again in this Congress. We haven't reauthorized the Surface Transportation Act. I hope a WRDA bill will get done with some of our WRDA projects. It is in conference today. Those are things we can do to help grow a middle class.

We have to invest in research. I think one of the lines that received the biggest applause in the President's State of the Union Address when he said: We have to restore the cuts we made that we should never have made to the basic research, the National Institutes of Health—headquartered in my State. They are located in every State, but they are headquartered in Maryland.

The work they do is critically important to economic growth in our country. We have to invest in research.

We need a progressive tax structure. More and more economists are telling us that to have a growing middle class, we need the revenue. We are going to pay our bills—we don't want the debt—but we have to do it in a way that is fair and rewards the middle class.

Middle-class families don't take advantage of these tax breaks, these tax loopholes. At a minimum, we have to close those tax loopholes. I agree with the President in that regard.

The President also mentioned in the State of the Union Address that for growing a middle class we want to make sure they have a job, we want to make sure they are trained for that job, we want to make sure they are rewarded for that job with fair wages, and we also want to make sure they have a secure retirement. We are not doing enough to make sure Americans have a secure retirement.

We have to save more as a nation. The best way to save is through retirement savings. We can all come together to do more. This is not a partisan issue. We should be able to do this together.

Let me end on a quote from a former President, Theodore Roosevelt.

He said: "This country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in."

I think that was what President Obama was talking about when he said "opportunity for all."

That is what this Nation stands for. We have all the reason to believe we can accomplish this for the people of America, but we need to work together with the President to work to implement commonsense changes so we can have a growing middle class in America.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, earlier this month the Quinnipiac poll asked voters what the top priority they had for President Obama and Members of Congress in 2014: 18 percent said health care; 16 percent said jobs and unemployment; 15 percent said the economy in general. By comparison, only 1 percent of the voters said income inequality.

In other words, 99 percent of the voters in this Quinnipiac poll felt that income inequality should not be our top priority and that, rather, they would like for us to focus on not only the symptoms of the problems but the root causes: how do we get people back to work; how do we increase upward income mobility, letting people climb that ladder of success so they can pursue their own American dream.

Yet the most significant economic proposal President Obama mentioned

in his State of the Union was aimed not at fixing our health care system, creating jobs or boosting growth but, rather, at this idea of reducing income inequality. The American people are pretty darn smart, and they understand that we need to grow the size of the pie, not only cut up the pie into different pieces.

The best way to do that is by guaranteeing that people have the opportunity to pursue their dreams, not some socialistic notion of let's slice up the pie in Washington, DC. No one does better under that kind of system.

But I also mentioned the President's—apparently—signature proposal for addressing income inequality; that is, by raising the minimum wage. I heard my friend from Maryland talking about the minimum wage as if Washington can wave a magic wand and say: You, Mr. Employer, you, Madam Employer, are now going to start paying your employees 40 percent more than you did yesterday because the big bad Federal Government orders you to do so.

They act as if that would have no other consequences or costs.

As I mentioned yesterday, there are studies that have been done that indicate that if we raise the minimum wage to \$10.10, for which the President has argued, it could well dislocate as many as several hundred thousand people from their existing jobs.

Let's think about this for a minute. A small employer has a business—let's say they have a fast food restaurant; I have hundreds of them, maybe thousands of them in my State—and the employer is worried about bringing money in the front door from selling their product, selling the food at their fast food restaurant, they know they are going to have certain expenses. Some of that is the materials or food they put together. Some of it is their overhead such as electricity and energy, but a significant part of that is going to be the cost of labor, paying people to work there.

If we automatically tell that small employer, that fast food restaurant, instead of \$7 an hour, they now have to pay 40 percent more, what is that going to do to their ability to not only hire and grow their business but to maintain their current level of employment?

Perhaps there is a reason the President has counterintuitively decided to come up with some sort of feel good quick patch such as the minimum wage, which would actually make things worse. Perhaps he has decided to focus on this because maybe he is feeling a little bit guilty about his record over the past 4 to 5 years.

According to the New York Times—hardly a bastion of conservative propaganda—the trend of rising inequality "appears to have accelerated during the Obama administration."

The President—and I will get to this in a moment—appeared to concede that much in his State of the Union speech. In fact, one measure of the income gap suggests the inequality of wages has increased four times faster under President Obama than it did under the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush. The best thing we could do to support upward mobility is not to address the symptom of lower wages but to address the root cause, expand the economy, jobs, and to give people the tools they need to qualify for good, high-paying jobs for which they don't have the job skills currently.

We know a lot of our community colleges, such as the one I visited last week in Houston, San Jacinto College, does a very good job of training people for the skills they need in order to qualify for good, high-paying jobs. That is where we ought to focus our government, not by the Federal Government trying to fix prices when it comes to wages and actually end up making things worse.

Unfortunately, the President seems incapable of embracing an economic strategy that doesn't involve more government, particularly more government spending and more government control over the private sector. My constituents in Texas tell me one reason they are feeling uncertain about the future and the economy, particularly if they are a business owner, is they don't know what kind of new taxes, they don't know what kind of new regulation, and they don't know what financial burden, such as ObamaCare, will be thrust down on them that will totally change their business model and cause them to go bankrupt—perhaps because they hadn't counted on what the Federal Government might do to them, as opposed to the market.

But we have tried the President's approach: big government, spending, stimulus spending, and the like. That is a big reason why we are suffering through the slowest economic recovery since the Great Depression and the highest and longest period of high unemployment since that same time.

Even when the President seems to be supporting a fresh approach, he is actually selling old ideas in a new package. I remember the President talking, for example, about tax reform. He called for abolishing loopholes in the Tax Code and simultaneously lowering the marginal rates. That sounds pretty good. I would support that, and I believe we could get strong bipartisan support for that kind of tax reform—lower the rates, cut out a lot of the underbrush, the tax expenditures.

They are much like the President's own bipartisan fiscal and debt commission, the Simpson-Bowles commission, recommended in December of 2010. But what did the President do when his own bipartisan fiscal commission reported to him a bipartisan plan to deal

with the debt and to get the economy moving again? He ignored it. He walked away from it.

Unfortunately, the President, when he talks about tax reform, is actually talking about a way to raise taxes, to raise revenue. This is what I mean by that. He talks about tax reform as a vehicle for a tax increase, even though he has already raised the taxes of hard-working American families by \$1.7 trillion while he has been President. But the American people are plenty smart and they can figure out if the President is going to eliminate their deductions and tax credits and the like that he is going to have to bring down their rate or else it will actually be a tax increase.

There is another good reason why we need to do the kind of tax reform I am talking about, and that occasionally the President talks about when he is talking about progrowth tax reform, and that is to make it revenue neutral, to bring down the rates, which will encourage people to invest and create jobs because they know the incentives will be there for them. They will be able to reap the fruits of their labor and of their risk. That is the kind of tax reform both political parties supported back in 1986 and the kind of tax reform we need to do again.

Sadly, the President and the majority leader have chosen to hijack this wonderful idea of tax reform while demanding another \$1 trillion tax increase. Meanwhile, the President wants to use the Tax Code to pick winners and losers by discriminating against certain industries and increasing government subsidies to others.

I heard him talk about the oil and gas industry again. This is actually one of the brightest sectors of the economy. But the President wants to take the goose that laid the golden egg and burden it with additional regulations and taxes.

Truth be known, 80 percent of the tax benefits that flow to the energy sector flow to the so-called green energy sector—many of which I think are important—but we have to be realistic. We are actually writing them a check as opposed to the millions and millions—and literally hundreds of millions of dollars—of tax revenue generated from the oil and gas industry.

If there is one sector of the energy economy that is creating more jobs and opportunity and provides more chance for us to reduce our imports from dangerous parts of the world, it is our domestic energy sector. But the President wants to raise their taxes.

The President acknowledged on Tuesday night that what has happened during the 5-year term of his Presidency is that average wages have barely budged, inequality has deepened, and upward mobility has stalled. In other words, he agrees with the assessment of the *New York Times*. The problem is the solu-

tion to that condition would actually make things worse and not better.

So I actually agree with the President's assessment: During his 5 years as President, average wages have barely budged, inequality has deepened, and upward mobility has stalled. So why in the world would we want to add another \$1 trillion tax burden on our economy and on the productive sector of our economy at a time when average wages have barely budged, inequality has deepened and upward mobility has stalled? Why in the world would we jeopardize the renaissance in American oil and gas production, which represents one of our few economic bright spots? Why in the world would the President continue to reject the Keystone XL Pipeline from Canada, which would create thousands of well-paying jobs?

You will notice, by the way, Madam President, that President Obama said nothing—zero, zip, nada—about the Keystone XL Pipeline in his State of the Union. It really is just mind-boggling.

I would like to close by noting something the President said about health care, and this is another interesting aspect of his State of the Union speech. It was about 40 minutes into his speech before he even mentioned health care, when that is the big, looming, 800-pound gorilla in the room. People are anxious about this rollout of ObamaCare—first the Web site, then the cancellations, and then the sticker shock. People are worried about it. But the President waited 40 minutes into his State of the Union speech before even addressing it.

But here is what the President said to congressional Republicans. He said: If you have specific plans to cut costs, cover more people, and increase choice, tell America what you would do differently.

The problem is we have been telling the President since 2009, but he has refused to listen. He has refused to listen, and he is still refusing to listen.

The President went on to say that Republicans owe it to the American people to say what they are for, not just what they are against. I agree with the President, and we have, and continue to do so, but he continues not to listen.

Republicans have been offering health care alternatives for at least the last 5 years, most recently just earlier this week when three of my colleagues: Senator HATCH, Senator BURR, and Senator COBURN introduced a health reform blueprint that would reduce costs, expand quality insurance coverage, and improve patient access to doctors and hospitals. If President Obama wasn't aware of this, then perhaps he needs to spend a little more time outside the White House and the Democratic echo chamber and actually engage with Members of this side of the aisle in se-

rious discussions. It is really easy to knock down a straw man, but only when it is not true. Given all the massive problems with the implementation of ObamaCare—not just with the Web site, not just with the cancellations, not just with the sticker shock or the fact you can't keep your doctors if you like them—and along with all of the massive problems still plaguing our economy and stalling wages, it is time for the President to show some real leadership. The way he could show that leadership is simply to get in a room with Members of the opposing party and to say: Let's figure this out.

This plan or this blueprint that Senators COBURN, BURR, and HATCH have introduced is just one of dozens of ideas that would actually bring down the cost of health insurance, which would make it more affordable, and that means more people could buy it and more people would get covered. But the difference between our approach and the President's approach under ObamaCare is that under ObamaCare the government gets to choose, and under our alternatives individuals and families get to choose what is best for them.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I rise today to express my support for the Agricultural Act of 2014, which is commonly known as the farm bill. It has been quite a journey over the past 3 years, and the bill before us is the result of many long hours of hard work. This bill, I understand, will be on the floor come Monday, and hopefully we will have a vote on final passage on this bill on Tuesday.

I believe this bill achieves the promise of reform while tackling the single largest domestic issue facing our country: The debt and the deficit. I commend Chairwoman STABENOW, Chairman LUCAS, Ranking Members COCHRAN and PETERSON, as well as my fellow conferees for finishing what has been a very difficult and complex task.

It is my sincere hope the Senate will adopt this bipartisan conference report, a bill that reforms critical farm programs, strengthens the Nation's food security, protects the livelihood of our farmers and ranchers and preserves our efforts to remain good stewards of the environment.

The bill not only works to protect producers in a time of need, but it also serves as a safety net for the nutritional well-being of low-income Americans. Our nutrition assistance programs play a key role in ensuring that needy Americans have access to the food they need to lead healthy, productive lives.

We have worked to find savings while still ensuring those in greatest need are provided a helping hand. I commend the important reinvestments

made in this bill to local food banks which provide support for so many of our communities.

Agricultural producers face a combination of challenges, such as unpredictable weather, variable input costs and market volatility that all combine to determine profit or loss in any given year. The 2008 farm bill provided a strong safety net for producers, and I believe the farm bill before us adheres to and honors the same commitment we made 5 years ago in that farm bill.

Notably, Congress has taken a fresh look at our commodity programs. Maintaining an effective safety net is critical to America's farmers, and the bill before us eliminates direct payments while enhancing options for farmers to manage their risk. We do so in a way that doesn't disadvantage one region over another, a formula I thought was lacking in versions of this bill in the last Congress. Since then, I have stressed to my colleagues the importance of producer choice, and I am truly pleased with the options that are built into this piece of legislation.

One part of this bill I am uniquely proud of concerns cotton, a crop that is particularly close to my heart and close to my home. More than any other part of this bill, the Upland cotton program represents fundamental reform. It meets our commitments in the World Trade Organization and will resolve our dispute with Brazil.

Moreover, our Nation's farmers and landowners deserve to have long-term conservation programs that have certainty to effectively and efficiently manage their land and resources for the years ahead. Locally led conservation is critical in supporting America's long-term environmental and economic stability. Not only do farm bill conservation programs play a key role in supporting clean air, clean water, and productive soils, they also help producers avoid unnecessary regulation and support our Nation's long-term economic and food security.

I also want to highlight language in this bill that links conservation compliance to crop insurance. My amendment led many leading agricultural, conservation, and crop insurance groups to come together and forge a compromise, ensuring crop insurance doesn't compromise our natural resources for generations to come. It also provides an opportunity for wildlife habitat to flourish and, thus, this farm bill is supported by virtually every hunting and fishing organization in the country.

While all of the regulatory issues I supported were not able to be included in the final conference report, I am happy that language was included to clarify forest roads are not point sources and are not subject to permit requirements under the Clean Water Act.

We must do what we can to protect producers, businesses, and all of our

constituents from over-burdensome regulations coming out of EPA. After all, I am confident we have balanced the needs and interests between commodities and regions. Ultimately, the reason we are here is to represent those who work the land each and every day to ensure that Americans continue to have the highest quality agricultural products in the world.

Contrary to popular belief, food does not come from the grocery store. For every piece of fresh produce purchased, every pound of meat, every cotton t-shirt, and for every jar of peanut butter there is a farmer or a rancher somewhere in America working each and every day—and working very hard—to get it there. I hope that we never take for granted the ability to get safe quality food to stores across America for consumers to purchase.

This will be my fourth and final farm bill as a Member of Congress. As a former chairman and ranking member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, I am very proud of this bill and of all previous farm bills of which I have had the privilege to be a part.

As I have said, I have been around the country as a Member of Congress over the last 20 years. When I leave Congress, as I will at the end of this year, I want to make sure we have strong agricultural policies in place so that young people, such as my grandson John and my grandson Jay, if they make a decision to come back to the farm, will have an incentive to do so, and they will be able to provide a quality of life for their family very much like the quality of life they have today. Good agricultural policy will incentivize those young people to stay in rural America and on the farm, and I think this Farm bill does that.

There is no single piece of legislation that impacts as many people in my State as this one. I believe it is vitally important to the farmers, ranchers, and consumers of Georgia, as well as to those across this great Nation that we support this legislation.

In closing, let me say it has been my distinct honor to represent and work with the people, farmers, and ranchers of Georgia for 20 years. You provide the highest quality food, feed, and fiber in the world. Thanks for the opportunity to represent you in Congress and to be a member of what I think is an outstanding agricultural committee.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I wish to thank the Senator from Georgia through the Chair for all of his extraordinary leadership on the agriculture committee for so many years. As a new member of that committee, I saw firsthand how important he was to our getting to a compromise.

So through the Chair, I say thank you to the Senator for his great service, and particularly his great service to farmers and ranchers all across his home State and also across the great State of Colorado.

I too wish to speak today on this compromise bill, this bipartisan bill, this farm bill which has such a long history. In 2012 the Senate agriculture committee was the only committee in the entire Congress with a bipartisan deficit plan. It passed the Senate. The House didn't take it up. I think it was an enormous disservice to rural Americans that we didn't pass this bill 2 years ago, particularly when farmers and ranchers in my region are facing an unprecedented drought.

I distinctly remember being out during the summer of 2012 on the eastern plains and the western slope of Colorado right before the Presidential election. While this town was completely consumed with who was going to win that election, people in Colorado weren't talking about it at all. They were asking: Why in the world can't we pass the farm bill through the Congress and get it to the President's desk?

Now finally, after a series of extensions and half measures, we actually got to a conference committee. I think it may be the only conference committee in this Congress. This is how we used to do business around here, I am told. I was glad to be a member of the one conference committee in this Congress. We got to committee on a long-term bill.

I have stood on this floor before talking about the land of flickering lights. This town has become a place where the standard of success is keeping the lights on for 2 more weeks or 2 more months. Here we have an honest-to-goodness 5-year farm bill.

Agreed to by both Republicans and Democrats, it has now been passed by the House of Representatives, and next week we will have a chance to pass it here. Thanks to the tireless work of Chairwoman STABENOW, Ranking Member COCHRAN, and the other conferees, we now will have the chance to vote.

Our rural communities are demanding the certainty that comes with a long-term bill. Under the last farm bill—and history ought to be our guide here—our farmers and ranchers were remarkably productive. They delivered the strongest 5-year stretch of farm exports in the history of the United States of America. Now it is time to make some reforms to farm policy and to once again give rural America the stability it needs to provide food, fuel, and fiber to the Nation.

This bill reflects the values and process we want to see in other areas of the budget. We came together as Republicans and Democrats to identify priorities, to streamline duplication, to get rid of things we didn't need to do anymore, and to focus in the areas that

were important—to break away from old, inefficient habits, to eliminate for the first time direct payments issued to farmers regardless of economic needs or market signals. That is a significant reform.

This bill prioritizes what is working for producers instead; namely, crop insurance, which is a large part of what keeps farmers and rural economies in business in this country, and that is why it is a priority.

Beyond crop insurance, another key highlight of this bill is the great tools it includes for livestock. It includes resources for much-needed livestock disaster programs that are critical to southeast Colorado, where ranchers are battling dry conditions we haven't seen since the dust bowl.

When I visited last August, producers who are facing stubbornly persistent drought and feed shortages told me that nearly 70 percent of their livestock had been liquidated or relocated from the region in just 2 years. That is part of a boom and bust cycle that comes with our livestock industry which makes it difficult to build for the future. This farm bill couldn't come sooner for Colorado's ranchers.

Beyond livestock disaster, there is a lot to support our ranching community in this bill. We have included a revamped conservation title—and I chair that subcommittee—which will keep our ranching lands in the West in their current state, rather than being divided for development.

The conference report also carries over important conservation title reforms from the Senate bill. Notably, it carries forward a Senate provision to ensure that recipients of government-supported crop insurance comply with basic conservation requirements. That measure was the result of a historic agreement between the commodity groups and our conservation groups. It is supported by a wide variety of people, from the Farm Bureau to the National Wildlife Federation.

This revamped conservation title is huge for rural America. It is huge for farming and ranching families looking to keep their land and agriculture. It is huge for sportsmen. It is huge for anyone who cares about the long-term health of our soil, our air, and our water. I thank again the groups who traditionally represent producers and the groups who traditionally represent the environmental community and conservationists and sportsmen for coming together on commonsense reforms. These conservation measures will help us improve the efficiency and production of agriculture and improve the quality of the environment in farm country.

We recognize that keeping these landscapes in their historical undeveloped state is an economic driver—for our State, anyway, and I suspect for many States—for tourism and for wildlife habitat.

As I have traveled the State of Colorado, farmers and ranchers are constantly talking to me about the importance of conservation and their commitment to be stewards of the land for the next generation. They highlighted in particular conservation easements which provide the Department of Agriculture assistance to help landowners voluntarily conserve the farming and ranching heritage of their land. I will spend a couple of minutes sharing a story I have told on this floor before about one of the many Coloradans who have benefited from the easement program.

This is a picture of the Music Meadows Ranch. I actually liked this photo so much when I was on the floor the last time with it that I now have a copy of it hanging in my office here in Washington. It is outside of Westcliffe, CO, which is at an elevation of 9,000 feet. There are 4,000 acres in the ranch. Elin Ganschow raises some of the finest grass-fed beef in the country on this family ranch. Thanks to the grassland reserve program, Elin's ranch now has a permanent conservation easement, providing critical wildlife habitat for elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions—species prized by Colorado's sportsmen—that contribute millions to our State's economy. Thanks to an amendment included in the conference report, we will see even more of these easements happen on high-priority landscapes such as the Music Meadows Ranch.

It is critical to our legacy and to the next generation of Coloradans to make sure we can find a way, when the land prices are rising the way they are, to keep farms and ranches in the hands of our family farmers and our family ranches. That is what this bill will help us do.

I thank Chairwoman STABENOW and Senator COCHRAN for working with me to get that amendment approved and carried into the final bill. I thank all the Colorado ranchers, sportsmen, and advocates of the outdoors for their support in drafting this legislation.

Also important to the West, this legislation makes great strides on forest help. This is a huge issue for Colorado and all Western States as we deal with terrible droughts, overgrown forests, and massive wildfires—a number of which have occurred in Colorado.

This conference report gives the Forest Service new tools to treat areas in need of restoration, like acreage suffering from the bark beetle epidemic that has ravaged Colorado.

The forestry title also reauthorizes important programs such as stewardship contracting and so-called good neighbor authority for our national forests.

So all in all, I again say thank you to my colleagues on the committee for working so hard together, for acknowledging regional interests that we have

in the West which may not be shared with everybody. Although anybody who is downstream from Colorado—and that is basically the entire country—ought to care about forest health in Colorado and ought to care about water quality in Colorado. I think we were heard in this bill, and I deeply appreciate that.

The final point I would make is something which just came up in the last 2 weeks and we were able to resolve. We had an appropriations bill which passed a couple of weeks ago that failed to include a very important provision to States that have a high percentage of their land occupied with Federal land, and that is the so-called PILT payments, payment in lieu of taxes.

The program helps rural counties containing Federal land within their boundaries offset the revenue they lose because they can't derive property taxes from their land. Dozens of Colorado counties derive significant portions of their operating budget from PILT. By the way, they use those operating budgets to help maintain a lot of these Federal assets out there by, for example, providing search and rescue missions. I can say, most of the people they are rescuing are not even from Colorado.

So I am very grateful to Chairwoman STABENOW for working with me and other Senators from the West to include a PILT extension in the conference report. It is only 1 year, however. Unlike the 5-year farm bill, this is not going to give us the predictability that we need. I will continue to work with my senior Senator, Mr. UDALL, and others to make sure people hear the voice of the West in this Chamber.

Finally, this bill reduces the deficit by \$23 billion. As I said, it is going to bring certainty and continued prosperity to rural America. From our forests, to our farms, to our ranches and rural communities, it is long overdue.

This bill has been supported across my home State of Colorado, from the orchards of the Grand Valley, to the wheat fields of Washington County, and on the editorial pages of the Greeley Tribune and the Denver Post.

This is a good bill. It passed the House with strong bipartisan support, and I urge a yes vote when we take up the farm bill conference report next week.

Madam President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE ECONOMY

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I wish to share some remarks this afternoon concerning a very important issue; that is, the financial condition of working Americans. Things are not good for them at this point in time.

Just a few weeks ago on January 5, Gene Sperling, the key economic adviser to President Barack Obama, appeared on CNN's "Face the Nation." He said most of the people are desperately looking for jobs.

... our economy still has three people looking for every job opening.

It has been reported that the House is having a retreat today and that they are discussing whether to proceed with immigration reform—apparently it would have to be somewhat like what passed the Senate or it would have no chance of passing the Senate—and they want to move this bill to try to solve a problem out there, but I think it is not practical at this point in time.

I wish to share some thoughts about what we should consider as we evaluate what the proper immigration flow into the United States is at this time. We are a nation that is founded on immigrants. We believe in that. We admit 1 million people a year lawfully now, and that is the largest number of any country in the world. We are about at the point—and I think we have reached it—where we have the largest percentage of foreign born in the history of the United States.

We hear advice from certain businesses. Despite Mr. Sperling's statement that there are three applicants for every job opening—we have advice of a different kind out of the business community; this is a post from the CEO of Marriott Hotels. Mr. Bill Marriott, by all accounts, is a fine citizen. He says the House is ready to tackle immigration. He said: "As unemployment inches downward, we also need a functioning immigration system that helps us staff positions that might otherwise go unfilled."

Apparently, he would like to have even more applicants for positions at his hotels and would probably suggest that the Republic would be in great danger if there is not somebody available at every one of his hotel resorts to roll down somebody's covers and put a chocolate drop on it. I don't know if that is the No. 1 challenge America faces at this time.

The Financial Times of London says that business groups are pushing Republicans for immigration reform.

I just want to talk about the economics of massive immigration. We need to understand it, and we need to understand it clearly. The proper flow of immigration into America is good for our country, but we need to be careful about this—particularly at a time of financial stress for millions of Americans who can't get a job or who can only get a part-time job or who have

not seen their wages increase for many years.

Responsible immigration, I would suggest first and foremost, should help the economy, not hurt it. The great public policy question of immigration reform is now before the House, and given the poor state of the economy and the abysmal condition of the Federal budget, immigration reform has become a cutting-edge debate, and a vigorous national discussion about our country's economic future and reform of the Federal programs that are driving unsustainable annual deficits.

Significantly increasing the inflow of immigrants into our country at this time would adversely shock an already weak economy, lower average wages, increase unemployment, and decrease each American's prosperity and share of total output. As experts tell us, the GDP, growth of America's economy per capita, will decline if the bill that was introduced in the Senate were to become law and pass the Senate.

The Congressional Budget Office—our own experts, the people who advise us—reported in its evaluation the Senate's effort to increase immigration substantially. So the immigration reform was touted as a tough immigration bill that was going to end all kinds of problems, but it dramatically increased the amount of immigration.

They evaluated this bill and found that the economy would indeed grow bigger because it would contain more people, but it would not be a stronger economy for Americans. GDP per person would actually decline. So that means the relative financial position of each American here would decline if the legislation were passed based on the careful analysis of the Congressional Budget Office.

Considering the acute current weaknesses of labor markets and the slowest economic recovery from a recession since the end of World War II, the last thing the U.S. economy needs is a handicap—much less an enormous harmful economic shock.

We still have not seen job markets recover to 2007 levels—6 years after the start of the recession. Our economy still has three people looking for every job opening. President Obama's advisers have said that labor markets still have not recovered. A significant expansion of the flow of immigrants into America would be occurring at a time of substantial weakness in labor markets.

It is not the unemployment rate that is so definitive. It is the number of people who are actually able to find a job and are working. The current economic recovery has been too slow to produce an economic rebound. We still have fewer jobs than we had in 2007, when the recession began, even though the population increased each year.

This chart is about employment as a share of the population. It shows at the

period of the recession that we had this rapid drop from 63 percent of the population working down to a little above 58 percent, and it stuck there and still there today. This represents millions of people who are not working today because they cannot find a job.

The concept that we would bring in more foreign workers to take the very limited number of jobs we have, and increasing our flow over the normal generous flow, makes no sense to me. I don't see how it can be defended intellectually. It might give Mr. Marriott the ability to have more cheap labor, and he may have to pay less to get somebody to work at his resorts, but that is not our problem. Our problem and our challenge is to help the average American citizen live a better life, and we are not doing that effectively. It has not happened, and this is years into this post-recession recovery—the so-called recovery.

The economy has produced 4.7 million jobs since the recovery began in 2009. There are 6.3 million people who have dropped out of the workforce. They have given up. They are discouraged workers who ceased to look for a job and do not show up on the unemployment rolls.

Some of them have taken disability. Some of them took early retirement. Some of them just quit. Maybe they have a spouse who is working and they are no longer able to work. This is an amazing statistic that dropouts exceed newly employed. This is unprecedented in the post-World War II period.

As of the end of 2013, 58.6 percent of the adult population was employed. This is down from 62.7 percent at the start of the recession. The percentage has been stuck at about 58.6 percent since September of 2009. It has not improved since 2009. If the same percentage of the population worked today as was working at the start of the recession, we would have 10 million more jobs. We would have 10 million more people working, 10 million more people able to support their families better, 10 million more people who are perhaps not on welfare than there are today.

In 2007, there were 146 million Americans employed. Today there are 144.6 million employed. At the same time, the population of those older than 16 years of age has grown by 13.5 million. So while the population is increasing, the number of people actually working is lower than it was in 2007.

Moreover, there has been no growth in the income of working Americans. Working American families are stressed. Jobs just are not being created at nearly the rate to keep up with the population, and millions are simply dropping out. To make matters even worse, the Census Bureau reported in August of 2013 that the incomes of working families have been in decline since 2007, adjusting for inflation.

This chart shows that it has been a fairly steady decline over a long period of time.

Look at this chart. A median income in 2012 dollars—constant dollars—was \$56,000 in 1999. Today, in 2012, it is down to \$51,000. That is a dramatic reduction in the average net income of American workers. Someone says: What does that have to do with immigration? I will discuss it. It is a factor in what is happening. It just is.

What does CBO say about immigration and wages? It is against this difficult economic backdrop that immigration reformers want to massively increase the number of work visas—doubling them—by increasing the flow of migrants and legalizing those in the country without documents. Basically, we would increase the current flow of legal immigrants to America from 10 million over 10 years to 30 million, and who would get permanent resident status in the United States, over a 10-year period. Each of those 30 million would be available to compete for any job in the marketplace. Having come from poor countries, many of them are glad to take a job for even the most minimum of wages. That is understandable. We respect that. I am not criticizing them; I am talking about the policy of the U.S. Congress and the President of the United States.

CBO found that an increase of this kind, if the bill that passed the Senate had become law, would do a number of things. No. 1, it would depress wages among low- and high-skilled native-born workers—depress wages, further, across the entire economy. That is what they reported to us. That is their official analysis.

They went on to say, No. 2, it would raise the national unemployment rate and increase the number of people unemployed.

No. 3, it would slow the growth of per capita output.

There may be someone who says this isn't so and insists it is not so. But I would suggest if we bring more iron ore into America, the price of iron ore declines. If we bring in more cotton, the price of cotton declines. If we bring in more textiles, the price of textiles declines. And if we bring in more labor, the price of labor declines. That is what the facts are. It is a matter of economics. It hasn't been repealed. It is amazing to me that some of our CEOs and some of our free market geniuses don't understand that simple fact.

What about depressing wages? The Congressional Budget Office concluded, based on extensive academic evidence, that low- and high-skilled native-born workers would compete at a wage disadvantage with similarly skilled immigrant workers.

CBO wrote:

Based on CBO's reading of that research, a 1-percent increase in the labor force attributable to immigration has tended to lower

the relative wages for all workers with less than a high school diploma by roughly three-tenths of 1 percent . . . and to lower the relative wages for workers with at least a college degree by one-tenth of a percent.

CBO's analysis of S. 744, the bill that passed the Senate, shows that average wages across the entire economy are lower for the first 12 years of this policy change.

All right. So what CBO said: If we pass this bill that passed the Senate, it will lower wages across the entire economy for 12 years.

Is it not the deep, fundamental responsibility of the Members of this Senate to be attuned to and concerned about the wages of working Americans? And should we not immediately reject, at a time of low wages, declining wages, any policy our CBO tells us—certainly correctly—will pull down further the wages of American workers, at a time when we have record unemployment, record numbers of people outside the workforce? How simple is this for us to understand? I cannot comprehend what it is that this Congress is thinking.

Professor George Borjas, of Harvard, the leading expert in the world, I think, on immigration and wages, recently noted that immigration from 1960 through 2012, which is the last year he had data, has cost native-born workers an of \$402 billion. Where did that money go, according to Professor Borjas? It went to the corporate profits in almost the exact same amount. He says that native-owned firms would gain \$437 billion in income. So they would have their income increase and almost the entirety of that increase in income is paid for by the reduction in wages of their workers.

Right now, we have healthy profits but not healthy wages. Look at this chart which points that out. This growth in profits is directly caused by the advantage that accrues to a business out doing what it is supposed to do, which is try to produce widgets at the lowest possible price and make the best profits it can make for their stockholders, and pay people competitive wages. When there are a lot more workers applying for jobs, they don't have to pay as high wages as they would if there weren't that many people applying for jobs.

I am not criticizing business. What I am saying is that as a matter of national policy, shouldn't it be our policy to listen to people such as Professor Borjas who studied this issue and tells us there is a direct relationship between declining wages and the number of immigrants we have coming into our country? I am not demeaning a single person who wants to come to America to work. I am just talking about facts.

In other words, Professor Borjas finds the increase for business is almost entirely paid for by the decline in wages for working Americans.

The problem today is declining wages for working Americans a lot more than it is about profits. I don't have any problem with corporate profits. I wish corporate profits were higher. But we should not be setting up economic factors and creating economic conditions that exacerbate an income problem that we have in America. That is all I am saying. I think American workers have a right to demand it, and they understand this. Maybe some of our geniuses don't understand it. Some have political gains they look for out of this. Some have economic gains they look for out of this. But somebody better be dealing with the concerns of the people in our country who are hurting.

Professor Borjas found that the impact of increased immigration from 1980 to 2000 resulted in a 3-percent decrease in the wage of average native workers and an 8-percent decrease in the wage of high school dropouts—those who don't have a high school degree. The poorest workers in America suffered the greatest amount during that 20-year period based on census data, empirical data, that he can defend.

As a matter of fact, this chart is a recent chart. Professor Borjas presented a paper to a large group of economists in June of last year—last summer—and to my knowledge, nobody challenged it then or since.

So a 10-percent increase in the size of a skill group—that is high school dropouts, for example—reduces the wages of that group significantly.

Professor Borjas wrote:

Immigration has its largest negative impact on the wage of native workers who lack a high school diploma, a group that makes up a modest (and, in recent decades, shrinking) share of the workforce. These workers are among the poorest Americans. The children of these workers make up a disproportionate number of the children in poverty: 24.8 percent of all children of the native-born working poor live in households headed by a high school dropout.

That is what he said, not me. I think the economics has not been disputed and it is just common sense.

Professor Borjas is not alone in these findings. I would note Professor Borjas, I believe, was born in Cuba and came to this country as a young man, as an immigrant. Similar results were found by economists at the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta. They had a look at it. The prominent labor economist David Card of the University of California-Berkeley reached similar conclusions.

However, it is not only lower wages that working Americans have to bear, but it will be higher unemployment as well.

The rapid increase in the immigrant population, especially those in the low-skilled segment of the income distribution, will overwhelm the ability of the economy to produce jobs and increase wages. Thus, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that S. 744, the bill

that passed the Senate, would raise the number of unemployed Americans during the first 5 years by an average annual number of 162,000, and that unemployment would “remain elevated through 2020.”

This is a stunning conclusion, especially when compared with what CBO argued in its 2013 Outlook. In their Budget and Economic Outlook of February 2013—just last February—CBO projected—get this—in their projections last year about how many additional jobs would be created per month for the next 5 years, they projected we would only create 75,000 jobs a month.

I don't know what the future holds, but we are not seeing the kind of job growth we expected. This past December, the job growth was 74,000—well below the 200,000 or so we need to just have a modest increase in the number of working Americans. So CBO projects a 162,000 reduction annually in the number of people who would be getting jobs in America as a result of the passage of this bill, and we are only going to create 75,000 a month. That is a serious hammer blow to working Americans and their ability to get a job. In other words, CBO's estimated increase in unemployed Americans will equal about a full month of average employment gain for the first 5 years after enactment. At today's job growth rate, that additional unemployment is like losing about a month of job gains every year.

What about economic output? As one might expect, the lower wages and higher unemployment reflect an economy that is not growing fast enough to absorb all of the new workers we have in the country now who become work-age eligible. While the size of the economy expands under the Senate's bill, because of the larger population, the growth rate is not fast enough to raise wages or lower unemployment. CBO estimates that GNP per capita will fall below baseline; that is, without passage of the immigration bill. So if we pass the immigration bill, the GNP—gross national product—of America per person, per capita, will be lower and stay lower until 2030, than it would be if the bill didn't pass at all.

President Obama, talked to us the other night about his concern over wages, and I would suggest the first thing he needs to do is to revise his commitment to the passage of the Senate immigration bill and quit pushing for it, because it is guaranteed to have a negative impact on jobs and GDP per capita in America. It just is. It is something I hope all of us will consider.

I know the House wants to do the right thing. I know they want to reach out and be a positive force in America. I know a lot of our Senators felt the same way. But they weren't focused on the realities and the impacts that the legislation, if passed, would have. It would lower wages, it would increase

unemployment, and it would reduce the growth in the economy per person over the next almost 30 years.

This is not what we can afford to do now, colleagues. So I urge all of us to be honest about this and do the right thing. I know there are big businesses that want this. I know there are political interest groups that want this. I know some of the Democratic leaders want this real badly, and we have special activist groups that have one reason or another to favor virtually open borders in America.

We cannot go in that direction. It is not good for our constituents, for the people who sent us here to serve the national interests.

I will just propose that instead of taking steps that are guaranteed, documented to make things worse, let's do a few things to make things better, things that would make jobs better and more profitable in America, without adding to the debt of the United States, which in itself is hurting the American economy.

We need more American energy that creates good-paying jobs right here in America. We need a more competitive tax and regulatory code that allows businesses and workers to compete in the global marketplace. We need a good trade policy that increases our exports and expands domestic manufacturing and demands that U.S. manufacturers and workers have their products fairly competed with on a level playing field around the world—fair trade as well as free trade. We need an immigration policy that serves the interests of the American people, as I have just noted. We need to convert the welfare office from a check-delivering institution to a job-creating, job-training center to help move people into jobs and help them become employed at better wages.

We need to make the government of this country leaner and more accountable to the taxpayers so that it produces more for every tax dollar that is extracted from the American public. We have an obligation to produce for the money they give us, and we are not being very productive by any fair analysis. We need to restore economic confidence by continuing our effort to produce a balanced budget.

Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to share these thoughts. I believe what I have said represents one of the most significant public policy issues facing our country today. We need to understand what we are doing. We need to understand the impact of our legislation. If we take the time to do so, we will recognize that when we reform immigration, and it must be quite different from that which would be done if the Senate bill were to become law.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, since the failure of the gun bill on the floor of the Senate, I have tried to come to the floor every week or so to talk about the voices of the thousands of victims who have died from gun violence all across this country. About 30 people a day—not even counting suicides—die from gun violence. It is a travesty, it is a tragedy, it is a scourge on our country, and it is inflicting pain in our cities, in our suburbs, and the Senate and the House of Representatives—the most deliberative, the most representative bodies in the history of the world—are doing absolutely nothing about it.

If you want to know why it continues, we can give a long list of reasons. There is no one panacea to solve the problem of gun violence. It is about tightening our gun laws. It is about better mental health programming, more funding. It is about addressing a culture of violence. But it is also about a signal that we send here, a signal of complicity.

Our silence essentially sends a message to young men and women all across this country that we must be OK, we must be all right with epidemic levels of gun violence if the numbers continue to spiral upwards and we do absolutely nothing about it.

The statistics alone tell you we should step to the plate and change our laws, address the problem, give new resources. But seeing that those numbers and that data have not really moved the Senate to action, maybe the voices of the victims will.

A lot of attention here in the greater Washington area was paid to a seemingly random shooting without apparent motive in a suburban Maryland mall on Saturday, January 25.

A gunman came in, a 19-year-old with a shotgun, and sprayed bullets into a Zumiez store, which is a store that sells clothing and merchandise for skateboarders and snowboarders.

He killed Brianna Benlolo and Tyler Johnson, two people he apparently had no connection to.

Brianna was 21 years old, and she left behind a little 2-year-old boy Elijah. Her friends who worked at the mall with her said Brianna was “really proud of her job.” They spoke about how positive she was. One friend said “she never seemed like she had any negativity.” She left behind a little notebook that she had filled with fanciful drawings and phrases from pop culture. She was a really, really happy young woman who was raising a really, really happy little boy. Little 2-year-

old Elijah is never going to get to see his mother again because of a seemingly random, unprovoked act of violence in another mass shooting.

Tyler Johnson had had a tough life. He had had a history of substance abuse. But he had been clean from drugs and alcohol for 2 years, and he had pretty much completely turned his life around. He was working, earning a paycheck at this store at the mall. But then, after work, he had become a board member at a local 12-step recovery house called the Serenity Center in Columbia, and he was now all about the business of mentoring other young people to make sure they would not fall into the same cycle of abuse of drugs and alcohol that he had.

The president of Serenity Center said:

I thought he was a remarkable young man. I don't see a lot of young people stepping up like that. I just thought he was an up-and-coming leader.

We are desperate in this country to have these kinds of role models such as Tyler Johnson—somebody who had struggled with dependence and had not only conquered it for himself but then had gone out and set himself about being a role model.

The difference that Tyler Johnson could have made—Tyler was 25 years old. Tyler was not even halfway through his life, and he had decided he was going to spend his life turning people's lives around. He had decided he was going to go back and get a degree that would help him become a counselor for young people.

We lost maybe 50 years of life transformations because Tyler Johnson is gone. Tyler Johnson was going to help turn kids' lives around, to get them back on the straight and narrow path like he did, but we do not get that benefit any longer because of another mass shooting at a Maryland mall.

When you read these obituaries and horrific newspaper articles about shooting after shooting, as I have since I became so personally connected to this issue in the wake of the shooting in Sandy Hook that took Dylan Hockley's life and Daniel Barden's life and Jesse Lewis's life and Ben Wheeler's life, you see how casual the violence is. Chad Oulson lost his life on January 13 of this year in Wesley Chapel, FL.

Chad was going to see a new movie. I have not seen it, but I have heard it is pretty good: "Lone Survivor." He was texting his 3-year-old daughter, as the previews were playing. One of the movie patrons did not like the fact that Chad was texting during the previews of the movie. So he confronted Chad about it. They had an argument. They had an altercation. This guy left the theater to go get a security guard. When he returned, he came back alone. He took out a gun, and he shot Chad.

Chad was struck in the chest and died. His wife was hit in the hand and

suffered injuries. An off-duty police officer and two nurses who happened to be in the theater ensured there were no more shots fired. They tried to resuscitate Chad until the paramedics arrived.

His family members said he was just a good all-around guy. He was the father of a beautiful little girl—a girl he was texting with at the time of his murder. "You'd be hard-pressed to find somebody who didn't like him," somebody said. "He was a friend to everybody, whoever he met."

Two days later, in Dallas, TX, Trinidad Salazar was killed over a dispute about roof shingles. There was a dispute as to whether he owned these shingles or whether another guy owned the shingles, and this 38-year-old guy decided the best way to resolve the dispute over who owned these roof shingles was to shoot 33-year-old Trinidad Salazar. A .40 caliber Glock pistol was pulled out. He fired one warning shot into the ground, and then fired one shot directly into Trinidad, and Trinidad, at 30 years old, is no longer with us.

The casualness and the randomness of this gun violence makes it even harder to take. It is not that you can ever defend this kind of carnage. But when no one can see it coming, when it becomes the result of simple arguments over housing materials or nuisances in movie theaters or items of clothing, it just makes it even more absurd that we do not step to the plate and do something about it.

In 2013—the year after Sandy Hook happened—we paid even more attention to school shootings. So when one came across our transom, when we saw evidence or reports of shootings on TV, we all paid attention. Over the course of 2013, there were 28 school shootings. Madam President, 28 school shootings happened in 2013—the year after Sandy Hook. That is a lot.

We are 28 days into 2014, and in those 28 days we have had 11 school shootings. We had 28 in all of 2013. We have had 11 school shootings in just the first month of 2014 alone. We are on pace—we are on pace—to have over 120 school shootings this year.

On January 9, in Jackson, TN; on January 13, in New Haven, CT; on January 14, in Roswell, NM; on January 17, in Philadelphia, PA; on January 17, in Albany, GA; on January 20, at Widener University; on January 21, at Purdue University; again on January 21, at Wakefield Elementary, in Turlock, CA; on January 24, at South Carolina State University; on January 27, in Carbondale, IL; on January 28, in Honolulu, HI—luckily, each one of them—"luckily," that is a terrible word to use—in each one of these school shootings there have only been one or two or three people shot or injured. But it is just a matter of time before there is another Sandy Hook. When you are having school shootings at the rate of

one every two school days, it is just a matter of time before somebody continues to pull that trigger over and over or someone does not intervene as quickly as they intervened in these situations.

If we do not recognize the trend that is developing, if we do not at least send a message that the Senate and the House do not condone with our silence these acts, then it will just continue to happen.

I am not suggesting that there is a magical act of Congress that we can pass that is going to end gun violence in this country or, frankly, that is going to stop people with deep psychological illnesses from walking into malls and churches and schools occasionally and firing weapons.

But we can take steps to make sure it does not happen as often. We can take steps to make sure the carnage is not as bad or as significant when someone decides to walk into a crowded place and do that kind of damage. That is within our power. That is something on which Republicans and Democrats should be able to agree.

I will continue to come down to the floor to tell the stories of the voices of the victims until we can find the ability to reach across party lines and do something to at least send a message that the Senate stands against the developing, awful, terrible trend of mass violence in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk about the farm bill that will be on the floor—is on the floor, that we will vote on sometime next week. I would also predict that this is the last farm bill that will not be driven by the new realities of people who want their food needs met in new ways. These food needs are going to be greater, but we are going to be less concerned, I would expect, 5 years from now about farm surpluses and what happens if we grow too much than we are about how we meet the growing food needs of the world, partially because of population, partially because people, once they get better food, want the better food. Once you have got the variety of food, once you have had the experience of better food, nobody wants to go back to the food they used to have. We are going to see that driving this debate more over the next few years than we have up until now.

Agriculture in many States, including my State of Missouri, is the No. 1 industry. Sixteen percent of our workforce is directly involved in agriculture. It continues in State after State where the Presiding Officer and I both hear that every Senator represents an agricultural State. I think every Senator represents a State where agriculture is a significant part of what we do, as it has always been part

of what we do. Fewer people participate directly on the production end of agriculture, but, of course, everybody participates on the consumption end of agriculture.

In America, agriculture directly supports 16 million jobs which are just involved in how we grow and process what we have. Farm families in Missouri, farm families nationwide, work each and every day to feed the country. More and more are focused on what it takes also to feed the world.

For 2 years now we have been in a temporary farm bill. In some cases, the assistance that government has given and will give again with the passage of this bill has not even been there for the last 2 years. When I talk in a few minutes about livestock disaster, that program went away in 2011 as we were facing some of the most difficult times in a long time.

The drought has been worse in many States than anytime since the 1950s. Programs that would deal with that have not dealt with that. But the investment in this bill will reaffirm our commitment to being at the forefront of productive agriculture. It will provide rural communities the ability to compete both here and abroad. Certainly, it is not perfect. I think while it may not be the best possible bill, I would say as I said 2 years ago when I voted for that interim bill, it is the best bill possible right now.

As we all know, the leaders on the agriculture committees in the House and the Senate have spent a long time trying to bring this bill together. If it were easy, they would have done it quicker. They did not come back earlier than everybody else did during the recent break because they wanted to be back early; they came back because that discussion had not brought itself to a final bill yet.

But this is the bill. It does some good things. It provides a certainty and a safety net for farm families. Very few farm families at some point in the productive cycle of a year do not have to go to the banker and say: We need to borrow some money to make something possible in this planning year that we could not do without borrowed money. Here is how we are going to pay it back. Well, "here is how we are going to pay it back" is a whole lot better if you say: Here is the safety net. Here is what happens if things that we do not expect to go wrong go wrong. Here is what happens if we have to actually use the crop insurance. Here is how we will pledge to you that we will, of course, have crop insurance when you make this loan. So this bill provides that and gives a 5-year place to look.

My mom and dad were dairy farmers. I have some sense of understanding how farm families work and think. Knowing how you can look at the rules and regulations 5 years in advance is a

whole lot better than looking 5 months in advance or 2 years in advance. We have gone through a period where farm families have not known for a long time now what the long-term government commitment to agriculture is. When we pass this bill, we are going to have that longer commitment for the first time in a while.

This supports our export opportunities. It finds ways that allow us to get more easily into markets that the people in those countries want us to be in, because what we produce is something they need, they want, they know they would like to have. "USA" stamped on a truck, on a bin, on a container, is a seal of approval all over the world.

This expands bioenergy production, not for the bioenergy things that are out there already in a proven way, but expanding bioenergy in places we know it needs to be expanded. This is the bill that we invest in rural communities.

Eighty percent of this bill is now in nutrition programs that affect people in the most urban parts of our country and in rural parts of our country. But the 20 percent that includes the crop insurance and other programs—I think crop insurance is about 4 percent of the entire bill here. We see people who are critical of how government is doing too much to help farm families, although they usually say—they usually assume that all farm families are big corporate farmers. But just 4 percent or so of the bill is that.

In the 20 percent that deals with rural America, it is things such as economic development that allow people to continue to compete and be in rural America. This gives our colleges and universities and the land grants principally, but the nonland grants who have an agricultural mission, the things they need, the tools they need, and research.

I think researchers were trying to figure out how to be sure that our products are as healthy and helpful to the people who consume them as possible. That is good. This bill does that by securing at the same time some real cost savings. There is about \$23 billion of deficit reduction because of the reforms in this bill, that which we have done in the past that we no longer believe we have to do for farm families to be competitive. I think 5 years from now we can look at this again and assume that the world marketplace allows us to look at farming in a new way.

I would like to discuss a couple of important issues that are addressed in this bill. One is research; the other is livestock disaster assistance. In 2012, about 80 percent of the agricultural land in America experienced a drought. It was the most extensive drought in our country since the 1950s.

In Missouri, all 114 counties were declared disaster areas because of that drought. Many with those persistently

dry conditions were ranked among the very worst in the country. We grow lots of livestock in our State—lots of livestock of all kinds, particularly cattle, beef and dairy cattle. We have livestock, we have other livestock that is a little easier to both categorize and contain and know everything you would want to know about.

But these industries did not have the kind of risk management programs they needed. For whatever reason, in the last farm bill, the livestock assistance programs, the livestock disaster programs—that is all they are; they are not to help in good times, they are purely to help in bad times. Those programs expired in 2011, just at the time when we had some of the worst livestock conditions we have had in over 50 years. So there was nothing there for those livestock producers. They were forced to liquidate their herds, resulting in the lowest cattle numbers since 1952.

What does that mean, the lowest cattle numbers since 1952? It means we have fewer cattle, obviously. But it also means that the replacement of the herd is going to be harder, not as many mother cows, not as many calves. Beef shelves in grocery stores will reflect these cattle numbers for a long time because people had to sell their herds.

In our State alone, there were 300,000 fewer cattle than there were a couple of years ago. It is the lowest number of cattle, in fact, single-year decline since the mid-1980s. It takes a long time to come back from that decline and have the numbers of cattle available for feedlots, for buyers, and eventually for the grocery store shelves than we would have had otherwise.

I am pleased the farm bill makes these programs permanent, but, again, they are permanent programs that only occur if you have extraordinary disaster circumstances that make them occur.

Thanks to smart investment in research, we have the safest, most affordable and abundant food supply in the world. We make smart investment in research. This is not a new commitment by the Federal Government. It goes back to 1862 when President Lincoln signed the bill that created the Department of Agriculture. One of the principal purposes for the Department of Agriculture was research that could be shared so that every farmer or every State or every community did not have to do their own research but research would be shared by the Department of Agriculture, encouraged by the Department of Agriculture, done in a way that met the needs of the whole country.

Research continues to produce great results. In 1940, 1 farmer fed 19 people. This year, 1 farmer feeds about 155 people. By 2050, global food demand is expected to increase by about 70 percent, and to double shortly after that. The

American farmer is the best farmer in the world at producing quality products that are desired to meet that growing food need. If world food needs double between now and some date shortly after 2050, that means we need to produce as much food in the second half of this century in any given year as we have produced—if 10,000 years of agricultural research has brought us to what we produce today, we need to double that in about the next 50 years.

It is incumbent upon us to make sure we have the tools available to do that. As the ranking member of the agricultural appropriations Committee, certainly research has been critical to our committee. I am glad the farm bill authorizes these research programs and allows us to continue to encourage research that will enable us to do what we need to do to meet our own food needs and world food needs.

Agricultural research lets us have more efficient production, ways to eradicate pests and disease. It addresses the adverse weather conditions the crops grow in. Africa as a continent is not in the food production role it needs to be, if by 2050 the projection is half of the people in the world will live in Africa. It is in our best interest to see them produce more food as well.

Of course, it is in our best interests to maintain a safe food supply. Agricultural research can aid small farmers. We can see ag research that adds value to staple crops and adds nutrients to staple crops in countries that grow a lot and have a lot of it, but, frankly, it may not have much food value, even though it may be most of what people eat.

The Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis conducts critical research to do just that, to look at a staple crop in a developing country and figure how that crop can be changed in a way that is beneficial to people who are used to it, who can grow it, but need to figure out how to select the best of those plants to replant next year.

Research into nutrient fortification, drought resistance, disease, and other things is important. The farm bill takes that step.

The chairwoman of the committee and the ranking member of the committee, our friends the Senators from Michigan and Mississippi, have worked hard to bring this bill forward.

I close by saying again, I predict that as world food needs and 21st century opportunities for agriculture change, that is going to define the debate 5 years from now, well below what we are likely to anticipate. It is no longer going to be a world that is driven about how do we sell the crops we grow, it is going to be much more driven by how do we grow the crops the world needs and Americans need, and how do we connect that result to the market that needs it.

American farmers for a long time have struggled with how productive

they were in a world that maybe didn't need everything we could grow. That is not going to be the case in the very near future. I believe by the time we get to the end of this 5-year farm bill, we are going to have a very different discussion about how we meet our own food needs, world food needs, and the great opportunity in agriculture, agriculture business, and competition—that nobody does better than the American farmer.

I intend to support this bill next week.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

IRAQ

Mr. MCCAIN. I attended, as did all of my colleagues, the President's State of the Union Message the night before last. Obviously, as always, the President delivers an excellent speech.

I must say that in the years I have attended the President's State of the Union Message, I have never seen a message on national security and foreign policy as disconnected from reality as the President's speech. Obviously it had minor importance by the amount of time that was taken in the speech, but what was most interesting was the President portrayed a Middle East, in particular, that has little relation to the reality today and the ongoing tragedies, deaths, and sacrifice because of a failure of American leadership.

In interesting polling data today, a Pew Research poll indicates:

More Now See Failure than Success in Iraq, Afghanistan

Little Partisan Gap in Views of Whether U.S. Has Reached Goals.

It continues:

After more than a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the public does not think the United States has achieved its goals in either country. About half of Americans (52%) say the U.S. has mostly failed to achieve its goals in Afghanistan while 38% say it has mostly succeeded.

Opinions about the U.S. war in Iraq are virtually the same; 52 percent say the United States has mostly failed in reaching its goals there while 38 percent say it has mostly succeeded.

Continuing:

In both cases, evaluations of the wars have turned more negative in recent years. In November 2011, as the U.S. was completing its military withdrawal from Iraq, a majority (56%) thought the U.S. had achieved its goals there.

So the American people, despite the rhetoric from the administration—some of it incredibly bizarre—have figured out that after many years of sacrifice, expenditure of American blood and treasure, we are looking at and staring failure in the face.

I will quote from the President's speech the night before last.

On Iraq, the President said:

When I took office, nearly 180,000 troops were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq.

Yes, that is a correct statement. But what the President didn't go on to say was that Iraq is now collapsing under the weight of sectarian violence that now has exceeded that of 2008, one of the most dangerous years of the war. What the President didn't say was that there is sectarian violence, Sunni and Shia, initiated largely by President Maliki, which is causing attacks throughout Iraq—bomb detonations, IEDs, attacks on various institutions. President Maliki has driven his own vice president out of the country. The list goes on and on.

I say to my colleagues, there is no greater example of our failure in Iraq than Fallujah today. In the second battle of Fallujah, in 2007, the United States of America lost 96 marines and soldiers killed, over 600 wounded. Today, vehicles are driving through the streets of Fallujah flying Al-Qaeda flags. Al-Qaeda is now in charge in Fallujah.

I wonder what we tell families of those brave soldiers and marines who were killed and wounded in the first and second battle of Fallujah. Because in the words of General Petraeus, who was the architect of the surge—which most of my colleagues, including the President of the United States, said would fail, when actually there were many of us who knew that it would and did succeed: We won the war but lost the peace.

We lost the peace because the United States of America did not leave a residual force behind, thereby allowing the situation to deteriorate to where it is today with Al-Qaeda now in charge of the city of Fallujah, Ramadi—the Syria-Iraq border now being the headquarters and staging areas of Al-Qaeda in both Syria and Iraq. Their black flags now fly over cities where brave Americans, marines and soldiers, sacrificed their lives and their well-being.

Gen. James Conway, who commanded the marines in the first battle of Fallujah in April 2004, commenting on failures of the administration's policies in Iraq stated: "In some ways, the al-Qaeda grand strategy is vindicated." He deplored U.S. policies, appeared weak and confused in the wake of how hard we fought to get those cities back in the first place.

What did the President of the United States say? Did he mention Fallujah? Of course not.

He said:

When I took office, nearly 180,000 troops were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq.

Yes, the troops are out of Iraq and the place is going to hell in a hand basket.

Don't think that these people, Al-Qaeda and Al Nusra, are not intent on pursuing their goals of radical Islam right to the United States of America. This should concern every one of my colleagues and every American citizen.

Yesterday there was a hearing in the Senate Intelligence Committee:

Al Qaida faction in Syria contemplating U.S. attack, intelligence officials warn.

Senate hears Nusra Front has "aspirations for attacks on the homeland" amid concern over civil war's terrorism implications.

Intelligence officials have claimed that a faction linked to al-Qaida in Syria has a desire to launch a domestic attack on the US, an assertion that underscored the growing importance of the Syrian civil war to global terrorism.

The Nusra Front, one of the jihadist factions in Syria, that aligns itself with al-Qaida, "does have aspirations for attack on the homeland," James Clapper, the US director of national intelligence, told the Senate Intelligence Committee on Wednesday, yesterday.

We know that with Al Nusra, Al-Qaeda, and other radical Islamist organizations, which, by the way, are attracting young men from all over the world, including Europe, is now one that is contemplating attacks on the United States of America.

I want to again mention General Conway, who commanded the marines during the first battle of Fallujah in 2004.

At the Heritage Foundation he said:

"We fought and died taking those cities," Conway said Wednesday at the Heritage Foundation. Conway became the Marine Corps commandant before retiring as a four-star general.

A blunt-talking general who rarely seeks the spotlight, Conway described his reaction to recent events in stark terms during his brief remarks.

It causes Iraqi and U.S. policies to look a little weak and confused in the wake of how hard we fought to get those cities back in the first place.

Continuing:

"In some ways, the al-Qaeda grand strategy is vindicated," Conway said, referring to the organization's desire to wait out American forces.

Why did they wait out American forces? They waited out American forces because as soon as President Obama took office he announced we were leaving. He didn't announce a strategy for success. He didn't say we have to reach certain goals before we leave. He told everybody we were leaving.

It is very clear, when we look at electoral history, that his vote against the resolution concerning military action in Iraq was one of the factors that led him to the Presidency. But for him to stand before the American people and say:

When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq.

This is, at best, a very incomplete depiction of what has happened since all of those troops are out of Iraq.

Finally, General Conway said:

Those who lost people, those wounded, I think, are now stripped of a coping mechanism, Conway said. "If you have a young Marine or soldier sitting with his legs missing, he could at least previously say, 'Well what we did was the right thing. Iraq is better for it, and we won.'" I'm not sure that same individual sitting in that chair is thinking those things these days. That's truly sad.

I have talked to and heard from so many of these brave young Americans who feel exactly as General Conway described. They don't know and they don't understand after the enormous sacrifices that they made that somehow now black Al-Qaeda flags are flying over Fallujah.

On Afghanistan, the President said:

More than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. . . .

After 2014, we will support a unified Afghanistan as it takes responsibility for its own future. If the Afghan government signs a security agreement that we have negotiated, a small force of Americans could remain in Afghanistan with NATO allies to carry out two narrow missions: training and assisting Afghan forces, and counterterrorism operations to pursue any remnants of Al Qaeda. For while our relationship with Afghanistan will change, one thing will not: our resolve that terrorists do not launch attacks against our country.

On the one hand, the President said there would be two narrow missions and yet our goal is still that terrorists don't launch attacks against our country. Again, he failed to put forward a true proposal for our strategy in Afghanistan and once again avoided offering any specifics on troop numbers. Why did we not leave a troop presence behind in Iraq? Because they would never give a troop number. Anybody who tells you the problem was not getting it through the Iraqi Parliament is not telling you the truth.

Senator GRAHAM, Senator Lieberman, and I were in Erbil when President Barzani said: I will go to Baghdad. When we met with Allawi, he said: I will sit with Maliki. We went to Maliki and Maliki said: I will agree to have a force of troops in my country. How many? We could not give him an answer nor would the administration give him an answer.

In the words and testimony of our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the number cascaded down to 3,500, and that would have been a force that spent its time defending itself. Therefore, we did not leave a troop force behind in Iraq, and I have just described the consequences.

The same thing is happening in Afghanistan. The President will not say the force level he wants left behind in Afghanistan. Why is it he will not?

I want to point out that President Karzai of Afghanistan is a paranoid individual, and he has been incredibly unhelpful. It has been terribly disappointing to me—and I have known

him for 14 years—that he is behaving as he is. But President Karzai's paranoia is somewhat understandable when he does not know whether the United States will remain, he doesn't know whether he can count on the United States, and he knows he has to stay in the neighborhood and accommodate for the likelihood now that the United States leaves completely. So his paranoia, to some degree, is much more understandable.

On our last trip to Afghanistan in early January, we saw firsthand the progress that has been made by American and Afghan forces, and such progress is a true testament to the positive impact our troops have had and the long-term benefits of our partnership with the Afghan people. The Afghan people, though, and military will need our continued support. If we pull out, if we see the Iraq movie again, we will see the same thing happen in Afghanistan that is now happening in Iraq, and it doesn't take a lot of smarts to know that.

So now we turn to Syria. In Syria "we will support the opposition that rejects the agenda of terrorist networks." What does that mean?

Despite promise after promise, the administration has refused to provide aid to the moderate opposition forces in Syria who are committed. It was 2 years ago when the President of the United States said: It is not a matter of whether Bashar al-Assad will leave office, it is a matter of when. It was over 2 years ago, at the Senate Armed Services Committee, when Secretary of Defense Panetta and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in answer to my question: Sir, it is inevitable, it is inevitable that Bashar al-Assad will leave office.

Does anybody believe that now?

Our failure to help the Free Syrian Army over time was negated and overwhelmed by the presence of 5,000 Hezbollah sent in by the Iranians, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, plane-load after plane-load of weapons that now land at the Damascus Airport from Russia, while they are loaded onto Russian-built helicopters, and barrel bombs, which are explosives packed with all kinds of nuts and bolts and other metals, are dropped out of those helicopters on men, women, and children.

But not to worry—not to worry—because the chemical weapons are leaving, apparently, according to the President, because he said: American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force, is why Syria's chemical weapons are being eliminated, and we will continue to work with the international community to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve, a future free of a dictator, terror, and fear.

The chemical weapons he is hailing as a success—how much has been accomplished? The Syrian Government

has delivered less than 5 percent of its deadliest chemical weapons agents to international authorities so far. This is a quote from an L.A. Times story:

Syria unlikely to meet deadline on its deadliest chemical agents. President Bashar Assad's government has delivered less than 5 percent of its deadliest chemical weapons agents. The deadline is next week.

So even this claim about chemical weapons being removed does not bear scrutiny. But far, far, far more important—far more important, I say—is that if we got rid of the chemical weapons Bashar al-Assad had, that would not change the equation on the ground. I am sure a Syrian mother cannot differentiate very well if her child is killed by a chemical weapon, a barrel bomb or is starved to death, as 120,000 men, women, and children have met that fate.

It is unbelievable. Now we are watching a charade take place in Geneva, and that of course has turned into a farce. Anybody who believes that Bashar al-Assad is going to willingly leave office, when he is winning the battle on the ground, obviously has no idea of the nature of Bashar Assad.

Again, the slaughter goes on, and one of the huge aspects of this happens to be the fact that it is no longer a civil war. I would remind my colleagues this conflict began because in homes there were some children who wrote some anti-Assad graffiti on the wall. They were rounded up by Assad's police and were tortured and beaten, and that began an Arab spring in Syria. That spread throughout the country and now has spread throughout the region.

As I just said, the Iraq-Syria border is now Al Qaeda. It is now controlled by them. The Iranians are all in, with 5,000 Hezbollah; Lebanon is destabilized; Jordan is overwhelmed by refugees; Turkey is even under strain; 100,000-some refugees are even in Kurdistan. It has turned into a regional conflict and one which, sooner or later, will finally erupt into a major conflict which is going to affect the United States of America.

The President of the United States may want to leave the Middle East alone, but I can assure my colleagues the Middle East will not leave America alone. Look at the statement made just today by our Director of National Intelligence who said that al-Nusra, an affiliate of Al Qaeda, is planning attacks on the United States of America.

The President said: Finally, let's remember that our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats but by the enormous opportunities to do good and promote understandings around the globe, and no one is better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities than America.

I couldn't agree more. But when the United States is viewed by the world, particularly the Middle East, as weak, withdrawing, no longer involved or try-

ing to disengage, then I am not sure we can have the effects the President outlined in his State of the Union speech.

I think it is very clear that a seminal moment, as far as the entire Middle East is concerned, was when the President of the United States said that because Bashar Assad had crossed the red line in the use of chemical weapons—there was indisputable evidence that 1,400 men, women, and children had been killed in chemical weapons attacks—we were going to have to enact strikes against Bashar Assad in Syria. A few days later, our Secretary of State, in one of the more incredible statements I have ever heard—said: Yeah, but the strike will be “unbelievably small.” I am not making that up. He said the strike would be “unbelievably small.”

That must have really frightened the Syrians when they heard that any military strikes would be “unbelievably small.”

The President of the United States then, without informing our allies—specifically the Saudis—according to published reports, took a 45-minute walk with his Chief of Staff and then decided he would go to the Congress of the United States for permission or for ratification of any attack he might make, and, obviously, that wasn't going to happen.

I say to my colleagues, I travel a lot in the Middle East. I can tell you—and I would even name names but not on the record—that at that moment our allies lost confidence, they lost belief in the United States. We are now watching countries in the region openly stating—for example, the Saudi Arabians refusing a seat on the National Security Council of the United Nations—and this is published everywhere—they no longer believe in the United States of America.

By the way, one of the other aspects of this, and there are many, is a Washington Post story of this morning:

Europeans are flocking to the war in Syria. What happens when they come home?

The story is about a couple of people who went from England.

The distress among security officials is pervasive in European capitals and in Washington. U.S. Intelligence Chief James R. Clapper, Jr. told a congressional panel Wednesday that the Syrian war had attracted about 7,000 foreign fighters from as many as 50 nations and that at least one of the main jihadist groups in Syria aspires to carry out an attack in the United States. But Europe is a far closer and more accessible target. The International Center for the Study of Radicalization estimated last month that nearly 2,000 Western Europeans had traveled to Syria to fight and that the number was rising fast.

Continuing to quote from the article:

French officials say 700 came from France. French Interior Minister Manuel Valls asserted this month that returning fighters represent “the biggest threat the country faces in the coming years.” The anxiety has

been especially acute in Britain, where memories are still fresh of the July 2005 transit bombings. These attacks, which claimed 52 lives, were carried out by home-grown radicals, at least two of whom had received training in Pakistan. “The penny hasn't dropped. But Syria is a game-changer,” Richard Walton, who leads counterterrorism efforts at Scotland Yard, told the Evening Standard newspaper. “We are seeing it every day. You have hundreds of people going to Syria, and if they don't get killed they get radicalized.”

So we are in a situation of failed leadership over the last 5 years and the chickens, unfortunately, are beginning to come home to roost. When the President of the United States, in his address to the Nation, describes things in the Middle East as he did, I think it is very, very, very unfortunate because that does not comport with the actual facts on the ground.

I say to my colleagues, the American people no longer believe our mission in Iraq and Afghanistan was the right thing to do. I can tell my constituents that in 2008 things were very different. The surge had worked. We were gradually withdrawing from Syria. We had the Taliban in Afghanistan largely under control. In Syria, Bashar Assad was losing. Now the terrain throughout the Middle East is dramatically different.

As much as I regret to say, it is my obligation to tell my constituents my view; that is, we have very, very difficult times ahead. I do not like to predict that bad things are going to happen, but right now I don't see how they can be avoided.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, the number one priority for any Senator from North Dakota is the passage of a 5-year farm bill.

When I was campaigning across North Dakota, I reminded my constituents that in spite of this wonderful energy renaissance we have going on in North Dakota, over 90 percent of all the land in my State is engaged in production agriculture.

It makes this farm bill so critically important to the economy not only of my State but the economy of this country. Sixteen million jobs depend in this country on the passage of a farm bill which provides producers with risk management opportunities that make their farm work sustainable and make their continuation in production agriculture economically possible.

So it is a good week for North Dakotans. Today we passed the flood insurance bill which will prohibit draconian and very dramatic increases in flood insurance prices from affecting my State. But also we are on the cusp and terribly close to doing something we have waited so long to do, and that is to pass a 5-year farm bill.

I will talk in general about some of the things this farm bill does, but I

wish to focus my attention on two areas not a lot of people have come to the floor to talk about, and those are the provisions for beginning farmers and ranchers and the importance of the livestock provisions in the farm bill.

The farm bill achieves the goals that put our agricultural system in a strong position to continue this country's role as a world leader in production agriculture. This is achieved through an effective farm program for growers, livestock disaster coverage for ranchers and livestock producers, enhanced crop insurance offerings, expanded agricultural research, and increased export promotion for agricultural products.

We have been void in our balance of trade by the inclusion of agricultural products and by what we do on the farm that has made a difference to that trade deficit: critical investments in biofuels which help build a stronger, more vibrant, and more resilient energy policy in our State; renewal of a sugar program to prevent excess imports of unfairly subsidized imported and foreign sugar; and targeted conservation assistance to tackle unique challenges, particularly in my State and the Red River Valley and in Devil's Lake. But I will tell a little story.

For years I have been going to farm producer meetings. During my time as a State official in North Dakota, I spent a lot of time at the Farm Bureau, a lot of time at the Farmers Union, with corn growers and soybean growers, and getting to know and understand agricultural work on tax and regulatory issues. I always felt as if I was the youngest person in the room that whole while, and I was in my 30s and 40s. I would walk into a room and feel young. That has really been true.

I had a really wonderful experience when I was back home this last trip. I went to something called Precision Agriculture, which is a special conference the Farmers Union hosts for North Dakota's NDSU Extension, where they look at using different kinds of new technologies, whether they are application technologies to be more efficient in how we use fertilizers and seeds or whether it is finding an ap that gives us more information for marketing. You name it. The Precision Agriculture conference has gotten bigger and bigger.

But why I point that out and talk about it is that as I stood at the podium and took one look, I said: I want everybody under the age of 45 to stand up. Well over half of my audience stood up. That has never before happened in the 30 years I have been involved in public policy in North Dakota.

Young farmers are coming back to the farm. Young farmers are engaging at levels with technological developments and techniques that heretofore were not available and really weren't trusted maybe by an older generation.

So now we have this new generation of producers who are going to do one of

the most important things that we do in this country, which is to feed our people and literally to feed the world. They are willing to do that. They are willing to risk and make incredible investments on the farm, whether it is land prices or equipment prices or whether it is betting the entire farm that you are not going to get hailed out. This farm bill is critical, first and foremost, to making sure that risk is mitigated by a crop insurance program which works for those young farmers.

I will outline just very briefly what those beginning farmer and beginning rancher programs are in this farm bill.

While this is changing, according to the Department of Agriculture's most recent census, the average age of American farmers is 57 years old; a quarter of American farmers are over the age of 65. Now, in North Dakota that dynamic is changing, as I have just outlined. But the 2014 farm bill makes critical investments to ensure that this next generation of farmers has an opportunity to enter the field by overcoming the high capital constraints and low production histories that make those early years the most difficult.

The program continues and funds the beginning farmer and rancher development program which develops and offers education, training, outreach, and mentoring programs to ensure the success of the next generation of farmers. The bill expands eligibility to include military veterans who wish to begin a career in agriculture.

The 2008 farm bill had \$75 million for this program with 5 years mandatory. The 2014 bill ups that amount to \$100 million, recognizing the need that we have to create that next generation of producers.

The 2014 farm bill prioritizes beginning farmers across USDA programs. The Department of Agriculture is required to prioritize beginning farmers to ensure they have access to USDA programs. The bill continues to set aside loan funds for both the beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers who struggle to find credit someplace else.

There are also 5-percent set-asides in the environmental quality incentive program and the conservation stewardship program to make sure that beginning farmers and ranchers have fair and equitable access to conservation programs.

This new farm bill increases access to capital for new farmers and ranchers. The bill makes significant strides in increasing lending to beginning farmers by expanding eligibility, removing term limits on guaranteed lending, and strengthening microloan programs that serve those beginning farmers.

This farm bill encourages older farmers to help beginning farmers through conservation. The bill reauthorizes the Conservation Reserve Program Transi-

tion Incentive Program, which gives 2 extra years of CRP to retiring farmers who transition their expiring CRP lands to beginning farmers. This program has seen great success with retiring farmers who want to help the next generation get started.

This new farm bill helps beginning farmers buy land. The bill reauthorized the contract land sales program, which guarantees loan payments to retiring farmers who sell their cropland to beginning farmers. It also continues the down payment loan program which allows young farmers without much money to start investments and down payments on a farm or a ranch. The borrower makes a cash down payment of at least 5 percent of the total cost, and the government provides a low-interest loan for 45 percent of the payment.

This new farm bill invests in value-added strategies that are especially important to these new farmers, value-added grants encouraging independent producers to process raw products into marketable goods, adding value and increasing farm income. Beginning farmers will continue to be given a high priority in this program.

It helps beginning farmers plan in the early years. The bill continues the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts, which are designed to help new farmers finance their agricultural pursuits.

So this is for the next generation who looks and says: Is there opportunity in being a farmer? Can farmers not only work there, but can they own the land and continue our rich and strong tradition of family farming?

I think the answer is yes. This is a farm program that offers them that opportunity that says: Yes, the United States and its people are willing to invest in your future.

Finally, I wish to talk about the importance of the livestock provisions. Livestock production is hugely important to North Dakota. Are we the largest livestock producer in the United States of America? That would not be true. But for my ranchers out west, this is a critically important program. This is a program which says to the ranchers: We recognize that not everybody who is engaged in production agriculture is engaged in producing crops or specialty crops. Those who herd cattle and work cattle and work as hard as any group of people I know deserve some attention in this farm bill.

If there ever was an example of where we needed to do something more for our beginning ranchers, the early snow storm of 2013 is it, where people literally lost their entire herd. For those who maybe don't have a lot of expertise, understand this: One cow is not interchangeable. Many of these families over the years, through genetics and through selective breeding, have in fact built the herd—built a herd unique to their ranch—and they lost it all.

When they turned to us and said: What is there to help us? We had to say: Nothing.

If you get hailed out and have crop insurance, there is help. If you have a major disaster and can't plant, there is help.

But what is there for us? We had to say "nothing," because we hadn't done a farm bill on a timely basis, and there was no help for those farmers.

This farm bill is retroactive. It is going to help those farmers who not only experience loss in the future but who have experienced loss since October of 2011. We are on our way to fulfilling the commitment that all of us made who came to the floor in October and talked about that terrible storm.

The 2014 farm bill includes exactly the type of pro-rancher policies I wanted Washington to produce. Not only does the bill include important livestock disaster programs; the bill also continues the widely popular and beneficial program called country of origin labeling—or COOL—policy which for years has been fought for by ranching families in North Dakota.

Additionally, the farm bill allows USDA in future years to move forward with livestock competition rules to provide transparent pricing for cow-calf operators in my State and elsewhere.

Finally, the farm bill provides targeted conservation and research programs for the support of cattle, pork, and poultry industries so they can better assess the challenges facing livestock production.

I get a lot of questions even in my State. Why should anyone support the farm program? Aren't things pretty good out there on the farm? I will say, over 4 million acres in North Dakota alone could not be planted this last crop season because of high water. That means the difference between a family farmer staying in business and not staying in business. But importantly, for all of America, this means we have a crop production system which feeds our country.

I tell people, let's think about things from the standpoint of value-added. What does that mean? New wealth doesn't come when you go to the retail store and buy a shirt or a new coat. That is not new wealth. We are just taking money which has been generated someplace else and circulating it in the economy. New wealth is created particularly in extractive industries such as oil and gas, coal mining, and it is created in agriculture. It is the quintessential new wealth creator. From the hard work of those producers in America grows an entire economy that fuels the opportunity for 16 million jobs.

In my State of North Dakota, I was recently talking to a plant worker who works at the KSHI plant who explained to someone that his top priority for his

workers was the passage of a farm bill. They said: Why would you care about the passage of a farm bill?

He said: Don't you get it? If the farmers aren't doing well, we aren't producing tractors. We are not producing what we need to produce.

I want everyone to understand that this is not a farm bill just for States such as North Dakota and Minnesota. This is a farm bill for the entire world—to feed the entire world. It is also a farm bill that provides new wealth creation that encourages the growth of 16 million jobs.

I will close with one final thought. We talk about food, fiber, and fuel—the three things we talk about when we talk about agricultural products. But we know that in the applied research we see in those great land-grant colleges—and our State has one of the best. It is called NDSU. They have the best football team in the history of forever. But let me tell you, it is also a great extension program and great agricultural research center.

They are doing amazing work at NDSU in polymer research. They are looking at biodegradable coatings and paints. We know that advanced manufacturing is the next step we are going to make in agriculture, and we are going to do everything we can to make sure that those products are sustainable and that those products are safe to use for our people and for our animals.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this farm program so we can make sure we keep 16 million people working and that we have that next generation of beginning farmers and beginning ranchers who are producing food for our country and food for the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I thank the Chair and thank Senator KLOBUCHAR for allowing me to go ahead of her. I ask to be notified after 10 minutes.

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

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I wish to talk about recent rulings in the Yucca Mountain repository litigation. I am ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on the Clean Air and Nuclear Safety. This is a matter I have followed closely. Our committee had a hearing this morning with the entire Nuclear Regulatory Commission and its new Chairman. These decisions are not simply political decisions, of course, they are legal decisions that adjudicated certain legal disputes that have been simmering for a number of years. The court's judgments were founded on law, not politics or nuclear policy. It adjudicated certain contested legal matters. From my perspective, it was an

affirmation of plain law against plain defiance of law, and the court made that clear.

Last August the DC Circuit—in the case of *in re: Aiken County*—rendered a decision that provided a clear legal victory to proponents of nuclear energy in America. More important, it was a victory for the rule of law and the U.S. taxpayer and a victory for the rightful power of Congress to adjudicate and legislate on energy policy. The judgment also rendered a resounding defeat for the policies advocated by the current administration, the majority leader of the Senate, and other politicians who have worked for years to thwart the law by refusing or blocking actions to implement the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, which is the law of the land.

More recently, in November of 2013, the DC Circuit issued another ruling in the case of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners v. United States Department of Energy. These Commissioners around the United States sued the Department of Energy. These Commissioners represent our States. That court found that the current administration—the Obama administration—has been ignoring the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

The DC Circuit ordered the Energy Department to stop charging U.S. ratepayers \$750 million a year in nuclear waste fees until the Federal Government complies with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

As a result, on January 3, just a few weeks ago, the Secretary of Energy was forced to formally submit a proposal to Congress to reduce the nuclear waste fee to zero—to end the fee—while at the same time asking the DC Circuit to reconsider the ruling it has rendered, which I don't think it will.

Taken together, these two rulings vindicate the concerns that many of us have raised since 2009 about the lawless actions of this administration in failing to deal with our Nation's nuclear waste in the manner required by law.

I hear from people all the time who wonder how in the world the President doesn't comply with the law. He amends the health care act and does other things that most Americans are just taken aback by. They can't imagine how he is not bound by law like everyone else, and, of course, he is. Indeed, he takes an oath to ensure that the laws of the United States are faithfully carried out.

I am currently serving as the Ranking member of the Senate Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety, which has oversight jurisdiction with respect to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and I have been looking closely at this matter. The Administration's lawless actions regarding nuclear energy, supported by the Senate Majority Leader, are deeply disturbing and contrary to a sound national energy policy. No one Senator,

no matter how prominent, can overrule established law.

The background: Over 30 years ago Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act to require the Federal Government to accept nuclear waste from commercial nuclear reactors around the country with the objective of safely storing it in a single, permanent, geologic repository that is safe and secure.

A recent report entitled "Yucca Mountain: A Post-Mortem" in *The New Atlantis* provides some important statistics. It is estimated that, today, the U.S. has accumulated over 65,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel, which is enough waste to "cover one football field to a depth of approximately 20 feet." That number is expected to more than double by 2055. This nuclear waste is currently stored at 75 sites spread across 33 states. The 8 states with the most spent nuclear fuel are Illinois, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New York, Alabama, California, Florida and South Carolina.

This report also recognizes that "there is broad consensus among scientists from around the world" that geologic disposal is "the best available option for permanent disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste . . ." This is not a surprising conclusion, as Congress determined decades ago that it is in the national interest to safely and securely dispose of nuclear waste deep underground far from populated areas. It is difficult to imagine a better location for such a repository than Yucca Mountain, NV, the remote site that has been selected by Congress.

Congress also created the Nuclear Waste Fund to collect the fees that were extracted from the nuclear power electric-generating companies. Money is taken from them, which they take from the ratepayers, and that money was to be used to cover the cost of this program. So far the Federal Government has collected \$25 billion for this fund at a rate of about \$750 million a year.

In 1987, the Congress passed—and President Reagan signed—a law that amended the Nuclear Waste Policy Act by officially designating Yucca Mountain, NV, as the Nation's geologic repository for spent nuclear fuel.

In July of 2002, Congress overrode Nevada's objections. Their representatives didn't like it, although I would note the area of Nevada where this facility is to be in place strongly supports it and they opposed Nevada leaders who opposed building it.

Congress overrode the objections and passed a joint resolution that said:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that there hereby is approved the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, for a repository. . . .

An extensive scientific evaluation process ensued, culminating in the En-

ergy Department determination, in an Environmental Impact Statement, that Yucca Mountain is an appropriate site for the safe, long-term geological storage of nuclear waste. Yucca Mountain is perhaps, according to a 2006 report by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, "the most studied real estate on the planet."

In 2008, the U.S. Energy Department submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission an 8,600-page application for authorization to construct the repository. It discussed every possible complaint and concern that could be raised, analyzing all the issues.

Section 114 of the act states that once the application is received by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, it "shall issue a final decision approving or disapproving the issuance of a construction authorization not later than the expiration of 3 years after the date of the submission of such application. . . ." That was in 2008, and they have not rendered a decision since.

This means the NRC is under a clear legal duty—as set out in statute, passed by Congress, signed by the President—to promptly complete the licensing process for Yucca.

Regrettably, in 2009, the Obama administration and its allies orchestrated a complex scheme to ignore the law, to control the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and shut down the Yucca mountain process.

How was this done? Here is how the Federal circuit court judge—Judge Raymond Randolph—described the administration's scheme. This is dramatic and crystal clear language. It blows the whistle on one of the most significant obstructions of law that I have seen during my time in Washington.

This is what the judge ruled:

Former (NRC) Chairman Gregory Jaczko orchestrated a systematic campaign of non-compliance. Jaczko unilaterally ordered commission staff to terminate the [Yucca] review process in October 2010; instructed staff to remove key findings from reports evaluating the Yucca Mountain site; and ignored the will of his fellow commissioners.

That is a dramatic indictment of Mr. Jaczko's leadership. I would note parenthetically that Mr. Jaczko was the choice of Majority Leader REID. He worked on Senator REID's staff, and he insisted that Mr. Jaczko be made the Chairman of the Commission.

Here is how the Board of County Commissioners of Nye County, Nevada—where Yucca Mountain is located and which strongly supports completion of the repository—explained it. They wrote in a recent letter that the Yucca repository has been "hijacked by the politics of a single powerful senator and what some view as complicity by the NRC Chairman [Mr. Jaczko]."

Beginning in 2009, now former Chairman Jaczko was able to effectively block any further progress on Yucca

Mountain; that is, until the DC Circuit finally ruled in August of last year that those actions were in clear violation of the law, which was an important victory for the rule of law and for the power of Congress.

In its ruling, the DC Circuit determined that "the [NRC] has continued to violate the law governing the Yucca Mountain licensing process."

The court then highlighted that the NRC had gone well beyond missing the statutory deadline for completing its review of the licensing application. Recognizing that "Congress has not altered the legal landscape"; that is, Congress has not amended the Nuclear Waste Policy Act; the court explained that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is "simply flouting the law."

The court also observed that, under Article II of the Constitution, "the President must follow statutory mandates so long as there is appropriated money available and the President has no constitutional objection to the statute . . ." The court stated that "the President may not decline to follow a statutory mandate or prohibition because of policy objections . . ." That is, "absent a lack of funds or a claim of unconstitutionality that has not been rejected by final Court order, the Executive [and its agencies] must abide by statutory mandates and prohibitions."

The court further explained: "It is no overstatement to say that our constitutional system of separation of powers would be significantly altered if we were to allow executive and independent agencies to disregard federal law in the manner asserted in this case by the NRC." On this basis, the court granted the request of the plaintiffs in the case for a "writ of mandamus against the NRC." This is a writ that is rarely issued that orders a governmental body to comply with the law. It held that the NRC "must promptly continue with the legally mandated licensing process." This was an important victory for the American constitutional order.

Completing Yucca has big implications for the Federal budget. As the ranking member of the Budget Committee, I believe we need to watch every dime we raise and spend. We have already spent, amazingly, \$15 billion—according to the Government Accountability Office—evaluating Yucca and other sites and doing work at the site.

We have already paid \$2 billion as of January 2012 for claims resulting from the Government's failure to deal with the waste issue; in other words, people have sued and made claims against the government for not fulfilling its obligation to build this site, and we have already paid out \$2 billion. It is a shame people can't be held individually responsible for obstructing the law and causing the Federal taxpayers to pay out \$2 billion.

According to the Congressional Research Service, the Federal Government's total liability for breach of contract claims from the failure to resolve the waste issue could reach \$50 billion. The government agreed and set up a method to receive this waste. The electric utility companies that generate nuclear power are now being forced—for decades—to keep the waste onsite at great expense, even though they paid billions of dollars into the fund to make sure it is taken care of at a single site.

With this important court victory, we may hope and expect that the Nation's nuclear waste program can be put back on track, and it is hurting right now. The costs are real, and they fall on virtually all Americans.

On October 28, the DC Circuit denied the NRC's petition for rehearing en banc. So the writ of mandamus stands. And, on November 19, 2013, the DC Circuit rendered another important decision in this arena. The court found the Energy Department in non-compliance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and ordered the Secretary of Energy to "submit to Congress a proposal to change the [nuclear waste] fee to zero until such a time as either the secretary chooses to comply with the [Nuclear Waste Policy Act] as it is currently written, or until Congress enacts an alternative waste management fee."

In response, on January 3, 2014, the Energy Secretary submitted a proposal to Congress to zero-out the nuclear waste fee. Pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 10222(a)(4), this proposal "shall be effective after a period of 90 days of continuous session have elapsed following the receipt of such transmittal . . ."

Now an important question is, how will the NRC respond? Our nation derives almost 20 percent of the electricity needed to drive the economy through nuclear power, which is a clean, safe, and affordable source of energy. The failure of this Administration to deal with the issue of nuclear waste disposal over the last 5 years has posed a serious threat to the future viability of nuclear power. As a recent report by the Heritage Foundation, entitled "Obama Administration: No Confidence in Nuclear Energy," explains:

President Obama's decision to abandon plans for removing the waste to the Yucca Mountain repository in Nevada creates an uncertainty that could be a barrier to the expansion of nuclear power.

So, this issue is critical to the future of nuclear power in America. We need to get this waste repository issue settled, and I believe the NRC should expeditiously proceed with the Yucca license proceeding in an independent manner worthy of the important task they have been assigned. I am hopeful that if we do so, we may have turned a final corner.

I received a letter dated October 23rd from the current NRC Chairman, Dr. Allison Macfarlane, providing a copy of the NRC's first monthly status report concerning compliance with the DC Circuit ruling and explaining that the NRC "will deliberate and determine the various activities that might compose the agency's response to the court's decision." A day later, on October 24th, I was joined by Senate EPW ranking member DAVID VITTER and all Republican subcommittee members in sending a letter to Dr. Macfarlane, urging the NRC to "comply expeditiously" with the DC Circuit's decision and explaining that "the next step in this legally mandated licensing process is for the NRC to complete the [Safety Evaluation Reports]" for the Yucca site.

On November 18, 2013, the NRC approved an order directing the NRC staff to implement the DC Circuit ruling by completing the Safety Evaluation Reports for Yucca Mountain. This is an important and crucial step in the process. I have, since, received other NRC reports dated December 18, 2013, and January 24, 2014, describing activities related to Yucca Mountain. The NRC has asked the Energy Department to prepare the supplemental environmental documents that are needed to move forward with the licensing process. It is my expectation that the Secretary of Energy will act promptly to provide the necessary information and support and to avoid the kinds of political schemes and unlawful acts that have previously derailed the Yucca process.

According to the NRC, the Energy Department has more than \$15 million in funds that could be used to support Yucca-related efforts, and an additional \$18 million that could potentially become available for these purposes. The most recent report from the NRC explains that "completion of the [Yucca Mountain safety report] is scheduled to take approximately 12 months, ending in January 2015," and that available funds are sufficient to complete this task.

The NRC Chairman and other Commissioners must follow the law in this matter. During her confirmation process earlier this year, Dr. Macfarlane affirmed a strong commitment to the "independence" and "impartiality" of the NRC and pledged to defend those principles. For instance, in her responses to my questions during her confirmation process, she unequivocally agreed with me that the NRC "should not allow political meddling from Congress or other parts of the executive branch to interfere with the NRC's independent decision-making processes." She committed to "zealously guard the independence of the NRC and oppose any efforts to undermine it."

During her confirmation, she also correctly recognized that the "respon-

sibility for establishing a nuclear waste policy resides with Congress," and she acknowledged that the "NRC currently has approximately \$11.1 million in unobligated carryover funds (and \$2.5 million in obligated, unexpended carryover funds) appropriated from the Nuclear Waste Fund" and that these funds "could be used for a variety of activities related to the Yucca Mountain project, including the completion of the technical licensing review."

We will be watching this process closely. I know that the leadership in the House of Representatives will be watching as well. In a letter dated August 23, 2013, the House Energy & Commerce Committee Chairman, FRED UPTON, and Environment & Energy Subcommittee Chairman, JOHN SHIMKUS, wrote to the NRC, stating:

[I]t is our expectation that the NRC's first action to implement the Court's decision will be to diligently resume its review of the license application, complete the [Safety Report], and issue it publicly. Our country has invested 30 years and \$15 billion in determining whether Yucca Mountain would be a safe repository. The NRC is this nation's nuclear safety regulator and its reputation for independence and objectivity rests on its transparency in this matter. As such, NRC's objective, scientific findings regarding the safety of Yucca Mountain would provide the public an independent, authoritative assessment of this important project.

I agree with Chairman UPTON and Subcommittee Chairman SHIMKUS. In particular, the NRC should know that Congress will watch closely to make sure that costs associated with completing the safety report for Yucca Mountain are appropriate and in line with earlier estimates.

Importantly, the NRC should already have all documentation necessary for this process ready and available. In December 2011, I joined Senator MARK KIRK and eight other Senate colleagues in a letter to the NRC and Energy Department about Yucca Mountain. That letter—sent over 2 years ago—was out of a deep concern that we had that the Administration was purposefully jeopardizing the ability for future consideration of the Yucca Mountain application by failing to adequately preserve scientific information and other records. We explained that "preserving the historical records and all scientific documents relating to Yucca Mountain is important to the nation's long-term goal of achieving a permanent solution to our nation's accumulating nuclear waste."

In that letter, we also explained:

Yucca Mountain is one of the most extensive research and development investments this country has ever undertaken. More than \$14 billion of taxpayer money and nearly 25 years of scientific research, data collection, geological characterization and evidence was collected to study the Yucca Mountain facility.

In March 2012, former NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko responded to our letter, stating: “The NRC documents relating to the Yucca Mountain Program . . . will continue to be retained as permanent records . . .”

I will note that the members of the board are good people, and I think the new chairman, Dr. Macfarlane, is going to try to do a much better job. But it was unbelievable how the former Chairman was able to obstruct Federal law.

The NRC should be able to proceed promptly with completing the licensing process. But if they fail to do so, the NRC Chairman, or the entire Commission, could be held in contempt of court and appropriate sanctions could be issued by the court, and should be, if they fail, and that was discussed this morning at the hearing. The Commission says they are going to move forward. They say they don't have as much money as they would like to have. They haven't asked for more money. They have a duty to fix this problem and deal with it, and if they need more money, they should ask Congress for it.

After all of these years and the money spent, a contempt citation would be a colossal failure and a tremendous embarrassment, and it would be the result of a willful failure to follow the clear responsibility of law.

In conclusion, I believe the DC Circuit's recent rulings concerning the Nuclear Waste Policy Act have made an important contribution to the Rule of Law in the United States and to the future of nuclear power. In Congress, there is strong bipartisan support for completing the Yucca license review process. In 2012, the House voted overwhelmingly, 326–81, in favor of appropriating the funds necessary for the NRC to continue the Yucca licensing process. Then, in July of 2013, the House soundly defeated an amendment offered by a member from Nevada that would cut funding for the Yucca licensing process. That amendment failed by a vote of 335–81.

Last July, Representatives FRED UPTON (R-MI) and JOHN DINGELL (D-MI), chairman and chairman emeritus, respectively, of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, authored an editorial entitled “Decision on Yucca Mountain Overdue.” They wrote:

Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to establish a deliberate, collaborative and mandatory process to site, license, build and operate a national permanent nuclear waste repository. The act obliges the federal government to safely dispose of high-level nuclear defense waste and commercial spent fuel from power plants. Electricity consumers and taxpayers have paid approximately \$15 billion to determine if the Yucca Mountain site in Nevada would be a safe repository. The [NRC] owes them an answer.

I couldn't agree more. With the benefit of the DC Circuit rulings in August and November of last year, which so

clearly stated the Administration's duties under law, Congress must not accept any further delay in the Yucca Mountain license process.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

LUGER NOMINATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Alabama for making his remarks a bit briefer, and I thank him as well for accompanying me to the State of the Union Address 2 nights ago.

I rise today to urge a vote in the U.S. Senate to confirm the nominee to be Minnesota's next U.S. attorney. I see my colleague and friend from Iowa here, Senator GRASSLEY, who has been working hard on his good nominee as well for Iowa, and we have been working on this together.

When we look at the extraordinary circumstances under which the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota has been operating, it will be clear why a vote on this nomination and getting this done is so important.

For 2½ years—883 days—Minnesota has not had a full-time U.S. attorney. During those years, from August 2011 to August 2013, Todd Jones was responsible for doing two jobs as the Minnesota U.S. attorney and as the Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. I would note, as Senator GRASSLEY has pointed out, it has been a difficult time in the office. While they continue to do good work, in part because the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota has great prosecutors, they did not have a full-time manager during this time, pending the approval of the ATF job and during the appointment time.

Over the summer, the Senate, as the Presiding Officer knows, confirmed Todd Jones as the Director of the ATF—the first permanent Director in 7 years—leaving the Minnesota U.S. attorney's position open. Senator FRANKEN and I, in consultation with getting a recommendation from a bipartisan U.S. Attorney Advisory Committee, which included the former Republican-appointed U.S. attorney under both the first George Bush and the second George Bush, who served on our advisory board, we recommended Andy Luger, a respected litigator and former assistant U.S. attorney, to fill the position. We recommended him 191 days ago.

It has now been about 6 months—183 days—since Director Jones left and we still do not have a permanent, full-time U.S. attorney. Minnesota needs a full-time U.S. attorney. It is a major jurisdiction. Andy Luger has the experience and know-how necessary to do this job well.

From his days fighting white-collar crime as an assistant U.S. attorney to his work with Minnesota law enforce-

ment to help improve their gang-fighting strategy, Andy has earned the respect of the legal and law enforcement communities. Throughout his career, he has proven to be a tireless advocate for the people of Minnesota.

As an assistant U.S. attorney, he successfully prosecuted organized crime, drug and white-collar cases. This included the prosecution of a \$150 million national real estate and investment fraud case, leading to the longest white-collar sentence in the United States at that time. In 2009, he was appointed by the Minnesota Commissioner of Public Safety to lead an investigation into the Metro Gang Strike Force and uncovered a series of problems with the unit. He recommended that the unit be disbanded and replaced by other law enforcement efforts and it was, in fact, abolished.

In fact, a Star Tribune editorial said that Andy's review of the strike force made “smart recommendations about The Twin Cities' next generation gang-fighting strategy” and that his report included “welcome measures to begin the long process of rebuilding the public's trust.”

Andy is well respected in the law enforcement community. I can tell my colleagues that after we made the recommendation to the President, I got nothing but positive words from police chiefs and others who are excited about him in this job. He is committed to building and maintaining strong working relationships and partnerships between Federal and local law enforcement.

In addition to his many years as a Federal prosecutor, Andy has had a distinguished career in private practice. He is currently a partner at the Greene Espel law firm where he is well regarded as a highly skilled trial lawyer focused on business litigation, representing businesses and white-collar defense. He has been selected as one of Minnesota's Top 100 “Super Lawyers” for the past 10 years and as one of the “Best Lawyers in America” for the past 4 years. He clearly has the experience, character, and drive to lead such a premier law enforcement agency as the Minnesota U.S. attorney's office.

The Minnesota U.S. attorney's office represents the United States with professionalism, high ethical standards, and an unwavering commitment to the safety of our community. These prosecutors work to protect public safety by focusing on the offenders who do the most harm to the community—terrorists, the “worst of the worst” violent criminals, drug traffickers, and major financial fraudsters. They also work closely with local law enforcement to ensure local and Federal resources are used efficiently and effectively.

I personally know this after having served as the chief prosecutor for Minnesota's largest county, Hennepin County, for 8 years, and I worked daily

with our U.S. attorney. We would discuss which office would handle cases. During the Moussaoui investigation, as people recall, we got in Minnesota the hijacker who survived, the guy who threatened to learn how to down a plane and was caught and imprisoned, and that came out of Minnesota immediately after 9/11. The office was very focused on the terrorism investigation and my office stepped in and took some major white-collar cases to help out. We have a tradition of working together throughout the years, and that is why this office is so important to me.

Example: The office won a conviction in a \$3.65 billion Ponzi scheme, the second biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. It has an ongoing terrorism investigation that has led to charges against 18 people for aiding the terrorist organization Shabaad, 8 of whom have been convicted, some receiving sentences of up to 20 years in prison. If one can imagine this, they are conducting major terrorism investigations and prosecutions, and we need a full-time U.S. attorney to make decisions and to be in charge.

Other major accomplishments include Operation Highlife, which was a major drug trafficking investigation involving more than 100 local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers and resulted in 26 indictments, 25 guilty pleas, and sentences up to 200 months in prison.

Operation Brother's Keeper was a successful investigation and prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang, which took 22 dangerous criminals off the street.

Operation Malverde received national attention with the prosecution of 27 defendants associated with a Mexican drug cartel, including the apprehension of the cartel regional leader, and sentences as high as 20 years in prison.

The office also recently played a key role in shutting down a major synthetic drug seller in Duluth. This head shop was a huge problem. The perpetrator has been convicted and is awaiting sentencing. They literally found over \$700,000 in his bathroom hidden in small plastic bags. They went after this head shop. They prosecuted that guy. They won that case. They deserve a leader.

Andy Luger is the right person for this job. The Judiciary Committee agreed and reported out his nomination without objection on January 9. I appreciate the service of the Presiding Officer as well as Senator GRASSLEY, who is here, on our Judiciary Committee, and I appreciate the support for his nomination.

I also supported the nomination of the U.S. attorney from Iowa, and we know how important that job is as well.

This position of U.S. attorney was regarded by the Founders as so vital that

they created it during the very first Congress; a position so crucial that it was born in the same law as the structure of the U.S. court; a position so necessary that President Zachary Taylor filled it within 2 days of Minnesota becoming a State.

In our case, for a variety of reasons—a variety of reasons—we have now gone 883 days without a full-time U.S. attorney. This is our moment. We need to move ahead on this nomination.

Again, I appreciate Senator GRASSLEY's help in moving these nominations forward. We have two U.S. attorneys, two Federal marshals. I can say that Andy is a dedicated public servant whose breadth of experience, strength of character, and commitment to justice make him a well-qualified candidate to serve as Minnesota's next U.S. attorney.

I don't think there are any objections to his nomination, but I urge my colleagues to support his confirmation and give this office the leader it deserves, as well as the district of Iowa.

Thank you very much, Madam President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I had a chance to listen to the Senator from Minnesota, and I come to speak on another subject, but I wish to assure her that we will get these two nominees and others across the finish line so the U.S. attorney for Minnesota can go to work, hopefully before we get many more days added to the 800 she has already talked about.

The farm bill process has been very long, very hard, and no doubt frustrating for all who have been involved. Some of us on the Senate agriculture committee have participated in two committee markups and two floor debates for this bill, and that is over a period of two Congresses. I voted for and supported the bill at every one of those junctures.

I believe our country needs a good farm policy, which means, of course, an adequate and yet limited safety net for farmers, because so much about farming is beyond the control of the farmers, and I am not talking just about natural disasters. Without a doubt, our farmers then face real, uncontrollable risks every year. The farm bill provides farmers, then, with a number of programs to mitigate risks.

Agriculture remains a changing industry. Unbelievable technological advancements are taking place right before our eyes. Farmers can now control irrigation equipment and monitor grain bins on the phone from the other side of the world. Agricultural technology is progressing so quickly. Five years from now, when we debate the next farm bill, autonomous tractors may well be doing a considerable amount of the field work in America.

Farm policy has also changed over time. Unfortunately, the majority of farm program benefits have started going to a concentrated number of farmers. The fact is 10 percent of the farmers—and those obviously would be the wealthy farmers—get 70 percent of the benefits from a farm bill. One reason for this is that the current farm policy offers farmers essentially unlimited subsidies if they hire the right lawyers. As a farmer, a citizen, and a legislator, I believe it is wrong to expect or even to allow the government to give unlimited support to my farm or any farm, especially since our country has a record \$17 trillion national debt.

During the first full Senate farm debate in the summer of 2012—so the last Congress—my payment limit reforms were adopted by a vote of 75 to 24 here on the floor of this very body. During the first round of floor debate in the House in this Congress, Mr. FORTENBERRY from Nebraska offered the same reforms and they were adopted there in the House by a vote of 230 to 194. Congress has spoken, then, and overwhelmingly agrees in both bodies with my commonsense approach of limitations on the amount that one farming operation can get.

Wouldn't anyone think that policy, which is widely supported in both bodies of Congress and which saves taxpayers nearly \$400 million, would be untouchable when it comes to a conference committee? The rules of this institution, the Senate, outline that. Senate rule XXVIII, if anyone would like to look it up. However, once again, behind closed doors, Washington decided to intentionally screw up common sense.

This conference bill increases the payments available through the countercyclical program—now called price loss coverage or PLC for short—by 150 percent compared to what this Congress had already agreed upon. I have yet to hear anyone tell me a single legitimate reason why that change could be made.

Additionally, the powers that be in this town have proven they learned nothing from the World Trade Organization Brazil cotton case. That dispute has resulted in the United States paying a \$143 million fine per year to Brazilian cotton farmers because our farm program for cotton does not meet the rules of international trade. This farm bill doubles down on the same market distorting principles that brought us that very same trade dispute.

The original payment limit reforms that this Congress approved also eliminated abuses through what is commonly known as the "actively engaged loophole." To sum up this loophole, it makes it very easy for nonfarmers to get farm subsidies—probably those who go to the extent to hire a lawyer. This results in the largest 10 percent of the

farms then, as I said before, getting 70 percent of the farm program's benefits, as I have already mentioned.

Yet the conference committee, in another brazen act of manipulation, eliminates my simple enforceable reform. I happen to think that one non-farming manager per entity is more than generous and over the years it has been much violated. So we just simply say it ought to be one nonfarm manager per farm and no more. But it has been a lot worse, and my language—the language accepted by this body—reformed that. But as I have indicated a couple times, the conference committee took it out.

The language in the bill now says—instead of the way it passed the Senate and passed the House on the floor of the House—USDA will have the opportunity to review and fix the actively engaged loophole but only if they should choose so; in other words, the Secretary of Agriculture does not have to.

I happen to know that Secretary Vilsack is sympathetic to what I have been trying to accomplish, so maybe he will be able to make something good out of what I think is a very bad provision in this bill that might actually make it very difficult for him to do that.

Under this provision, USDA could have fixed this problem—or even under existing law, I should say—USDA could have fixed this problem at any point, since it is the result of their rule-making. So giving, as the compromise does, the USDA power they already have and claiming reform happens to be a true—and true too often—example of a Washington hat trick.

The conferees did not stop at just kicking the decision over to the Department, they also tied the USDA's hands with unnecessary requirements that must be met before action can even be taken. That is why I say it is going to be difficult for Secretary Vilsack. I hope he can find ways to accomplish what I want to accomplish. As I said, I think that is where his heart is.

So I hope Secretary Vilsack, and I can even say the Obama administration, finally uses this authority to produce a strong, enforceable rule regarding the number of people who can be eligible for farm subsidies from taxpayers; in other words, people who are actually farming. I am certainly going to offer them my thoughts on this issue.

Maybe I should explain why I said even the Obama administration, beyond Secretary Vilsack. Because in this President's budget more than once and in the Bush budget more than once, Presidents—including this President—have suggested these reforms to save money. This year I said about \$400 million. Actually, according to CBO, it is \$387 million.

The Government Accountability Office released a report in October of 2013 that clearly outlines the problems with the actively engaged loophole. One farming partnership they highlighted was composed of 22 LLCs, with 20 different owners and 16 managers who got their eligibility through the actively engaged loophole.

So you understand why the bill that passed the Senate and the House said one manager. At least four of the managers I have referred to from that operation even live out of the State, while several others live in cities around the State well outside of commuting distance.

Additionally, just yesterday, it was reported that a large farming operation in the State of Illinois is being fined \$5.3 million because they were exploiting taxpayers for farm subsidies. In this case, the government determined their business structure was intentionally designed to evade those payment limitations that are even in existing law with the exact fake entity structures my provisions would have nearly eliminated.

I wish to quote U.S. attorney Jim Lewis, who handled that case:

We are pleased with this favorable resolution of the government's claims of misuse of farm subsidy programs. These programs are designed to help farmers withstand market price volatility and the intrinsic risks associated with farming from year to year. Any attempt to exploit the system to take more than one's fair share is an improper use of government funds that erodes the public confidence in such programs and threatens their continued viability.

End of comment of U.S. Attorney Jim Lewis, who won that case against these farmers, and they will be fined that \$5.3 million.

I wish that U.S. attorney could have been part of the farm bill conference committee. His logic and expertise would have helped.

If a farm's business model depends on lawyers setting up complicated Mickey Mouse legal structures just to get more government subsidies, perhaps the owners of that entity are in the wrong business.

So my provisions would have limited subsidies going to a few thousand people who are very well off and, quite frankly, do not need unlimited farm payments from the government—and probably are not even involved with dirt under their fingernails—especially since, by definition, they would be people then who do not actually work on farms.

If we cannot cut subsidies that go to nonfarming millionaires, how will we ever find the courage then to fix other great entitlement problems we have in this country?

With all that said, there are a few things this bill does that are good.

The dairy provisions have ended up more market oriented than where we started, which I believe is very good. I

am glad the Crop Insurance Program will remain strong for farmers across the country, and the nutrition program reforms are welcomed.

In the end, I have to make a judgment of the bill as a whole. Every Member of this Senate has to. I believe this bill, sadly, is a missed opportunity. The Congressional Budget Office says the final savings in this bill are only \$16.6 billion. That is a pretty small amount compared to the fact that it will spend nearly \$1 trillion.

I think my colleagues know I am a person who plays by the rules. So I played by the rules with these reforms that were adopted 2 years ago 75 to 24—not debated or voted on this year because they were part of the bill that passed the Senate and then went to the House of Representatives and were voted on there 230 to 194.

So we played by the rules. A majority of both bodies support these reforms. Yet, in the end, just a small group of people, with a single-minded intent to keep unlimited farm subsidies flowing out the door, proved that Congress deserves its 12-percent approval rating.

I want to be clear. I strongly support the business of agriculture. I have been involved in farming my whole life. My son Robin operates our family farm. I understand the industry. Growing wholesome foods to feed the world has always been one of the noblest occupations, in my opinion.

But if I were to vote yes on the bill, it would be an endorsement of the egregious manipulation of my payment limitation reforms behind closed doors. I cannot in good conscience do that. Therefore, I will oppose the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Just to kind of clarify, do you understand. I hope everybody understands we had the moral authority of a majority of the Senate, the moral authority of a majority of the House of Representatives, the moral authority of a majority of the people of this country—who I believe would say it is a good thing to save \$387 million—and yet that moral authority was avoided by conferees who thought: To heck with the majority of the Senate or a voting majority of the House of Representatives of 230 to 194. It does not mean anything. We can do whatever we want to do. We can waste that \$387 million. We can continue to give farm payments to people who are not farming. We can continue to let 10 percent of the biggest farmers get 70 percent of the benefits of the farm program, which, in the end, then helps subsidize big farmers getting bigger. There is nothing wrong with big farmers getting bigger, but you should not subsidize it. It drives up the price of farmland, it drives up the price of cash rent, so our young farmers cannot get started farming. If you want to preserve the family farm, that is one of the things that is very important.

So I have said my part. I hope I am around 5 years from now so I can try this once again because I do not intend to give up on this process. Five years from now is the next farm bill probably. Maybe there will be opportunities between now and then. I intend to take advantage of those opportunities.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak as in morning business.

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

MILITARY RETIREE CUTS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I am here today as a voice for our veterans and career military servicemembers.

Since I came to Congress in 2001, I have served on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, both in the House and the Senate, and have continuously fought to uphold the promises we have made with the men and women who served on behalf of our Nation. I am continually looking for opportunities to improve the lives of our veterans who have served honorably and have sacrificed, sometimes with their lives, in support of our country.

They deserve every benefit they earned and what we have promised them, but they have suffered a grave injustice in this body. Late last year the Senate, without my support, agreed to a budget that cut retirement benefits of our veterans, reducing the cost-of-living adjustment. I certainly could not support this provision.

Veterans and the American people are rightly upset. I want to share some of the letters I have received from our veterans and other Arkansans. David Mullins from Jonesboro wrote:

I am a 20 year veteran of the United States Army. I retired as a Sergeant First Class and I am currently drawing military retirement. I joined the Army when I was 18 years old and I wouldn't do anything different. Even though it was very hard at times, I know that was what I was supposed to be doing. Less than 1% of the American population serves in the military and of those only about 13% actually retire with 20 years or more of service. So we are talking about less than .02 percent of the population. It is really appalling that, after sacrificing my freedoms to protect those of my fellow citizens, this is how we are treated. America is out of touch.

I agree with David. In a letter I sent to the Armed Services Committee leadership in the House and Senate, I equated retirement compensation cuts to reaching into these individuals' retirement accounts and taking that money from them. This is unconscionable.

Diane from Hot Springs, AR, said in a letter:

I am truly disgusted by the new deal that cuts military pensions but doesn't touch benefits for any of the politicians. I would

have no problems if it was an across the board cut. This is the best example of what is wrong with our government. Cut benefits for those that make real sacrifices for their country. They take lower pay and separation from family.

I agree with Diane. It is not fair. Our veterans should not be the ones bearing the burden for irresponsible spending. We need to cut spending and put our country on the path of fiscal responsibility, but it should not come at the expense of our Nation's military retirees. These are the only Americans who are being asked to sacrifice under the budget agreement. It is wrong to single out our servicemembers for what amounts to \$6 billion over 10 years, representing a .02-percent reduction. We need to right this wrong so our military retirees and their families have one less thing to worry about.

Terry Williamson from Jacksonville, AR, wrote:

I just retired from 26 years of active duty serving my country in the Air Force. I must say I was shocked and disappointed to learn that the pay of retirees are being offered up to be reduced by 1% cost of living as part of the budget deal. I feel that I have lived up to and beyond my part in serving my country. I have not even received my first retirement check and yet already my government is short changing my and all veterans who have served and fulfilled their end of the deal, defending this great nation. I ask you to do what you can to not allow this to happen to a small portion of society that gave more to their country than most.

Terry, we are working to make sure you get the full retirement you earned. We are seeking ways to undo this cut and fully restore military pay.

In January Congress took the first step toward restoring veterans' COLAs with the passage of the Omnibus appropriations bill. This exempted medically retired disabled veterans and survivors from the COLA reductions. But there is more work to do. The good news is we are on your side.

Senator AYOTTE introduced the Keeping Our Promises to Our Military Heroes Act that repeals the COLA reduction for all military retirees. I am certainly proud to support that legislation.

Arkansans want Congress to fully restore military retiree benefits as soon as possible. I am committed to raising this priority at every possible opportunity until justice is realized for these military families. While there has been much discussion about restoring these benefits in future legislation, this should be done at the earliest opportunity in order to provide certainty for our military retirees' financial future.

To our Nation's military retirees, I am committed to this fight. You have earned these benefits. Congress must correct the wrong and restore your full retirement pay. As always, thank you for your service to our country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

HILL FARMSTEAD BREWERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is home to hundreds of world-class small businesses, each of which dots our economic landscape with their unique and often award-winning offerings. Our reputation for quality has made the "Vermont brand" one that is valued and sought after by consumers across the Nation—and increasingly also across the globe. One burgeoning industry in Vermont is that of craft beer. In fact, the State is becoming almost as well known for its craft beers as it is for its maple syrup.

One such successful small brewery, the Hill Farmstead Brewery, was featured in the January 18, 2014, edition of the New York Times. After a planned expansion next year, the brewery's owner, Shaun Hill, plans to cap production at 150,000 gallons per year. His successful business model, and highly sought after brew, as the article states, "offers lessons in how limiting production can bring success."

Vermont's small-State appeal attracts business owners large and small. The Hill Farmstead Brewery is just one example of the successes Vermont's economy boast. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of "Craft Beer, the (Very) Limited Edition," from the January 18 New York Times be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Jan. 18, 2014]

CRAFT BEER, THE (VERY) LIMITED EDITION

(By Claire Martin)

Two weeks ago, a beer drinker in Fresno, Calif., called Hill Farmstead Brewery in Vermont to ask where he could buy its craft beers. "You have to drive to the airport, get a ticket, fly to Burlington, rent a car and drive an hour and a half to the brewery," the owner, Shaun Hill, replied with a laugh. But he wasn't joking.

Hill Farmstead, in the hamlet of Greensboro, produces just 60,000 gallons of beer annually. The beer is available for purchase only at the brewery and in roughly 20 Vermont bars. In addition, Mr. Hill sends 12 kegs to distributors in New York City and Philadelphia a few times a year.

Next year, after several buildings are expanded and new equipment is installed, Mr.

Hill plans to cap production at 150,000 gallons a year—forever. (For context, the Russian River Brewing Company, a craft brewery in California, made 437,100 gallons last year, and Dogfish Head Craft Brewery in Delaware produced 6.3 million gallons.)

Hill Farmstead is one of at least three Vermont craft breweries that are churning out small batches of highly sought-after beers and have owners with firm plans to keep the operations small. Mr. Hill's story offers lessons in how limiting production can bring success.

Mr. Hill, 34, has been honing his brewing technique for nearly 20 years. He first learned to make beer for a high school science-fair project, then started a homebrew club in college and later worked as the head brewer at two other Vermont breweries, the Shed and the Trout River Brewing Company, as well as one in Copenhagen, Norrebro Bryghus.

Two beers created during Mr. Hill's tenure at Norrebro Bryghus won gold medals in 2010 at the World Beer Cup, an international beer competition, and a third earned a silver medal.

Several months before these accolades, Mr. Hill returned to Vermont to begin construction on Hill Farmstead Brewery on a former dairy farm that he and his brother, Darren, a woodworker, inherited from their grandfather. "I wanted to make beer, I wanted to live in this place and I wanted to help my family and make sure I had the finances available to take care of this land in perpetuity," Mr. Hill says.

This wasn't his first attempt at starting a brewery, but it was the first time he was able to obtain financial backing. "Ten years ago or even still five years ago," he says, "it was very difficult to find private investment or to convince banks to loan money to a start-up."

In the past decade, craft beer production has thrived, attracting investors with deep pockets. In 2012, national retail sales for craft beer were \$11.9 billion, according to the most recent figures from the Brewers Association.

While Mr. Hill was in Denmark, where American craft beer was starting to become popular, he was able to borrow \$80,000 from a small group of European and American lenders who he felt respected his vision and abilities.

From the start, his philosophy has been to make the best beer possible without pursuing what he calls "infinite, boundless growth." He operates under the belief that beer is a perishable item, "just like lettuce or broccoli," he says, and should be consumed locally, not shipped long distances.

Mr. Hill has a staff of six, including two assistant brewers who harvest yeast and transfer beer into kegs, but he personally makes all of the brewery's offerings—pale ales, stouts and porters—using modern stainless steel tanks and traditional wooden barrels, like those used in winemaking.

The beers are known for having "a sense of balance that isn't common in a lot of new breweries," says Jeff Baker, the bar manager of the Farmhouse Tap and Grill in Burlington, which serves the beers. "They're hoppy, but they're not super-bitter and they don't exhaust your palate."

For entrepreneurs who measure success in more than just financial terms, it's still crucial to have a viable business, says Bo Burlingham, author of "Small Giants: Companies That Choose to Be Great Instead of Big." "The challenge for a lot of small companies who have nonfinancial goals is that

you can't let that get in the way of having a very financially solid business," Mr. Burlingham says. "You'd better have a sound business model, steady gross margins, a healthy balance sheet and margins you protect."

For Mr. Hill, financial stability came quickly. He says the brewery began turning a profit after just one year.

Demand surged last February when users of the beer-review site Ratebeer.com deemed Hill Farmstead the best brewery in the world—after having anointed Mr. Hill as the best new brewer in 2010.

Now Mr. Hill says he fields questions like the one from the Fresno caller every day. He estimates that thousands of people have made long-distance beer runs to Hill Farmstead Brewery, some traveling from as far as New Zealand, Norway and Japan.

Customers wait in line for one to four hours to buy bottles and two-liter growlers of the beers, many of which are named for Mr. Hill's ancestors (Edward, Abner, Florence). The brewery once sold an entire batch of beer—500 gallons—in one day.

As his beer's popularity has risen, he has sometimes worked 18-hour days. Some small-business owners who have achieved financial stability choose to delegate a significant portion of their work to employees, but Mr. Hill says he won't be doing that.

And the notion of moving production to an industrial park, where craft breweries are commonly found, holds no appeal for him. He has decided to invest in infrastructure and better equipment that will make his current operation more efficient.

"I didn't start this brewery so I could keep growing and move it away from here; that wasn't the point," he says. "It wouldn't be fun anymore. It wouldn't have purpose or meaning."

FAIRNESS IN DISASTER DECLARATIONS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this week, Senator KIRK and I introduced the Fairness in Federal Disaster Declarations Act. It is designed to ensure fairness in FEMA's consideration of whether a community will be granted Federal assistance after a disaster.

This legislation is necessary because the way FEMA evaluates whether to declare an area a Federal disaster is not working. It works against States with large populations.

From 2002 to 2012, Illinois was denied Federal disaster assistance six times. Texas was denied 11 times—for damage caused by everything from wildfires to tropical storms. Florida was denied Federal disaster assistance six times during that 10 year period, and California, New Jersey, and New York were each denied four times. FEMA's formula does not work for large, populous States, particularly those with a concentrated urban area, like Illinois.

It is not enough just to talk about the numbers, though. Each one of these disasters devastated communities. In each one of these disasters, people saw their homes and their towns destroyed.

This past November, tornadoes swept through Illinois, killing six people and destroying whole towns in my State. The cities of Washington, Gifford, and

New Minden, IL, experienced some of the worst tornado damage I have ever seen. Power lines were down and public infrastructure was decimated, but because Illinois did not meet one of FEMA's criteria, we were denied Federal public assistance.

Governor Pat Quinn is going to appeal that denial, and he has Senator KIRK's and my full support for that appeal.

Illinois also was denied Federal disaster assistance after tornadoes destroyed the towns of Harrisburg and Ridgway in 2012. Eight people died after tornadoes with winds up to 200 miles per hour splintered homes, businesses, churches, and public infrastructure in those two towns. Nevertheless, the State was denied public assistance. FEMA said because Illinois has a large population, we should be able to absorb those recovery costs. When similar tornado damage happened in neighboring Joplin, MO—which has a smaller population—Federal assistance was granted.

It is not just tornado damage in Illinois that has resulted in denials from FEMA for Federal assistance, and it is not just the State's per capita that has been used as FEMA's justification for the denials. Counties with a high population also have been denied. Last April, Illinois experienced major flooding both along the Mississippi River and resulting from flash flooding due to major storms.

Many communities in Cook County, including Chicago and its suburbs, experienced unprecedented flooding. But because the damage in Cook County did not meet FEMA's per capita requirement, Cook County was denied individual assistance. All of the neighboring counties were approved. Cook County was denied.

When questioned about these decisions, FEMA pointed to the factors it considers when determining if a Federal declaration is warranted. One of these factors has to do with the population of the State. If a State has a large population—more than 10 million people—it is analyzed differently than if it were smaller. The thinking is that large States have the resources necessary to absorb the recovery costs. Well, I can tell you—Illinois does not have the resources to absorb the costs of these tornadoes and flooding. Whole towns were devastated in these disasters.

The bill Senator KIRK and I introduced assigns a value to each of the six factors considered in the disaster declaration analysis. When FEMA considers individual assistance—help for people to rebuild their homes and pay for temporary housing—it will use the same, consistent factors, no matter where the disaster strikes.

The population of the State will constitute 5 percent of the analysis. Consideration of the concentration of damages will be 20 percent. The amount of

trauma to the disaster area will be 20 percent. The number of special populations—such as elderly or unemployed people—will be 20 percent of the analysis. The amount of voluntary assistance in the area will be 10 percent. And the amount of insurance coverage for the type of damage incurred will be 20 percent of the analysis.

Our bill also adds a seventh consideration to FEMA's metrics—the economics of the area, which will receive 5 percent consideration. This includes factors such as the local assessable tax base, the median income as it compares to that of the State, and the poverty rate as it compares to that of the State. It is reasonable that FEMA should take into consideration the size of the State, but as the regulations stand, large States are being penalized. Assigning values to the factors will ensure that the damage to the specific community weighs more than the State's population.

After the tornadoes hit Harrisburg and Ridgway, the head of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Jonathon Monken, worked with locals and people from the FEMA regional office to determine if the State could apply for public assistance—money to help Mayor Gregg and others pay for the overtime accrued by all the people working around the clock to help the community dig out of the destruction. What Director Monken and the others discovered was that it would have been a waste of the State's time and resources to even apply for Federal public assistance. We did not meet FEMA's threshold.

Currently, FEMA multiplies the number of people in the State by \$1.35 to determine a threshold of the amount of damage a state would have to have incurred to be considered for public assistance. In Illinois, that figure is

about \$17 million. Well, Harrisburg, Ridgway, and the surrounding communities had about \$5.5 million in public assistance damages, and \$5.5 million is a lot of loss, particularly in a rural area, but not enough to qualify for Federal assistance under FEMA's rules.

In the same way this bill assigns values to the factors FEMA considers for individual assistance, it assigns values to the six factors the agency considers for public assistance. The per capita consideration will be 10 percent of the analysis. Localized impacts of the disaster will make up 40 percent of the analysis. The estimated cost of the assistance needed will constitute 10 percent of the analysis. The insurance coverage in force will be 10 percent. The number of recent multiple disasters will be 10 percent. And an analysis of the other Federal assistance for the area will make up 10 percent of the evaluation.

The bill also would add a seventh consideration for public assistance—the economic circumstances of the affected area—which would be considered at 10 percent of the analysis. This would include the same information as it would for individual assistance—the local assessable tax base, the median income of the area as it compares to that of the State, and the poverty rate as it compares to that of the State.

Illinois is a relatively large State, geographically, and has a concentrated urban area. The State—particularly downstate—is being punished for this fact. If the cities of Washington and Gifford—and Harrisburg and Ridgway—do not qualify under FEMA's current criteria for federal assistance, something is wrong.

These towns were struck by category 4 and category 3 tornadoes, respectively, and the damage is devastating. The people of these communities are

being punished for living within a populous State. Let's fix the metrics FEMA uses to make this analysis so that they are fair to every state.

BUDGETARY REVISIONS

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, section 114(d) of H.J. Res. 59, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, allows the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to revise the allocations, aggregates, and levels filed on January 14, 2014, pursuant to section 111 of H.J. Res. 59, for a number of deficit-neutral reserve funds. These reserve funds were incorporated into the Bipartisan Budget Act by reference to sections of S. Con. Res. 8, the Senate-passed budget resolution for 2014. Among these sections is a reference to section 313 of S. Con. Res. 8, which establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill. The authority to adjust enforceable levels in the Senate for a farm bill is contingent on that legislation not increasing the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2018 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2023.

I find that the conference agreement on H.R. 2642, the Agricultural Act of 2014, as reported on January 27, 2014, fulfills the conditions of the deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill. Therefore, pursuant to section 114(d) of H.J. Res. 59, I am adjusting the budgetary aggregates, as well as the allocation to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

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

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

BUDGETARY AGGREGATES—PURSUANT TO SECTION 111 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 311 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

	(Dollars in millions)	2014	2014–18	2014–23
Current Budgetary Aggregates:				
Spending:				
Budget Authority		2,924,837	n/a	n/a
Outlays		2,937,094	n/a	n/a
Revenue		2,311,026	13,699,478	31,095,742
Adjustments Made Pursuant to Section 114(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act: *				
Spending:				
Budget Authority		3,243	n/a	n/a
Outlays		2,124	n/a	n/a
Revenue		5	51	104
Revised Budgetary Aggregates:				
Spending:				
Budget Authority		2,928,080	n/a	n/a
Outlays		2,939,218	n/a	n/a
Revenue		2,311,031	13,699,529	31,095,846

n/a = Not applicable. Appropriations for fiscal years 2015–2023 will be determined by future sessions of Congress and enforced through future Congressional budget resolutions.
 * Adjustments made pursuant to section 114(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which incorporates by reference section 313 of S. Con. Res. 8, as passed by the Senate. Section 313 establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill.

REVISIONS TO THE BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAY ALLOCATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY PURSUANT TO SECTION 111 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 302 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974

	(Dollars in millions)	Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry		
		Current Allocation	Adjustments*	Revised Allocation
Fiscal Year 2014:				
Budget Authority		12,852	3,243	16,095
Outlays		11,862	2,124	13,986
Fiscal Years 2014–2018:				
Budget Authority		68,964	–3,906	65,058
Outlays		66,695	–5,310	61,385

REVISIONS TO THE BUDGET AUTHORITY AND OUTLAY ALLOCATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY PURSUANT TO SECTION 111 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 AND SECTION 302 OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974—Continued

	Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry		
	Current Allocation	Adjustments*	Revised Allocation
(Dollars in millions)			
Fiscal Years 2014–2023:			
Budget Authority	141,305	– 15,034	126,271
Outlays	137,659	– 16,504	121,155

*Adjustments made pursuant to section 114(d) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, which incorporates by reference section 313 of S. Con. Res. 8, as passed by the Senate. Section 313 establishes a deficit-neutral reserve fund for a farm bill.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, the act, calls for the Select Committee on Ethics of the United States Senate to issue an annual report not later than January 31 of each year providing information in certain categories describing its activities for the preceding year. Reported below is the information describing the committee's activities in 2013 in the categories set forth in the act:

(1) The number of alleged violations of Senate rules received from any source, including the number raised by a Senator or staff of the Committee: 26. (In addition, two alleged violations from the previous year were carried into 2013.)

(2) The number of alleged violations that were dismissed—

(A) For lack of subject matter jurisdiction or in which, even if the allegations in the complaint are true, no violation of Senate rules would exist: 19.

(B) Because they failed to provide sufficient facts as to any material violation of the Senate rules beyond mere allegation or assertion: 7.

(3) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry: 2. (This figure includes one matter from the previous calendar year carried into 2013.)

(4) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry that resulted in an adjudicatory review: 0.

(5) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee dismissed the matter for lack of substantial merit: 1.

(6) The number of alleged violations for which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry and the Committee issued private or public letters of admonition: 0.

(7) The number of matters resulting in a disciplinary sanction: 0.

(8) Any other information deemed by the Committee to be appropriate to describe its activities in the previous year:

In 2013, the Committee staff conducted 12 new Member ethics training sessions; nine Member and committee office campaign briefings; 13 employee code of conduct training sessions; eight

public financial disclosure clinics, seminars, and webinars; 28 ethics seminars and customized briefings for Member DC offices, state offices, and Senate committees; three private sector ethics briefings; and eight international briefings.

In 2013, the Committee staff handled approximately 8,073 telephone inquiries and 1,980 inquiries by email for ethics advice and guidance.

In 2013, the Committee wrote approximately 755 ethics advisory letters and responses including, but not limited to, 608 travel and gifts matters (Senate Rule 35) and 104 conflict of interest matters (Senate Rule 37).

In 2013, the Committee issued 3,246 letters concerning financial disclosure filings by Senators, Senate staff and Senate candidates and reviewed 1,760 reports.

REMEMBRANCE AND RESOLVE

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, every January brings hope that the New Year will be a happy and safe one. But, sadly, 2014 has already been marred by gun violence.

To cite just a few examples, on January 9, a 16-year-old student at Liberty Technology Magnet High School shot a classmate in the thigh with a pistol. On January 14, a 12-year-old in New Mexico walked into his middle school's gym and opened fire with a shotgun, injuring two of his classmates as they waited to go to class. And on the evening of January 15, a man used a semi-automatic handgun to murder two people at an Indiana grocery store. He was about to kill another person just before police officers shot and killed him.

Sadly, our Nation's epidemic of gun violence continues. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control has estimated that around 30,000 people in the United States die from gunshot wounds every year, and more than 60,000 people are injured by guns every year. A study also has shown that the firearm homicide rate in our Nation is 20 times higher than the combined rate of 22 other countries comparable in population.

We live in a country where almost every week a community is wracked by a mass shooting, defined as an incident that claims at least four lives. In 2013, our Nation witnessed at least 25 such

shootings. These occur all over our Nation, in places like Oklahoma City, where last August a man who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia stopped taking his medication and shot his mother, sister, niece, and nephew; in Ottawa, KS, where last April a man who had served prison time for attempted second-degree murder shot and killed 4 people; in Washington, DC, where a mentally deranged individual killed 12 and injured 8 at Washington's Navy Yard.

Last December, just one day before the anniversary of the tragic Newtown school shooting which stole the lives of 27 people, 20 of them children, another school shooting occurred in Arapahoe, CO. This time, the perpetrator was an 18-year-old high school senior who entered his high school near Denver armed with 125 rounds of ammunition, a pump-action shotgun, a machete, and three incendiary devices. He critically injured a classmate, who has since tragically passed away, before taking his own life. While this may not qualify as a mass shooting, it is no less troubling. It is a testament to how disturbingly numb to gun violence our society has become that the sentiment "it could have been worse" is some form of relief.

Today, America is a nation where parents are nervous to send their children to schools, shopping malls, and movie theaters because they are genuinely afraid that their kids might not come back. We live in a nation where toddlers find unsecured handguns in their family's homes and accidentally take lives. We live in a society where arguments and disputes turn into tragedies, all with one ill-considered pull of a trigger. Is this the kind of environment we want to live in? Is this what we want to leave for the next generation?

Mr. President, it is my hope that this year, the procession of gun tragedies will begin to end. It is my hope that we will not be submerged this year in the horror of a mass shooting. But this hope will only be realized if Congress takes action to stop the gun violence plaguing our country.

I urge my colleagues not to accept the status quo, where convicted felons, domestic abusers, and the mentally ill can get their hands on a deadly weapon at any time. I urge my colleagues to take steps toward ending this violence

by passing commonsense legislation, supported by 90 percent of the American people, that would enact background checks on all gun sales. I urge my colleagues to work to ensure that our homes, our families, and our neighborhoods become safer.

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate Ashland University for addressing the challenging issue of skyrocketing tuition. After serious consideration, Ashland has dramatically reduced its tuition for the 2014-2015 school year by 37 percent. Ashland hopes this important step will improve access to higher education at affordable prices while keeping the university financially competitive.

Ashland University, which is located in Ashland, OH, has a proud history of providing quality education since its founding in 1878. The university offers undergraduate, masters, and doctorate degrees and has been nationally recognized and ranked in the "Top 200 National Universities" by U.S. News & World Report for the last 2 years.

Madam President, I would like to congratulate Ashland University for addressing the affordability and accessibility of higher education.

TRIBUTE TO MYRON BELKIND

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize Cleveland native Myron Belkind, who was named president of the National Press Club on January 25, 2014. Mr. Belkind grew up in Lyndhurst, OH, where he began his career in journalism writing as a student and then for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Cleveland Press.

During Mr. Belkind's 42-year career with the Associated Press, he covered many world leaders and headed up Associated Press bureaus in Kuala Lumpur, New Delhi, London, and Tokyo. He served as president of several foreign press associations and as a journalism instructor at the George Washington University in Washington, DC. He has received the Distinguished Alumni Awards from the Ohio State University School of Communications and Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

As a foreign correspondent in the 1970s, Belkind covered major international news stories and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the breaking news that Prime Minister Gandhi's government had declared a state of emergency on June 26, 1975, suspending civil liberties, arresting thousands of political opponents, and imposing restrictions on the national and international press.

He is the first National Press Club president with an extensive international background in foreign cor-

respondence. In his new role, he has vowed to continue his work promoting worldwide freedom of the press and will continue to strive for professional development and excellence in journalism.

Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Myron Belkind, a fellow Buckeye, as he begins this new chapter in his distinguished career.

REMEMBERING MARSHA OGILVIE

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to Marsha H. Ogilvie, a loyal and steadfast mayor of Sandpoint, ID. On January, 8, 2014, Mayor Ogilvie lost a valiant battle with cancer and my State lost a good friend, a champion for women and children and a tireless public servant.

Mayor Ogilvie, who was born at March Air Force Base in Southern California, moved to the great State of Idaho in 1994. In the 20 years she made Idaho her home, she distinguished herself in service to others. As she once said, and many in Sandpoint now say, she won the hearts and minds of the people in Sandpoint.

Elected mayor just 2 years ago and having served the two previous years on the city council, Mayor Ogilvie, leaves a giant hole in those hearts and the broader community. The business and professional experience Mayor Ogilvie brought was wide and varied and earned her the respect of many. Early in her career, she served in restaurant and retail management. When she and her husband Francis arrived in Sandpoint, they opened a couple of small businesses—The Candy Cottage and the All Smiles gift shop. But Marsha Ogilvie was not just about business. She cared deeply about the health, welfare and success of women and children.

Soon after moving to Idaho and well before entering public service, she established Kinderhaven, a nonprofit community organization which is dedicated to supporting children in crisis. Founded in 1996 and under the vision and compassionate care of Marsha Ogilvie, more than 1,300 children have found the all-important help they needed in times of their greatest distress. So important to the Sandpoint community, Kinderhaven was named the grand prize winner in the 2002 Governor's Brightest Stars Awards. In addition, Mrs. Ogilvie, who crossed paths with many women serving as volunteers in the Sandpoint community, started Women Honoring Women. It was designed to be a one-time event but has evolved since 1999 into an annual event to recognize and honor women in Bonner County who are 65 or older and working to make a difference in the lives of others, who love learning and exhibit qualities of leadership. Marsha Ogilvie recognized these qualities in others because she, too, pos-

sessed them. . . well, all but one—she was only 64 when she passed away.

If these achievements were not enough, Marsha Ogilvie joined with three friends to co-author a children's book, which was just recently published. *Gigi's Enchanted Forest* was a way to honor the life of a mutual friend of theirs who shared their hope for and love of children and a dedication to community service.

Mayor Marsha H. Ogilvie personified a life of giving and caring. Her unparalleled legacy of hard work, reaching out to her community and recognizing those who help others in volunteer service is indelibly etched on the many hearts and minds of those she served in Sandpoint, ID, and far beyond the city limits. May God bless her husband, her family and the hundreds of Idahoans who will miss her passion, exuberance and spirit of joy.

FISHER'S TECHNOLOGY

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, a small business faces a constant threat to its bottom line when the products they sell grow obsolete. Years of expertise and business relationships can be rendered meaningless without the ability to adjust in an ever changing and technologically advancing marketplace. There is no better example of adaptation than Fisher's Technology in my home State of Idaho.

Fisher's Technology was founded in Boise, ID in 1936, during the worst years of the Great Depression, as a specialty typewriter sales and repair shop. In 1985, Gary Mahn purchased the company and, since then, Fisher's Technology has expanded its inventory to become Idaho's largest office supply firm. This would not have been possible had Fisher's remained narrowly focused on typewriters. In a continuing business evolution, Mr. Mahn sold the office supply portion of the company to another local Boise company. This allowed Fisher's Technology to maintain and grow the remaining office equipment division.

Today, Fisher's Technology has four locations across Idaho, offering a variety of office hardware and software products along with IT services. After a 78 percent increase in sales revenue, topping \$13 million, Fisher's was named to Inc. Magazine's 5,000 fastest-growing companies in the Nation. Fisher's has made this list four of the last 5 years, a testament to the Fisher's Technology team's hard work and commitment to customer satisfaction. At a time when America's economy has struggled to add jobs, Fisher's Technology has boosted its payroll from 46 employees in 2009 to 66 today representing a 43 percent increase in hiring.

Not only has Fisher's Technology helped businesses across Idaho meet their equipment needs, but its employees are also active members of their

communities and strive to give back in any way that they can. For example, the company sponsors the Blue Cross "Blue Cruise" bicycle race, which benefits local charities in Idaho's Treasure Valley.

I commend everyone at Fisher's Technology on their continued growth, resilience, and determination, and wish them another 78 years of success.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAVID MELINCOFF

• Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I rise today to recognize a remarkable Vermonter, David Melincoff, who is carrying on the tradition of providing a good meal and fostering a sense of community each Thanksgiving.

As many Vermonters continue to struggle to make ends meet in the wake of the most severe recession to hit the United States in generations, Mr. Melincoff marked the 24th year his Burlington, VT restaurant has offered a traditional Thanksgiving dinner at no cost. Nearly 1,000 dinners were given away this past Thanksgiving. Since the Thanksgiving Community Dinner started 24 years ago at Sweetwaters American Bistro, Mr. Melincoff estimates that more than 20,000 meals have been served free of charge.

The dinner, a traditional Thanksgiving meal of turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes, offers the same experience a diner would have eating at the restaurant on any other night, including wait service provided by volunteers. The fundamental difference is that the meal is free of charge—and the sense of community this generosity inspires is undeniable.

It is not only those who are having financial difficulties who attend the Thanksgiving Community Dinner. As Mr. Melincoff noted, "Sometimes it's an emotional need." Often, people who have lost a loved one attend in order to share in the company and fellowship of others. The dinner provides an opportunity where people, regardless of their economic status, can sit and break bread together. "Here, they just feel equal. That's the part that always gets me," Mr. Melincoff said. "It's about self-respect."

The meal itself is just one part of the day-long event. A coat donation drive was added as another effort to serve 4 years ago. Hundreds of coats are collected in advance by the Windjammer Restaurant in South Burlington, and this year roughly 700 coats were provided to individuals in need.

Local residents and members of the business community also pitch in to make the Thanksgiving Community Dinner a success. Everyone benefits from this event, whether it is from the food provided or the satisfaction of giving back to the community. For the

volunteers, Mr. Melincoff noted, "it puts things into perspective about what you should be grateful for."

Mr. President, I wanted to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Melincoff for his commitment and service to others and applaud his efforts to reach out to those in need.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and two withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agree to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the British-American Interparliamentary Group: Mr. MCINTYRE of North Carolina and Mr. DELANEY of Maryland.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1977. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

POM-193 and POM-194 originally appeared without text in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of Wednesday, January 29, 2014.

POM-193. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature petitioning the United States Congress to amend the Radiation Exposure Act of 1990; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18-04, S1

Whereas, the United States Government and the Atomic Energy Commission together with the United States Armed Forces conducted testing of atomic nuclear weapons on Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls in the Marshall Islands, South Pacific, from 1946 to 1962; and

Whereas, a total of 67 atomic and thermonuclear bombs/devices were detonated with a total yield of 108,492.2 kilotons which resulted in fallout across a wide area around the Marshall Islands in the Pacific; and

Whereas, no less than ten of those detonations yielded between five to ten megatons of radioactive material from the center of the explosion to the height of between 12 to 55 miles into the jet-stream; and

Whereas, on October 31, 1952, Operation Ivy was conducted on Elugelab Island ("Flora") in the Enewetak Atoll, in which the first true thermonuclear hydrogen bomb (a 10.4 megaton device) code name Mike was detonated, destroying the entire island leaving behind a 6,240 feet across and 164 feet deep crater in its aftermath; and

Whereas, in 90 seconds the mushroom cloud climbed to 57,000 feet into the atmosphere and within 30 minutes had stretched 60 miles in diameter with the base of the mushroom head joining the stem of 45,000 feet; and

Whereas, radioactive fallout is the after effect of the detonation of a nuclear bomb where radioactive particles and earth debris, which comprise the mushroom cloud, are released into the atmosphere and remain in the atmosphere for about 24 hours before descending back to earth; and

Whereas, before the descend back to earth, these radioactive particles can be carried through jet-streams in the atmosphere to locations over a thousand miles away from the actual test site and settle into the environment causing multiple health and environmental problems; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are located approximately 1,230 miles directly west of the test sites; and

Whereas, the radioactive dust particles travelled through the westward flowing jet-streams from the Marshall Islands to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, due to the deleterious effects of the nuclear radiation, on October 5, 1990, the United States Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act ("RECA") which established new programs for persons physically present in areas near the Nevada nuclear test site during atomic testing at the site. Atmospheric testing of atomic devices—important to national security during the darkest days of the "cold war"—ended in 1963 when, under President Kennedy, the United States signed and ratified the limited Test Ban "Treaty". Prior to the Treaty, the United States detonated over 200 atomic devices in the open air in both the South Pacific and in Nevada. The RECA provides compassionate payments to persons with specified diseases who fear that their health were harmed because of fallout from atmospheric atomic testing at the Nevada test site, regardless of whether caution can be scientifically established; and

Whereas, on July 10, 2000, Public Law 106-245, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2000 was passed, adding two new claimant categories, providing for, among other things, additional compensable illnesses, removing certain lifestyle restrictions, and adding additional geographic areas to the "downwinder" claimant category; and

Whereas, although RECA coverage has been expanded, it still does not provide relief to all Americans affected by fallout, particularly residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Territory of Guam; and

Whereas, there is no doubt that the Territory of Guam has received radioactive debris from fallout during the nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific Ocean to such an extent that in March 2004, Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo spoke before the Committee to Assess the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program to request that they include an assessment of Guam for “downwinders” and ship decontamination as part of their congressionally mandated study; and

Whereas, because the islands in the CNMI are in close proximity to the Territory of Guam, separated by a scant 30 miles, and both are affected by the same wind, weather and ocean current patterns, it logically follows that radiation which affects the Territory of Guam necessarily affects the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, as a result, the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board (“NSRB”) published in 2005 its report entitled “Assessment of the Scientific information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program”; and

Whereas, because fallout may have been higher for the people outside RECA-designated areas, the NRSB recommended that all residents of the continental US, Alaska, Hawaii, and overseas US territories who have been diagnosed with specific RECA-compensable diseases and who may have been exposed to radiation from U.S. nuclear-weapons testing fallout be compensated; and

Whereas, the United States Congress has the authority to amend RECA to include residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands affected by radiation as eligible “downwinder” claimants; and

Whereas, the failure of the United States Congress to amend RECA in such a way as to compensate affected residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Islands will cause the people of the Commonwealth to bear a disproportionate burden in defending the United States of America; and

Whereas, we, the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, United States of America, humbly request that the Commonwealth be included in RECA with the same criteria that was made for Nevada test site in 1990 for compassionate payments; Now, therefore be it

Resolved, on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by the Eighteen Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully petitioned to declare that all Americans shall be given the same consideration when it comes to compensation for exposure to radiation from U.S. nuclear testing; and be it further

Resolved, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully petitioned to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990, Public Law 101-426, as amended by Public Law 101-510, 3139 (43 U.S.C. 2210) and Public Law 106-245, to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the jurisdiction “downwinders” covered by the Act; and be it further

Resolved, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully requested to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands similarly as the Territory of Guam

and be granted RECA “on site” status; and be it further

Resolved, That the affected population previously and currently in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (those residing who have been exposed to radiation from the Atomic Energy Commission tests in the Marshall Islands) be recognized as being “downwinders” of such test; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall certify, and the Senate Legislative Secretary and the House Clerk shall attest to the adoption of this joint resolution, and thereafter the Senate Clerk shall transmit a certified copy to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America; to the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate; to the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Mark Chuck Grassley, ranking member, Committee of the Judiciary United States Senate; to the Honorable Mark Udall, United States Senate; to the Honorable Tom Udall, United States Senate; to the Honorable Martin Heinrich, United States Senate; to the Honorable Mike Crapo, United States Senate; to the Honorable James Risch, United States Senate; to the Honorable Michael Bennet, United States Senate; to the Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, United States Senate; to the Honorable Michael B. Enzi, ranking member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, United States Senate; to the Honorable Robert Menendez, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs United States Senate; to the Honorable Bob Corker, ranking member Committee on Foreign Affairs United States Senate; to the Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Chairwoman, Committee on Appropriations United States Senate; to the Honorable Ben Lujan, member of Congress, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Lamar Smith, Chairman, Committee on Judiciary United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable John Conyers, Jr., ranking member, Committee on Judiciary United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Fred Upton, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Henry Waxman, ranking member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Nita Lowey, ranking member, Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Ed Royce Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Eliot Engel, ranking member Foreign Affairs Committee, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable John Kline, Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable George Miller, ranking member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, United States House of Representatives; to Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., Attorney General of the United States; to Mr. RJ Ritter, National Commander, National Association of Atomic Veterans; to Mr. Bob Kithau, Hawaii State Commander, National Association of Atomic Veterans; to the Honorable Madeleine Z. Bordallo, Member of Congress, United States

House of Representatives, Territory of Guam; to the Honorable Gregorio “Kilili” Camcho Sablan, CNMI Delegate to the United States Congress; to the Honorable Eloy S. Inos, Governor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Honorable Judith T. Won Pat, Speaker, 32nd Guam Legislature, Territory of Guam; to the Honorable Edward B. Calve, Governor, Territory of Guam and to Mr. Robert N. Celestial, Atomic Veteran from Guam and President of the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors.

POM-194. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature requesting the United States Congress to eliminate Section 2109 of S. 744 and similar legislation which will allow thousands of alien workers, their families, and persons of other ethnic origin who are in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to become permanent residents and subsequently become U.S. citizens; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 18-34

Whereas, the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands, in the exercise of their inalienable right of self-determination, negotiated the Covenant Agreement which established the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in a Political Union with the United States of America. And, in a plebiscite called by the United States on June 17, 1975, they approved the Covenant Agreement by 78.8 per centum. And, with the approval of the Covenant (U.S. Public Law 94-241; 90 Stat. 263) by the 94th United States Congress in a Joint Resolution (H. J. Res. 549) on March 24, 1976 and approved by the President of the United States on October 24, 1977, the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands finally realized their aspiration to be freed from foreign dominations, and to be recognized as a people of the Northern Mariana Islands, with the “the right of local self-government and to govern themselves in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption” as agreed upon and guaranteed pursuant to Article 1, Section 103 of the Covenant; and

Whereas, this desire of the Chamorros and Carolinians of the Northern Mariana Islands is not unique, and serves as a basic tenet that guides indigenous peoples around the world who wish to be protected and secure in their homeland, and to exercise their right to self-government. These include the Filipinos, led by national hero and icon Jose Rizal; the Native Americans of North America; the indigenous Fijians, outnumbered at one point by ethnic Indians; the Aborigines of Australia; the Maori of New Zealand; and the Native Hawaiians; and

Whereas, the debate on immigration reform issues is now before the 113th United States Congress, and in particular, the passage of Section 2109 (Long-Term Legal Residents in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S.744 by the Senate, that is now before the House of Representatives, if approved and becomes a law, will make thousands of alien workers, their families and people of other ethnic origin in the Commonwealth eligible to become U. S. permanent residents five years from its enactment, and five years thereafter, they will be eligible to become U. S. Citizen; and

Whereas, the CNMI’s 2010 census data shows that there were 53,883 people in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Of that figure, 2,461 were Carolinians

and 12,902 were Chamorros, representing a combined total of 15,363 persons of Northern Marianas descent. The 2010 census reported other ethnic groups as follows: 19,017 Filipino; 2,253 Korean; 3,659 Chinese; 1,979 other Asian persons; 1,343 persons of other ethnic origin; 6,832 persons of two or more ethnic origins; and 3,437 persons of native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. These groups of people represent a total of 38,520 or 71 percent of the total population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, compared to only 15,363 or 29 percent of Chamorro and Carolinian people of Northern Marianas descent. Undoubtedly, the alien workers, their families and people of other ethnic origin have already outnumbered the population of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of Northern Marianas descent; and

Whereas, the U. S. Senate, in introducing S. 744 with the added Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), failed to recognize and respect the spirit and sanctity of the Covenant Agreement; the fundamental provisions delineated in Article I, Section 105 of the Covenant, namely, Articles I, II, and III and Sections 501 and 805; and in particular, Article I, Section 103, which guarantees the indigenous Chamorros and Carolinians of the Northern Mariana Islands their right of local self-government and to govern themselves with respect to internal affairs in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption; and

Whereas, S. 744, Sections 2109 B(i), (ii), (iii), (v)(I), (V), and (C) will allow the alien workers, their families and people of other ethnicity to become permanent residents and eventually become U. S. citizens upon it becoming law. According to the 2010 census these foreign people represent a combined total of 38,520 or 71 percent of the Commonwealth's population. Such data clearly depicts a great disparity in the population profile of the Commonwealth, where the people of Northern Mariana descent represent only 15,363 or 29 percent of the total population of 53,883. As a consequence, the Chamorros and Carolinians of the Northern Marianas Islands will ultimately become powerless and minority voice in their homeland. Their social, economic, and political rights and all that they have aspired, bargained and worked hard to achieve, pursuant to the Covenant Agreement; including their rights under the Northern Mariana Islands Constitution, which they wrote, adopted, and approved by the President of the United States of America on October 24, 1977, will undeniably be taken away from them; and

Whereas, Article V, Section 506 of the Covenant, which the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands agreed to, and approved, hold the same provisions as those found in Section 2109 of S. 744. Sub-section (II) of Section 2109 permits such alien who was, on May 8, 2008, and continues to be as of the date of the enactment of this paragraph, a permanent resident (as defined in section 4303 of this title 3 of the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Code, in effect on May 8, 2008); and (III), is the spouse or child (as defined in section 101(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(b)(1))), of an alien described in sub-clauses (I) or (II); and (IV), was, on May 8, 2008, an immediate relative (as defined in section 4303 of title 3 of the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Code, in effect on May 8, 2008, of a United States citizen, notwithstanding the age of the United States citizen, and continues to be such an immediate relative on the date of

the application described in subparagraph (A); and (V), is the spouse or child (as defined in section 101(b)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(b)(1))), of the alien guest worker described in sub-clause (V) and is presently resident under CW-2 status. The intent of these provisions are already permitted under Section 506 of Article 5 of the Covenant Agreement, notwithstanding Sections 2109B(i), (ii), (iii), (v)(I), (V), and (C) (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S.744; and

Whereas, Section 2109 ((Long-Term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744 is amending Article V, Section 506 of the Covenant by including Section 2109 B(i), (ii), (iii), (v)(I), (V), and (C) to allow alien workers, their families, and people of other ethnic origin, who were counted and described in the CNMI's 2010 Census, to become permanent residents and eventually become U. S. citizens. Clearly, this Act violates the fundamental provisions delineated in Article I, Sections 105 and other provisions of the Covenant; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives of the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature recognizes the importance of granting improved status to the few stateless persons who were born in the Northern Mariana Islands between January 1, 1974 and January 9, 1978 (Section 2109 B(v)(I)); however, the granting of permanent resident status to foreign persons delineated in Section 2109 B(i), (ii), (iii), (V), and (C) of S.744, should and must go through the established process, pursuant to the Immigration and Nationality Act. Therefore, the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature disagrees with and is strongly opposed to the inclusion of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in S.744, under Section 2109 (Long-Term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); and

Whereas, Article V, Section 503(a) of the Covenant authorizes the United States Congress to make applicable to the Northern Mariana Islands the immigration and naturalization law of the United States after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. This was accomplished when the U.S. Congress enacted the Consolidated Natural Resource Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-229). However, such authority given to the United States Congress under the said Article V, Section 503(a) does not necessarily mean that the U.S. Congress can unilaterally and arbitrarily enact immigration laws and/or other bills or legislations for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that contradicts and infringes on the fundamental provisions delineated in Article 1, Section 105 and other provisions of the Covenant; particularly, outlined in Article 1, Section 103, which guarantees the indigenous people of the Northern Mariana Islands the right of local self-government and to govern themselves with respect to internal affairs in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption; and

Whereas, Article 1, Section 105 of the Covenant states: "The United States may enact legislation in accordance with its constitutional processes which will be applicable to the Northern Mariana Islands, but if such legislation cannot also be made applicable to the several States the Northern Mariana Islands must be specifically named therein for it to become effective in the Northern Mariana Islands. In order to respect the right of self-government guaranteed by this Cov-

enant the United States agrees to limit the exercise of that authority so that the fundamental provisions of this Covenant, namely Articles I, II and III and Sections 501 and 805, may be modified only with the consent of the Government of the United States and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands"; and

Whereas, Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744 contradicts U.S. Public Law 110-229 (Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008) which mandates the alien worker population of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to be zeroed out when the transition period ends on Dec. 31, 2014. U.S. Public Law 110-229 (Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008) seeks to help create jobs for the many unemployed indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian people and U.S. citizens who are residents in the Northern Mariana Islands, who have been actively searching for work in the job market. Section 2109 of S. 744, on the other hand, will deprive the Chamorro and Carolinian people of Northern Marianas descent and U.S. citizens who are residents of the Commonwealth of employment opportunities, as alien workers and people of other ethnic origin will continue to occupy and fill the positions in the job market; and

Whereas, alien workers who are recruited for employment purposes, should not, irrespective of the length of their employment in the Commonwealth, be automatically entitled to full social, economic, and political rights, because such benefits and privileges of United States citizens were never promised, bargained, entered, and/or agreed upon in their employment contracts, which were approved by them and the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; nor were discussions made or suggested for alien workers, their families, and persons of other ethnic origin to become permanent resident during the negotiation of Covenant Agreement between the indigenous people of the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States of America, notwithstanding Section 506 of Article V of the Covenant; and

Whereas, the enactment of Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744, and/or any similar Act by Congress, will dramatically change the social, economic, and political landscape in the Commonwealth to the advantage of the thousands of alien workers, their families and people of other ethnic origin or race upon them becoming U.S. Citizens. This will have a devastating effect on the social, political and economic livelihood of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands. It will give birth to a new form of foreign domination on the indigenous people once again, but this time, sadly, it evolves from within the Commonwealth by way of Section 2109 (Long-term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); and

Whereas, the enactment of Section 2109 of S. 744, and/or any similar legislations by Congress will place the Carolinian and Chamorro people of the Northern Mariana Islands back in time, trapped under a new form of foreign domination once again, and a direct violation of the Covenant Agreement, and the mandates of the Trusteeship Agreement which was agreed upon by the United States and the United Nation Security Council, including the Charter of the United Nations which obligates the United States "to promote the development of the people of

the trust territory toward self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the trust territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned". The enactment of Section 2109 and/or other similar act or legislations by Congress is a direct contradiction to the freely expressed wishes of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Marianas Islands when they exercised their inalienable right of self-determination and negotiated the Covenant Agreement with the United States of America—to be free from foreign domination, and to be recognized as a people of the Northern Mariana Islands, with "the right of local self-government and to govern themselves in accordance with a Constitution of their own adoption; and

Whereas, Section 2109 of S. 744, and/or any similar Act currently before both houses of the U.S. Congress for consideration, or are being proposed will create alarming concerns to the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands, thus affecting the relationship between them and the United States; therefore, the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature urged the U.S. Congress that any and all propose legislations that infringes upon the social, economic and political rights of the indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian people who are of Northern Marianas descent, who called for, negotiated, and voted favorably in support of the Covenant, must be addressed pursuant to Article 1, Section 105 and Section 902 of the Covenant; and

Whereas, Section 902 of Article IX states in part: "The Government of the United States and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands will consult regularly on all matters affecting the relationship between them". . . "to consider in good faith such issues affecting the relationship between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States as may be designated by either Government and to make recommendations with respect thereto": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives of the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature respectfully request and urge the House of Representatives of the 113th United States Congress to eliminate Section 2109 (Long-Term Legal Residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) of S. 744, and any similar legislation that is currently before both houses of the U.S. Congress undergoing review for consideration until such legislative intent for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is discussed pursuant to Article 1, Section 105 and Article IX, Section 902 of the Covenant to Establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas in Political Union with the United States of America; and to recognize, respect and take into serious consideration the mandates of the Trusteeship Agreement which was agreed upon by the United States; and the United Nation Security Council, including the United States obligation under the Charter of the United Nation as stipulated in the House Joint Resolution No. 549—to approve the "Covenant To Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America"; and be it further

Resolved, That the Speaker of the House shall certify, and the Clerk of the House shall attest to the adoption of this resolution. The Clerk of the House shall transmit a certified copy of this Resolution to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate, 113th United States Congress; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the

House, 113th United States Congress; the Honorable Gregorio "Killili" Sablan, CNMI Delegate to the 113th United States Congress; the U. S. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewell; the Secretary of U.S. Department of Homeland Security; the Honorable Eloy S. Inos, Governor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Honorable Ralph DLG Torres, President of the Senate; 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature; the Honorable Donald P. Flores, Mayor of Saipan; the Honorable Ramon M. Dela Cruz, Mayor of Tinian and Aguigan; the Honorable Melchor A. Mendiola, Mayor of Rota; and the Honorable Tobias C. Aldan, Mayor of the Northern Islands.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL for the Committee on Indian Affairs.

*Vincent G. Logan, of New York, to be Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians, Department of the Interior.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 1974. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to prohibit Federal education mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 1975. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an above-the-line deduction for child care expenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1976. A bill to protect consumers by requiring reasonable security policies and procedures to protect data containing personal information, and to provide for nationwide notice in the event of a breach of security; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1977. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset; read the first time.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico:

S. 1978. A bill to increase access to primary care services through training and accountability improvements; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1979. A bill to provide for USA Retirement Funds, to reform the pension system,

and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 342. A resolution designating February 3 through 7, 2014, as "National School Counseling Week"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to provide a permanent deduction for State and local general sales taxes.

S. 84

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 84, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 289

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 289, a bill to extend the low-interest refinancing provisions under the Local Development Business Loan Program of the Small Business Administration.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

S. 865

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 865, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 1235

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr.

ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1235, a bill to restrict any State or local jurisdiction from imposing a new discriminatory tax on cell phone services, providers, or property.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1587

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1587, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal to each of Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 1596

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1596, a bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees.

S. 1654

At the request of Mr. REED, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1654, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny tax deductions for corporate regulatory violations.

S. 1704

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1704, a bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students.

S. 1709

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1709, a bill to require the Committee on Technology of the National Science and Technology Council to develop and update a national manufacturing competitiveness strategic plan, and for other purposes.

S. 1792

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1792, a bill to close out expired, empty grant accounts.

S. 1814

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1814, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Silver Alert plans throughout the United States and for other purposes.

S. 1908

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1909, a bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes.

S. 1923

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

S. 1924

At the request of Mr. RISCH, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1924, a bill to require a report on INF Treaty compliance information sharing.

S. 1925

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1925, a bill to limit the retrieval of data from vehicle event data recorders.

S. 1941

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1941, a bill to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.

S. 1953

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Wyoming

(Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1953, a bill to amend certain provisions of the Inspector General Act of 1978 and the Inspector General Improvement Act of 2008, and for other purposes.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1957

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1957, a bill to establish the American Infrastructure Fund, to provide bond guarantees and make loans to States, local governments, and infrastructure providers for investments in certain infrastructure projects, and to provide equity investments in such projects, and for other purposes.

S. 1972

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1972, a bill to prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of an individual's status or history of unemployment.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

S. RES. 340

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 340, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that all necessary measures should be taken to protect children in the United States from human trafficking, especially during the upcoming Super Bowl, an event around which many children are trafficked for sex.

S. RES. 341

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from

Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 341, a resolution observing the 100th birthday of civil rights leader Daisy Bates and honoring her legacy as an American heroine.

AMENDMENT NO. 2707

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2707 proposed to S. 1926, a bill to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 and to reform the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1976. A bill to protect consumers by requiring reasonable security policies and procedures to protect data containing personal information, and to provide for nationwide notice in the event of a breach of security; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Data Security and Breach Notification Act of 2014. I introduce this bill with my good friend, Senator FEINSTEIN, Chairman of the Intelligence Committee, as well as Senators PRYOR and NELSON, valued Subcommittee Chairmen on the Senate Commerce Committee. I want to express my particular gratitude to Senator PRYOR for his work on this issue. He has long been the champion of data security legislation on the Commerce Committee, and his well-known commitment and expertise on this issue, as well as his support of our current bill, have proven to be indispensable.

While the recent breaches at Target and Neiman Marcus have made headlines, these breaches are nothing new. Data breaches have happened before, and they will inevitably occur in the future. Understanding this, there is much more that can be done to prevent breaches and, when they occur, respond to them.

Similarly, the concepts in today's bill are not new and have been considered by Congress before. The bill that Senators FEINSTEIN, PRYOR, NELSON, and I introduce today is not a significant departure from the bill that Senator PRYOR and I introduced in the past two Congresses. Like the earlier bills, it is predicated on basic principles: companies should adopt strong security protocols to protect consumers' personal information; they should quickly notify affected consumers in the event of a breach; and the Federal Trade Commission, FTC, and State attorneys general should be empowered to fully enforce the law.

With those principles as a framework, the bill we introduce today has four key elements.

First, it directs the FTC to promulgate rules establishing robust data security protocols that companies and nonprofits must adopt when collecting and storing consumers' personal information. These rules will be strong, but they will also be flexible. We recognize that security measures for a large multi-billion-dollar corporation may not be appropriate for a small business. As such, the Commission is required to consider the impact on small businesses and other mitigating factors in developing its rules.

Second, the bill requires breached companies to notify affected consumers unless there is no reasonable risk of identity theft, fraud, or other unlawful conduct. In so doing, the breached company must also provide those consumers with free credit reports. If companies adopt advanced technologies that render their personal data unreadable, indecipherable, or otherwise unusable, there is a rebuttable presumption that no risk to consumers exists. The FTC, in consultation with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall establish guidelines identifying the technologies that would qualify for this rebuttable presumption.

Third, the bill will establish a two-pronged enforcement system, whereby the FTC and state Attorneys General are afforded not only traditional equitable remedies but civil penalty authority as well. Moreover, the bill makes it a criminal offense for anyone to knowingly conceal a data breach.

Lastly, our bill will require companies to report data breaches to a designated Federal government entity as established by the Department of Homeland Security. This entity will serve as a central repository for information on all data breaches of a certain magnitude and will, in turn, notify other relevant Federal and law enforcement agencies, such as the Department of Justice, Secret Service, FTC, and affected State Attorneys General.

I would like to note that, while the impetus behind introducing this bill is to provide consumers with the strongest protections possible, the bill will also provide businesses with regulatory certainty—something they currently lack. Our bill will finally codify into regulation what the FTC is already doing; that is, the Commission has a long history of bringing enforcement actions against companies for negligent data security practices as violations of the FTC Act's broad prohibition against "unfair or deceptive acts or practices." Indeed, the Commission is currently embroiled in numerous data breach cases. The FTC's new data security rules mandated by our bill will finally provide more explicit detail

to industry regarding the rules of the road. Importantly, the bill will create one set of Federal rules; it will preempt State laws with regard to data security and breach notification so that companies no longer have to operate under a patchwork of differing state laws.

Notwithstanding my frustration over Congress's decade-long failure to pass meaningful data security legislation, I remain hopeful that this year will be different. The American public is demanding that we do something about a problem that is only getting worse. As I noted earlier in my remarks, there will be more data breaches in the future—it is inevitable. And the consequences are not trivial. Not only do these data breaches impose potentially devastating financial consequences on consumers who are victimized by identity theft and other financial fraud, these breaches also threaten basic consumer privacy. Companies continue to collect, aggregate, and house an unfathomable amount of personal information about all of us. These same companies must guard that information with the highest of security standards. While I am not naive to think our bill will prevent all data breaches of the future, I am confident that it will go a long way towards pushing companies to do more—much more. And it will finally provide consumers with peace of mind that—when a breach does occur—they will be notified as soon as possible so they may take the necessary steps to protect themselves.

I thank Senators FEINSTEIN, PRYOR, and NELSON for helping me on this important bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 342—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH 7, 2014, AS "NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK"

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 342

Whereas the American School Counselor Association has designated February 3 through 7, 2014, as "National School Counseling Week";

Whereas the importance of school counseling has been recognized through the inclusion of elementary and secondary school counseling programs in amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

Whereas school counselors have long advocated for equal opportunities for all students;

Whereas school counselors help develop well-rounded students by guiding students through academic, personal, social, and career development;

Whereas personal and social growth results in increased academic achievement;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in ensuring that students are ready for college and careers;

Whereas school counselors play a vital role in making students aware of opportunities for financial aid and college scholarships;

Whereas school counselors assist with and coordinate efforts to foster a positive school climate, resulting in a safer learning environment for all students;

Whereas school counselors have been instrumental in helping students, teachers, and parents deal with personal trauma as well as tragedies in their communities and the United States;

Whereas students face myriad challenges every day, including peer pressure, bullying, depression, the deployment of family members to serve in conflicts overseas, and school violence;

Whereas a school counselor is one of the few professionals in a school building who is trained in both education and mental health matters;

Whereas the roles and responsibilities of school counselors are often misunderstood;

Whereas the school counselor position is often among the first to be eliminated to meet budgetary constraints;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school counselors is 471 to 1, almost twice the 250 to 1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and other organizations; and

Whereas the celebration of National School Counseling Week will increase awareness of the important and necessary role school counselors play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 3 through 7, 2014, as “National School Counseling Week”; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe National School Counseling Week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the role school counselors play in schools and the community at large in preparing students for fulfilling lives as contributing members of society.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on Tuesday, February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m., in Room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on the nominations of Ms. Rhea S. Suh, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, and Ms. Janice M. Schneider to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, Department of the Interior.

Because of the limited time available for the business meeting, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Sen-

ate, 304 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, 20510-6150, or by email to ian_nicholson@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224-7571 or Ian Nicholson at (202) 224-7143.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Thursday, February 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on S. 1784, the Oregon and California Land Grant Act of 2013, and S. 1966, the National Forest Jobs and Management Act of 2014.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by e-mail to John_Assini@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Michele Miranda at (202) 224-7556 or John Assini at (202) 224-9313.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building. The committee will hold a hearing entitled “West Coast and Western Pacific Perspectives on Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate to conduct a hearing on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of this oversight hearing is to explore opportunities and challenges associated with lifting the ban on U.S. crude oil exports. For further information, please contact Todd Wooten at (202) 224-3907, Abigail Campbell at (202) 224-4905, or Lauren Goldschmidt at (202) 224-5488.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS AND SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR AND NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works and the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 30, at 9:30 a.m., in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a joint hearing entitled “Oversight Hearing: NRC’s Implementation of the Fukushima Near-Term Task Force Recommendations and other Actions to Enhance and Maintain Nuclear Safety.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled “Section 123: Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreements.”

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 30, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Shutdown: Examining Federal Government Closure Impacts on the District of Columbia.”

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

NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 342.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 342) designating February 3 through 7, 2014, as "National School Counseling Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 342) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, January 30, through Monday, February 3, the majority leader and Senators WARNER and ROCKEFELLER be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1977

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1977) to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

Mr. REID. I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the

Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The next rollcall vote will be 5:30 p.m. on the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany the farm bill.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2014, AT 2 P.M.

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:57 p.m., adjourned until Monday, February 3, 2014, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MIRANDA A. A. BALLENTINE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE, VICE TERRY A. YONKERS, RESIGNED.

MICHAEL J. MCCORD, OF OHIO, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER), VICE ROBERT F. HALE.

BRIAN P. MCKEON, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE KATHLEEN H. HICKS, RESIGNED.

CHRISTINE E. WORMUTH, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY, VICE JAMES N. MILLER, JR., RESIGNED.

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

WILLIAM P. DOYLE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE A FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSIONER FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2018. (REAPPOINTMENT)

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

NORMAN C. BAY, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2018, VICE JON WELLINGHOFF, RESIGNED.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ANN ELIZABETH DUNKIN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, VICE MALCOLM D. JACKSON.

CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD

MANUEL H. EHRLICH, JR., OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHEMICAL SAFETY AND HAZARD INVESTIGATION BOARD FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JOHN S. BRESLAND, RESIGNED.

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

MILEYDI GUILARTE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, VICE JAN E. BOYER, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SUZAN G. LEVINE, OF WASHINGTON, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

L. REGINALD BROTHERS, JR., OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE TARA JEANNE O'TOOLE, RESIGNED.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTOPHER DAVID FREDERICK, OF MINNESOTA
JULIE ANNE MORIN, OF VIRGINIA
JULIO MALDONADO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND/OR SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AS INDICATED:

SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

JAMES BENJAMIN GREEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CANDICE EVETTE PARKER BRUCE, OF GEORGIA
JENNIFER ARGUETA CLEVER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

JOSHUA EMMANUEL LAGOS, OF TEXAS
LASHONDA V. MCLEOD, OF MISSISSIPPI
JOHN P. SLETTE, OF MINNESOTA
LINSTON WINSTON TERRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ORESTES H. VASQUEZ, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT THOMSON WRIGHT, OF WASHINGTON
JEFFREY E. ZIMMERMAN, OF MINNESOTA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 27, 2013:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

GEOFFREY W. WIGGIN, OF SOUTH DAKOTA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED:

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

SCOTT THOMAS BRUNS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KEENTON CHIANG, OF CALIFORNIA
ALFRED LANDON LOOMIS, OF LOUISIANA
MIGUEL A. HERNANDEZ, OF CALIFORNIA
HENLEY K. JONES, OF FLORIDA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

NICOLE DESILVIS, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KENNETH WALSH, OF MISSOURI

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

FRED AZIZ, OF VIRGINIA
JOEL BLANK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TIMOTHY BROWNING, OF VIRGINIA
DAWN BRUNO, OF NEW YORK

JOSEPH CARREIRO, OF VIRGINIA
CALLIE H. CONROY, OF MARYLAND
THOMAS MUENZBERG, OF COLORADO
PAUL OLIVA, OF CALIFORNIA

WILLIAM QUIGLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MICHAEL ROGERS, OF MICHIGAN

ARTHUR ROY, OF CALIFORNIA
AISHA SALEM, OF FLORIDA

NATHALIE SCHARF, OF KANSAS
NATHAN SEIFERT, OF UTAH
REBECCA TORRES, OF FLORIDA

JANELLE WEYER, OF WISCONSIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION INTO AND WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

SUSAN K. BREMS, OF VIRGINIA
SHARON LEE CROMER, OF NEW YORK
ROBERTA MAHONEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS

MARY CATHERINE OTT, OF MARYLAND
ANDREW B. SISSON, OF VIRGINIA

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

JEFFREY W. ASHLEY, OF TEXAS
JOHN A. BEED, OF MARYLAND

ROBERT M. CLAY, OF VIRGINIA
LAWRENCE HARDY II, OF WASHINGTON

ELIZABETH ANN HOGAN, OF VIRGINIA
MARY ALICE KLEINJAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

PETER ANDREW MALNAK, OF NEVADA
DANA R. MANSURI, OF WASHINGTON

LAWRENCE A. MESERVE, OF VIRGINIA
HERBERT B. SMITH, OF DELAWARE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

BRUCE ABRAMS, OF CONNECTICUT
REED J. AESCHLIMAN, OF WASHINGTON
R. DOUGLASS ARBUCKLE, OF FLORIDA
DOUGLAS HILLARY BALL, OF OREGON
ARTHUR W. BROWN, JR., OF MARYLAND
SEAN EDWARD CALLAHAN, OF NEW YORK
JAMES CARLIN CHARLIFUE, OF VIRGINIA
OSVALDO M. DE LA ROSA, OF FLORIDA
MARY EILEEN DEVITT, OF VIRGINIA
ALICIA D. DINERSTEIN, OF NEW YORK
POLLY C. DUNFORD-ZAHAR, OF NEW YORK
CHRISTOPHER WHEATLEY EDWARDS, OF FLORIDA
BRADEN W. ENROTH, OF VIRGINIA
CLAY WILLIAM EPPSON, OF CALIFORNIA
JASON D. FRASER, OF FLORIDA
THEODORE VICTOR GEBR, OF OREGON
ANDREW MARC HERSCOWITZ, OF CALIFORNIA
MARCUS A. JOHNSON, JR., OF VIRGINIA
NADEREH C. LEE, OF NEW YORK
MARK ANDREW MEASSICK, OF FLORIDA
STEVEN GEHALE OLIVE, OF CALIFORNIA
KERRY A. PELZMAN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
KURT A. POPE, OF FLORIDA
MARIA RENDON LABADAN, OF FLORIDA
GARY ROBBINS, OF COLORADO
PAUL ANDREW SABATINE, OF OREGON
LITTLETON WALTER TAZEWELL, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN G. WASHBURN, OF FLORIDA
SARAH W. WINES, OF FLORIDA
ANN MARIE YASTISHOCK, OF PENNSYLVANIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED:

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JULIE ANN KOENEN, OF CALIFORNIA
MARCIA MUSISI NKAMBWE, OF ARIZONA
MILES F. TODER, OF VIRGINIA
PETER E. YOUNG, OF TENNESSEE

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ELISE AYERS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
SARAH DREYER, OF FLORIDA
LOUIS DUNCAN, OF FLORIDA
FAMELA L. FESSENDEN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RONALD L. GLASS, OF FLORIDA
REBECCA A. HAMMEL, OF VIRGINIA
ZEINAH SALAH, OF CONNECTICUT
CAROL JEAN WILSON, OF VIRGINIA
MARK C. WILT, OF MICHIGAN

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

PATRICIA LYNN ALEXANDER, OF VIRGINIA
RICHARD TODD ANDREWS, OF FLORIDA
SHARLENE MANPRET KAUR BAGGA-TAVES, OF MICHIGAN
TAHALIA J. BARRET, OF NEW YORK
ALDER BARTLETT, OF OREGON
THOMAS GARY BAYER, OF RHODE ISLAND
SARA A. CALVERT, OF MARYLAND
ANGELA ORNELAZ CARDENAS, OF TEXAS
JUDY CHEN, OF NEVADA
RICHARD X. CHEN, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT D. CLINK, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID COHEN, OF FLORIDA
ALICIA CONTRERAS, OF ILLINOIS
MATTHEW WILLIAM CORBIN, OF WASHINGTON
G. HEATH COSGROVE, OF ALABAMA
MOHAMED SANOUSSY DANSOKO, OF CALIFORNIA
DIANNA LYNN DARSNEY, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
EILEEN SIOBHAN DERBY, OF NEW YORK
JENNA MICHELE DIALLO, OF MARYLAND
KATHERINE JOY DOW, OF WASHINGTON
SIMONE DUNCAN, OF FLORIDA
MICHELLE SHANA DWORKIN, OF NEW YORK
JOHN AARON EDGAR, OF WEST VIRGINIA
JO JEAN ELENES, OF ARIZONA
IOLI FILMERIDIS, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH T. FOLTZ, OF MICHIGAN
AMANDA L. FONG, OF TEXAS
QING LUO FRANCIS, OF GEORGIA
EMILY GARDINER, OF VIRGINIA
BENJAMIN GOGGIN GARRETT, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE L. GLENN, OF CALIFORNIA
LUIS EDUARDO GUZMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
BRYAN HIGHFILL, OF TEXAS
W. CULLEN HUGHES, OF COLORADO
SHELBY PATRICK HUNT, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL L. JONES, OF NEW YORK
SHAWN ELIZABETH ALEXANDRIA JONES, OF NEVADA
ROOPA H. KARIA, OF OREGON
HAELEE KIM, OF NEW JERSEY
MARIA KIM, OF PENNSYLVANIA
BRADLEY KLINGSPOORN, OF WISCONSIN
KY TU LAM, OF CALIFORNIA

ROBERT CHASE LAYNG, OF MAINE
LESLIE A. MACKEN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
NORA MOON MADRIGAL, OF CALIFORNIA
LUIS ALFREDO MAES, OF NORTH CAROLINA
JERRY L. MARCUS, OF FLORIDA
ENILDA MARTIN, OF FLORIDA
DEBORAH R. MILLER, OF HAWAII
ANNE G. MURPHY, OF TEXAS
VERLA CLEOPATHRA LORETTA NATHANIEL, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
TIMOTHY ONG, OF CALIFORNIA
PHILLIP NEIL PALMER, OF NEW YORK
MANDY M. PARHAM, OF MARYLAND
ESTHER PARK, OF CALIFORNIA
NATHAN B. PARK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LORENZO PERDIGUERRA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SHANLEY M. PINCHOTTI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH GEWURZ RAMIREZ, OF ILLINOIS
JILL RANDALL, OF NEW MEXICO
DAVID ALAN RATLIFF, OF CONNECTICUT
MICHAEL J. REILLY, OF MAINE
KATHERINE-ANN RENIERS, OF NEW YORK
ALEXANDRA L. RIBOUL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RYDER H. ROGERS, OF TEXAS
MARIELLA ELIZABETH RUIZ RODRIGUEZ, OF CALIFORNIA
KALONJI SAMUEL, OF NEW YORK
CHRISTOPHER N. SCHAFER, OF TEXAS
AARON SCHUBERT, OF ALASKA
TARA TAYLOR SIMPSON, OF TEXAS
JENNIFER A. SLOTNICK, OF VIRGINIA
CRAIG A. SMITH, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSHUA J. SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
DANIELLE A. SPINARD, OF RHODE ISLAND
KARTIK SRINIVASAN, OF MICHIGAN
J. DAVID STOTT, OF FLORIDA
D. BENJAMIN SWARTLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JEANNETTE ELIZABETH VAIL, OF OHIO
SARAH WERTH, OF WASHINGTON
BRANDY WITTHOFT, OF NEW YORK
BRIAN KEITH WOODY, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KATHLEEN M. ADAMS, OF FLORIDA
CHARLES J. ADDISON, OF VIRGINIA
STERLING K. AINSWORTH, OF VIRGINIA
CLAUDIA A. ALVAREZ, OF VIRGINIA
NAVDEEP AUJLA, OF WASHINGTON
ROBERT N. BADENHOP, OF VIRGINIA
BETHANY BARRIENTEZ, OF VIRGINIA
KATHRYN M. BOSWELL, OF MARYLAND
ANNA MARIE BOULOS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DORCAS D. BRANNOCK, OF VIRGINIA
DAVID BYRNS, OF VIRGINIA
JUAN C. CACERES, OF VIRGINIA
KARN L. CARLSON, OF TEXAS
CARRINGTON R. CARTER, SR., OF MARYLAND
FLACELIA CELSULA, OF VIRGINIA
TAMARA SAITO CHAO, OF CALIFORNIA
CHRISTOPHER M. CLOSE, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN M. COATS, OF FLORIDA
CHIANA N. COLEMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KATHLEEN L. COLGAN, OF VIRGINIA
STEVEN CUPIC, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW T. DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
BYRON H. DENNEY, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL R. DISNER, OF VIRGINIA
SEAN DOHERTY, OF VIRGINIA
COCO DOWNEY, OF VIRGINIA
LEON PAUL D'SOUZA, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN Q. DUONG, OF VIRGINIA
FRANZ W. DURDLE, OF VIRGINIA
STACEY C. DUVALLE, OF MARYLAND
KATHRYN EDWARDS, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KURT M. EILHARDT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS ELMFONT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RANDALL T. EVERS, OF MARYLAND
KAYLAN M. FILLINGHAM, OF MARYLAND
JACOB K. FISHER, OF FLORIDA
SARAH LINDSEY FLEWELLING, OF MAINE
DAVY E. FOGLE, OF VIRGINIA
RAPHAEL A. GARCIA, OF FLORIDA
JENNIFER K. GORMAN, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN GRIFFITH, OF MARYLAND
LEKISHA R. GUNN, OF ALABAMA
ERIC C. HAMMARSTEN, OF OKLAHOMA
KINGSPRIDE HAMMOND, OF VIRGINIA
BRETT ETHAN HANSEN, OF VIRGINIA
JOSHUA D. HATCH, OF TEXAS
CALVIN HAYES, OF FLORIDA
GABRIEL LAVON HURST, OF NEW YORK
BRIAN JEFFREY HUSAR, OF ILLINOIS
CHEN-TZE GEORGE HWANG, OF VIRGINIA
GREGORY A. JENTZSCH, OF OREGON
DAMION R. JOHNSON, OF NEW YORK
BRANDON W. KAPPUS, OF VIRGINIA
KEVIN J. KELLENERBERGER, OF VIRGINIA
KATHERINE KIGUDE, OF CALIFORNIA
CAITLYN KIM, OF NEW YORK
AMY ELIZABETH KORNBLOTH, OF FLORIDA
JULIE A. LABORDE, OF NEVADA
MARIANNE E. LEE, OF FLORIDA
ADAM A. LUND, OF OREGON
JESSE LYNCH, OF FLORIDA
NICOLE L. MADDEN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
TIMOTHY A. MILLER, OF VIRGINIA
CAROLYN I. MOORE, OF MISSOURI

KARA M. MOORE, OF VIRGINIA
JESSICA A. MORRIS, OF NEW YORK
KENT MULLEN, OF VIRGINIA
STEVEN MULLEN, OF MARYLAND
EMILY M. R. NELSON, OF NEW YORK
PHOEBE J. NEWMAN, OF MAINE
BRUNO E. NOJIMA, OF VIRGINIA
LAUREN FORBES O'DOHERTY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALEXANDER JOZEF PARCAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
WILLIAM HAIGH PAYNE, OF VIRGINIA
MARY JO ANN PHAM, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ROBYN A. PUCKETT, OF GEORGIA
GREGORY W. QUICK, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SEONG HEON RA, OF VIRGINIA
VALERIE M. REED, OF VIRGINIA
EILEEN R. REQUENA, OF VIRGINIA
NATHAN W. RHOADS, OF VIRGINIA
AMANDA J. RIVERS, OF VIRGINIA
SARAH K. G. ROGERS, OF CALIFORNIA
JOSEPH AARON ROZENSHTAIN, OF NEW YORK
PATRICK RUMLEY, OF FLORIDA
WILBER N. SAENZ, OF VIRGINIA
SARA E. SAUKAS, OF VIRGINIA
ROBERT ALLEN SCOTT, OF IOWA
JOSEPH J. SENCHYSHYN, OF NEW YORK
JOSEPH F. SKRTIC, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH B. SOLLENBERGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SUSAN SKODA SOLLENBERGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANDREA R. STARKS, OF MARYLAND
JOEL STEWART, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DANIEL STREITFELD, OF TEXAS
ELLEN TAMARIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
KIMBERLY S. TIGHERNAIN, OF VIRGINIA
JEFFERY ALAN TOMASEVICH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
VALERIE L. ULLRICH, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
LAURA J. VERBISKY, OF MICHIGAN
ERIC WASHBAUGH, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN MICHAEL WAYS, OF GEORGIA
MICHAEL A. WELCH, OF VIRGINIA
MARK A. WELLS, OF VIRGINIA
REBECCA R. WHITE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOHN F. WIDOWER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DAVID LEE WILLEY, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
TIARA WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
ODESSA M. WORKMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HAENIM YOO, OF CALIFORNIA
SEAN YOUNG, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

KATE E. ADDISON, OF VIRGINIA
EHSAN A. ALBAZIZ, OF WASHINGTON
MARVIN J. ALLRED, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH A. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
GINA M. ANDREWS, OF TEXAS
CAROLINA J. ASTIGARRAGA, OF VIRGINIA
KRISTIAN T. BARNEY, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTINE BELL, OF VIRGINIA
JOHN TODD BELMEAR, OF COLORADO
CHARLES M. BENNETT, OF FLORIDA
LADISLAV BERANEK, OF WASHINGTON
ARVIN BHATT, OF NEW YORK
RICHARD BINDRUP, OF NEVADA
KENDALL S. BLACKWELL, OF TEXAS
SARAH M. BOMAN, OF UTAH
EDWARD P. BOUCHER, OF VIRGINIA
MARK J. BOUCHIE, OF VIRGINIA
MEGHAN M. BREEN, OF VIRGINIA
CHEYENNE BROWN, OF VIRGINIA
KATE E. BURNS, OF VIRGINIA
VERONICA CASTRO, OF CALIFORNIA
ALTHEA CAWLEY-MURPHREE, OF WASHINGTON
ANDREW CHIRA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SARAH O. CHO, OF VIRGINIA
JAMES P. CHYNOWETH, OF FLORIDA
NICHOLAS CORNELL COHEN, OF INDIANA
ROBERT M. CORNEJO, OF VIRGINIA
MARIA B. CORREA, OF TEXAS
RACHAEL CULLINS, OF INDIANA
MONICA LYNN DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
EDWARD P. DE MAYE, OF VIRGINIA
JONATHAN L. DECANIO, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW P. DORR, OF VIRGINIA
GARY W. DUNCAN, OF VIRGINIA
HADY ELINEIL, OF CALIFORNIA
JESSICA A. FELDMAN, OF VIRGINIA
ROSS FELDMANN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
RYAN E. FLORY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WILBUR C. FREDERICK, OF VIRGINIA
LAURA L. FREEMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH GAI, OF VIRGINIA
ELIZABETH G. GAY, OF VIRGINIA
GREG GERARDI, OF VIRGINIA
ANTHONY GIARRIZZI, OF VIRGINIA
MARSHA GOLDING, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTOPHER DANIEL GOOCH, OF UTAH
LYLE SCOTT GOODE, OF CALIFORNIA
GARRY E. GRABINS, OF ILLINOIS
SHAI E. GRUBER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARK R. GUCWA, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM K. HAMBLIN, OF VIRGINIA
YOUNG MOK HAN, OF CALIFORNIA
TIMOTHY J. HANKO, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN MATTHEW HANLON, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
MAXWELL STEINBACH HARRINGTON, OF VIRGINIA
PATRICK BENNETT HARRINGTON, OF CALIFORNIA
CYNTHIA J. HARTMAN, OF VIRGINIA
JANET A. HEG, OF WASHINGTON

MICHELE L. HILTZ, OF VIRGINIA
 CHADWICK HOUGHTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 SPENCER J. HUBBARD, OF VIRGINIA
 JONATHAN JANKORD, OF VIRGINIA
 TRAVIS WILLIAM JONES, OF MARYLAND
 SETAREH S. JORGENSEN, OF MARYLAND
 MARY F. KEFFER, OF VIRGINIA
 DEBORAH ANN KERSHNER, OF COLORADO
 CHRIS J. KUCHARSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
 PATRICK A. LAUGHLIN, OF VIRGINIA
 WINSTON LE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JENNIFER CARMEN LEE, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN F. LESO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 EMILY A. LEVASSEUR, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 STACI K. MACCORKLE, OF OREGON
 RICHARD L. MAHY, OF MARYLAND
 SAID MAQSODI, OF VIRGINIA
 KARON E. MASON, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTOPHER MCKINNEY, OF TEXAS
 JOHN J. MCLOONE III, OF VIRGINIA
 DARREN MCMAHON, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMES ROBB MCMILLAN, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID E. MERRELL, OF WASHINGTON
 CARRIE A. MIRSHAK, OF OHIO
 KAREN M. MONTAUDON, OF OREGON
 MICHAEL C. MOORE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MARIA MORENO, OF CALIFORNIA
 DEDRIC J. MORTELMANS, OF VIRGINIA
 BRIAN D. MOUZON, OF VIRGINIA
 ELISA M. MURPHY, OF VIRGINIA
 JENNIFER K. NAMES, OF VIRGINIA
 MAXWELL DAVID NANSON, OF VIRGINIA
 ANDREW NISSEN, OF VIRGINIA
 ADAM B. NORTON, OF VIRGINIA
 EVELYN A. OKOTH, OF MARYLAND
 ANDREW JOHN OSORNO, OF CALIFORNIA
 JEREMY N. PACE, OF LOUISIANA
 SETH PEAVEY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 CHRISTOPHER H. PUEHL, OF VIRGINIA
 CYNTHIA L. RAPP, OF VIRGINIA
 SAMANTHA A. RINGMACHER, OF TEXAS
 DAVID ROBBIE, OF COLORADO
 JAMES M. ROBINSON, OF WASHINGTON
 DAVID A. RONDON, OF VIRGINIA
 JEFFREY PAUL SAKURAI, OF CALIFORNIA
 NISSA SALOMON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOCELYN M. SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
 SEAN Z. SMITH, OF MARYLAND
 INGRID SPECHT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 RICKY D. STROH, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 ANNE C. STURTEVANT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LIAM O. TOOMEY, OF VIRGINIA
 VALERIE M. VASS, OF VERMONT
 CONOR M. WALSH, OF VIRGINIA
 JESSE WALTER, OF WISCONSIN
 MOLLY M. WEAVER, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTINA C. WEST, OF TEXAS
 LINDSEY S. WHITE, OF VIRGINIA
 AMY M. WISER, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHELE D. WOONACOTT, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHAEL B. WYATT, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSEPH H. ZAMOYTA, OF MARYLAND
 WILLIAM F. ZEMAN, OF CONNECTICUT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION INTO AND WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:
 CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

GERALD MICHAEL FEIERSTEIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 ROBERT S. FORD, OF MARYLAND
 DAVID M. HALE, OF NEW JERSEY
 STUART E. JONES, OF VIRGINIA
 LINDA THOMAS-GREENFIELD, OF LOUISIANA

CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

RONALD D. ACUFF, OF FLORIDA
 DOUGLAS A. ALLISON, OF VIRGINIA
 MARJORIE ANN AMES, OF FLORIDA
 WHITNEY YOUNG BAIRD, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 ERICA JEAN BARKS-RUGGLES, OF VIRGINIA
 KRISTEN F. BAUER, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 PAUL S. BEIGHLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 KATE M. BYRNES, OF FLORIDA
 FLOYD STEVEN CABLE, OF NEW YORK
 AUBREY A. CARLSON, OF TEXAS
 ANNE S. CASPER, OF NEVADA
 TODD CRAWFORD CHAPMAN, OF TEXAS
 KAREN LISE CHRISTENSEN, OF VIRGINIA
 SUSAN R. CRYSTAL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 KAREN BERNADETTE DECKER, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHLEEN A. DOHERTY, OF NEW YORK
 MARY DALE DRAPER, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHAEL J. FITZPATRICK, OF FLORIDA
 ROBERT W. FORDEN, OF CALIFORNIA
 JENNIFER ZIMDAHL GALT, OF COLORADO
 THOMAS HENRY GOLDBERGER, OF NEW JERSEY
 MARK A. GOODFRIEND, OF CALIFORNIA
 ROBERT DANIEL GRIFFITHS, OF NEVADA
 KELII J. GURFIELD, OF WASHINGTON
 PETER DAVID HAAS, OF FLORIDA
 DANIEL J. HALL, OF TEXAS
 DENNIS B. HANKINS, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHLEEN D. HANSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CLIFFORD AWTRY HART, OF VIRGINIA
 JENNIFER CONN HASKELL, OF FLORIDA
 DONALD L. HEFLIN, OF VIRGINIA
 LEO J. HESSION, JR., OF CALIFORNIA
 CATHERINE M. HILL-HERNDON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 PERRY L. HOLLOWAY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA

JOHN F. HOOVER, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTINE L. HUGHES, OF FLORIDA
 THOMAS J. HUSHEK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MICHAEL JOSEPH JACOBSEN, OF TEXAS
 JULIE LYNN KAVANAGH, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHAEL STANLEY KLECHESKI, OF VIRGINIA
 KENT D. LOGSDON, OF FLORIDA
 MATTHEW ROBERT LUSSENHOP, OF MINNESOTA
 MICHAEL WILLIAM MCCLELLAN, OF KENTUCKY
 ROBIN D. MEYER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JONATHAN M. MOORE, OF ILLINOIS
 WENDELA C. MOORE, OF VIRGINIA
 KIN WAH MOY, OF NEW YORK
 WARREN PATRICK MURPHY, OF VIRGINIA
 JULIETA VALLS NOYES, OF FLORIDA
 LARRY G. PADGET, JR., OF TEXAS
 VIRGINIA E. PALMER, OF VIRGINIA
 BETH A. PAYNE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MARY CATHERINE PHEE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CLAIRE A. PIERANGELO, OF CALIFORNIA
 LONNIE J. PRICE, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBIN S. QUINVILLE, OF CALIFORNIA
 ELIZABETH H. RICHARD, OF TEXAS
 ADELE E. RUPPE, OF MARYLAND
 SUE ELLEN SAARNIO, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTIAN J. SCHURMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 KRISTEN B. SKIPPER, OF CALIFORNIA
 PAUL RANDALL SUTPHIN, OF VIRGINIA
 MARA R. TEKACH, OF FLORIDA
 MICHAEL STEPHEN TULLLEY, OF CALIFORNIA
 DAVID A. TYLER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 THOMAS LASZLO VAJDA, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMES E. VANDERPOOL, OF CALIFORNIA
 PAUL DASHNER WOHLERS, OF WASHINGTON
 STEVEN EDWARD ZATE, OF FLORIDA
 TIMOTHY P. ZUNIGA-BROWN, OF NEVADA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS INDICATED: CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

KELLY ADAMS-SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
 STEVEN P. ADAMS-SMITH, OF VIRGINIA
 JORGAN KENDAL ANDREWS, OF VIRGINIA
 VIRGINIA MEADE BLASER, OF VIRGINIA
 SCOTT DOUGLAS BOSWELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 WILLIAM HARVEY BOYLE, OF ARIZONA
 MATTHEW GORDON BOYSE, OF CONNECTICUT
 BRIDGET A. BRINK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MARYKAY LOSS CARLSON, OF TEXAS
 JAMES A. CAROUSO, OF NEW YORK
 MELISSA CLEGG-TRIPP, OF WASHINGTON
 THEODORE R. COLEY, OF VIRGINIA
 KELLY COLLEEN DEGNAN, OF CALIFORNIA
 LESLIE STEPHEN DEGRAFFENRIED, OF TEXAS
 JILL DERDERIAN, OF MARYLAND
 THOMAS M. DUFFY, OF CALIFORNIA
 STUART ANDERSON DWYER, OF MAINE
 ANDREW S. E. ERICKSON, OF CALIFORNIA
 THOMAS R. FAVRET, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 TARA FERET, OF VIRGINIA
 PATRICIA L. FIETZ, OF VIRGINIA
 FRANK JONATHAN FINVER, OF MARYLAND
 DEHAB GHEBREAB, OF VIRGINIA
 PAUL G. GILMER, OF CALIFORNIA
 JOSHUA D. GLAZEROFF, OF VIRGINIA
 ANTHONY F. GODFREY, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHARINA P. GOLLNER-SWEET, OF VIRGINIA
 FRANCISCO JAVIER GONZALES, OF NEW JERSEY
 LAURA MARLENE GOULD, OF VIRGINIA
 ERIC F. GREEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ALLEN S. GREENBERG, OF TEXAS
 MICHAEL NICHOLAS GREENWALD, OF CALIFORNIA
 HENRY HARRISON HAND, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 TODD C. HOLMSTROM, OF MICHIGAN
 HENRY VICTOR JARDINE, OF VIRGINIA
 LISA ANNE JOHNSON, OF VIRGINIA
 ELIZABETH JANE JORDAN, OF FLORIDA
 GEORGE P. KENT, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN STUART KINCANNON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DOUGLAS A. KONEFF, OF MARYLAND
 MICHAEL B. KOPLOVSKY, OF NEW YORK
 STEVEN CHRISTOPHER KOUTSIS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 DALE A. LARGENT, OF WASHINGTON
 LAURA ANNE LOCHMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 JAMES L. LOI, OF CONNECTICUT
 THEODORE J. LYNG, OF CONNECTICUT
 JEAN ELIZABETH MANES, OF FLORIDA
 ANDREW COOPER MANN, OF WASHINGTON
 CARLOS F. MATUS, OF MARYLAND
 WAYNE AMORY MCDUFFY, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID SLAYTON MEALE, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID MEES, OF MARYLAND
 CHRISTOPHER MIDURA, OF VIRGINIA
 KEITH W. MINES, OF NEW YORK
 SARAH CRADDOCK MORRISON, OF VIRGINIA
 SUSAN BUTLER NIBLOCK, OF MARYLAND
 KAREN L. OGLE, OF MICHIGAN
 KEVIN MICHAEL O'REILLY, OF VIRGINIA
 INMI KIM PATTERSON, OF NEW YORK
 BRIAN HAWTHORNE PHIPPS, OF FLORIDA
 THOMAS C. PIERCE, OF OREGON
 JOHN MARK POMMERSHEIM, OF FLORIDA
 JOHN ROBERT POST, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LYNETTE JOYCE POULTON, OF CALIFORNIA
 TIMOTHY JOEL POUNDS, OF NEVADA
 JEAN E. PRESTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MONIQUE VALERIE QUESADA, OF FLORIDA
 DAVID J. RANZ, OF NEW YORK
 DAVID REIMER, OF VIRGINIA

RICHARD HENRY RILEY IV, OF VIRGINIA
 LYNN WHITLOCK ROCHE, OF VIRGINIA
 ELIZABETH HELEN RODD, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHRYN M. SCHALOW, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID JONATHAN SCHWARTZ, OF VIRGINIA
 DOROTHY CAMILLE SHEA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ADAM MATTHEW SHUB, OF MARYLAND
 LYNNE P. SKEIRIK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 MICHAEL H. SMITH, OF NEW JERSEY
 THOMAS D. SMITHAM, OF MARYLAND
 ANDREW SNOW, OF NEW YORK
 SEAN B. STEIN, OF IDAHO
 JAMES KENT STIEGLER, OF CALIFORNIA
 MARTINA A. STRONG, OF TEXAS
 STEPHANIE FAYE SYPTAK-RAMNATH, OF TEXAS
 GREGORY DEAN THOME, OF WISCONSIN
 LAURENCE EDWARD TOBEY, OF NEW JERSEY
 LAURIE JO TROST, OF VIRGINIA
 LESLIE MEREDITH TSOU, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN MICHAEL UNDERRINER, OF OHIO
 DENISE A. URS, OF TEXAS
 PETER HENDRICK VROOMAN, OF NEW YORK
 GARY S. WAKAHIRO, OF CALIFORNIA
 JESSICA WEBSTER, OF DELAWARE
 WILLIAM J. WEISSMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
 ERIC PAUL WHITAKER, OF CALIFORNIA
 FRANK J. WHITAKER, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 HENRY THOMAS WOOSTER, OF VIRGINIA
 THOMAS K. YAZDGERDI, OF FLORIDA
 PAUL DOUGLAS YESKOO, OF VIRGINIA
 MARTA COSTANZO YOUTH, OF MARYLAND

CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, AND CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RAYMOND BASSI, OF VIRGINIA
 MARK S. BUTCHART, OF MARYLAND
 RICHARD A. CAPPONE, OF VIRGINIA
 JANET A. COTE, OF NEVADA
 CAROLYN I. CREEVY, OF VIRGINIA
 JILL E. DARKEN, OF ILLINOIS
 LON C. FAIRCHILD, OF VIRGINIA
 BARTLE B. GORMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 ALEEN JANICE GRABOW, OF WISCONSIN
 ROBERT ALLEN HALL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 RALPH A. HAMILTON, OF OHIO
 ROGER A. HERNDON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 BRUCE J. LIZZI, OF MARYLAND
 DAVID LEE LYONS, OF MARYLAND
 MICHAEL M. MACK, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHLEEN A. MCCRAY, OF VIRGINIA
 ALEX G. MCFADDEN, OF FLORIDA
 BEVERLY DOREEN ROCHESTER, OF NEVADA
 THOMAS GERARD SCANLON, OF VIRGINIA
 DEAN K. SHEAR, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 12, 2008:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

DAVID MICHAEL SATTERFIELD, OF MISSOURI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED:

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MATTHEW D. LOWE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MELISSA JO GARZA, OF TEXAS

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTIAN CHARETTE, OF FLORIDA
 CYNTHIA ANNE EHRLICH, OF CALIFORNIA
 ROGER CHANCE SULLIVAN, OF WASHINGTON

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JUANITA LUCIA AGUIRRE, OF TEXAS
 MICHAEL AHN, OF CALIFORNIA
 REBEKAH DAVIS AHRENS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

RYAN AIKEN, OF UTAH
 R. ANDREW ALLEN, OF VIRGINIA
 NAFESAH ALLEN, OF NEW JERSEY
 NATALIA ALMAGUER, OF FLORIDA
 MAYRA ALEJANDRA ALVARADO TORRES, OF CALIFORNIA

MOLLY MCKNIGHT AMADOR, OF TENNESSEE
 KRISTER BERT ANDERSON, OF MARYLAND
 REBECCA ARCHER-KNEPPER, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN S. ARMIGER, OF COLORADO
 BRIAN P. ASMUS, OF FLORIDA
 WILLIAM P. ASTILLERO, OF NEW JERSEY
 KARA B. BABROWSKI, OF FLORIDA
 ZACHARY BAILEY, OF MARYLAND
 JUDITH E. BAKER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 TERESA SUSAN BALL, OF TENNESSEE
 DAWN ELIZABETH BEAUPAIN, OF FLORIDA
 ESTHER FALCON BELL, OF RHODE ISLAND
 JESSICA ERIN BERLOW, OF FLORIDA
 VIRGINIA ELLEANOR BLAKEMAN, OF NEW YORK
 CHELAN BLISS, OF WASHINGTON

AJA CITTRECE BONSU, OF TEXAS
 ANTHONY JUNG BONVILLE, OF TEXAS
 VIRGILE GEORGES BORDERIES, OF CALIFORNIA
 ASHLEY CHANTEL BORDERER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 DAVID SEAN BOXER, OF CALIFORNIA
 ANNE BRAGHETTA, OF CALIFORNIA
 VIRGINIA CLAIRE BREEDLOVE, OF CALIFORNIA
 BRIGETTE BUCHET, OF MARYLAND
 RAVI FRANKLIN BUCK, OF MISSOURI
 PETER BURBA, OF CALIFORNIA
 MATTHEW A. BUSHELL, OF CONNECTICUT
 WILLIAM A. CAMPBELL, OF WISCONSIN
 CARINA R. CANAAN, OF FLORIDA
 NATALIA DEL PILAR CAPEL, OF FLORIDA
 ALYSSA M. CARALLA, OF GEORGIA
 OMAR CARDENTY, OF FLORIDA
 MARCUS BLAIR CARPENTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DANIEL C. CARROLL, OF HAWAII
 MELISSA ANN RHODES CARTER, OF ARKANSAS
 ANDREW NICHOLAS CARUSO, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHAEL PATRICK CASEY, OF VIRGINIA
 BETH M. CHESTERMAN, OF TEXAS
 JONATHAN B. CHESTNUT, OF GEORGIA
 SARAH JANE CIACCIA, OF TENNESSEE
 ERIN JORDAN CLANCY, OF CALIFORNIA
 TRAVIS JOHN COBERLY, OF KANSAS
 JACLYN ANNE COLE, OF MARYLAND
 DESIREE MICHELLE CORMIER, OF CALIFORNIA
 CHRISTOPHER A. CRAWFORD, OF UTAH
 CHRISTOPHER B. CREAEGHE, OF COLORADO
 ROBIN SLOAN CROMER, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 JUAN C. CRUZ, OF FLORIDA
 GAETAN WILLIAM DAMBERG—OTT, OF NEW YORK
 JESSICA RENEE DANCEL, OF COLORADO
 SCOTT B. DARGUS, OF WASHINGTON
 PETER JOHN DAVIDIAN, OF OHIO
 JUSTIN E. DAVIS, OF GEORGIA
 NEIL MICHAEL DIBIASI, OF FLORIDA
 TRENTON BROWN DOUTHETT, OF OHIO
 SADIE ELEN DWORAK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 JASON DYER, OF NEW MEXICO
 CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL ELMS, OF NEW YORK
 STEPHEN J. ESTE, OF TEXAS
 MARCUS GEORGE FALION, OF TENNESSEE
 JOHANNA L. FERNANDO, OF TEXAS
 JOSEPH ANTON FETTE, OF VIRGINIA
 KYLE FIELDING, OF WASHINGTON
 ERIK T. FINCH, OF TEXAS
 JESSE KYLE FINKEL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 COLIN W. FISHWICK, OF WASHINGTON
 JOAN H. FLYNN, OF VIRGINIA
 PHILIP LOWELL FOLKEMER, OF MARYLAND
 NICOLE LOKOMAIIKA I KIKUE PROBST FOX, OF HAWAII
 MATTHEW A. FULLERTON, OF MARYLAND
 AARON ELLIOTT GARFIELD, OF CALIFORNIA
 GERALDINE B. GASSAM, OF LOUISIANA
 JOSEPH GIORDONO—SCHOLZ, OF CALIFORNIA
 ANGELA CARMEN GJERTSON, OF TENNESSEE
 SARAH ELIZABETH GJORGJJEVSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
 CATRYN MARGARET GLEASMAN, OF TEXAS
 SAMUEL EVERETT GOFFMAN, OF ILLINOIS
 HOLLYN J. GREEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 KATHERINE PHYLLIS GRIFFITH, OF VIRGINIA
 PRISCILLA GUZMAN, OF TEXAS
 JAMES J. HAGENGROBER, OF WASHINGTON
 LAURA JANE HAMMOND, OF MINNESOTA
 CHERYL HARRIS, OF VIRGINIA
 DANIEL ROSS HARRIS, OF CALIFORNIA
 NICHOLAS R. HARRIS, OF VIRGINIA
 JANEL MARGARET HEIRD, OF MICHIGAN
 PEPIJN M. HELGERS, OF NEW YORK
 PATRICIA ADRIENNE HILL, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 LAUREN D. HOLMES, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 WILLIAM N. HOLTON, JR., OF CALIFORNIA
 VERONICA HONS—OLIVER, OF FLORIDA
 KATHLEEN INGRID HOSIE, OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
 DONNA J. HUSS, OF INDIANA
 MOUNIR E. IBRAHIM, OF NEW YORK
 AMENAGHAMWON IYI—EWEKA, OF WISCONSIN
 DANA MARIE JEA, OF VIRGINIA
 JENNIFER JENSEN, OF CALIFORNIA
 MATTHEW B. JONES, OF VIRGINIA
 RYAN D. KARNES, OF WASHINGTON
 JOANNA TRACY KATZMAN, OF NEW JERSEY
 JENNIFER ANNE KELLEY, OF FLORIDA
 CRAIG S. KENNEDY, OF WASHINGTON
 JANET MARIE KENNEDY, OF FLORIDA
 MORGAN WHITMIRE KENNEDY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 WALTER ANTHONY KERR, OF CONNECTICUT
 LAWRENCE J. KORB, JR., OF VIRGINIA
 LORRAINE JEAN KRAMER, OF VIRGINIA
 JACK C. LAMBERT, OF OREGON
 BRENT JOSEPH LAROSA, OF MARYLAND
 ELIZABETH E. A. LEE, OF WEST VIRGINIA
 ALEXI LEFEVRE, OF FLORIDA
 SCOTT HAMILTON LINTON, OF COLORADO
 JONATHAN L. LOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 W. GARY LOWMAN, JR., OF FLORIDA
 SCOTT C. LUEDERS, OF FLORIDA
 AMANDA LUGO, OF TEXAS
 IAN ROBERT MACKENZIE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ERIN RUTH MAL, OF VIRGINIA
 NAVEED AHMED MALIK, OF TEXAS
 MATTHEW R. MALOY, OF MONTANA
 ARIANY ELISABETH MANRING, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 NICHOLAS B. MANSKE, OF WISCONSIN
 TARA L. MARIA, OF VIRGINIA
 IZAAK MARTIN, OF WASHINGTON
 JUAN D. MARTINEZ, OF NEW YORK

LAUREN D. MATAACK, OF CALIFORNIA
 TRISHITA MAULA, OF NEW YORK
 KELLY JEAN MCANERNEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 JAMES PATRICK MCCORMICK, OF ILLINOIS
 JOHN B. MCDANIEL, OF TEXAS
 GREGORY G. MCELWAIN, OF NEW MEXICO
 KELLY A. MCGUIRE, OF TEXAS
 RYAN EDWARD MCKEAN, OF WISCONSIN
 GREGORY MEIER, OF MARYLAND
 ROBERT E. MELVIN, OF TEXAS
 MATAN MEYER, OF FLORIDA
 AYSA MATTHEW MILLER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 BEAU JUSTIN MILLER, OF MICHIGAN
 BENJAMIN J. MILLS, OF NEW MEXICO
 SEAN PATRICK MOFFATT, OF NEW YORK
 JEREMY JASON MONKS, OF VIRGINIA
 NAVARRO MOORE, OF FLORIDA
 PATRICIA RENEE MORALES, OF TEXAS
 ROBERT E. MORGAN, OF TEXAS
 CHAD WILLIAM MORRIS, OF COLORADO
 STEPHEN MRAZ, OF FLORIDA
 MILESSA N. MUCHMORE—LOWRIE, OF TEXAS
 CHARLES VINCENT MURPHY, OF CALIFORNIA
 W. MARC MURRI, OF UTAH
 KATHERINE MUSGROVE KETCHUM, OF KANSAS
 MARK ROBERT NAYLOR, OF TEXAS
 PATRICIA NEARY, OF VIRGINIA
 LINDA A. NEILAN, OF NEW JERSEY
 THOMAS ANDREW NIBLOCK, OF IOWA
 JOHN DAVID NORDLANDER, OF COLORADO
 ELIZABETH NORMAN, OF WASHINGTON
 FREDERICK NICHOLAS NOYES, OF TEXAS
 AUTUMN K. OAKLEY, OF WASHINGTON
 ELIZABETH CURRAN O'ROURKE, OF ILLINOIS
 ALEXANDER R. ORR, OF NEW YORK
 MICHELLE R. OSADCZUK, OF FLORIDA
 ANDREW J. PARTIN, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 MARY LILLIAN PELLEGRINI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 XIXALA SANDRA PEREZ, OF VIRGINIA
 LISA MARIE PETZOLD, OF NEW YORK
 JULIAN I. PHILLIPPI, OF OHIO
 CAITLIN S. PIPER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 RICHARD JOHN POLNEY, OF NEVADA
 MARIA DEL PILAR QUIQUA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 RYAN M. QUINN, OF FLORIDA
 THOMAS LEE RADKE, JR., OF MISSOURI
 SCOTT R. RASMUSSEN, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHERINE O. RAY, OF OREGON
 NANCY FARQUHAR RHODES, OF TEXAS
 LEA PALABRICA RIVERA, OF NEW YORK
 LAURA AYLWARD ROBINSON, OF WASHINGTON
 TANYA ELAINE ROGERS, OF TEXAS
 TYLER J. ROGSTAD, OF MINNESOTA
 DOUGLAS B. ROSE, OF MINNESOTA
 SUSAN ROSS, OF NEW YORK
 TERESA ROTUNNO, OF NEVADA
 CAREY HALE RUDELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LAUREN C. SANTA, OF NEW JERSEY
 NADIA DINA SBEIH, OF CALIFORNIA
 JANICE SCHILL, OF CALIFORNIA
 KIMBERLY K. SCRIVNER, OF NEVADA
 BEHRANG FARIAN SERAJ, OF CALIFORNIA
 JAMES P. SHAK, OF ARIZONA
 LAUREN C. SHELTON, OF VIRGINIA
 LEVI W. SHEPHERD, OF VIRGINIA
 AARON M. SINGLETERRY, OF WASHINGTON
 MONICA AMELIA SLEDJESKI, OF NEW YORK
 LAURENCE J. SOCHA, OF ILLINOIS
 JEREMY DAVID SPECTOR, OF TEXAS
 MATTHEW BOUTON STANNARD, OF CALIFORNIA
 MATTHEW M. STEDD, OF CALIFORNIA
 DAVID S. STIER, OF NEW YORK
 ANNA STINCHCOMB, OF VIRGINIA
 DANETTE I. SULLIVAN, OF TENNESSEE
 SHANNA DIETZ SURENDRA, OF MICHIGAN
 ETHAN KENT TABOR, OF MARYLAND
 VIOLETA D. TALANDIS, OF FLORIDA
 VANESSA ANNE TANTILLO, OF NEW YORK
 DANIEL J. TARAPACKI, OF NEW YORK
 JAY B. THOMPSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JULIE THOMPSON, OF FLORIDA
 GRETCHEN L. TIETJE, OF TEXAS
 PATRICK ALLARD TILLOU, OF VIRGINIA
 NICOLE ANNE MARIE TOBIN, OF KANSAS
 EMERITA F. TORRES, OF NEW YORK
 MIRNA R. TORRES, OF NEW MEXICO
 TIMOTHY TRANCHILLA, OF MISSOURI
 MARY ELLEN TSEKOS—VELEZ, OF VIRGINIA
 GREGORY J. VENTRESCA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DANIEL VILLANUEVA, OF FLORIDA
 DOMINGO J. VILLARONGA, OF NEW YORK
 NICHOLAS VON MERTENS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 DAMIAN GEORGE WAMPLER, OF NEW YORK
 DARREN IBRAHIM WANG, OF CALIFORNIA
 THOMAS CHARLES WEBER, OF TEXAS
 BROOKE WEHRENBURG, OF TEXAS
 JOE WELSH, OF CALIFORNIA
 CHAD JACOB WESEN, OF WASHINGTON
 JOHN NOEL WINSTEAD, OF WYOMING
 SCOTT B. WINTON, OF MISSOURI
 STACEY ELIZABETH—VERSIE WOOD, OF CALIFORNIA
 THOMAS N. WOTKA, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTIAN S. YUN, OF CALIFORNIA
 RUSSELL A. ZALIZNIAK, OF FLORIDA
 WILBUR G. ZEHR, OF NEW YORK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.
 FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE

DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
 KEVIN TIMOTHY COVERT, OF MARYLAND
 JANET WOODBURY MILLER, OF NEW YORK
 FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
 K. ANNA KOSINSKA, OF FLORIDA
 YOLANDA A. PARRA, OF FLORIDA
 FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
 KATHERINE MARIE DIOP, OF MARYLAND
 VANIA Z. GARCIA, OF VIRGINIA
 JAHN FRANK JEFFREY, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHAEL STELLARD OBRVON, JR., OF FLORIDA
 NIKK SOOKMEWIRIYA, OF VIRGINIA
 FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
 KRISTEN ELIZABETH AANSTOOS, OF FLORIDA
 BENJAMIN J. ABBOTT, OF NEW YORK
 VANESSA GRACE ACKER, OF TEXAS
 ZIA AHMED, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 JOEL DUNIWAY ALLEY, OF OREGON
 SYED MUJTABA ANDRABI, OF WASHINGTON
 JEFFREY MICHAEL AUSTIN, OF FLORIDA
 NATHAN DOUGLAS AUSTIN, OF WASHINGTON
 MICHELLE E. AZEVEDO, OF CALIFORNIA
 EMILY HARTER BALL, OF TEXAS
 PATRICK BALL, OF TEXAS
 JESSICA ROHN BANULS, OF VIRGINIA
 GRAHAM GLYN BARKER, OF FLORIDA
 JARI D. BARNETT, OF OKLAHOMA
 JENNIFER ALAYNE BARR, OF INDIANA
 AMANDA K. BECK, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHELLE NICOLE BENNETT, OF CALIFORNIA
 ANDREW BERDY, OF NEW JERSEY
 JOSEPH STEPHEN BERNATH, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 RICHA SONI BHALA, OF ILLINOIS
 ALISSA M. BIBB, OF NEW YORK
 DUSTIN REEVE BICKEL, OF GEORGIA
 MARQUIS MCLEMORE BOYCE, OF GEORGIA
 RYAN G. BRADEEN, OF MAINE
 MATTHEW MCMAHON BRIGGS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 BARRETT G. BRYSON, OF CALIFORNIA
 SARAH A. BUDDS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 JOHN P. CALLAN, OF WASHINGTON
 JOSEPH CHRISTOPHER CARNES, OF OHIO
 MAUREEN CHAO, OF CONNECTICUT
 JESSICA CHESBRO, OF OREGON
 W. JOSEPH CHILDERS, OF OHIO
 MARJORIE E. CHRISTIAN, OF TEXAS
 SARAH KATHLEEN CLYMER, OF MINNESOTA
 CHRISTOPHER COLLINGTON, OF FLORIDA
 BRIAN M. COMMAROTO—ROVERINI, OF NEW JERSEY
 WILLIAM ROBERT COOK, OF CALIFORNIA
 FAUSTO P. DEGUZON, OF WASHINGTON
 JONATHAN MORRIS DENNEHY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 PHILLIP ANTHONY DE SOUZA, OF MARYLAND
 JILL WISNIEWSKI DIETRICH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 NOAH A. DONADIEU, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 GIDEON T. DONOHO, OF NEW YORK
 EMILY BOND DUNIVANT, OF TENNESSEE
 GEORGE ANDREW DUSOE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 ALLISON D. DYESS, OF TEXAS
 WILLIAM ECHOLS, OF WASHINGTON
 KARIN MARIE EHLERT, OF MINNESOTA
 JESSICA D. EL BECHIR, OF LOUISIANA
 JEFFREY GORDON ELSÉN, OF WISCONSIN
 JENNIFER SUZANNE EMPIE, OF NEW YORK
 MICHAEL A. ERVIN, OF WASHINGTON
 CRAIG J. FERGUSON, OF OREGON
 TIMOTHY J. FOLEY, OF FLORIDA
 SONNET FERNANDEZ FRISBIE, OF TEXAS
 SEAN MARIANO GARCIA, OF FLORIDA
 LAUREN LEIGH GARZA, OF WASHINGTON
 MAXIMILIAN ROBERT PEREZ GEBHARDT, OF NEW JERSEY
 IVNA GIAUQUE, OF UTAH
 JOHN GOSHERT, OF INDIANA
 COLLIER F. GRAHAM, OF MISSISSIPPI
 MARK OSTAPOVYCH GUL, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHAEL L. GUNZBURGER, OF CALIFORNIA
 RENE GUTEL, OF ARIZONA
 TAMRA KAY HACKETT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CRISTINA—ASTRID HANSELL, OF CALIFORNIA
 DAVID H. HASKETT, OF MARYLAND
 NICKOLAUS HAUSER, OF TEXAS
 ELAINE MARIE HENSLE, OF VIRGINIA
 BENJAMIN D. HESPRICH, OF VIRGINIA
 KATE ELIZABETH HIGGINS, OF VIRGINIA
 SIRLI HILL, OF VIRGINIA
 MARCIA E. HOUSE, OF GEORGIA
 MARCUS RYAN JACKSON, OF FLORIDA
 TIFFANY L. JACKSON, OF FLORIDA
 JOSEPH V. JAMES, OF VIRGINIA
 DANA EDWARD JENSEN, OF NEW YORK
 RIAN L. JENSEN, OF WASHINGTON
 ANNE DUDTJE JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LINDA MARIE JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ALEX MICHAEL JONES, OF WISCONSIN
 AARON JAMES KADKHODAI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 CHRISTEN DECKER KADKHODAI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 LISA K. KALAJIAN, OF FLORIDA
 MARJON E. KAMRANI, OF TENNESSEE

STEPHANIE J. KANG, OF MISSOURI
 JESSICA LEVY KANIA, OF NEW JERSEY
 MATHEW KAWECKI, OF CALIFORNIA
 MAX EDMUND KENDRICK, OF NEW YORK
 SALMAN KHAN KHALIL, OF VIRGINIA
 SHANA LEE KIERAN, OF MAINE
 CARINA DEA KLEIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ROBERT EDWARD KRIS, OF NEW YORK
 KLAUDIA G. KRUEGER, OF FLORIDA
 JAMES R. KUYKENDALL, OF OKLAHOMA
 ATHENA KWHEY, OF CALIFORNIA
 KRISTINA D. LAW, OF VIRGINIA
 ANDREW ROTHSCHILD LEDERMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MIKAEL DANIEL LURIE, OF OREGON
 NATHANAEI MORRISON LYNN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ALEXANDER C. MACFARLANE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 ANDREW MALANDRINO, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID R. P. MARTINEZ, OF NEW MEXICO
 EMMA OLWEN PAMELA MARWOOD, OF NEW YORK
 ALAN DANIEL MCCARTHY, OF VIRGINIA
 CHARLES ELLIOTT MCCLELLAN, OF ARIZONA
 WILLIAM APPLETON MCCUE, OF MAINE
 DANIEL E. MEHRING, OF CALIFORNIA
 DOERING S. MEYER, OF TEXAS
 LEONEL GREENE MIRANDA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MICHAEL WALTER MITCHELL, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHAEL J. MOODY, OF UTAH
 YOON S. NAM, OF CALIFORNIA
 PAUL W. NEVILLE, OF WASHINGTON
 JENNIFER K. NILSON, OF WISCONSIN
 RICHARD ANDREW O'NEAL, OF GEORGIA
 ZENNIA D. PAGANINI, OF MARYLAND
 REENA PATEL, OF TEXAS
 DARIN ANN PHAOVISAI, OF ILLINOIS
 GRANT G. PHILLIPP, OF ILLINOIS
 ARCHANA PODDAR, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 CHRISTOPHER THOMAS POLILLO, OF ILLINOIS
 ADRIAN J. PRATT, OF FLORIDA
 KARA LEE PREISSEL, OF FLORIDA
 MICHAEL JOSEPH PRYOR, OF RHODE ISLAND
 AARON DAVID RADER, OF MARYLAND
 AMY NICOLE REICHERT, OF COLORADO
 MICHAEL RICHARDS, OF FLORIDA
 RITA ALICIA BUCK RICO, OF CALIFORNIA
 JASON CORCORAN ROBERTS, OF VIRGINIA
 BENJAMIN O. ROGUS, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHELE ROULBET, OF ILLINOIS
 MACKENZIE L. ROWE, OF WASHINGTON
 ALAN R. ROYSTON, OF FLORIDA
 SUSAN A. RUSSELL, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 CRAIG ANTHONY RYCHEL, OF CALIFORNIA
 DAVID V. SALVO, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 MICHAEL JAMES SCHARING, OF VIRGINIA
 NIGEL KANTILAL SHAH, OF CALIFORNIA
 GREGORY D. SIMKISS, OF GEORGIA
 BARRY SMITH, OF WASHINGTON
 LEVI RADMAN SMYLYE, OF FLORIDA
 SANDRA M. SNIDER-UGH, OF VIRGINIA
 WILLIAM CATLETT O'LEARY, OF VIRGINIA
 ADAM B. STERN, OF FLORIDA
 STACEY D. SUTTON, OF GEORGIA
 NATIELLA V. SVISTUNOVA, OF OREGON
 PETER J. SWEENEY, OF NEW JERSEY
 HUMZA TARAR, OF FLORIDA
 NATHANIEL TEK, OF NEW JERSEY
 ROBERT EMIL TIBBETTS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 SERGEY S. TROITSKY, OF FLORIDA
 KEVIN A. VALLANCI, OF WEST VIRGINIA
 KATHLEEN VAUGHAN, OF FLORIDA
 JUSTINE ELIZABETH VEIT, OF MISSOURI
 GEOFFREY DAVID LISLE WESSEL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 ERIN MARIE WILLIAMS, OF TEXAS
 BRIAN K. WINGATE, OF WASHINGTON
 ALEXIS SATHRE WOLFF, OF VIRGINIA
 HSUEH-TING WU, OF CALIFORNIA
 JOHN ANTHONY GERHARD YODER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

GABRIELA R. ARIAS VILLELA, OF FLORIDA
 SAYED FAHIM AZIZI, OF VIRGINIA
 SUZANNE BALSAM, OF VIRGINIA
 KATRINA MARIA BARNAS, OF NEW YORK
 JUAN BARRAGAN, OF VIRGINIA
 ASHLEY BARTLETT, OF FLORIDA
 KATE BARTLETT, OF FLORIDA
 YANIV BARZILAI, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 ALEXANDER BENJAMIN BELLAH, OF VIRGINIA
 EMMANIA R. BLUM, OF NEW YORK
 EMILY ROSE BRANDT, OF TEXAS
 JOHN CERABINO-HESS, OF CALIFORNIA
 RYAN CLAY, OF VIRGINIA
 TYLER E. CRUSE, OF GEORGIA
 MICHAEL SEAN CULLINAN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 MARCELINA M. DA SILVA, OF VIRGINIA
 MARIA DAVYDENKO, OF ALASKA
 DARSHANE M. DAWLEY, OF VIRGINIA
 TERRI NATHINE FRANCES DAY, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 JOSHUA ROBERT DELARA, OF NEW YORK
 MARTHA J. DEMOS, OF FLORIDA
 KATRINA NICOLE DRAYTON, OF MICHIGAN
 ARTHUR DYMOND, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSEPH A. DZMURA, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBERT GEORGE EHRMANN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 NASHWA N. ELGADI, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 LOGHMAN FATTAHI, OF VIRGINIA

PERLA GABRIELA FERNANDEZ, OF KANSAS
 SARAH GARDINER, OF CONNECTICUT
 ANTHONY PETER GEORGIANNI, OF VIRGINIA
 MATTHEW J. GOODMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 KATY A. GORE, OF VIRGINIA
 ERIC T. HAN, OF CALIFORNIA
 GARRETT HARKINS, OF NEW YORK
 STEPHEN CAREY HARRIS, JR., OF MISSOURI
 KARI ELAYNE HATCHER, OF MICHIGAN
 JOEY EILEEN HILDEBRAND, OF OHIO
 DANIEL JOSEPH HOFFMAN, JR., OF TEXAS
 NAHDER BRYANT HOUSHMAN, OF ILLINOIS
 HUI JUN TINA HUANG, OF VIRGINIA
 ANTHONY A. IPPOLITI, OF VIRGINIA
 STANLEY N. JAREK, OF WASHINGTON
 BRIAN C. JOHNSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LESHAWNA R. JOHNSON, OF NEW YORK
 NATHAN BENJAMIN JOHNSON, OF CALIFORNIA
 DANIEL P. JOYCE, OF FLORIDA
 RYAN T. JOYCE, OF VIRGINIA
 STACEY S. KERNS, OF GEORGIA
 GLORYA SING KEY, OF WASHINGTON
 DONG WAN KIM, OF VIRGINIA
 KENNETH M. LAM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 EDITH HOPE LEE, OF WASHINGTON
 HAI F. LI, OF VIRGINIA
 DANIEL M. LISS, OF FLORIDA
 TIMOTHY PETER LOCKWOOD, OF ARIZONA
 CHRISTIAN MCCORMICK LOUBEAU, OF NEW YORK
 MACIEJ JAN LUCZYWO, OF NEW YORK
 SAMIRA MARR, OF VIRGINIA
 JILLIAN AMBER MCCOY, OF MARYLAND
 JONATHAN DEMETRIUS MCMASTER, OF MARYLAND
 RACHEL B. MEHRAVARI, OF NEW YORK
 STEPHEN C. MERCADO, OF VIRGINIA
 SALLY MEYERS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 TIFFANY MICHELLE MILLER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 SALVADOR CHAIDEZ MOLINA, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHAEL A. MORENO, OF VIRGINIA
 TYLER S. MOSELLE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 SARAH E. MOYER, OF NEVADA
 CHRISTOPHER R. MULLIN, OF CALIFORNIA
 EMILY Y. NARKIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DOMINIC THUAN VINH NGUYEN, OF CALIFORNIA
 THAO THI NGUYEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 NATALIE ANN OLDANI, OF VIRGINIA
 KABEER PARWANI, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 MARYCLAIRE PEROUTKA, OF VIRGINIA
 HOMER C. PICKENS, OF VIRGINIA
 TREVA MARIE POWERS, OF COLORADO
 JASON E. RASKIN, OF VIRGINIA
 MARK J. REDMOND, OF CONNECTICUT
 KRISTINA ROSALES KOSTRUKOVA, OF VIRGINIA
 THOMAS ROSEN-MOLINA, OF CALIFORNIA
 MALIKAT OLAMIDE RUPAI, OF ILLINOIS
 LUIS ARMANDO SANCHEZ, OF VIRGINIA
 VALERIE J. SANTOS, OF VIRGINIA
 MARY SARGENT, OF VIRGINIA
 MATTHEW C. SPADE, OF VIRGINIA
 ABIGAIL M. SPENGLER, OF COLORADO
 NORA T. STAAL, OF VIRGINIA
 NICK STOJANOVICH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CAMERON D. THOMAS-SHAH, OF MICHIGAN
 AARON M. THOMPSON, OF VIRGINIA
 HARRY R. THOMPSON III, OF ILLINOIS
 JULIA B. THOMPSON, OF VIRGINIA
 MATTHEW V. TOMPKINS, OF CALIFORNIA
 LARS TRAY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 BRYANA K. TUCCI, OF VIRGINIA
 JEFFREY L. UNDERCOFFER, OF MARYLAND
 MARTIN VAUGHAN, OF IDAHO
 IVAN VILELA, OF NEW JERSEY
 DANIEL RICHARD WALKER, OF NEW YORK
 ADAM MICHAEL WALLINGFORD, OF NEBRASKA
 PHILLIP JAMES WALSKY, OF CALIFORNIA
 RANDY R. WANIS, OF VIRGINIA
 KRISTEN ELIZABETH WEAVER, OF CALIFORNIA
 DAMON A. WILLIAMS, OF CALIFORNIA
 THOMAS G. WINSTON, OF VIRGINIA
 PAUL WULFSBERG, OF MASSACHUSETTS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

BEATA ANGELICA, OF CALIFORNIA
 BELGIN JENNIFER VANDERPLOEG, OF CALIFORNIA
 FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
 ANTONIO GABRIELE AGNONE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CLAYTON ALEXANDER ALDERMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
 LEAH GRACE ALLEN, OF ARKANSAS
 ERIC P. ANDERSEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 NATHAN ANDERSON, OF TEXAS
 ANDREA LYNNE AQUILLA, OF MARYLAND
 EMILY M. ARMITAGE, OF VIRGINIA
 ERIC TRANSFELDT ATKINS, OF WASHINGTON
 MARK MADISON ATKISSON, OF NEW JERSEY
 JOSEPH BAGGA-TAVES, OF MICHIGAN
 BARRY MICHAEL BELKNAP, OF MINNESOTA
 JEREMY R. BERNDT, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 ELIZABETH J. BLUMENTHAL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DOUGLAS R. BOUDREAU, OF VIRGINIA
 CHARITY L. BOYETTE, OF VIRGINIA
 MEGHAN EILEEN BRADLEY, OF VIRGINIA

JODI R. BREISLER, OF MINNESOTA
 ALAN Z. BRINKER, OF OHIO
 JOHN S. BROWN, OF WASHINGTON
 CIERA DAWN BURNETT, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 MARGARET CATHERINE CAMPBELL, OF VIRGINIA
 LEANNE R. CANNON, OF VIRGINIA
 NOAH CLARK, OF WASHINGTON
 REBECCA MARIE DANIS, OF MISSOURI
 GIANGHIA NAR DAO, OF CONNECTICUT
 SANDYA LAKSHMI DAS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CHRISTOPHER A. DAVENPORT, OF VIRGINIA
 ALISON EVANS DAVIS, OF MARYLAND
 EUGENIA WALKER DAVIS, OF OHIO
 ANDREA JO DE ARMENT, OF OHIO
 GABRIEL DEL BOSQUE, OF TEXAS
 DANIEL A. DEL CASTILLO, OF FLORIDA
 JAMES BUTLER DEWEY, OF WASHINGTON
 JUAN DOMENECH CLAR, OF PUERTO RICO
 CHRISTOPHER M. DUMM, OF VIRGINIA
 THOMAS ELAND EDWARDS, OF WASHINGTON
 BRETT ANDREW EGGLESTON, OF TEXAS
 BENJAMIN HARRIS ELLIS, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSEPH FARBEANN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 PETER RICHARD FASNACHT, OF NEW JERSEY
 TERRANCE ELLIOTT FAVORS, OF COLORADO
 JOHN P. FER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOSHUA N. FINCH, OF WYOMING
 DOUGLAS L. FLITTEER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 MICHAEL KENT FOGO, OF GEORGIA
 TARA EILEEN FOLEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 MARY FRANGAKIS, OF NEW YORK
 NEIL STEVEN GIPSON, OF NEBRASKA
 EMILY ANNE GODFREY, OF ARIZONA
 RAFAEL ANCHETA GONZALEZ, OF TENNESSEE
 EMILY R. GREEN, OF VIRGINIA
 SARA D. GREENGRASS, OF FLORIDA
 CHRISTOPHER M. GRELLER, OF WYOMING
 TRAVIS A. GROUT, OF OHIO
 TOMAS ANDRES LEVY GUERRERO, OF VIRGINIA
 CRAIG ACTON HALBMAIER, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 ADAM C. HALVERSON, OF COLORADO
 CHRISTOPHER THADDEUS WESTON HARTFIELD, OF GEORGIA
 TIMOTHY F. HAYNES, JR., OF NEW YORK
 LISA RAY HECHT-CRONSTEDT, OF FLORIDA
 HOLLY M. HECKMAN, OF ALABAMA
 NEIL HELBRAUN, OF ILLINOIS
 ANTHONY J. HENDON, OF MICHIGAN
 JACQUELINE BRETT HERNANDEZ, OF FLORIDA
 MARK HERRUP, OF MARYLAND
 SHANNON PIPER HILL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ANA ELIZABETH HIMELIC, OF ARIZONA
 AMY SERINA HIRSCH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ELIZABETH A. HOLCOMBE, OF FLORIDA
 DANIEL J. HORNING, OF OHIO
 KRISTEN J. HUGHES, OF MICHIGAN
 JASON RAY HUTCHISON, OF FLORIDA
 BRANDON JOVAN JACKSON, OF FLORIDA
 JINANSHU CHINMAY JAIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 HUGO A. JIMENEZ, OF VIRGINIA
 AMANDA JOHNSON MILLER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MARK RICHARD JORGENSEN, OF MINNESOTA
 STEVEN COLLAT KAMENY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 NAHAL KAZEMI, OF CALIFORNIA
 JONATHAN A. KENT, OF IOWA
 SAMANTHA Y. KUO, OF CALIFORNIA
 PABLO KURIAN, OF CALIFORNIA
 JEFFREY L. LADENSON, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 CHRISTINA T. LE, OF TEXAS
 EILEEN M. LEWIS, OF VIRGINIA
 LI PING LO, OF VIRGINIA
 ANGELA ITOGE MANALO, OF CALIFORNIA
 PATRICK MARTINO, OF WISCONSIN
 KUROSH MASSOUD ANSARI, OF VIRGINIA
 AMIT MATHUR, OF VIRGINIA
 SARAH LOSS MATHUR, OF VIRGINIA
 CASH LEE MCCrackEN, OF TENNESSEE
 CHRISTOPHER PAUL MEADE, OF VIRGINIA
 RACHEL SUZANNAH MIKESKA, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMES THOMAS MOFFITT, OF NEW MEXICO
 FARID ABBAS MOHAMED, OF MAINE
 ERIN M. MOLNAR, OF NEW YORK
 ANDREW R. MOORE, OF MICHIGAN
 CATHERINE ELIZABETH MULLER, OF FLORIDA
 NEAL SHAUN MURATA, OF HAWAII
 STEPHEN JOHN MURPHY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 COURTNEY C. MUSSER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 SELENA NELSON-SALCEDO, OF MINNESOTA
 KATHLEEN M. NUTT, OF VIRGINIA
 CHINWE OBIANWU, OF TEXAS
 JOHN BURTON O'BRIEN, OF FLORIDA
 MORGAN J. O'BRIEN III, OF NEW YORK
 WILLIAM JOHN O'CONNOR, OF CALIFORNIA
 KEVIN JAMES O'LEARY, OF CALIFORNIA
 AAMOD OMPRAKASH, OF NEW YORK
 JEFFREY M. O'NEAL, OF TEXAS
 KATHERINE IVES ORTIZ, OF CALIFORNIA
 MICHAEL OSE, OF IOWA
 MATTHEW J. PASCHKE, OF OHIO
 VIRSA Y. PERKINS, OF TENNESSEE
 MATTHEW LAWRENCE PETTIT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LANCE L. POSEY, OF TENNESSEE
 ELIZABETH POWERS, OF MINNESOTA
 ANDREW J. PUBLICOVER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 MICHAEL J. QUIGLEY, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHERINE N. RAFANIELLO, OF NEW YORK
 DANIEL RAKOVE, OF CALIFORNIA
 ROSELYN Y. RAMOS, OF MARYLAND

JUDNEFERA A. RASAYON, OF VIRGINIA
 PENNY SUE RECHKEMMER, OF IOWA
 KATRINA ROSE REICHWEIN, OF TEXAS
 WENDY A. REJAN, OF FLORIDA
 JEREMY STEWART RICHART, OF VIRGINIA
 BRIAN P. ROGERS, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 EBONY ROSE ROSEMOND, OF MARYLAND
 JESSICA ALEAH ROWLAND, OF FLORIDA
 JOHNATHAN MICHAEL ROY, OF TEXAS
 LURA ELIZABETH RUDISILL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 AMY UNANDER RULE, OF ILLINOIS
 AMELIA R. RUNYON, OF OREGON
 PRESTON RAPHAEL SAVARESE, OF WYOMING
 EMILY ANNE SCHUBERT, OF VIRGINIA
 MELISSA L. SCHUMI JONES, OF FLORIDA
 JOSHUA SHEN, OF CALIFORNIA
 MONICA SHIE, OF NEW YORK
 GURDIT SINGH, OF KANSAS
 ANGIE SMITH, OF OHIO
 JASON P. SPELLBERG, OF COLORADO
 DANIEL SPOKOJNY, OF MICHIGAN
 TAMARA N. STERNBERG, OF WYOMING
 REBECCA L. STRUWE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 JOHN DAVID STUBBS, JR., OF NORTH CAROLINA
 KATHRYN MICHELLE STEHLDRER, OF TEXAS
 TIMOTHY WILLIAM SWETT, OF ILLINOIS
 SONIA SMYTHE TARANTOLO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JESSUP L. TAYLOR, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 BEVERLY A. THACKER, OF OREGON
 CHARLES ARTHUR THOMAS, OF TEXAS
 TEDDE HOLDEN THOMPSON, OF FLORIDA
 AQUEELAH S. TORRANCE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 JUSTINE OVEN TREADWELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ERIN J. TRUHLER, OF MINNESOTA
 LYNN MARIE VACCA, OF CALIFORNIA
 CARLY NICOLE VAN ORMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOSEPH WILLIAM WADE, OF UTAH
 SHIRAZ U. WAHAJ, OF FLORIDA
 ANNE WAN, OF CALIFORNIA
 MATTHEW DANIEL WARIN, OF VIRGINIA
 BRIANA M. WARNER, OF MAINE
 DAVID W. WARNER, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID AUSTIN WESTENHOFER, OF KENTUCKY
 MARK THOMAS WHITEHEAD, OF VIRGINIA
 ANDREA TOLL WHITING, OF VIRGINIA
 ERIC C. WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
 KIMBERLY ELIZABETH WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA
 JONATHAN E. WOLFINGTON, OF FLORIDA
 MARK W. ZANOLLI, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 KIMBERLY D. ZAPPEL, OF MINNESOTA
 HOLLY HOPE ZARDUS, OF WASHINGTON
 RACHAEL ZASPEL, OF TEXAS
 THOMAS S. ZIA, OF FLORIDA
 JEFFREY ERIC ZINSLEIFER, OF CALIFORNIA
 ALEKS ZITTE, OF FLORIDA
 LINDSEY MICHELLE ZULUAGA, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

JORGE ALBERTO ABUDEI BURGER, OF GEORGIA
 DANIEL C. ACKER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 MICHELLE L. ANDERSON, OF COLORADO
 RAFAEL ANDRADE-RAVELO, OF PUERTO RICO
 ALEX FRANCIS ANDREW, OF TENNESSEE
 CYRUS A. ATTIA, OF VIRGINIA
 ELENA CHRISTINA AUGUSTINE, OF WASHINGTON
 JEFFREY SEAN BARRUS, OF UTAH
 BENJAMIN JOSEPH BAUGHMAN, OF ILLINOIS
 CHRISTOPHER BEALOR, OF VIRGINIA
 BLAIRE E. BINGHAM, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHRYN ELIZABETH BOLOGNA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 STEPHEN G. BOWEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ELIZABETH LAUREN EVANS BRADY, OF VIRGINIA
 KEVIN L. BRENDLE, OF FLORIDA
 ANDREW GARY BURTON, OF VIRGINIA
 SARAH M. CARLSON, OF VIRGINIA
 RANA KANAAN CASTEEL, OF VIRGINIA
 RODERICK ZANE CHAMBERS, OF TEXAS
 MOLLY PATRICIA CHINGCHILLA, OF ALASKA
 EVA COFFEY, OF TEXAS
 STEPHANIE G. COHEN, OF VIRGINIA
 MATTHEW J. CONLEY, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTOPHER E. CONNELL, OF VIRGINIA
 STEPHEN R. COOK, OF VIRGINIA
 KELLY A. COSTELLO, OF VIRGINIA
 PAUL C. COX, OF VIRGINIA
 CHARLES D. CRISP, OF VIRGINIA
 ERIN I. CURTIS, OF VIRGINIA
 BRIAN M. DANATZKO, OF VIRGINIA
 TINA KAREEMA DAUOD-AGKUC, OF DELAWARE
 TUCKER D. DAVIS, OF VIRGINIA
 ZACHARY DEBORD, OF VIRGINIA
 RAMON DELGADO, OF VIRGINIA
 REQUEL A. DELL-ORSO, OF VIRGINIA
 KEVIN C. DENNEHY, OF CONNECTICUT
 RISHI PRAFUL DESAI, OF WEST VIRGINIA
 JOANNA L. DETAMORE, OF VIRGINIA
 ZACHARY E. DOBOZE, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBERT ALAN DOLLINGER, JR., OF VIRGINIA
 JESSICA DORCUS, OF VIRGINIA
 M. DAVID DOWD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOHANNA M. DUROCHER, OF VIRGINIA
 BLAKE D. EDWARDS, OF FLORIDA
 EDWARD ANTHONY EICHLER, OF MAINE
 NELS H. ERICKSON, OF VIRGINIA
 JENNIFER A. FALLON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 KAREN S. FANG, OF MARYLAND

MELONY FLETCHER, OF MARYLAND
 ERIC FONG, OF CALIFORNIA
 WESLEY C. FREDERICKS, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBERT E. FULTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LILLIANA GABRIEL, OF VIRGINIA
 MARINA GALKINA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 KEVIN P. GALLAGHER, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMES S. GARDNER, OF TEXAS
 KENNETH C. GARDNER, JR., OF PENNSYLVANIA
 MICHAEL R. GARNER, OF MARYLAND
 MATTHEW AARON GLENN, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHRYN A. GONZALES, OF VIRGINIA
 PAMELA K. GREENLEAF, OF VIRGINIA
 JACOB L. GUNSCHDEL, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 COLIN T. HALE, OF VIRGINIA
 JACOB ANTHONY HALL, OF CALIFORNIA
 RUSSELL C. HEADLEE, OF NEBRASKA
 JOSEPHINE GIA HINMAN, OF NEW JERSEY
 AMY E. HIRSCHAUER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ANDREW BLAYNE HOLTZ, OF NEW YORK
 KATHERINE M. HOLTZ, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHERINE HOOPS, OF MINNESOTA
 STEPHANIE JEAN HOOSTAL, OF MINNESOTA
 CHRISTOPHER B. HULICK, OF VIRGINIA
 HEATHER YANG HWALEK, OF MAINE
 TEUTA IDRIZI, OF VIRGINIA
 OWEN JOHNS, OF ARIZONA
 TIMOTHY NILS JOHNSON, OF NEW YORK
 DANIEL NICHOLAS KANIGAN, OF UTAH
 SEAN KEITH, OF OREGON
 ELAINE VICTORIA KELLEY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 KATHERINE A. KERR, OF OHIO
 ELIZABETH E. KEVERN, OF VIRGINIA
 HYEJU J. KIM, OF VIRGINIA
 JOYCE KIM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 BRANIGAN M. KNOWLTON, OF UTAH
 KEVIN A. KRIMM, OF VIRGINIA
 SANJAI KUMAR, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMES P. LACEY, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 ERIK A. LARSEN, OF VIRGINIA
 AMY FULING LEE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOY LEE, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBERT A. LEE, OF VIRGINIA
 GRIFFIN PATRICK LENOIR, OF TEXAS
 AMELIA M. LIEBHOLD, OF VIRGINIA
 ERIC R. LITTLE, OF VIRGINIA
 MEGHAN HEALY LUECKE, OF CALIFORNIA
 BENTON S. LUSK, OF VIRGINIA
 MOHINI A. MADGAVKAR, OF TEXAS
 CHARLES MALINAK, OF NEW YORK
 RUBY VERGARA MARCELO, OF MARYLAND
 AMBER L. MAREZ, OF VIRGINIA
 DANIEL E. MARTIN, OF MARYLAND
 CHARLES ALBERT MATAACK, OF CALIFORNIA
 COURTNEY M. MAZZONE, OF NEW YORK
 JERMELE K.L. MCGASKEY, OF VIRGINIA
 CONOR MCNAMARA, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTOPHER MERRIMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMES MIKULEC, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHELLE ABREU MILARDO, OF NEW YORK
 CHRIS R. MILLER, OF VIRGINIA
 ROBERT MIRANDA, JR., OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTOPHER MARK MOHRMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 DANIEL A. NALEPA, OF VIRGINIA
 ROSS EDWARD NEADING, OF COLORADO
 LISA LYNN NESSELROAD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 TIFFANY M. NEWMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 ANDREW YOONTAK NHO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CLARE E. NICHOLSON, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 HELEN YOUNG NO, OF CALIFORNIA
 MARK D. NORRIS, OF VIRGINIA
 MARTIN C. OH, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTIAN R. OLSEN, OF MARYLAND
 CINDY L. OTIS, OF VIRGINIA
 MARK STEVEN PADGETT, JR., OF VIRGINIA
 KRISTI H. PATTON, OF VIRGINIA
 EDWARD C. PERRY, OF TEXAS
 NORMAN R. PFLANZ, OF NEBRASKA
 VIRGINIA B. PIERSON II, OF VIRGINIA
 ERICA M. PINERO, OF VIRGINIA
 JAMISON FRANK PIXLEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 AMY C. POLISHUK FUCHS, OF VIRGINIA
 CHRISTOPHER M. POTHOVEN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ANSSI I. PULKKINEN, OF VIRGINIA
 SARAH M. PURCELL, OF VIRGINIA
 RYAN JEFFREY PURNELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 CYRUS PYUN, OF VIRGINIA
 ADAM K. RASMUSSEN, OF VIRGINIA
 LUIS E. REINOSO, OF VIRGINIA
 LAKESHA M. ROBINSON, OF VIRGINIA
 JACOB ROCCA, OF MINNESOTA
 CATHERINE ANN RODEN, OF ALABAMA
 JAMES C. ROSS, OF COLORADO
 GLENN R. RUDOLPH, OF VIRGINIA
 LAURA W. RUSS, OF CALIFORNIA
 SARITAH SABB, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSEPH FRANK SAHID, OF VIRGINIA
 JENNIFER NICOLE SANOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 NATHAN R. SCHMIDT, OF VIRGINIA
 ETAN SCHWARTZ, OF NEW JERSEY
 DONALD SCOTT, OF VIRGINIA
 ELA M. SEPULVEDA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 PAYAL SHAH, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSHUA SHIPP, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 HOLLY R. SISK, OF VIRGINIA
 SARAH L. SMYTHERS, OF VIRGINIA
 ELISABETH SOCOLOW, OF NEW YORK

LATHDA SOULATHA, OF HAWAII
 LISA A. SPINK, OF VIRGINIA
 MARIA STAVROPOULOS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 PAUL STILLLEY, OF ARIZONA
 CHARLES A. STINGER, OF MARYLAND
 ROCHELLE STOCK, OF VIRGINIA
 JAY M. STROHM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 ERIC JOSEPH SULLIVAN, OF FLORIDA
 JAMIE L. SUTTER, OF OHIO
 ERIC S. SWINN, OF VIRGINIA
 MICHAEL J. TAYLOR, OF VIRGINIA
 BRIAN W. TEPLICA, OF VIRGINIA
 LAURA THEISSEN, OF MISSOURI
 JEFFREY A. TISINGER, OF VIRGINIA
 CODY GLEN TITENSOR, OF OREGON
 JONATHAN TO, OF ARKANSAS
 CHRISTIAN EDWARD TORRES, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LINDA TOTH, OF VIRGINIA
 VANESSA TOUFALLY, OF TEXAS
 MARK TROCINSKI, OF COLORADO
 RITA E. TROTTER, OF VIRGINIA
 THOMAS PATRICK TRUXES, OF VIRGINIA
 ADRIENNE M. TYGENHOF, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 BELGIN JENNIFER VANDERPLOEG, OF CALIFORNIA
 SHAWN R. VASQUEZ, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN ANDREW VOIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
 DAVID WACKER, OF COLORADO
 ALEXANDER TED PUHK WALD, OF CONNECTICUT
 PAULETTA M. WALSH, OF CALIFORNIA
 JERUSHA C. WALZER, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN G. WARD, OF VIRGINIA
 ALLISON R. WELCH, OF CALIFORNIA
 LAUREN PATRICIA WELCH, OF NEW YORK
 MICHAEL M. WILDMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 JARED E. WOLFE, OF ILLINOIS
 KAREN E. WRIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
 TIMOTHY WRIGHT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LAUREN M. WYGANT, OF VIRGINIA
 JOSEPH YACKLEY, OF ILLINOIS
 SUE H. YEH, OF VIRGINIA
 EMILY VALENTINE ZEEBERG, OF NEW YORK
 RICHARD H. ZIELINSKI, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 W. GREY ZIMMERMAN, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2012: CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

DANIEL MENCIO HIRSCH, OF MARYLAND
 BENJAMIN BEARDSLEY DILLE, OF MINNESOTA

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM T. COLLINS
 BRIG. GEN. JAMES S. HARTSELL

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. MICHAEL S. ROGERS
 IN THE AIR FORCE

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

To be colonel

WILLIAM E. DICKENS, JR.
 RICHARD R. GIVENS II

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

To be colonel

KYLE WILLIAM BLASCH
 DARRIN DANIEL LAMBRIGGER
 ANDREW T. MACCABE

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

To be colonel

LUAN TRAN LE
 DARON C. PRAETZEL
 DAVID C. SCHAEFER

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

To be colonel

CYNTHIA B. CAMP
 MARK EDWARD GIVENS
 ERNEST VASQUEZ
 BRYAN M. WINTER

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

To be colonel

LAURA I. FERNANDEZ
KAREN LYNN HECKER
MARTIN J. HINDEL
ELIZABETH HOUSER LICKLITER
AVIS MAUREEN MCALLISTER
PAULA B. MCCARRON
STEPHEN J. MCMANUS
KATHLEEN V. E. REDER
ALBERT C. REES

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

To be colonel

DIANE M. DOTY
ANITA L. FLIGGE
CHERYL R. GATES
COLLEEN MAY KELLY
CHRISTOPHER J. MATLACK
KIMBERLY A. MCCUE
DAWN LYNN MOORE
ANGELA L. MORTON
MICHAEL NICHOLSON
EDWARD D. RONNEBAUM

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

To be colonel

RICHARD L. ALLEN
JEFFREY SCOTT BEERY
WILLIAM L. BRAY
JOHN E. BUTERBAUGH
GREGORY L. CANDELL
MICHAEL S. CHESSER
JAMES P. DOLAN
JULIANNE FLYNN
JAMES E. FRAME
JEFFRY L. HUFFMAN
ERNEST C. LEE
EDWIN C. NEWMAN III
SCOTT M. STRAYER
ANDREW O. TODD
SANDRA R. VOLDEN

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

To be colonel

CONNIE L. ALGE
FRANK J. ANCONA
BRIAN A. ANDERSON
CHRISTOPHER R. ANDERSON
RALPH ANTON ANTHENIEN, JR.
JEFFREY JOHN ARMENSTROUT
MARK DOUGLAS ARNHOLT
SCOTT W. BANNING
RUSSELL D. BARILE
STEVEN C. BARNETT
ERIC RANDOLPH BENTS
STEVEN L. BEYER
DAVID A. BIGGS
AMANDA SUE BIRCH
JENNIFER A. BLOCK
MICHAEL REMI BORBATH
KAREN D. BOSKO
JOHN CHRISTOPHER BOSTWICK
FRANK L. BRADFIELD III
RICHARD A. BRIGGS
JIMMIE P. BROOKS
GERALD Q. BROWN
CHARLES CASTLEMAN BULGER III
BRETT M. BURAS
JOSEPH E. BURGNER
TRAVIS S. CAUGHLIN
SUSAN BETH CHAMBERLAIN
IAN V. CHASE
ALLYSON C. CHAUVIN
JOHN D. CHERRY
KYLE J. CIOFFERO
CHRISTOPHER J. CLAY
NATHAN BEDFORD CLINE
JAMES K. CLUTTER
EARLE B. COMBS IV
CHARLES D. CORNELIUS
LISA M. CRAIG
MARK K. CUMBEE
JENNIFER L. CUMMINGS
JEFFREY W. DAVIES

ALLAN R. DAVIS
PAUL R. DELMONTE
JAMES R. DEVERE
JAMES M. DOOLIN
CRAIG W. DRESCHER
DENNIS PATRICK DUFFY
PATRICK J. DULANEY
MATTHEW T. DURHAM
STAN T. DUVAL
RICHARD J. ECCHER
DAVID S. EDWARDS
KIMBERLY S. ELLE
ROBERTA D. ERNEST
RICHARD A. ERREDGE
PETER G. FERGUSON
STEVEN A. FISCHER
GORDON E. FORNELL, JR.
BRIAN S. FREEMAN
HIRAM P. GATES III
BRETT J. GENNARELLI
JEFFERY A. GREEN
STEPHANIE S. GREEN
RODERICK T. GRUNWALD
THOMAS C. GUERRA
DOUGLAS E. GULLION
DAVID W. HALE
KENT D. HANSEN
MITCHELL A. HANSON
DOUGLAS R. HASSEBROCK
BRYAN A. HERRICK
PAUL B. HROMANIK
RICHARD L. INGRUM
KENDALL B. JAMES
WILLIAM G. JAMES
JEFFREY L. JANICK
LAURA ROSEMARY JENKINS
ANNE C. JOHNSON
LISA M. JOHNSON
CONSTANCE C. JOHNSONCAGE
SCOTT F. JOKERST
SHELLEY B. KAVLICK
JOHN E. KEELER
ROBERT A. KIRBY
ELIZA S. KNUTSON
KEVIN S. LANE
STEPHEN L. LANIER
MICHAEL V. LOFORTI
SHANE D. LOHMAN
TIMOTHY L. LOHOF
RAYMUNDO LUEVANOS
JOHN W. LYONS
BEENA N. MAHARAJ
GERARD PHILLIP MALLOY
MICHAEL J. MALONE
BARBARA D. MANOUSE
DARRYL L. MARKOWSKI
LYNN M. MARSHALL
FRED L. MASSEY
WILLIAM A. MATNEY
KEVIN R. MENSING
LEE E. MERKLE
BRENT A. MERRITT
JODY A. MERRITT
DOUGLAS B. MEYERS
MITCHELL D. MIGLIORI
ERIC L. MIKKELSON
MICHAEL M. MOEDING
DAVID PAUL MOORE
TIMOTHY D. MOORE
BRIAN J. MORK
JAMES L. MORRIS III
DONALD MOSES, JR.
WILLIAM D. MURPHY
BRIAN D. NEAL
JOHN G. NIAKAROS
JOHN R. NOWAK
BRANDON K. NUGENT
HUGH E. OROURKE
KENNETH J. OSTRAT
KATHERINE M. PALLOZZI
PATRICIA ANN PETTINE
BENJAMIN D. PHILLIPS
DEAN PHILLIPS
CHARLAN A. POIRSON
LEWIS E. POORE, JR.
DALE R. PUDWILL
JESSICA P. A. RAINES
DONALD P. RICE, JR.
CHARLES L. RICH
MITCHELL D. RICHARDSON
DONALD W. RICHEY
WILLIAM S. RIEHL
MICHAEL L. ROBBINS

MAUREEN B. RODRIGUEZ
KEVIN J. ROETHE
KENNETH N. ROSE
RICHARD L. ROSS, JR.
MICHAEL F. ROTHERMEL
NATHAN W. ROUGHT
WALTER C. RUMAN
BRYAN L. RUNION
MICHAEL K. SANDER
DANIEL J. SARACHENE
RANDALL JOHN SAUER
HEIDI L. SCHEPPERS
EDWARD A. SCHINDLER
CHRISTINE B. SCHLACTER
CRAIG T. SCOTT
DAVID A. SCOTT
JULIE CATHERINE SCOTT
DAVID M. SEARS
DAVID WILLIAM SKOWRON
STEPHEN E. SLADE
JOHN S. SMIGLA
KELLI B. SMILEY
BRIAN PHILIP STAHL
ROGER R. STOECKMANN
CHRISTOPHER B. STOKES
JUDE R. SUNDERBRUCH
RICHARD W. TATM
LAURA CHAMPION TAYLOR
GARIN P. TENTSCHERT
HOLLY E. THOMPSON
ROBERT R. TOFIL
RICHARD S. TUBBS
EDGAR K. TUCKER
LARRY E. TYER, JR.
DEBORAH LASOCKI VAN CASTER
TROY N. VONADA, JR.
LORI P. WALDEN
STEPHEN DAYLE WALKER
DAVID S. WEBB
RICHARD R. WEBSTER
JAMES C. WHITMIRE
RICHARD A. WILLIAMS
WAYNE M. WILLIAMS
SCOTT A. WINNER
TIMOTHY W. WOLLMUTH
RIPLEY E. WOODARD
KENNETH E. YEE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531, 1211 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

SUN Y. KIM

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

LEON M. LEFLORE

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on January 30, 2014 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

LESLIE BERGER KIERNAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N. MANAGEMENT AND REFORM, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 6, 2014.

LESLIE BERGER KIERNAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DURING HER TENURE OF SERVICE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR U.N. MANAGEMENT AND REFORM, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 6, 2014.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, January 31, 2014

The House met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WENSTRUP).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 31, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRAD R. WENSTRUP to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Send Your spirit of peace, honesty, and fairness during this time of constituent visits. May their ears and hearts be open to listen to the hopes and needs of those whom the Members of this House represent.

Bless the people of this great Nation with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, that they might responsibly participate in our American democracy.

Please keep all who work for the people's House in good health, that they might faithfully fulfill the great responsibility given them in their service to the work of the Capitol.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

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

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 30, 2014 at 10:30 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1417.
That the Senate passed H.R. 2860.
That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res. 28.
That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res. 29.
That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 31.
With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 30, 2014 at 4:06 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1926.
With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 4(d) of House Resolution 5, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, and section 1(k)(2) of House Resolution 895, One Hundred Tenth Congress, I transmit to you notification that JUDY BIGGERT and Belinda Pinckney each

have signed an agreement not to be a candidate for the office of Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress for the purpose of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 until at least three years after he or she is no longer a member of the board or staff of the Office of Congressional Ethics.

Copies of the signed agreements shall be retained by the Office of the Clerk as part of the records of the House.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

SENATE BILL AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS REFERRED

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

S. 1417. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize programs under part A of title XI of such Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

S.J. Res. 28. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of John Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

S.J. Res. 29. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the House stands adjourned until noon on Monday next for morning-hour debate.

There was no objection.

Thereupon (at 3 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, February 3, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

RULES AND REPORTS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(d), executive communications [final rules] submitted to the House pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1) during the period of August 1, 2013, through January 3, 2014, shall be treated as though received on January 31, 2014. Original dates of transmittal, numberings, and referrals to committee of those executive communications remain as indicated in the Executive Communication section of the relevant CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

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

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

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

4617. A letter from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Trade Agreements Thresholds [FAC 2005-72; FAR Case 2013-021; Item IV; Docket 2013-0021, Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AM67) received January 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4618. A letter from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, GSA, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-72; Small Entity Compliance Guide [Docket No.: FAR 2013-0078; Sequence No. 8] received January 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4619. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-155, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4620. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-183, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4621. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-182, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4622. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a letter regarding commitments in the Joint Plan of Action; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4623. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a letter regarding commitments in the Joint Plan of Action; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4624. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. ACT 20-271, "Procurement Practices Reform Exemption Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4625. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. ACT 20-271, "Procurement Practices Reform Exemption Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4626. A letter from the Director, Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Community Residential Care (RIN: 2900-AO62) received January 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4627. A letter from the Director, Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Penalty for Breaking Appointments (RIN: 2900-AO51) received January 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

4628. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue

Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Permitted disparity in employer-provided contributions or benefits (Rev. Rul. 2014-3) received January 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1825. A bill to direct Federal public land management officials to exercise their authority under existing law to facilitate use of and access to Federal public lands for fishing, sport hunting, and recreational shooting, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-337 Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3675. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission; with amendments (Rept. 113-338). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1825 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BARR, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. COTTON, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. PERRY, Mr. PITTS, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. REED, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 3979. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK (for himself and Mrs. LUMMIS):

H.R. 3980. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate Federal and State permitting processes related to the construction of new surface water storage projects on lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to designate the Bureau of Reclamation as the lead agency for permit processing, and for other pur-

poses; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Washington:

H.R. 3981. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to allow for prepayment of repayment contracts between the United States and water users, to provide surface water storage enhancement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY
STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 3979.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK:

H.R. 3980.

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

Article IV Section 3 clause 2 United States Constitution.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Washington:

H.R. 3981.

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

Article IV Section 3 clause 2 United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 15: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 401: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 411: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 477: Mr. CHAFFETZ.
H.R. 494: Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 508: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 515: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 596: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 946: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
H.R. 1020: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 1091: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
H.R. 1229: Mr. RUSH, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. HAHN, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 1289: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 1507: Mr. FORBES and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 1563: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 1603: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 1666: Ms. KUSTER and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 1690: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1726: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 1728: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1750: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1761: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 1763: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 1796: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 1814: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 2084: Mr. LYNCH and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 2139: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 2305: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 2612: Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 2643: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. LATTA, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 2757: Mr. McDERMOTT.
 H.R. 2959: Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, and Mr. GRIF-FITH of Virginia.
 H.R. 3086: Mr. POMPEO, Mr. DESANTIS, and Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 3180: Mr. LATTA.
 H.R. 3327: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 3370: Mrs. CAPITO.
 H.R. 3407: Mr. LEWIS.
 H.R. 3485: Mr. BARR.
 H.R. 3541: Mr. STEWART and Mr. POE of Texas.
 H.R. 3579: Mr. POE of Texas.
 H.R. 3600: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Ms. SINEMA.
 H.R. 3604: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
 H.R. 3658: Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. SENSEN-BRENNER, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
 H.R. 3663: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
 H.R. 3698: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. NEAL, Mr. HULTGREN, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. MARINO, Mr. RUP-PERSBERGER, Mr. KEATING, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. CUM-MINGS, Mr. WITTMAN, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr.

GOODLATTE, Mr. JONES, Mr. RENACCI, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. SIRES.
 H.R. 3712: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 3717: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 3747: Mr. RAHALL.
 H.R. 3778: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 3781: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 3788: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
 H.R. 3856: Ms. KAPTUR and Ms. TSONGAS.
 H.R. 3857: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington and Mr. PETRI.
 H.R. 3877: Mr. DEFAZIO.
 H.R. 3914: Mr. SERRANO and Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 3921: Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 3967: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
 H.J. Res. 68: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
 H. Con. Res. 16: Mr. HARRIS.
 H. Con. Res. 79: Mr. YODER.
 H. Res. 227: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H. Res. 428: Mr. ROHRBACHER and Mr. GRIMM.
 H. Res. 430: Ms. LEE of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. O'ROURKE.
 H. Res. 440: Mr. GALLEGO.
 H. Res. 447: Mr. SHIMKUS.
 H. Res. 456: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. MESSER.
 H. Res. 468: Mr. HONDA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. CICILLINE, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIM-ITTED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIM-ITTED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. LUCAS

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Agriculture in H.R. 3590 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

OFFERED BY MR. UPTON

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce in H.R. 3590 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING MOUNT VERNON OPTIC HERALD

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Mount Vernon Optic Herald, a valuable resource to the constituents of the 4th District of Texas that was recently and fittingly named a "Texas Treasure Business" by the Texas Historical Commission.

The Mount Vernon Optic Herald, which celebrates its 140th year in 2014, is the oldest continuously operating business in Mount Vernon. Not only does the Herald hold a distinguished history within the community, but it is a family business. Members of the Bass family have owned the newspaper for more than 60 years, when Jim and Tish Bass purchased the newspaper in 1952. Their daughter and son-in-law, Pat and Bob Wright, ran the business from 1980 until 2005 when Susan Reeves, granddaughter to the Basses, and her husband John took up the mantle.

The Mount Vernon Optic Herald is the best representation of freedom of speech in service to its local citizens. But more than that, it is also a testament to family values and hard work that define the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate the Mount Vernon Optic Herald on 140 years of achievement that have culminated in attaining the "Texas Treasure Business Award." I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing the Herald, the readers in the Mount Vernon community, and the Bass family many more years of continued success.

IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR AN- DREW WOLDAR AND THE NA- TIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate math professor Dr. Andrew Woldar and Villanova University for winning a research grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Professor Woldar's project on algebraic graph theory was recognized by the NSF for its important contribution to the mathematical sciences. This grant will support a conference at Villanova University in June 2014, which will bring together experts, researchers and students to discuss recent advancements in mathematics. Professor Woldar and Villanova University's dedication to the field and leadership in teaching continue to prepare students with the technical background they will need for successful careers.

The NSF is a leading, independent national academy promoting the progress of science through research programs and education projects. NSF grants help recognize individuals for their contributions to the mathematics and science communities. I commend the NSF for its continued support of innovative research.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Professor Woldar for his hard work and wish him the best of luck with the conference.

THE ARIZONA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Arizona Trail Association and honor its celebration of the Arizona National Scenic Trail's 20th Anniversary.

In a short time, the Arizona National Scenic Trail has become one of the premier long distance trails in the country. The people that have worked to make this happen over the last 20 years are as diverse as the trail itself. The Arizona Trail demonstrates what trail users and land managers can accomplish when they share a common vision.

School teacher Dale Shewalter developed the concept of a cross-state trail in the 1970s and began traveling around Arizona giving presentations on his vision of a trail connecting communities, mountains, canyons, deserts, forests, public lands, historic sites, various trail systems, wilderness areas and other points of interest. The idea was embraced by all types of trail users throughout Arizona, Arizona State Parks, National Forests, the Bureau of Land Management and National Parks Service.

In 1994, the Arizona Trail Association incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and became an organized voice for the trail, bringing together passionate hikers, backpackers, equestrians, mountain bicyclists, runners, trail builders, nature enthusiasts, cross-country skiers and others from throughout the state. These committed individuals provided the necessary route identification, volunteers for building and maintaining the trail, logistical support, fundraising and awareness for the trail and ensured that it received National Scenic Trail status.

I am proud to have segments of the Arizona National Scenic Trail in my district, and congratulate the diverse supporters who made it a reality, including Matt Nelson, Arizona Trail Association's Executive Director, and Gary Hohner, the Association's Board President. And special thanks to all those in Southern Arizona who enjoy the trail now and work to preserve it for future generations.

HONORING JACKSONVILLE JOINT RESERVE INTELLIGENCE CENTER

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the fine men and women serving our nation at the Jacksonville Joint Reserve Intelligence Center (JRIC), located at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida.

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) has selected the JRIC as the "small" JRIC of the Year. JRICs are designed to recognize the joint nature of the Defense Intelligence and at the same time to improve the Military Services' ability to meet emerging unit and tactical level intelligence requirements. This reachback capability has the added benefit of reducing travel and per diem costs associated with traditional annual training and minimizing forward deployed forces' footprint and sustainment; permitting the reservists to perform their mission at home station.

Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, USA, lauds the Jacksonville JRIC when he wrote, "the award is based on the following criteria: the ability to optimize JRIC management through effective space and systems utilization, while providing maximum flexible access based on mission requirements; the ability to facilitate joint access, joint training, innovation, and a collaborative work effort; and the ability to maximize reserve utilization in support of Defense Intelligence by fostering the integration of multiple intelligence disciplines."

It is a pleasure and honor to represent the great men and women who serve at the Jacksonville JRIC and to see them recognized for their selfless service and dedication. The hard work of the men and women who serve in and around Jacksonville illustrate the importance of the First Coast to national defense, and reiterate that our community's efforts to be an anchor of national security.

IN HONOR OF MASTER SERGEANT GEORGE A. BANNAR, JR.

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I was honored to attend the grand opening and dedication ceremony of the Military Free Fall School's new Master Sergeant George A. Bannar Jr. Vertical Wind Tunnel at Yuma Proving Ground. The new wind tunnel will be used in the Special Forces Qualification Course to teach proper free fall techniques.

Master Sergeant Bannar, the new wind tunnel's namesake, was a member of the Army's

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

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

Special Forces and was stationed at Yuma Proving Ground as a Military Free Fall Instructor. He enlisted in the Army in October 1996 and graduated from the Special Forces Qualification Course in July 2003. On his fifth deployment to Afghanistan, Master Sergeant Bannar was killed in action by enemy forces in Wardak Province on August 20, 2013. His awards include the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star.

Master Sergeant Bannar is survived by his wife Michelle, his mother Sheila Long, and his father George Bannar, Sr. As a husband and a father of three, I cannot imagine the pain of losing a spouse or a child. I extend my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Master Sergeant Bannar.

I know that this new facility and the men and women who train there will stand as a testament to Master Sergeant Bannar and all of our fallen heroes. They fought to protect us and our freedoms. May we never forget their sacrifice.

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE CHATHAM TRAIN STATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Chatham Train Station, located in the Borough of Chatham, Morris County, New Jersey, as it celebrates its Centennial Anniversary.

Chatham first became a stop on the Morris & Essex lines in 1838. In 1914, the current station building was built. The building was designed in-house under the supervision of Frank J. Nies, the architect for the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroads (DL&W).

The station complex consists of a station building for the inbound traffic, and a shelter house for the outbound traffic. They are connected by a concrete pedestrian tunnel.

The Chatham Station was designed in the Renaissance Revival style, adapted to the functions of an early twentieth century combination station. The exposed beams and oversized brackets seem to relate to the Stick style, and may have been deliberate gestures to the suburban architectural tradition. The Chatham complex was built in conjunctions with a track elevation project with the roadbed, Fairmount Avenue, built up to its present level after the station and shelter was completed.

In 1929, the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroads, the owners of the railway at that time, spent \$100 million to electrify 173 miles of track over 78 miles of road on the Morris & Essex lines. This meant that Chatham station would be served by electric trains, some of the first in the country.

After World War II, the presence of the Chatham Station would prove to be key in the population increases in neighboring Chatham Township. During this time, rural lands in the township started to be developed for residential use, due to the easy commute to Manhattan.

Today, the Chatham Station is a commuter rail station and a branch of the Morris & Essex

Lines. The station serves trains on the New Jersey Transit's Morristown line. These trains travel from Hackettstown to New York's Pennsylvania Station. In 2012, over 80 thousand people used the station.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating both the Chatham Station, and Friends of Chatham Station as it celebrates its Centennial Anniversary.

IN HONORING THE LIFE OF CALDWELL "HANK" HAYNES

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Caldwell "Hank" Haynes.

Born in Jacksonville, Florida in 1941, Hank was a friend to all he knew. A sports enthusiast, he was the manager of the football team at my own alma-mater, Lee High School, in Jacksonville. Hank attended college at the University of the South in Seawee, Tennessee, where he was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame after garnering 10 varsity letters, four in wrestling, two in baseball, and four as the manager of the football team.

Following graduation, Hank served as an officer in the Navy for four years. He was on a destroyer stationed in San Diego when by chance he met his wife, Billie Haynes, also a Jacksonville native and Lee High School graduate. They were married for forty-six years where they resided in Jacksonville.

Upon leaving the Navy, Hank went to work for his family's insurance firm, Peter and Bond Insurance, the oldest insurance firm in Florida. He became president of the company in 1981 when his father retired. In 2007 Hank merged the company with GHG Insurance and formed what is now known as Haynes, Peters and Bond Co. Dedicated to his work, Hank continued to work at the firm up until two weeks before his death.

A role model to many, Hank was a well respected leader of our community in Jacksonville. His generosity of spirit and winning personality will make him long remembered. I send his family my heartfelt condolences and I know that Jacksonville will mourn his loss greatly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in this solemn goodbye to Hank Haynes.

IN RECOGNITION OF ESTIVEN RODRIGUEZ, WHO EMBODIES WHAT AMERICA REPRESENTS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Estiven Rodriguez, a high school student from my congressional district, to the nation's Capitol as he was one of the additional guests who was seated in the box with the First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden and Valerie Jarrett, Senior Advi-

sor to the President, at the State of the Union Address on Tuesday, January 28, 2013.

It made me extremely proud to welcome Estiven who has been invited by the White House to represent the best and the brightest students in my congressional district. Students like Estiven inspire us all with hope and optimism for a better America, where everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.

Estiven Rodriguez is the son of a Dominican immigrant, he arrived in the United States when he was nine years old and didn't speak any English. When he entered Washington Heights Expeditionary Learning School (WHEELS) in the sixth grade, he still spoke and understood very limited English. Now a high school senior, Estiven is one of the top students in his class and will attend Dickinson College in the fall on a Posse Foundation Scholarship, making him a first-generation college student. "At only 16, 17 years old, he, in many ways, embodies the spirit of a life-long learner. He is a model student," said Erick Espin, Estiven's 11th grade United States history teacher. Outside of his academic studies, Estiven is also a member of the school's math club, and soccer and track teams. Earlier this month, Estiven attended an event at the White House on expanding college opportunity. His story underscores the importance of the President's goal to give all kids a chance to get ahead, regardless of the circumstances of their birth.

Estiven has been chosen as one of the guests who have been invited to sit with the First Lady to represent the stories of millions of Americans across the country, who are working hard to better their communities, improve their own economic outcomes and help restore opportunity for all."

HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY MR. JAKE ALARID

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mr. Jake Ignacio Alarid on his 80th birthday, which will be on February 1, 2014. Mr. Alarid has a lifetime of achievements in service to his country and his community, and I am proud to work with him on issues facing veterans in Los Angeles.

Born in 1936, Jake is the oldest of thirteen children. Jake displayed spirit and independence at a young age, taking jobs on cattle drives and working the family farm to help support his siblings. In 1953, Jake was drafted to serve in the Korean War. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was deployed to Okinawa and Iwo Jima, Japan, to support the Prisoner Exchange in Inchon, Korea. Three years later, Jake received an Honorable Discharge as a Sergeant and proud Hispanic veteran.

After relocating to Los Angeles, California, Jake completed his Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical Engineering at Northrup Aeronautical Institute. In 1964, he went on to work as a reliability test engineer on the Apollo program, which included the Apollo 11 Moon

landing mission and Apollo 13. Jake later worked on the Space Shuttle program as a Manager in Space Shuttle Test Operations. After 34 years of service, Jake retired from Rockwell International.

In addition to his strong work ethic, Jake has also demonstrated leadership in the G.I. Forum, a veterans' and civil rights organization, and the largest Federally Chartered Hispanic Veterans organization in the U.S. He was elected as the National Commander for the American G.I. Forum from 1983-1984, and again from 1994-1998.

As Commander, Jake met with Presidents Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton to discuss issues facing Hispanic veterans. He was selected by the Departments of Defense and State to participate in fact-finding missions to Bosnia, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Iraq. He has encouraged young students to continue their education and pursue careers that would further their goals, including careers in the military, just as the Marines helped launch his own career.

Following his years as National Commander, Jake continued to remain an active advocate, serve as a voice for veterans, and recognize the contributions made by the Hispanic community. Jake has been an advocate of education as a way for people, especially Hispanics, to excel and be successful in life. Jake remains an active member of my own Veteran's Committee, carrying on as a voice for our new generation of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, Jake Ignacio Alarid is a man who has selflessly given his time and efforts to the Los Angeles community and to Hispanic veterans across the country. He has become an icon in our community and has impacted the lives of countless men, women, and children during his lifetime. Jake exemplifies the true meaning of service to one's country and service to others, and for that his community is grateful. I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in wishing Jake a very happy 80th birthday.

HONORING THE MINNESOTA
ORCHESTRA

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Minnesota Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä to congratulate them on their Grammy award in the category of Best Orchestral Performance for their recording of Sibelius' first and fourth symphonies. The Minnesota Orchestra is a source of great pride for Minnesotans and is one of the institutions that makes our state's artistic culture so rich.

The Minnesota Orchestra began in 1903, the eighth major symphony orchestra to be established in the United States. Since then, it has represented Minnesota across the globe, performing in over 661 cities worldwide. Renowned composers Aaron Copeland and Igor Stravinsky have both guest-conducted the Orchestra.

Since its early years, the Minnesota Orchestra has been a great asset to our state, pro-

ducing landmark recordings and touring ambitiously to critical acclaim and full houses. Under the leadership of former musical director Osmo Vänskä, the Orchestra has grown to elite, world-class status. In 2010, *The New Yorker* wrote of their March 1 performance at Carnegie Hall, "the Minnesota Orchestra sounded, to my ears, like the greatest orchestra in the world."

I felt great sadness, then, when the Orchestra suspended its season two years ago. From October 1, 2012 to January 14, 2014, the Minnesota Orchestra musicians suffered the longest lockout of any American orchestra in history, leading to the resignation of esteemed conductor Vänskä and significant hardship for the musicians who went without a secure salary or benefits. This was a painful period for Minnesota arts. That's why I was thrilled when both sides were able to reach a contractual agreement earlier this month, and I look forward to seeing the Orchestra return to the stage in February.

The Orchestra has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to artistic excellence and integrity, and this Grammy is well-deserved. I appreciate all that the Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä have done and continue to do for Minnesota, and thank them for their exemplary achievement and service.

OPPOSING THE FARM BILL

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant opposition to the Farm Bill. While there is much to commend in this compromise, I cannot in good conscience vote for a bill that cuts \$8.6 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

I applaud all my colleagues on the Agriculture Committee for their hard work and long hours spent putting this agreement together. Today's bill makes a number of much-needed changes to our nation's agricultural policy. It finally ends the practice of direct payments to farmers in favor of real crop insurance, a laudable achievement that the Agriculture Committee has been working towards for over a decade. The bill expands support for organic foods, local farm-to-table programs, and farmers' market nutrition, all of which I have strongly supported and will continue to champion.

This agreement also maintains important animal welfare provisions. In particular, I am thankful for Congressman SCHRADER's leadership in working to strip the King Amendment, which would have invalidated hundreds of state animal welfare laws, from the conference report. I am also pleased that the committee chose to include animal fighting restrictions that will help to forever end this abhorrent practice by making it a federal crime to attend an animal fighting event.

Unfortunately, beyond these important reforms, a full third of the savings in this bill comes from cuts to SNAP, formerly known as food stamps. SNAP helps millions of Americans living in poverty put food on the table, in-

cluding nearly 200,000 in Rhode Island. Eighty percent of the households receiving SNAP earn below the federal poverty level, making it a vital form of assistance for countless working families. Today's bill will have a disproportionate effect on low-income seniors, working poor families with children, and individuals with disabilities. And for those who are currently struggling to find work, many of whom have just seen their emergency unemployment benefits expire due to the inaction of this Congress, the loss of SNAP assistance could be a crippling blow. Rhode Island has the highest unemployment rate in the nation; I will not vote to make life more difficult for thousands of our families.

Last year, I joined several of my colleagues in taking the SNAP Challenge, a commitment to living on no more than \$4.50 per day in food costs. Every member of Congress should experience what it's like to subsist on this paltry amount to better understand the impacts of the decisions we make on the lives of our constituents. Sadly, as we observe the 50th Anniversary of the War on Poverty, the SNAP cuts in today's bill seem to be part of a war on the poor. This is only one element of a worrying trend from the House majority that would lead us toward a world where the rich take care of themselves and the poor fight for the scraps. I hope that my colleagues step back from this misguided policy before it is too late.

Although I am unable to vote for these cuts to food assistance, I will continue to work with my colleagues to promote sensible agricultural policies that promote healthy eating, sustainable farming practices, and ample food for every American.

IN HONORING THE LIFE OF REAR
ADMIRAL JOSEPH COLEMAN,
USN (RET.)

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and life of Rear Admiral Joseph Coleman, USN (Ret.), who was a voice of vision and action in our Jacksonville community for decades. Joe spent 32 years that spanned two wars defending our country as a member of the United States Navy. But, Joe's commitment to his country did not end with retirement. Joe reassigned his leadership skills to make the City of Jacksonville a better place to live not only for retired and active duty military but for all its citizens.

Joe was a proud member of the Greatest Generation and always claimed the title of the "Navy's best fighter pilot." That may be debated among fighter pilots, but his contribution to the Navy was considerable and his dedication to his country steadfast. He flew Hellcats against the Japanese in World War II, served aboard the USS *Midway*, had thousands of flight hours in various aircraft, made 550 carrier ship landings, and commanded the aircraft carrier USS *Ranger* during the Vietnam War.

Joe's list of volunteer activities was both long and varied. Joe Coleman came to our town in the military, returned as a veteran, and

became a great civic leader. Along the way Joe made a significant difference in many lives. His guiding hand led to a wonderful retirement community in Atlantic Beach called Fleet Landing. Today, hundreds of people live in this community near the sea. He was a leader in a plethora of military activities like the USO and the Navy League, but Joe also served on the board of Florida State Community College, the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and numerous other organizations. There are those who join boards and there are those who work and make a difference; Joe is in the latter category.

Perhaps it was his fighter pilot quick thinking or his finely attuned peripheral eyesight honed from hours of flying, but Joe Coleman is a man of vision who encouraged others to take courageous steps and to make difficult decisions. He is one of the leaders who changed Jacksonville from a sleepy Southern town into the robust metropolis it is today. We are considered the most military friendly town in America. Joe Coleman played a major role in making us that.

Joe recently passed away at the age of 91. He embodied our World War II heroes as a member of the Greatest Generation. Joe Coleman was Admiral Joe to his grandchildren, a patriotic civilian leader in our community, and a gentle naval hero to our veterans. I was proud to call him friend.

HONORING MATT LITTLE

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 31, 2014

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Matt Little who passed away on Sunday at the age of 92. Mr. Little was an extraordinary man of leadership, integrity, and determination. His achievements in the civil rights movement will have a lasting impact on the citizens of Minnesota and the United States.

Mr. Little was born in August 1921 in North Carolina to a factory worker and homemaker. Graduating from North Carolina A&T University in 1948, he served 3½ years in the military during the Second World War in an all-black infantry regiment.

Upon his arrival to the Twin Cities, Mr. Little quickly realized that racism was a prevalent barrier to everything from job opportunities to housing. African-Americans could not stay at major hotels, and could only buy houses in certain neighborhoods.

Mr. Little found work in the post office, and started a landscaping business. After being denied a firefighter position due to race, he was part of a federal lawsuit to integrate the Minneapolis Fire Department. Mr. Little joined the NAACP in 1954 where he ultimately became president of his chapter and president of the Minnesota NAACP.

His civil rights accomplishments are plentiful. Mr. Little was prominent in supporting the integration of Minnesota public schools. He led

the Minnesota delegation to participate in the March on Washington. He fought hard for fair housing laws in the state legislature. He helped create the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission. He was a leading influence in the hiring of former Minnesota Vikings Head Coach Dennis Green, one of the pioneering African-American head coaches in franchise history.

Mr. Little also believed strongly in civic participation. He was elected four times as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, five times to Minnesota's State Executive Committee, and four times as an elector to cast one of the state's 10 electoral votes for U.S. President. In 2008, when he watched President Obama being sworn in, he said, "There are no words to describe this feeling. I waited all of my life, and now I've seen it happen in my lifetime."

Even in his later years, Mr. Little continued to be involved in the community. He maintained his column "Little by Little" featured in the Minnesota-Spokesman-Recorder, and was a fan of seniors tennis.

A man of grace and respect, Mr. Little held a pragmatic perspective in tackling racial inequality believing it was an issue that simply needed solving. Matt Little was a political inspiration for many, and I am proud to have known him in my lifetime. He will always be remembered as a relentless civil rights champion, a fervent public speaker, and a Minnesota icon. A truly exceptional leader, I believe if we live by Matt Little's actions, our country will be better for it for generations to come.

SENATE—Monday, February 3, 2014

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, Jr., a Senator from the State of Maine.

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God of our salvation, whose ear is always open to hear the cries of contrite hearts, consecrate our lawmakers today for Your service. Give them tallness of stature to see above the wall of prideful opinions the greatest good for the most people. Lord, provide them with the courage, vision, and wisdom to face these crucial days confident in the ultimate triumph of Your providence. Make their lives as lighted windows of faith, hope, and love amid the encircling gloom. Be the unseen guests at every meeting and guide each of their decisions.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 3, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, Jr., a Senator from the State of Maine, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

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

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to Calendar No. 297, the veterans omnibus bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, we will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany the farm bill, H.R. 2642. The time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees. At 5:30 p.m. there will be a cloture vote on the farm bill conference report.

As we have already announced, final passage will be tomorrow after our weekly caucuses.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1977

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told that S. 1977 is due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1977) to repeal Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with this legislation at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, tonight the Senate will vote to end debate on the farm bill conference report. I expect the Senate to conclude work on this measure, which will reduce the deficit and protect hungry families. This will happen, as I indicated, tomorrow afternoon.

Passing this legislation will support our Nation's farmers and ranchers and more than 16 million jobs in the farm industry. Ensuring that our farms remain the most productive in the world and protecting American agricultural jobs is vital for our economic recovery. I have been in the Senate and the House for a while, as has the chairman of the agriculture committee, the junior Senator from Michigan, so I have seen people handle legislation. The

work done by Senator STABENOW has been remarkably good. It is exemplary for her to work to the point where we are now going to pass this important legislation. I look forward, as she does, to a strong bipartisan vote on cloture tonight and on the passage of the bill tomorrow.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

As we continue to work toward final passage of the farm bill, a bipartisan group of Senators has been working behind the scenes to reach an agreement to restore emergency unemployment benefits to 1.6 million people. In the 3 weeks since the Republicans filibustered a bill to extend this important program, 220,000 more Americans lost their benefits. State economies across the country have suffered as unemployed people, who are already getting by on so little, had to find ways to survive on even less.

When unemployment benefits dry up, customers disappear from local stores and businesses suffer. More than \$2.2 billion has been drained from State economies since the emergency unemployment insurance expired.

Nevada alone lost \$29 million in economic activity just last month, and \$28 million has drained from the economy in the Republican leader's home State of Kentucky since the emergency benefits expired on December 31. It is no wonder two-thirds of Americans—including 65 percent of Independents—believe we should extend unemployment assistance. Helping neighbors who have been hit hard is not only the compassionate thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do for our economy.

Economists say there is no way to stimulate the economy more than to give these people who don't have jobs some money because they are going to spend it.

Since Republicans filibustered a bill to restore benefits without adding a penny to the deficit—that legislation would not have added a penny to the deficit—the toll on local and national economies has been devastating, but the toll on unemployed Americans has been immeasurable.

For people who worked all of their lives and lost their job through no fault of their own, being unemployed is difficult enough, but worrying about how to pay the rent, put gas in the car, and buy groceries while they look for a new job can be demoralizing. For the long-term unemployed, some of those who have been struggling to find work for more than a year, \$300 a week in unemployment benefits can be the difference between keeping a roof over their heads or becoming homeless, and this is no hyperbole.

A 57-year-old Nevada woman wrote to me last week to say that the loss of her unemployment check was the last straw. Now she is homeless and couch surfing. She is sleeping on the couches of friends kind enough to take her in.

This is what she wrote:

Can you imagine sleeping on friends' couches at my age? Can you imagine having to sell everything you worked hard for just to keep gas in the car in the event someone calls for an interview?

She went on to say:

I have worked my whole life, since I was 16 years old, and contributed to a system that is now failing me on a major scale.

Millions of people—such as this unfortunate Nevada woman—who have worked hard all of their lives and contributed to their communities and played by the rules are on the verge of losing everything, just like her. It doesn't have to be this way.

I remain cautiously optimistic that Republicans will heed their constituents back home and help Democrats restore emergency benefits to Americans in need.

Congress can't solve every problem, but we can solve this problem. All we have to do is work together—Democrats and Republicans—to do what is right for our constituents, our country, and our economy.

I urge Republicans to join us to restore these crucial benefits.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Will the chair announce the business of the day.

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

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014— CONFERENCE REPORT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, a bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, as we begin the final debate and vote on the farm bill conference report, I thank our majority leader for supporting this effort every step of the way. Every time I have gone to him and said, Mr. Leader, we need to have time for some particular procedural vote or to move it along, he has been

there. So I thank him very much for moving this conference report so quickly.

I also thank Senator COCHRAN and our entire committee. When Senator COCHRAN is here later today, I will speak more about the wonderful partnership we have had. The senior Senator from North Dakota will be speaking after me. I thank, Senator HOEVEN for being an invaluable partner through this entire process. It has been a tremendous pleasure working with the senior Senator, and he has made a real impact. I am very appreciative.

As my colleagues know, the last farm bill expired 490 days ago. It is time to get it done. It is time to pass this tomorrow and to give it to the President for his signature.

This is not your father's farm bill. This farm bill is focused on the future, not the past. We worked long and hard to make sure that policies worked for every region of the country, for all of the different kinds of agricultural production we do in our country—from traditional row crops, to specialty crops like fruits and vegetables, to livestock, to organics, to local food systems.

For the past 2½ years, we have been working in a bipartisan way with colleagues in the Senate and in the House, and I appreciate our partnership with the chairman and ranking member in the House to craft a farm bill that reflects the future in American agriculture and the healthy food choices that consumers are asking for in the marketplace.

As we begin this final debate, I want to focus for a few minutes on some of what people might not be focused on in this bill. Later today I am going to speak about the bill and each of its parts.

There are just five things I wanted to highlight as we begin this debate.

First, conservation. The farm bill is actually our country's largest investment in land and water conservation on private lands, which are the majority of our American lands. That means we are restoring and preserving wildlife habitat and open spaces. We help farmers reduce runoff to help keep rivers and streams clean and teeming with fish. This bill includes a historic new agreement that ties conservation compliance to crop insurance.

This bill helps prevent plowing of native grasses through a provision called Sod Saver that will save taxpayers money and preserve sensitive habitat for years to come.

Second, energy jobs. This farm bill has major investments in American energy independence. I am very proud to say this conference report contains the full \$880 million investment we passed in the Senate for renewable and clean energy. It includes my Grow it Here, Make it Here initiative to support innovative biobase manufacturing that

takes crops grown on our farms, uses it to replace petroleum and other chemicals, and transforms them into consumer products.

It contains the Rural Energy for America Program, known as REAP, to help farmers install on-farm renewable energy and energy efficiency systems to lower their energy usage. This bill supports the development of the next generation of biofuels, including new technologies using food and agricultural waste.

Third, healthy foods. One of the incentivized programs in this bill, among others, is a successful program in Michigan called Double Up Food Bucks, which essentially doubles food assistance when a family is shopping for produce at a farmers' market. Speaking of which, we have quadrupled support for farmers' markets—four times more help than the previous farm bill. That means farmers have more choices to find fresh, locally grown foods, and it means farmers have more opportunities to sell those products and grow our rural economies.

Fourth, research. Crops and livestock are affected by pests and diseases, and if we are going to continue to be the world's leader in food production, we need to invest in order to fight back.

Unfortunately, for years we have had to cut funding for critical research, and that has been a great concern of mine and of all of our committee. This farm bill includes an innovative solution to that problem. It creates a new agricultural research foundation modeled after health research foundations to bring private and public dollars together to support our scientists all across the country who are working to fight pests, find cures for crop diseases, and focus on food safety and innovation.

Finally, reform. This farm bill contains the greatest reforms to agricultural programs in decades. We have finally ended direct payment subsidies, which are given to farmers in good times and bad. Instead, we shift to a responsible, risk management approach that only gives farmers assistance when they experience a loss.

The bill also ends farm payments to millionaires, addresses a loophole that allows people who aren't farming to get payments, and tightens payment limits with a cap on payments that, for the first time, includes all commodity title programs, including limits on marketing loans. We looked at every part of the farm bill for reform and savings. It is safe to say we are the only area of the Federal Government that has voluntarily cut spending in our own area of jurisdiction. Counting sequestration cuts, we made a commitment to achieve \$23 billion in deficit reduction, and we have.

I have spoken about five reasons to support the farm bill. There are many more. This farm bill reflects a major

step forward in creating a new paradigm for the future and a real victory for farmers, families, and all Americans who care about protecting our soil and water resources, increasing American energy independence, and the quality of life of rural communities across our country.

With that, at this time, so that other colleagues may speak, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is currently considering the conference report to H.R. 2642.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent to proceed on my leader time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESIDENTIAL ACTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, in his State of the Union speech last week, President Obama promised America a year of action. He said he wants to use his pen and his phone to make it happen. Here is what I say: The President should use that pen and that phone of his today for the Keystone XL Pipeline and the jobs that will be created almost immediately.

Here is something both parties can agree on. I see my colleague from North Dakota here, and nobody has been more aggressively advocating the Keystone Pipeline than he has. This is an important shovel-ready project for America. Here is the President's chance to work with Republicans on a bipartisan plan to create thousands—literally thousands—of private sector jobs almost immediately. Here is his chance to show he is not captive to the ideological extremists on the left. Here is his chance for action on a policy the American people actually want. Here is his chance.

On Friday, the State Department released yet another report concluding what the President and everyone else already knew. The Keystone XL would meet the President's stated requirements on the environment, and there was basically no good reason not to build it.

So here is a project that essentially wouldn't cost the taxpayers a dime to build, that would have almost no net environmental effect, and that would put thousands of Americans to work right away. It is an initiative that is supported by an overwhelming majority of Americans. It is supported by unions, by businesses, by Republicans, by Independents, and even by prominent Democrats—close to 20 right here in the Senate alone. Yet the President has delayed and delayed for more than 5 years now, not because the project really needs to be studied further but because of pressure from the most doctrinaire fringe of the doctrinaire left.

These are the kinds of folks who care a lot more about ideology than what makes sense for the middle class. Yet these are the same folks who have a lot of influence in today's Democratic Party. Just look at the war on coal—a war that is being waged with scant concern for the lives of people who live in States such as Kentucky where people are really hurting, and it doesn't seem to matter much to these folks.

So here is the thing. The President has run out of excuses on Keystone. It is way past time to make a decision. Let's be honest: This decision shouldn't be a hard one at all because the science, the economics, and common sense all basically point in one direction. As far as I can tell, ideology is really the only thing that could lead to a different decision.

So is President Obama on the side of the middle class or is he on the side of leftwing special interests? He needs to use that pen to show us where he stands, and he really ought to do it today.

While he is at it, he should pick up the phone too because in his State of the Union Address the President called on Congress to help break down trade barriers that stand in the way of more American jobs. He called for legislation that would help prevent foreign countries from taking the trade jobs that should be going to America's middle class.

"China and Europe aren't standing on the sidelines," he said, and "neither should we," he said. Republicans applauded him for that. He is absolutely right. But now the President's own party is standing in the way of getting anything done. So if there ever was a moment for the President to use his phone, this is it because trade should be a bipartisan issue. It sure used to be. Just ask President Clinton.

America's middle class is hurting. The very least Washington can do for them is to approve job-creating initiatives such as Keystone and enhancing American exports. So we will see soon enough if the President meant what he said about his pen and his phone—if his year of action will really be just that instead of another tired slogan.

The answer is pretty simple. The President needs to step up and lead. Middle class Americans have taken a back seat to the hard left extremists in this town for entirely too long. It is time for the President to stand up to these folks and to do the right thing. Pick up that phone and that pen and get this done.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, it is interesting that I follow our minority leader who spoke about the Keystone XL Pipeline issue, as well as the chairman of the agriculture committee in the Senate, the esteemed Senator from

Michigan Ms. STABENOW, who has done such a marvelous job of leading the farm bill.

The role of Congress is to govern. The people of this great country—more than 300 million people, and the country that leads the world—send us here to govern. To govern, we have to join together on a bipartisan basis to get something done. Solutions, by their nature—particularly solutions to complex problems—are never perfect. There are no perfect solutions. But we are elected to join together, Republicans and Democrats, and solve problems; to put together solutions, although not perfect, that will meet the challenges this great Nation faces.

Regarding energy, I echo the sentiments of the minority leader. I have worked on the Keystone project for more than 5 years now, first as a Governor and now as a Senator, and we have tremendous bipartisan support on that project and we need to move forward. The minority leader is right on point.

I come today to talk about what I believe we are on the cusp of moving forward on, something we have worked on very hard, particularly these last 2 years, and that is the farm bill. I wish to begin by thanking and commending the Senator from Michigan who is the chairman of the Senate agriculture committee, who has worked with unbelievable dedication and who has truly shown the spirit of bipartisanship I am speaking about.

So I begin by thanking our chairman Senator STABENOW, who has worked with Democrats and Republicans. She has continually reached across the aisle not only to her ranking member, the good and senior Senator from Mississippi Mr. COCHRAN, but also to our counterparts in the House, including Representative FRANK LUCAS, who is the chairman of the Agriculture Committee in the House, and Representative COLLIN PETERSON, who is the minority member in the House. One is from Oklahoma and one is from Minnesota. So north and south, east and west, across this great country, Republicans, Democrats, Senators and House Members, and our chairman have worked to fashion a product that truly is a compromise but which is a vital solution we need to put in place and we need to put it in place now for our farmers and ranchers.

I will begin with this chart, and I have to say it is the only one I brought. It is the same chart I am going to end up with. I am going to talk about the farm bill for a few minutes, but here is why a farm bill is so important. It is not just that it is so important to our farmers and ranchers; it is important to every single American and beyond, for these simple reasons: The farmers and ranchers we have in this country produce the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world—the

highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world.

That is what we are talking about. When we talk about good farm policy, we are talking about something that benefits every single American every single day.

Somebody can say, Oh, well, gee, we don't need a farm bill. Don't worry about the farm bill; just let the farmers and ranchers do it the way they do and we will see what happens. Really? That is what we should do? We should take a chance on not having the kind of sound farm program we have now, when we have the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world, in the history of the world, that benefits every single American every single day? We should say, Oh, let's not worry about that; let's just let it go and see what happens? I don't think that is a very good argument.

So let's talk about this farm bill that is so important to every single American. Sixteen million jobs in this country, either directly or indirectly, rely on agriculture. We have a favorable balance of trade in agriculture, and we have a net worth of farmers and ranchers across this country who do an amazing job every single day.

I am going to start out by talking about the fact that we actually saved money. We saved more than \$23 billion. So think about it. Here is a mandatory spending program where we strengthen the farm program, we improve it, we make it more cost-effective, and we save \$23 billion to reduce the deficit and the debt. How about we go through every other program in government and see how we make it better and reduce spending. Because when we do that, then we will have done what we are talking about here with the farm bill. It seems like a good idea.

I see the good Senator from Montana on the floor and the Senator from South Dakota as well as the esteemed Senator from Michigan, and they will tell us the same. Here we are reforming a mandatory spending program and we are reducing the cost while strengthening the program. It seems like what we ought to be doing.

I know some folks will come here today and say, Gee, it could be better because of this or that, or we should have done this or that, and go right back into the same old gridlock and, I guess, argue for having yet another extension on a farm bill that expired over a year ago and should have been done a long time ago. We provide a better program with savings of more than \$23 billion to help reduce the deficit and the debt.

What did we focus on in this bill to make it more cost-effective and to make it better? As our chairman on the agriculture committee said, we eliminate direct payments. People want to talk about reforms. We eliminate direct payments for the first time

in a long time—more than \$50 billion in direct payments—and we replace it with something that is much more cost-effective. We replace it with strengthened crop insurance so that farmers and ranchers can insure like other small businesses across this country to manage risk, even though they operate in an environment where they certainly can't control the risks. When we talk about weather, whenever we are putting in a crop and then waiting to see what the weather will be, that is a very difficult proposition. So we worked with them on crop insurance so they can try to insure the same way other types of businesses insure. That is much more cost-effective than the old direct payments. As our chairman said a minute ago, those direct payments were going out good years and bad, whether farmers and ranchers needed them or not. Now it is insurance, the way other businesses work.

We give them an option. We give them a countercyclical program called the price loss coverage that works on a countercyclical basis. So if times are tough, if prices are low, if they need help, they get help. And if times are good and prices are high and they have a good crop, they do not get help. That is cost effective.

We have tried to design it so we generate real savings—more than \$23 billion—but if it works as we hope, it will generate more savings so we will continue to have the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the world, continue to support a growing job base—16 million and growing—continue to help us in our balance of trade by creating a favorable balance of trade for this country in agriculture, and we hope with the reforms made we will continue to help reduce the deficit and the debt.

We also provide strong support for livestock. I think perhaps the Senator from South Dakota will tell you about a terrible storm that occurred earlier this winter. This has been a tough winter across the country. But for livestock producers out in the Midwest—in South Dakota, in my home State of North Dakota, and other areas—thousands and thousands of cattle were killed in an early blizzard. We provide help and support for those cattlemen.

We continue to provide other programs that will help them market not only here in our country but overseas, to continue to build that favorable balance of trade for our country.

In the dairy program—and it was very important to get agreement in the House; this is yet another example of how the conferees had to work to strike the right balance between what everybody wanted, Republican and Democrat, to come up with a program we could get support on—there is no supply management in the dairy program. It helps our smaller dairy producers with an insurance type product,

and the cost of the premium increases with higher levels of production by the dairy producers. So it is designed the way that I think everybody should feel is a fair basis, where, again, when our smaller dairy producers need help, it is there, but it is cost effective and it is done without supply management.

The conservation title—again, the Senator from Michigan talked about the importance of conservation—is an example where we had disagreement. Right. This goes to the heart of what is in this farm bill. Here is an example—as I have said, our chairman did a marvelous job on the ag committee, working with our ranking member and everyone else—on conservation, I have to say, I had some different ideas than what is in the final compromise bill. I felt that crop insurance and conservation should have remained decoupled. But they are not. They are coupled in the final product. But, to make things work, again we sought and found compromise. We made changes in the bill that truly make the conservation provisions much more farmer friendly.

What do I mean by that? I mean it is not retroactive. It is forward looking. The conservation rules in the bill apply going forward. They do not go back retroactively to the start of the last farm bill. That is very important. You cannot put people in a situation where they are being forced to go out and change their farm or ranch on a retroactive basis. That is also very important.

Another provision we were able to include in the report language is mitigation. Farmers and ranchers do a tremendous job on conservation. I love to hunt and I love to fish. My wife likes to fish even more. But when I am out there hunting, I see what is going on, I see who is taking care of the land and making sure the water is there, the cover is there, the food is there for wildlife—deer, birds.

For any conservation program to be truly effective, you have to enlist the farmers' and ranchers' support so the conservation community and farmers and ranchers are working together in a way that works for those individuals, those business people, those families, those farmers and ranchers who are out there making their living. Every day they are out there. They are not just out there once in a while. They are not just out there sometimes, as I am when I go out hunting. They are out there all the time making it work. So these provisions have to work for them.

That is why when we talk mitigation, the mitigation rules have to work for the people who own the land—the farmers and ranchers. That is why we have worked to include language that makes sure USDA is focused on an acre-for-acre approach, as long as there is reasonable and commensurate value, and we set up a fund to help them do that.

I think we achieved a good result. All of the wildlife groups, the conservation groups, and the hunting groups are on board. They are endorsing this bill. Even the NRA is endorsing this bill. There is strong support from conservation groups, from hunting groups, fishing groups, wildlife groups.

But at the same time, I think we have provisions that truly make it farmer friendly so that it works for our farmers and our ranchers. I know that was something we had to work on very hard to get to but is vitally important.

The bill has a strong energy title. We included and, in fact, strengthened the beginning farmer and the beginning rancher provisions.

I want to end on reform. Clearly, with our debt and deficit, it is vitally important we find ways to achieve savings. So as we go through all the discretionary spending programs—which is one-third of the Federal budget—we have to find savings. We are working to do that.

Since I have been here, we have reduced discretionary spending from \$1.35 trillion to roughly \$1 trillion. Since the beginning of 2011—discretionary spending at that time was \$1.35 trillion—this year and next year, it will be about \$1 trillion. So you can see we have reduced discretionary spending about 35 percent—and over this 5-year stretch—and that is without counting inflation.

But two-thirds of the government is mandatory spending. Two-thirds is mandatory spending programs. So we have to find ways to make revisions so we protect and preserve the programs that are vital to us, such as Medicare and Social Security, but we also have to find ways to take these mandatory programs and find savings and reforms as we do here in this farm bill.

So when we talk about eliminating direct payments, when we talk about payment limitations that for the first time apply to everything, whether you are getting the ARC program—the ag risk coverage—or the price loss coverage program, as in your farming operation, whether it is the marketing loan program, your total payments cannot exceed \$125,000.

That is the first time we have had a cap that applies to everything. Right. We have had caps before, but they did not apply to everything. That is a real reform. You are going to hear others come down and say: Well, gee, it should have been better. It should have been like this. But I am telling you, we have not had one that applied to everything before where you truly had a cap.

So when we talk about eliminating direct payments, when we talk about a cap that applies to everything, that is a real reform. Furthermore, we have an AGI limit—adjusted gross income limit—that also applies to everything for the first time, just like the payment limit. Right now, if you make \$900,000 or more, you do not get any

program assistance. Before, again, it did not apply across the board. That is real reform.

I think in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—where we knew it would be tough to come up with a compromise—clearly, there were differences of opinion on each side of the aisle and between the Senate and the House. Here again, I commend the leaders of our conference committee—Senator STABENOW, Senator COCHRAN, Representative LUCAS, and Representative PETERSON—and the members of the conference committee. There was a lot of work to do in this conference committee.

To get an agreement on food stamps, on SNAP, supplemental nutrition assistance payments, was no small effort or accomplishment. Again, like all compromises, if you look at it, it really is fair to both sides. The compromise itself—based on the reforms we made in LIHEAP and getting the States to truly make sure we do not have waste, fraud, and abuse, but that people who need help get help—we have truly strengthened those provisions. The scoring by CBO is about an \$8 billion reduction. But again, we get our economy going. These kinds of reforms will generate more savings while still ensuring people who need help get help.

If you look at that number, then it is very close to what the Senate said they had to have. So for those who are in that camp, they should feel this is a bill they can support. That is a fair compromise. On the House side, where clearly there was a desire to have a significantly larger number, if you look at this as a two-step process, where you take the savings that come out of expiration of the stimulus program—where there was about \$11 billion in savings—and combine it with the reforms we made here—the \$11 billion and the \$8 billion; \$19 billion—that was \$20 billion. That was close to the House's original number.

Like all good compromises, it is fair and it does seek to get the kind of reforms that I think the American public wants to make sure there is not waste, fraud, or abuse in the Food Stamp Program, but for those who need help, they get that help.

Again, I commend not only the leadership in the ag committee but also the leadership in the House and the Senate for recognizing that it is time to put a solution in place for the American people. Again, no solution is perfect. But we cannot continue to operate with an expired policy that not only does not give our farmers and ranchers the certainty they need to continue to produce the highest quality, lowest cost food supply, which benefits every single American, but where we do not achieve the very savings and reforms that we have been sent here by the American people to achieve.

So it is time to vote. We will vote on this farm bill. There was a very strong

vote in the House—250 to 160—a strong bipartisan support on both sides of the aisle. The Senate needs to step up now and put this solution in place for the American people.

With that, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the farm bill conference report. It has taken a long time to get to this point, with several unnecessary roadblocks along the way, but we are finally near the finish line, and it is time we conclude this process. I commend Chairwoman STABENOW, Ranking Member COCHRAN, Chairman LUCAS, and Ranking Member PETERSON for their leadership in developing this reasonable conference report.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 will reduce the deficit, restructure our ag support programs, continue to feed the hungry, aid livestock producers hit by the Atlas blizzard, and enable consumers to know from where their food comes.

This conference report certainly is not perfect. As with any legislation that is this important and far-reaching, it is impossible to fully satisfy everybody. But this is a reasonable compromise.

Our ranchers will benefit significantly from this bill. Not only does this compromise enable country-of-origin labeling to continue as well as maintain USDA's ability to ensure a fair and transparent marketplace, but it also contains critical livestock disaster assistance programs to help ranchers in my State who are still recovering from the 2012 drought and last year's terrible blizzard. My ranchers lost tens of thousands of livestock, and they have been left hanging because of congressional inaction. With passage, they will finally be able to get the aid they need.

Beyond the important assistance for livestock producers, this bill also reforms our farm programs by eliminating direct payments and by strengthening the crop insurance program. It also offers key support for young and beginning farmers and ranchers, and it contains reasonable conservation compliance requirements for farm program and crop insurance eligibility.

This legislation represents more than just assistance to our farmers and ranchers. It is also a jobs bill. It contains mandatory funding for several energy and rural development programs, and it will help USDA deal with the huge backlog of pending rural water and wastewater infrastructure applications.

Hundreds of rural communities across the country, including Aberdeen, Watertown, and Brookings in South Dakota will also continue to be eligible for rural housing programs as a

result of a provision I included in the Senate-passed farm bill that is maintained in this conference report.

I would also like to highlight the provisions to address some key forestry issues important to the fight against the pine beetle in the Black Hills. This bill provides the Forest Service and private forest landowners with critically needed tools and flexibility. This includes permanently authorizing stewardship contracting to combine timber harvests with needed conservation work, building on the Mountain Pine Beetle Response Project in the Black Hills by streamlining activities to combat insect and disease epidemics, and clarifying the forestry exemption to Clean Water Act permitting. These changes provide needed certainty for both private and public forest managers.

While I am overall very pleased with this conference report, there are some disappointments. The senior Senator from Iowa and I have worked for years for meaningful payment limitations. In fact, we were able to include in the Senate bill a hard cap on payments as well as new language to define farm program eligibility requirements. The House bill includes nearly identical language. However, this conference report actually loosens payment caps and it punts the decision of defining "actually engaged" to the Secretary of Agriculture. This is frustrating. However, moving forward, I will urge USDA to follow the intent of the Senate and House bills with respect to farm program eligibility when it undertakes rulemaking.

Even though I am not fully pleased with everything in this conference report, I think it does represent a compromise. As such, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing the bill. If we do not, food prices will rise, ranchers in my State will be forced out of business, and we will not get the deficit reduction or reforms to our farm programs.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the importance of passing this farm bill that is in front of us, but I not only speak as a Senator, I also speak as a farmer, someone who is involved in production agriculture. When I am not wearing a suit and casting votes or traveling around the State finding out what is on the minds of Montanans, I am farming. From planting to harvesting, to accessing seed, to hauling food to the market, I know firsthand the life in production agriculture.

I know that whether you are a farmer or rancher or forester, it can be very tough because there is a lot of uncertainty—uncertainty I witnessed firsthand last summer when I visited the fields of Montana's Gallatin Valley, a valley that was devastated by a hail-

storm literally hours before harvest was to begin, or the uncertainty caused by the blizzard that cost South Dakota thousands of cattle this last fall.

Farmers and ranchers understand and accept that uncertainty is a fact of life because we deal with weather; they know it is part of what comes with being in production agriculture, but what they cannot accept and what they should not accept is a Federal Government that takes 6 years in drafting a 5-year farm bill. We do not need that kind of uncertainty. That is why we need to pass the farm bill we have today.

When I talk to my fellow producers in Montana and around the country, they tell me the lack of a long-term farm bill is preventing them from making critical business decisions. Without a long-term farm bill, farmers do not know what crop insurance is going to look like. They do not know what to expect from future farm loans. It is hard to plan ahead or expand operations. You cannot even do the simple business planning without that farm bill.

Many of us in the Senate got our start in business and know the importance of a predictable business environment. Farming and agriculture is no different. You need certainty to grow and to prosper. The fact is the lack of a long-term farm bill is hurting economies from Montana to Maine. Folks need and are demanding a responsible long-term farm bill. I think it is time for the Senate to do the right thing; that is, pass the 5-year farm bill.

But I am not encouraging folks to vote for this bill just for the sake of certainty. They should also vote for it because I think it strengthens the hands of farmers, ranchers, American families who depend on them. Livestock owners will see many benefits from this farm bill. This 5-year plan makes livestock disaster assistance programs permanent and retroactive, helping those South Dakota ranchers whom I spoke of a minute ago to recoup their October losses as well as Montana ranchers who lost cattle to drought back in 2012.

All in all, livestock owners will be better able to manage risks, improve production, and meet the new challenges because of this bill. When it comes to farmers, this bill removes the term limits on USDA-guaranteed farm loans so farmers can continue to access credit at banks in rural communities.

It also provides more support for farmers and ranchers just getting their start in agriculture. In rural America we need more young producers willing to get up and work hard, keep small family farms and ranches going. This bill is a positive step for beginning farmers and ranchers.

Conserving land is another critical issue across this country, particularly rural America. Farmers and ranchers

are the true stewards of the land. This bill continues that proud American tradition. By improving portions of the Conservation Reserve Program—or Sodbuster—this farm bill supports our outdoor economy by working with farmers and ranchers to preserve more native prairie for wildlife habitat.

That is good news for the hunters and anglers of this country. Montana is no exception. It is good news for folks who sell rifles and waders and the guides who show our hunters and anglers where to fish and where to hunt. All in all, this great outdoor economy adds up to \$6 billion in the State of Montana alone.

This bill also includes an extension of PILT payments to rural communities that cannot generate enough revenue from lands that are controlled by the Federal Government. This is a big deal in rural America. It continues strong country-of-origin labeling so consumers know where their meat was born, raised, and processed, giving them the option to buy U.S.-made meat if they so choose.

The big multinational meat-packing firms may not like it, but for American ranchers it is critically important, as it is for consumers. Why? Because Americans know we produce the finest beef in the world. This 5-year farm bill takes all of these positive steps while saving taxpayers \$23 billion by making tough choices in the nutrition assistance program and changing how we apply farm subsidies.

Chairman STABENOW and Ranking Member COCHRAN have written a commonsense bill that is supported across our agricultural community. I wish to thank them for that. In an era when too many folks look for reasons to vote no instead of yes, it takes strong and determined leaders to bring a responsible, bipartisan bill such as this to the floor. That is why—because I am in production agriculture especially—the work that Chairman STABENOW and Ranking Member COCHRAN did for the American farmers and ranchers needs to be commended.

That commitment is going to keep America's rural economy strong. The Senators from Michigan and Mississippi are the reason this bill is finally at the finish line. Thanks to them, we are on the verge of approving a bipartisan bill that will strengthen production agriculture and support families, farmers, and ranchers across this country.

My wife and I took over our family's farm in north central Montana in 1978. We had land and we had a strong work ethic, but we had little else. So with some hard work and a few good decisions and weather that cooperated, our farm is doing pretty well right now. Our story can be repeated across rural America. But production agriculture will only be strong if it has the certainty that comes with a commonsense, long-term farm bill. That is

what is in front of us, a bill that lets farmers and ranchers know how to plan ahead, how to make their books balance, a bill that lets the distributors allocate resources and make sound business decisions, and a bill that takes responsible steps to strengthen programs that are working and ending others that are not.

Let's not leave farmers and ranchers and all Americans who depend on them high and dry again. With strong support for production agriculture, with strong support for a nutrition program, and with a bill that saves taxpayers significant dollars, it is time to vote yes and send this farm bill to the President's desk.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, before the Senator from Montana leaves the floor, I wish to thank him for his wise counsel throughout the process of writing the farm bill. It is nice to have a farmer in the Senate who can give practical ideas and reactions. This is somebody who has been out there fighting for the farmer, small farmers, to be able to make sure they have the same shot to be successful as the big producers.

I thank Senator TESTER not only for his support, but he has a very key voice in supporting farmers and ranchers across the country. I very much appreciate his counsel as we bring this effort to conclusion.

I ask unanimous consent that the time during quorum calls be equally divided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. STABENOW. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the Agricultural Act of 2014 is the culmination of a lot of hard work by our conferees, Representatives MIKE ROGERS and MARTHA ROBY from Alabama, as well as my colleagues in the Senate, Senators STABENOW and COCHRAN and others.

This important legislation contains a number of commendable measures. During my time in the Senate, I have been a strong supporter of Alabama's farmers and believe this legislation does make a number of positive reforms over the long term that should help in the effort to reduce, not grow, the involvement of the Federal Government in agriculture.

For example, the legislation transitions farm subsidies from a system of

direct payments to a more market-based crop insurance support program. Senator Lugar always favored that. I think many other people who have thought about agriculture think that is the right path to go. I have supported that.

As a 5-year bill, this legislation should also give our farmers and their families some certainty that they need to make prudent planning decisions and give them choices to select programs that best meet their needs.

I believe our farmers can move forward and help our Nation remain a global leader in the production of food and fiber which is critical to our economic well-being and national security.

The final bill also contains many other essential provisions to reduce unnecessary regulations, such as the inclusion of the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, forest roads fix, which I have strongly supported. It is an excessive intervention into the forest industry to have the EPA involved in the issues that they are talking about, and I think we have clarified that so that won't be a problem.

It also contains provisions that are designed to help Alabama catfish producers, peanut farmers, cotton farmers, and forest landowners who compete in the global economy.

I am pleased the final bill contains my provision to help farmers in States like Alabama that have not significantly used irrigation practices in the past. Under the current USDA policy, farmers have been excluded from the Federal irrigation program if they don't have a history of irrigation, and that makes no sense where we are trying to involve more people to smartly use more irrigation. I thank the ranking member and the chair of the committee for their work supporting us on that. My provision will help ensure that more Alabama farmers are able to access these programs. It has been a priority of mine for some time, although it is a small part of the overall bill.

As a whole, the Congressional Budget Office claims that the farm bill will reduce the deficit by \$16.6 billion over 10 years. This is a step, a small step, however, in the right direction. It means that if current law were extended without change, we would be spending \$16.6 billion more than if this bill were passed. So that is positive.

I wish we could do more, and we can do more. Unfortunately, we haven't done more, but this is a positive step. It is fair to say that the elimination of countercyclical and direct payments—almost entirely—is a historic occasion. Of course, Congress enacted Freedom to Farm in 1996, which was intended to slowly phase out these kinds of subsidies. But when times became particularly difficult for our farmers in the years following the 1996 bill with low

prices and drought, these programs were, in essence, reinstated by Congress. The retreat and the movement away from Federal intervention was greatly eroded.

In my view—and that is all I have at bottom, is my view—Congress should seek to steadily reduce the role of the Federal Government in farming. But millions are dependent upon farming for their livelihoods, and a thoughtful, conservative approach to reducing Federal intervention would be to continue this reduction steadily over time. It surely can't be done smartly all at once without some real dislocation in the agricultural marketplace—although I must say I think we could have gone a good bit further this year.

But I remain concerned that the reforms to the SNAP program, the food stamp program, are much too modest. I hope our actions today help set the table for continued and badly needed reforms that I and others have outlined during our debate on the farm bill in 2012, 2013, and this year.

Yet it seems clear to me that the bill before us today regretfully does not go nearly as far as it could in addressing the abuses and the wastefulness that are contained in those programs.

For example, the bill spends \$956 billion over 10 years. Nearly 80 percent of that is for the SNAP program, food support programs.

It is, in reality, as someone has said, a SNAP bill, a food stamp bill. Eighty percent of the money goes to that one problem. It asks our farmers to contribute a disproportionate share to deficit reduction. The bill cuts food stamps by only about \$8 billion and it cuts the agricultural programs by about \$8 billion. That sounds fair, balanced, as my colleagues like to use that word, "balanced." But we are cutting \$8 billion from the 20 percent of the program and the other \$8 billion from the other 80 percent of the program, and that is not balanced.

I want to say to my colleagues that there is no intent or desire of any Member of this Senate to have people who are hungry remain hungry and people who are in need of food not to have food. What we are saying is there are a great number of abuses in the program that have clearly been identified and should be fixed and haven't been sufficiently fixed.

Although it repeals direct payments, the bill replaces those payments with new programs that seek to help farmers in a more effective way and that will cost at least \$27 billion. So we reduce some programs and increase others. I think most of that is in the agricultural insurance policy, which is probably, in general, a better way to help our agricultural industry.

Congress needs to be careful about spending more money, and many Senators and independent analysts think these new programs may cost even

more than CBO is currently projecting. It moves money from direct support to crop insurance, and I think that could be good. We have studied the farm bill conference report and note that the Congressional Budget Office has concluded it increases spending in 2014 by \$2.1 billion above the spending limits Democrats and Republicans agreed to in December. It is more than what we agreed to in December—\$2.1 billion over the limits we agreed to in a bipartisan way.

In the Senate this would normally subject the legislation before the Senate to two points of order, budget points of order, because it violates the budgeted spending limits we just agreed to. Proponents of the bill would then be required to either reduce the spending in the bill to the agreed-upon level or gather a supermajority of 60 votes to waive the point of order and agree to violate the budget.

However, the Senate majority, our Democratic colleagues have deployed a budget gimmick with Republican support that rendered these points of order—and consequently limit a minority's right to enforce the spending limits—ineffective. This is something I predicted 2 months ago when the Ryan-Murray legislation passed. I said on December 18, as that deal was being debated:

With 57 different reserve funds, the Murray-Ryan spending bill that is before us now will allow Senator REID and Chairwoman MURRAY to bring to the floor a practically unlimited number of big tax-and-spend bills. It will not be subject to the 60-vote limit. Normally the minority party would be able to raise a point of order under section 302(f) of the Budget Act.

So the Budget Committee chairman has decided to make an adjustment to the budget spending levels, and she can do so because of the Ryan-Murray spending agreement that passed the House, the Republican House, and the Senate. This will allow increased spending in the farm bill above the amount we agreed to.

Though two points of order would lie against the bill, they are voided in the Ryan-Murray legislation because of the powers granted to the Budget Committee chairman in that legislation.

Let me explain this power that was granted, yet again. The Ryan-Murray agreement includes 57 deficit neutral reserve funds. Operationally, a reserve fund allows the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee to adjust the allocations of budget authority and outlays to a Senate committee or committees; aggregate levels of budget authority, outlays, and revenues; and other appropriate levels prior to Senate consideration. This allows the proposed legislation to avoid most spending and revenue-related budget points of order as long as the measure complies with both the subject matter and deficit neutrality instructions in the reserve fund.

In the case of the farm bill, the Ryan-Murray budget numbers refers to the Senate-passed budget which garnered bipartisan opposition.

The Senate budget, S. Con. Res. 8, in section 313 gives the chairman of the Budget Committee the power to adjust the budget for any farm bill reauthorization: "Provided that such legislation would not increase the deficit over either the period of the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2018 or the period of the total of fiscal years 2013 through 2023."

Those are complex words I just read. But in other words, the farm bill is now in a situation where it can increase spending in the first fiscal year and promise that it will recoup the money later on, which is exactly what this bill does, and the minority's rights are diminished in its ability to stop it because of the Ryan-Murray budget agreement. That is what I warned about in December. Some said there wasn't anything to it. I warned that there was, and I think we are already seeing that there is something to the complaints I made.

I said on the floor of the Senate that the "power that Senators had to block tax-and-spend legislation that breaks spending limits has been eroded significantly" by Ryan-Murray.

The danger is that we will certainly have spending increases in the short-term, but we have only promises of spending limitations in the future.

There is no point of order that lies against the bill because the Ryan-Murray agreement passed by Congress, I acknowledge—I am not sure if Members of the House and Senate fully knew what was included in the Ryan-Murray agreement after that secret meeting between the two budget leaders.

This legislation is far from perfect, and we will see how we proceed with the agriculture bill. I appreciate those who have worked on it. We need to do the right thing for agriculture. It is an important part of our Nation's economy and our national security. I have invested a lot of time and effort in it, as I know most of my colleagues have. I appreciate the work of those who have produced this legislation for us.

I thank the Chair and I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. We all know the Senate and House agriculture leaders unveiled the long-awaited conference report last week for the 2014 farm bill. It has been a long trip getting this far. Every conference committee, of course, has some controversy, but the 2014 farm bill has had more than its fair share of twists and turns—right down to the negotiations on the dairy policy in the fleeting hours—before we, as conferees, signed this conference report. It sounds like the old days of The Perils of Pauline

when we had the farm bill tied to the railroad tracks or about to head over the dairy cliff.

Fortunately, we had Chairwoman STABENOW, Ranking Member COCHRAN, and their superb staffs. I am also blessed with my own superb staff: Adrienne Wojciechowski, Kathryn Toomajian, Rebekah Weber, Kara Leene, and Tom Berry, all of whom spent hours away from their families while working on this important bill. We ended with a bipartisan, bicameral farm bill that addresses the needs of every region in the country. Senator STABENOW and I were on the phone or emailing about every hour of the day, night, and weekends from Michigan, Vermont, overseas, and from the Senate, but it worked. Everybody had a chance, Republicans and Democrats alike, to express their views. Now it is time to vote, pass the bill, send it to the President, and give sorely needed certainty to our farmers, our families, and our rural communities.

After all, the 2014 farm bill saves taxpayers \$23 billion. It eliminates duplicative programs. It strengthens the toolbox for conserving our natural resources. It gives the farmers some much-needed, long-overdue certainty as they make planting decisions. They don't have the luxury that we seem to give ourselves to wait until the very last second to vote on something. They have to plan months in advance. It provides relief to struggling families, support for rural communities, and investments in a sustainable energy future. Is it a perfect bill? Of course not. No farm bill is. But while there are provisions I would not have preferred, I do believe it has a lot of provisions that will benefit Vermont and the Nation.

I wish the commonsense dairy policies that were passed twice by the full Senate and supported by Republicans and Democrats, by the chair and by the ranking member, and also by the House Committee on Agriculture had not been ambushed at the last hour. As a result, we don't have a market stabilization program—something that was proposed by dairy farmers themselves that would have protected taxpayers from the exorbitant costs and would have insulated dairy farmers and consumers from volatile rollercoastering milk prices.

Unfortunately, the Speaker of the House and some of the very powerful, huge industry figures from out West did not want it.

We do have, because of the constant work of everybody—and I again would praise the chair of our own committee, Senator STABENOW—a solution that while not perfect will help our small dairy farmers protect themselves from poor economic conditions when milk prices plummet or when feed prices skyrocket or, as we have sometimes seen in the worst scenario, when both happen at the same time. The final

farm bill includes changes to lower the cost of the Dairy Producer Margin Protection Program for Vermont's small, family dairy farms. It will also discourage large dairies from using this program to flood the markets through overproduction of milk, something that wipes out small family farms.

But the bill is not just about farmers; it is a food bill that supports hungry children and struggling families and it has healthy food initiatives. I am disappointed the final bill contains many cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, but the conferees worked together and rejected the deepest cuts to the hunger safety net and the most harmful new conditions which were advocated by an extreme majority in the House, both of which would have undermined the very reasonably offered food assistance. These provisions would have slashed nearly \$40 billion from nutrition assistance programs, eliminating the eligibility for millions of Americans, and making it harder for hungry children to receive free school meals.

Frankly, I am fed up with hearing Members, whether in the House or sometimes Members in this body, say: Oh, we can't afford to feed these hungry children when they go to school. These are the same Members who voted for a blank check to go to an unnecessary war in Iraq, something that has cost us \$2 trillion, which they did on a credit card. We need to feed children in America so they might actually learn while they are at school, but some say: Oh, we can't afford that. Come on. Feeding those hungry children is an investment in the future of this great Nation.

Some of the demeaning and offensive provisions, such as allowing drug testing of beneficiaries and unrealistic work requirements, were left out. You're telling me that we can have tax-paying, hard-working citizens, who, when factories close, won't be able to feed themselves with supplemental nutrition. We are going to demean them after what they have done for the country? Of course not.

The legislation promotes food security in low-income communities and encourages healthy eating through increased access to fruits and vegetables. That is something we have done in Vermont for years and it is also one of the reasons—that and the fact we cover every child from birth to 18 years old for health care—that Vermont is always listed as either No. 1 or No. 2 of the healthiest States in the Nation.

This legislation also—and again I wish to compliment the Chair on this—continues to share the responsibility to conserve our working farmlands and our natural resources. If we lose these natural resources, we can't make them again. We are not going to get them back. Federally supported crop insurance will ease farmers' exposure when

natural disasters strike. It will keep working lands in production. Meanwhile, enlisting farmers to continue the simple conservation practices they are already following will ensure the protection of our wetlands and our sensitive lands.

In a country as diverse as ours, it is no simple task to produce a farm bill that addresses the needs of every region or every industry or every priority. I am proud this is a bill that offers a targeted approach to tackling the needs of each State and agricultural sector, rather than doing it the easy way, which is a one-size-fits-all, which ends up not fitting anybody.

The regional equity program guarantees that no State is left out from receiving conservation resources under the farm bill. Not only Vermont communities but rural America everywhere will be strengthened by a broadband development program, energy efficiency initiatives, and water treatment and distribution loans. Vermont's very beautiful Northeast Kingdom REAP Zone will continue to be a catalyst for growth and progress to help build a resilient rural economy. Organic agriculture is supported through certification cost sharing, stronger enforcement, crop insurance, and funding for organic research. We should promote organics because it is the fastest growing sector in agriculture.

I am also pleased that many of the harmful provisions from the House farm bill were removed during the conference negotiations, including dangerous secrecy provisions and attacks on critical environmental regulations. One that was proposed by an extremely conservative Republican would have actually threatened to limit States rights. What an amazing turn of events. We got rid of all of these.

Bottom line, the Senate and the House have produced a farm bill that at its core is about keeping America strong. Make no mistake, farming is part of our national security. Look at the number of nations in this world that would give anything to be able to feed themselves and have food left over to export. We are more secure as a nation because we can do that.

This farm bill will boost the economy, will create jobs, will offer support for the hungry, conserve our national resources, improve our energy security, and stand up for our country's families. I am proud to have signed the conference report for another farm bill that will support Americans today and into America's future. I look forward to one of my few duties I get to perform after this bill passes: I will sign the bill as President pro tempore after the Speaker signs it. And I know from what he has said to all of us, the President will then sign it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am going to address a small part of this bill but a very important part of the bill, something I have been working on through at least two farm bills. Since the chairwoman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is here, Senator STABENOW, I thank her for defending my position up until the last day or two of the conference. She kept me informed fully about the difficulty of the position that both Houses had taken getting that out of conference.

I come to the floor not to discuss just my issue but to use it as an example that my colleagues may look forward to in the future; that is, that just because something goes through the Senate, even without controversy—because as far as I know it wasn't discussed or there was no amendment offered to strike what I am talking about that came out of committee and it passed in the House of Representatives by a 230-to-194 vote in the same language—one would assume that something which was the same in both Houses would not be changed by the conference. In fact, rule XXVIII of the Senate rules says this: "Conferees shall not insert in their report matter not committed to them by either House, nor shall they strike from the bill matter agreed to by both Houses."

So if Members are interested in the Senate rules being followed by conference committees in the future, understand in this particular case that was not followed. The provisions were not necessarily struck, but they were changed in such a manner that the \$387 million the Congressional Budget Office said would be saved if my provision stayed in, that amount of money will not be saved.

We are talking about a situation that we are trying to correct, going back at least to the 2008 farm bill and maybe previous to that, where 10 percent of the biggest farmers get 70 percent of the benefits from the farm program, so it is subsidizing farmers as opposed to helping medium- and small-sized farmers get through conditions such as natural disasters, politics, and other aspects beyond the control of farmers that the safety net for farmers was intended to help.

So we could have saved \$387 million, and the rules of Senate said this should have been in the final package that came back to the Senate, but it is not here. It seems to me my colleagues ought to be aware of that fact because they may be in a similar situation sometime on some other conference committee report, and the question is: Are you going to let a small number of people—for most of this conference report 4 people negotiating the difference between the House and the Senate—speak for the other 531 Members of the Congress? Are you going to let a majority of that group of people represent a

minority of the Senate and a minority of the House? By this being taken out or this being changed in such a way so it has no value, that is exactly what has happened.

Making sure we have limits on the amount of money a farmer can get and real numbers that work is not something new. President Bush vetoed a farm bill in 2008 because he said it continues subsidies for the wealthy. In another part of his veto message he said the American taxpayer should not be forced to subsidize that group of farmers who have adjusted gross incomes up to \$1.5 million as the rationale for vetoing that bill.

So what we have is the moral authority of a majority of the Senate, a moral authority of the House of Representatives, and their positions taken on this language—language that limited a farmer to no more than \$250,000 and defining a farmer as somebody who is actually engaged in the business of farming so nonfarmers don't get help from the farm program—has been taken out, regardless of the moral authority that said it should be kept in the bill. In other words, conferees are taking out something that represented a minority of the House of Representatives and a minority of the Senate.

We are here to vote on a farm bill—cloture today, final passage tomorrow. The farm bill is a very important safety net for producers. It gives farmers a chance to survive in tough times. As a farmer, I understand the risk of farming. My payment limit reforms were adopted—and I can't say that too many times—in both bodies of Congress. It would have saved \$387 million.

People said, when we limited through my amendment that you could have one nonfarming manager per farming operation, that was unreasonable.

There would have been a lot of money saved. But more importantly, as is the situation today and will probably be the situation in the future, nonfarmers are going to be able to get benefits from a farm program when they don't have legitimacy for it. This provision should not have been touched, because it was the same in both Houses.

Unlimited subsidies, when 10 percent of the biggest farmers get 70 percent of the benefits from the farm program, actually put a new generation of young and beginning farmers at a severe disadvantage. There is nothing wrong with farmers getting bigger. That is the American dream, to use your potential to do the best for yourself. But when large farmers who shouldn't get subsidized get big payments from the farm program, it is, in my estimation, wrong—particularly when it drives up the price of land as it has in the recent 5 to 8 years; drives up the price of cash rent as it has recently. It is very difficult for people who are just trying to get into the business of farming to

start. So I think when nonfarmers can qualify for the farm program as managers when they might not even be making a phone call to the operation and having limits that don't mean much—which is exactly what we are doing, subsidizing big farmers to get bigger—it puts young and beginning farmers at a severe disadvantage.

Changing my reforms behind closed doors is wrong. The House and Senate had spoken on the issue. With no debate in the Senate here, a 230-194 vote in support of the Fortenberry amendment in the House of Representatives—something under the Senate rules that is the same in both bodies should not be messed with by the conferees, but it was changed dramatically.

Some are saying the effort the conferees took to give the U.S. Department of Agriculture authority to bring about some of these reforms on who is engaged in the business of farming will do the job. But they have had that authority for a long time, and I see this as a Washington hat trick to say you have done something when you haven't done anything.

I am not going to be able to vote for this bill because it would endorse what has happened. Egregious manipulation behind closed doors of something that is the same in both Houses should not be tolerated, and I hope my colleagues will take that into consideration so it doesn't happen to them in the future. How we will fix other entitlement programs if we can't cut subsidies to millionaire farmers who don't even farm makes it very difficult.

As I said, my friend from Michigan, Chairwoman STABENOW, has worked hard on this bill. I wanted to support this farm bill. I just can't get over what happened behind closed doors, once again, here in Washington. And as she has told me so many times, she has defended my position and I thank her for so doing.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, in spite of all the discussion about our great energy renaissance and “all of the above,” and new manufacturing—and, yes, we are going to be a test site for the unmanned aircraft—in North Dakota we live and we breathe agriculture. In summer, our plains are filled with beautiful sunflowers and canola fields and flax. It is the most amazing view, especially when the canola is next to the flax.

Our ranchers take serious pride in their cattle herds that graze around

much of our State. The wheat, grain, corn, and soybeans farmers provide help to feed the world and have the best products produced in agriculture today.

Agriculture also supports 16 million jobs around the country, including thousands of manufacturing jobs in North Dakota. This is not surprising, given that our State is one of the most productive farm States in the country. Those jobs make it possible for our State to continue to harvest each year, supporting families across North Dakota but also throughout the country.

I take great pride in the work our farmers and ranchers do. I know all North Dakotans do as well. For too long we weren't supporting them enough to enable them to do their job. In fact, we held farmers and ranchers in limbo because they haven't been sure how to prepare for this crop year since the Congress had not done its job and passed a farm bill. Finally, that is about to change.

During my campaign I pledged to work tirelessly to get a long-term farm bill passed. Now we are literally at the 1-yard line of finally reaching the goal of passing a 5-year bipartisan farm bill. I am incredibly proud of the work we have done and what we have almost accomplished. And I do have to give a shout-out to our tremendous chairwoman, Senator DEBBIE STABENOW, who, as Senator HOEVEN put it, is a tough negotiator—tough but fair, and absolutely remarkable, not only this year but also in 2013 and 2012, and who never resists an opportunity to inform anyone who crosses her path about the importance to the economy of this country that a long-term farm bill positions us much better to be competitive in the world.

One subject we talk about a lot is the budget and about long-term systemic reforms that can give us what in public policy we need to do, such as a safety net for farmers, but also reduce costs to taxpayers. This farm bill saves 23 billion in Federal dollars, while still providing one of the strongest safety nets for farmers and ranchers ever crafted in a long-term farm bill. It makes critical reforms to target resources where they are most needed while also giving farmers the opportunity to thrive. This farm bill achieves that goal, and puts our agricultural system in a strong position to continue its role as a world leader.

This is achieved through effective farm programs for growers; livestock disaster coverage for ranchers and livestock producers; enhanced crop insurance offerings; expanded research, which is so critical to so many of our new crops; increased export production for agricultural products; critical investments in biofuels and in energy; our renewal of the Sugar Program to prevent excess imports of unfairly subsidized foreign sugar; and targeted conservation assistance to tackle the

unique problems in this country, particularly in my State with Devils Lake and the Red River Valley.

In North Dakota we grow more than 20 different crops each year, and we lead the Nation in the production of 13 different commodities, including spring wheat, durum wheat, barley, edible beans, peas, lentils, canola, sunflowers, and flaxseed. So while we talk about this expansion and explosion of both corn and soybeans, North Dakota is leading the way in diversification, which I think is the future for agriculture.

North Dakota is also a leading livestock State, with thousands of cow-calf operators raising livestock in the West, and a leading producer of sugar beets from growers in the Red River Valley.

Approximately 25 percent of my State's economic base and employment is derived from work done on the farm. I talk about this quite a bit, because I think when we think about economics and what generates economic activity, at the very beginning, we have to have new wealth creation, and in this country new wealth creation comes from what we extract from the earth, how we use our resources, and it comes from exportation of our goods and services. That is new wealth, and farming is such a critical component. When we think about it, we realize our farmers and ranchers help grow the economy and reduce our Nation's trade deficit. North Dakota alone exported more than \$4.1 billion in commodities this year, contributing to farm cash receipts of over \$7.6 billion.

But to simply put in a crop, an average grower in North Dakota spends upward to \$1 million in import costs with the hope of earning a modest profit, a modest return on that investment at the end of the year.

What is more, each year North Dakota faces challenges completely out of their control, such as floods, droughts, price collapse, and the introduction of new pests and pathogens. Each year North Dakota growers face an incredible risk—within the last 2 years—the uncertainty of not having a farm bill. They are able to take the risk because the rest of the country takes a little bit of risk with them for that food security and national security that American agriculture provides.

For too long this body has debated farm and rural policies in place in our country without providing the needed certainty to America. Soon—in just a few hours—we will have the opportunity to prevail by putting rural America on a strong ground by passing a comprehensive long-term farm bill that stands for our ranchers and our producers and stands for the people who consume agricultural products in this country.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote yes on this bill. It is good for my State, it is good for the country, and it is good for the world.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I have 20 to 30 minutes. I would appreciate it if the Presiding Officer would notify me when I have consumed 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Mr. COBURN. I have been in the Congress for a lot of farm bills. I saw "Freedom to Farm." I saw the last farm bill, the one before that, and now I am looking at this one. It reminds me of the auto commercial—something's up. Well, it sure is.

Only in Washington can we claim a bill saves \$24 billion when it increases the spending 43 percent over the next 10 years. How does that fit? Is that just the language of Washington? In fact, we are going to spend almost \$1 trillion over the next 10 years on what should be called a food security bill rather than a farm bill because this is not a farm bill. This is a food security bill.

The language we hear from our colleagues is totally parochial or product based. We hear all the claims that we are thinking about the best interests of the Nation. What we are truly thinking about is the best interests of the parochial values for our own States. That is how we get this conflagration of people coming together to pass a bill that, I admit, has some limited reforms in it.

I just heard the Senator from North Dakota talk about how we create wealth. I could not disagree more. We create wealth by making sure the risk of capital investment is responsive to market forces. This farm bill is anything but that. There is no response to market forces because there is no place else in this country where someone can go into a business or an enterprise and be guaranteed that their revenue is going to be secure. We even added a new supplemental low-cost Crop Insurance Program that all of us who are not farmers in America are going to pay the deductible on. Plus, we are going to subsidize 62 to 63 percent of all the crop insurance in the country.

When we subsidize crop insurance, what we are doing is taking the capital risk and modifying the risk; therefore, markets are not going to work.

We talk about sugar prices. Americans are losing candy manufacturers like crazy. Why is that? Because Americans pay twice as much as the rest of the world for sugar because we are protecting cane sugar and beet sugar farmers rather than letting market forces work.

I am very disturbed at the process of this bill as well. Senator DURBIN and I tried to put some income limitations on the benefits to the wealthiest in this country when it comes to crop insurance. It passed this Senate with 64 or 65 votes. It was in the bill when it left here. The House passed the same thing by a voice vote and the conferees took it out.

What is the farm bill about? It is about protecting the well-heeled and well-connected in the agricultural community.

I know a little bit about agriculture. My dad ran a ranch with 5,000 mother cows. I worked on it in the summer and after school. Back then—in the 1970s—there were no benefits for a cattle rancher. That has come into the farm program since the 1970s. It guarantees them that now they will make decisions that are against market forces but will farm the government.

So I say again, only in Washington when we are going to spend \$350 billion more on a program over the next 10 years will somebody claim we are cutting spending \$14 to \$20 billion. Only in Washington will that happen. It is unique Washington accounting.

We have heard all the proponents say what a great job they did. Let me talk a little bit about some of the details of this farm bill.

One of the things the President talked about—he just put JOE BIDEN in charge of the job training programs. He is supposed to look at all of them to see if they have metrics. The GAO has studied that. I have looked at every job training program—State and Federal—in my State.

They have 10 job training pilot programs in this bill. We don't need any more job programs. What we need to do is make sure the ones we have work and have metrics on them. We need to make sure that when we spend American taxpayers' dollars that we are actually giving somebody a life skill rather than filling the coffers of the companies that contract to do all the job training programs or allowing the small bureaucracies that suck up the grants. Oklahoma's Federal programs are highly ineffective—especially when we compare them to the State-run programs, which are highly effective.

So in this farm bill we are creating more job-training programs. It sounds good. It is a good sound bite on the floor, and it is a good sound bite in the press back home. But something is up, and what is up is we continue to make the same mistakes as a legislative body. That mistake is that we want to please constituents at home more than we want to fix the real problems in front of this Nation.

Let me talk about SNAP for a minute. There is not anybody in this country I want to go hungry. When this country was first founded, we used some very good principles that the Senate and the House have totally disregarded in terms of how to help people.

I reference the historical blueprint from a book written by a man by the name of Marvin Olasky. The title of that book was called "The Tragedy of American Compassion." It talks about how we used to help people versus how we are helping them now; how did we

build up people as we helped them versus now; how are we tearing down people as we help them. It talks about creating dependency versus creating responsibility.

He outlines several factors this country has used in the past that we ought to be reembracing. Let me list a couple of them. One is we should give relief to people only after one-on-one personal investigation of their need. Let me say that again. We ought to know they need it. Contrast where the money is coming from. The money is not coming from today's taxpayer when we are running a \$640 billion deficit. The money is coming from our kids and our grandkids.

Do we not have an obligation to know that when we give somebody a SNAP card they truly need it versus the fact that the SNAP cards and PIN numbers get sold? The SNAP card is then used by somebody else. That is going on throughout this country. That is not to say that most of the people who are getting this benefit don't need it. Because there is no personal investigation into it and there is no accountability on the part of the receiver or the giver, we are creating a situation in our country where we are undermining self-reliance.

The second point he made was to give necessary articles and only what is immediately necessary. That means you have to investigate it in order to give what is least susceptible to abuse; to give only in small quantities and in proportion to immediate needs and less than might be procured by labor except in cases of sickness. That is a great principle. Let's help people, but let's help people help themselves. Let's don't create a situation of temptation to do the wrong thing; to give assistance at the right moment, not prolong it beyond duration of the necessity which calls for it. We don't do that at all in any of our programs; to require each beneficiary absence from intoxicating liquors and drugs; to discontinue relieving all who manifest a purpose to depend on alms rather than their own exertion for support. I don't have one problem paying my taxes to make sure people don't go hungry and have food on the table for their kids.

I just watched a documentary my daughter referred to me. I have to say, as a physician, I understand the scientific tests and the great research that went into this. It is called "Forks Over Knives." It makes the case that most of our health care cost is based on our diet. It is very accurate and well done—except we have no limitations.

Senator HARKIN and I have tried for years to get limitations on how food stamps and SNAP cards are used. We can't budge anybody to say we ought to limit it to healthy foods, because for every \$1 we spend on food, we are creating \$1 in health care costs down the road.

I recommend that my colleagues watch that study. It is unbelievable in terms of heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. No medicine, just a change in diet, and all of a sudden those things go away. They go away because we take Big Agribusiness's push to use what is profitable out of the food chain and then start supplying foods that are actually good for us.

It seems to me Congress looks backward instead of forward when it comes to the farm bill. One of the things we ought to do is look at the world and what the population is. I also wish to say that some of the hardest working people in this country are the people who are in agriculture. I don't say these things to demean them, but markets do work.

We hurt our farmers when we take them away from market forces because that will cause them to make decisions that are false choices when it comes to capital investment, and those are false choices for our country because that means capital is going into something that is subsidized by the government rather than going into something that is not subsidized that will create a greater good and more wealth for our country.

This bill does exactly that. You realize in this bill you are guaranteed 86 percent of your revenue. Let me think about that. Do you know anywhere else where you can get your revenue on your crops guaranteed at 86 percent and the Federal taxpayer is paying most of the cost of the insurance for that?

Individuals in Oklahoma, Maine, and Virginia are paying higher tax dollars so we can create a system where we are investing in crops that are not necessarily good for us and causes us to pay a higher price for a domestically produced crop versus world markets; whereas, we could direct the same inputs into a product that is much better for us and we would be much more competitive.

One of the points I wish to make is that in 2013, net farm income was \$131 billion. That is 16.5 percent over what it was the year before, in an economy that is only growing less than 2 percent. Yet we are going to spend almost \$100 billion a year in the future, of which only 18 percent of that will be for agricultural programs, outside of the Food Stamp Program. We are going to spend \$18 billion to misdirect capital in a way that, in the long run, we won't see that kind of growth.

I will finish with other commentary. It is necessary that we have a farm program, but there is one little trick in this farm bill that everybody ought to be aware of. It is the pressure for the next farm bill that is put in this farm bill, and my colleagues know what it is. They didn't eliminate any of the permanent law that is on the books; they just let it stay there, and then we

created the farm bill for 5 years. What is the purpose of that?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 15 minutes.

Mr. COBURN. I thank the Chair.

The purpose is so that in 10 years, and in 5 years when we come to another farm bill, the default position will fall back to 1940s-era agricultural law, which will create pressure to do a farm bill again. If we do the same next time, it is going to cost \$1.5 trillion over the following 10 years.

My best friend is a feed corn, soybean, and wheat farmer. The farm is in excess of 2,000 acres in Oklahoma. On breaks, when they are harvesting, I go down there and drive a grain buggy. I have only bent the auger on it once. I hear it from a farmer's perspective. Do my colleagues know what he tells me? He tells me we don't need this anymore. We don't need it. We need decisions on capital investment to be made on risks and markets. No one can tell me, when we have \$131 billion in net farm income this year, that we need to be subsidizing 86 percent of everybody's product, guaranteeing them, no matter what happens in yield or price, they are going to get 86 percent.

The cost of this bill isn't just the \$1 trillion we are talking about; it is going to be much higher. We have had historically high commodity prices. They have moderated somewhat, but if they go back anywhere close to historical prices, this bill is going to cost at least another \$100 billion, just in one program alone. CBO's assumption is that we are not going to do that. But most of the leading agricultural economists in this country think corn is going to be under \$4, it is going to be \$3.75, and wheat will decline and soybeans will decline. So the score we have on this bill is nonsense because it doesn't reflect the reality of what is happening out there.

I appreciate the hard work people did on the farm bill. I am highly critical of adding new job programs. I think we have missed it completely. We don't even know what the real problem is in terms of job training in this program, and the 10 pilot programs aren't going to make a difference anywhere. What we ought to have is real programs that are WTO-compliant, that reconnect capital investment with the real world forces of market prices and markets.

We spend \$200 million a year just on one program—assisting farmers selling their products overseas. Do we know what sells products overseas? Price, quality. But we have a little \$200 million program that everybody in organized agriculture gets to take advantage of. They get a couple of trips a year on the Federal taxpayer. It ought not be so. If we want to promote products, we ought to be out promoting them. We shouldn't be promoting private brands with Federal Government

money. We ought to create the opportunity to promote it, but we shouldn't be doing it.

Needless to say, I will not be voting for cloture. I will reemphasize that Senator DURBIN and I had a great amendment. Those who signed the conference report and took that out can't stand up and say anything about anybody who is wealthy in this country or the tax rates or anything else, because they just gutted one of the things that would have put back equality in terms of the farm program for the very wealthy in this country. We are continuing to pay hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars monthly to the most well-connected, well-financed, wealthiest people in this country because they are farming the farm program. By taking that out, those who did lose all moral authority to ever say anything again about income inequality in this country, because those who signed the conference report chose to take that out.

We understand how politics works. I understand how politics works. But credibility is important in our country and we are losing it. We are losing it here. Look at the polls. We have lost it in the Nation's Capital as far as the American people are concerned. We haven't just lost credibility; we are losing legitimacy, because we wink and nod to do the parochial vote, even though in the best long-term interests of our country we are doing the wrong thing. But it sure sells well at home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on two matters. The first is the farm bill and the second is the U.S. attorney situation in my State of Minnesota.

Being a Senator from a State that is a leader in agricultural products and now the sixth biggest State in terms of agricultural exports, I can tell my colleagues that the agricultural sector of this country is strong and it has, in fact, been a jewel in this economy when we look over the last few years and we look at the industries that were hit so hard during the downturn. Our food supply remains strong. Part of why it remains strong is because we have believed in investing in agriculture and agricultural research and in the next wave of machinery and all kinds of things, and it has helped our country, it has been a positive for our country.

We have 80,000 farms in Minnesota. We are an exporting State, and it is one of the major reasons our unemployment rate is down to 4.6. Because it is not just about the small farmers all over our State, it is also about the businesses and the employees, and it is also about the fact that we are a country that makes its own food and is not dependent on foreign food the way we are dependent on foreign oil.

I fought hard to get on the agriculture committee when I came to the Senate. I was honored to serve on the farm bill conference committee under Senator STABENOW's leadership. We worked together, as the Presiding Officer knows, on a bipartisan basis to put together a farm bill that strengthens the safety net for our Nation's family farms, preserves critical food and nutrition programs, and brings down the deficit compared to the last farm bill to the tune of over \$20 billion, which is one of the reasons we wanted to put this new farm bill in place. The bulk of the savings comes from the transition from those direct agricultural subsidies to a more risk-based management system of crop insurance.

We also worked hard in the conservation area, which is very important in my State where hunting and fishing are a way of life. The conservation provisions are streamlined from 23 to 10 and we have the support of hundreds of environmental and conservation groups, including Pheasants Forever, which is based in Minnesota, as well as Ducks, Unlimited.

We also worked hard in the energy area to finally fund that title, to acknowledge that we need many sources of energy in this country, including biofuels, wind, and solar. That is a big part of this bill as well.

We kept the nutrition programs strong just by the fact that we were up against suggested cuts of \$40 billion from the House of Representatives, and we found a way to make some changes that might not have been our top priority, but they were ways we were able to move on the farm bill and work with some of these States that were leveraging their heating assistance for food stamps. Most States were not affected. My State was not affected.

We also provided permanent disaster relief for our Nation's livestock producers, something that is very important when we look at all the dead cows in South Dakota and everything that happened there.

I believe the strength of this bill is a testament to the work and leadership of Chairman STABENOW and her tireless efforts. I thank Senator COCHRAN as well as Chairman LUCAS, and Ranking Member PETERSON from my State, and then also Congressman TIM WALZ who served on the conference committee as well.

This bill is important to the farmlands of our country, but it also is good for rural economies. I believe we do right by ourselves when we do right by our rural communities.

I was listening to my colleague from Oklahoma, and I too have been on combines with farmers. I will say I wasn't driving that combine, which wouldn't have been good for the farm or the neighboring farms. I was a passenger. I heard a different story from my farmers in terms of the concern about

bouncing from year to year and not knowing what the policies are, and how good it has been to have a 5-year policy in place for farm policy, how far we have come from those freedom-to-farm days when we were foreclosing on farms all over our State, and how we want to be able to continue to produce food in our State and to encourage young farmers and ranchers. That is why that amendment was part of my major focus, which was to give them some breaks on crop insurance and grazing their cattle on CRP land.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

U.S. ATTORNEY FOR MINNESOTA

Now I wish to turn to a very different topic, which is Minnesota's U.S. attorney. This is an appalling situation, as the Presiding Officer will hear by the numbers. For 887 days, Minnesota has not had a full-time, permanent U.S. attorney—887 days. During that time, from August 2011 to August 2013, Todd Jones was responsible for doing two jobs. He was responsible for being the U.S. attorney in Minnesota as well as being the Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. As my colleagues can imagine, with the mess after Fast and Furious, he had a lot of work to do at the ATF and that was his major focus. Meanwhile, we kept going with some fine prosecutors, but we didn't have a full-time leader.

Over the summer, thanks to my colleague from the State of Arizona, Senator McCAIN, we were able to finally confirm Todd Jones to that job. The ATF had been without a permanent director for 7 years. We got that done. Of course, then it officially left the Minnesota U.S. attorney's position open, even though it had already really been open for 2 years.

Even before that decision was made by the Senate to confirm Todd Jones, Senator FRANKEN and I had gathered together a bipartisan group, including the former U.S. attorney under President Bush, to advise us on a replacement for Mr. Jones—even before the time we confirmed Mr. Jones because of our concern over the problems in the office, many of which were on the front page of our newspaper. We were able to get a recommendation from our committee for a replacement, Mr. Andy Luger. He is a respected litigator, a former assistant U.S. attorney.

It has now been 196 days since we made that recommendation to the President. It has been 187 days since Director Jones was confirmed with no full-time U.S. attorney again in the office. While the office has continued to provide the United States with the high-quality legal representation it deserves, Minnesota needs a full-time U.S. attorney.

Mr. Luger sailed through the Judiciary Committee with no objections. He

has passed all the tests necessary, including the FBI test. He has the support of law enforcement with whom I have spoken. He has the support of one of our Republican Congressmen in the area. I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY, who also supports him and has raised issues with the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office because of the fact that we have not had a full-time attorney for 888 days, and he has been supportive of our efforts to quickly move Mr. Luger's nomination, not just through the committee but to the floor.

Senator GRASSLEY is in a similar situation because his U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa was nominated on the same day and is also awaiting confirmation on the floor. Again, they have both come through the Judiciary Committee without any objection.

So why is this important? Well, I ran a prosecutor's office with about 400 people for 8 years. We worked directly with the U.S. attorney's office. We were there during 9/11 when the U.S. Attorney's Office in Minnesota was dealing with the Moussaoui case. As you remember, he was caught in Minnesota. They were dealing with terrorism issues. We worked hand in hand. We took a number of their white-collar cases.

I have been able to witness firsthand how day in and day out you need a U.S. attorney to make very difficult decisions as to what cases to go forward on, and especially without a full-time U.S. attorney it is very difficult to decide where to put limited resources in terms of strategic decisions. We have not had that person in place for 888 days.

Protecting our Nation from terrorists is a top concern for all of us. When you hear of the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office, you might not think: terrorism. But in fact, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Minnesota is renowned for its counterterrorism efforts and terrorism prosecutions, especially investigating the terrorist organization al-Shabaab. For years, authorities have been on alert for al-Shabaab in Minnesota.

In Operation Rhino, the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office prosecuted Omer Abdi Mohamed, who recruited young Somali Americans to fight for terrorists in Somalia. Mohamed was indicted in November 2009 in Minnesota and pled guilty in July 2011 to conspiracy to murder, kidnap, and maim abroad.

This operation is part of an ongoing terrorism investigation. As you know, there have been suicide bombings in Somalia—sadly, recruiting people out of our Somali community in Minnesota. We are proud of that community. They are an incredible part of our State. But this did happen. It has led to charges against 18 people for aiding al-Shabaab—8 of whom have been convicted, some receiving sentences of up to 20 years in prison.

So I ask you, why would you pick an office like this not to have a leader for 888 days? But through a variety of circumstances—the fact that the ATF job was held up in terms of an appointment, and then the fact that this is being held up right now—we still do not have a leader.

In addition to terrorism cases, the U.S. attorney's office is also responsible for prosecuting major drug crimes. Recently, the office won a major conviction and played a key role in shutting down a big synthetic drugstore in Duluth. And 2 weeks ago, the Minneapolis Star Tribune had a major news story about a growing and deadly heroin epidemic in Minnesota. As we have seen from the death this weekend of someone who was a celebrity, I think we all know there have also been heroin deaths all over this country, so Minnesota is not alone. But we are alone in that we have not had a chief leader in our U.S. attorney's office to come up with a strategy to deal with this case for 888 days.

In the first half of 2013, 69 people died of opiate-related overdoses in Hennepin County, MN. That would be 69 people died. Some of these deaths were young kids. This is a situation that demands attention immediately, and Mr. Luger is eager to work with law enforcement on a strategy.

Federal and State law enforcement also partnered to combat identity theft and white-collar crime. Minnesota had the second biggest white-collar conviction in terms of money—next to Madoff—in the country. Yet this is an office that we have chosen not to put a leader in for 888 days. The U.S. attorney's office won a conviction in a \$3.65 billion-dollar Ponzi scheme case—as I mentioned, the second biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history.

Currently, Minnesota's U.S. Attorney's Office is headed by an acting director. But an acting director simply cannot provide the same kind of leadership as a full-time U.S. attorney.

I know that the local heads of the DEA, FBI, and other Federal and State law enforcement agencies are very anxious to get a U.S. attorney in full time.

I would also note that we also do not have an administrative officer because we are awaiting putting in a U.S. attorney so that Mr. Luger can hire an administrative officer. This is not a small office. There are more than 100 people working there, including 54 lawyers. Again, they are without a full-time boss and a leader. I think these hard-working prosecutors and the people they work with deserve a leader in the office.

When Minnesota was first made a State, President Zachary Taylor filled the position of U.S. attorney in 2 days for our young new State. Back then, they deserved a U.S. attorney. If they could get it done in 2 days, I think we should be able to get it done in 888 days.

I urge my colleagues to support his swift confirmation and give this office and its hard-working prosecutors the full-time prosecutor they deserve.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to make remarks about the farm bill conference agreement that is before us.

Of course, across the Nation Americans are demanding that Washington restore their faith in government. Last year we saw a Congress crippled by government shutdowns and debt-ceiling standoffs. We nearly failed to pass a Defense authorization bill.

While many of my colleagues have high hopes this year for returning to the practice of moving legislation through the regular order and perhaps working under a more open amendment process, I am profoundly disappointed that one of the first pieces of legislation we will send to the President this year is a \$1.5 trillion farm bill. It is a mind-boggling sum of money that is spent on farm subsidies, duplicative nutrition and development assistance programs, and special-interest pet projects.

Taxpayer groups such as Citizens Against Government Waste blasted this farm bill as a "Dung Deal." Last week, the Wall Street Journal called it "A Bipartisan Taxpayer Raid," writing:

It's no accident that Congress dropped this porker under the cover of the State of the Union hoopla. Handouts to agribusiness and millionaires, continued trade protectionism for the sugar industry—it's all still there.

How are we supposed to restore the confidence of the American people with this monstrosity? A few weeks ago we crammed down their throats a \$1.1 trillion Omnibus appropriations bill loaded with wasteful spending. Tomorrow we will wash the omnibus down with another trillion dollars. The only policy that gets bipartisan traction in Congress is Washington's desire to hand out taxpayer money like it is candy.

We have heard about some of the "savings" generated by this farm bill. It is true there are noteworthy cuts to several outdated Depression-era farm subsidies such as the Direct Payments Program and the Countercyclical Program. We also close loopholes in our Food Stamp Programs and conservation programs, which generated about \$16 billion in savings, according to the Congressional Budget Office, and I applaud the conferees for their efforts.

But, unfortunately, just about every subsidy eliminated under the farm bill is simply reinvented into a new and many times more expensive program. For example, we have a new thing called Agriculture Risk Coverage Program, which locks in today's record-high crop prices and guarantees farmers up to an 86-percent return on their

crop. Depending on market conditions, ARC—agriculture risk coverage—could cost taxpayers between \$3 billion to \$14 billion each year—far more expensive than the \$5 billion saved by the elimination of the Direct Payments Program. The bill also maintains the \$95 billion federally backed crop insurance program which subsidizes crop insurance premiums. We then pile on a new \$20 billion program called Supplemental Coverage Option that subsidizes crop insurance deductibles.

The bill also strips out an amendment offered by my colleagues Senator DURBIN and Senator COBURN which would have prevented crop insurance subsidies from going to individuals with a gross income greater than \$750,000 a year. That amendment was adopted by 59 votes in the Senate's farm bill earlier last year. And guess what. Surprise. It is absent from the conference agreement. Millionaire farmers can rejoice that their crop insurance subsidies are safe. That is millionaire farmers, farmers with a gross income greater than \$750,000 a year. So the next time I hear the managers of this bill talk about the small farmer, I guess they are talking about millionaires as well.

But it is all part of farm bill politics. In order to pass a farm bill, Congress must find a way to appease every special interest of every commodity association from asparagus farmers to wheat growers. If you cut somebody's subsidy, you give them a grant. If you kill their grant, then you subsidize their crop insurance. Let's look at several handouts that special interests have reaped in this year's farm bill.

The bill provides \$7 million in grants for the marketing of sheep. Now some who may be viewing this at home will maybe think I am making it up that we are spending \$7 million of their tax dollars for the marketing of sheep.

It also adds a thing called—and I am not sure I pronounce it right—"japonica rice." Japonica rice is a sushi ingredient grown primarily in California, and it is added to the list of products that can receive farm subsidies.

The bill provides \$100 million to promote the maple syrup industry. I repeat: \$100 million to promote the maple syrup industry. It says American tax dollars will go to—and I quote from the bill—"promote research and education for maple syrup production . . . promoting sustainability in the maple syrup industry . . . and market promotion for maple syrup."

So, my fellow citizens, the next time you see an advertisement for maple syrup, you may want to watch it because it is your tax dollars that paid for it.

It places a 15-cent fee on harvesting Christmas trees. Not even Christmas is left out of this one—a 15-cent fee on harvesting Christmas trees. That money then is earmarked for promoting the orchard industry.

There is \$12 million for a "wool research and promotion" program. There are a lot of needy areas of America today, but I had no idea that wool research and promotion was worthy of \$12 million of our tax dollars.

I think this next one is probably my favorite—or unfavorite: \$5 million for a study to—again, I am quoting from the bill—"evaluate the impact of allowing schools to offer dried fruits and vegetables to children."

I know that is a tough decision for schools to make, as to whether they should offer dried fruits and vegetables to children. Do we need \$5 million to help them evaluate that?

There is \$25 million for a new grant program to "teach children about gardening, nutrition, cooking"—and get this—"and where food comes from." I am sure all over America children are asking: Where does food come from? This may sound like a well-intentioned initiative, but this grant program is a lot like 18 other food and nutrition programs that the Government Accountability Office declared duplicative in a report issued 2 years ago.

The Federal Government's duplication of nutrition programs has cost \$62.5 million annually in previous years. So here is a new grant program under the label of "nutrition education."

The energy title of this bill doles out about \$881 million in energy programs. Most Americans do not realize that the farm bill has become as much about energy subsidies as about farm subsidies. There is funding for ethanol research, biorefinery installations, and a sugar-to-ethanol program where the Federal Government purchases surplus sugar and sells it at a loss to ethanol producers.

American taxpayers will spend \$5 million on the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program. Now, if there is anything that is needed in America, it is a good, vigorous biodiesel fuel education program. We are going to spend \$5 million on it. It is to spread the gospel on the benefits of biodiesel. I have no objection to the use of biodiesel. In fact, I think I prefer it much more as an alternative compared to corn ethanol. But here we have \$5 million to educate consumers on the benefits of biodiesel.

Hidden in this bill is a tax on heating oil. Just yesterday, the Washington Times talked about the farm bill's National Oilheat Research Alliance Program in an article entitled "Congress seeks to jack up fees on home heating oil in midst of frigid winter." The article reads:

Congress' mammoth farm bill restores the imposition of an extra fee on home heating oil, hitting consumers in the cold-weather states just as utility costs are spiking. The fee—two-tenths of a cent on every gallon sold—was tacked onto the end of the 959-page bill, which is winding its way through Capitol Hill. The fee would last for nearly 20 years and would siphon the money to develop

equipment that is cheaper, more efficient and safer, and to encourage consumers to update their equipment. The heating oil fee was backed by Northeast lawmakers who said it would fund important research to benefit consumers.

The bill prohibits oil companies from passing the fees on to consumers, but taxpayer advocates said that's a sham and that the money has to come from consumers. To say they can't pass on the cost, said Diane Katz, research fellow in regulatory policy at the Heritage Foundation, "It's kind of silly because of course the costs are going to get passed on. Money is fungible."

So here we have a special oil tax on consumers where the revenue is earmarked back to the heating oil industry, about \$15 million a year according to the GAO. Why is the Federal Government in the business of collecting funds for heating oil research on behalf of the heating oil industry?

The bill reauthorizes USDA loan subsidies for peanut growers and allows them to use their peanuts as collateral. If a peanut grower forfeits on their USDA loan, the Federal Government takes ownership of the peanuts and taxpayers bear the cost of storing the peanuts.

The infamous sugar program is housed in this farm bill. This is probably the most ongoing scandal in the history of all of the farm bills and of all of the egregious aspects of it. Like the peanut program, USDA gives sugar growers, primarily in Florida, Louisiana, and Michigan, hundreds of millions of dollars in loans each year.

If a sugar grower misses their profit margins, they get to keep the loan and transfer their excess sugar to the Federal Government as collateral. Over the past year, sugar subsidies and forfeitures have cost the taxpayers \$258 million, while over 640,000 tons of sugar was handed over to the USDA.

You know something. If you really look at it, there are a few families that control the sugar industry in Florida. Those families, God bless them, have given generous contributions to both Democratic and Republican parties. So the taxpayers have paid \$258 million and over 640,000 tons of sugar was handed over to the USDA. Combined with import tariffs and marketing controls, the USDA Sugar Program costs consumers over \$3 billion every year, one of the most obscene Federal farm subsidies ever conceived. This farm bill, advertised as full of reforms, does nothing.

Another bizarre handout in this farm bill that I have been involved in now for many years is the creation of a catfish office. Again, I assure my colleagues, I am not making this up—a catfish office inside the U.S. Department of Agriculture at a cost of \$15 million a year.

The USDA will hire inspectors to visually inspect catfish in seafood facilities—only catfish and not shrimp, not a cod, not a tilapia, but only a catfish. We are going to have a special office

called—appropriately—the catfish office, to inspect visually catfish in seafood facilities—and only catfish.

Senator SHAHEEN and I and 11 other Senators have sponsored legislation to kill this catfish program. I have been opposing it for years. In 2012, our legislation was adopted in the Senate by voice vote. I assure the distinguished manager of the bill that is the last time that on this issue I will accept a voice vote. The distinguished chairperson assured me that with a voice vote this amendment of ours would remain in the legislation, and obviously that has not been the case.

So next time the distinguished manager, if it ever comes up again, assures me that an amendment of mine will be adopted in the final legislation, I will have to have better authentication than just taking her word.

Last year, the House Agriculture Committee passed a bipartisan amendment to repeal it in the farm bill. Despite all this opposition, the unpopular catfish office resiliently survived conference. We do not need a new USDA catfish inspection program. The Food and Drug Administration already tests catfish, along with all other seafood.

But certain farm bill conferees are insisting on creating a catfish office because catfish farmers in Southern States do not want to compete against foreign catfish importers, particularly those from Vietnam. Its true purpose is trade protectionism at the taxpayer's expense. Under this farm bill, there will be a virtual ban on catfish imports for several years while foreign inspectors switch from FDA's inspection procedures to USDA's catfish procedures.

The Government Accountability Office investigated the proposed catfish office. In four different reports—four different reports—they called it “duplicative” and “wasteful” and warned that it fragments our food safety system by splitting FDA's ability to inspect seafood.

In fact, one GAO report was simply titled, “Responsibility for Inspecting Catfish Should Not Be Assigned to USDA.” It called on Congress to eliminate the catfish office. Both the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the FDA have questioned the scientific value of the proposed catfish office. Several years ago, USDA studied the idea and concluded that there is substantial uncertainty regarding the actual effectiveness of a USDA catfish inspection program. Even the President's budget proposed to zero it out.

American consumers should also be concerned about the trade implications of this program. Some nations, including Vietnam, have threatened WTO retaliation against American agricultural exports, like beef and soybeans.

Trade experts warn that this catfish gimmick is the kind of protectionism that harms our efforts to win concessions under trade agreement negotia-

tions like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which could reduce the tariffs on American products sold to Asian trading partners.

Again, Senator SHAHEEN and I tried to eliminate the catfish office in the Senate's farm bill, but the managers blocked the vote on our amendment. The House Agriculture Committee did the right thing and passed the farm bill amendment to eliminate it. Unfortunately, when this bill went to conference, several Senate conferees blocked the vote in conference to repeal it—actually blocked a vote in conference and actually rewrote the law to increase it.

It seems that catfish is one bottom feeder with friends in high places. At the end of the day, this farm bill will be hailed by its supporters as reform-minded. Let me assure the American public that this is hardly reform. It was managed under a closed amendment process and will prove to be more wasteful and costly than any farm bill we have ever seen.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this bill. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the Wall Street Journal Editorial appropriately entitled, “A Bipartisan Taxpayer Raid.”

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, Jan. 28, 2014]

A BIPARTISAN TAXPAYER RAID

(Editorial)

President Obama delivered his State of the Union address Tuesday night to the usual bipartisan cheers for proposals that don't have a chance of becoming law and that half the Members despise. If you want to know what they were really cheering about, take a gander at the gaudy spectacle of the 2014 farm bill, which gives bipartisanship a bad name.

Congressional negotiators on Monday unveiled this hulking 949-page special-interest bonanza, which will cost nearly \$1 trillion over 10 years—or more than President Obama's stimulus. House Agriculture Chairman Frank Lucas, said to be a Republican, and Senate counterpart Debbie Stabenow (D., Mich.) are advertising the bill's token savings and reforms. The real headline is how complete a victory this is for the entitlement and farm-subsidy status quo.

Start with the fact that the subsidy programs are still linked to food stamps. House conservatives last summer revolted to force the chamber to separate the two, in an attempt to end to the unholy alliance of urban Democrats and rural Republicans that sustains the growth of both. The conferees negotiated a remarriage.

Republicans also caved on a House provision to limit the food-stamp reauthorization to three years, which would have required a debate on a separate timetable from farm subsidies in the future. The final bill reauthorizes everything for five years, setting the stage for a logrolling repeat.

As for food stamps, the House bill had reduced future 10-year spending by \$39 billion—a mere 5%—in a program that has doubled in cost since 2008 and is now about \$80 billion a year. The “compromise” settles for a cut of \$8 billion over 10 years (1%), which is barely

larger than Senate Democrats' opening bid of \$4 billion.

The elated conferees are bragging that they closed a food-stamp “loophole,” but that's a rosy interpretation. “Heat and eat” is a classic liberal spending tactic by which states direct small home-heating assistance checks to households solely to make those households eligible for food stamps.

The reform requires that households receive all of \$20 in annual federal heating assistance (rather than today's \$1) to trigger benefits. They must be laughing at that one in the grocery lobby. Meanwhile, Republicans abandoned reforms that would have tightened the program, such as making food-stamp eligibility contingent upon asset tests (as used to be the case) or work requirements (as under welfare reform).

The farm crew is also boasting they eliminated the “direct payment” program—handouts that go to growers whether they produce a crop or not. Yet the \$5 billion in savings is rolled back into the government-subsidized (and uncapped) crop-insurance program as well as a new “shallow-loss” program that guarantees farmers' revenues and could balloon to \$14 billion a year.

Speaker John Boehner is getting credit for winning his showdown with Collin Peterson over the Minnesota Democrat's demand for a new Soviet-style program to manage U.S. milk supply. The conferees stripped that stinker, but they salved Mr. Peterson's feelings by fiddling with a separate insurance program as an alternate means to give government control over milk production.

Handouts to agribusiness and millionaires? Continued trade protectionism for the sugar industry? It's all still there. Heritage Foundation research fellow Daren Bakst notes that the GOP even rolled over for President Obama's Christmas tree tax, which demands a 15-cent assessment on every fresh-cut Christmas tree, to fund an industry promotional program.

Republicans get credit for keeping the bill free of earmarks, and for bucking Democratic demands that the bill's savings go to more spending, rather than deficit reduction. But with the Congressional Budget Office reporting on Tuesday that the bill saves a pathetic \$16.5 billion over 10 years (rather than the \$23 billion negotiators claimed), these are linings without much silver.

The apparent GOP political calculation is that it needs an election-year farm bill to solidify its rural-voter support and to ward off President Obama's attacks that they are mean to poor people. Talk about premature surrender. Unlike the autumn government shutdown, the farm bill did give them real political leverage. Democrats and Mr. Obama want food stamps and a farm bill. Republicans could have held out at least for some reform progress. The main achievement of this bill will be to re-elect Mr. Peterson, the Democrat, and give more GOP voters reason to wonder why they elected these guys.

Oh, and it's no accident that Congress dropped this porker under the cover of State of the Union hoopla. GOP leaders are eager to leave town for their annual retreat and to avoid a conservative revolt. So they are planning a vote Wednesday morning, fewer than 48 hours after it was unveiled.

So much for Mr. Boehner's promise to run a more transparent Congress and allow 72 hours for Members to read what they are voting on. The American people elected a GOP House not merely to oppose the Obama agenda, but to stand for real reform. They deserve a lot better than this.

Mr. MCCAIN. I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the conference report for the 2014 farm bill represents a true compromise in the longstanding tradition of the Agriculture Committees. The proposal continues numerous reforms and progressive policies that we created, expanded, or strengthened in previous farm bills when I served as chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

This agreement is not perfect, and each side had to give. For example, we were very far apart and had to negotiate on how we were going to support the food assistance programs we have. But, in this bill we have preserved SNAP and rejected the draconian House provisions that would have meant the end of food assistance for nearly 4 million people. I take solace in knowing that no one who needs this assistance will be kicked off the program.

As a conferee and as a longtime supporter of SNAP, what we used to call food stamps, I am proud of what we have done in this bill to improve SNAP—the Nation's most effective nutrition program. It has been a crucial support to needy families around the country, particularly during the recent economic downturn.

First, we took a number of steps to improve overall program administration and program integrity. While SNAP is extremely efficient and effective with low rates of fraud, we can always strive to do better. This bill equips States and USDA with a number of new tools to continue their strong track record on program administration.

In this bill we have provided USDA with additional resources to improve integrity. USDA has a strong and commendable commitment to rooting out fraud in the program. But the number of stores accepting SNAP has increased significantly, which means that USDA must continue to improve its efforts to monitor retailers. This bill provides USDA with additional resources to boost its use of technology, for example, by taking advantage of innovations like data mining, which can show patterns of redemption among retailers and help pinpoint outlets that may be abusing the program. We expect USDA to use data analysis and other smart tools to uphold the program's high compliance standards.

The bill also provides funding for pilot projects for State and Federal partners to address retailer fraud. States selected for the pilot must demonstrate a commitment of resources to recipient trafficking and they must prove that they have accurately determined fraud. The States that have successfully found and fought fraud should receive priority in partnering with USDA on the retailer fraud pilot projects. But success is not defined as a State that has used threats to persuade

recipients to accept disqualification. Subsequent audits must confirm that the State disqualified participants who truly were guilty of fraud and not confused about their rights or scared about the possibility of being prosecuted under criminal law, as it is understandable that some innocent people may be.

One of the thorny issues we wanted to tackle was the issue of how to handle when clients request to have their EBT card replaced multiple times. The concern was that some households were repeatedly reporting their cards stolen or lost. USDA thought that some households requesting that their cards be replaced 10 or more times per year were selling those cards. We wanted to empower the agency to address that issue. In the case when a household requests an excessive amount of card replacements, the household must provide an explanation about why they need another card. We know from experience that some households request multiple cards because they are confused about program rules. We heard one report about an elderly woman who requested a card replacement each month because she thought she was supposed to throw away the card after she used the benefits. By asking households to provide an explanation, States will be able to accommodate individuals who need more help to access their benefits. Of course, making a household wait to receive a new card until it provides an explanation is a burden for the household. Increasingly, States aren't answering their phones in a timely way. So this requirement should not be imposed on households unless we have a reason to believe there is a problem—either with their ability to use the card or with program integrity. We expect that USDA will not impose this new requirement on households that lose their cards a few times. We understood that they would set the trigger for the explanation at least at 4 times a year.

It is also important that households be able to provide their explanation through any number of options, such as over the phone to their EBT customer service center, via e-mail or mail. Most important, we don't want SNAP agencies requiring households to provide their explanation in person. That is too burdensome a requirement, particularly when many offices may be far away from a given recipient and have long lines and delays to see someone. And, no matter what the reason a household provides, States cannot withhold their card or use withholding the card as leverage to compel some other action. Obviously, if the State believes the household has committed fraud or doesn't believe their explanation, the State should investigate. If they discover illegal activity, they can pursue a fraud violation through regular program rules. Those are steps

that come after the State reissues the food card. I am particularly concerned about how this provision is implemented with respect to vulnerable groups such as the homeless, people with disabilities, or seniors. We don't want these individuals or any struggling household to lose access to their food benefits because their lives are chaotic and messy. We do not want vulnerable people to feel that their food benefits are conditioned upon giving the right answer about why they lost their card. We cautioned USDA to make sure that this provision was not used to delay benefits in any way. We can balance program integrity needs with compassion for our most vulnerable citizens.

The farm bill also tightens SNAP eligibility in response to some rare cases.

One of the provisions that got a lot of attention was the provision that reiterates that felons who have been convicted of certain crimes such as murder and who violate their parole or probation cannot be eligible for SNAP. SNAP has long banned fleeing felons from the program. My good friend former Senator Lugar championed that rule. But Members felt that it was important to reiterate this rule with respect to ex-offenders who served time for particularly heinous crimes. As has been the case for many years now, those who serve their sentence and are in compliance with the terms of their parole or probation and who are otherwise eligible for SNAP may apply for and receive assistance through the program. This provision does not change anything with respect to program eligibility or program operations. States already have the processes in place to implement this provision.

Second, over the last several years, there have been highly publicized instances where SNAP participants who won big at the lottery continued to receive SNAP. My understanding is that both of these winners lived in Michigan. Of course, people who win millions of dollars from the Powerball do not need the help of SNAP, and for the most part program rules would already exclude them. But we wanted to be sure that this type of thing never happens again. We included a provision to prohibit households where someone won a substantial amount of money from a lottery or gambling from participating in SNAP. We are leaving it to USDA to define "substantial". Our expectation is that they will not include nominal winnings that don't permanently change the household's economic circumstances or their ability to purchase food.

We also expect USDA to work with States to ensure that this provision is implemented behind the scenes without asking questions of clients. While we had two lottery winners, the nearly 47 million people who participate in this program are struggling. We don't

want them to be asked if they had won the lottery when they are going through the process of applying for benefits. State lotteries and gaming commissions must report winners that exceed the threshold to state SNAP agencies. That way, State agencies can remove individuals with substantial lottery or gambling income without requiring reports from every participant or adding questions to current SNAP forms.

While I am focused on using back-end data matching to implement this provision, I would like to discuss the bill's provisions that have to do with what we call data matches. Data matching helps SNAP to preserve its record of strong program integrity and also cuts States' and applicants' paperwork requirements.

First, the bill makes it possible for SNAP to more easily exchange data with other programs by adding Federal standards for such data sharing. This sensible provision means that our systems can "talk" with each other across the various State and Federal programs. It is a welcome and timely change. We expect the administration to protect individuals' personal private information and prevent it from being misused.

We also are requiring States to use HHS's National Directory of New Hires when certifying a household for SNAP to help the State determine eligibility and what level of benefits the household should receive. Right now States' use of the database is optional. We think the Federal database could be helpful to States to find important information about the employment of noncustodial parents who live or work in other States.

Finally, the bill puts in statute the existing State practice of using the Federal Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements Program, or SAVE, to verify immigration status. States can use this to efficiently determine eligibility without requiring a household to fill out unnecessary forms or find paperwork. This does not change anything with respect to immigrant eligibility rules or households' responsibilities. This requirement is another example of a behind-the-scenes administrative efficiency in the bill. The use of the Income Eligibility Verification System, or IEVS, will remain optional, though. It is sensible for the administration to set standards for how to verify immigration status through a national immigration data set. Given low rates of error and fraud in SNAP, we did not want to dictate how and when States use IEVS.

On the topic of data matches, I want to make clear that we want States to use available data sources containing up-to-date, accurate information that helps determine SNAP eligibility and benefit levels as States are making their decisions. Matches can help us to

verify what clients tell us and reduce burdens on them. Matches can also identify information that clients failed to reveal. However, data matches are sometimes wrong and they can require a lot of staff work to correct, as well as place undue burdens on clients. This bill should not be interpreted to force States to seek or to use unhelpful data matches or where they determine the data match is not cost-effective. We expect the Secretary will help States determine the best ways to use the data sources. It is not sensible to pay for matches for all individuals or to do the matches every month or quarter, rather than as the State is making an eligibility decision or if the State has uncertain information about a SNAP recipient. States need the flexibility to determine that an individual living a 2-hour drive from the State border with a verified long-term job in the community does not need to be checked in the new hire data base to determine if he is working out of State. We expect USDA to work with HHS to find ways to hold the costs of the match to State agencies and the Federal Government in check, while maximizing payment accuracy. As always, States must ensure that SNAP applicants and recipients always have a chance to prove that data matches are inaccurate.

As useful as data matching can be, we need to remember to ensure some balance on program integrity efforts. It is an inefficient use of resources to have eligibility workers looking for information about clients every minute of the day. Asking States to follow up on matches that may not yield any changes in eligibility or benefit levels isn't a good use of States' time and resources. In the last two farm bills, we took steps to establish certification rules such that States would carefully assess eligibility at certification and recertification. In the interim, unless States had information to suggest that clients were income ineligible or participating in two households, households were to continue to receive benefits without disruption or inquiries about their circumstances. Those changes worked. Overall program participation is up among eligible households, suggesting that we were right to make it easier for households to maintain benefits. States need to focus on adjudicating eligibility at application and renewal. This framework informed our approach to the use of datasets. We want States to use third-party data to make eligibility renewals as efficient as possible. But, this information is not meant to be used in fruitless fishing expeditions to prove households ineligible or to find data that requires needless back-and-forth between the client and the agency during their certification period.

I would like to turn now to talk about one of the more exciting aspects of the nutrition title. The final bill in-

cludes several reforms of SNAP's employment and training program, including new investments in identifying innovative job training opportunities for this population.

Most SNAP participants who can work, do work. As we know, however, millions of Americans are out of work. So we want to find more ways to help those who are able to work but have been unable to secure a job. We also want to find ways to build and grow the skills of workers so that they may find better jobs with better pay.

SNAP work programs will receive better, and more, funding in this bill. It gives \$200 million to pilot and evaluate new state employment and training programs. States can draw these pilots from SNAP E&T components, but the programs can also include work supports, like child care or transportation assistance, that those with low-paying jobs often cannot afford. We want to help States build pioneering volunteer programs, which if focused on skills building or education programs, might boost an individual's employability. It was imperative in this effort that States be creative and try different approaches to addressing the barriers that could be keeping individuals from working, such as stable housing or childcare.

We recognize that it is far better for the long term for people to secure and keep unsubsidized jobs in the private sector. So we have allowed those types of arrangements to be considered part of the pilots. But because States will have much less control over information about what private employers are doing, we needed to include significant safeguards. We fully expect that these pilots will operate under longstanding protections from the SNAP law and other laws against the displacement of other workers, as well as workplace protection laws such as those for health and safety, wage and hour standards, family leave, workers' compensation, and the like.

The initial House proposal in this area was surprising in its harshness. The House essentially gave States incentives to throw off of SNAP people who could not find jobs. Furthermore, the proposal allowed States to then spend on whatever they wanted the savings obtained from throwing people out of the SNAP program. I thank the leadership of the conference committee, especially Chairwoman STABENOW, for holding firm to the principle in designing these work pilot projects that we should not give States any new authority to take away people's SNAP benefits when they cannot find jobs. The rules under the pilot project for sanctioning people will be the same as under current law in terms of when sanctions can be applied and for how long.

When it comes to sanctioning individuals for refusing to cooperate in employment and training programs, we

already have in place protections to ensure that if there are good cause reasons for noncompliance that individuals cannot be sanctioned. Similarly, for how these are extended to employment activities under the pilots, the agreement ensures that unless clear evidence shows that an individual wilfully refused to take actions that she or he could safely and properly take, participants in employment activities in the work pilots may not be subject to sanctions. For instance, no sanction will apply if the employer gives the individual fewer hours than expected or if the individual's mental or physical disability prevents the individual from succeeding at the work or if childcare or transportation is not available at the time when he or she has been asked to work. Willful refusal to cooperate is different from failing to perform adequately at work. Some low-skilled workers will fall short at the workplace as a result of taking jobs that may be at the outer limits of their ability. This is a difficult determination, and a State may have a hard time telling with a private sector employer whether an individual wilfully refused to comply or whether the employer made demands that the employee could not, for whatever reason, comply with. In such instances, it is inappropriate for States to take away SNAP benefits.

In designing the pilots, we did not intend in any way to take away from States' existing authority to treat jobs that SNAP applicants and recipients have found for themselves as allowable work activities and support such work with support services like childcare and transportation.

Figuring out which services and activities work the best for different types of people is a hard nut to crack in the job training world, but it is one of the main goals of these pilots, and so we have required a careful evaluation. With the low-wage labor market the way it is and such a high percentage of SNAP recipients working already, we must ask how we will know whether the State's program and services made a difference. So we have required that only projects where the State can guarantee they will participate fully in the evaluation should be included in the pilot. We especially want to know more about how States can most effectively assess SNAP participants' needs early and match those needs to the right education and training programs and other supportive services that will positively affect that individual's job prospects.

Even though we have invested heavily in these handful of pilots, we also want to learn more broadly what is working and not working so well across the country in getting SNAP participants the skills and training they need to get and keep a well-paying job. So under the bill States must report more on the results of the services that they

provide to SNAP participants. Using this information, USDA will work with the other experts in job training to improve assessment of whether SNAP employment and training can attain more longlasting results and will push States to focus on proven activities. We will rely upon this information when we reauthorize the program five years from now. We understand that SNAP participants are often poorer and have lower education and skills than people who participate in other job training programs, and as such, we made clear we must have appropriate expectations of these services' outcomes and take those differences into account. In this slow-growing economy, everyone will not find work immediately. Sometimes we have to invest now in building skills to see a better outcome for people in the future, and when designing measures, we expect USDA to take a long-term view. As I mentioned above, upfront assessment is key, and so, while individual assessments already are a requirement for SNAP work registrants, we expect the USDA to have a focus on assessment as part of the state measures.

Now, let's turn to how this farm bill modernizes SNAP through a number of improvements for retailers.

The way we buy our food is evolving rapidly, and this bill helps SNAP remain in step. This bill gives the Secretary authority to test mobile technology use in SNAP, such as applications for smartphones that have become increasingly common and hold special promise to simplify SNAP transactions at farmers markets and vegetable stands. But we don't want recipients to see higher prices and we don't want program integrity to lapse as we seek additional ways to accept benefits. As a result, we start in this bill with a pilot project to test the idea. We expect USDA to pay special attention to testing fraud-prevention measures, so that these new technologies do not open the program up to new schemes for criminal activity. Some things will be tricky in a mobile environment. USDA currently relies on inspections of retailers' stores as a way of keeping out unscrupulous retailers, and so will need to find ways to reliably distinguish between eligible and ineligible or disqualified retailers in a comparable fashion as it implements this provision.

Pilot projects testing purchasing food online with SNAP benefits also are allowed under the bill, reflecting a trend in the food industry towards online transactions. The delivery of groceries could potentially help elderly or disabled recipients to access food more easily. Of course, we worked here too, to ensure that the same strong program integrity standards apply to this potential new way of redeeming benefits and we require, in the bill, that the agency stop the expansion of online

transactions if the Department determines the fraud risk is too great. We were clear that SNAP benefits cannot pay for any delivery fees associated with online purchases, but we also expect USDA to also set standards for the fees to ensure that they are not so high that, on balance, this provision results in more hunger. After all, SNAP recipients rely on the program because they cannot purchase enough food—high fees would make hunger worse. USDA should ensure that fees are capped at very low levels and are clear to the recipients so that they are not surprised at the time the food is delivered.

On the topic of modernizing SNAP benefits, I am troubled by the recent reports of States seeking to include photo identification or fingerprinting as a way of supposedly ensuring program integrity. That is not a direction I think the program should go. One of the main advantages of moving to SNAP benefit cards, away from the paper coupons, was that the transaction looks the same and so there is less stigma. USDA should not approve State attempts to require photos on SNAP cards unless there is an airtight way of making sure every household member can use the card, as well as any other person who is authorized to shop for the SNAP recipient. There is no need for SNAP to pursue such measures when other card issuers, like credit card companies, have not insisted on such measures to maintain security even though those cards are issued to individuals.

One final point I want to make about EBT cards. Last fall, because of a glitch with the computers at an EBT contractor, Iowa and about 15 other States had their EBT systems go out of commission for hours, wreaking havoc in grocery store aisles and leaving thousands without food. In this bill we have taken another step to "modernize" by restricting the ability of States to routinely issue manual vouchers, but we have created an important exception for disasters or system outages. We expect USDA to create a simple, fast way for States to declare that they need to invoke this back-up plan.

In addition to these changes for how retailers take SNAP benefits, the bill also raises the bar for retailers in an effort to increase the availability of healthy foods. Stores that want to participate in SNAP have an obligation to participate as full partners in making healthy food available to low-income Americans.

Some retailers have sought to spread SNAP issuances out over longer periods during the month for the purposes of evening out their business. This is allowed now through staggered issuance, and some language in the statement of the bill managers encourages USDA to allow benefits to be staggered throughout the month.

I am sympathetic to the need for retailers to not have spikes and troughs in their business, but I am deeply concerned about a practice in some States I have heard of where, as part of a State's staggered issuance plan, households may receive no benefits for as long as 10 days during a month. Apparently this is in the "transition" to staggering benefits, but this kind of hardship in the name of smoothing retailers business is very troubling. SNAP benefits already are low and run out for many households before the end of the month. To add on another 10 days before the household receives the next month's benefits could be a devastating hardship and means more children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities going to bed hungry or facing heart-wrenching decisions.

The SNAP law regarding staggered issuance actually does provide a requirement to protect households from stretches without food during the transition. We revisited this provision in the last farm bill and again reaffirmed that households may not experience a cut as a result of staggering benefits over the month. Nonetheless, I understand that the Department has not fully enforced this rule. One solution would be for the Department to allow States to protect households during the transition with a one-time increase in the month prior to cover the transition period.

In this debate over the last several years I heard repeated concerns, particularly from some House Members, that SNAP was somehow out there recruiting people who don't need food assistance to sign up. This is a ridiculous claim. Quite the opposite is true. Some people need help learning about the program, and there are many groups around the country who are working day in and day out to ensure that people who need some assistance have the information they need to sign up, have misperceptions cleared up, and can get some help navigating what is a very complicated and burdensome process.

At the insistence of the House, we included some narrow provisions to prevent some perceived, uncommon abuses. We ended the USDA's collaboration with the Mexican consulate and we prohibit groups who help sign up eligible households from being paid on a "bounty" basis for each successful application, a practice I don't believe occurs very often, if at all.

But we have been assured that we have done nothing in this bill to undermine the great work that goes on around the country by dedicated individuals and community groups to help educate and assist our low-income neighbors. We still hear that the main reasons eligible households don't sign up are that they are not aware of the program, they don't understand how it works, or they don't understand the program rules and can't get through

the process. In this bill, we have done nothing to change the education and application assistance activities that States and community groups can engage in. We have long prohibited "recruitment," which is trying to talk someone into applying if that person has made an educated choice to not apply. In this bill we codify that definition. But we fully expect that it will continue to be allowable for USDA, States, and other partners to share information about the program, the advantages of participation, how the rules work, and to assist people in applying for benefits. Such activities may change someone's mind about applying, but it is acceptable to change your mind because you learned new, accurate information or because you understand what you have to do to apply. That is not persuasion, but rather, is education, and is still completely appropriate under this bill.

So to be clear, we have severed the relationship with the Mexican Government related to SNAP. And while it is inappropriate for anybody to receive their pay as a "bounty" per application, it is fine to be tracking how many people a group assists in applying and the outcome of the application process. That is just a common, responsible practice for assessing whether the group successfully is achieving its goals. Section 16(a) already prohibits tying anyone's pay to the number of people disqualified from SNAP and we have extended that principle to application assistance.

I do want to address the one significant cut in SNAP benefits that the nutrition title includes. I am disappointed that as a result of this bill 850,000 very low-income households are going to lose food assistance. There are certainly many ways we could have reinvested these funds into SNAP to improve the program and reduce hardship, but I have to agree with my colleagues that the practice of issuing a household just \$1 in energy assistance so that they can deduct more income than we had intended goes too far and it is sensible to address this issue.

In this bill we have limited this practice. It is a painful loss for families who benefit from this policy, but the change repairs the unintended oversight. What happens is that States can give SNAP households without heating or cooling expenses a token LIHEAP payment of \$1 or less, which enables them to qualify for a utility deduction and in turn increases their SNAP benefits.

But we do not want this provision to affect any households in the States that have not engaged in this practice or to cut benefits for households that do pay for utility expenses in the States that engaged in the practice. I know LIHEAP is a critical program in helping low-income families meet their energy needs, especially in cold weath-

er places and in winters like the one we're having this year. When the State has already determined that a household needs help paying for utilities, it is wholly appropriate for SNAP to piggy-back on that information. We expect the Secretary to work with States to ensure that where a legitimate LIHEAP payment is made—that is, when LIHEAP has determined the household pays heating or cooling costs that such information still can be used to authorize a utility allowance in SNAP and that nothing should change in how the State makes this determination. All we wanted to do was shut down the inappropriate practice of very small LIHEAP payments to households without utility expenses from triggering a full SUA.

In addition, we also expect USDA and States will work to ensure that households that do not receive LIHEAP but that do incur utility expenses will continue to be able to receive the appropriate allowance. Many households do pay separately for utilities and need the SUA to receive adequate benefits. In cases where the cost of gas for heating is included in rent but the household pays for air conditioning or where the landlord has a surcharge to rent for utilities, the tenant should be able to claim the higher standard utility allowance.

We understand and regret that some of the effective dates in this legislation will result in considerable time pressure for the Department and States as a result of the slow process by which the final bill came together. We hope they make their best effort to meet these deadlines. But agencies should not establish any claims against households for benefits that would have been proper under prior rules because new rules have not yet been implemented. None of this is the fault of any household, and they should not have to experience the hardship of recoupment or tax intercept because the policy-making process moved slowly.

Several other provisions in the bill's nutrition title deserve a mention.

In Puerto Rico the Nutrition Assistance Program block grant plays a unique role in the safety net because the island does not receive significant funds from other programs that are available in States, such as TANF and SSI. Despite this, Puerto Rico remains shortchanged on nutrition assistance too—if NAP operated as SNAP does in the States, participation would be 15 percent higher and the program would cost more than 22 percent more in Federal dollars. Because of these inequities, Puerto Rico can currently issue 25 percent of its SNAP benefits to households as cash, rather than in a form that can only be spent on food. As a result, some of the benefits likely are spent on other essential household items. Although I have no objections to current law, responding as it does to

the unique circumstances of Puerto Rico, on the Agriculture Committee we have been under pressure to end this cash allotment. However, I fear that such a change could be very problematic for some participants who really need access to certain nonfood items and lack any other means of obtaining them. This bill requires a study on how eliminating the cash portion of the nutrition grant would affect Puerto Ricans. Assuming the study shows that it's feasible to make such a change, the cash allotment will be gradually phased out. But we wanted to be sure to protect poor Puerto Ricans, and so under the bill, if the Secretary determines that eliminating the cash portion would cause hardship, he or she can exempt categories of participants. The exemption could apply to the entire NAP caseload if the study shows that changing the policy would significantly and adversely affect all participants.

The bill also requires USDA to test changes to food assistance in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. USDA will explore whether CNMI's food aid can be configured more like the national SNAP structure and then a pilot is authorized subsequently to test this new approach. We understand that many of SNAP's administrative requirements may not be appropriate for CNMI, so we don't expect an identical program, just one that moves in that direction. If the Secretary finds that it is not feasible to run such a pilot, the funds available in this bill can be used for any of the things that the existing CNMI block grant currently allows for.

The bill also provides for a pilot program to test the provision of canned, dried, and frozen fruits and vegetables in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. The program, as the name suggests, currently allows for only fresh fruits and vegetables. The pilot in the conference report was included at the suggestion of some in Congress who believe that providing other forms of fruits and vegetables will be beneficial for the health of children.

I myself am skeptical of the need to make changes to current law with respect to the program. As we know from a recent, rigorous evaluation of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, the program is currently effectively improving child health and increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. In addition, the program is extremely popular with both children and with schools, with far more schools desiring to be included in the program than are able to do so because of limited funding. This doesn't sound to me like a program that is not working.

But the pilot program will settle the question of the health impact of canned, frozen, and dried fruits and vegetables, allowing us to know from a sound scientific study whether allow-

ing canned, frozen, and dried fruits increases consumption at a level consistent with a fresh-only program. Luckily, we have a sound benchmark for purposes of comparison that can be found in the evaluation of the fresh-only program. And it will be interesting to learn whether other forms of fruits and vegetables improve kids diets in the same way the current program does. In carrying out this pilot, we expect USDA to put together the soundest methodology possible so that we can compare the performance of the fresh-only program with one that also provides canned, dried, or frozen fruits and vegetables.

In addition, the bill makes a couple of changes to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children program, known as WIC.

WIC provides healthy foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals to nearly 9 million pregnant and postpartem women, infants, and very young children, and has a strong track record of improving birth outcomes as well as the diets and health of participants. One reason that WIC has been so effective is that the foods the program provides were selected through a rigorous, science-based process to fill gaps in the diets of the low-income women and very young children who participate. There have been many efforts over the years to get Congress to intervene in the specific foods offered by WIC, the most recent of which has been an attempt to require WIC to offer white potatoes. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's decision to exclude white potatoes was based on the recommendation of the Institute of Medicine, which found that Americans already consume plenty of white potatoes and providing them through WIC would crowd out purchases of other vegetables, like leafy greens, that are truly lacking in participants' diets. The absence of such a requirement in this legislation reflects a firm commitment by Congress to protecting the integrity of the WIC Program by keeping the process of selecting which food to offer science-based.

Another one of WIC's hallmarks is that it is very cost-efficient. Each year Federal WIC spending is reduced by \$1.5 billion to \$2 billion as a result of a competitive bidding process for infant formula, which results in sole-source contracts between State WIC programs and infant formula manufacturers. In light of the tremendous savings associated with these sole-source contracts and the valuable health improvements that WIC participation brings, Congress has remained strongly committed to WIC's competitive bidding process for infant formula. This legislation calls upon USDA to study the implications of sole-source contracting across all nutrition programs, as well as upon retailers and consumers, including the important role that sole-source con-

tracts play in WIC. Our consideration of the WIC Program when it is next reauthorized will benefit from a comprehensive assessment of the implications of WIC's infant formula bidding process for participants, retailers, and other consumers, as well the implications for federal cost-containment efforts and the ability of the WIC program to serve all eligible applicants.

As I said at the start, this agreement is not perfect. Each side had to give a little, but I am proud that we have rejected provisions that would have kicked worthy SNAP recipients off the program and this proposal is a sound, balanced, bipartisan bill. It contains significant reforms, and extends and funds progressive elements that I was proud to include in previous farm bills. Coming to agreement wasn't easy, but this farm bill takes an important step forward in dealing with the Nation's most important food and agricultural issues. I urge my colleagues to support it.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

MS. STABENOW. Mr. President, first of all, I thank our majority leader again, as I did earlier today, for his help in bringing this conference report to the Senate as quickly as possible and for his willingness every step of the way to work with us. I thank my partner in the Senate, Senator COCHRAN from Mississippi, for his wonderful leadership.

At this point in time I will turn to him and allow him to make his statement before proceeding with mine. I want to say to Senator COCHRAN and to all of those in Mississippi who are lucky to have him as their Senator fighting for them what a pleasure it has been to partner with him and his really excellent staff, and to have the opportunity to come here today with a strong bipartisan product that represents the agricultural and food interests of all parts of our country.

I yield to the distinguished Senator from Mississippi.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

MR. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am honored to be invited by the distinguished chairman to proceed in describing our work product, the farm bill conference report. It has been a true pleasure working with her and the members of her staff, it seems like over a long period of time with her coming to my State of Mississippi and traveling to other regions of the country to get a first-hand impression and a lot of knowledge about the challenges being faced by the agricultural sector in our country. She has brought to this effort a lot of enthusiasm and commonsense intelligence and pure old hard work. Also, there are the personal courtesies that abound to all of us who serve on the agriculture committee in the Senate, during hearings preparing for the

mark-up of an agriculture bill and during conference with our colleagues in the House to produce a conference report.

I am pleased that this conference report represents a 5-year farm bill. It is very important to production agriculture and to all Americans, as a matter of fact. The leadership that we have had from other Senators on the committee is reflected here too. We have had an active committee participating in hearings as well as our mark-up sessions. It has been a pleasure to work with Senator STABENOW and with all of our fellow colleagues on the committee.

We are recommending reforms in this legislation that are designed to assure producers that we understand the value of a safety net that will support them when they are struck by disasters or other things that are out of their control. Marketing disasters are just as severe as weather-related disasters. The risk management policies in the bill recognize the regional differences in priorities of agricultural production throughout the country. The commodity and crop insurance titles of the conference report reflect how Congress can work effectively to support American agriculture and at the same time be responsible to taxpayers.

The conference agreement consolidates and improves programs to encourage farmers and ranchers to use healthy land and forest management practices to conserve land, water, and wildlife resources. Programs such as the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, which will become a part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wetlands Reserve Program, are very important elements of a new emphasis on conservation.

We also achieve savings that are significant from reforms in the nutrition title of the program. The expected costs of nutrition programs are reduced by \$8 billion. The conference report includes programs to combat waste, fraud, and abuse.

I am particularly proud of our work to address the needs of our Nation's food banks because whether it is in Jackson, MS, or in Indianapolis, IN, many people turn to these facilities when other options are not available.

Other titles of this legislation, such as the research title, have proven that keeping the United States' lead in agricultural research is essential to our maintaining an edge in global competition. Our land-grant universities, such as Mississippi State University and Alcorn State University in my State, have seen their university-based research commercialized to improve American agricultural production.

In addition to agricultural production reforms, this conference agreement contributes to the goal of deficit reduction. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the bill will save tax-

payers nearly \$17 billion. The farm bill baseline was trimmed by \$6 billion from sequestration, resulting in an overall savings of \$23 billion.

Failure to enact this farm bill would leave farmers and related businesses with uncertainties that have been hanging over the agricultural sector for the past 2 years. This bill achieves significant savings and addresses a variety of agriculture needs across the country.

I urge the Senate to support passage of the conference report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Again, I wish to say what a pleasure it has been to work with the distinguished Senator from Mississippi and also with the chairman in the House, Congressman LUCAS, and the ranking member, Congressman PETERSON.

This really has been an example of the House and the Senate working in a bipartisan way. We are about to take the final steps now in passing the 2014 farm bill. We have actually passed this twice in the Senate. Each time we have gotten large bipartisan majorities because of the fact that we have worked together.

The final conference report that we have before us is one of which I believe we can all be proud. I hope my colleagues will support it and send it to the President for his signature.

We all know this has been a long time in coming—in fact, frankly, way too long. Our farmers and ranchers have waited way too long.

This bill has seen a long and winding road, but in the process we have worked together. We have not quit. We have worked across the aisle. The final bill has the support of over 370 different groups, and they represent those from all over the country and all over the ideological spectrum. That is because we wrote this bill when we were working hard to find common ground. We listened to each other, we respected each other, and we developed a bill that works for every kind of agricultural production in every region of our country, for families, and for consumers across the country.

We have 16 million people who work in America because of agriculture—16 million people. Many of them work in Michigan. Many of them work in Mississippi, California, New England, Virginia, North Dakota, and in every other State in this great country. They grow different crops in different climates, and they have different needs. That certainly is one of the challenges, always, for a farm bill, particularly when we are talking about a farm bill that reforms programs. Those 16 million people were on our minds every single minute as we wrote this bill, and that is why we have such a strong coalition supporting this farm bill.

This is a farm bill for the future with a whole new focus on responsible risk

management, healthy, locally-grown foods, strong conservation practices, clean energy, and research. In fact, it is a bit of a misnomer to call it a farm bill. It is 12 different bills, all of them impressive and worthy of colleagues' votes, and they all are put together in what we call the farm bill.

I want to take a moment to talk about these different pieces and all of the great policies that we have been working on for 2½ years.

The first title, the commodity title, if we were going to split off the commodity title of the farm bill and give it a name of its own, we would probably call it the farm bill. That pretty well describes the commodity title. Maybe that is why—even though the commodity title of the farm bill is, in fact, smaller in terms of spending this year than it has been before—the farm bill has held onto its name all of these years.

Once upon a time the commodity title was the be-all and end-all. The first farm bill was written during the Great Depression, when the entire agricultural system in the country broke down. Farmers left food to rot in the fields because crop prices were so low. It would bankrupt them to spend the money to harvest and to ship their products to market.

At the same time, people were so desperate for food that some of the most iconic images of the Great Depression are long, crowded bread lines that stretched for blocks and blocks. We have come a long way since the Great Depression, and our agricultural farm policies are very different than they once were. That is why this farm bill focuses on the future of agriculture in this country. This is not your father's farm bill.

In 1996 Congress passed a law called Freedom to Farm that eliminated the last vestiges of those production controls. To give farmers time to get used to the new system, that bill created a system of direct payment subsidies, which were supposed to be temporary.

But it didn't quite work out that way. Those payments continued, farm bill after farm bill, even when it was quite clear they were no longer defensible. The checks kept coming in good years and in bad. In some cases the checks went to people who weren't even farming.

In the budget climate of today, we just cannot afford those business-as-usual policies of the past. It was one of my top goals, as we wrote this bill, to end direct payments once and for all, and that is exactly what we have done together in this farm bill.

We also went through this bill page-by-page and made major reforms. We streamlined programs. We have cut red tape. We have eliminated waste. The first thing in this bill, on page 1, line 1, is repealing direct payments.

This is not your father's farm bill. This is a critical step in changing the

paradigm of agricultural policy. Instead of direct payment subsidies, we are shifting the focus of the farm bill to responsible risk management. Farming is a risky business. In fact, I can't think of a more risky business than farming in this country. We saw this in South Dakota last fall when a freak blizzard wiped out tens of thousands of cattle and devastated ranchers. We saw this the year before when record-setting droughts wiped out crops across America's heartland. We saw it in Michigan where the combination of an early thaw and a late freeze almost destroyed our entire cherry crop and our apple crop.

No other industry is as dependent on the whims of Mother Nature or on the wild swings of the market as agriculture. That is why we have a farm bill. We have a stake, and we should be proud we have the safest, most affordable food supply in the world because we partner with farmers. That is why risk management is our No. 1 goal in this bill.

In fact, it is what farmers have been asking for. They want the ability and, more importantly, the responsibility of managing their own risk. Of course, in a country as big and diverse as ours, the risks faced by farmers in Michigan are very different from the risks faced by farmers in Mississippi or Oklahoma or Minnesota. That is the key principle that guided us when we wrote the bill to make sure it worked for all different kinds of crops throughout the country.

As farmers are managing their risk, we are giving them the choice to participate in an Agricultural Risk Coverage Program—that we are calling ARC—which will help them cover losses they incur at the individual farm level or county level or they can participate in a Price Loss Coverage Program which will trigger if prices drop below a reference price.

Both of these programs will use historically-based acres decoupled from production to minimize any influence from the program on farmers' decisions on what or where to plant. We don't want them planting to the government program.

In addition, in order to qualify for either of these programs, farmers must agree to comply with conservation and wetlands requirements. They are so important.

We are reforming the system to stop subsidy payments to millionaires, and we have imposed a new, overall cap—a first-time overall cap—of \$125,000, for the first time covering both crop support and marketing loans, all parts of the commodity title.

This is the overall commodity title cap passed by the Senate, even though underneath the cap there were differences. We are requesting the USDA to close what is called the management loophole by updating its definition of "management" and giving the Sec-

retary, for the first time, the authority to put limits on the numbers of managers on a farm that can qualify for payments.

By ending direct payments once and for all—by asking farmers to take responsibility for managing their own risk, and by partnering with them so that they can do it, and by capping farm payments and stopping payments to millionaires—we are putting in place the most significant reforms in agricultural policy in decades. This is a bill our colleagues can be proud to vote for.

In hearing some of the opposition, people are debating the old farm bills and not understanding what we have done.

Every farmer we have talked to in writing this bill said that crop insurance was their top priority. So we strengthened crop insurance and gave more crops access to this kind of insurance.

With this bill, we are taking significant steps to change the paradigm of farmer programs. With crop insurance, farmers don't get a check, they get a bill. They may pay tens of thousands of dollars in premiums and never get a check in a year because it is a good year and there is no disaster, just like any other kind of insurance.

This bill also includes a very important permanent livestock disaster assistance program for ranchers who lose livestock due to severe weather, disease or other acts of nature. In the past, Congress had to pass ad hoc disaster assistance for livestock producers, adding to the cost and the complexity of the program. These have been some very tough years for ranchers. In fact, livestock herds are down to their lowest level since 1951—imagine that—because of what we have seen.

That is why this bill, for the first time, has a permanent, funding baseline, and a system that will ensure our ranchers don't go bankrupt because of a freak blizzard in October or a scorching drought that wipes out a rancher's feed supply. This disaster assistance is applied retroactively to October 1, 2011, and makes the program permanent.

One of the worst agricultural disasters happened in 2009 to our American dairy farmers. That is why we worked very hard in this bill to strengthen the dairy safety net by replacing the existing dairy supports with two new programs. The dairy margin insurance program, another insurance program, protects producer margins equal to the difference between the all-milk price and a national feed cost. We are taking special care to make sure that these insurance premiums are affordable for small and medium-sized dairy farms, making sure, especially, that we focus on any farm with fewer than 200 cows.

The Dairy Product Purchase Program, which is new and is a part of this, gives the Department of Agri-

culture the flexibility to purchase dairy products, milk, and other products when margins fall below \$4. Those dairy products will be donated for the first time to families in need, through public and private organizations, including food banks, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens. This was a hard-fought compromise on dairy. I have to say my preference would have been what we passed twice in the Senate as a strong dairy policy. But given the resistance of the Speaker and the leadership in the House and the need to be able to find something we could move forward on and pass that would work for dairy farmers, we worked very hard to find a way to move forward to get the votes and support and make sure we were helping farm operations in every region of the country. We know the pressures on the New England area farmers are very different from the pressures on our own producers in Michigan or in the Midwest or on the west coast, and we have worked hard to find something that works.

While title I of the farm bill reforms programs so farmers are taking responsibility for their own risk, title II of the farm bill is about risk management for the whole country. This is the conservation bill in this farm bill. In all the discussions in the farm bill, it too often gets overlooked. In fact, it is our Nation's largest and most enduring investment in conservation on private lands, which are the majority of our lands in America.

This farm bill includes a historic agreement between supporters of traditional commodities and environmental and conservation groups to link conservation compliance to crop insurance—critically important as we eliminate direct payments and ask farmers to manage their risk through crop insurance. We do not want to create unintended consequences of risk for our lands and our water resources.

At the start of this farm bill process, commodity groups and conservation groups were on very different sides on this issue, but they sat down together, they listened, and they found common ground. It turned out their differences weren't as great as they thought they were. In fact, no one has a bigger stake in protecting our land and our water than our farmers. With a little compromise and a lot of hard work, which is the story of this entire bill, they brought us a plan that conserves soil and water resources for generations to come and protects the safety net for farmers to rely on.

This has been called the greatest advancement in conservation in three decades. I wish to underscore for my colleagues that this is an important and historic agreement, and I thank everyone who has been involved in the hard work of putting it together.

We have also created a new sodsaver provision to prevent farmers from

plowing up native prairie lands, saving money for taxpayers and saving absolutely critical wildlife habitat. We need to manage land to prevent erosion. That is how we avoid having another dust bowl during droughts. It is equally important to continue preserving wetlands that help prevent flooding and create important wildlife habitats for ducks and birds and other waterfowl.

What else does the conservation title do? It directly preserves millions of acres of wildlife habitat, which in turn has helped to rebuild populations of duck, quail, and pheasants, among others. That is why the bill has the strong support of the National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Quail Forever, Pheasants Forever, the Audubon Society, and the World Wildlife Fund, which are only a handful of the more than 250 conservation groups that have endorsed this bill.

To strengthen conservation, we went through every program and focused on making it more flexible, easier to use, and we were able to take 23 different programs, cut it down to 13, and put it into 4 different areas with a lot of flexibility that also allowed us to save dollars in this bill.

The first is working lands, giving farmers the tools they need to be the best stewards of their natural resources. The centerpiece of this function is called EQIP—the Environmental Quality Incentives Program—one of the most important conservation programs out there for farmers. EQIP gives technical and financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and private forest owners to help them conserve soil and water.

Working lands conservation also includes the Conservation Stewardship Program, which encourages higher levels of conservation and the adoption of new conservation technologies. We continued the conservation innovation grants and the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program, which allows landowners to get value-added benefits from their land by opening them to hunting and fishing and bird watching. We made these programs even more flexible and added a focus on wildlife habitat, making them easier for farmers to use.

The second area, the Conservation Reserve Program, recovers highly erodible land from production to benefit soil and water quality as well as wildlife habitat. Despite record droughts over the last few years—droughts that in many ways were worse than during the Dust Bowl—the soil stayed on the ground. We haven't had a Dust Bowl. The soil has stayed on the ground. CRP was a big part of that, protecting not only the soil but air quality as well.

We also continued an important incentive program to help older farmers transition their land to beginning farmers.

One of the parts of the conservation title that I am most proud of is a new focus on regional partnerships. This will have a big impact on my own Great Lakes—that we in the Great Lakes area love so much—as well as the Chesapeake Bay and other critical areas where there are large-scale regional conservation challenges. We consolidated several programs into one, which will offer competitive, merit-braced grants to regional partnerships made up of conservation groups, universities, farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners to support improved soil health, water quality and quantity and habitat for wildlife.

The final area includes conservation easements, which lets landowners voluntarily enter into agreements to preserve wetlands and farmlands and protect them against development and sprawl. We consolidated and streamlined existing easement programs to protect important land for generations to come.

The farm bill is also an export bill. In fact, agriculture is one of the few areas where our Nation maintains a healthy trade surplus. That is why this farm bill continues efforts to expand opportunities for American exports, including the Market Access Program, to promote U.S. agricultural products in overseas markets and develop programs to open new markets for American agricultural products.

The farm bill is also a humanitarian bill that speaks to the best about us and our American values. Around the world millions of people get their only meals as a result of the generosity of the American people through the Food for Peace and the McGovern-Dole program.

I saw this last year firsthand in Haiti, where schools would open bags stamped with the American flag and provide a modest meal to students every day—very likely their only meal that day. I met one little boy who saved part of his lunch to take it home in his bag to his parents so they could have something to eat that night.

In fact, in the life of this program, more than 3 billion—billion—people in over 150 countries have gotten a meal thanks to the generosity of the American people and the American farmer.

The farm bill makes major reforms to our food aid program, speeding up emergency food aid response and giving flexibility to organizations on the ground to supply local food to people in need. These reforms mean that because of this farm bill we will feed another 500,000 people around the world. That is why this bill has earned the endorsement of many humanitarian and religious groups, including Feed the Children, the ONE Campaign, CARE USA, Church World Service, Catholic Relief Services, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), World Food Program USA, the United

Methodist Church, and the American Jewish World Service among many others.

Of course, we know hunger and poverty strike families all around the globe, including right here at home. I believe in the richest country in the world it is a disgrace for any child to go to bed hungry at night or go to school hungry in the morning. Crop insurance is disaster assistance for farmers who have been hit by a natural disaster. The nutrition title of the farm bill is disaster assistance for families who have been hit by an economic disaster. Most families who need food assistance only need it for a few months, and the vast majority of people receiving food help are children, the elderly, and the disabled, including our disabled veterans.

When the House of Representatives passed their nutrition bill, they included many provisions that would have seriously hurt Americans, such as many in Michigan who have paid taxes all their lives, lost their jobs through no fault of their own, and are mortified they need help to put food on the table for their families while they are getting back on their feet. This conference report rejects every single one of those harmful provisions. Instead, this final conference report before us strengthens the integrity and accountability of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—or SNAP—ensuring every dollar is spent responsibly so those who need help can get it.

The bill stops lottery winners from being able to get SNAP benefits and stops the use of SNAP funds at liquor stores. It also includes an important provision that addresses what the Washington Post called “a black eye on the program.” We have streamlined eligibility requirements to cut down on wasteful duplication, but a number of States discovered a way to use that streamlining to give some families additional SNAP benefits by counting utility bills they do not have. By sending out as little as \$1 in home heating assistance, States have been able to qualify families for a utility deduction, even if they do not pay any utility bills.

I salute those who want to help people get additional funds. I would have very much supported adding additional help in this bill, but this cannot be justified—what is being done here. We addressed this loophole and protected the entire program for 47 million people.

Here is what we have done and here is what it means to someone on SNAP. If you receive \$20 or more a year in low-income heating assistance—if you receive \$20 a year in low-income heating assistance—nothing changes for you. If you receive less than \$20 a year, you will need to go back to the old system of producing an actual utility bill in order to receive credit for a utility bill.

That is the sum total of where we have received and garnered the savings in this bill as it relates to closing loopholes. This is about strengthening the integrity of this program to ensure that food assistance is there for families who have fallen on hard times.

The farm bill also includes a number of pilot programs to help people find work or receive job training so they do not need food assistance. The Secretary of Agriculture can approve these pilots, which include funding for child care and transportation to make sure individuals are able to succeed.

The bill increases funding for food banks, continues an important effort that provides supplemental food for seniors as well as the senior farmers market program.

I am pleased this bill has the support of the AARP and others who understand the importance of senior nutrition.

The farm bill continues efforts to serve fresh fruit and vegetable snacks in schools, and includes a new national pilot based on something we do in Michigan called double Up Food Bucks. It essentially doubles the SNAP benefits for families when they shop for fresh produce at farmers markets.

I also wish to mention the healthy food financing initiative, which addresses the very serious problem of lack of access to grocery stores in low-income neighborhoods. There are many places in Michigan where this is a very serious issue. This financing initiative will help families put healthy food on the table while creating jobs in neighborhoods across the country.

It is also important to stress that the Congressional Budget Office projects that this farm bill, in addition to addressing fraud and abuse, will spend \$11.5 billion less on food assistance the right way—by the economy improving and people going back to work. So when we look at the fact that the numbers are going down, it is because of the economy improving. Frankly, this is where we need to be focusing our efforts, on supporting businesses to create jobs, and part of the way to do that is by passing this jobs bill called the farm bill.

The farm bill is also a credit bill, increasing access to resources which help farmers, especially the beginning and veteran farmers, own and operate farms. This results in jobs. This title will make more qualified farmers, of all sizes, eligible for USDA farm loans and gives more flexibility to the USDA so they can better reach new types of farming, including local and regional producers.

With 16 million people working in agriculture across the country, the farm bill is a jobs bill—and nowhere is that more evident than in America's rural communities. The rural development title of the farm bill authorizes programs which are absolutely essential

to small towns and rural communities and those who work in those communities.

We are continuing the important work of rural economic development and rural broadband. Just as rural electrification brought opportunities to families across the country in the last century, rural broadband opens doors for increased commerce and interconnectedness for the 21st century.

Ninety percent of community water systems serve 10,000 people or less. We provide mandatory funding to address the backlog of rural water applications at USDA so rural communities have a safe supply of drinking water.

For the first time we prioritize and reserve funding for rural development applications submitted by communities working together on long-term, sustainable community and economic development plans because these regional strategies will be more effective at the local level, and we want to provide as much flexibility as possible. The farm bill's rural development title is about entrepreneurship and the lasting strength of small towns across America in which it invests.

As I mentioned earlier today, we are creating an innovative new Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research in this bill—modeled after what we do with medical research—to tackle the difficult fight against pests and diseases, and it increases opportunities through innovation to create jobs. For too many years, agricultural research has suffered because of budget cuts over and over. This new research foundation will bring together public and private funds to maintain a steady stream of funding for this important research. We provide \$200 million in seed money, and it can be matched by \$200 million from the private sector in an ongoing commitment.

In addition to the new research foundation, we have a major new focus on food and agricultural research throughout this bill. We have a major focus on the specialty crops research initiative to find solutions to pests and diseases that affect fruit and vegetable crops, and we have efforts in this title to support beginning farmers and ranchers as well. We are also continuing successful research and extension efforts, including work done by our premier land grant universities—such as my alma mater, Michigan State University.

As to the forestry title, healthy forests mean clean air, fresh water, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Coupled with the tools we have in the conservation title, the forestry title of the farm bill helps foresters maintain the health of our private forest lands.

We are strengthening our efforts to fight invasive pests that have destroyed many thousands of trees, particularly in the West. We worked hard to ensure that private landowners can

continue to effectively manage their operations.

As I mentioned earlier this afternoon, the farm bill is an energy bill. I am extremely pleased that during negotiations with the House we kept the full funding from the Senate's energy title.

Our rural communities have been at the forefront of the effort to achieve American energy independence. We are strengthening these efforts through the highly successful Rural Energy for America Program, which helps farmers and rural small business owners generate their own power or improve energy efficiency to lower their utility bills. Thousands of farms across the country have lowered their input costs thanks to the REAP program.

We are continuing our commitment to the development of the next generation of advanced biofuels. Scientific advancements are allowing us to develop ethanol with food and agricultural waste products. With this farm bill, we will see even more biorefineries come online, producing homegrown fuels which bring competition and lower prices for consumers at the pump.

This farm bill also supports our growing biobased economy with my new grow it here, make it here initiative. Biobased products are manufactured items made from all kinds of plant materials that replace petroleum and other chemicals. These products are everywhere, from the cups in the Senate cafeteria—which are made by a Michigan company, by the way—to cleaning products, industrial lubricants, and even the foam in the seats of cars which, if it is a new American-made car, will be based on soy oil foam rather than petroleum oil. Biobased manufacturing creates jobs, strengthens our economy, and reduces our use of fossil fuels.

As I have said before, this is a farm bill focused on the future, and nowhere is that more evident than in the specialty crops title. This is essentially the produce aisle of the farm bill. Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, nuts, and nursery crops. We are strengthening the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, expanding specialty crop research, expanding crop insurance to include specialty crops, and continuing the highly successful fresh fruits and vegetables SNAP program in our schools.

We don't want to just grow more fruits and vegetables, we need to be able to get them to consumers. That is why this farm bill more than quadruples support for farmers markets. We are also strengthening local food hubs, which bring farmers together with local supermarkets, restaurants, and schools to supply locally grown healthy foods.

The farm bill also recognizes an incredibly fast-growing segment of agriculture—organics. We continue our efforts to support farmers to get certified

as organic, expand crop insurance options to organic farmers, and provide funding for continued organic research.

This bill truly reflects the diversity of crops we grow in America, and nowhere is that more evident than in the specialty crops and organics title.

In every part of this farm bill we worked on streamlining and consolidating programs. In fact, we ended over 100 different programs and authorizations in this process. I said to my staff at the very beginning: Don't think about programs. Think about principles—what should we be doing in agriculture and food policy, not what programs do we want to protect. That is how we have moved forward throughout this entire process.

There is one thing we did add and I am very pleased with; that is, a new veterans agriculture liaison at USDA to work with our men and women in uniform who are coming home and want to get involved in agriculture. We know the majority of our men and women are coming home to small towns, such as where I grew up in northern Michigan, and rural communities, and we want to support them so they can be successful if they choose to go into agriculture.

This is a new kind of farm bill, designed to meet new challenges of a changing world. We are also making major reforms, eliminating unnecessary, unjustified programs to cut government spending and to increase the integrity of farm programs.

This farm bill reflects critical steps in changing the paradigm, where we are ending subsidies and giving farmers the tools they need to manage their own risks. We support them, but in doing that, as we know, when we have insurance products—and that is what we are looking at throughout this bill, whether it is a new insurance-type approach for cotton or dairy or for our traditional commodities. With any other kind of insurance, you pay the premium, pay the premium, and pay the premium but don't get any help unless there is a loss, a disaster. This is a fundamental shift in this farm bill, helping our farmers to manage risk in a fiscally responsible way.

I think my distinguished ranking member would admit it was a lot of work. After all of this work, to my knowledge, we offer the Senate the only effort where a group of people within their jurisdiction of authority have voluntarily cut spending to reduce the deficit. If we couple the sequestration cuts of approximately \$6 billion and the cuts in this bill to agriculture, we are coming to the Senate and offering a bill of reform, cutting programs, cutting duplication, cutting spending that actually creates \$23 billion in deficit reduction. I am proud of that. This truly is not your father's farm bill.

We are about to vote to bring debate on this conference report to a close.

But before we do, I once again thank my ranking member, the senior Senator from Mississippi, who has been a friend and a partner throughout this entire process. I have enjoyed very much having the opportunity to work with Senator COCHRAN and his very competent staff. I learned along the way that we have a great love of music in piano playing and the blues—which sometimes we were singing during this process. But it has been my great honor to work with him and our House colleagues as we have worked to bring this forward.

My ranking member had a different perspective than I had, and we have written this bill together. I have learned a lot about the perspective of Mississippi and the South, and I hope I have shared the perspective of Michigan and the North—and the East and the West—as we have listened to our colleagues. I urge our colleagues to support this conference report.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act.

Harry Reid, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Bill Nelson, Tom Harkin, Tammy Baldwin, Jon Tester, Michael F. Bennet, Patrick J. Leahy, Max Baucus, Amy Klobuchar, Heidi Heitkamp, Joe Donnelly, Richard J. Durbin, Mark Udall, Martin Heinrich, Sherrod Brown.

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

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, an act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 20 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Alexander	Fischer	Merkley
Baldwin	Franken	Mikulski
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Moran
Baucus	Graham	Murkowski
Bennet	Hagan	Murphy
Blunt	Harkin	Murray
Booker	Hatch	Nelson
Boozman	Heinrich	Portman
Boxer	Heitkamp	Pryor
Brown	Hirono	Reed
Burr	Hoeven	Reid
Cantwell	Isakson	Risch
Cardin	Johanns	Sanders
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Casey	Kaine	Schumer
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Crapo	Levin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Manchin	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Feinstein	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—22

Ayotte	Grassley	Roberts
Blumenthal	Heller	Rubio
Coburn	Inhofe	Scott
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Corker	Lee	Shelby
Cornyn	Markey	Warren
Cruz	McCain	
Flake	Paul	

NOT VOTING—6

Begich	Rockefeller	Udall (CO)
Landrieu	Toomey	Vitter

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 72, the nays are 22. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from New Jersey.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, it is an honor to speak for my first time in the Senate. As I speak today on the urgent need to extend unemployment insurance, I feel a sense of profound gratitude that I first want to note. First, I feel this gratitude to the people of the State of New Jersey. It is remarkable, the privilege they have given me to walk into this hall, to stand right in the area where the great Senator Frank Lautenberg stood, to work here in this hall which is filled with such history, to have the privilege of sitting there at the desk where the Presiding Officer is sitting and touch things that seem like they should belong in a museum, like a gavel from hundreds of years ago, to walk in here and see over our heads words like "courage" and "wisdom" and "patriotism." Most importantly, it is a privilege to walk here among my colleagues, all 99 of them, every single one senior to me in months and years served, in wisdom, and in experience. It is my prayer, first and foremost, that I prove worthy of this incredible honor.

With all of that said, I also realize that I joined this body at a time when Congress is not really thought that well of by the American public. In fact, this institution's approval ratings are at an all-time low. I find that not surprising. Even when I was running for this office, I encountered so much frustration. In the days before I came down here, people who you would think would love Congress would look at me and say: Go down there and give them hell. I think that is because so many people in America understand what we have endured for the last 6 years, which is the worst economy of my lifetime. While we are seeing some progress in our national recovery, it has come slowly and unevenly. Many families are still hurting. Americans believe Congress is not doing all it can to address the urgent problems they face. They believe that we have, in some cases, made problems worse. Some people, I understand, have surrendered to cynicism about government, cynicism about America's future, cynicism about the ability for people themselves to shape their own lives and their destiny. But we cannot allow the pain of so many Americans to overshadow that long history we all share. There is a reason why American history does not look kindly upon cynics and naysayers, for even with all of its wrenching pain and savage problems, our collective past offers a resounding testimony to overcoming impossible challenges, to righting terrible wrongs and advancing deeper and deeper meaning to those very American words "liberty and justice for all."

That is what our Nation is, the oldest constitutional democracy, a country founded not so that its people get special treatment because of divine rights of Kings and Queens but because everyone is valued. We did not get there right away. Even in our founding documents, where Native Americans are referred to as savages, African American as fractions of human beings, and women not at all, we have made progress.

I know I am here in this Chamber because of what this Nation has done by coming together. Like all of my colleagues, all 99 of them, we are not here because of some royal lineage or entitled ancestor. I personally stand here like others because of the grit, work, sacrifice, and discipline of my ancestors but also because they had the blessing to labor in a Nation that for generation after generation advanced to greater and greater inclusion, greater and greater opportunity, spread among more and more people.

Our Nation has an enduring belief that when we struggle together for a common cause America is better and we are all better. It is the understanding that we are a Nation with a profound and sacred Declaration of Independence. Also, our country has a

historical chorus that profoundly proclaimed a declaration of interdependence.

We began and have endured because our ancestors understood the common cause that is America. This cause was heralded by our greatest leaders in every single generation, the people whose words and speeches and examples inspired me to be here today. George Washington, an original Founding Father, reminded us of this principle and American ideal in his farewell address where he wrote:

The name American belongs to us. We have in common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty we possess are the work of joint counsel and joint effort, of common dangers, common suffering and common successes.

So standing here I am grateful that I have never forgotten what my mom has told me time and time again: "Boy, don't forget where you come from." Well, I know from whence I come. I now from whence all of my colleagues come. I am proud that we, all 100 of us, descendants of slaves, of immigrants, labor factory workers, domestics, of farmers who through toil brought from the earth hope, of business people, who with impossible mountains before them climbed high and commanded forth new opportunity—all of us, despite our political differences, share a common heritage, and we share a common desire to solve problems, to address the challenges that plague this Nation, that hurt families, to serve our country so that we may give truth to the words like "courage" and "patriotism" and "wisdom," so that they never become simply empty words etched above our heads but they constantly fuel the passion and desire of our hearts.

That is why 3 months in, almost to the day, I am inspired by the work of this body. I have not surrendered to the cynicism about it. I am inspired by the remarkable people who sit around me right now. This is a great institution. I now have an even more fervent, relentless belief that together we can address our common cause and the common challenges afflicting our national strength.

Principal among these challenges facing the United States is the persistent economic hardship and insecurity facing too many Americans. Our economy, though improving, is nonetheless failing too many people. Economic trends and challenges, not of any individual's making, and particularly not of the making of those who felt the pain of this great recession the most, are forcing too many families out of the middle class and into poverty.

This is not a threat to just some. It is a threat to us all. A shrinking middle class and intractable poverty is a threat to America. It is a challenge to the very idea of who we profess to be as

a Nation; that each generation should do better than the one before; that we are a land of growing prosperity shared by a widening population; that the idea that anyone born in any station, through hard work, self discipline, and sacrifice can make it in America.

But over the last few decades this has become less and less the case. You see, wages are stagnant and by some measures have declined for the middle class. Social mobility in America, almost embarrassingly, lags behind many of our competitor nations. More and more families are beginning to question that idea that in America every generation does better than the one before.

More and more people now are getting stuck and feeling stuck through no fault of their own in a dismal hope-subduing economic condition. I watched, when I was Mayor of New Jersey's largest city, how company after company shed workers during the recession, how retirement savings collapsed, how the ratio of people looking for jobs to jobs available jaggedly cut against the American worker, still standing now at roughly 3 Americans looking for a job for every job that is available.

Amidst this jarring recession, other economic trends continue to deepen our national economic wounds. Companies are now outsourcing jobs and investment. New technologies bring incredible societal benefit, but they are also driving many jobs into obsolescence. The worker in America is facing a weakening in negotiating position.

So as a new Senator, I am inspired by my colleagues, many of them, and especially their incredible staff, the unsung giants of our Federal Government who are working hard to meet the challenges. I profess that I hear from Members on both sides of the aisle a true understanding of our common cause and our collective responsibility here in the Senate.

Senator after Senator to whom I talked in my first 3 months is driving an agenda that gives my very hope sustenance. I am proud to roll up my sleeves and work with them regardless of party. While we may have differences in approach and disagreements on strategy, the common call to improve our economy has Senators nobly pushing what I believe are critical important legislative measures, measures that range from efforts to address our national skills gap, to expand educational opportunities, to boost our manufacturing sector, to lift small businesses, to promote research, development and investment in infrastructure, and efforts to stop the perverse incentive that drives jobs and investment overseas, and so much more.

But these critical and worthy efforts may take months or longer to move through Congress and even more time to have an effect to expand our economy at the necessary rate. Thus they

do not relieve us from the urgency to do more right now to help those families caught amidst these treacherous economic trends.

These are families who so desperately want to work, who spend their days searching for jobs, sending out resume after resume after resume, going online and filling out application after application after application. There are tens of thousands of New Jersey families who are visiting food pantries for food or depleting their savings accounts or are cashing out their IRAs and who are racking up credit cards just to pay for necessities, who are skipping prescriptions, who are missing rent payments, and who are falling behind on their mortgages, letting car insurance lapse, having their utilities canceled, and having their children miss out—sitting out of field trips or afterschool activities just because their parents can't afford the costs.

This is why unemployment insurance is critical. It is America answering the call to help people in a crisis not of their own making.

I am proud, God, I am so proud, that for the past 50 years America has answered that call time and time again to help others in crisis. We are America. We have been America. This is our tradition. When times are tough, as the great New Jersey poet sings: "We Take Care of Our Own." In fact, we are a nation that takes care of its own and reaches beyond. If there is a crisis, America is there. If there is a crisis, be it a typhoon in the Philippines, an earthquake in Haiti, America responds; be it an act of terror in New York or Washington, an oilspill in the gulf, flooding in Colorado or a hurricane barreling up the northeastern coast, America responds.

Our tradition is clear. When the vicious vicissitudes of the market create economic crises for our people at levels as high as they are now, America responds. Extending unemployment insurance has always been viewed in this light.

When Senator Robert Wagner rose in the Senate in the mid-1930s amidst a depression that cast millions of families—my family—into economic peril, he called the Social Security Act and its unemployment provision a compound in which blended elements of economic wisdom and social justice exist.

George Bush, who extended unemployment benefits five times, at a time when unemployment was lower than it is now, said in very plain English:

Americans rely on their unemployment benefits to pay for the mortgage or rent, food and other critical bills. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down.

Our inaction in the Senate in not renewing emergency unemployment benefits at the end of December, with national unemployment as high as it is

now, has let millions of Americans, adults and their children down—down into an avoidable economic misery.

In New Jersey, I found it was particularly stinging to our residents, even confusing to them, that when times were not as bad as they are now, we acted with bipartisan, no-strings-attached conviction for our fellow Americans. Not only did we act when the unemployment rate was lower than it is now, but we acted to extend unemployment insurance time after time when long-term unemployment was about half of what it is today.

President after President, Congress after Congress responded—but not now.

When times were better, we responded—but not now.

When fewer people were struggling, we responded—but not now.

When foreign competition was not as fierce, we responded—but not now.

When banks were irresponsibly over-leveraged and when insurance companies were dangerously undercapitalized, when rating agencies rated trash as treasure and when mortgage companies used reprehensible practices that harmed family after family, all together threatening to create cataclysmic crisis, we responded—but not now.

For millions of Americans suffering in these horrible economic conditions not of their own making, who play by the rules, who are looking for work, who are struggling, who are suffering, we have more than 50 years of history of responding and extending unemployment insurance—but not now.

I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment just to extend and single out my gratitude for the leadership of my colleague JACK REED. For his efforts, he has been incredible in trying to extend these benefits. He, along with other of my colleagues, refused to give up. He has worked quietly and relentlessly to find a bipartisan solution. He has offered compromise, offered pay-fors, and has offered a way forward that would bring hope. But so far that solution has proved to be elusive.

If we are to honor our collective legacy and tradition, we cannot surrender in this moment to the partisanship of today. So many people are depending on this body to come together and find a way not left or right but forward for America, because every week that we delay, 70,000 Americans lose their benefits. For thousands, every week, that means losing a house, an eviction from an apartment, and depletion of savings. Because 40 percent of those who received benefits have children, it means depriving our children of things we would all consider the basics. Nearly 3 weeks ago I stood with Senator REED and pledged to go back to New Jersey and return with stories of the people I met who needed our collective action and needed us to come together. Twelve events later, after stops all

across New Jersey, my heart has broken time and time again.

It is broken by the former A&P manager in River Edge, working every day to find a job and has burned through his entire life's savings; by the Hunterdon woman whose home of decades has gone into foreclosure. She is working every day to find a job but is in crisis; by the soon-to-be father in Paterson, working hard every day to find a job but is wracked with worry about providing for his new baby; by the father of five in Bridgetowne who now struggles every day to find a job but also to afford life's basic necessities. He was talking to me about keeping the heat on, about how they can keep gas in the car and food on the table. He told me about the strain and the stress it is creating in his oldest, a 10-year-old son.

These stories from cities to suburbs, from Barbara and Robert's kitchen table in Old Bridge, NJ, to the County Griddle Lounge in Clinton, NJ, to the One Stop Center in Plainfield, NJ, were eerily similar and, most of all, they were all avoidable with action from Congress.

Eileen from Bernardsville told me she had been looking for work for 1 year. Federal benefits allowed her to stay afloat and afford the things necessary to find a job, money for gas, dry cleaning, a cell phone. Even in front of other job seekers, she couldn't disguise her anger and disappointment with Washington. Her anger was about feeling that she and others were being ignored. She told me she felt ashamed of a country that would turn its back on its own people. She is mad about a Congress that she feels doesn't hear her, but she is mostly mad that anyone, especially a Member of Congress, would say she is lazy.

She is right to be mad, especially about the absurd notion that unemployment benefits provide a disincentive to work. That allegation frankly burns me. It is something I have heard too often; that somehow people are lazy or that unemployment insurance and payments, as meager as they are, provide a disincentive to work. This, to me, is intellectually dishonest and, according to most studies, factually not true.

This is one of those corrosive political strains that burns the collective gut of our national truth, pitting, actually, American against American and violates that American wisdom—my mom always told me—that we should not look down on another person unless we are extending a hand of help. We are not calling them lazy.

When I was mayor of Newark, I saw my share of lines of good people doing that well, offering a hand of help. These lines, I will tell you as mayor, motivated me even harder to double down because they were lines at soup kitchens where Americans were helping Americans. They were lines at the

one-stop job center where Americans were helping Americans.

But the longest lines I saw as mayor were when we had successes, when a new business, supermarket or company would come to town and say they were hiring. The lines would go on for blocks or wrap around buildings with people desperate to work, even for minimum-wage jobs.

I can vividly remember scenes just like that when Newark opened a Home Depot or then-Continental Airlines held a job fair. It was Americans in line with pride in their hearts, resumes in their hands, and hunger to find a job, any job, to get to work.

I heard that the last 2 weeks all over my State from former managers applying for entry-level jobs to no avail and people with years of experience so desperate they were applying for minimum-wage jobs with no success.

The people who really blew me away, who just set me aback because I honestly should have expected it—but I didn't expect to hear it—were people who told me in order to keep their pride and to keep their feelings of self-worth, on top of all of their stress and strain of unemployment, they found ways to volunteer at their local libraries, at their schools, at their churches. These were folks such as Mary, whom I met in Hunterdon County. Mary told me she was helping women look for work as she herself was. She was helping them develop skills from her experience while she was trying to find her own job.

This is the America I know. From our cities to our wealthier suburbs, people want to work. They want to give back. They want to contribute. They want to represent the truth of who we are as a country. Time and time again I heard people say, "We don't want unemployment insurance, we want a job."

Even folks who had jobs, though, told me of the pain of congressional inaction.

I stopped to meet with folks in Woodbury. I went to a restaurant, Marlene Mangia Bene—Senator MENENDEZ can probably pronounce that better. I spoke with the owners: Christopher, Maria, Frank, and other business leaders. The community of businesspeople told me how high the prevalence of unemployed people was and how many people were losing their benefits, and they came to the simple conclusion, as they watched how it hurt businesses in that town—less money coming to people in their time of need, less money spent, and that meant less revenue for businesses, which meant that some businesses might not be able to hold on to as many employees, and then those laid-off employees would then need unemployment insurance and more social services.

The cycle feeds itself.

If we fail to extend unemployment benefits, economists say it is going to

cost the country almost one-quarter of a million jobs this year alone. This is another government self-inflicted wound we can avoid. Reinstating benefits will save 19,000 jobs in New Jersey alone.

But it is bigger than that. Every single job is a family-added distress. While all families are important, there are some who should weigh especially heavy on the conscience of our country.

Take New Jersey State Assemblyman Bob Andrzejzak, an Iraq war vet who lost his leg in service to our country. He pulled together a group of veterans, young and old, for me to talk with at a Rio Grande diner in Middle Township in Cape May County.

I challenge any Member of Congress who hasn't done so already to sit with veterans who are receiving unemployment benefits or who, because of our inaction, just lost them. It is not hard to find them.

Unfortunately, nearly 21,000 veterans lost their benefits earlier than anticipated when we failed to extend benefits in December, and about 3,000 or more will join them each month unless we right this wrong.

Listen to the testimony of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who have come back into this economy after fighting on the frontlines, after facing peril and danger most of us can't imagine, and then here in America they have to face the harsh realities of, despite their best efforts, being unemployed and even facing the potential horrors of homelessness.

These men and women who fought for our country, who stood for our Nation, are not lazy. There is no disincentive to work in these benefits. These are people who signed up to go to war. The assemblyman told me how hard it was for his friends and even him to find a job. He told me what it does to their spirits and what it is like to give all for your country and then have your country fail to do what it has consistently done for others during times of crisis over the last 50 years—to extend unemployment benefits.

This man, Bob Andrzejzak, is shorter than me but he stands taller than I will ever stand—and on a prosthetic leg. He works a job as an assemblyman in New Jersey, with honor, battling to give more hope to his constituents in counties with high unemployment, such as Cape May County, with an over 12-percent unemployment rate.

He has good days, he has bad days, fighting it out on the front lines of our economic struggle. This Iraq war veteran is still fighting to protect his country, to advance it, and make real his country for the lives of thousands of people. His cause is our common cause. This burden should not be his to bear alone. We too, U.S. Senators, like him, have jobs, elected by the people. We swore an oath to be there for our

countrymen. We too pledged our sacred honor to serve America, to return to the words of General Washington. The name "America" belongs to all of us. We must be there for everyone, especially in this time of trial.

It is my hope this body, in this generation of America, finds our measure of commonality and comes together to find a way so we can better tend to those in crisis, so that we too may add our humble measure to the greatness of that enduring American ideal.

Let us extend unemployment insurance.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, if I could praise my colleague for his eloquence and for his passion and say how right he is. I thank my colleague Senator MENENDEZ for allowing me to speak, but I wanted to commend Senator BOOKER for his brilliance and for his dedication.

I want to applaud the Senator for New Jersey for his maiden speech and for using this opportunity to focus on the urgent need to renew unemployment insurance for over 1.7 million Americans. The expiration has drained an estimated \$2.2 billion from State economies according to estimates based on data from the Department of Labor and the Ways and Means Committee.

Our constituents, who lost their job through no fault of their own and are searching for work in this extremely challenging economy, are looking to Congress to renew this commonsense and very modest support. They've worked hard and are searching for work with just as much fervor. But on December 28 the rug was pulled out from under them because some of my colleagues on the other side had decided they would rather let emergency unemployment insurance expire. And yet we have traditionally extended aid when the long-term unemployment rate remains as high as it still unfortunately is.

Democrats have been pushing to extend this vital lifeline since before its expiration. And on December 17, Senator HELLER and I introduced a bipartisan path forward—and I thank the Senator from New Jersey for his support for that measure. This emergency extension for unemployment insurance for 3 months would give us more time to work on a year-long extension and address the concerns raised by some of my colleagues. This way folks in Rhode Island, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Kentucky—jobseekers all over the Nation—would not lose unemployment insurance as we work through these complex issues. Unfortunately, that immediate aid was filibustered despite our efforts.

That did not deter us. We have kept on working through those issues raised

by some of my Republican colleagues and we have addressed them. We are now proposing a 3-month fully paid extension—which is way out of line with past extensions. Indeed, 17 of the 20 times that emergency aid was extended no strings were attached.

President Reagan extended emergency aid three times and President George W. Bush did it five times.

We are still working to secure enough votes to break a potential filibuster. We are not there yet, but I remain hopeful. Yet the clock is ticking. I hope some of my Republican colleagues understand that jobseekers deserve a solution now and not procedural delays or obstruction. So I look forward to continue working with Senator BOOKER on doing everything we can to extend this vital aid to our constituents immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I want to commend my colleague from New Jersey for an eloquent and soaring speech that speaks to the collective aspirations we should have in this body on behalf of the collective Nation we represent. I am not at all surprised at Senator BOOKER's ability to relate to this body the lives of people from New Jersey and across the country who depend upon us to respond to them in their times of need and to remind us of the greater nature of what we should stand for as an institution and on behalf of this country. He did it with such aplomb and such passion and intensity, yet at the same time with such sincerity that I think it is an excellent beginning to what will be a very long series of remarks in the Senate on critical issues that will both inform us and at the same time remind us of the high calling for which we are all brought to the Senate.

I want to take one moment to add to what Senator BOOKER said, specifically on the topic he ultimately drove home, and that is this question of unemployment. I want to relate one story—I see the Senator from Utah is up, so I will relate only one story—but it speaks to the very heart of what Senator BOOKER was conveying here.

I get thousands of letters from people who depend on their meager unemployment benefits to avert economic disaster while they desperately look for work. As Senator BOOKER said, these people are not lazy; they are not looking for a handout. They just want a job, any job. I want to talk about one constituent in particular—Noelle from Atlantic County, who described herself as “a middle-aged unemployed single mother trying to raise two sons to be successful contributing members of our society.” She relates what happened after her marriage ended:

I didn't shrug my shoulders and give up, even though the “system” said I didn't qualify for assistance . . . I took care of children

in my home to pay the bills and avoid child care costs. In 2000, when my children were school age, I found a minimum wage seasonal job and worked hard to become a permanent employee . . . I worked even harder to rise up in the organization and become a respected manager. When that company went bankrupt in 2009, I found another job within two weeks taking a large pay cut and making far less than I would have made on unemployment. I stayed with that company for 4 years until I was laid off in July of 2013. Once again, I didn't shrug my shoulders and give up. For the following 26 weeks I sought employment. I have joined every employment website I could find and I applied for any job remotely within my limited job skills. Unfortunately, the responses I have gotten have not been encouraging. Thirteen years of retail experience, including nine years of management experience, translates into few opportunities. No one will consider me for any entry level positions based on my previous experience.

She closes by saying:

No, I do not think unemployment should be a way of life. No, I do not think you can be unemployed and disabled. No, I do not think 3 million unemployed Americans are going to find jobs in 26 weeks.

She is so right, and these are the type of Americans Senator BOOKER was talking about, and this is why the Senate should act.

I don't believe that is too much to ask, and I am pleased Senator BOOKER has come to this floor to lend his voice to the debate and to stand for people such as her. Again, I congratulate my colleague from New Jersey on an eloquent speech on such an important issue.

I am pleased that he chose to speak about unemployment insurance, an issue critical to so many families in New Jersey and across this Nation so they can make ends meet while they're looking for work.

Senator BOOKER has always been a voice for the voiceless, given hope to the vulnerable, and a helping hand to those who need it. It is why he chose public service. It is who he is and what he has always stood for.

He spoke eloquently and I commend him for his remarks. He rightfully pointed out that the issue of unemployment insurance isn't just about the poor. It is about all those people who need help while they continue to look for work.

We have seen the recession chip away at the middle class, pulling more and more families to the edge.

In this job market, they need more time to find work, and extending unemployment benefits will give them that time. It will allow them to step back from the edge.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, we are better than this. This farm bill is a monument to every dysfunction Washington indulges in to defend our policies and twist our economy to benefit itself at the expense of the American people.

The top-line talking point among defenders of this bill is “compromise.” The farm bill, we are told, may be imperfect, but it is a compromise we can all live with. They said negotiators from both Houses and both political parties came together and hammered out a deal. They said: This is just how you have to act to get things done in Washington.

There is, of course, some truth to this, but it is more of a half truth. There absolutely is compromise in this thousand-page \$1 trillion mess. But it is not a compromise between House Republicans and Senate Democrats. No, it is collusion between both parties against the American people. It benefits special interests at the expense of national interest.

This bill does not demonstrate how to do things in Washington but instead demonstrates how to do things for Washington. The final product before us is not just a legislative vehicle, it is a legislative getaway car.

And what did they get away with? Well, the farm bill is really two bills—one that spends about \$200 billion to subsidize the agricultural industry and another that spends \$750 billion on the public assistance program previously known as food stamps. The farm bill is, thus, a beltway marriage of convenience between welfare and corporate welfare, ensuring the passage of both while preventing reform in either. Instead, Congress broke out the neck bolts and sutures and put Frankenstein's monster back together.

This was the year the farm bill was supposed to be different. This was supposed to be the year when we would finally split the bill into its logical component pieces and would subject them both to overdue scrutiny and reform. This was the year we might have strengthened the Food Stamp Program with work and other requirements for able-bodied adults, to help transition beneficiaries into full-time jobs. This was the year we might have added an asset test, to make sure wealthy Americans with large personal bank accounts were no longer eligible for food stamps. But those reforms aren't there. Those reforms aren't here—not in this bill.

Under this legislation, the Food Stamp Program is not really reformed, it is just expanded. Once again, the give and take of compromise in Congress boils down to the American people give and Washington takes. Yet, if anything, the other side of this bill is even worse. Not only did the conference committee fail to reform programs subsidizing agricultural businesses, the conference committee removed many of the few improvements the House and Senate tried to include in the first place.

For instance, the original Senate bill, for all its faults, included a novel provision to limit farm subsidies to actual farms, actual farmers. The Senate

bill was also going to phase out crop insurance subsidies for wealthy Americans with an annual income of more than \$750,000; farmers who made three-quarters of a million dollars a year, after all, should not need taxpayer assistance to keep their farms afloat.

The House bill included a transparency reform requiring Members of Congress to disclose any subsidies they personally receive under the crop insurance programs. Yet all of the above reforms mysteriously disappeared from the final legislation now before us.

It is not as though the farm bill was a paragon of accountability and fairness to begin with. Agricultural policy follows a troubling trend in Washington, using raw political power to twist public policy against the American people to profit political and corporate insiders.

For instance, under this legislation, the Federal Government will continue to force taxpayers to subsidize sugar companies, both in the law and in the grocery store. The bill maintains the so-called “dairy cliff,” keeping dairy policy temporary. This will create an artificial crisis the next time we take up the farm bill, which will once again undermine thoughtful debate and reform.

Perhaps of all the shiny ornaments hung on this special-interest Christmas tree, the shiniest may be the actual croniest handout to the Christmas tree industry itself. Under this farm bill, small independent Christmas tree farmers will now be required to pay a special tax to a government-created organization controlled by larger corporate producers, like some medieval tribute to feudal lords. These costs will, of course, be passed on to working families. So every December, Washington will, in effect, rob the Cratchits to pay Mr. Scrooge and his lobbyists in Washington.

Yet, even all this is squeaky-clean legislating compared to this farm bill’s most offensive feature—its bullying, disenfranchising shakedown of the American West. Most Americans who live east of the Mississippi have no idea that most of the land west of the great river is owned by the Federal Government. I don’t mean national parks, protected wilderness, national monuments, and the like. We have a lot of those and we love them. But that is a fraction of a fraction of the land I am talking about. I am just talking about garden-variety land—the kind that is privately owned in every neighborhood and community across the country. More than 50 percent of all of the land west of the Mississippi River is controlled by a Federal bureaucracy and it cannot be developed: no homes, no businesses, no communities or community centers, no farms or farmers markets, no hospitals or colleges or schools, no Little League fields, no playgrounds, nothing.

In my own State, it is 63 percent of the land. In Daggett County, it is 81 percent. In Wayne County, it is 85 percent. In Garfield County, it is 90 percent. Ninety percent of the land in Garfield County isn’t theirs. In communities such as these, financing local government is a huge challenge. There, as in the East, local government is funded primarily by property taxes. But in counties and towns where the Federal Government owns 70, 80, or even 90 percent of the land, there simply isn’t enough private property to tax to fund basic local services: another sheriff’s deputy to police their streets, another truck or ambulance to save their lives and protect their property from fires, another teacher to educate their children.

To compensate local governments for the tax revenue Washington unfairly denies them, Congress created—as only Congress could—the PILT program. PILT stands for Payment in Lieu of Taxes.

Under PILT, Congress sends a few cents on the dollar out West every year to make up for lost property taxes. There is no guaranteed amount. Washington just sends what Washington feels like sending.

Local governments across the Western United States, and especially in counties such as Garfield, Daggett, and Wayne County, UT, completely depend on Congress making good on this promise. Given this situation, there are three possible courses of congressional action:

First, Congress could do the right thing and transfer the land to the States that want it.

Second, Congress could compromise and fully compensate western communities for the growth and opportunity current law denies them.

But in this bill it is neither. Congress instead chooses option three: lording its power over western communities to extort political concessions from them, like some two-bit protection racket. “That’s a nice fire department you got there,” Congress effectively says to many western communities. “Nice school your kids have. It would be a shame if anything should happen to it.”

These States and communities are looking for nothing more than certainty and equality under the law. Yet Congress treats these not as rights to be protected but as vulnerabilities to be shamelessly exploited.

For weeks I have been on the phone with county commissioners who feel they have no choice but to support a policy they know doesn’t work. This bill takes away their ability to plan and budget with certainty and forces them to come back to Congress, hat in hand, every year. County commissioners know this is no way to run a community.

I share their frustration, and I applaud their commitment to their

neighbors and their communities. I am convinced that in the long run, the best way to protect these communities is to find a real permanent solution—one that gives them the certainty and the equality under the law they deserve.

My vote against the farm bill will be a vote to rescue Utahns from second-class citizenship and local communities in my State from permanent dependence on the whims of faraway politicians and bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

For all the talk we hear in this Chamber about inequality, we nonetheless seem oblivious to its causes. This bill—and thousands of other bills, laws, and regulations like it—are themselves the root cause of our shortage of opportunity in America today. The end result of this legislation will be to disenfranchise and extort the American people to benefit special interests, to enrich the well-connected at the expense of the disconnected.

The true cost of that transaction—just another forced deposit and withdrawal from Washington’s dysfunctional favored bank—is a lot more than \$956 billion. The true cost of this kind of unequal cronyst policymaking is the trust of the American people in the legitimacy of our political institutions, in the fairness of our economy, and in the good faith of their countrymen.

Our constitutional republic, our free enterprise economy, and our voluntary civil society depend absolutely on the equality of all Americans under the law, the equality of all citizen opportunity to pursue happiness in their own communities, according to their own values, each on a level playing field with everyone else. This legislation dangerously subverts that principle and mocks any patriot who still holds it dear.

All Americans may be equal but—as George Orwell might put it if he were here today—under the farm bill some Americans are simply more equal than others.

I will not be a part of it, and I encourage my colleagues to recognize that there is another way, there is a better way, a new approach that remembers what—and whom—we are supposed to really stand for.

What we are supposed to stand for is deliberation—open debate and transparent amendments on this floor, in this Chamber. These programs should not be coupled to shield them from scrutiny and protect them from reform. If we need food stamps to fight poverty and farm subsidies to maintain our food supply, let those programs stand on their own merits or not at all.

Furthermore, the land out West is not going anywhere. This should be an opportunity for us to bring our people together, not turn our regions against each other and turn the right to local government into a dangerous political football.

It is time to have a serious debate about a permanent solution to federally-owned lands which can improve economic opportunity and mobility while reducing the national debt and deficit. All the evidence in this farm bill to the contrary, I believe we are capable of finding such a solution.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Senator BOOKER for his maiden speech. It is great to have him with us, and I thank Senator BOOKER also for calling upon the better angels in all of us to do what is right. Opportunity and fairness for all are not just empty words. They are words to live by and words to live up to.

Today I rise to add my support for extending unemployment benefits to those among us who need and deserve this lifeline.

In December over 2,000 Hawaii workers lost their unemployment benefits. Since then about 250 more Hawaii workers are losing their benefits every week.

In 2008 our country was plunged into the deepest economic crisis since the Great Depression. Many lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Many are still unemployed. Since 2008 unemployment benefits have kept over 11 million people out of poverty. Unemployed workers spend their benefits immediately on food and other necessities. Unemployment benefits go immediately into the local economy. Every dollar of spending on unemployment benefits generates almost \$1.60 in local economic activity.

But this isn't just about numbers. For people struggling to find work, emergency unemployment insurance is a vital safety net. It can mean the difference between being able to get back on your feet or falling into poverty. These programs provide real hope and real opportunity for people. I know this because I have lived it.

My mother raised three children by herself as a single parent. Most of us have relied upon or know families who have used the earned unemployment assistance they paid for. When my mother lost her job through no fault of her own, her unemployment checks went for rent and putting food on the table for her three children while she searched for work. So I know the anxiety when the family breadwinner loses her job, when every dime makes a difference.

Those who say people on unemployment are lazy or don't want to work are insulting and injuring millions of Americans, about whom nothing could be further from the truth.

High unemployment particularly hurts women. Among female heads of households, the U.S. unemployment rate was 8.7 percent in December. That is two points higher than the 6.7 per-

cent unemployment rate for the Nation as a whole. Neither one of these statistics takes into account workers who have given up looking for work. We should support a short-term extension of unemployment benefits while Congress works on a needed longer-term bill.

Last Friday President Obama announced a new effort to support the long-term unemployed. He gathered over 300 companies who have signed onto a set of best practices for recruiting and hiring unemployed—especially those long-term unemployed—to prevent discrimination against these Americans.

The Federal Government will lead by example in a new Presidential memorandum to improve its own recruiting and hiring of long-term unemployed people. Congress can do its part by updating and strengthening job-training programs, such as through the Workforce Investment Act which we will take up later this year. For right now, millions of families are counting on us to extend a vital life line to them. I urge my colleagues to support extending unemployment benefits.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise this evening to discuss the Agricultural Act of 2014—the farm bill conference report.

This legislation has been delayed over 2½ years, weighing the entire time on the minds of farmers and ranchers all across the country.

Last Tuesday I came to the floor to explain why I was the only Senator on the farm bill conference not to sign the conference report and why I cannot in good conscience support this legislation. I am here today to go beyond my philosophical concerns with the direction of the legislation, and I will instead focus on how the farm bill will negatively impact agriculture in my home State of Kansas, as well as other States.

The farm bill is not a simple reauthorization or continuation of our Nation's farm and food programs. We have already done that once with the 1-year extension of the 2008 bill. Instead, the legislation before us should be a wholesale rewrite of the programs and policies at the Department of Agriculture.

When this bill is signed into law by the President and fully implemented, our producers will have to make choices among new safety net programs, new regulations, and new rules. Some of these choices will happen only once and will be irrevocable. They cannot be changed for the next 5 years. This is a 5-year bill. We owe it to these farmers, ranchers, small business owners, as well as to the next generation of producers to get this legislation right. Unfortunately, I believe the Congress has missed the mark in that the con-

ference report goes backwards toward protectionist subsidy programs instead of forward with innovative and responsible solutions.

I am not alone in that assessment. As reported by the Kansas City Star last Friday, January 31, all four Kansas House members voted “no” on what is arguably the single most important piece of Federal legislation in Kansas. Now, that should grab everybody in America's attention. The entire House delegation from the wheat State was united in opposing this version of the farm bill.

It is not that we do not appreciate agriculture or the producers and their families in our State. It is entirely the opposite. We care so much that after 3 years of work, we will not settle for supporting backwards legislation just to get something done. I call it a look in the rearview mirror.

I understand compromises were made. But I cannot support a bill which marches backwards toward producers making bad decisions based off of government subsidies, retaliation against our livestock producers, and, once again, agriculture taking a disproportionate cut in spending compared—yes—to Federal nutrition programs.

When Chairperson STABENOW and I started the process of rewriting the farm bill, Kansas producers, regardless of what they planted, over and over again said their number one priority and concern was the availability of crop insurance which protects in case of disaster. They were also fully aware that direct payments would no longer be available to them, and most were OK with that direction. Kansas producers did not ask for a continuation of a target-priced subsidy program and they certainly did not want Congress to raise the target prices of all commodities.

Two years ago, in 2012, the Senate Agriculture Committee and the full Senate passed a farm bill that ended the countercyclical and commodity subsidy programs. If signed into law, the 2012 Senate farm bill would have taken the Federal Government and the Department of Agriculture out of the business of sending signals to producers, essentially telling them what crops to plant. Unfortunately, that reform was never fully realized.

We have something called the new Price Loss Coverage Program that is contained in this conference report. It sets high fixed target prices and subsidies for all commodities and regions of the country.

Last week, after the final details of the bill were released, I talked with a young producer near Dodge City, my hometown, who is a member of my volunteer agriculture advisory council. I fondly refer to them as my “ag posse.”

With the current cash price for wheat at the Dodge City grain elevator

around \$6 and a target price guaranteed for wheat set at \$5.50 a bushel for the next 5 years, I asked this young, successful, and informed producer: What are you going to plant? What he told me should not surprise anyone in this body—or anyone. He said: Pat, I am going to plant wheat for the government subsidy.

His answer only reinforces one of my biggest concerns with this conference report. When the Federal Government guarantees producers a subsidy triggered off a target price, reference price, a countercyclical price—whatever you want to call it—it always has and always will lead to planting and marketing distortions.

Today many producers have a college or advanced degree, often in business. They are going to evaluate the programs at the Department of Agriculture and make decisions that benefit their business's bottom line.

Instead of planting grain sorghum or corn or soybeans, my friend in western Kansas already knows he is going to plant the crop he is guaranteed to receive the highest subsidy payment from the government, not from the market. In this case, he plans to plant wheat at \$5.50 per bushel over corn which has a target price of \$3.70 a bushel.

I have yet to hear one explanation for why Congress is not only including target prices for corn, wheat, sorghum, soybeans, rice, peanuts, and barley but raising and fixing their prices regardless of movements in the market.

Kansas is the breadbasket of the world. So you might think Kansas producers planting more wheat would be a good thing; however, simple economics and history demonstrate why this is such a dangerous road for the Federal Government to take.

When all producers in Kansas and the rest of America have the same price guarantees and signals to plant wheat—no matter where you are—and the majority makes the business decision to follow subsidy signals instead of the market, over time there will undoubtedly be more production than global demand or otherwise.

We will have a surplus of wheat leading to lower wheat prices. That could normally be corrected by market signals, but with the fixed target price, farmers will continue to plant wheat for the subsidy—that subsidy guarantee—leading to further overproduction and even lower crop prices. We have been there before, and that is why we tried to reform the program several farm bills back.

This cycle of overproduction, low grain prices, and expensive support payments could eventually lead back to the days of mandatory quotas and acreage allotments—it has happened before—known as set-asides, paying farmers not to grow anything. We don't need to go back to those days. Our pro-

ducers in Kansas want none of that from their Federal Government.

Besides having high fixed target prices, the new Price Loss Coverage Program sets the price guarantees so high that some are at or above the producer's cost of production. This would mean the government is essentially subsidizing a producer so much that they are guaranteed to make a profit if they have a normal or average year.

It gets worse. The early analysis I have seen shows that the target prices are high enough that rice, peanuts, and barley growers will receive a subsidy payment at least 75 percent of any given year, likely triggering a payment 4 out of the next 5 years.

Other commodities are not treated as favorably. Wheat prices are likely to trigger a payment, on average, only 35 percent of the time and soybeans less than 15 percent.

What that tells me is that the new target price guarantees are set high enough for a few commodities to trigger subsidy payments with a high frequency.

Folks, this is no longer a risk-management tool or part of a responsible safety net. Make no mistake, the Price Loss Coverage Program is nothing more than a profit protection program from some of our commodity growers.

The lone commodity that has moved out of the price supports entirely was forced to after learning the lesson the hard way.

In 2002, the World Trade Organization ruled against the United States for cotton programs, including a decoupled target price subsidy. In a settlement with Brazil, we have been paying their producers \$147 million a year for damages. We are still paying them.

As much as I disagree with the backward direction of the commodity title, Kansas livestock producers may have more beef with this conference report. Kansas is in the heart of cattle country. After 3 years of drought, livestock producers in my home State are waiting for disaster assistance that has been unnecessarily delayed for over 3 years.

Yet when taking the full conference report under consideration, both the Kansas Livestock Association and the Kansas Pork Association strongly oppose this bill. Why?

In a letter sent to me by Jeff Sternberger, president of the Kansas Livestock Association, he says:

We are deeply disappointed the report does not address our two priority issues, mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL) and the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, GIPSA, rule on cattle marketing.

Mandatory country-of-origin labeling, or COOL, is a marketing program; however, our closest trading partners have found the practice anything but cool. Canada and Mexico are two of our biggest and historically strong mar-

kets for U.S. beef, pork, and chicken exports. In 2012 alone, Canada imported over \$1 billion worth of U.S. beef and Mexico imported over \$800 million.

If we do not come into compliance, as required by the World Trade Organization, Canada and Mexico will retaliate against the United States.

Without these markets, Kansas livestock producers will lose value on their products, negatively impacting one of the biggest drivers of our State's economy. Unfortunately, our efforts to fix COOL in the farm bill conference committee fell short—to the displeasure of our livestock producers and trading partners.

The GIPSA rule on livestock marketing should have been addressed in the final farm bill conference report as well. The House version of the farm bill had strong provisions that would have let our livestock producers make their own marketing decisions instead of GIPSA. Yet the provisions were left entirely out of the conference report with no explanation or transparency—behind closed doors.

Finally, I have to address a major inequality in the final conference report; that is, nutrition spending. When the Congressional Budget Office released their official estimate of the budgetary effects of this agriculture act, I was more than disappointed.

According to their letter:

CBO estimates that direct spending stemming from the programs authorized by the conference agreement would total \$956 billion over the 2014 to 2023 period, of which \$756 billion would be for nutrition programs.

That is almost \$800 billion. By the way, that lower figure is a bet on the economy improving and people getting off the SNAP program, which would certainly be good but is not certain.

When you do the math, that means 79 percent—almost 80 percent—of the total spending in the farm bill will go to nutrition programs, including SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The final compromise includes \$8 billion in food stamp savings mainly from tightening the Low-Income Heating and Assistance Program, the infamous LIHEAP loophole, and that is a good thing. States were gaming the system. I am all for that, but that amounts to a 1-percent reduction to the nutrition spending out of a \$750 billion program if you believe the projections. I think it is probably more toward \$800 billion.

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry recently released a statement with the headline “Deficit Reduction: The 2014 Farm Bill,” showcasing the savings in this legislation. The release highlights the inequality between farm and food programs:

Farm subsidy programs were cut far more significantly than any other area of the budget under the Agriculture Committee's jurisdiction. By comparison, farm subsidy

programs were cut by 31 percent, while nutrition programs were reduced 1 percent.

You heard that right. Farmers, ranchers, farm broadcasters listening in, you heard that right. The farm bill once again prioritizes spending for food stamps over all other Department of Agriculture programs, including important conservation programs, research programs, and rural development programs.

I am fine with reducing farm subsidies such as the target price program, but we should have included additional reforms to the nutritional programs, which we tried to do—in several votes—in a reasonable and responsible manner. We were not touching anybody's benefits; we were just looking at the eligibility requirements. But the conference principals decided on the final compromise—again behind closed doors.

While we all want to provide much needed certainty to producers—goodness knows it is been a long time since we had a farm bill in place—the conference missed an opportunity for greater and necessary reforms to our Nation's farm programs, burdensome regulations on livestock producers, and Federal nutrition programs.

After over 3 years of deliberation and disputes over the farm bill, our producers, consumers, taxpayers, and global trading partners expect and deserve more than what is found in this conference report.

As a conferee, I did not sign the conference report last week. That didn't give me any pleasure. As a Kansan and a Senator from a large agriculture State, I am going to vote against this rearview mirror legislation for all the reasons I have itemized.

Having said that, I do wish to take a moment to personally thank Chairperson STABENOW and Chairman LUCAS, over in the House, for their unwavering drive and perseverance to finalize a farm bill. It is one thing for me to stand and criticize it and find in my heart and my mind and on behalf of my Kansas producers to vote no because I think that is the right vote, but I also know they have endeavored—Chairman STABENOW and Chairman LUCAS—to at least get a bill. It is a tall task to get a majority of the Members of Congress to understand that the farm bill is not simply a bill that you pay off.

I can remember when I was chairman of the committee over in the House and I asked a colleague to help me on the farm bill. He said: Why don't you just pay it? That indicated his broad knowledge of the farm bill at that particular time.

The farm bill is not simply a bill you just pay off. It instead represents important legislation for both urban, rural States and districts and the stability of the world, if you will, knowing we have to feed 9 billion people in the next several decades. At last, the

Chairs have beaten all the odds and are on the verge of completing a very complicated and time-consuming undertaking, to say the least.

I must also thank my colleagues and friends on the House and Senate agriculture committees for their knowledge, their expertise, and their diverse perspectives on agriculture. It is going to be really hard to imagine that many of the faces in the Senate agriculture committee room will not be there in person for the next farm bill 5 years down the road—Senator TOM HARKIN, Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS, both of whom will be sorely missed as they have both led the committee in their respective caucuses through previous farms bills. However, they will literally “watch over” the committee for years to come, because their portraits are on the wall, hanging just above us. I think their eyes move when we consider amendments.

Senator MAX BAUCUS will continue his service to the country as the next Ambassador to China, but we will miss his advice and counsel in the committee.

Finally, it is hard to describe the void that will be created with the departure of Senator MIKE JOHANNIS of Nebraska. As the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, he has seen both sides of the farm bill, implementing one and writing another. Even though Nebraska left the Big 12 for the Big 10, this K-State fan can admit we will all miss having this champion from the Cornhusker State around.

So although I will not vote for the farm bill conference report, I promise to all of Kansas agriculture that I fully appreciate the need for a farm bill, especially one that has been delayed for years. But while we need a farm bill, we do not need this farm bill.

I truly respect the farmers and ranchers and everybody connected with agriculture for what they do as a profession for our economy and for global stability in a troubled and angry world. I just wish the rest of this Senate would do the same thing. I will continue to work and to advocate and to champion agriculture on their behalf every single day.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I wish to commend the junior Senator from New Jersey on his first speech on the Senate floor. He brings a strong voice to the U.S. Senate. Today he raises that voice for our friends and neighbors who need it, and I am proud to stand alongside him.

Just 5 years ago middle-class families got hammered by the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. These families didn't cause the crisis. They worked hard and played by the rules. But they ended up paying the

price for Wall Street's wild risk-taking and Washington's failed oversight. People lost jobs, lost savings, lost homes. Far too many of them are still struggling.

For these families every dollar counts. An extra couple of hundred dollars a week can keep food on the table or the heat on during cold winter months. It can mean the difference between making the rent or mortgage payment or being out on the street.

That is what emergency unemployment insurance is for—to give folks the little bit of help they need to keep their heads above water while they search for a job. Unemployment insurance represents our commitment as a country that we will pitch in when our friends and neighbors have fallen on rough times, knowing they would do the same for us.

So far, Republicans seem determined to break that commitment. Because of Republican filibusters, 1.6 million Americans and counting have lost access to unemployment insurance since the end of last year, including more than 60,000 people in Massachusetts. Their obstruction means we cannot fulfill our commitment to the families who need it most.

My Republican colleagues should be looking for a way to say yes—yes to helping middle-class American families and their 2.3 million children who rely on unemployment insurance. But, once again, they just want a way to say no.

Extending unemployment insurance should be a simple matter. It happened five times during the Bush administration and not once—not once—did Republicans demand that the costs be offset by cuts or revenue increases elsewhere. But the Republicans have insisted on a different standard this time, filibustering because the extension of benefits wasn't offset. Democrats thought this was wrong, but we compromised and we agreed to offset the cost. So did we have a deal? No. The Republicans refused to take yes for an answer and filibustered again.

Why would Republicans block the extension of unemployment benefits? Some seem to believe unemployment insurance is actually bad for struggling families. One Republican Senator recently said emergency unemployment insurance does a “disservice” to people because it causes them to “become part of this perpetual unemployed group in our economy.” Last year's Republican Vice Presidential nominee, Congressman RYAN, said that Federal safety net programs such as unemployment insurance are like “a hammock, which lulls able-bodied people into lives of complacency and dependency.”

This is an insult to hard-working people across this country—people who are doing their best and can't find a job.

This is an insult to people such as Terri, a 41-year-old resident of Gardner, MA, who lost her job last year.

Here is what she wrote to me after Congress let the unemployment insurance program expire:

[M]y employer suddenly let me go and I found myself unemployed for the first time since my very first part-time job at 15. I have been diligently looking for work, applying everywhere, but I haven't had any job offers . . .

She writes that unemployment insurance:

. . . is all we have. I'm already on the brink of losing my home, we are struggling to hang on to what very little we have. . . I know I'm one of 1.3 million faces, but I'm a face from near your home. I'm a face that never thought I'd be in this situation. I'm a face that needs the help of my government's services that I have paid into for many, many years. I'm a face that has done everything I'm supposed to—but I feel like I've fallen aside and no one sees me.

I'm not an abuser of the system. I'm someone who really needs my government to be there for me now. Please see me.

Terri isn't looking for a life of complacency and dependency. And she is not the exception. A person can't get unemployment benefits unless they prove they lost their job through no fault of their own, and they prove they are actively looking for work. Unemployment insurance is a critical lifeline for people who are trying their hardest and need a little help—a recognition that Wall Street and Washington caused the financial crisis but Main Street is still paying the price.

And there is the rub. Republicans line up to protect billions in tax breaks and subsidies for big corporations with armies of lobbyists, but they can't find a way to help struggling families get back on their feet.

People such as Terri are hurting. They worked hard their whole lives and paid into the system, and after the worst economic crisis in generations, they are searching for jobs and scrambling to stay in the middle class. They are not looking for a handout; they are looking for a chance to rebuild their lives. They would be there for us; we should be there for them.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am reminded even at this late hour, when most of the world has moved on to other pursuits, what a great privilege it is to be with two magnificent voices and advocates for fairness and economic opportunity: Senator WARREN of Massachusetts, and my very good friend, Senator BOOKER of New Jersey, on his first occasion here on the floor. I feel very blessed and fortunate and privileged to be here with them. I feel that way at any moment on this floor in this body but particularly as we face this great challenge ahead: how to preserve and enhance our middle class in America; how to make sure America fulfills its great promise Senator BOOKER evoked so elo-

quently, going back to the days of George Washington; and now, with great leaders facing many of the same kinds of basic questions about whether we can provide that opportunity going forward, whether we are equal to the task in an increasingly complex society.

Just today, in the New York Times, there was a very profound and telling story about markets losing middle-class consumers. Only the high-end and the low-end retailers are being able to find markets for their products because our middle class is dwindling, squeezed by the vise of an increasingly desperate situation. How desperate it is for people who are depending now on unemployment insurance, as they see the deadlines for them approaching and they know they will lose roofs over their heads, meals on their table, for families they are struggling to keep together. As Senator BOOKER and Senator WARREN said so well, the unfairness of the economic crisis caused by Wall Street and Washington but visited upon Main Street America, middle-class America, mainstream America, still struggling to recover.

We know the unemployment we face today is deeper and more intractable than at any other time in our history. Long-term unemployment is larger percentagewise than it has been in previous recessions. That is a tragedy for those families but also for our economy, because those consumers are lost to the retailers and to the mainstream small- and middle-sized businesses that depend on them to grow and hire more people.

In Connecticut, as of last month, almost half of all of the individuals who have suffered a job loss—43.6 percent—were unable to find work for 6 months or more. That is more than 60,000 people. Those numbers don't tell the stories. They are not the voices and faces I have seen who are depending on a meager \$300 a week and who have lost even that amount.

Rosa Dicker, who has a deep knowledge of health care reform from her previous work, has received only three call-back interviews out of 500 jobs she has sought, and her job search lasted almost a year. Michael Kubica, who went back to get his MBA after years of experience in insurance and publishing, and, again, has been repeatedly turned away for employment. Alicia Nesbitt, proud to have been employed continuously from the age of 16—decades ago—recently found herself applying for food stamps. Then, of course, there is Katherine Hackett of Moodus, CT, who joined the President recently to speak out about the need for extending these benefits. Katherine's family has sacrificed greatly for this Nation, because she has not one but two children serving in our military. Yet, because of Congress's inaction, Katherine is struggling to pay for food and heating bills during her job search.

There are good guys out there helping people to find jobs. Capital Workforce Partners has done tremendous work. I have met with them and other job creators, as well as job seekers around Connecticut, and sometimes those job searches actually succeed, because people are able to sustain their lives and continue to search for work.

Erin Londen, one of the constituents whom I met as I have gone around the State, has found work after 10 months of unemployment. She writes:

I could not be happier! I just love my new job, it is everything I was looking for.

She is not a person who wanted to be without work. She is not a person who sought to be unemployed for 10 months. None of these people—none of the people on long-term unemployment insurance—want to be without work. She wrote to me:

It can take up to three months to get an interview. Then if you have follow-up, it could be another month. So I do not think it is reasonable to only offer six months of unemployment benefits.

That pretty much says it.

I want to emphasize one aspect of this problem that I think is absolutely unconscionable for this Nation to tolerate, and that is the high unemployment rate among our veterans.

This situation for post-9/11 veterans is beyond comprehension and beyond accepting. The male post-9/11 veterans in particular face rates of 8.6 percent, almost 2 points above the national average. Many of these veterans have been out of work for more than 6 months.

Long-term unemployment among our veterans is a scourge that this Congress has an obligation to address. Many of them left good-paying jobs. They came back to a nation that said it was grateful, and now they find no jobs and no unemployment insurance to keep a roof over their head and food on their table.

That is why I have introduced the VOW to Hire Heroes Act that would extend a key tax credit to incentivize companies to hire veterans. This credit expired last year, but veteran unemployment remains a serious problem, and I urge the Congress again to pass it. I have been joined by Senator BEGICH and Senator UDALL of New Mexico in writing to the Finance Committee to urge it to approve this measure so we can bring it to the floor.

I want to thank AMVETS as well for its support on a measure that is, unfortunately, increasingly important; that is, to ban discrimination against veterans in both employment and housing. Believe it or not, this phenomenon occurs. Most would find it incredible. Yet a measure is necessary to ban discrimination against men and women who served in uniform, who served and sacrificed, who have given to this Nation.

Discrimination, unfortunately, is also a fact of life against the long-term

unemployed. I have proposed again and reintroduced the Fair Employment Opportunity Act, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of employment status.

Discrimination has been established by various studies—researchers at Northeastern University. Similar studies involving academics at Yale, the University of Chicago, and the University of Toronto have found that the long-term unemployed—the longer they have been unemployed—are much more likely to be victims of discrimination. I want to thank seven cosponsors on this bill: Senators MARKEY, GILLIBRAND, SANDERS, SHAHEEN, MURPHY, MENENDEZ, and BROWN. I urge other colleagues to support it as well.

Finally, I want to thank again Senator BOOKER. He honors not only his own long history of public service but also the memory of our late colleague, our extraordinary and esteemed colleague, and my wonderful mentor and friend, Frank Lautenberg. He joins the ranks of others in the Senate who are fighting for the needs of the economically disadvantaged—people, as he said so eloquently, who play by the rules. They believe in this country, its ideals, its goals, and they want to serve it and give back and contribute.

This Nation depends on a covenant. It is the covenant that each of our generations leaves the country better for the one that follows—not only that the country is better for the next generation, but that each of our generations, on our watch, pledges to do better.

That is the reason we need to extend unemployment insurance. Without it, we will be a lesser nation, not just economically but in fairness and morality as well. I thank Senator BOOKER for reminding us of that fundamental fact about our Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I would like to briefly say thank you to my fellow Senators who took time to come and listen to my maiden speech but especially those who also spoke on the issue as well. They spoke with eloquence. They spoke poignantly about people in their State. And I pray they spoke persuasively.

I thank Senator HIRONO, Senator MENENDEZ, my senior Senator, especially. I thank Senator WARREN and Senator BLUMENTHAL, who are still here. I thank, also, Senator JACK REED and Senate Majority Leader REID, as well, for their working on this issue.

I finally want to say that I have already gotten word from people who actually saw some of the speeches from myself and my colleagues that even the words alone made a difference to them. At least they felt someone heard them, is understanding what they are going through. But that urgency persists, and my hope is that we, working together, can find a way to extend these benefits.

Thank you very much.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

FEDERAL COAL PROGRAM INVESTIGATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, the coal under our Federal public lands is a tremendously valuable asset that belongs to the American people. For nearly my entire career in Congress, I have been working to ensure that we do not shortchange taxpayers by giving this asset away to the coal companies for bargain-basement prices. As we are facing Federal deficits and budget cuts for programs that benefit hard-working, middle-class families, we need to ensure more than ever that we are not giving a windfall to coal companies on the backs of taxpayers in Massachusetts and across the Nation by selling this public coal for less than it is worth.

In 1982, following coal lease sales by the Department of the Interior on public lands in the Powder River Basin, PRB, in Wyoming and Montana, I asked the Government Accountability Office, GAO, to investigate whether taxpayers had received a proper return in these lease sales. The GAO found that this Federal coal was sold for pennies on the dollar. The GAO report concluded that the Interior Department had sold this public coal in the Powder River Basin for \$100 million less than it was worth. Following that revelation, there were a number of recommendations made to reform the Federal coal leasing program and ensure that taxpayers were protected. Unfortunately, I have concerns that similar problems with the Federal coal program may persist today at the expense of taxpayers in Massachusetts and around the country.

This week, I am releasing a new public GAO report on the Federal coal leasing program. This is the first time in 20 years that the GAO has evaluated this program and it is well overdue.

The findings in the latest GAO report highlight the fact that there still is a lack of competition for Federal coal leases. This dearth of competition

amongst coal companies means that it is the Interior Department, and not the market, that is ensuring a fair price is set for these valuable resources. To give you an idea of the magnitude of this issue, for every cent per ton that coal companies decrease their bids for the largest coal leases, it could mean the loss of nearly \$7 million for the American people. We have to act to correct the issues identified in the report and make sure national resources are not being given away at below market prices.

The GAO has found that the Interior Department is not properly considering the potential of future exports of this coal from Federal leases. These coal leases are issued for 20 years and can be further extended. Coal exports for electricity generation in other countries have doubled in just a few years. Companies want to sell U.S. coal overseas to China and European markets to increase their profits. If we are not properly valuing the possibility that coal exports to higher priced markets will continue to increase, we risk not only costing taxpayers money but also exacerbating climate change by, in effect, subsidizing coal companies to send more coal abroad to be burned in dirty power plants.

Moreover, the GAO has concluded in its public report that the Interior Department lacks transparency and is not providing sufficient information to the public on the Federal coal leasing program. I am extremely concerned that a lack of transparency and public information for the American people and for the Congress is inhibiting proper oversight of this important program to protect taxpayers.

When I was serving as ranking member of the House Natural Resources Committee, I began an oversight inquiry into the Federal coal leasing program in July 2012. While the Department has provided me, and my staff has reviewed, hundreds of pages of leasing documents, certain critical information necessary to properly evaluate this program has been withheld. As a result, the Interior Department is not providing information on the Federal coal program to the Congress in a way that allows for proper oversight. While the intent of this restriction may be to protect the integrity of future lease sales, the effect is to hamper congressional oversight.

As part of its investigation, the GAO released two reports to me, one that is public and one that is not able to be made public. GAO kept one of these reports nonpublic because the Interior Department believes that the proprietary information contained in the nonpublic report could harm the integrity of future lease sales. I believe that increased transparency with these coal lease sales would increase the integrity of the process, not lessen it. It would be very helpful for the American people

to be able to review this information. But even if that is not possible because of concerns about proprietary information, Senators should be able to review this information and debate it in order to ensure that taxpayers are protected. Unfortunately, we are not able to have that debate on the floor of the Senate for the American people. That is wrong and very troubling.

It is concerning to me that an agency would seek to withhold this sort of information from Congress. Without this information, we cannot make a legislative decision about whether the statutes governing coal leasing on Federal lands are working as intended and whether the Department is administering them properly.

Based on my staff's examination of the materials provided to me by the Department and included in the non-public report issued to me by the GAO, it appears that the Interior Department may be consistently undervaluing Federal coal leases. The GAO report found that the Interior Department is using information that is outdated in valuing coal leases. Based on the examination of the materials provided to me, I believe that this problem may be even greater than stated in the GAO report. I am concerned that the Department may be using extremely outdated information and boilerplate analysis that does not reflect current market conditions.

These are tremendously serious problems. Based on my staff's examination of the materials, I believe that using appropriate market calculations and assumptions in some recent coal lease sales could potentially have yielded \$200 million more for the American people and possibly hundreds of millions of dollars more.

Therefore, I am transmitting two letters to the Interior Department, one that I am able to release publicly and one that I cannot, which seek answers to how the Department will respond to the recommendations in the GAO report and other issues involved in Federal coal leasing. I believe that until the questions and issues that I have raised in my letters to the Department are properly addressed to guarantee sufficient taxpayer protections are in place, the Interior Department should temporarily suspend further Federal coal leasing. I will also be introducing legislation in the future to reform the Federal coal program to guarantee a fair return for the American people.

Congress needs to be able to conduct the necessary oversight to ensure that the problems we have seen in the Federal coal program in the past do not continue. Until that happens we cannot assure taxpayers in Massachusetts and every State that they are getting a fair return on this public resource that they own. Until that happens, we lack the assurances that we are not subsidizing coal companies to increase

carbon pollution by sending our coal overseas. It is time for the Congress to be able to conduct the oversight of this program that is required.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 5:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1901. An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

H.R. 2860. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that the Inspector General of the Office of Personnel Management may use amounts in the revolving fund of the Office to fund audits, investigations, and oversight activities, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1977. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1982. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4477. A communication from the Chief of the Planning and Regulatory Affairs Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Automated Data Processing and Information Retrieval Systems Requirements: System Testing" (RIN0584-AD99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4478. A communication from the Chief of the Planning and Regulatory Affairs Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Certification of Compliance With Meal Requirements for the National School Lunch Program Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010" (RIN0584-AE15) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4479. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Dinotefuran; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions" (FRL No. 9402-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4480. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Acetochlor; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9904-19) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4481. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Indaziflam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9903-88) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4482. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standards of Conduct and Referral of Known Suspected Criminal Violations; Standards of Conduct" (RIN3052-AC44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4483. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the designation of funding for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC-4484. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of a completion date of April 2014 for a report relative to the Department of Defense purchases from foreign entities for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4485. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Barriers to Nontraditional Suppliers to the Department of Defense"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4486. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department of Defense (DoD) intending to assign women to previously closed positions in the Army; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4487. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Proposal Adequacy Checklist Revision" ((RIN0750-A115) (DFARS Case 2013-D033)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4488. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Limitation on Use of Cost-

reimbursement Line Items” ((RIN0750-AI16) (DFARS Case 2013-D016)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4489. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Libya that was originally declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4490. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004, relative to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4491. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report to Congress describing actions taken to support and preserve Minority Depository Institutions; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4492. A communication from the Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Financial Research’s annual report on activities of the office to date; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4493. A communication from the Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Financial Research’s 2013 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4494. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 27, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4495. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4496. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 27, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4497. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities with Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds” (RIN3235-AL52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 27, 2014;

to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4498. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final Flood Elevation Determinations” ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 22, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4499. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Community Reinvestment Act Regulations” (RIN3064-AD90) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4500. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds” (RIN7100-AD61 and FRB Docket No. R-1432) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 27, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4501. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to transnational criminal organizations that was declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 24, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4502. A communication from the Director, National Science Foundation, transmitting draft legislation entitled “Antarctic Environmental Liability Act of 2014”; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4503. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, the report of a draft bill entitled “U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Resource Protection Act” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 6, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4504. A communication from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, prospectuses that support the Administration’s fiscal year 2014 Capital Investment and Leasing Program; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4505. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Dispositioning Boiling Water Reactor License Noncompliance with Technical Specification Containment Requirements During Operations with a Potential for Draining the Reactor Vessel” (EGM 11-003, Revision 2) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4506. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Generic Letter 2008-1, Managing Gas Accumulation”

(NRC-2013-0173) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4507. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: HISTORM 100 Cask System; Amendment No. 9” (RIN3150-AJ12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4508. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Decommissioning Financial Assurance Instrument Security Program” (MD 8.12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4509. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Changes to Dispute Procedures” (FRL No. 9803-9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4510. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Title V Operating Permit Program; State of Iowa” (FRL No. 9905-21-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4511. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Section 110(a)(2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards” (FRL No. 9905-62-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4512. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Consent Decree Requirements” (FRL No. 9905-54-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4513. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards” (FRL No. 9905-63-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4514. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hazardous Waste Management System; Modification of the Hazardous Waste Manifest System; Electronic Manifests" (FRL No. 9828-9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4515. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2013 Revisions to the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule and Final Confidentiality Determinations for New or Substantially Revised Data Elements" (FRL No. 9905-71-OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4516. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Carolina: Non-interference Demonstration for Removal of Federal Low-Reid Vapor Pressure Requirement for the Greensboro/Winston-Salem/High Point Area" (FRL No. 9905-70-Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4517. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Kansas; Annual Emissions Fee and Annual Emissions Inventory" (FRL No. 9905-66-Region 7) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4518. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 9904-02-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4519. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Quality Implementation Plan; Alabama; Attainment Plan for the Troy Area 2008 Lead Nonattainment Area" (FRL No. 9904-91-Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 1980. A bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to provide for 12-

month continuous enrollment under the Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program and to promote quality care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1981. A bill to provide that the rules of the Federal Communications Commission relating to preserving the open Internet and broadband industry practices shall be restored to effect until the date when the Commission takes final action in the proceedings on such rules that were remanded to the Commission by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 1982. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. HELLER:

S. 1983. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation, to convey, by quitclaim deed, to the City of Fernley, Nevada, all right, title, and interest of the United States, to any Federal land within that city that is under the jurisdiction of either of those agencies; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KIRK:

S. 1984. A bill to enhance penalties for computer crimes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 1985. A bill to reauthorize and modify the pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1986. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to provide for outreach, and coordination of services, to veterans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 114

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 114, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, with respect to certain exceptions to discharge in bankruptcy.

S. 315

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to reauthorize and extend the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments of 2008.

S. 489

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

BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 1033

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1033, a bill to authorize a grant program to promote physical education, activity, and fitness and nutrition, and to ensure healthy students, and for other purposes.

S. 1135

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1135, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to repeal a certain exemption for hydraulic fracturing, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1184

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1184, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to include information on the coverage of intensive behavioral therapy for obesity in the Medicare and You Handbook and to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity, and for other purposes.

S. 1236

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1236, a bill to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

S. 1407

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1407, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to strengthen elementary and secondary computer science education, and for other purposes.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from New Jersey

(Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1529

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1529, a bill to provide benefits to domestic partners of Federal employees.

S. 1688

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1688, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), collectively, in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

S. 1712

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1712, a bill to provide protections for workers with respect to their right to select or refrain from selecting representation by a labor organization.

S. 1803

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1803, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 1950

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1961

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1961, a bill to protect surface water from contamination by chemical storage facilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S.J. RES. 10

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 10, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitu-

tion of the United States relative to equal rights for men and women.

S. RES. 270

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 270, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio.

S. RES. 271

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 271, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that United States military assistance for Cambodia should be suspended until an independent and credible investigation occurs into the July 28, 2013, parliamentary elections, and election reforms are being implemented by the Government of Cambodia.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2712. Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. BEGICH, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2713. Ms. WARREN (for Mr. PRYOR) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 376, to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2712. Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. BEGICH, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the matter proposed to be inserted, add the following:

SEC. —. REPEAL OF CERTAIN REDUCTIONS MADE BY THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-67) is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

SA 2713. Ms. WARREN (for Mr. PRYOR) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 376, to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 9, line 2, strike "\$14,500,000" and insert "\$12,000,000".

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2013, at 10:30

a.m. in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Hearing on the nomination of Surgeon General designate, Vivek Hallegere Murthy."

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Emily Schlichting of the committee staff on (202) 224-6480.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2013, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Supporting Children and Families through Investments in High-Quality Early Education."

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Aissa Canchola of the committee staff on (202) 224-2009.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEE TO MEET

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, February 3, 2014, at 3 p.m., in order to conduct a hearing entitled "Safeguarding Consumers' Financial Data."

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that detailees Nona McCoy and Kevin Batteh be granted floor privileges for the duration of the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill.

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

DROUGHT INFORMATION ACT OF 2013

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar Number No. 222, S. 376.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 376) to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee

on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Drought Information Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM.

(a) **SYSTEM AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3 of the National Integrated Drought Information System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 313d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “and continue to support” after “establish”; and

(B) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “to better inform and provide for more timely decisionmaking to reduce drought related impacts and costs”; and

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) **SYSTEM FUNCTIONS.**—The National Integrated Drought Information System shall—

“(1) provide an effective drought early warning system that—

“(A) collects and integrates information on the key indicators of drought and drought impacts, including water supplies and soil moisture, in order to make usable, reliable, and timely forecasts of drought, including assessments of the severity of drought conditions and impacts; and

“(B) provides such information, forecasts, and assessments on both national and regional levels;

“(2) communicate drought forecasts, drought conditions, and drought impacts on an ongoing basis to stakeholders and entities engaged in drought planning, preparedness, and management, including—

“(A) decisionmakers at the Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local levels of government;

“(B) the private sector; and

“(C) the public;

“(3) provide timely data, information, and products that reflect local, regional, and State differences in drought conditions;

“(4) coordinate, and integrate as practicable, Federal research and monitoring in support of a drought early warning system;

“(5) build upon existing Federal, State, regional, private, public, and academic forecasting and assessment programs and partnerships; and

“(6) continue ongoing research and monitoring activities related to drought, including research activities relating to length, severity, and impacts of drought and the role of extreme weather events and climate variability in drought.”.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section 4 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 313d note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) \$14,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

(c) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the National Integrated Drought Information System.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the implementation of the National Integrated Drought Information System, including an assessment of how the information, forecasts, and assessments produced by such system are utilized in drought policy planning and response activities.

(B) Specific plans for continued development of the system, including future milestones.

(C) An identification of research, monitoring, and forecasting needs to enhance the predictive capability of drought early warnings that include—

(i) the length and severity of droughts;

(ii) the contribution of weather events to reducing the severity or ending drought conditions; and

(iii) regionally-specific drought impacts.

(D) A list of partners with whom the Under Secretary collaborates to implement the National Integrated Drought Information System.

(E) A description of the outreach activities conducted by the Under Secretary regarding the National Integrated Drought Information System.

(3) **CONSULTATION.**—In developing the report required by paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall consult with relevant Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local government agencies, research institutions, and the private sector.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered, the Pryor amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to, the committee substitute, as amended, be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The amendment (No. 2713) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To reduce the authorization of appropriations amount)

On page 9, line 2, strike “\$14,500,000” and insert “\$12,000,000”.

The committee-reported substitute amendment, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 376), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 376

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Drought Information Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM.

(a) **SYSTEM AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3 of the National Integrated Drought Information System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 313d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “and continue to support” after “establish”; and

(B) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “to better inform and provide for more timely decisionmaking to reduce drought related impacts and costs”; and

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) **SYSTEM FUNCTIONS.**—The National Integrated Drought Information System shall—

“(1) provide an effective drought early warning system that—

“(A) collects and integrates information on the key indicators of drought and drought impacts, including water supplies and soil moisture, in order to make usable, reliable, and timely forecasts of drought, including assessments of the severity of drought conditions and impacts; and

“(B) provides such information, forecasts, and assessments on both national and regional levels;

“(2) communicate drought forecasts, drought conditions, and drought impacts on an ongoing basis to stakeholders and entities engaged in drought planning, preparedness, and management, including—

“(A) decisionmakers at the Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local levels of government;

“(B) the private sector; and

“(C) the public;

“(3) provide timely data, information, and products that reflect local, regional, and State differences in drought conditions;

“(4) coordinate, and integrate as practicable, Federal research and monitoring in support of a drought early warning system;

“(5) build upon existing Federal, State, regional, private, public, and academic forecasting and assessment programs and partnerships; and

“(6) continue ongoing research and monitoring activities related to drought, including research activities relating to length, severity, and impacts of drought and the role of extreme weather events and climate variability in drought.”.

(b) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section 4 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 313d note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) \$12,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.”.

(c) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the National Integrated Drought Information System.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the implementation of the National Integrated Drought Information System, including an assessment of how the information, forecasts, and assessments produced by such system are utilized in drought policy planning and response activities.

(B) Specific plans for continued development of the system, including future milestones.

(C) An identification of research, monitoring, and forecasting needs to enhance the predictive capability of drought early warnings that include—

(i) the length and severity of droughts;

(ii) the contribution of weather events to reducing the severity or ending drought conditions; and

(iii) regionally-specific drought impacts.

(D) A list of partners with whom the Under Secretary collaborates to implement the National Integrated Drought Information System.

(E) A description of the outreach activities conducted by the Under Secretary regarding

the National Integrated Drought Information System.

(3) CONSULTATION.—In developing the report required by paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall consult with relevant Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local government agencies, research institutions, and the private sector.

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 340 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 340) expressing the sense of the Senate that all necessary measures should be taken to protect children in the United States from human trafficking, especially during the upcoming Super Bowl, an event around which many children are trafficked for sex.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 340) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of Tuesday, January 28, 2014, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

OBSERVING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF DAISY BATES

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Judiciary Com-

mittee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 341 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 341) observing the 100th birthday of civil rights leader Daisy Bates and honoring her legacy as an American heroine.

Without objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 341) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of Wednesday, January 29, 2014, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1982

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I understand that S. 1982, introduced earlier today by Senator SANDERS, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1982) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Ms. WARREN. I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will re-

ceive its second reading on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2014

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 4, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill, with the time until 12:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; and that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

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

PROGRAM

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, there will be a rollcall vote at approximately 2:35 p.m. on adoption of the farm bill conference report.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:56 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 4, at 10 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Monday, February 3, 2014

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 3, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. FOXX) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Guide our minds, thoughts, and desires this day. By Your spirit, breathe into us a new spirit. Shape this Congress and our world according to Your design that we may fulfill Your will.

Bless the Members of this people's House. Give them attentive hearts and open minds, that through the diversity of ideas, they might sort out what is best for this Nation.

May their speech be deliberately free of all prejudice, that others might listen wholeheartedly. Grant that all dialogue be mutually respectful, surprising even the most jaded with the emergence of unity and justice.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here be for Your greater honor and glory.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HOLDING led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

IRAN TARGETING AMERICA

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

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, as the Obama administration continues to cut deals with the regime in Iran, Iranian military leaders pulled no punches in letting us know that they are prepared to strike our homeland, our forces in the Middle East, and our ally Israel.

These military leaders are at the real center of power in Tehran, pulling the strings behind the scenes. They are also the people who this administration is trusting to end their nuclear weapons program even though they invested heavily in keeping that same program hidden from the world for years. Iranian commanders just this past weekend went as far as to talk about destroying America from within and how we will face devastating consequences if we exercise our military option.

Madam Speaker, their words are just another reminder of how this administration has misplaced their trust and how the current deal with Iran jeopardizes our national security.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 5 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS ALLOWABLE USE ACT

Mrs. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1791) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1791

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act".

SEC. 2. USE OF CERTAIN HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FUNDS FOR ENHANCING MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS, MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY, AND MASS PROPHYLAXIS CAPABILITIES.

Section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (13) as paragraphs (11) through (14), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

"(10) enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, including the development and maintenance of an initial pharmaceutical stockpile, including medical kits, and diagnostics sufficient to protect first responders, their families, immediate victims, and vulnerable populations from a chemical or biological event;"; and

(2) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking "(a)(10)" and inserting "(a)(11)".

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1791, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, introduced by my colleague and the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, the honorable Congressman BILIRAKIS from Florida.

This bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make it clear that grant funds under the State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative may be used to enhance medical preparedness and purchase medical countermeasures.

The Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee held a series of hearings in the 112th Congress on medical preparedness. The subcommittee heard about the importance of medical countermeasures from representatives of the emergency response community, and this bill is in response to those concerns.

In August, I held a field hearing in my district looking at central Indiana's ability to handle a mass casualty event. Like the witnesses who testified at the hearings held in the 112th Congress, these witnesses at the field hearing stressed the importance of building medical preparedness.

As a result of this bill, grant funds could be used for items such as pre-deployed medical kits for first responders and their families, caches of equipment, training and exercises, and planning activities. The grant guidance for these programs currently allows funds to be used for medical preparedness equipment and activities.

This bill codifies those activities to ensure that they will continue to be allowable, and it will not cost any additional money to do so. We have seen the benefits that grant funds, including those used for medical preparedness activities, have provided when it comes to response capabilities. This was clearly demonstrated in response to the Boston Marathon bombings.

We know that the threat of chemical or biological attack is real. In fact, my

subcommittee will be holding a hearing next week to get an update on the bioterrorism threat and preparedness here in this country.

We must ensure that our first responders have the tools and capabilities they need if such an event should occur. This bill has the support of several first responder groups, including the International Association of Emergency Managers, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Emergency Services Coalition for Medical Preparedness. I will insert their letters of support into the RECORD.

H.R. 1791 was approved by the Committee on Homeland Security last year by a bipartisan voice vote. I am pleased that, during the markup, the committee approved an amendment offered by the ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), to ensure that in addition to protecting first responders funds can also be used to protect vulnerable populations such as children.

I urge fellow Members to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

EMERGENCY SERVICES COALITION
FOR MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS,
April 26, 2013.

Hon. GUS BILIRAKIS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BILIRAKIS: The Emergency Services Coalition for Medical Preparedness is pleased to support the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. The events of the last two weeks again demonstrate the need for immediate, at hand protections for our emergency services personnel and their families and households. The Congressionally-chartered WMD Commission has issued warnings for years about the continuing threat from biological weapons.

Emergency services professionals are uniquely expected to continue operating in hazardous conditions when others are sheltering. Whether responding to industrial fires, bombs placed in cities, or other situations with unknown secondary risks, the protections described in the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act will enable emergency services to more confidently carry out their tasks.

Pre-event medical caches have been provided for federal workers and hundreds of postal employees. Your bill addresses the lack of protection of the millions of local and state protectors who daily provide law enforcement, public works, emergency management, fire, rescue and emergency medical services.

The Coalition looks forward to working with you and your staff in passage of the Bill. Thank you for your leadership and continuing support for "protecting the protectors."

Sincerely,

TIM STEPHENS,
Advisor.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE CHIEFS,
Fairfax, VA, April 26, 2013.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

Hon. BENNIE THOMPSON,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL AND RANKING MEMBER THOMPSON: On behalf of the 12,000 chief fire and emergency officers of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), I urge you to support the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. This bill addresses an important aspect of America's homeland security and emergency preparedness through improving the resiliency of emergency first responders by helping provide pre-event Medkits to first responders and their families.

Individual physician-based prescription efforts and federal planning have already provided protections for countless employees of the U.S. Postal Service and the federal government—first responders however have not been included in these pre-event protections. The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act addresses this gap by allowing jurisdictions to use the Urban Areas Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding to improve their medical preparedness through the procurement of Medkits and other medical countermeasures.

In 2008, the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism issued their report in which the Commission identified a biological attack as the most likely threat to the United States. In the event of a biological attack, our nation's first responders will play crucial roles such as treating patients and mitigating the effects of such a biological attack. One of the most effective ways to ensure the resiliency of emergency first responders is the provision of pre-event Medkits for first responders and their families. These Medkits will allow first responders to focus on protecting and serving the public rather than worrying about the safety of themselves or their families. The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act will help jurisdictions provide these crucial protections to their first responders.

Thank you for your support for America's first responders. We urge you to continue your support by ensuring first responders and their families are protected while they protect their communities.

Sincerely,
CHIEF HANK CLEMMENSEN,
President and Chairman of the Board.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
EMERGENCY MANAGERS,
Falls Church, VA, May 1, 2013.

Hon. GUS BILIRAKIS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BILIRAKIS: The U.S. Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM USA) is pleased to support the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. We thank you for introducing a bill which addresses the lack of protection for the emergency services protectors by providing funding to enhance medical preparedness, medical surge capacity and mass prophylaxis capabilities. We were pleased to testify before you in support of a similar bill last session.

Helping local and state jurisdictions provide crucial protection to first responders, their families, and immediate victims from a

chemical or biological event through Medkits and other medical countermeasures will ensure the resiliency of first responders. These Medkits will allow first responders to focus on protecting and serving the public rather than worrying about the safety of themselves or their families.

Thank you for your continued support to protect America's first responders and their families.

Sincerely,

JEFF WALKER,
CEM, IAEM USA President.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1791 the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1791 would formally authorize grant recipients under the State Homeland Security Grant or Urban Area Security Initiative programs to use the funding to enhance medical preparedness and medical surge capacity.

Although the Federal Emergency Management Agency already permits grantees to use these funds to enhance medical preparedness, this measure will give some predictability to grant recipients as they struggle to rebuild and maintain a robust medical response capability at the State and local level.

Additionally, I am proud to support this effort to provide resources that will equip our first responders with home medical kits. When disaster strikes, we have an obligation to protect our protectors. We also have an obligation to protect the most vulnerable in our communities.

During the full committee markup of H.R. 1791, the committee unanimously approved an amendment I offered. This amendment would ensure that resources are available to develop plans to distribute countermeasures to schools and child care facilities, the elderly, individuals with special needs, and low-income communities in the event of a biological incident.

I would like to thank the full committee chair, Mr. McCAUL, and the subcommittee chairwoman, Mrs. BROOKS, for supporting my amendment. I also look forward to continuing to work with both of you in the future on other initiatives such as H.R. 3158, the SAFE in our Schools Act, to ensure that the needs of our schoolchildren and other vulnerable populations are adequately addressed in emergency preparedness and response plans.

On behalf of the ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON, I would also like to thank Chairman McCAUL for working with us to reauthorize the Metropolitan Medical Response System, the MMRS. This program provided targeted grants to 124 highly populated jurisdictions to support the integration of emergency management, health and medical systems into an organized response to mass casualty events.

The program has not been funded since fiscal year 2011 and its authoriza-

tion has lapsed. I sincerely hope that the next time we meet here on the House floor to address medical preparedness, it will be to consider bipartisan reauthorization legislation for the MMRS. As State and local governments continue to stretch their budgets to make up the reduced Federal support across many programs, we must make sure that the public health community is prepared and equipped to keep our constituents safe.

I look forward to working with my ranking member and the majority to ensure that MMRS remains a priority for this committee.

In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1791. With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I must say, Madam Chair, you are doing an outstanding job chairing this committee. Thank you for your help on this bill. I also want to thank Mr. PAYNE. Your father would be very proud of you today. He was a good friend of mine.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1791, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, which amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make it clear that grant funds under the State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Area Security Initiative may be used to enhance medical preparedness and purchase medical countermeasures.

I originally introduced the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act in 2012 after a series of hearings on medical countermeasures in the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications.

At these hearings, we received testimony from representatives of the emergency response community on the importance of stockpiling medical countermeasures in the event of a WMD attack. This includes pre-deployed medical kits for first responders and their families similar to those provided to postal workers participating in the national U.S. Postal Medical Countermeasures Dispensing Pilot Program.

The grant guidance for the State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Area Security Initiative currently permits this funding to be used to procure medical countermeasures and for other medical preparedness and medical surge capacity equipment and activities. However, this guidance is developed on an annual basis, as our chair said, and there is no guarantee that these uses will be authorized in the future. That is why this bill is so very important.

To be clear, no new funding is authorized in this bill. However, these ex-

penditures authorized and codified by the bill we are considering today can make a big difference in the protection of the public, including emergency responders, in the event of an attack, and there should be no doubt that grant funding may be used to support them now and in the future.

As the former chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I consistently find myself in awe of our first responders and the sacrifices that they make for the public. In the wake of events such as Hurricane Sandy, I am committed to ensuring Congress does all that it can to support those brave men and women.

I am pleased that this legislation is supported by the Emergency Services Coalition on Medical Preparedness, which works to ensure that we "protect the protectors," and other agencies as well. I also thank the ranking member for adding that great amendment because we must protect our children as well.

I thank and commend, of course, Representative SUSAN BROOKS, our chair, for her assistance with this bill and for her willingness to join me as an original cosponsor.

I urge all Members to support this great, very important bill.

Mr. PAYNE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge passage of this measure as a small step to address gaping needs at the State and local level when it comes to medical preparedness.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1791, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Florida noted in his statement, this bill passed the House the last Congress by a bipartisan vote of 397-1. I hope Members will once again express their support for the men and women who protect us every day by voting for this bill.

I want to thank my ranking member for his dedication and his commitment to protecting the protectors, as he so eloquently stated, and we certainly request that our fellow Members support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1791, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act for two reasons.

First, the bill will save lives. Second, the legislation is necessary to support the vital work of first responders in the event of a biological and chemical terrorists attack or incident.

The legislation provides for the development and maintenance of an initial pharmaceutical stockpile, including medical kits, and diagnostics sufficient to protect first responders, their families, and immediate victims from a chemical or biological event.

The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act will amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security

Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

This legislation ensures that first responders have necessary medicines and treatments to protect themselves, their families and those within their vicinity immediately should a biological and chemical terrorist attack occurs.

In short, first responders will not be able to do the work of saving lives if they fall victim to an attack or are distracted by worry regarding how their family may be fairing during a biological or chemical attack should one occur.

First responders often include law enforcement officers, fire fighters, and emergency medical personnel.

The city of Houston covers over a 1000 square mile region in Southeast Texas. It has an evening population of nearly two million people and over three million during the day when commuters are in the city.

There are 103 fire stations that serve the city of Houston with most offering ambulance or medic support, but there is only one station, Number 22, that specializes in hazardous material.

In the city of Houston one out of every ten citizens use Emergency Management Services (EMS) and within a year there are over 200,000 EMS incidents involving over 225,000 patients or potential patients.

EMS response services have 88 City of Houston EMS vehicles, with just under fifty percent staffed by two paramedics and can provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) to patients.

These consist of 15 ALS Squads, and 22 ALS transport units with eight functioning in a "Dual" capacity as both Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support (BLS).

The remaining fifty-one transport units are Basic Life Support (BLS), and staffed by two Emergency Medical Technicians.

Law enforcement agencies that serve the city of Houston include the Houston Police Department, Harris County Sheriff's Department, Harris County Constables, Port of Houston Authority Police and Corrections Officers.

Because of the nature of chemical or biological terrorist attacks mass casualties are the objective and the impressive resources of our nation's 4th largest city would likely be overwhelmed immediately should an attack occur it is important to provide them with the resources provided by this legislation.

The repositioning of resources in the form of medicines that can support pulmonary respiratory function or arrest neurological damage as a result of poisoning lives can be saved that could otherwise be lost. This bill can reduce deaths and give victims the greatest chance for survival and recovery.

Emergency responders because of this bill would have treatments in the communities where they serve and live to help neighbors, coworkers, and people who are immediate need to live saving help.

As a senior member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I am mindful of the need for our first responders to be prepared and well trained to manage a wide range of potential threats both conventional and unconventional.

This bill offers one more resource that will be available to first responders to do the work

they have dedicated their lives to doing—saving lives.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1791, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act for two reasons.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 1791, the "Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act", but I have serious concerns about this legislation and its overlap with the policies appropriately established in the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA).

Of course, we all agree that it is important for States, territories, tribes, and high-risk urban areas to be prepared for possible acts of terrorism. And we also agree that medical preparedness and related activities are an important part of this.

However, I worry that this bill may result in duplicative and uncoordinated efforts across the government.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the lead federal entity on the public health and medical response to public health emergencies and incidents, including bioterrorist attacks. Specifically, this bill conflicts with HHS's authority under PAHPA. Legislation reauthorizing the PAHPA authorities at HHS was passed on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis by the House and Senate and signed into law just last March.

HHS already undertakes a number of activities related to enhancing medical preparedness and medical surge capacity in States and cities. The Department also maintains a stockpile of countermeasures and other pharmaceutical supplies for terrorist attacks and other public health emergencies—which is managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I believe the use of DHS grant funds for medical preparedness activities authorized in H.R. 1791 without any consultation requirement or acknowledgement of HHS's role in public health and medical response efforts is short-sighted. It has the potential to undermine HHS's leadership and expertise on this important issue and impede a unified federal response to terrorist attacks.

If my colleagues believe that there should be enhanced support of medical preparedness activities, I hope that we can work together to find a way to ensure coordination of efforts and preserve HHS's important role.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1791, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

□ 1715

GI BILL TUITION FAIRNESS ACT OF 2013

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 357) to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 357

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013".

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

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.
- Sec. 3. Scoring of budgetary effects.
- Sec. 4. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education for purposes of All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance conditional on in-State tuition rate for veterans.
- Sec. 5. Clarification of eligibility for services under the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program.
- Sec. 6. Extension of eligibility period for vocational rehabilitation programs.
- Sec. 7. Work-study allowance.
- Sec. 8. Responsibilities of the Directors of Veterans' Employment and Training.
- Sec. 9. Contents of Transition Assistance Program.
- Sec. 10. Rounding down of increase in rates of disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation.
- Sec. 11. Limitation on performance awards in the senior executive service.
- Sec. 12. Semiannual reports to Congress on cost of certain travel.
- Sec. 13. Report of infectious disease at medical facilities of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 14. Prohibition of visual recording without informed consent.
- Sec. 15. Two-month extension of Veterans Retraining Assistance Program.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or a repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. SCORING OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled "Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation" for this Act, submitted for printing in

the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

SEC. 4. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION RATE FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3679 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (6), the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided by a public institution of higher education to a covered individual pursuing a course of education with educational assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living in the State in which the public institution of higher education is located if the institution charges tuition and fees for that course for the covered individual at a rate that is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State in which the institution is located, regardless of the covered individual’s State of residence.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is a veteran who was discharged or released from a period of not fewer than 90 days of service in the active military, naval, or air service less than three years before the date of enrollment in the course concerned

“(3) If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) a covered individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same public institution of higher education while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of higher education, any course so pursued by the covered individual at that institution of higher education while so continuously enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval under paragraph (1).

“(4) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution of higher education requires a covered individual pursuing a course of education at the institution to demonstrate an intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement, to establish residency in the State in which the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements not relating to the establishment of residency, in order to be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State.

“(5) The Secretary may waive such requirements of paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(6) Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of this title.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (c) of section 3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), shall apply with respect to educational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of education during academic terms that begin after July 1, 2016, through courses of education that commence on or after that date.

SEC. 5. CLARIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES UNDER THE HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM.

Subsection (a) of section 2021 is amended by striking “reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force.” and inserting the following: “reintegration into the labor force of—”

“(1) homeless veterans;

“(2) veterans participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs supported housing program for which rental assistance provided pursuant to section 8(o)(19) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(19)); and

“(3) veterans who are transitioning from being incarcerated.”

SEC. 6. EXTENSION OF ELIGIBILITY PERIOD FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 3103 is amended by striking “twelve-year period” and inserting “17-year period” each place it appears.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a veteran applying for assistance under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 7. WORK-STUDY ALLOWANCE.

Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “June 30, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2018”.

SEC. 8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTORS OF VETERANS’ EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.

Section 4103 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection (b):

“(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each Director assigned to a State under subsection (a) shall carry out the following responsibilities:

“(1) Monitoring the performance of veterans’ training and employment programs in the State, with special emphasis on services to disabled veterans.

“(2) Monitoring the performance of the State workforce agency in complying with section 4212 of this title.

“(3) Suggesting to the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans’ Employment and Training corrective actions that could be taken by the State workforce agency to address deficiencies in the performance of veterans’ training and employment programs in the State.

“(4) Annually negotiating with the State workforce agency to establish performance goals for veterans’ training and employment programs in the State.

“(5) Reviewing the State’s requests for funding for veterans’ training and employment programs and providing advice to the State workforce agency and the Assistant Secretary regarding such funding requests.

“(6) Forwarding complaints regarding possible violations of chapter 43 of this title to the appropriate Regional Administrator or to the to the Assistant Secretary, as required.

“(7) Carrying out grant officer technical representative responsibilities for grants issued under programs administered by the Department.

“(8) Providing advice to the State workforce agency on strategies to market veterans to employers.

“(9) Supervising and managing all support staff, including Assistant Directors, establishing workload priorities, managing all personnel actions, and evaluating all assigned personnel.

“(10) Submitting to the Assistant Secretary regular reports on the matters described in paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (8), and any other matters the Assistant Secretary determine appropriate.

“(11) Performing such other related duties as directed by the Assistant Secretary.”

SEC. 9. CONTENTS OF TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1144 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) Provide information about disability-related employment and education protections.”

(2) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), and (e), as subsections (d), (e), and (f), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

“(c) ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS OF PROGRAM.—The mandatory program carried out by this section shall include—

“(1) for any such member who plans to use the member’s entitlement to educational assistance under title 38—

“(A) instruction providing an overview of the use of such entitlement; and

“(B) courses of post-secondary education appropriate for the member, courses of post-secondary education compatible with the member’s education goals, and instruction on how to finance the member’s post-secondary education; and

“(2) instruction in the benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and in other subjects determined by the Secretary concerned.”

(b) DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—The program carried out under section 1144 of title 10, United States Code, shall comply with the requirements of subsections (b)(9) and (c) of such section, as added by subsection (a), by not later than April 1, 2015.

(c) FEASIBILITY STUDY.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives the results of a study carried out by the Secretary to determine the feasibility of providing the instruction described in subsection (b) of section 1142 of title 10, United States Code, at all overseas locations where such instruction is provided by entering into a contract jointly with the Secretary of Labor for the provision of such instruction.

SEC. 10. ROUNDING DOWN OF INCREASE IN RATES OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION AND DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION.

(a) ROUNDING.—Each dollar amount increased under section 2 of the Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-52), if not a whole dollar amount, shall be rounded to the next lower whole dollar amount.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a payment made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 11. LIMITATION ON PERFORMANCE AWARDS IN THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE.

For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not make any performance awards under section 5384 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 12. SEMIANNUAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON COST OF CERTAIN TRAVEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 5 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§518. Semiannual reports to Congress on cost of certain travel

“(a) SEMIANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than June 30, 2014, and not later than 60 days after each 180-day period thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate a semiannual report on covered travel made during the 180-day period covered by the report.

“(b) MATTERS INCLUDED.—Each report under subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) With respect to each instance of covered travel made during the period covered by the report—

- “(A) the purpose of such travel;
- “(B) the destination;
- “(C) the name and title of each employee included on such travel;
- “(D) the duration of such travel;
- “(E) the total cost to the Department of such travel; and
- “(F) with respect to covered travel described in subsection (d)(2), the identity of the person or entity that paid or reimbursed for such travel.

“(2) The final costs to the Department with respect to all covered travel made during the period covered by the report, including costs relating to—

- “(A) transportation, including fares for travel by air, rail, bus, ferry, cruise ship, taxi, mass transit, or other mode of transportation;
- “(B) expenses or reimbursements relating to operating and maintaining a car, including the costs of fuel and mileage;
- “(C) passport and visa fees;
- “(D) lodging;
- “(E) per diem payments;
- “(F) baggage charges;
- “(G) computer rental fees;
- “(H) rental of halls, auditoriums, or other spaces;
- “(I) entertainment;
- “(J) contractors;
- “(K) registration fees; and
- “(L) promotional items.

“(c) DUPLICATIVE INFORMATION.—Each report under subsection (a) shall include the information described in subsection (b) regardless of whether such information is also included in a report under section 517 of this title.

“(d) COVERED TRAVEL DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘covered travel’ means travel made by an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including an employee who is stationed in a foreign country, on official business to any of the following locations:

- “(1) If the Department or other element of the Federal Government pays for such travel, a location outside of—
 - “(A) the several States;
 - “(B) the District of Columbia;
 - “(C) a territory, commonwealth, or possession of the United States;
 - “(D) Indian lands (as defined in section 4(4) of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2703(4))); or
 - “(E) the territorial waters of the United States.
- “(2) If any person or entity other than the Federal Government pays (or reimburses) for such travel, any location, regardless of whether the location is inside or outside of the United States.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding after the item relating to section 517 the following new item:

“518. Semiannual reports to Congress on cost of certain travel.”.

SEC. 13. REPORT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE AT MEDICAL FACILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7311 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f)(1) The Secretary shall report to the appropriate entity each case of a notifiable infectious disease or condition that is diagnosed at a medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs in accordance with the laws of the State in which the facility is located.

“(2) In addition to reporting each case of a notifiable infectious disease or condition at a medical facility of the Department pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall report each such case that is classified as a health-care-associated infection sentinel event to the accrediting organization of such facility.

“(3)(A) If the Secretary fails to report a case of a notifiable infectious disease or condition at a medical facility of the Department in accordance with State law pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

“(i) take any remedial action required under the laws of the State to correct such failure; and

“(ii) if the Secretary does not correct such failure pursuant to clause (i), pay to the State an amount equal to the amount that a medical facility not owned by the Federal Government that is located in the same State would pay as a penalty to such State for such failure.

“(B) The State may file a civil action against the Secretary in the United States district court for the district in which the medical facility is located to recover from the United States the amount described in subparagraph (A)(ii).

“(C) A civil action under subparagraph (B) may not be commenced later than two years after the cause of action accrues.

“(4)(A) In any case in which the Inspector General of the Department suspects that a director of a Veterans Integrated Service Network has failed to comply with an applicable provision of this subsection, the Inspector General shall conduct an investigation to determine whether such director failed to comply with an applicable provision of this section.

“(B) If the Inspector General determines under subparagraph (A) that a director has failed to comply with a provision of this subsection, the Secretary shall suspend such director for such period as the Secretary considers appropriate under subchapter I or subchapter II of chapter 75 of title 5, as the case may be. In addition to such suspension, the Secretary may impose such other administrative disciplinary action on the director as the Secretary considers appropriate and for which the Secretary is otherwise authorized.

“(5) The Secretary shall—

- “(A) maintain records of each notifiable infectious disease or condition reported pursuant to paragraph (1); and

- “(B) submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a notification of each such notifiable infectious disease or condition.

“(6) In this subsection, the term ‘notifiable infectious disease or condition’ means any infectious disease or condition that is—

“(A) on the list of nationally notifiable diseases or conditions published by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; or

“(B) covered by a provision of law of a State that requires the reporting of infectious diseases or conditions.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The reporting requirement under section 7311(f) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to a case of a notifiable infectious disease or condition diagnosed at a medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs on or after the date that is 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 14. PROHIBITION OF VISUAL RECORDING WITHOUT INFORMED CONSENT.

Section 7331 is amended—

(1) by striking “The Secretary, upon” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, upon”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) VISUAL RECORDING.—(1) The Secretary shall prescribe regulations establishing procedures to ensure that, except as provided by paragraph (2), any visual recording made by the Secretary of a patient during the course of furnishing care under this title is carried out only with the full and informed consent of the patient or, in appropriate cases, a representative thereof.

“(2) The Secretary may waive the requirement for informed consent under paragraph (1) with respect to the visual recording of a patient if such recording is made—

“(A) pursuant to a determination by a physician or psychologist that such recording is medically necessary or necessary for the safety of the patient;

“(B) pursuant to a warrant or order of a court of competent jurisdiction; or

“(C) in a public setting where a person would not have a reasonable expectation to privacy, such as a waiting room or hallway, and such recording is for general security purposes not particularized to the patient.

“(3) In this subsection, the term ‘visual recording’ means the recording or transmission of images or video, but does not include—

“(A) medical imaging, including such imaging produced by radiographic procedures, nuclear medicine, endoscopy, ultrasound, or other similar procedures; or

“(B) images, video, and other clinical information transmitted for the purposes of providing treatment through telehealth and telemedicine technologies.”.

SEC. 15. TWO-MONTH EXTENSION OF VETERANS RETRAINING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 211 of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-56; 125 Stat. 713; 38 U.S.C. 4100 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)(B), by striking “March 31, 2014” and inserting “May 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (k), by striking “March 31, 2014” and inserting “May 31, 2014”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 357, as amended, is a bipartisan package of legislation that relates to improving employment and training opportunities for America’s veterans. While there are many worthwhile provisions in this bill, I want to focus on

section 4 primarily, which deals with in-state tuition for veterans, and section 14, which ensures privacy of veterans who are being treated at a VA medical facility.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's veterans have always been a source of strength for America's economy. The post-9/11 GI Bill has given thousands of our veterans the opportunity to attend college or receive other types of vocational training at little to no cost to the veteran themselves.

Every dollar that we provide in education and training benefits to veterans under the GI Bill goes right back into our economy when these veterans graduate and enter the workforce. I think we can all call that a great investment.

However, there are many veterans, through no fault of their own, who are forced to pay exorbitant tuition rates to schools simply because of the transit nature of their military service, and that precludes them from meeting some of the burdensome State residency requirements.

Mr. Speaker, as most American families know, the difference between in-state versus out-of-state tuition at most public schools is immense. According to the College Board, the average in-state tuition and fees at public institutions is now \$8,655 a year. Out-of-state students pay an average of \$21,706 per year.

Since the post-9/11 GI Bill will only pay for tuition and fees at the in-state rates at public schools, out-of-state student veterans could incur significant debt to make up that difference. I believe that this practice has got to end.

The men and women who served this Nation did not just defend the citizens of their own home States, but the citizens of all 50 States. The educational benefits they receive from the taxpayers should reflect the same reality.

Mr. Speaker, many States are out in front on this issue, including my home State of Florida, and I applaud the 22 States that currently offer some form of in-state tuition to veterans, regardless of their residency.

Other State legislatures again, as I said, including my home State of Florida, are currently reviewing legislation to provide this benefit. It is my hope that the House passes this bill, and it will encourage those States to move forward.

To that end, section 4 of the bill would require that, in order for public colleges and universities to be eligible to receive payments from a veteran's GI Bill benefits, they must enroll these veterans at in-state tuition and fee rates.

There are important limitations to this requirement. First, States would be permitted to require that student veterans show intent to become full-time residents of the State in which they are attending school.

Secondly, the in-state requirement would only apply to veterans who are attending college within 3 years of their discharge from Active Duty. These limitations will ensure that this policy not only targets the population of veterans that are most adversely affected by residency requirements following their military separation, but also fairly recognizes States' legitimate interest in subsidizing public education for its taxpaying citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to highlight section 14 of the bill, which incorporates the text of a bill that I introduced called the Veterans' Privacy Act.

In June of 2012, a covert camera disguised as a smoke detector was installed in the room of a brain-damaged veteran who was being treated at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa. Upon discovering the hidden camera, the veteran's family was understandably outraged. When the veteran's family asked about the camera, VA officials first stated that the camera did not exist. Then they changed their story and admitted that the "smoke detector" was actually a video camera.

When further asked if the camera was recording, the VA told the family that the camera was only monitoring the patient; it was not recording. Only after inquiries by local media and the Veterans' Affairs Committee did VA admit that the camera was, in fact, recording the patient. VA then removed the camera from the patient's room.

In the wake of this incident, I sent a letter to VA asking for its legal authority to place a camera in a patient's room without their consent. The VA replied that the hidden camera did not violate the law.

I am deeply disturbed at VA's actions and response to the privacy interests of this veteran and can't help but wonder whether similar incidents are occurring across the country. That is why I authored this section, which should direct VA to prescribe regulations ensuring that when veterans receive care from VA, their privacy will not be violated by unauthorized video surveillance.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, there are many other worthwhile provisions in this bill, and I defer to my colleagues on the floor this afternoon to highlight other remaining provisions.

I thank my good friends and the ranking member of the committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), and everybody who is here today who are cosponsors of this bill and helping us to move forward.

I am also grateful to Leader CANTOR and Speaker BOEHNER for their help in bringing this legislation to the floor.

With that, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 357, as amended.

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

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

As one of Riverside County's Representatives, a county that has the eighth-largest veterans' population in the Nation, I proudly rise today in support of H.R. 357, as amended. This bill is a far-ranging bill that seeks to improve the lives of our veterans.

H.R. 357 includes a number of measures that were considered by the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity and was reported favorably out of the Veterans' Affairs Committee last June.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER of the full committee, and Chairman FLORES of the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, for their leadership. I especially enjoyed holding several field hearings last year with Chairman FLORES in our respective districts.

The Veterans' Affairs Committee has traditionally been a bipartisan committee, and I am pleased to see that cooperation continue as both leaders helped bring this bill to the floor today.

In the area of education, H.R. 357 would require all public colleges and universities using the GI Bill to provide all veterans with in-state tuition rates. Currently, veterans who have not established residency at the school of their choice must pay out-of-state tuition rates.

In order to fulfill their military obligations, servicemembers must uproot their families and periodically move around the country. This makes it difficult to establish residency for purposes of in-state tuition rates when veterans seek to use their GI Bill benefits. By providing all veterans with in-state tuition rates, H.R. 357 will make it easier for veterans to choose the educational institution that best serves their needs.

The new Transition Assistance Program includes a mandatory 5-day core program of instruction that all separating servicemembers are required to take. The education portion is an optional track available to all members but is not required. Some separating servicemembers may not have additional time to take an optional course.

H.R. 357 would move the education track to the mandatory portion for veterans seeking to use their GI Bill benefits, which will ensure that these veterans can make better choices regarding their education and assist them in making the most of their GI Bill benefits.

In addition, H.R. 357 also extends the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program for 2 months to better align the program with the traditional academic semester.

Now, in addition to these provisions, Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight two sections which I have sponsored and which are included in H.R. 357. I believe these sections will also assist our veterans in terms of their education and in finding work after their separation from the military.

Section 6 is from the first bill I introduced, H.R. 844, the VetSuccess Enhancement Act. This provision would extend from 12 years to 17 years the eligibility period that veterans with service-connected disabilities have to enroll in VA vocational rehabilitation and employment programs.

Veterans with traumatic brain injury or spinal cord injury often require years to complete rehabilitation and adjust to the new realities of day-to-day living. Only then can these veterans consider returning to work. This provision will provide these veterans with the additional time they need to seek vocational rehabilitative services.

Section 7 is from another bill I introduced, H.R. 1453, the Work-Study for Student Veterans Act. This section provides for a 5-year extension of the Veterans Work-Study program at the VA.

As an educator, I know how important these programs are to students to enable them to fit some part-time work into their academic term. The VA program pays veterans to perform a variety of tasks, including assisting other transitioning veterans by helping them with outreach.

By providing support in the college Office of Veterans' Affairs, these students help other veterans to navigate the VA system. It is an important program to veteran students in my district and to thousands of others in schools across the country.

The last provision that tackles transition issues would codify the major duties of the directors and assistant directors from the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Services.

At present, there is no standardization of the requirements and duties of these positions. H.R. 357 will provide more consistency in the services provided veterans by standardizing the responsibilities of these officials. In addition, codifying their duties will enable us to better track their funding, review their performance and hold everyone accountable to the same standard.

These are important changes to the educational benefits and transition services for our veterans and will better assist veterans in serving our communities and our Nation after they leave service.

Finally, in terms of fighting veteran homelessness and improving VA medical care, H.R. 357 would clarify that veterans who are homeless and participating in the HUD-VASH voucher program, and those who are transitioning from incarceration, are eligible for services under the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program, or the HVRP. I am sure that all these veterans will find these services very beneficial as they look to begin the next chapter in their lives.

H.R. 357 would require the VA to more consistently report infectious dis-

eases diagnosed at VA medical facilities to State authorities to increase the likelihood that infectious disease outbreaks that may occur are addressed sooner and more comprehensively.

Although we have expressed concerns over the enforcement mechanism included in this provision, we all can support the importance of comprehensive notification.

H.R. 357 also includes a provision that would protect a veteran's personal privacy by directing the VA to ensure that any visual recording made of a patient during treatment is carried out only with the full and informed consent of that patient.

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

□ 1730

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida, GUS BILIRAKIS, the vice chairman of the full committee and sponsor for veterans not only in his community but around this country.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida, Chairman MILLER, for all of his good work on behalf of our true American heroes, and I also want to thank the ranking member for his good work on behalf of this particular bill and all of its provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 357, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013. This is an important package of veterans' legislation, of which I am a cosponsor, that works to increase access for our Nation's heroes and the benefits they have earned through their service to our country. In particular, I want to highlight three sections of this legislation that I am very proud to support.

H.R. 357 will make informed changes to the GI Bill program that will allow States to jump-start the process to provide instate tuition to veterans. The bill would require that in order for an educational institution to receive GI Bill funding, they must offer instate tuition to veterans, regardless of the veteran's residency. That is the least we can do. And I really appreciate the chair sponsoring this provision.

Mr. Speaker, our members of the armed services are not given options as to where they will reside. They move according to the needs of the military. It is only fitting that, when these veterans use their earned benefits, they are not penalized because of residency requirements that they have no control over.

H.R. 357 also provides an extension of the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, also originally sponsored by our chair. This important program offers 12 months of training assistance to unemployed veterans between the ages of 35 and 60. Again, it is the least we

can do. During these difficult economic times, it is important that we do everything we can to assist our veterans in their job search and retraining efforts.

I also want to commend the chairman for another provision, and it is the VA's patients' privacy act. And, of course, we need to give our veterans the privacy that they so deserve, as patients.

I would like to urge all our Members to support this great bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS), who is also the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the chairman for bringing this bill to the floor and my colleague and fellow educator, Mr. TAKANO, for yielding to me.

I rise today in support of H.R. 357, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013. As professor emeritus of political science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, I know firsthand the importance of a college education. And I am proud that my home State of Nevada already has laws in place that allow all veterans, regardless of residency status, to pay instate tuition while attending our public colleges and universities.

I was fortunate to teach a number of our Nation's heroes during my time at UNLV. Having these veterans in class was truly a win-win situation. Our veterans are able to pursue a college degree to help them with their transition to civilian life, and their fellow students are able to benefit from hearing about the veterans' experiences in the military, on the battlefield, and in foreign lands while they have served our country.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important legislation that will improve our higher education system and help our Nation's heroes acquire the skills and knowledge to complement their experience so they can succeed once they leave the military.

I thank the chairman again for bringing this bill, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 357 and, in particular, section 13, which encompasses my legislation, the Infectious Disease Reporting Act.

Section 13 imposes necessary requirements on the Department of Veterans Affairs to report infectious disease outbreaks at their medical facilities. These requirements are a response to

infectious disease problems at VA facilities that were uncovered by my subcommittee's investigations last year. The investigations highlighted a deadly outbreak of Legionnaires' disease at the Pittsburgh VA from February 2011 to November 2012 which tragically caused the deaths of at least five veterans and afflicted as many as 22 others.

According to medical experts, timely disease surveillance is critical to infectious disease control; and delayed, incomplete, or inconsistent disease reporting can compromise an effective public health response and result in further infectious disease outbreaks.

Although it has become clear that these deaths could have been prevented with proper procedures, the VA failed to act appropriately within widely accepted medical practices. Surprisingly, the VA is not required by current law to report the incidence of infectious diseases at their facilities to State and local public health officials.

As one of the Nation's largest health care providers, VA should set the standard for infectious disease reporting. However, they do not even participate in infectious disease reporting like all other medical facilities within a particular State, creating a public health risk to those localities with VA facilities.

In response, section 13 requires the VA to report each case of an infectious disease in accordance with the laws of the State in which the facility is located.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. COFFMAN. And failure to report will subject the VA facility to State penalties. These penalties are vital to ensure the VA will comply with and improve their reporting requirements.

Given the VA's recent inadequate responses to infectious disease outbreaks, it is imperative that Congress and our veterans demand improvements. Therefore, I urge full support of section 13 of H.R. 357, as well as the passage of the entire bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE), a great champion of veterans and former member of this committee.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 357, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act. This legislation contains a number of important changes in VA programs that provide our veterans with education, training, rehabilitation, disability benefits, and housing; and it deserves our support.

I want to focus my remarks today on the disease reporting provisions in the bill because I have been deeply involved with that issue over the last year or so.

In November of 2012, the VA announced that there had been an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease at a VA hospital in Pittsburgh, which I represent. Shortly thereafter, I joined other members of the regional congressional delegation in requesting investigations into the outbreak. In response, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the VA Inspector General's Office examined the outbreak and the events leading up to it at length. The Centers for Disease Control also looked into the outbreak and determined that it had resulted in several deaths and more than two dozen illnesses.

I want to personally express my gratitude to my good friend Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman JEFF MILLER, Oversight Subcommittee Chairman COFFMAN, and Ranking Member MICHAUD for being so responsive to our requests for investigations and investigating the outbreak and holding hearings on it last year.

In the end, the hearings and investigations identified a number of shortcomings in the way the outbreak was handled and the need to be addressed. One of the concerns raised, as we learned more about the outbreak, was that for some time after the local VA facility knew it had Legionella bacteria in its water supply and that VA patients had been sickened by it, it had not notified State or local health agencies about the outbreak. Under current law, VA is not required to make such reports, which are required of all other hospitals.

Chairman MILLER, Subcommittee Chairman COFFMAN, Senator CASEY, and Congressmen MURPHY, ROTHFUS, and I all agree that in the future the VA should be required to report outbreaks of potentially deadly diseases to public health authorities, just like other hospitals already do.

The language in this bill is the result of our discussions over a number of months. I believe that the need for this reporting requirement is obvious. I urge my colleagues to support this bill which will make this important change.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my good friend from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) for being in the forefront on this particular issue.

At this time, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from the 12th District of Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of our Nation's veterans and the legislation currently under consideration. This legislation makes much-needed reforms that would bring accountability and transparency to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Over the past year, I have worked with Chairman MILLER and Chairman COFFMAN, my western Pennsylvania colleagues—Congressmen DOYLE, MUR-

PHY, KELLY, and SHUSTER—and local veterans' families to investigate the outbreak of Legionnaires' disease at the Pittsburgh VA.

The VA Office of the Inspector General determined systemic failures surrounding the outbreak led to tragic and preventable deaths of local veterans. We must do all we can to ensure that this does not happen again.

Chairman COFFMAN's Infectious Disease Reporting Act, which I strongly support, has been included in today's legislation. This commonsense reform will increase transparency and save lives by improving infectious disease reporting requirements and requiring the VA to follow the same rules as the rest of our world-class health care institutions in western Pennsylvania.

Today's legislation also builds on an amendment I offered last year that prohibits bonuses for senior VA executives. This money would be better spent resolving the VA disability claims backlog and ensuring that our veterans are receiving the first-rate care they have earned.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote for this legislation, and I look forward to continuing to working with my colleagues in Congress to serve our Nation's veterans.

Mr. TAKANO. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from the 18th District of Pennsylvania, Dr. MURPHY, a Navy Reservist himself.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, "Sonny" Calcagno, age 85; John Ciarolla, age 83; Clark Compston, age 74; John McChesney, age 63; William Nicklas, age 87; and "Mitch" Wanstreet, age 65 are the victims of the Legionnaires' disease outbreak at the Pittsburgh VA health care system in 2011 and 2012. We can never really heal the emotional scars that these families have suffered and the 21 additional families who had a family member with a case of Legionnaires', but we can work to make sure something like this doesn't happen again.

Today's legislation fixes one of the flaws uncovered during this investigation; and under this bill, VA hospitals will soon follow the same reporting requirements for infectious diseases as other medical facilities. This way, public health authorities will know when a disease outbreak occurs and can take immediate action.

Thanks to the dogged determination and diligence of Chairman MILLER, Congressman COFFMAN, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, the ranking member, and my colleagues, Messrs. DOYLE, ROTHFUS, and KELLY, we now know the Legionnaires' outbreak was entirely preventable except for the gross mismanagement and negligence of a few key officials at the Pittsburgh VA.

The inspector general's report revealed some troubling findings. The VA lacked proper documentation and maintenance of the water system, and was lax in properly informing and testing patients. Further, the VA did not communicate properly with the hospital system in the detection of Legionella. That is why this bill is necessary, because timely reporting and transparency requires adherence to the strongest standards, followed by quick action.

But with this, our work is not yet done. It has been more than 2 months since I last asked VA Secretary General Shinseki to tell Congress what has been done to hold accountable those who are responsible for this outbreak, and his agency has promised to do so. But Congress is still waiting for an answer.

□ 1745

Transparency and accountability are essential for the Secretary to rebuild the trust in the VA. We are grateful to our veterans for their service and grateful to the hard workers of the VA hospital system. The Pittsburgh VA has been a leader in infection control work and should be commended for that, but, in this case, the failures of some are simply unacceptable.

My hope is that through this bill requiring reporting of infection cases we will be able to restore the trust that the VA has with its veterans and their families. It is so critically needed in order to make these essential changes.

I ask for my colleagues to vote in support of this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Does the gentleman from Florida have additional speakers?

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have one more speaker at this time.

Mr. TAKANO. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the Third District of the State of Pennsylvania, MIKE KELLY, who is a stalwart supporter of the veterans in the State of Pennsylvania and also the United States.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 357, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013, a bill introduced by my friend, Representative JEFF MILLER, chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

I wish to highlight section 13, which includes H.R. 1792, the Infectious Disease Reporting Act, a bill introduced by my friend, Representative MIKE COFFMAN, chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. The Infectious Disease Reporting Act is a bill that I am proud to cosponsor.

This commonsense provision is necessary to respond to infectious disease issues at VA facilities nationwide, including the deadly outbreak of Legion-

naires' Disease at the Pittsburgh VA in 2011 and 2012 that killed at least five of our veterans and sickened as many as 22. This facility became ground zero for the Veterans' Affairs Committee's investigation, which found gross mismanagement by the Pittsburgh VA in response to the 2011 outbreak. This is particularly troubling to me as there are many veterans in my district who rely on the Pittsburgh VA for their health care.

Currently, the VA facilities are not required by law to report infectious disease at VA facilities to State and local health officials, even though the VA is one of the Nation's largest health providers; yet, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center—it is only a few hundred feet away—is required to do this.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. This inconsistency makes absolutely no sense and leaves the VA off the hook. In other words, this bill holds VA facilities accountable to the same standards as other medical facilities located in the same State. This just makes sense.

Now, our veterans, who have sacrificed so much, deserve far better. This bill is a step in the right direction to ensure that veterans receive safe, high quality health care at the VA. I urge strong support of H.R. 357.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, in closing, H.R. 357 makes important changes to the benefits and services we provide veterans and to the manner in which we provide them. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 357, as amended.

I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members would have 5 legislative days with which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials that they may have on this legislation.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Thank you to all the Members who have come to the floor today to support this bill. I encourage all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 357, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act. In addition to requiring all public institutions to give veterans in-state tuition rates as a condition of receiving GI Bill education benefits, this legislation also includes a five year limitation on executive bonuses at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Under current practice, the VA pays out about \$400 million in bonuses each year. Recently, we have seen these bonuses too often

go to people whose work does not merit a reward, and to the contrary, may even warrant reprimand.

This practice has been evident at the Atlanta VA Medical Center, where despite the fact that four unexpected deaths were attributed to mismanagement and lack of oversight, tens of thousands of dollars in bonuses were awarded to top level executives at the facility. At the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center in Augusta, three patients died after management failed to act in a timely manner to schedule appointments. Despite requests to the VA, we are still waiting to hear whether those responsible received bonuses instead of reprimands.

It is past time that we stop blindly handing out rewards pay—bonuses should be the exception, not the norm. Furthermore, at a time when so many of our soldiers are returning from war, and in light of the deaths in Atlanta, I believe the VA should prioritize veterans' health and well-being above all else.

Mr. Speaker, we should reward our veterans with quality care and services in exchange for their commitment to our country and our freedoms. I urge my colleagues to join me in expressing support for our nation's veterans by supporting H.R. 357.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 357, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DOYLE (during consideration of H.R. 357). Mr. Speaker, on January 29, I was not present when H.R. 2642, the conference report for the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act, better known as the farm bill, was voted on. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1791, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 357, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS
ALLOWABLE USE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1791) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 391, nays 2, not voting 38, as follows:

[Roll No. 32]

YEAS—391

Aderholt	Capps	Davis, Rodney
Bachmann	Capuano	DeFazio
Bachus	Cárdenas	DeGette
Barber	Carney	Delaney
Barletta	Carson (IN)	DeLauro
Barr	Carter	DelBene
Barrow (GA)	Cartwright	Denham
Barton	Castor (FL)	Dent
Bass	Castro (TX)	DesJarlais
Beatty	Chabot	Deutch
Becerra	Chaffetz	Diaz-Balart
Benishkek	Chu	Dingell
Bentivolio	Cicilline	Doggett
Bera (CA)	Clark (MA)	Doyle
Bilirakis	Clarke (NY)	Duckworth
Bishop (GA)	Clay	Duffy
Bishop (UT)	Cleaver	Duncan (SC)
Black	Clyburn	Duncan (TN)
Blackburn	Coble	Edwards
Blumenauer	Coffman	Ellison
Bonamici	Cohen	Ellmers
Boustany	Cole	Engel
Brady (PA)	Collins (GA)	Enyart
Brady (TX)	Collins (NY)	Eshoo
Braley (IA)	Conaway	Esty
Bridenstine	Connolly	Farenthold
Brooks (AL)	Conyers	Farr
Brooks (IN)	Cook	Fattah
Broun (GA)	Cooper	Fitzpatrick
Brown (FL)	Costa	Fleischmann
Brownley (CA)	Cotton	Fleming
Bucshon	Courtney	Flores
Burgess	Cramer	Forbes
Bustos	Crawford	Fortenberry
Butterfield	Crowley	Foster
Byrne	Cuellar	Foxx
Calvert	Culberson	Frankel (FL)
Camp	Cummings	Franks (AZ)
Cantor	Daines	Frelinghuysen
Capito	Davis (CA)	Fudge

Gabbard	Lofgren	Rogers (KY)
Gallego	Long	Rogers (MI)
Garamendi	Lowenthal	Rohrabacher
Garcia	Lowey	Rokita
Gardner	Lucas	Rooney
Garrett	Luetkemeyer	Ros-Lehtinen
Gibbs	Lujan Grisham	Roskam
Gingrey (GA)	(NM)	Ross
Gohmert	Luján, Ben Ray	Rothfus
Goodlatte	(NM)	Roybal-Allard
Gowdy	Lummis	Royce
Granger	Maffei	Ruiz
Graves (GA)	Maloney,	Ruppersberger
Graves (MO)	Carolyn	Ryan (OH)
Grayson	Marchant	Ryan (WI)
Green, Al	Matheson	Salmon
Green, Gene	Matsui	Sánchez, Linda
Griffin (AR)	McAllister	T.
Griffith (VA)	McCarthy (CA)	Sanchez, Loretta
Grijalva	McCaul	Sarbanes
Grimm	McClintock	Schakowsky
Guthrie	McCollum	Schiff
Hahn	McDermott	Schneider
Hall	McGovern	Schock
Hanabusa	McHenry	Schrader
Hanna	McIntyre	Schweikert
Harper	McKeon	Scott (VA)
Harris	McKinley	Scott, Austin
Hartzler	McMorris	Scott, David
Hastings (FL)	Rodgers	Serrano
Hastings (WA)	McNerney	Sessions
Heck (NV)	Meadows	Sewell (AL)
Heck (WA)	Meehan	Shea-Porter
Hensarling	Messer	Sherman
Herrera Beutler	Mica	Shimkus
Higgins	Michaud	Shuster
Himes	Miller (FL)	Simpson
Hinojosa	Miller (MI)	Sinema
Holding	Miller, George	Sires
Holt	Moore	Slaughter
Honda	Mullin	Smith (MO)
Horsford	Mulvaney	Smith (NE)
Hoyer	Murphy (FL)	Smith (NJ)
Hudson	Murphy (PA)	Smith (TX)
Huelskamp	Nadler	Southerland
Huffman	Napolitano	Stewart
Huizenga (MI)	Neal	Stivers
Hultgren	Negrete McLeod	Stutzman
Hunter	Neugebauer	Swalwell (CA)
Hurt	Noem	Takano
Israel	Nolan	Terry
Issa	Nugent	Thompson (CA)
Jackson Lee	Nunes	Thompson (MS)
Jeffries	Nunnelee	Thompson (PA)
Jenkins	O'Rourke	Thornberry
Johnson (GA)	Olson	Tierney
Johnson (OH)	Owens	Tipton
Johnson, E. B.	Palazzo	Titus
Johnson, Sam	Pallone	Tonko
Jones	Pascrell	Turner
Jordan	Pastor (AZ)	Upton
Joyce	Paulsen	Valadao
Kaptur	Payne	Van Hollen
Keating	Pearce	Vargas
Kelly (IL)	Pelosi	Veasey
Kelly (PA)	Perlmutter	Vela
Kennedy	Perry	Velázquez
Kildee	Peters (CA)	Visclosky
Kilmer	Peters (MI)	Wagner
Kind	Peterson	Walberg
King (IA)	Petri	Walden
King (NY)	Pingree (ME)	Walorski
Kinzinger (IL)	Pittenger	Walz
Kirkpatrick	Pitts	Waters
Kline	Pocan	Waxman
Kuster	Poe (TX)	Weber (TX)
Labrador	Polis	Webster (FL)
LaMalfa	Pompeo	Welch
Lamborn	Posey	Wenstrup
Lance	Price (GA)	Westmoreland
Langevin	Price (NC)	Whitfield
Lankford	Quigley	Williams
Larsen (WA)	Rahall	Wilson (FL)
Larson (CT)	Rangel	Wilson (SC)
Latham	Reed	Wittman
Latta	Reichert	Wolf
Lee (CA)	Renacci	Womack
Levin	Ribble	Woodall
Lewis	Rice (SC)	Yoder
Lipinski	Rigell	Yoho
LoBiondo	Roby	Young (AK)
Loebsock	Roe (TN)	Young (IN)

NAYS—2

Amash Massie

NOT VOTING—38

Amodei	Gutiérrez	Rush
Andrews	Kingston	Sanford
Bishop (NY)	Lynch	Scalise
Buchanan	Maloney, Sean	Schwartz
Campbell	Marino	Sensenbrenner
Cassidy	McCarthy (NY)	Smith (WA)
Crenshaw	Meeks	Speier
Davis, Danny	Meng	Stockman
DeSantis	Miller, Gary	Tiberi
Fincher	Moran	Tsongas
Gerlach	Richmond	Wasserman
Gibson	Rogers (AL)	Schultz
Gosar	Runyan	Yarmuth

□ 1856

Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

Mr. RANGEL changed his vote from “present” to “aye.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COOK). The Chair would ask all present to rise for the purpose of a moment of silence.

The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in remembrance of our brave men and women in uniform who have given their lives in the service of our country in Iraq and Afghanistan, and their families, and of all who serve in our Armed Forces and their families.

GI BILL TUITION FAIRNESS ACT
OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 357) to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 390, nays 0, not voting 41, as follows:

[Roll No. 33]
YEAS—390

Aderholt	Doggett	Kildee
Amash	Doyle	Kilmer
Bachmann	Duckworth	Kind
Bachus	Duffy	King (IA)
Barber	Duncan (SC)	King (NY)
Barletta	Duncan (TN)	Kinzinger (IL)
Barr	Edwards	Kirkpatrick
Barrow (GA)	Ellison	Kline
Barton	Ellmers	Kuster
Bass	Engel	Labrador
Beatty	Enyart	LaMalfa
Becerra	Eshoo	Lamborn
Benishek	Esty	Lance
Bentivolio	Farenthold	Langevin
Bera (CA)	Farr	Lankford
Bilirakis	Fattah	Larsen (WA)
Bishop (GA)	Fitzpatrick	Larson (CT)
Bishop (UT)	Fleischmann	Latham
Black	Fleming	Latta
Blackburn	Flores	Lee (CA)
Blumenauer	Forbes	Levin
Bonamici	Fortenberry	Lewis
Boustany	Foster	Lipinski
Brady (PA)	Fox	LoBiondo
Brady (TX)	Frankel (FL)	Lofgren
Braley (IA)	Franks (AZ)	Long
Bridenstine	Frelinghuysen	Lowenthal
Brooks (AL)	Fudge	Lowey
Brooks (IN)	Gabbard	Lucas
Brown (GA)	Gallego	Luetkemeyer
Brown (FL)	Garamendi	Lujan Grisham
Brownley (CA)	Garcia	(NM)
Bucshon	Gardner	Lujan, Ben Ray
Burgess	Gibbs	(NM)
Bustos	Gingrey (GA)	Lummis
Butterfield	Gohmert	Maffei
Byrne	Goodlatte	Maloney,
Calvert	Gowdy	Carolyn
Camp	Granger	Marchant
Cantor	Graves (GA)	Massie
Capito	Graves (MO)	Matheson
Capps	Grayson	Matsui
Capuano	Green, Al	McAllister
Cardenas	Green, Gene	McCarthy (CA)
Carney	Griffin (AR)	McCaul
Carson (IN)	Griffith (VA)	McClintock
Carter	Grijalva	McCollum
Cartwright	Grimm	McDermott
Castor (FL)	Guthrie	McGovern
Castro (TX)	Hahn	McHenry
Chabot	Hall	McIntyre
Chaffetz	Hanabusa	McKeon
Chu	Hanna	McKinley
Cicilline	Harper	McMorris
Clark (MA)	Harris	Rodgers
Clarke (NY)	Hartzler	McNerney
Clay	Hastings (FL)	Meadows
Cleaver	Hastings (WA)	Meehan
Clyburn	Heck (NV)	Messer
Coble	Heck (WA)	Mica
Coffman	Hensarling	Michaud
Cohen	Higgins	Miller (FL)
Cole	Himes	Miller (MI)
Collins (GA)	Hinojosa	Miller, George
Collins (NY)	Holding	Moore
Conaway	Holt	Mullin
Connolly	Honda	Mulvaney
Conyers	Horsford	Murphy (FL)
Cook	Hoyer	Murphy (PA)
Cooper	Hudson	Nadler
Costa	Huelskamp	Napolitano
Cotton	Huffman	Neal
Courtney	Huizenga (MI)	Negrete McLeod
Cramer	Hultgren	Neugebauer
Crawford	Hunter	Noem
Crowley	Hurt	Nolan
Cuellar	Israel	Nugent
Culberson	Issa	Nunes
Cummings	Jackson Lee	Nunnelee
Daines	Jeffries	O'Rourke
Davis (CA)	Jenkins	Olson
Davis, Rodney	Johnson (GA)	Owens
DeFazio	Johnson (OH)	Palazzo
DeGette	Johnson, E. B.	Pallone
Delaney	Johnson, Sam	Pascrell
DeLauro	Jones	Pastor (AZ)
DelBene	Jordan	Paulsen
Denham	Joyce	Payne
Dent	Kaptur	Pearce
DesJarlais	Keating	Pelosi
Deutch	Kelly (IL)	Perlmutter
Diaz-Balart	Kelly (PA)	Perry
Dingell	Kennedy	Peters (CA)

Peters (MI)	Salmon	Thornberry
Peterson	Sánchez, Linda	Tierney
Petri	T.	Tipton
Pingree (ME)	Sanchez, Loretta	Titus
Pittenger	Sarbanes	Tonko
Pitts	Schakowsky	Turner
Pocan	Schiff	Upton
Poe (TX)	Schneider	Valadao
Polis	Schock	Van Hollen
Pompeo	Schrader	Vargas
Posey	Schweikert	Veasey
Price (GA)	Scott (VA)	Vela
Price (NC)	Scott, Austin	Velázquez
Quigley	Scott, David	Visclosky
Rahall	Serrano	Wagner
Rangel	Sessions	Walberg
Reed	Sewell (AL)	Walden
Reichert	Shea-Porter	Walorski
Renacci	Sherman	Walz
Ribble	Shimkus	Walters
Rice (SC)	Shuster	Waxman
Rigell	Simpson	Weber (TX)
Roby	Sinema	Webster (FL)
Roe (TN)	Sires	Welch
Rogers (KY)	Slaughter	Wenstrup
Rogers (MI)	Smith (MO)	Westmoreland
Rohrabacher	Smith (NE)	Whitfield
Rokita	Smith (NJ)	Williams
Rooney	Smith (TX)	Wilson (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen	Southerland	Wilson (SC)
Roskam	Stewart	Wittman
Ross	Stivers	Wolf
Rothfus	Stutzman	Womack
Roybal-Allard	Swalwell (CA)	Woodall
Royce	Takano	Yoder
Ruiz	Terry	Yoho
Ruppersberger	Thompson (CA)	Young (AK)
Ryan (OH)	Thompson (MS)	Young (IN)
Ryan (WI)	Thompson (PA)	

NOT VOTING—41

Amodei	Gutiérrez	Runyan
Andrews	Herrera Beutler	Rush
Bishop (NY)	Kingston	Sanford
Buchanan	Loebsack	Scalise
Campbell	Lynch	Schwartz
Cassidy	Maloney, Sean	Sensenbrenner
Crenshaw	Marino	Smith (WA)
Davis, Danny	McCarthy (NY)	Speier
DeSantis	Meeks	Stockman
Fincher	Meng	Tiberi
Garrett	Miller, Gary	Tsongas
Gelbach	Moran	Wasserman
Gibson	Richmond	Schultz
Gosar	Rogers (AL)	Yarmuth

□ 1906

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, to make other improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3590, SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report

(Rept. No. 113-339) on the resolution (H. Res. 470) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

JOE'S STONE CRAB

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, to the sound of cracking claws, Joe's Stone Crab, a famous, and especially delicious, South Beach institution has made its debut here in the Nation's Capital.

Over 100 years ago, in 1913, Joe and Jennie Weiss started a lunch stand on Miami Beach that has become a south Florida icon, as recognizable as South Beach, Little Havana, or the Everglades.

Many families view the opportunity to dig into a plate of Joe's stone crabs as a special treat, especially because they have to save up their money for a while in order to get to Joe's.

South Floridians are proud to support Joe's because even after 100 years, it is still a family-owned business, one that treats their nearly 400 employees like they are part of that family.

So, to all of my congressional colleagues, if you cannot make it down to my sunny and warm Miami congressional district to try these delicious stone crabs, at least you have the opportunity to get a taste of what you are missing in our tropical paradise through a brand new Joe's in downtown D.C. Come and enjoy what south Florida has to offer.

THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS WIN SUPER BOWL XLVIII

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, in the Seattle tradition I would like to rise and recognize the football game that was played last night in New Jersey. Our team played very well, and no one in Seattle was the least bit surprised at the result.

MILITARY SUICIDES

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to welcome encouraging news from the Army on a problem our military has faced for over a decade, the increase of suicides.

It was announced today that, for the first time since 2004, suicides in the Army have decreased. In 2013, there were 150 suicides in the Active Duty Army, down 19 percent from the 185 in 2012. This is great news, but it is just a first step and a lot more must be done.

Mr. Speaker, even one soldier taking his or her own life is a tragedy, but 150 is still an epidemic, especially where one in five were never deployed. That number increases further if you include the Guard, Reserves, and other services. Not only must Congress do more to address this issue, this country needs to focus more on the overarching issue of mental health.

As this Congress moves forward, I will continue to work on this issue and intend to introduce legislation again dealing with mental health assessments during initial enlistments.

We must keep faith in the promise to take care of these individuals who stepped forward to serve our Nation.

FEDERAL PRISON POPULATIONS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the United States Attorney General, Eric Holder, and President Obama for joining with voices, particularly those of the House Judiciary Committee, Republicans and Democrats, and acknowledging that the United States is comprised of only 5 percent of the world's population, but we incarcerate almost a quarter of the world's prisoners.

While the entire U.S. population has increased about one-third over the last 30 years, the Federal prison population has increased at a staggering rate of 800 percent, currently totaling nearly 216,000 inmates and currently operates at a 33 percent overcapacity.

One-half of those Federal prison populations are drug offenses. While some of them are truly dangerous persons, as Deputy Attorney General Cole said, many of them are first-timers, and by possession only, wound up under Federal laws, the crack cocaine laws, in the Federal system.

Today, I stand to support the clemency offering that is being offered by the Department of Justice, as well as to reduce barriers in housing and access to health care.

I ask my colleagues to join me in working to ensure that we get word out to these individuals and their families to make sure that this clemency works and works in the right way, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1915

PRESIDENT WRONG ON MARIJUANA

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, recently, President Obama said that marijuana is no more dangerous than alcohol; however, the White House's own Web site gives numerous examples to the contrary:

First, marijuana use, particularly chronic use that begins at a young age, can lead to negative health consequences, such as dependence, addiction, respiratory illnesses, and cognitive impairment;

Second, marijuana is not a benign drug, and it is the second-leading substance for which people receive drug treatment;

Third, in the past 20 years, marijuana potency has tripled, leading to serious public health concerns;

Fourth, long-term use, particularly in adolescents, may be linked with lower IQ later in life.

Mr. Speaker, comparing marijuana to alcohol, as the President did, will only encourage its use and endanger the health of many Americans.

CASTROVILLE

(Mr. GALLEG0 asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to highlight parts of the 23rd District, I rise today to talk about one of the jewels of the 23rd, Castrovillo, where Texas meets France. One of several settlements founded by Henri Castro in 1844, the Alsatian culture there is still evident. And most people don't know that it was the first county seat of Medina County, serving until 1893.

The population in the 2010 census was only 2,680 people. It is a small town very near a big city, 25 miles west of San Antonio. There are 97 historical buildings in the town. It is a great place for a walking tour.

And if you are looking for recreational relaxation, there are few places better than Castrovillo, where the Medina River meanders through town. The Medina River was once the border between Texas and Mexico. There are 126 acres of pecan trees and flowers along the Medina River in the Castrovillo Regional Park and lots and lots of shopping. Castrovillo Pottery is one of the coolest pottery shops around, where they will show you how to make your own.

Mr. Speaker, around the 23rd District in 1 minute.

OBAMACARE CONTINUES TO HURT SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, I hosted a town hall by telephone with constituents to hear their expectations for the President's State of the Union address. The overwhelming message was clear: we must repeal and replace the government health care takeover bill, which destroys jobs.

During the call, I spoke with Annette, a small business owner from Columbia who would like to expand her company and hire more employees. Unfortunately, because of the tax increases imposed by ObamaCare, Annette feels as though the government is single-handedly prohibiting her from creating new jobs.

Annette is not alone. Today, Federal employees received their February pay statements, and one dedicated employee showed me her premium had doubled, putting her family in crisis.

House Republicans have an alternative that repeals the unworkable health care law and replaces it with commonsense solutions that will not deter Annette and millions of other small business owners from creating jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP

(Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, recently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced that it is expanding the boundary lines of Wyoming's Wind River Indian Reservation so that it now includes three towns: Kinneer, Riverton, and Pavillion. This decision by the EPA, claiming it had authority under the Clean Air Act, overturned earlier congressional actions that reduced the size of Wind River Indian Reservation and made clear that the neighboring towns were not a part of this reservation.

In a January 6 press release, Wyoming Governor Matt Mead is quoted as having said:

My deep concern is about an administrative agency of the Federal Government altering a State's boundary and going against over 100 years of history and law. This should be a concern to all citizens because, if the EPA can unilaterally take land away from a State, where will it stop?

Where will it stop, indeed. I believe the EPA thinks that it controls anything that touches air or water. They even think they control the boundaries of the Indian nations. You can't make this stuff up.

ISSUES FACING THE NATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the

gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Speaker for allowing me this 1 hour to talk on some very important subjects that are facing the Nation. We deal with economic issues. We deal with the health care crisis in our country. And Americans right now, as they are watching us on this floor this evening, wonder if they will have a job tomorrow. So many Americans right now are looking at part-time jobs rather than full-time jobs. This is changing their lives, and it is changing what they thought the future would hold for them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the American people that it is not over. Hold on. We know that better days could be ahead. Why? Because economics can change; economic policies can change. And unfortunately, what we have seen coming out of the Obama White House, the economic policies have led to Americans not having the number of hours that they need to be able to provide for their families. They haven't led to the wage increases that they had hoped that they would be able to see.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, very disturbing information has come forward that nearly \$4,000 in a reduction of income has occurred, on average, to American households. From the time President Obama first came into office in 2008, the average median household income was something like almost \$4,000 more in 2007 than it is today in 2014.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how anyone could see that that is good news or that that is a good deal because with inflation and inflationary values—we all know, Mr. Speaker, that people pay more for gasoline today in 2014 than they did back in 2007. We know that people pay far more today for groceries, Mr. Speaker, in 2014 than they did in 2007. So what the American people need is relief, relief from these inflation-pushed high prices on the American people.

That is why the report that came out on Friday regarding the Keystone pipeline was so important. It confirmed what numerous other studies had already told us before, and it is this:

The Keystone pipeline will not increase carbon emissions here in the United States. It is completely safe. And for the good of the United States of America, for the good of our environment, for the good of job creation, for the good of wage increases in the United States, we should have built Keystone and the pipeline and increased American energy production years ago.

We have the chance now. And so, Mr. Speaker, I call on the Obama administration to implement what the recent State Department report issued on Fri-

day, and it is this: that we can safely go ahead and build the Keystone pipeline.

But I think we need to go much further than that, Mr. Speaker. I think that it would behoove not only this House of Representatives but also the United States Senate and the President of the United States to unify and agree on something that would be so good for all Americans—young and old, rich and poor, Black and White, Latinos—all elements of the United States. We should unite on growing our economy and growing prosperity for the average American. And we can do this, Mr. Speaker, by engaging in an all-of-the-above energy policy whereby we legalize all forms of energy and, in fact, encourage exploration and growth, because we have reports that are issued every single year that come to the same conclusion year after year after year: of all the countries in the world—there are well over 100 countries in the world, and of all the countries in the world, our own government tells us every year in a report that it is the United States of America that has been singularly blessed.

Blessed how, Mr. Speaker? Blessed with an abundance of natural energy resources. Whether it is oil—the United States is blessed with more oil than Saudi Arabia—or whether it is natural gas—the United States of America is blessed with trillions of cubic square feet of natural gas—every day, Mr. Speaker, our scientists and our explorers find more and more of these wonderful natural resources: oil, natural gas, and coal. And because of the genius of the scientists in the United States, we have cleaner options than ever before to use this fundamental source of energy which is the number one source of energy in the United States, and that is coal.

In my home State of Minnesota, we see that there is a propane crisis. The people in my district are severely curtailed from using this energy resource. And there is also a scarcity of the product as well. I spoke with one individual today on the plane when I was coming in who told me that he was so happy. His mother locked in at about \$1.30 a gallon on propane, and he said there are reports propane could go up to over \$6 a gallon, perhaps even \$7, before the harshest winter in decades in Minnesota and other parts of America, as well, is over.

Let's help the American people's lives, Mr. Speaker. Let's not make life more difficult for the average American. Let's make life better. And we can do that very simply by engaging in an all-of-the-above American energy strategy, whereby, literally millions of high-paying jobs would come online.

Since President Obama came into office, we have seen the average median household income go down, not freeze or stay the same, but actually go down,

go down by nearly \$4,000. And, in fact, the average median income of the average American, they now see that their income is 8 percent less today than it was 7 years ago. Rather than that being our story, let's change the narrative, Mr. Speaker. Let's change it for a positive, happy ending for the American people so that when they go to their local gas stations, rather than gas being in excess of \$3 a gallon or in some parts of this country over \$4 a gallon, let's bring that price down, Mr. Speaker, so that it could be \$2 a gallon again. I know that is entirely possible and within our grasp.

But what would be even better is to see the average American's income, including senior citizens on fixed income, to see their incomes go up—their rate of return on their savings, the rate of return on their dividends, their investments that they have tied up, after a lifetime of labor, after a lifetime of doing the right thing, taking their hard-earned money, putting it into savings, putting it into investments, putting it into, for many Americans what is their number one investment, which is their home, seeing Americans' home values rise. Why? Because of having a go-go economy, a growth-based economy, an economy that is growing because, rather than being a consumer of energy from foreign nations, we are, instead, the world's leading supplier of energy resources across the rest of the world.

I know this is possible, Mr. Speaker, and I know that we can unify on this issue—not only fossil fuels but also nuclear reactors.

□ 1930

Just this last week, I spoke with an individual who is an expert in the field of nuclear reactors. Before, in the United States, we relied on large nuclear reactors. In my home State of Minnesota, Mr. Speaker, we have two nuclear reactors in my State that supply somewhere between 20 and 25 percent of all the electricity needs in Minnesota. We are grateful that we have these two reactors that provide emission-free power in our State, but we have a new generation of nuclear reactors that could come online and be available for people all across the United States. Think, in a rural area, where perhaps it is just a few thousand people who perhaps wouldn't have access to nuclear-generated energy, they could have access to new, small, nuclear modules that are effectively able to be put in very unique locations, completely safe, almost—almost—waste-free.

This new generation of nuclear reactors, in my opinion, should be studied and put online in the near future so that we could have yet one more tool in America's energy toolkit. As a matter of fact, the United States could be,

again, the leading supplier of this newest generation of modular nuclear reactors to be used and deployed across the world where they are safe, where they can't be compromised, and where very, very little nuclear waste comes forward.

You see, it is exciting, Mr. Speaker, to look at the future when so many of my constituents that I speak to today are worried and nervous about the future. They literally tell me, Congresswoman, I have no idea if my children will be as well off in their future as I am today. Every generation of Americans has been hopeful and optimistic, Mr. Speaker, because they have assumed and taken for granted that their children would be better off economically than they are today. That is all of our hope. I know I feel that for my biological children, and that is my hope and my prayer for our foster children. We want every generation to not only have what we had but to exceed it and shoot for the stars with their ambition, their goals, their dreams and their plans. Isn't that America? Isn't that what defines us, to build the next generation of the next mousetrap, to benefit not only us, not only our children, but to benefit and lift up those among us in the United States who seek to move up the next economic ladder?

You see, that is what can happen with innovation. Pull out a smartphone, if you have a smartphone, and you think of what was available to only the wealthiest among us, you now see in the hands of people at the bottom level of the economic ladder. Yet how much improved are our lives because we have smartphones today that are available to us? Think of the applications, the apps, if you will, that are on smartphones, and how those apps can be used to increase productivity in the United States, can be used, for instance, on health care to connect us more quickly with a doctor or a nurse or a pharmacy so we can realize the requirements that we need to become healthier individuals.

There are so many great innovations that are just waiting around the corner if we only legalize them, if we only open them up, and if we reject this very heavy hand of government that wants to bureaucratize nearly every element of our lives and cause different aspects of our lives to be far more expensive and have less of an ability to access the newest innovations. Instead, we in the United States need to be what we were for the first several hundred years of our existence, and it is this: nimble—nimble and able to capitalize on the intellect, the raw ideas and the talents that are in the United States. Legal immigration has benefited this country immeasurably, and we embrace with both arms legal immigration and all that has meant for our country. These are just a few of the

things that we have to be hopeful about and optimistic about as we go forward in our country.

There are other issues, as well, besides economics, that we grapple with here in the United States. One of those deals with foreign policy, another deals with national security, and another deals with how the United States is viewed across the world. I have spent time with my colleagues, many of whom this last week were across the world trying to meet with world leaders and find out what the concerns are and how we in the United States can advance our mutual interests.

I was privileged to be able to go on a fact-finding trip recently with one of my Democrat colleagues, a wonderful man from Rhode Island, Representative JIM LANGEVIN. JIM is a quadriplegic, and he and I had the privilege of traveling both to Australia and to New Zealand, where we met with our counterparts and also where we could talk about mutual areas where we could work together.

We see the rise in Asia of a new and aggressive China, a China who, for all practical purposes, has been engaging in what some would call cyber espionage and cyber warfare against nations all across the world—not just the United States but against many nations. How can we cooperate, then, with our allies to counter very aggressive steps that could be taken by, for instance, the Chinese or perhaps the Russians or perhaps the Iranians or other nations, North Korea, for instance, who may not have the United States' best interest at heart, who may, in fact, through the use of the Internet, through cyber espionage or through hacking in government computers, be, in essence, stealing some of the United States' most sensitive secrets, secrets that we would not want our adversaries to have? This is a very real issue, Mr. Speaker, and one that needs to be addressed.

That isn't the only form of warfare. There is also economic warfare, where our private businesses, through their own expenditure of funds on research and development, have come up with innovative new products and have, in effect, had the plans, the designs and the processes for those products literally stolen by adversaries—again not with our best interest at heart here in the United States. That information has been taken, and in some cases, we are told, a country like China has built a factory in China or in some other location where all they had to do was steal the raw data from an American company and they could go to work once they had that intellectual property and put to work perhaps a new line of paint, perhaps a new product that was being made in the United States and now is being made more cheaply in China and is undercutting the patents, the protections and the in-

tellectual property that we have in the United States.

Do you see, Mr. Speaker, it is a brave new world that we live in. That is why national security matters, and it is why foreign policy matters. It is why this last weekend at the Munich conference it was very important that we in the United States listened to and paid attention to what it was we were hearing from our foreign partners in the world. We have to recognize the reality of our world. Not everyone has America's best interest at heart. Not all foreign powers want to make sure that it is America's children who will grow up to be the economic and military powerhouse leaders of the world.

You see, many foreign nations would like to see the United States cut down, reduced down, so that we are no longer an economic leader or a military leader. I believe that the United States has been a strong partner in keeping peace across the world for decades. We are not a perfect country. We haven't done everything right. We get that. We recognize that. But I believe that our world has been better off when the United States has been that economic leader and that military leader.

If the United States isn't the leader in the world, who should be? What would peace be like in the world if Vladimir Putin and the Russian Government were the leader holding together world powers? Just imagine for a moment what that would be like. Or imagine, Mr. Speaker, what would it be like if China was the leader holding together world powers? We know what they have done before. By stealing secrets from our government and stealing secrets from private industry, we know what that has done. What would that be like if China was the leading military or economic superpower?

We can't think that this is some far-off future scenario that could never happen. We need to open our eyes, and I think one place that we can open our eyes is listening to what foreign leaders are telling us. What some of my colleagues have told me even as recently as today from some of their travels, foreign travels across the world, is that they have never heard before foreign leaders say to them what they are saying now. Foreign leaders are saying, look, we don't get the United States anymore. We don't understand your foreign policy. We don't understand your national security, because we don't understand who the friends of the United States are anymore. We don't understand who your adversaries are anymore. In fact, we can receive communications from the State Department or the Defense Department or an intelligence department, and we can get three different pictures of the same scenario. Which one should we believe?

There is a problem—and we didn't hear this just once. We have heard this

from multiple regions in the world and from multiple world leaders who were scratching their heads, even including former Polish President Lech Walesa, who had said the United States is no longer the political and moral power in the world.

You see, Mr. Speaker, other nations across the world want the United States, a responsible holder of power, to maintain that sense of decency and rule of law and adherence to a common goal of mankind, to prefer peace over war. Sometimes the United States has had to go to war. We have had to go to war in order to stand face to face and toe to toe with some of the most maniacal dictators that have ever been known in human history. That would include a Stalin of Russia, that would include a Mao Tse-tung of China, and that would include an Adolf Hitler of Germany. These maniacal rulers have served to hurt the chances for peace in the world, and yet it is the United States that has chosen to put on the line treasure and blood time after time after time. Once war has ensued—no one wants war, no one prefers war—but once that has ensued, it is the United States through the Marshall Plan that did, in fact, rebuild Europe and feed millions who were starving. It was the United States after World War II, after dropping the bombs in Japan, that went in and helped to rebuild that war-torn country and the difficulty that had ensued.

These aren't easy issues. There is no clean line here of right and wrong. There are difficulties that we grapple with. We get that. But, Mr. Speaker, one thing that we should agree on is that the policies of the United States shouldn't hurt the American people, and they shouldn't hurt people in other countries. Our policies should be ones that help the American people and help to bring about peace with other nations of the world. That should be easy.

That is why this last weekend at the Munich conference I was particularly concerned with our Secretary of State's comments. There was an article that had come out just this weekend regarding our Secretary of State, and I wanted to quote from it. I wanted to be able to speak a little bit, also, about some other issues that have been in the news. The American people continue to ask me about Benghazi: When are we ever going to get the truth about Benghazi? Just over a week ago, there was an article by the second-in-command in Benghazi who wanted to straighten up the facts and put his view on paper.

That is all very interesting. We want to be able to have time to talk about that, but I think it is also very important that we talk about and listen to America's greatest ally in the world. There is an ally that felt very disrespected and even used the word "offended" after comments that were

made at the Munich conference this week by our Secretary of State. Now, in deference to our Secretary of State, followup responses have been that he didn't mean to say what was reported in the media, but I think it is very important that we look at our ally—and this is Israel—and what Israel's response is. Again, I think, Mr. Speaker, we need to look at the context of the remarks that were made by our Secretary of State. Because, you see, if you speak with the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, as I have done numerous times in the last few months, and if you speak to the Foreign Minister of Israel, as I have been privileged to do, to the defense secretary in Israel, as I have been privileged to do, and to the intelligence secretary in Israel, as I have been privileged to do, they have been very strong and united in their view of the greatest existential threat that Israel faces today.

□ 1945

That threat isn't new; it is one that Israel has faced for the last recent years. And it is this: it is Iran with a nuclear weapon, because Iran has stated unequivocally, once they gain access to a nuclear weapon, and potentially the missile means to deliver that weapon, they have announced they will use that weapon against Israel. They will use that weapon against Israel, Israel being about the size of New Jersey. The largest city, Tel Aviv, and the surrounding area provides employment to approximately 80 percent of the Israeli population. So it doesn't take a lot of imagination, Mr. Speaker, to see that it may be the game plan of a nuclear weaponized Iran to drop a nuclear weapon on Tel Aviv and effectively wipe out the Jewish State of Israel in one fell swoop.

If that would happen, we should not kid ourselves, that capability and capacity, I believe, could just as easily be used against our Western partners and allies in the European region. It could be used against Australia, our great ally and friend, and also against New Zealand, our great ally and friend. And it could even be used here in the United States of America.

The rhetoric that has come out of Iran is nothing less than outrageous, but intentional. The regime has stated, they haven't deviated one iota from their nuclear goals and ambitions—not one iota.

What would that mean for the world if Iran obtained a nuclear weapon? You see, this is a very dangerous, dangerous game that we are playing with Iran.

I absolutely disagree fundamentally with the President's decision under the P5+1 agreement to allow Iran to continue to spin centrifuges and continue to enrich uranium which could be used as a fuel for a nuclear weapon. Iran has not complied with the U.N. resolutions, not at all. They have not.

What is different today under the P5+1? Not much, I would submit. So the worst nightmare for Israel has been realized in that exactly when Iran was being squeezed with economic sanctions, when they were in a position where they were starting to yell "ouch," that is exactly when the United States and the P5+1 pulled back the pressure and allowed Iran to have some breathing space, breathing space to the tune of billions of dollars of access to grow and prop up Iran's failing economy. This was not the time to give balance to Iran. This was the time to demand cooperation from Iran.

And so what is happening now is that we see people from all over the world—China, Russia, various nations—are all buying plane tickets to run to Iran to conduct economic deals because, you see, under the previous sanction's regime, nations were prevented from constructing economic deals because it would help build up Iran. Now, it is an open-court press to engage in economic commerce with Iran. That is building up Iran, and it is causing Iran to have less incentive to come to the table and stop their program of enriching uranium, of spinning centrifuges, and they are not in any way dismantling their current nuclear program.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu said, it is his worst day in 10 years. He said this is the deal of the century for Iran.

Why is it we would fail to listen to our number one ally in the world, Israel, on this topic of a nuclear weaponized Iran? Why wouldn't we listen to their concerns? Why—Israel, which is far more vulnerable to Iran with a nuclear weapon—wouldn't we take those concerns into account?

Well, I think it is revealing what happened this last weekend at the Munich conference because you see, Mr. Speaker, one government minister in Israel called Secretary of State Kerry's statements "offensive." At the conference the Secretary said, and I quote from the article that was published this weekend:

You see, for Israel, there is an increasing delegitimization campaign that has been building up.

In other words, there is an effort to delegitimize Israel. People are very sensitive to it. There are talks of boycotts and other kinds of things. Are we all going to be better off with all of that? The Intelligence Minister, Steinitz, in Israel yesterday morning said:

Israel cannot be pressured to negotiate with a gun against its head.

In other words, economic boycotts from the European Union, from sanctions, and also from divestment campaigns.

Now, let's just think about this for a moment. Boycotts, boycotting Israel's products. Approximately 30 percent, I am told, of economic trade that Israel engages in comes from Europe. If there

is a boycott that comes from the EU, this will severely handicap Israel's economy, and yet it seems Secretary of State Kerry was threatening Israel with an economic boycott.

What about sanctions? Sanctions. Isn't it the mother of all ironies that sanctions, by agreement of the United States, have been lifted from what arguably is the United States' greatest adversary, a nuclear weaponized Iran, and also Israel's greatest adversary, a nuclear weaponized Iran? We would lift sanctions, ironically, against a rogue regime with announced intentions to annihilate people across the world, the Jewish State of Israel, the United States of America; the Jewish State of Israel being the little Satan and the United States of America being denominated the great Satan. So we would lift sanctions on this maniacal nation, a nuclear Iran, and yet we would threaten sanctions or the possibility of sanctions from the EU against America's greatest ally, Israel? Isn't that one of the most severe ironies of all time? This being the greatest existential threat to the world, Iran with a nuclear weapon. How could it be that our Secretary of State could bring this up to the world at the Munich conference this last weekend, the specter of a boycott against Israel, sanctions against Israel, and the potential of a divestment campaign analogous to South Africa which actually engaged in apartheid.

And yet in Israel, what is the so-called apartheid when the Palestinians can work in the State of Israel? Palestinians are allowed to live in the Jewish State of Israel. There is an effort of coexistence from the Jewish State of Israel. And yet what has the Palestinian Authority done? They have thumbed their nose at the Oslo Accord. They have thumbed their nose. Have they fulfilled the requirements on the Palestinians? No, they have not.

What did Israel do? Israel took land in the Gaza area, which is on the Mediterranean Sea. They withdrew Israeli settlers from Gaza and gave the land over to the Palestinian Authority in exchange for peace. What sort of peace did Israel realize by actually giving up that land to the Palestinian Authority? They were met with rockets fired in the region near Beersheba and Sderot. Those areas continue to have thousands of rockets pointed at them.

Who, I ask, Mr. Speaker, is the aggressor in this situation? Who, I ask, Mr. Speaker, should be the one to receive economic boycotts or sanctions or divestment? Would it be Israel, which is not being the aggressor with rockets against Gaza, or should it be Gaza?

You see, these rockets are hidden in neighborhoods. They are hidden in nursing homes by the Palestinians. They are hidden in areas where civilians are kept. And these rockets are

not fired at military targets, Mr. Speaker, by the Palestinians. They are specifically targeted at elementary schools, at nursing homes in Israel, and at innocent human life. Think of this.

And our Secretary of State this weekend, in effect, threatened Israel with boycotts, economic sanctions, and divestment. No wonder the Israelis were so extremely upset with our Secretary of State. Even the economic minister, Naftali Bennett, whom I had the privilege of meeting on one of my recent trips, had a message for all of the advice givers:

Never has a nation abandoned their land because of economic threats. We are no different.

In other words, be warned, Israel will not give up further land no matter what the threats are. And the United States, which purports to be Israel's best friend, should not be the one rattling the saber with economic threats.

Naftali Bennett went on to say:

Only security will ensure economic stability, not a terrorist state next to Ben Gurion Airport. We expect our friends around the world to stand beside us and against anti-Semitic efforts targeting Israel, and not for them to be their amplifier.

That is how those words were received in this very volatile part of the world. Even Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu weighed in on our Secretary of State's boycott threats, primarily coming from Europe, during his Cabinet meeting. According to a transcript of the Prime Minister's remarks on the Prime Minister's Web site, he called any attempts to boycott Israel "immoral and unjust."

"They will not achieve their goal," the Prime Minister said. "First, they cause the Palestinians to adhere to their intransigent positions, and thus push peace further away."

You see, these are not big asks for reasonable people to consider. You see, the Palestinian Authority is being asked to recognize the right to exist for the Jewish State of Israel—the right to exist. They don't even want to accept that the Jewish State of Israel has the right to exist. That is number one. Number two, does the Jewish State of Israel have the right to defend herself from aggression? They won't even admit that she has the right to defend herself from aggression.

Maybe it would help if Hamas, which is the ruling authority over Gaza, maybe it would help if they remove article 7 from their charter, which calls for the annihilation of the Jewish people, the extermination of the Jewish people. There isn't much difference between the call in the Hamas charter, which is the final solution, the riddance of the Jewish people in the Jewish State of Israel, there isn't much difference between that and what a maniacal leader tried to accomplish during World War II. And yet these same terrorists are being given deference in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

It is bizarre to think that the United States and the policy of the United States since 2008 has included calling on Israel to retreat and give up even more land to the Palestinians, which have repeatedly called for the annihilation of the Jewish state. It is amazing that the United States and our President has called on Israel to withdraw to the pre-1967 borders, which would be a suicide mission.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I have been to Israel. I have literally stood in an apartment building where I can look out the front window of the apartment and see the Mediterranean Sea and the border of Israel on the west, and look out the window in the rear of the apartment and see Israel's border on the east with the Golan Heights, about a 9-mile width.

□ 2000

What country could defend itself, especially when the call is that the Palestinian Authority seeks to unite both the area of Judea and Samaria with Gaza, and they want a highway to do that? In other words, Israel is being called upon to cut herself in two. If she cuts herself in two, just like any human body, she couldn't go on, she couldn't survive, she couldn't live.

So these requests that are coming—in fact, those demands that are coming from the Palestinian Authority—should be shut down by the United States of America. That is where the delegitimization should come, Mr. Speaker, not delegitimizing Israel because she has a goal of the existence of the Jewish state. Shouldn't Israel have that right to continue and preserve itself as the Jewish State of Israel? Isn't that a worthy goal? Should we agree with that?

Why should we be undercutting that goal when the so-called partner in peace, the Palestinian Authority, is unwilling to even work with step one? I understand the response from leaders in Israel this weekend—I understand it—because, in effect, what they are saying is they no longer recognize the United States of America as its friend.

Isn't it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that parallels what many Members of Congress have been hearing from various leaders across the world: We no longer recognize the United States of America; we no longer recognize your foreign policy. Behind closed doors they are telling us they want us to succeed. They want us to remain the world's superpower because we provide literally defense across the world to keep world order. If we are not here as a force for good, then what, then who, then what is the next step? So you see these are not comments made by our ally Israel and those leaders without cause and without reason.

The Prime Minister said: "They will not achieve their goal"—meaning the

boycott and the sanctions and the divestment. "First, they cause the Palestinians to adhere to their intransigent positions and thus push peace further away." True. "Second, no pressure will cause me to concede the vital interests of the State of Israel, especially the security of Israel citizens."

Make no mistake about it: Israel won't give up, Israel is going to stand, Israel is going to be there. So the last nation to put roadblocks in Israel's way should be the United States of America.

Secretary Kerry has a proud record of over three decades of steadfast support for Israel's security.

That is the statement that was released. But the Secretary's words don't add up.

At the conference, Kerry said of the Israel-Palestinian conflict:

Today's status quo absolutely, to a certainty, I promise you 100 percent, cannot be maintained. It's not sustainable. It's illusory. There's a momentary prosperity, there's a momentary peace.

In other words, Secretary Kerry is putting pressure on Israel to make a change, and to make a change whereby putting her sovereignty on the line.

The question is: Will the United States continue to press Israel to withdraw from Judea and Samaria, the Biblical homeland of the Jewish State of Israel?

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, why in the world would the United States ask Israel to withdraw from the very location where, according to Biblical and Torah documents, the Jewish State of Israel was begun; where Abraham, the originator of the Jewish State of Israel, where the Jewish people had their origin. Why would Judea and Samaria be that area that is the area that we would expect would be given back to the Palestinian Authority when there has been virtually continuous presence of the Jewish people in that region, albeit to varying degrees?

I had the privilege of standing at Shiloh—or what some people pronounce Shiloh—where the tent of meeting was moved in the interim period between the First Temple period and the Second Temple period on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The temple was in a tent at Shiloh.

There are artifacts yet today being found, shards of pottery that prove that this location in Judea and Samaria was where the Jewish people had their most holy site, where the Holy of Holies, the Ark of the Covenant, was kept with the tents built around, where worship was conducted for over 350 years by the Jewish people. Yet the Jewish people are told they have to leave that land, the land of their origins, the land of worship for over 3,500 years—they have to leave? It is incredible, it is impossible, it will never be.

One thing that needs to be understood, Mr. Speaker, is the tenacity and

determination and decision of the Jewish people. You see, Mr. Speaker, they have given up before. They have given land for peace. They have given one concession after another. But what they have told me in my visits to Judea and Samaria, no more the people who live there are temporary settlers. They are residents, this is their home, and they have no intention of leaving, and they will fight to the death for their land and for their people and for their ancestors and forebears and, yes, for their children and for the future of the Jewish State of Israel.

You see the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stood in this Chamber right behind me and stood, Mr. Speaker, at the lectern, and he told a joint session of Congress very clearly that Israel isn't what's wrong with the Middle East; Israel is what is right with the Middle East.

I know from experience. The very first time I was privileged to travel to the Jewish State of Israel was the day after I graduated from high school. It was in 1974. I spent my summer in Israel. It was a very different place back then. It was a Third World country. The modern State of Israel was established in 1948 under extremely severe adverse conditions, and they continued to fight for the maintenance of their sovereignty. Why? Because they were continually attacked by their Arab neighbors and continue to remain so to this day.

There is only one Jewish state in the world. There are multiple Arab nations, multiple Muslim nations across the world, as it should be. We recognize the right to exist of Muslim nations. We recognize Iran's right to exist.

Why is it that only the Jewish State of Israel has to struggle for the world to recognize its right to exist? Why is it the only nation in the world that has to struggle to have recognition of its designated capital—Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the eternal undivided city and the undivided capital of the Jewish State of Israel. Yet that appears, once again, to be the bone of contention for the world, Jerusalem. Even so much so that the United States, which is supposed to be Israel's ally and we are supposed to have Israel's back, our Embassy remains in Tel Aviv rather than in Jerusalem.

There are efforts to have our Embassy moved, and I call upon our government, Mr. Speaker, I call upon our President, to demonstrate to Israel that we do have your back, we are your greatest ally, and have the United States move our Embassy into Jerusalem and do it in a fortnight and make it happen and show the world that we literally do have their back.

If we can't do that, Mr. Speaker, I will call upon our administration to at minimum change the State Department's Web site, which, if you look at the map of Israel and if you look at the

capital Jerusalem, Jerusalem is not designated Israel; it is considered an international up-for-grabs area. Really?

Jerusalem is contiguously surrounded by the Jewish State of Israel. How could this not be the very navel of the Jewish State of Israel? You see if the United States makes a decision to abandon Israel, as many nations of the world have done, as many nations are crying out for an economic boycott of Israel, economic sanctions against Israel, economic divestment against Israel, as though Israel were a criminal—if the United States, Mr. Speaker, chooses to join that extremely misguided, wrongheaded void of all facts, then I make a prediction, Mr. Speaker: that the United States will be adversely affected economically, and I believe that we could see adversity militarily against the United States as well.

There has always been one great defender of the Jewish state and of the Jewish people. That defender has been listed throughout antiquity, and Israel has had her back held by a force stronger than the United States. That strong right arm will remain for Israel. That defender will remain. The question is what will be the destiny of the United States? Will our destiny be one of blessing or will our destiny be one of adversity?

I think we need to be very clear and very careful in how we deal with the Jewish State of Israel. Israel must never be betrayed, and the United States must not put pressure on the Jewish State of Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to go over just a brief timeline that I put together of Jewish and Israeli concessions and foreign demands that have been put on the Jewish State of Israel.

You can go back to 1917 with the Balfour Declaration.

Go back to 1920. There were Arab attacks on peaceful Jewish settlements in the northern part of the British-controlled Palestine, where seven Jews were killed. The British military administration urged the disbanding of the Zionist commission, created to assist the British authorities in giving effect to the Balfour Declaration, promising the upbuilding of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The British military administration was replaced by a League of Nations mandate. It was Israel that was betrayed.

In 1921, anti-Jewish riots occurred in Jaffa on the Mediterranean, orchestrated by the British-installed Mufti of Jerusalem by the head of the Muslim community. They took the lives of 43 Jews in that effort in 1921. The British temporarily suspended Jewish immigration into Israel.

In 1922, Britain removed all of Palestine east of the Jordan. Seventy-eight percent of Palestine was removed from the territory of the League of Nations mandate for Palestine and power

transferred to Emir Abdullah, who established the Emirate, later called Transjordan.

In 1929, a campaign of false rumor and propaganda, orchestrated by the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj-Amin el-Husseini, alleged that Jews demonstrated at the Western Wall to curse Mohammed. Never happened. That mosques had been attacked by Jews. Never happened. That others would soon be attacked. A massive anti-Jewish pogrom convulsed Palestine in which 133 Jews were murdered by Arab mobs. The British suppressed the assaults, they killed 110 Palestinian Arabs. The British Shaw Commission ignored evidence of the Mufti's orchestration of the violence and recommended reducing Jewish immigration, and blamed the Jews for the murderous violence against them.

In 1939, a commission that investigated the Arab Revolt recommend creating a Jewish state in 20 percent of the British Mandate, with 80 percent of the mandate to be placed under Arab control and incorporated into the Transjordan. The Arab world rejected that—in other words, the Palestinian homeland rejected it—and the Arab Revolt continued.

In 1939, the St. James Conference was attended by the Zionist and Palestinian Arab leadership. Again, the Arab parties refused to sit in the same room with the Zionist representatives. No solution was reached. A paper was written. Further Jewish immigration would have to be dependent upon Arab approval.

□ 2015

In 1947, the United Nations proposed partitioning the British mandate. The plan was accepted by the Zionist movement. It was rejected by all Arab parties. Again, 6,000 Jews—1 percent of the Israeli population—were killed in a war in May of 1948 when Israel declared herself the Jewish state. That was her entrée into statehood and sovereignty. Israel has fought for her sovereignty ever since and has been under attack by our Arab neighbors ever since.

In 1949, Arab belligerents other than Iraq signed an armistice agreement with Israel. All refused to recognize Israel. All refused to negotiate a solution to the Palestinian-Arab refugee problem created by the first Arab-Israeli war that was launched by the Arab States. The Arab war on Israel created 700,000 Palestinian-Arab refugees. Most were confined to Palestinian refugee camps in neighboring Arab States, and 50,000 remain alive today—only 50,000. The oft-heard figure of 4 or 5 million Palestinian refugees includes, contrary to any other refugee case in the world, not only the actual refugees but generations of their offspring. Today, we have refugees from the Syrian conflict. Only the current refugees are included, not multiple generations.

This is not true with the Palestinians. The U.N. called on Resolution 194, calling for returning refugees between the context of an Israeli-Arab peace, and all Arabs opposed that resolution.

On and on we go, Mr. Speaker, to the present time, including the most recent demand by Secretary of State Kerry against the Israelis that the Israelis had to release over 100 terrorists, many of whom were murderers, who had killed innocent Israelis, including an American citizen. The United States Government put pressure on the Israeli Government to release known murderous terrorists and thugs in exchange for—what?—other Israeli prisoners to be returned to Israel? No, Mr. Speaker. It was in return for the Palestinians to sit down at the negotiating table, and they did.

Once again, Israel disadvantaged herself and released murderous terrorists in order to get the Palestinian Authority to just come to the table. What has been the goal of the Palestinian Authority? Delay, wait, change the terms, move the goalpost, never getting to a point of actually coming to an agreement.

We have the instance in '47-'50 of Jews in Arab lands being told that they had to flee violence and persecution.

In 1956, Israel captured the Sinai and then later returned it to Egypt. In 1957, Israel withdrew from all of the Sinai. In '67, Egyptian demands were met, and that is when Israel returned that land to Egypt. 1973 was the Yom Kippur war. Egypt attacked Israel. Syria attacked Israel. Israel turned the tide with a miracle, and a ceasefire came about. In '79, Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty with Egypt, and Israel dismantled 5,000 communities.

In 1993 were the Oslo Accords. To this day, they have not been met by the Palestinian partners. In 1994, Israel and the PLO signed the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. Again, the Palestinian Authority repudiated that agreement. In 1995, the Oslo II agreement was, again, repudiated. In 1997, Israel and the PA signed the Hebron agreement. Again, there was no peace, and it was undercut. In 1998, the Wye River Memorandum—undercut. In 1999, the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement—again, undercut.

In 2000-2001, with the Camp David negotiations, again, Israel came in good faith—again, undercut. In 2003, the Roadmap for peace did not call for terrorism-free Palestinian leadership, and terrorists remain in that leadership today. In 2005, as I said earlier, Israel withdrew unilaterally from Gaza and northern Samaria, and 8,000 rockets have attacked Israel in that time. In 2008, Israel made another peace offer to the PA that covered 94 percent of the West Bank. Again, it wasn't enough. The PA wouldn't accept the offer, and it made no counteroffer. You see, the PA is unwilling to say "yes."

That is why this last weekend was so important, Mr. Speaker, and why Sec-

retary of State Kerry's words fell on incredulous ears. In spite of the nuclear agreement with Iran and now with the words that were said this last weekend, we need to make it unmistakable that I as a Member of Congress stand with Israel, as do my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS: WHEN WOMEN SUCCEED, AMERICA SUCCEEDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to lead the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order hour on: "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds."

I am honored to serve as the co-guest anchor this evening with my colleague and classmate, the gentlewoman from Illinois, Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY. We realize the importance "when women succeed, America succeeds" has on our economic agenda. I would also like to thank my colleagues Congressman HORSFORD and Congressman JEFFRIES for their assistance in organizing this evening's Special Order hour.

Too many women across America are being left behind in today's economy. As the President so passionately stated in his House floor speech of the state of the Union on Tuesday, today, women make up about half of our workforce, but they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. This is wrong—and in 2014, it is an embarrassment. It is important for me to note: for Black women, the pay gap is even larger. Black women on the average earn only 64 cents to every dollar a man earns.

The President implored Congress, the White House, the businesses from Wall Street to Main Street to come together and give every woman the opportunity she deserves, because, "when women succeed, America succeeds."

Mr. President, I couldn't agree more, and I thank you for adding this statement, this call to action, to your State of the Union.

Many Democrats invited women from across America to attend the State of the Union address or to watch it—women who are among long-term unemployed women who are making a difference in their community, like in my community, a lady by the name of Amelia Caldwell, from the west side, working as a home health aide, or to my guest Karen Morrison, working as an executive in health care. Both must balance the work life, and both understand that we must continue to mentor and provide resources to support women, resources such as health care,

child care, equal pay, affordable college tuition, early childhood education, economic development opportunities, and more advocates. Why? Because, when women succeed, America succeeds.

We know that women have made and continue to make great strides, but there is more work to be done. We must provide women with economic security and opportunities that they deserve, that their families need.

I want to thank the Congressional Black Caucus chairwoman, MARCIA FUDGE, for her leadership in making this a front-burner issue for the Congressional Black Caucus tonight.

Just think about it. Jeannette Rankin was the first woman elected to Congress in 1917, who stood before this body and said, I may be the first woman to be here, but I won't be the last. She was right. Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm was the first Black woman to serve in this body, and was the first in our Nation as a female to run for President of the United States. Leader PELOSI was the highest ranking female elected to serve in American history and was the first female to serve as House Speaker.

America is a much better place because of their service, but there are still far too many women who are left behind. We can help rectify that by making sure that we advocate for women's rights—to have the right to vote, to have pay equity, pay leave, and access to quality child care. This evening, we will have the opportunity to hear many firsthand stories about women and the challenges that they face and how we can help overcome them.

Let me start by introducing my guest anchor, ROBIN KELLY, from the Second District of Illinois. Robin is no stranger to the challenges that women face in the workforce. As a former State legislator and administrator and scholar and now a congressional advocate for women, I proudly present the gentlelady from Illinois, and I yield to her.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Congresswoman BEATTY.

I want to thank all of my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus who have joined us here tonight and who continue to fight and serve as the conscience of our Congress.

Mr. Speaker, "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds." It is a simple enough concept, yet it hasn't received the attention it deserves in the policy arena. As we reflect on moments like the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act—a bill that most of us would agree was long overdue—it is important that we keep in our minds and hearts the critical lesson of that important legislation, which is that it is unacceptable for pay discrimination to exist in our workforce, that workers who face discrimination have a right to claim compensa-

tion for the injustices they face, that regardless of gender, race, religion, or sexual identity, we all have a right to be justly compensated for our work, and most importantly, that it is beneficial to our economy, our families, and our children to pay fair wages to all of America's workers.

In that spirit, we must lift up the cause of an economic agenda for women and their families. As we look to grow our economy, let us keep in mind how women drive that growth.

Women are the breadwinners or co-breadwinners in nearly two-thirds of America's families. Women now outnumber men at every level of the higher education ladder. In 1964, only about 40 percent of women were enrolled in any type of college. Today, that figure is 57 percent. There are, roughly, 3 million more women currently enrolled in college than men. Women-owned businesses, like those owned by Vicky Linko, Letty Velez, and Christie Hefner in Illinois, account for nearly \$3 trillion of the gross domestic product in the United States.

Women are vital to our economic future. Still, the facts on how far we need to go for women to truly achieve the American Dream are staggering.

One in three adult women is living in poverty or on the brink of it. One-quarter of single mothers spend more than half of their incomes on housing compared to one-tenth of single fathers. Of all single mothers, nearly two-thirds are working in low-wage retail, service or administrative jobs that offer little economic support to adequately provide for the needs of their families. Women make only 77 cents for every dollar a man makes—a pay gap that exists even the first year out of college and continues through a woman's life. If you are a woman of color, no matter what your education is, there is that gap, and the gap grows as your education increases. Wage disparities cost American women an estimated \$400,000 to \$2 million in lost wages over a lifetime.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congresswoman KELLY, for providing us with those necessary statistics so we have a better understanding of, when we move forward, how we need to deal with making a difference in the lives of those women.

Now I have the great honor to yield to the gentlelady from Ohio's 11th Congressional District. She is the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus. She is a leader, a lawyer, and an advocate for the people. She leads the largest delegation of the Congressional Black Caucus in its history. We stand 43 strong following her leadership. Please join me as I yield to the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE.

□ 2030

Ms. FUDGE. Thank you so very much, and thank you for yielding.

I want to especially say this evening that as we talk about women, we are anchored tonight by two women, Congresswoman BEATTY, of course, from the great State of Ohio, and Congresswoman KELLY from Illinois. I have had a wonderful opportunity to meet these outstanding women, and I am so pleased that they are here this evening. I thank them again for leading this Special Order hour for the Congressional Black Caucus.

Today, members of the CBC raise our collective voices to advocate for a stronger economy by supporting and investing in working women across America.

My colleagues and I know improving the economic condition of families and communities across the country begins with strengthening the economic position of women, because when women succeed, America succeeds.

Last week, we marked the fifth anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the first piece of legislation signed by President Obama. As a result of this important legislation, women can more effectively take legal action against employers for gender-based pay discrepancies. While the Lilly Ledbetter Act helped provide a pathway for women to litigate pay discrimination, it does not address how we will invest in the economic future of working women in the United States.

Today, women comprise almost half of the American workforce. The country has come a long way in promoting equal rights and equal pay for women, but it is unacceptable that in 2014, women still make 77 cents on the dollar compared to their male counterparts.

In my home State of Ohio, women make approximately \$10,000 less than men each year, and in my district, the median wage for women is 86 percent of the median wage for men. According to the 2010 Census, in 40 percent of American households with children, women are the sole or primary providers, and over 30 percent of households headed by women are living in poverty.

African American and Latino women tend to feel wage discrepancy more acutely, receiving approximately 64 cents and 55 cents on the dollar, respectively, when compared to White, non-Hispanic males.

This inequality must not continue. The economic security of our Nation's children depends on women's access to fair pay. This Nation cannot afford to continue treating women unfairly or leave women behind if they expect to strengthen and grow our economy.

We can start to address this inequity by increasing the minimum wage. Almost two-thirds of workers earning the minimum wage are women. The minimum wage has not been sufficiently adjusted to reflect inflation. Increasing the minimum wage will help lift millions of women and children across the country out of poverty.

It is also necessary to establish policies that enable working mothers to earn a living wage and to take care of their families. This requires workplace protections for pregnant workers, paid family sick leave for emergencies, and affordable child care.

We cannot sit idle as half the population of our Nation lags behind. I look forward to voting in support of measures that break down economic barriers preventing women from reaching their full potential, because when women succeed, we all succeed.

Thank you.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you, Congresswoman FUDGE. Clearly, we can see that she is no stranger to advocating for women and for lifting women out of poverty and standing for them.

Earlier today, Congresswoman FUDGE had the opportunity to speak to thousands of women who are gathered here this week to advocate for the same agenda, women of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, where she served as the 21st president. She spoke to them because they, too, join us in understanding that when women succeed, America succeeds.

Now I would like to yield to the gentlelady from California's Third Congressional District, a woman who has a long history of standing up for people; a woman who understands when you talk about the statistics that we have heard tonight, and we will continue to hear tonight, about women living in poverty; a woman who only a few weeks ago, as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of President Johnson's war on poverty, led us in a press conference with his daughter. Standing with her were members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

I call her a champion of the people. I call her our warrior of the people.

Join me as I yield to the gentlelady from California, the Honorable BARBARA LEE.

Ms. LEE of California. Let me first thank you, Congresswoman BEATTY, for those very humbling remarks, for your tremendous leadership, and for the work that you do each and every day not only for the people of your district but for the people and the women and the children and families in the entire country.

I just have to say that you have certainly hit the ground running here in Washington, D.C. I think you have because of your life's work in Ohio, and what you have done in Ohio as an elected official and how you have just charted the course for so many issues for so many women. Thank you for leading us tonight.

Also, Congresswoman KELLY, I want to thank you for organizing this Special Order and also for being such a champion for women and children and your district in Illinois.

Again, I have been here now for probably eight terms. You all have just ar-

rived. I just want to thank you. It is really an honor to work with you.

Congresswoman BEATTY, you earlier mentioned the President's quote. I want to mention once again what he said during the State of the Union because I think it is important to make sure that the country continues to hear that the President understands when women succeed, America succeeds, and he is leading the charge in the White House for that, in terms of his leadership.

Today, women make up about half of our workforce, but they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. That is wrong, and in 2014, it is embarrassing.

So thank you again, Congresswoman BEATTY, for reiterating the President's quote, because we can't forget that he truly is supportive of our overall agenda.

It is simply unacceptable that women are still being paid 77 cents for every dollar that a man makes. African American and Latina women are being paid even less, at 64 cents and 50 cents, while doing the same work as men.

That is why our Democratic women of the House, under the leadership of Congresswomen NANCY PELOSI, DONNA EDWARDS, and DORIS MATSUI, along with all of us, have launched the "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds" campaign.

In drawing attention to the need for a true economic agenda for women and families in D.C., we all have been hosting a series of events in our districts across the country, and we are hearing the same thing. Congresswomen KELLY and BEATTY, myself, Congresswoman FUDGE from Ohio, are all hearing the same thing.

Saturday, I was really thrilled and honored to have been joined by Leader PELOSI at my event in Oakland. I was also joined by former Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, who so courageously told her story as a former public assistance recipient needing affordable child care and a good-paying job as a bridge over her troubled waters.

Also at this event I was joined by two of my constituents, Clarissa and Irma, who shared their struggle of trying to take care of their family.

Clarissa told us about her struggle as a single parent. When budget cuts caused her to lose the subsidy that she received to pay for child care, she was forced to pull her son, Xavier, out of preschool and resign from her job to care for him during the day. Xavier started kindergarten unprepared and is now in his second year, catching up with his peers. It is very difficult.

Clarissa is an unbelievable mother. So Xavier is going to make it, and he is going to be a true leader because of Clarissa, who is working each and every day to make sure he catches up. This didn't need to happen if she had affordable child care.

Also, it reminded me of when I was in college with my two sons. I always say they were the two best educated children under 3 years of age. They were college-educated under 3 years because I had to take them to class with me while a student at Mills College because I could not afford child care.

Child care is so critical to the success of women. When women succeed, America succeeds.

Let me tell you about Irma. She is a single mother and a restaurant worker, a low-wage worker. She shared her experience with pregnancy discrimination. There was not a dry eye in the room.

Irma, like so many women, became pregnant, and her manager reduced her work hours from 40 hours a week to less than 30 hours a week. He assigned her difficult tasks. You know why he did? To try to get her to resign. They had her doing work that she would never be allowed to do if her doctor had known that they were requiring her to do that.

After assigning her a particularly difficult task when she was 8 months pregnant, Congresswomen BEATTY and KELLY, do you know what her manager told her? He said, Well, if it's so hard, then why go to work? Why go to work?

So Irma's story is the story of so many of our constituents.

It also reminded me, as my colleagues have mentioned, of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman elected to Congress. She was fighting when she was here in Congress for pay equity for domestic women. She was fighting for affordable child care and for education.

Congresswoman Chisholm was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. She was someone that many of us looked up to. Her passion for the plight of working poor and women was undeniable.

Leader PELOSI and myself unveiled the Shirley Chisholm Black History stamp on Saturday during our panel discussion. It was just an amazing moment because of all the people in that room. There were 500 of my constituents; young people, middle age, old people. My 89-year-old mother and my two sisters were there. People really understood when women succeed, America succeeds, and the fight that Shirley Chisholm mounted for that.

In Brooklyn, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE serves in the spirit of Shirley Chisholm. She and Congressmen JEFFRIES, RANGEL, MEEKS, and KELLY had the privilege to unveil Shirley Chisholm's stamp in Brooklyn.

Once again, the message of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm that when women succeed, America succeeds, is so relevant and so current today. So the principles of our women's economic agenda which we are discussing tonight resonates throughout our country, like raising the minimum wage. I just have

to reference low-wage workers. The majority are women and women of color.

Also, affordable, quality child care and paid family medical leave. Again, I mentioned my mother, a phenomenal woman who raised three young girls. Paid family medical care for not only our children but our elders, our senior citizens. It is so important that people know that they can care for their family members during their golden years, as well as their children.

Pay equity and closing the gap in terms of the statistics we cited earlier. All of these efforts that we are mounting here in Congress, hopefully we will have bipartisan support for raising the minimum wage in this overall agenda.

All of this means that when women succeed, America succeeds. The success of women is truly central and integral to the success of our country as a great democracy which stands for liberty and justice for all.

So thank you again, Congresswomen BEATTY and KELLY, for organizing this tonight.

I have to close by just saying Congressman Shirley Chisholm was a true Delta woman. She was the epitome of a Delta woman, and so this week, once again, saluting Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm and our overall women's agenda is so timely and so profound. Thank you again for this moment.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congresswoman LEE, and so timely are your words.

Talking about Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm reminds me of a quote of hers that I read. It said:

Tremendous amounts of talent are lost to our society just because that talent wears a skirt.

Certainly, like you, she was a phenomenal woman. So let me thank you again for your personal story and for telling us the story of Irma, because as I think of my congressional district and I think of a phenomenal family, I think of the Troy family, a family where I call her Mother Troy and Pastor Troy. They have four sons, but they have three daughter-in-laws who go out every day into the community, whether it is feeding a child, providing child care, or working with the homeless or in housing.

□ 2045

So in each of our communities we have stories because we understand in our communities that when women succeed, America succeeds. Thank you.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to Congressman JEFFRIES from the great State of New York, and it is, indeed, an honor, as he is coming to share with you that he represents the Eighth Congressional District.

He is no stranger to this platform. You see, as our colleague and classmate, we are standing in tonight as co-anchors because Congressman JEFFRIES

is the real anchor. He and Congressman HORSFORD have been stellar in their leadership, in their scholarship, to come here for every Special Order hour under the Congressional Black Caucus and lead us in an agenda that makes a difference in the lives of so many people.

To have him here today, standing with us not only as a Congressman but as a spouse, as a father, sends a strong message that not only do women understand when women succeed, America succeeds, but men also understand it.

I yield to the gentleman from the great State of New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio for yielding, as well as for the tremendous job that you have done anchoring this CBC Special Order along with our good friend, the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois.

It reminds me, back at home, sometimes the pastor in my church would have a guest preacher come and deliver the sermon for the occasion, and the guest preacher will do so well that he will remark afterward, it is a dangerous thing when you bring that type of preacher to the pulpit because the congregation may not want the main preacher to come back again.

You and Congresswoman KELLY have done such a tremendous job, certainly, STEVEN HORSFORD and I are at risk of losing our anchor positions. Nonetheless, we thank you for all that you have done.

It was a particular honor on Friday, along with Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE and Congresswoman KELLY and Congressmen GREG MEEKS and CHARLIE RANGEL, to be at the official unveiling held by the United States Postal Service of the Shirley Chisholm stamp to commemorate the life and times of this tremendous woman, this Member of Congress, this trailblazer, all that she had done.

I recall that she once made an observation to a young person who was considering a career in public service and asked Congresswoman Chisholm whether he should pursue this or not. Congresswoman Chisholm responded by saying to this young man interested in public service, Well, if you decide to run for office, don't be a career politician. She said, Be a statesperson. Representative Chisholm explained that the difference is, a career politician is only concerned with the next election, but a statesperson is concerned with the next generation.

As we stand here today, we would all do well to take that piece of advice that Congresswoman Chisholm uttered decades ago as it relates to the policy agenda connected to the theme "when women succeed, America succeeds" because, in order for that to be possible, we also have to be sensitive to what we

are doing for the next generation of young people in the context of child care availability, universal pre-K, strengthening the Head Start program that has served so many over decades.

What are we doing for the next generation to make sure that women, in particular, who are raising up the future leaders of America, are equipped with the resources and the ability to provide them with the best possible upbringing?

Now, 50 years ago, in this Chamber, President Lyndon Baines Johnson spoke before a joint session of Congress and he declared a war on poverty. And we know that, as a result of that initiative, there were several legislative programs that were enacted into law between 1964 and 1966—Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, school breakfast program, Food Stamp Act, college work study, minimum wage enhancement. All of these programs, taken together, contributed in a meaningful way to lifting millions of people out of poverty.

Now, we know, as we stand here today we have still got a lot of work to be done. But instead of there being a war on poverty, what we have seen far too often during this Congressional session and the previous one is a war on women. That is unfortunate that we have gone from trying to lift people up and give them an opportunity to pursue the American Dream to failing to deal with the issues that women in America face today and, in some instances, aggressively trying to roll back rights that were hard-fought and acquired over the years.

Now, as the President mentioned in this State of the Union that we all witnessed over the last week, that women in America make 77 cents for every dollar that a man earns. President Obama called it an embarrassment. I agree with that statement. It is also a national outrage.

How can it be the case that in America, in 2014, we are still allowing for such significant pay disparity that, as Congresswoman LEE pointed out, is even worse for women of color? So we have got to move forward under the principle—to bring to life the notion that one should be provided equal pay for equal work.

The second thing that we can do is to deal with this minimum wage issue that we have in America. As was pointed out earlier today, two-thirds of minimum wage earners in America are women. And so the failure to raise the minimum wage, to have indexed it appropriately for inflation to account for cost-of-living increases in America, disproportionately adversely affects women in this country. The reality is, with a minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, a woman in America can work full-time, 35 hours per week, across an entire year and, in attempting to raise a

family, fall well below the Federal poverty line. It is the classic definition of working poor.

So the failure to raise the minimum wage has consequences for women, for the family, and for the overall well-being of communities all across America, particularly when considering the fact that, in 40 percent of American households, women are either the primary or the sole breadwinner.

So that means, particularly as it relates to some of our good friends on the other side of the aisle who often express concern for family values—and I share that concern—the best family value is a good paycheck; because if you ensure that when people are working hard they are paid well for it, then we are ensuring that they have the capacity to take care of their families, of which women, increasingly, are the sole or primary breadwinners.

So I just commend my distinguished colleagues, Representative KELLY and Representative BEATTY, the dynamic duo of the CBC freshman class, for all that they have done and will continue to do on behalf of women, communities of color, and America in the context of their tremendous advocacy.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman JEFFRIES. And thank you for reminding us, if we could eliminate the wage gap, if we take, just in part of my district, in Columbus, in the metropolitan area, if we were able to eliminate the wage gap, it would allow women to have 77 more weeks of food; it would allow them to have six additional months more to pay their mortgage or rent; it would allow them to also have 2,555 gallons of gas to be able to take that child to child care or to go to work.

So it is so important that we understand the agenda and why we stand here today as members of the Congressional Black Caucus advocating for women in this agenda, because we understand, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor now, to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, the 10th Congressional District of New Jersey. And we share a common bond: his father from New Jersey, my father from New Jersey. He is someone who understands all too well the value of when women succeed, America succeeds. He is a spouse; he is a father of triplets. And so it is so important, when we talk about early childhood education and when we talk about childhood, child care, that we understand that he understands, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, Congressman DONALD PAYNE.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me just acknowledge my colleagues from the freshman class, the gentlewoman from Ohio and the gentlewoman from Illinois, for anchoring this hour, when Women Succeed, America Succeeds.

I now am one of two members of the freshman class that has not had the opportunity to anchor this hour. Mr. HORSFORD and Mr. JEFFRIES have done such an exceptional job in that. As Mr. JEFFRIES pointed out, Mrs. BEATTY is always ready for the challenge and has demonstrated and, as was mentioned earlier, has stepped up to the plate and hit the ground running in the Halls of Congress and has demonstrated her leadership on numerous occasions.

With that, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that we know we have made great progress in this country closing the gender wage gap; but women still, as it has been stated, and we need to continue to let it resonate, earn just 77 cents on every dollar a man earns for the same work. And for women of color, unfortunately, naturally, I am not surprised, the gap is even wider, with women of color earning just 64 cents for every dollar that a man makes.

In New Jersey, the gap has even grown worse. In just 1 year, women in New Jersey earn, on an average, \$13,000 less than their male counterparts. Now, that is shocking. That is absolutely incredible that the gap, the margin is that wide, because over the course of that woman's lifetime, that adds up to more than \$434,000.

Now, what could a family over their lifetime do with another \$435,000? Probably could own a nicer home, send all their children to college, live in a manner in which all Americans deserve to live in.

□ 2100

What we have is working poor. \$434,000—that is a significant amount of money over the course of someone's life. That is not the America that I was raised to believe in. The home of the free, the land of the brave. Equality is always discussed, but there are always underlying factors in why those words are not lived up to for some people—particularly in this case, women.

Mr. Speaker, we live in the 21st century. Women now make up more than half of our workforce. As President Obama said last week in his State of the Union Address, paying women less is just plain wrong. In 2014, it is an embarrassment, and we all agree with him in that respect.

This gross gender pay inequality doesn't hurt just women. It hurts families, and it hurts our local economy as well. I don't know in my case of a husband who is happy that his wife is working that hard and making 77 percent of what she deserves to make. Any way you look at it, it is lost revenue coming into the home, and it could make such a difference on small things—vacations, education, groceries, food, sustenance to make it through the week, the month, the year.

On top of that, a woman shouldn't have to feel like she may lose her job if

she takes time off to care for her sick children. Now this is something that I know all too well, Mr. Speaker. I know that my wife and I were very fortunate to have the FMLA while we were raising our triplets, you see, because one would get sick, then the next one would get sick, then the next one would get sick, then I would get sick, then my wife would get sick, and it would start all over again. There is no way either one of us could care for them while worrying about whether she is going to have a job to return to, but still today, too many women have to choose between being employed and caring for their families. It is just not right, and it is just not fair.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in the greatest nation on Earth, no one who puts in a 40-hour workweek should be living in poverty, ever. They are playing by the rules. They are getting up every day, working hard, two and three jobs sometimes, and still not making ends meet. No one in this Nation that plays by the rules should find themselves in that condition. In this country, it is just not about having a job, but it is about having a good job.

More than two-thirds of minimum wage earners are women. We owe it to them to pay them a wage that they could actually live on and provide for their families because we know, Mr. Speaker, in many cases, that woman is the wage earner in the home, the only wage earner in the home, and to have them find themselves in that condition is unfathomable in the 21st century.

I was very encouraged by the President's actions to raise the wage for new government workers. It makes sense. It makes sense in this day and age to have a living wage, something you can take care of your family on. Congress needs to follow that example.

There are many things that this Congress could do to ensure that women succeed. Pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, pass the Family Act, and raise the minimum wage for all. All of these measures have been blocked by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but the success of women in America cannot and should not be bipartisan as an issue.

We must put our political differences aside and show this country that we care and we understand. We owe it to our mothers, we owe it to our wives, and we owe it to our daughters to provide them with the quality of life that they deserve.

So I implore my fellow Americans that are watching this tonight, whether your Member is a Democrat or a Republican, to see where they stand on this issue, to check how they are voting in your interests, and if they are not voting in your interests, then you should remove them. Because when women succeed, America succeeds.

I yield back.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman PAYNE. "Land of the free,

home of the brave”—it reminds me of the words that Leader PELOSI talked about during the 165th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, the first women’s rights convention that addressed women in social, economic, and political life. It said that women should be granted all the rights and privileges that men possess. So thank you for that message.

As we continue in this hour, I would like to yield to my coanchor, the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Congresswoman.

I, too, feel compelled to tell my Shirley Chisholm story. As you have heard, I was privileged enough to be at the unveiling of her stamp, and I was very, very proud to be there, but also, I met Shirley Chisholm 22 years ago. I was a director of minority student services for Bradley University, and we invited Congresswoman Chisholm out to be a speaker. I picked her up from the airport and drove her back when her time was done.

We had the opportunity to have coffee together, and I felt her passion for the everyday person, to improve their quality of life. Little did I know that she was planting a little seed in me, as she was the first black woman elected, and I am the 30th and hopefully counting black woman elected to Congress. So I am very proud of that moment, and it gave me that opportunity to reflect when I heard all of her stories last Friday.

You have heard from our many colleagues that nearly half of the workforce is female, yet two-thirds of all minimum wage workers are women. You have heard 40 percent of working women are their family’s primary breadwinner. If these women were paid the same wages as their male counterparts, their family income would increase by \$6,776 a year. This is a \$245 billion increase in wealth nationwide. If women receive equal pay, our economy would generate \$447.6 billion in additional income. Again, we all would benefit from this, not just women.

41.5 million adult women and 16.8 million adult working women live in households below 200 percent of the poverty line. Women workers, single mothers, and low-income workers are the least likely to have access to paid leave and workplace flexibility offered through their employer, only exacerbating gender inequality and women’s poverty.

The United States, as we said, the wealthiest country in the world, is the only developed nation that does not require employers to provide paid maternity leave, and the family and medical leave protections that do exist fail to cover nearly half of all full-time employees.

Revenue of women-owned businesses is 27 percent of that of men-owned businesses. I remember when I was a State

representative, thanks to SEIU, being a child care worker for a day, and I went into the home of a woman who took care of other children for other women so that they could go to work. Both the child care worker and the mom going to work were very low-wage earners, but if it wasn’t for that low-wage earner or child care worker, the mom couldn’t afford to pay her so she could then go to work. It would be easy for the moms to stay home, but they didn’t want to stay home. They wanted to work. They wanted to build their resume, and they also wanted to give their children the opportunity to be around other children and to learn from those low-wage child care workers. So both groups of women are affected by the minimum wage in this country.

With that, I yield back, Congresswoman.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much for sharing your stories, as my coanchor.

All evening, we have heard the stories of women who have advocated and fought in these Chambers, women like Shirley Chisholm. We know the stories all too well of the Rosa Parks, of the Barbara Jordans. Then as we look to education, we know the stories of women who serve as presidents of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, women like Dr. Johnnetta Cole, women like Cynthia Jackson-Hammond at my alma mater, Central State University. We know women who have worked and earned their place in history because they understand that when women succeed, America succeeds.

We know the stories of our parents. But one thing tonight I want to make sure that we add to these resources when we talk about economic development and we talk about child care and we talk about all the other services, pay equity and health care, and that is the right to vote. That is one of the most critical things that I want us to remember, because when we get people registered to vote and then we allow them to be able to vote, that is one of the most powerful tools.

The story we don’t hear when we talk about “when women succeed, America succeeds” is the story of a little lady from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, a lady by the name of Oseola McCarty. The name probably won’t mean a lot to a lot of people. She was someone who was a washer woman. She washed clothes for women who didn’t look like her or think like her and many who probably didn’t even know her name, but this woman in her own little wisdom truly understood the value of when women succeed, America succeeds.

You know why? She took her pay every week, and she put it in a jar, and she saved, and you see, she didn’t have children. She didn’t have a spouse or

brothers and sisters, and she wrote a little note saying that she wanted these dollars to go to a child that was underserved, a child who would be able to take these few dollars and get a college education because that would make a difference in that child’s life. Well, at the time of her death, someone opened up that container. And in that container, there was an estimated amount of \$150,000.

So when I think about “when women succeed, America succeeds,” I will add the name of Oseola McCarty to that list, because that is what we are talking about tonight. When we talk about members of the Congressional Black Caucus being the conscience of the Congress, it means that when we stand on this House floor advocating for folks who are voiceless, that is our role.

So when we seem so passionate and so concerned when some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle stand in the way of providing health care for women, for providing early childhood education or wanting to make a difference in how we feed our poor, then it reminds me of all the stories that we have heard today.

□ 2115

It reminds me of all the women who are fighting because they understand that there are faces on all of the statistics that we have heard tonight. And all of these faces, whether well-known or not, when you go back to your districts, understand when you stand with us as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, as you stand with us, with women in our caucus, you are standing with all the women across America. And the message you are sending is, when women succeed, America succeeds.

It is my great honor to ask my co-anchor tonight to close us out and ask everyone to remember that we are here, and, yes, I will say it again, when women succeed, America succeeds.

I yield to the gentlelady from Illinois.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Congresswoman. You make me think about my grandmother, because it was my grandmother in the late 1940s who purchased a grocery store and told my grandfather, We are in the grocery business now. It was because of her parents instilling in her and helping her to succeed and be a role model that she planted a seed for our family and her sons and then my father and my uncle. And it just fed the line for success and all of us going to college because of my grandmother. She was the very strong one in the family.

America cannot afford to maintain the status quo. Nearly 70 percent of Americans on or above the brink of poverty are women and the children who depend on them. That is almost 42 million American women and more than 28 million American children living on or at the brink of poverty. Tonight’s conversation is about sparking

an agenda that will enable women to achieve greater security. This includes raising wages for women and their families and allowing working parents to support and care for their families.

I want to thank the entire Congressional Black Caucus, especially my fellow co-anchor, the gentlewoman from Ohio, Congresswoman BEATTY, who did a fantastic job.

As we recognize Black History Month, we are reminded the Congressional Black Caucus exists to improve communities through policy action that meets the needs of millions of our most vulnerable citizens. It is that spirit that guides us here tonight. When we see millions of women and children on the brink of poverty, we must act. When we see total household incomes being short-changed because of gender biases in wage, we won't stand for it. When women succeed, America succeeds. I will say it again. When women succeed, America succeeds.

I thank my colleagues for caring enough to get involved in this debate.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I ask unanimous consent that my colleagues have 5 days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MESSER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. With that, I yield to my co-anchor, Representative BEATTY, for any last words.

Mrs. BEATTY. Let me just say as we close out that it is so important that you understand that our message tonight is certainly about making a difference in the lives of those who live in this wonderful country. So let me end as we started with, when women succeed, America succeeds.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived audience.

A NATION DIVIDED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives and to take up some of the issues that I know are important to you and are important to Americans. I come here tonight to try to put some perspective on this intense debate that we have had.

I would start with this, Mr. Speaker, that over Christmas vacation, I don't know of a time that this Congress hasn't taken a break over Christmas and gone back to celebrate the birth of

our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. That is the foundation of the core of the faith of our Founding Fathers that established this country, built this Capitol, and worshipped in the building.

I do remember a Christmas Eve present that we got from the United States Senate Christmas Eve morning when they passed a version of ObamaCare on a Christmas Eve vote, but I don't remember a President ever criticizing Congress for leaving town to go visit our families over Christmas vacation until this year when our President of the United States, Mr. Speaker, made his trip to his home State of Hawaii and took his Christmas break out there. He took his family with him, and certainly most thinking Americans don't object to such a thing, but I remember a speech that he gave from Hawaii where he criticized Congress for leaving town over Christmas. He said that we should have stayed here in Washington and solved this myriad of problems we have in our Nation, that going home apparently was inappropriate.

Well, I think when they were here, when the Senate was in voting on Christmas Eve morning that morning when they delivered to us ObamaCare, that was the time they should have gone home for Christmas vacation instead and listened to the American people, because the aftermath of that was that there was a huge wave election in 2010, and Republicans in the House of Representatives ended up with 87 freshman Republicans as a result of the American people's rejecting ObamaCare.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, I bring up the point of the President's criticism of Congress for taking Christmas off and point out three other topics that he brought up in that speech. He said he has an agenda for 2014—and this was a preview of his State of the Union address, I might add—and this agenda that the President has for 2014 includes three things: the extension of unemployment benefits, adding weeks on what his number really is—but I know that they have supported 99 weeks, almost 2 years of unemployment—and then the other piece of it was to increase the minimum wage. He is seeking to do that by an executive edict with regard to the Federal employees. And the third piece was he called upon Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Now, when you are home with your family over Christmas and you hear a speech like that from the President of the United States, the first thing you think is why in the world would he go before the American people with any kind of a message, let alone one like that? Don't take a Christmas break, and I am going to tell Congress what they ought to do. They ought to pass a minimum wage increase; they should

extend unemployment benefits; and they should pass—the President said this to us before—the Senate version of the Gang of 8's comprehensive immigration reform bill.

I point out, also, Mr. Speaker, that America now understands that comprehensive immigration reform—CIR, for short—really is three words that encompass one word, and that is "amnesty."

One would wonder why the President chose those three topics and gave that speech at that time. I would give this answer, Mr. Speaker: no one should really wonder. A President of one party that has the same party that rules in the United States Senate and controls the agenda over there, who is opposed by Republicans in the House of Representatives, is going to do this predictably, because tactically it is what you do in this business if you are not a uniter but a divider, and that is pick the topics that unify your party and divide the opposing party.

So he picked three topics that just essentially and almost universally—I will say, virtually—unify the Democrat Party and are designed to split and divide the Republican Party—minimum wage, for example. Now, I can go back quite a ways on how far back the minimum wage goes. But I can say, Mr. Speaker, that every time that Congress has raised the minimum wage, somebody has lost a job. It has cost jobs every time. We lose more and more of those entry-level job opportunities when the minimum wage goes up because the employers can't afford to train unskilled workers and put them in the workforce and take on all of the risk, the regulation, the recordkeeping, the liability, and sometimes the benefits package that is required. They can't afford to pay all of that and bring somebody into the workforce that has maybe no skills.

The reason that there are entry-level wages is so that people can get started in a job and you can afford as an employer to hire them and keep them there and upgrade their job skills, and hopefully in the same company you can move them right on up through the chain and bring them up through the system, and their wages and their benefit package, or at least their wages, go up with that consistently.

I happen to know how that works. We have never—I founded and have operated a construction company for 28 years. In those 28 years, we have never paid minimum wage. We have always paid over that. But when we brought somebody in at a skill level, we identified their skills, paid them what we thought we could afford to pay them, trained them, watched to see how they developed, and gave them raises in proportion to the skill level and the production that they gave because, after all, when they come to work, they would say, What is my job? And I said,

Well, your job is to help me make money. If you do that, then I want you to stay here, and we are going to do our best to take care of you.

Mr. Speaker, I recall walking into my construction office in one of those years, perhaps in the early nineties, and my secretary had decorated the Christmas tree in the entryway of our office. I looked at the tree. It looked nice, and it had decorations on it. I don't usually pay much attention to those things, and I walked on.

She said to me, Well, did you notice the tree? And I said, Yes, I did.

And isn't it pretty? was her question. Sure, the tree was pretty. She said, Go back and look at it a little more closely.

I went back and looked at that tree more closely, and it was symmetrical, symmetrically decorated. It didn't have any lights on it, and it didn't have any tinsel on it. All it had on it for decorations were gold Christmas emblems that were a thin piece of something thicker than foil but that kind of a texture, gold. And it would be, oh, a snowflake, a star, a baby Jesus and different pieces from the nativity scene all over that tree. Then I looked at that, and I said, Yeah, those are nice. She said, Look a little closer. She turned one of the decorations around on the back side, and on the back side there was engraved the name of one of our employees. And you look at another, and it would be their spouse. And you look at another, it would be one of our employees' children.

By the time I had looked at those decorations on that tree, it occurred to me that the decisions that I was making that were designed to help the company make money also impacted the lives of not just the people that we were writing the paycheck to, but their spouse, their children, and their family members, and that the responsibility of those decisions impacted all of the names on that tree directly.

It is quite a thing to walk in and understand that, Mr. Speaker, and see how that is. But all of those people on that tree benefited from the decisions I made, hopefully; and we benefited, all of us together, from the work we did together.

That is the way companies are supposed to be—good companies especially. Small companies operate like families. Good companies today, large companies, talk about the culture of the workplace. They want that culture to be a culture that brings people back again, people that look forward to going to work every day. They want people to look forward to working with their colleagues and their coworkers, and they compete for good labor.

So we don't need a Federal Government that gets in between an employer and an employee. This system of entry-level wages that gets people started in

a job where they can learn a skill, learn customer relations, learn responsibility, learn to look people in the eye, learn to provide service, learn to smile and hustle and act like you like it, if you can do that, you are not going to be working for minimum wage very long.

But the President and the Democrats want to divide that and put that minimum wage out of reach of a lot of employers, which means a lot of especially young people with no skills aren't going to get the opportunity. Divide, unify—virtually unify the Democrats—and divide the Republicans with minimum wage.

The next thing, extending unemployment benefits to 99 weeks, Mr. Speaker? How can we possibly afford paying people not to work for 99 weeks? The long tradition in this country has been 26 weeks, a half a year.

Now, a lot of times it is not people's fault when they get laid off. It might be seasonal; it might be the company folds; it might be the company downsizes. But that unemployment that is there is to give them a bridge to find another job, whatever they need to do to find that other job. And if this government decides, this Congress decides that we are going to borrow money, borrow money from the American people to run this government, borrow money from the Saudis, borrow money from the Chinese—\$1.3 trillion borrowed from the Chinese—so that we can extend unemployment benefits and sometimes provide early retirement for people that decide, "Well, I can qualify for 99 weeks of unemployment. I will be 65 by then. I can qualify then for Medicare, Social Security, and my pension plan. There is no reason for me to find a job at age 63 because this Federal Government has managed to add on to 99 weeks of unemployment," it is not a wise thing to do. It is a bad policy for our economy, and it causes our workforce skills to atrophy, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2130

So, having dispatched minimum wage and having dispatched extending unemployment benefits, now we are down to the third thing. In each case, unemployment benefits and extending unemployment benefits also, it is borrowed money to fund those projects that unify Democrats and divide Republicans. Part of the Republicans are going to say I am going to go along with that because I don't want to take the political heat, and inside they are going to think it is not a good thing for this country. They do the same thing on the minimum wage, increasing the minimum wage. So the President is dividing Republicans and he is unifying Democrats against Republicans.

The third thing is this: the proposal that this Congress pass comprehensive immigration reform, CIR/amnesty, that is the big one of the three divisive

agenda items that the President rolled out after he criticized Congress for taking Christmas off to visit our families.

Some of the result has been the pressure felt by some of the leadership in this Congress to produce a document that is called "Standards for Immigration Reform." So I received this document Thursday afternoon about 4:15 and I looked through this. These are principles on immigration, Mr. Speaker. I looked through this, and it has a preamble that starts out: "Our Nation's immigration system is broken." Well, that is the first half of the first sentence, and already I disagree.

Mr. Speaker, our immigration system is not broken. We have a system of laws and a system set up for enforcement. It is not the system that is broken; it is the President of the United States who has prohibited his law enforcement officers from actually following the law. When the law expressly dictates that when encountered, they need to place people who are unlawfully in the United States in removal proceedings, and the President has prohibited ICE, for example, and the Border Patrol, from carrying out the law, it is not the system that is broken; it is the President who has taken an oath of office that includes that he take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and I would close quote there, and that includes that the President is instead taking care that the law is not being faithfully executed, and there are at least five different violations of his constitutional limitations with regard to immigration. There are multiple others, Mr. Speaker.

The Constitution is at great risk because of the—I wanted to say "cavalier," but instead I would say because of the willful—disregard and disrespect for the Constitution that we have seen as the President has gone down the line and violated this Constitution multiple times.

For example, the President has suspended Welfare to Work. When that legislation was written back in the middle 1990s, and I know the author of that legislation, it was carefully and specifically written so that the President couldn't waive the work component of TANF, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. Even though the language is specific and the language is as tight as they could think to write it at the time, the President has decided we are going to provide TANF benefits, but there is not going to be a work component.

Of the 80 different means-tested welfare programs we have in the United States, at least 80 of them, only one required work. All of the hubbub on the floor of the House of Representatives in the 1990s about Welfare to Work, there was going to be welfare reform and people were going to be transitioning from welfare to work, all of that hubbub resulted in one policy, one program that

required work: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. The President suspended the work component.

The President suspended No Child Left Behind. The President supported and his minions carried out the Morton memos, which reversed immigration law, made up new immigration law, and ordered that they not enforce immigration law against people that apparently didn't make the President feel politically vulnerable.

So that is just part of this. That takes us also, Mr. Speaker, down to ObamaCare. In ObamaCare there have been multiple times that the President has violated the law that carries his name and his signature. The first and the most egregious—excuse me, not the first, the most egregious, was when the President announced some time last year that he was going to delay the implementation of the employer mandate.

Now, the law, Mr. Speaker, the ObamaCare law says that the employer mandate shall commence in each month after December of 2013. That means it starts in January, a month ago. We are into February now. The President has announced he is going to delay it for a year. He has no authority, he has no constitutional authority to delay the implementation of ObamaCare. None. Yet, he extended the individual mandate, delayed the employer mandate.

When the conscience protection was being violated in the rules that were written by the Department of Human Services, he decided every large employer, large employers had to provide contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations as part of their health insurance policies, and religious organizations and individuals objected. They said I am not going to be violating my conscience. The law cannot compel me, because of my religious beliefs, to violate my religious beliefs. That is a First Amendment right, the protection of the freedom of religion. But the President insisted even the Catholic Church would have to comply.

For 2 weeks of national hubbub, the President held his ground. Until noon on a Friday, and a lot of these things happen, Mr. Speaker, around noon on a Friday, the President stepped out to the podium and said, I have heard this discussion that religious organizations don't want to provide contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations—and abortifacients, Mr. Speaker, are abortion-causing pills. The religious organizations don't want to do this, and so now I am going to make an accommodation to the religious organizations. An accommodation, and the accommodation he made is, he said, I am now going to require the insurance companies to provide these things for free, and he repeated himself, provide these things for free.

So I thought okay, if there is going to be a change in policy, I bet I will see

it come back before the floor of the House of Representatives, and I will have an opportunity to debate, perhaps offer an amendment, and vote on this change. Well, Mr. Speaker, I didn't really think that, I just knew that is what the Constitution would require before there could be a change in the law, but there actually was a rule. So I checked the rule. Did they propose a rule change? Did they publish it? Did they go through the administrative procedures requirements in order to get a rule change?

The first thing you do is you go back and read the rule. Did anything change in the rule that compelled the churches to provide contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations, as compared to the insurance companies, as the President said in his press conference. No, Mr. Speaker, there was no change in the regulations. The only thing that changed was the President gave a speech, and in that speech, he said religious organizations, you don't have to do this any more. Insurance companies, you have to do this now.

What a reach. What a constitutional overreach for a President to believe that because he spoke, millions would line up and swoon at the very words of a President of the United States who again is going beyond the bounds of the authority vested in him, limited by the Constitution of the United States. That just gives a sample of some of some of the things that are going on, Mr. Speaker.

I bring this up because the President said to Congress: Pass comprehensive immigration reform. He also said if he is not satisfied with the results, if Congress doesn't move fast enough, he has an ink pen and he has a cell phone, and he will just run the government by signing executive orders. That was part of the promise that he made behind me, Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union address last week.

Well, so some in this Congress think if we try to catch up with the President, we can get along with him, and that's why you see this language here in the preamble of the Standards for Immigration Reform that says our immigration system is broken. Well, it is not broken. What is broken is the trust between the American people and the bond that is required when the President gives his oath of office to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, not take it apart by executive action that we can't catch up with through litigation.

If the President doesn't respect his oath to the Constitution, and if the President doesn't respect the legitimate congressional authority under article 1 that the Congress has, why would he then respect a decision made by a court, especially a lower court, a circuit court. Maybe, just maybe, pub-

lic opinion would force him to respect a Supreme Court, but, Mr. Speaker, it is unlikely that we will see a case get to the Supreme Court before this President is finally signing off in his last year of office.

I look at the points on this Standards for Immigration Reform, and there are four different provisions. One is border security and interior enforcement. It says that must come first. Of course we know that they would legalize everybody first, and then they are going to try to secure our borders. It says secure our borders and verify they are secure. The difficulty with that is, who is going to decide when they are secure? I would hand it over to the Texas border sheriffs, along with New Mexico, Arizona, and California. I would hand it over to the local government people and let them decide. If the States would certify the borders are secure, if the sheriffs would certify that the borders are secure, and if the county supervisors would certify that they are secure, we would have a pretty good answer as to whether they are secure, but we have heard those promises before. Janet Napolitano made it clear that she thought the borders were secure. Of course, I don't believe that.

When I mentioned earlier in a media program that just the children, the unaccompanied children that are being picked up along our southern border are running up to the numbers where for this year it is going to tally 50,000; 50,000 children, some of them little kids, tiny little kids who are being handed over to coyotes to be brought into the United States so they can qualify for the promise of the DREAM Act—50,000 kids. That is not out of me; that is from the president of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement union, Chris Crane, who is a plaintiff in a lawsuit, by the way, that is stalled and sidetracked over to Eric Holder and other places.

Next point is Implement an Exit/Entry Visa Tracking System. Supposedly these are the broken parts of the immigration system. They are going to enforce the border because something is broken and they need to pass a new law. We have the resources to enforce the law. We are spending over \$12 billion on the southern border, and for about \$8 billion, we could build a four-lane interstate all of the way from the Pacific Ocean clear down to Brownsville. But then the Entry-Exit Visa System was passed into law. That is the law. It was passed into law in 1996. We have an entry system but not an exit system, so there is no balance of who is here. By the way, if you get that working, who is going to keep track who is here, at least theoretically, and how are you possibly going to enforce that given that you have sanctuary cities and you have the equivalent of sanctuary States and you have an administration that refuses to

allow their own people who are hired to do so to enforce the law? I don't know why this is a new piece; it has been the law since 1996. If we can't get that law enforced, why would a new one be enforced if this one is not?

Item number three, Employer Verification and Workplace Enforcement. That is actually pretty good. That is the E-Verify program, and the language defines it. It says they need a workable electronic employment verification system. Now, if you make that mandatory, you wonder about the freedom of the American people that now have to prove that they are an American before they can go to work. That is a new burden of proof that we haven't had before. I don't want to speak too strongly against that, Mr. Speaker. I would just say instead that my new IDEA Act is a better idea. What it does is it clarifies that wages and benefits paid to illegals are not deductible for Federal income tax purposes. It allows the IRS to come in and do an audit. In that audit, they can run the names of the employees through E-Verify, and if the employer uses E-Verify, they get safe harbor on any violations of hiring people who can't lawfully work in the United States. The IRS can look at that and say you had a chance for safe harbor, you didn't use E-Verify. These employees can't lawfully work in the United States, and you can't lawfully deduct the wages and benefits you paid to them. It is not a business expense to break the law. So the IRS would deny those business expenses for salary and benefits, and they can attach interest and penalty. So your \$10-an-hour illegal becomes about a \$16-an-hour illegal, and you have voluntary compliance with E-Verify. It is a much better situation. Point number three isn't so bad.

Reforms to the legal immigration system. That is, they want to accelerate legal immigration, Mr. Speaker, and the needs of employers and the desire for those exceptional individuals to help our economy. Well, there is some truth in that, but we are bringing in 1.2 million legal immigrants a year and giving them an opportunity, a path to citizenship; 1.2 million. Now, those folks who want to change all this policy and grant amnesty for everybody that is here, and then open the doors up for an accelerated legal immigration to go on after that, to the tens of millions, and we are not talking about 11 million; we are talking about 11 million times some multiplying factor that is probably closer to three times or more than that say over the next 20 years.

□ 2145

We need to come to a conclusion as to what is an appropriate number of legal immigrants to come into America. I think 1.2 million is plenty generous. I think then we should start to

upgrade those applicants so that they are young, they have education, they have language skills, they have learning capacity, they have an ability to simulate into the American culture and the American civilization and contribute and pay taxes so that they carry their share of the load because the day is going to come that they are not.

Then, Mr. Speaker, I take us down to the lower end of this. First, the DREAM Act gets addressed, and it pretty much embraces DICK DURBIN's DREAM Act. Of course, I reject that for the sake of this, that, again, it rewards lawbreakers.

But in the final paragraph, the concluding paragraph, it says: "individuals living outside the rule of law." It says, Mr. Speaker: "There will be no special path to citizenship for individuals who broke our Nation's immigration laws." There would be no special path to citizenship.

Well, let me just say that if you put people on a path to citizenship who are in this country illegally while you have 5 million people waiting outside the United States who do respect our laws, then you have given a special path to citizenship. The nonspecial path is for those folks to go back into their home country and line up behind the 5 million who are lined up in their home country today waiting, respecting our laws to come into the United States; otherwise, it is a special path to citizenship.

But they go on and they say: "that would be unfair to those immigrants who have played by the rules and harmful to promoting the rule of law." That is breathtaking in its concept. We are going to provide a special path to citizenship because it would be harmful to promoting the rule of law, except we are going to legalize all of those people that have broken the law. And we are not going to ask them to go back to their home country and get in the back of the line; we are going to let them stay here and it won't matter whether they are in a line or not. They were satisfied to live in the shadows of America—that is what they came here to do—or else they came here on the promise of amnesty like those kids that are coming across our southern border now to line up for the DREAM Act, 50,000 strong in a year.

"Harmful to promoting the rule of law." No. What they are proposing here is destructive to the rule of law.

It goes on further and it says: "from here on, our immigration laws will indeed be enforced." There is another breathtaking statement, Mr. Speaker. Immigration laws from here on would indeed be enforced.

I am very confident, and I have not looked, but I am very confident that I can go into this CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in the House and in the Senate and go back to 1986 and pull the debate

out of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and point to you where time after time a Member of Congress, House and Senate, said, We are going to pass this amnesty act, and from here on, indeed, our laws will be enforced; we will restore the rule of law from this point forward, but first we must grant amnesty.

Those are the words from 1986. Those are the words from this document that was released just last Thursday. And those have always been the myopic words of people who believe in open borders more so than they believe and have reverence for our rule of law, which we still have the opportunity to restore, even from the 86th Amnesty Act, the rule of law.

If we fail to do so here and now, if this amnesty is granted, the rule of law will not be restored within the lifetime of this Republic, Mr. Speaker.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities with regard to the President.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CRENSHAW (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of flight delays.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2860. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that the Inspector General of the Office of Personnel Management may use amounts in the revolving fund of the Office to fund audits, investigations, and oversight activities, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1901—An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4629. A letter from the Director, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the annual report from the Office of Financial Research for 2013; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4630. A letter from the Director, Office of Financial Research, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the 2013 Annual Report on Human Capital Planning; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4631. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting Pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, Transmittal No. 10-13 informing of an intent to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Kingdom of Belgium, Australia, Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Hellenic Republic, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Norway, Portugal, the Kingdom of Spain, and Turkey; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4632. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Interagency Working Group on U.S. Government-Sponsored International Exchanges and Training FY 2013 Annual Report; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4633. A letter from the Acting Inspector General, Agency for International Development, transmitting two reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4634. A letter from the Executive Analyst, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting four reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4635. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting thirty reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4636. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4637. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, "Certified Business Enterprise Expenditures of Public-Private Development Construction Projects for Fiscal Year 2013"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4638. A letter from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting the Office's final rule — Post-Employment Conflict of Interest Regulations; Exempted Senior Employee Positions (RIN: 3209-AA14) received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4639. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0706; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-067-AD; Amendment 39-17708; AD 2013-25-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4640. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0421; Direc-

torate Identifier 2013-NM-003-AD; Amendment 39-17701; AD 2013-25-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4641. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0340; Directorate Identifier 2010-SW-081-AD; Amendment 39-17630; AD 2013-21-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4642. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0603; Directorate Identifier 2009-SW-079-AD; Amendment 39-17706; AD 2013-25-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4643. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Model [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0370; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-034-AD; Amendment 39-17711; AD 2013-26-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4644. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-1030; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-193-AD; Amendment 39-17712; AD 2013-26-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4645. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0304; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-005-AD; Amendment 39-17713; AD 2013-26-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4646. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; CFM International S.A. Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0407; Directorate Identifier 2012-NE-22-AD; Amendment 39-17710; AD 2013-26-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4647. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Various Aircraft Equipped with Wing Lift Struts [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0023; Directorate Identifier 96-CE-072-AD; Amendment 39-17688; AD 99-01-052 R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4648. A letter from the Chair, NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel, transmitting the Panel's Annual Report for 2013; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 470. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-339).

Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WAXMAN (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. DOYLE, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. PAL-LONE):

H.R. 3982. A bill to provide that the rules of the Federal Communications Commission relating to preserving the open Internet and broadband industry practices shall be restored to effect until the date when the Commission takes final action in the proceedings on such rules that were remanded to the Commission by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HIMES (for himself, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut):

H.R. 3983. A bill to establish a competitive grant program assisting the development of innovative early learning curricula for low-income children; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HIMES (for himself, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 3984. A bill to establish an Early Learning Challenge Fund to support States in building and strengthening systems of high-quality early learning and development programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. WESTMORELAND:

H.R. 3985. A bill to sunset funding under sections 1341 and 1342, and to repeal section 1343, of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. MOORE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. HOLT, Ms. CHU, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. HONDA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina):

H. Res. 471. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of February 3, 2014, through February 7, 2014, as "National School Counseling Week"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers

granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. WAXMAN:

H.R. 3982.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under the Commerce Clause of Article I of the United States Constitution, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 3983.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 3984.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. WESTMORELAND:

H.R. 3985.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

- H.R. 32: Mr. FINCHER and Mr. HIMES.
- H.R. 164: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
- H.R. 318: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
- H.R. 322: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
- H.R. 333: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
- H.R. 352: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
- H.R. 455: Ms. CHU, Ms. TITUS, Mr. FARR, Ms. MENG, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. POCAN, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. NEAL, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. BASS, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. PETERS of California.
- H.R. 508: Mr. REED.
- H.R. 721: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
- H.R. 946: Mr. FLORES.
- H.R. 1009: Mr. RAHALL.
- H.R. 1010: Mr. YARMUTH.
- H.R. 1281: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. CLAY.
- H.R. 1286: Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 1354: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
- H.R. 1648: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
- H.R. 1701: Mr. FLEMING.
- H.R. 1717: Ms. GABBARD.
- H.R. 1726: Mr. ELLISON.
- H.R. 1869: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
- H.R. 2035: Mr. TIERNEY.
- H.R. 2123: Mr. PASCRELL.
- H.R. 2328: Mr. SCHRADER.
- H.R. 2415: Mr. WHITFIELD.
- H.R. 2484: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. ISRAEL.
- H.R. 2502: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Ms. DELAURO.
- H.R. 2553: Mr. FATTAH, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. KILMER.

- H.R. 2560: Mr. POCAN.
- H.R. 2575: Mr. ROSKAM.
- H.R. 2638: Mr. BARTON, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. COFFMAN.
- H.R. 2651: Mr. HARPER and Mr. LANCE.
- H.R. 2694: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
- H.R. 2767: Mr. DESJARLAIS.
- H.R. 2780: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
- H.R. 2847: Mrs. BEATTY and Ms. LOFGREN.
- H.R. 2904: Mr. HIGGINS.
- H.R. 2905: Mr. HIGGINS.
- H.R. 2907: Mr. LATHAM.
- H.R. 2921: Mr. BENISHEK.
- H.R. 2994: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. PETRI, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, and Mr. JONES.
- H.R. 2997: Mr. CULBERSON.
- H.R. 2998: Mr. O'ROURKE.
- H.R. 3040: Mr. CICILLINE.
- H.R. 3116: Ms. MOORE and Mr. LANGEVIN.
- H.R. 3301: Mrs. WALORSKI.
- H.R. 3382: Ms. BASS, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
- H.R. 3384: Mr. PETERS of California and Mrs. WALORSKI.
- H.R. 3392: Mr. LONG.
- H.R. 3395: Mr. ENYART, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
- H.R. 3408: Mr. LATTA and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
- H.R. 3450: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
- H.R. 3471: Ms. GABBARD.
- H.R. 3482: Mr. PALAZZO and Mr. TIPTON.
- H.R. 3485: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. PERRY.
- H.R. 3486: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
- H.R. 3493: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
- H.R. 3494: Mr. KEATING, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. FARR.
- H.R. 3513: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
- H.R. 3529: Mr. STIVERS.
- H.R. 3530: Mr. DOGGETT and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
- H.R. 3538: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. KIND, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
- H.R. 3539: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
- H.R. 3541: Mr. PRICE of Georgia.
- H.R. 3556: Mr. FARR and Mr. CAMPBELL.
- H.R. 3578: Mrs. CAPITO and Ms. JENKINS.
- H.R. 3590: Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. TURNER, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. CARTER, and Mr. STOCKMAN.
- H.R. 3620: Ms. WATERS.
- H.R. 3635: Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
- H.R. 3658: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 3671: Mr. COLE.
- H.R. 3689: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. POMPEO.
- H.R. 3697: Mr. POLIS.
- H.R. 3711: Mr. GRAYSON.
- H.R. 3712: Mr. YARMUTH.
- H.R. 3717: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas and Mr. LONG.
- H.R. 3727: Mr. COTTON.
- H.R. 3732: Ms. FOXX.
- H.R. 3738: Ms. CHU.
- H.R. 3740: Mr. ENYART and Mrs. CAPPS.
- H.R. 3747: Mr. PASCRELL.
- H.R. 3753: Mr. PETERS of California.
- H.R. 3757: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. McNERNEY.
- H.R. 3789: Ms. GABBARD.
- H.R. 3790: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. HOLT.
- H.R. 3794: Mr. BACHUS.
- H.R. 3824: Mr. HUFFMAN.
- H.R. 3855: Mr. COHEN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Ms. DELBENE.
- H.R. 3863: Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. YODER, and Mr. GARDNER.
- H.R. 3864: Mr. REICHERT and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
- H.R. 3865: Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. BARTON, Mr. FORBES, Mr. MULVANEY, Mrs. HARTZLER, and Mr. HURT.
- H.R. 3870: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
- H.R. 3877: Mr. CLAY and Mr. COURTNEY.
- H.R. 3892: Ms. CHU and Ms. BORDALLO.
- H.R. 3930: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. LATHAM, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. TIBERI.
- H.R. 3954: Mr. DENT.
- H.R. 3964: Mr. BARR and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
- H.R. 3971: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
- H.R. 3972: Ms. BASS, Ms. CHU, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FARR, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MORAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. NORTON.
- H.R. 3979: Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CARTER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. PITTENGER, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. TURNER, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. WILLIAMS.
- H.J. Res. 25: Mr. MICHAUD and Mr. RANGEL.
- H. Con. Res. 78: Ms. BROWN of Florida and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
- H. Con. Res. 80: Mr. CICILLINE.
- H. Res. 35: Mr. LANKFORD.
- H. Res. 109: Mr. MEEHAN.
- H. Res. 153: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
- H. Res. 302: Ms. GRANGER.
- H. Res. 356: Ms. KUSTER and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
- H. Res. 387: Mr. McINTYRE and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
- H. Res. 447: Mr. JEFFRIES.
- H. Res. 457: Ms. CHU, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. ISRAEL.
- H. Res. 463: Mr. ENYART.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON
 The amendment filed to the Committee Print for H.R. 3590 by me does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING ALL AMERICANS' RIGHT TO LIFE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on January 22, 2013, we remembered the unborn children who have died as a direct result of the Supreme Court's rulings in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* on January 22, 1973.

An estimated 55 million children have been aborted in the United States since those Supreme Court decisions were handed down from our Nation's highest court 41 years ago. This staggering number represents nearly three times the total population of my home state of Florida. In 2012 alone, Planned Parenthood reported performing 330,000 abortion procedures—more than the entire population of Orlando.

On this 41st anniversary of those historic decisions, I mourn for the loss of our Nation's unborn children and for their families. Every child is an invaluable gift with unique talents, interests and personality. My wife, Sandy, and I have six children, and it has been a privilege to raise them and watch them as they've grown over the years. Three of our children are now married, and Sandy and I have eight beautiful grandchildren. As our family continues to grow, it is a blessing to welcome more grandchildren and great-grandchildren into our lives.

Life is a precious gift, and I am grateful every day for the lives of my children and grandchildren. I am saddened by the loss of 55 million unborn children, children who would have lived to be our cherished sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, our neighbors, and our friends. Our Nation is strongest when every child's right to life is honored. To that end, we must never cease to fight for life, nor cease to be grateful for our own.

HONORING MEREDITH EARL ROBERTS FOR A LIFE OF SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a wonderful man and close friend, Meredith Earl Roberts, Jr., of Longview, TX, who passed away on January 2, 2014, at the age of 77 following a brief battle with cancer. Earl was one of the most influential leaders in Longview for many years and leaves an extraordinary legacy of service.

Born and raised in Longview, Earl earned a Bachelor of Arts from Baylor University and a

law degree from The University of Texas. He was an esteemed attorney in Longview for more than 50 years, serving as President of the Gregg County Bar Association. He also served as an advisor to the City Council and was an attorney for the Sabine River Authority of Texas for 35 years, during which time he helped to acquire land for the Lake Fork Reservoir.

Earl's parents impressed upon him the value of community service, and he devoted a lifetime to many worthy causes. From 2000 to 2003, Earl served as Mayor of Longview. As Mayor, Earl established public transportation in Longview, developed water resources, and reduced the City's debt, among other accomplishments. Earl also served on the Board of Directors of many not-for-profit organizations, including the Longview YMCA, the Longview Chamber of Commerce, the Longview Economic Development Foundation, LeTourneau University, and the Highway 80 Rescue Mission. Additionally, he served as Chairman of Deacons at First Baptist Church of Longview where he taught Sunday School for many years.

Earl was an avid runner who could be found on the streets in the early morning with his fellow group of runners affectionately known as "The Pack of Fools." In addition to numerous local races, he participated in more than 40 marathons, including five times in the Boston Marathon.

Earl was an outstanding American, a leader in his hometown, and beloved by all who knew him. I am proud to have known him as a personal friend. He was always loyal to his family and will be remembered fondly by his wife of 55 years, Elizabeth Hull "Betty" Roberts; his two children Murray and David, along with David's wife Amanda; his siblings Claire and James; his five grandchildren; and other family members and friends. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this great American, Earl Roberts, Jr. Longview has lost one of its favorites sons.

HONORING JOHN DOWLING'S SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. John Dowling, Middleport Township Supervisor, and to recognize his many years of service to the citizens of the City of Watseka, Iroquois County and the State of Illinois.

Mr. Dowling has served for 35 years in education as a teacher, coach and administrator in the Watseka Unit 9 District. For the past twenty five years, John has also been a member of the Watseka Public Library Board and

plans to serve in this role until his term expires. Additionally, he served on the Iroquois County Board for 26 years until November 2010 when he retired.

In recognition of his tremendous service to the community, he has been named the Watseka Citizen of the Year and awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Watseka Area Chamber of Commerce and the Iroquois County Times Republic.

Mr. Dowling will be retiring from the position of Middleport Township Supervisor at the end of March and I would like to thank him for all he has done for the residents of Middleport Township, the City of Watseka, and Iroquois County. He has been a leader and advocate for many important issues throughout his years of service, and has become a well-respected member of the community.

While he is leaving this post and heading into retirement, I know that Mr. Dowling will always be there to lend a helping hand or give advice to those in need. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 16th District of Illinois, I wish to express our deepest thanks to John Dowling for his exemplary service and dedication.

RECOGNIZING JOE CRANKSHAW

HON. PATRICK MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Joe Crankshaw for his 56 years in the newspaper business. Mr. Crankshaw was born during the Great Depression, an era in journalism known as the "Age of the Columnists" which saw a rise in photo-journalism and 35mm photography. It was the heyday of newsreels and copy was still done by typewriters and edited with scissors and glue.

Mr. Crankshaw began his career in 1958 when he was hired by Ernie Lyons, editor of the then-weekly *Stuart News*. After five years, Mr. Crankshaw moved on to *The Florida Times Union* and *The Miami Herald* where his stories consistently made the front page.

In 1991 Mr. Crankshaw rejoined the Scripps Treasure Coast team where he was recognized as one of the best by his publisher and colleagues. In the years since, Mr. Crankshaw has been quick to take advantage of modern technology and the many more recent innovations in media. According to a Scripps Treasure Coast reporter, Mr. Crankshaw received an iPhone for his 80th birthday and within a few days was sharing apps with co-workers half his age.

It is humbling to recognize Mr. Crankshaw's engagement and activism outside of the newsroom. In addition to being a family man with two daughters and two stepchildren, Mr. Crankshaw loves sharing his knowledge and

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

experiences to those with journalistic ambitions. Last year, he presented a guest lecture to journalism students in Utah where he was warmly welcomed via video conferencing. A Korean War veteran, he has always made it a mission to keep the best interests of our military and veterans and their families a priority; and ultimately, Mr. Crankshaw has served as a role model and inspiring figure in northern Palm Beach and Treasure Coast communities. Though he will be sincerely missed in the newsroom, I wish him the best in retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF GARRY BROWN

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce an article entitled "Garry Brown will join a Hall of Fame that would be incomplete without him" that was published in the Springfield Republican on January 28, 2014. This tribute written by Ron Chimelis highlights the outstanding career of Garry Brown.

Garry has been a well-known and beloved sports writer in Western Massachusetts for over sixty years. Even after retiring, he still offers features and his famed column *Hitting on All Fields*, which he has written for the Springfield Republican for over forty years. Garry's passion and dedication to all sports in Western Massachusetts has earned him the admiration of his readers as well as his peers. As a result, Garry was inducted into the Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame on Friday, January 31, 2014.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to congratulate Garry on this well-deserved honor and wish him the best in the future.

GARRY BROWN WILL JOIN A HALL OF FAME THAT WOULD BE INCOMPLETE WITHOUT HIM

(By Ron Chimelis, The Republican)

He was born in the same year as Mickey Mantle, grew up watching Ted Williams and began his sports writing career when Joe DiMaggio was playing center field at Yankee Stadium.

Garry Brown was there at Busch Stadium in 2004, when the Boston Red Sox ended an 86-year World Series title drought. His encyclopedic knowledge of baseball's local history is unmatched.

It is not who he has covered or where he has been, however, that best defines Brown. It is how he is viewed by others who find themselves practically forcing well-deserved honors upon a man too humble to expect them.

One such honor will come Friday night. Brown is part of the seven-man inaugural class of the Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame, which will hold enshrinement at the La Quinta Inn & Suites in Springfield.

No individual—not a player, manager or executive—has lived a life more interwoven with baseball's local history than Brown, who is still going strong at The Republican in Springfield.

Technically, he is retired. That has not stopped the 82-year-old from continuing to offer features, retrospectives, and live coverage of the Springfield Falcons.

He is still serving up "Hitting to All Fields," which has survived 40 years of seismic change in newspapers.

Achievements? Let's run down a few, sticking to baseball because the overall list is too long.

Brown was a high school beat writer from 1952-66, which he calls his favorite time. He covered Pittsfield's run to the 1960 state title and that summer's American Legion World Series, with a 15-year-old shortstop named Mark Belanger leading the way.

How about Chicopee High's three straight state titles from 1961-63? When fellow Hall of Fame inductee Al Stanek struck out 25 and Amherst's Cliff Allen whiffed 16 in Chicopee's 1-0 tourney win in 1960, Brown was there.

He was the Red Sox beat writer from 1986 to June 2009, but also covered the World Series in 1967 and 1975. That was Brown, writing on deadline when Carlton Fisk's home run and Bill Buckner's error changed history.

Awards? A story on Carl Yastrzemski's final weekend made "Best Sports Stories of 1983." The American Legion's national award saluted his coverage in 1963.

In 2002, Brown was in his 52nd year of writing when he earned a New England award for columns. In 2003, the Boston Chapter of the Baseball Writers Association of America honored him with the prestigious Dave O'Hara Award, a prized honor that signifies recognition by one's peers.

The night was memorable. So was the acceptance speech by a man whose humility is rare for his field.

"I do get tired of people asking me if Cy Young was a nice guy," said Brown, who paused for effect.

"He was," the honoree said, drawing warm laughter and applause from the crowd. He won the Kid Gore Award for high school coverage in 1998. That's associated with basketball, but it's still a biggie.

When the Springfield Public Schools Sports Hall of Fame selected its inaugural class, the committee wanted badly to elect Brown as a contributor. He respectfully declined, saying the first year should be reserved for the athletes.

He was elected in the second.

He campaigned tirelessly for a return of minor league baseball to Springfield. Had it materialized, a popular public choice for the new ballpark's name over his objections was Garry Brown Stadium.

For the Western Mass. Baseball Hall of Fame, Brown was elected unanimously before he could say no.

Now in his seventh decade of service, Brown was asked about the attributes that made him a success.

"Not knowing when to quit," he said with typical self-effacing humor.

That knowledge, or lack of it, has been a blessing to his readers and made this region a much better place. The Western Mass. Baseball Hall of Fame would be incomplete without him, even if an ageless writer for all ages would never say so himself.

HONORING HAROLD PAYNE, A TRUE AMERICAN HERO

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding American and vet-

eran of the Second World War, Harold Payne of Caddo Mills, TX, who passed away December 8, 2013 at the age of 92.

Harold was an extraordinary man in many ways. Born and raised in Caddo Mills, Harold was voted class president of Caddo Mills High School where he also captained several athletic teams. Harold attended college at East Texas State University and then served his country as a pilot, flying B-17 bombing missions over France and Czechoslovakia. He later became a founding member of the 390th Bomb Group Memorial Museum in Tucson, Arizona.

Harold was a successful businessman, owning and operating his own business, Payne's Famous Furniture Village, in Caddo Mills for 35 years. He was active in his community, serving on the board of the Audie Murphy/American Cotton Museum, the hospital board, the school board, Hunt County Fair Board, and bank board. He also served on the City Council for many years. He was a founding member of the Faith Bible Church, where he served on the board of elders.

Harold is a true American hero whose outstanding service to his country and community will be long remembered. I am proud to have known him as a personal friend, and he will be missed by his family and many friends. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this great American, Harold Payne.

A RECORD OF SERVICE

HON. SCOTT H. PETERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Toni Atkins on her unanimous selection to be the next Speaker of the California State Assembly. Toni's career of public service in California is one marked by achievement, perseverance, and an ability to listen to all points of view.

From Toni's earliest days in San Diego, it was apparent that she was devoted to the public good. She worked as the Director of Client Services for the Womancare Health Center. This position reflected Toni's constant advocacy for women's health, including women's reproductive choices. These are issues that she has advanced in both her work as an elected official, and privately through her "Toni Atkins Lesbian Health Fund."

I first started working with Toni in 2000 when we were elected to San Diego's City Council. I remember Toni as being a consensus builder, a member who was willing to bring all interested parties to the table. Toni looks past partisan labels to come up with common sense solutions to some of the most challenging issues facing San Diego.

Toni had many great accomplishments while serving in the office; she helped pass a living wage ordinance that boosted pay for thousands of hard working San Diegans and also passed a bill that expanded the affordable housing in the city. It was Toni's hard work and fair-mindedness as a legislator which propelled her to the position of mayor pro-tem of San Diego, in which she became the first

openly lesbian mayor of the city. Serving in this position Toni served as an inspiration to LGBT people, their families and allies everywhere.

Toni's commitment was again called to serve her state; she was elected in 2010 to the California State Assembly, where she fights for important issues such as ending homelessness, and veterans issues. Once again Toni's vision and judgment has been recognized by her colleagues and in a unanimous selection, Toni was chosen to lead the California State Assembly as its Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize my friend Toni Atkins for her record of achievement, and her continued commitment to serving the citizens of California. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Toni as she goes on to lead California's State Assembly.

LOUISE DREUTH'S RETIREMENT
FROM GOVERNMENT SERVICE

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Ms. Louise Dreuth. Louise is retiring from the federal government this month after more than 26 years of public service in the national security arena. She currently works in the Department of Defense as a senior congressional analyst in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence's Congressional Activities office.

Although Louise originally hails from New York, she graduated from high school and college in Montgomery County, Maryland, and has been a longtime resident of Bethesda. Since she entered the work force, Louise has had a varied and distinguished career, having worked in both the legislative branch and executive branch at different times. Notably, Louise began her government service as a Professional Staff Member on The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence when the committee was first established in 1977. No doubt those were interesting and challenging times, as the new committee worked to establish ongoing oversight of the Intelligence Community. As a Professional Staff Member on the HPSCI, Louise played a significant role helping the committee develop its authorization bills, performing research, and contributing to the critical mission of thorough oversight.

Louise left the Committee in 1986 to work in the private sector for several years, but returned to the federal government in 1992 and joined the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), where she worked for 13 years in a number of increasingly challenging legislative and public affairs positions. Her work at MDA prepared her well to become the Chief of Communications for the Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA) when it was established in 2005. Shortly after CIFA was merged under the Defense Intelligence Agency in 2008, Louise joined the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (OUSDI), where she is now. She has handled a busy, high-profile portfolio of

counterintelligence and security legislative issues in OUSDI's Congressional Activities office for the past five years.

Most recently, Louise has led numerous congressional engagements related to the latest unauthorized disclosures of classified material. As so often was true during her career, Louise's role has been to advise intelligence professionals in the Department of Defense on how to communicate the impact of these leaks and what DoD and defense intelligence entities are doing to prevent future disclosures. Louise has also contributed to Congress's better understanding and oversight of these critical issues.

At the conclusion of her impressive career as a national security and legislative affairs professional, Louise is looking forward to spending more leisurely days with her husband Mike, their little grandson Ben, and their adult children Josh and Beth. I know Louise has been a very devoted daughter to her mother, and will now be able to see her more frequently.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Louise Dreuth for her dedicated public service. Over the course of more than 26 years in legislative and public affairs positions within the federal government, she has advised many national security and intelligence professionals on how to communicate important, complex issues to Congress and the American public. She has made direct and significant contributions toward positive relations between the legislative and executive branches of our government. Louise has consistently brought great credit upon herself and every office in which she has worked. I thank her for her service and wish her all the best in her retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. FRANKLIN D. CHEATHAM ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM CAMPBELLVILLE UNIVERSITY

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Franklin D. Cheatham. After 40½ years of educating Campbellsville University math and computer science students, Dr. Cheatham will retire on December 31, 2014.

Dr. Cheatham, senior vice president for academic affairs, attended Campbellsville College (before it became Campbellsville University) and graduated in 1965. He joined the university as a faculty member in 1973.

Named a Distinguished Alumnus in 2002, Dr. Cheatham received several awards for his dedication to academic excellence and the students at Campbellsville University. Among the awards are: Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award (1989) and the Campbellsville/Taylor County Chamber of Commerce "Educator of the Year Award" (1992 & 2000).

In addition to teaching, Dr. Cheatham has also served as a faculty advisor for Sigma Zeta and the science and math honor soci-

eties. He also served as president of and on the board of directors of the Consortium for Computing in Small Colleges.

Dr. Cheatham has gone above and beyond his duties as professor and Campbellsville University and his many students have seen the benefits of those actions. Today I thank Dr. Cheatham for his four decades in education and wish him well in his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I am writing to inform you that I was detained on December 5, 2013 and was unable to be on the House floor for votes related to H.R. 3309, the Innovation Act. Had I been there, I would have voted as follows: rollcall vote 623: Goodlatte Amendment for H.R. 3309: "yes"; rollcall vote 624: Watt Amendment for H.R. 3309: "no"; rollcall vote 625: Massie Amendment for H.R. 3309: "no"; rollcall vote 626: Jackson Lee Amendment for H.R. 3309: "no"; rollcall vote 627: Rohrabacher Amendment for H.R. 3309: "no"; rollcall vote 628: Conyers Amendment for H.R. 3309: "no"; rollcall vote 629: On Final Passage of H.R. 3309: "yes."

IN HONOR OF PLANTRONICS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Plantronics, a pioneer in audio communications and wearable technology based in my district in Santa Cruz, California. Plantronics just received the prestigious Secretary of State's 2013 Award for Corporate Excellence and with good reason. Over the past half century, Plantronics has excelled in both products and people. This innovative company was founded in a garage by Courtney Graham and Keith Larkin, two airline pilots looking to make a smaller, lighter headset for use in airplane cockpits. Their headsets were adopted by the Federal Aviation Administration, employed in the first Apollo mission, and used to transmit Neil Armstrong's legendary first words from the moon: "That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind." Today, Plantronics products are used by 911 emergency workers, airline pilots, astronauts, and all Fortune 100 companies.

While Plantronics emphasizes high-quality products, it is their equal emphasis on people and the environment that has further distinguished this company. The Plantronics manufacturing facility has advanced best practices in environmental stewardship, corporate citizenship, and employment. The company offers their workforce educational support programs, enabling employees to attain over 2,300 degrees; professional development programs have supported more than 1,000 employees' promotion into new roles; and they

have a new 800,000 square foot facility that generates 70% of its own power. And that's just the tip of the iceberg.

As CEO Kenneth Kannappan said, "Our focus on our people, giving back to our communities and being responsible stewards of the environment are central to our identity, our culture and our position as a leader in audio communications." I congratulate Ken and Plantronics for receiving the Award for Corporate Excellence, a well-deserved recognition of their impressive work.

IN HONOR OF WILLIAM A. GARY

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. William A. Gary, who passed away on January 12. Mr. Gary was a long-time resident of Prescott, Arizona. He was also a husband, a father, a rancher, and a philanthropist.

Mr. Gary was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. He left his studies at Texas A&M University to serve our country as a Marine Corps captain in World War II and returned to Texas A&M after the war to finish his animal husbandry degree. He met his wife, Marion, when he was stationed at Camp Pendleton, where she served as a nurse in the Navy.

Mr. Gary was born into a long line of ranchers going back to 17th century Virginia. Ranching was in his blood. In 1958, he and his wife, as well as their two children, moved to Arizona, where they bought a ranch and subsequently began other businesses. Like most entrepreneurs, Mr. Gary and his family did not find immediate riches, but through their hard work they eventually found success.

After retiring from ranching, Mr. Gary began his philanthropic ventures in earnest. He had honed his fundraising skills when he helped found the Marine Military Academy in 1965. After retirement, he put those skills to use again, raising millions of dollars for important Prescott institutions. Not only did he raise millions for the Phippen Museum in Prescott, allowing the museum to double its size and improve its grounds, he also donated several pieces to the museum. The museum's Bill and Marion Gary Western Heritage Gallery is named in recognition of his and his wife's contributions. Mr. Gary also raised funds for the Yavapai College Foundation, helping to build the college's performance hall and other facilities.

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY FARM BUREAU

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased and honored to rise today and join in the Centennial Celebration of one of the most

committed, hard-working and influential groups in San Diego County, the San Diego County Farm Bureau. 2014 marks 100 years of leadership for this non-profit membership organization, founded with the objective to promote and protect local agriculture.

Since 1914, the San Diego County Farm Bureau has served as the leading advocate for the farming community and works with elected officials, government agencies, educators, the media and the public to create an environment that allows for the continued growth and sustainability of local agriculture. The first formal meeting of the San Diego County Farm Bureau was held on February 20, 1914, at the Speckles Theater in San Diego where 383 family farmers paid \$1 in dues to be eligible to vote on creating the organization. It was here that the San Diego County Farm Bureau became the third of 53 county farm bureaus formed in California. Judge W.R. Andrews of Spring Valley was elected as its first president and the Bureau's longevity can be directly attributed to a proud lineage of 51 presidents and legion of volunteers who have given unselfishly of their time in support of our local farming community.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that America's agriculture industry is steeped in tradition and was an integral industry upon which the economy and self-sufficiency of our young nation was built. America's "agrarian republic" represented the hope of new beginnings and many of our founding fathers believed the character of leadership and necessary virtue would be found in those who worked the soil, in those who invested their time and effort into the production of their crops both for their own existence and that of their community. James Madison extolled the value of connecting with one's land and it was Thomas Jefferson who said, "Agriculture. . . is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals and happiness."

While there was an initial debate on the long-term viability of agriculture's role in developing America's manufacturing base, our nation's productivity in this industry proved to be an immediate return on investment and indicative of the ability of the American people to thrive in any circumstance. As our nation grew, so did the importance of agriculture, particularly in California. Today, California leads all other states in farm income. With 73 percent of the state's agricultural revenues derived from over 200 different crops and 27 percent of revenues generated by livestock commodities, California is our nation's leader in agriculture production. San Diego County has one of the country's largest farm economies and has more small and organic farms than any other county in California. San Diego County leads the nation in production of its two major crops, ornamentals and avocados, and is successfully invested in the areas of nurseries, cut flowers, fruits, vegetables, nuts, field crops, vineyards, livestock, and poultry.

This production and success is not by chance, it is a direct result of the hard work of San Diego County's agriculture community and the tireless advocacy of the San Diego County Farm Bureau on their behalf. While our nation and my home state of California continue to face many economic challenges,

particularly in the agriculture industry, we move forward with full confidence knowing that groups like the San Diego County Farm Bureau are leading by example and utilizing a wealth of experience that will continue to allow us to take advantage of our full potential. Congratulations again to the San Diego County Farm Bureau on 100 years of service and I look forward to their continued success well into the future.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,293,019,654,983.61. We've added \$6,666,142,606,070.53 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week of January 27, 2014. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

- Rollcall No. 24: H.R. 2166—"yea."
- Rollcall No. 25: H.R. 3008—"yea."
- Rollcall No. 26: Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule—"nay."
- Rollcall No. 27: H. Res. 465—"nay."
- Rollcall No. 28: Approving the Journal—"yea."
- Rollcall No. 29: Motion to Recommit with Instructions on H.R. 7—"yea."
- Rollcall No. 30: Final passage of H.R. 7—"nay."
- Rollcall No. 31: Final passage of H.R. 2642, Farm Bill Conference Report—"yea."

TRIBUTE TO SPORTING KANSAS CITY

HON. KEVIN YODER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the major league soccer team from my home, the Kansas 3rd Congressional District—Sporting Kansas City. In early December, 2013, Sporting KC squared off against Real Salt Lake in the MLS Cup final match at Sporting Park in Kansas City, Kansas. The victory gave Sporting KC their first Major League Soccer title in thirteen years,

and was only decided after 10 rounds of penalty kicks. When all was final, Sporting KC was victorious 7–6 in a shoot-out win, bringing the Philip Anschutz Trophy to Kansas City.

Sporting KC head coach Peter Vermes and the entire roster of players, including MVP defender Aurelien Collin, brought so much excitement to our community throughout the 2013 season. To have the Championship match played out in Sporting Park, in front of more than 21,000 loyal fans, only maximized the energy and atmosphere that night in December and it was simply amazing.

We greatly appreciate the investment and leadership of Robb Heineman, Cliff Illig, Neal Patterson, Pat Curran and Greg Maday. Bringing Sporting KC to Kansas has been great for the team and the entire community.

Mr. Speaker, the Sporting Kansas City soccer team is the first major league sports team to win a league championship at home in Kansas City since 1985. The pride and excitement the entire Kansas City community has with the club is great, and we all congratulate Sporting KC, the players and coaches, the organization staff, and everyone with a role at the park on their 2013 Major League Soccer Cup Championship. You make us proud.

TRIBUTE TO THE BENEDICT
COLLEGE HARAMBEE FESTIVAL

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, February 3, 2014

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Benedict College Harambee Festival, in Columbia, South Carolina, in my Congressional District. One of the largest college-sponsored festivals in the nation, the Benedict College Harambee Festival will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary on February 22nd. As we observe Black History Month, I believe it is important to highlight this special event for its expression of multiculturalism, inclusion and advocacy of African American Southern history and culture.

In 1988 Benedict College led by Dr. George A. Devlin, Chair of the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, revived its efforts to create a series of events to celebrate and study Black History Month. Originally called the African American Bazaar, the free event was designed to unite the community. The Harambee Festival weathered much adversity in its first few years. Initial attempts in 1989 were "snowed out." Extreme cold and rain in 1991, and again in 1992 greatly affected Festival attendance records.

Organizers have likened lessons of African American history to the Harambee Festival because it teaches that after struggle, success is possible. The Festival has prospered and is today one of the biggest college-sponsored festivals in the United States of America with an average attendance of over 6,000 people. A success story of Benedict College, the Harambee Festival now includes a bake contest, fashion show and a number of live performances alongside historical presentations, as well as community-oriented service activities.

Since 2010, the Harambee Festival Community Choir has performed annually at the Festival, preserving the rich musical tradition of gospel music. The Choir is composed of members of the Benedict College Gospel Choir as well as great singers from choirs in the Midlands, the Pee Dee, and other regions of South Carolina. A number of performers have showcased their talents over the Harambee Festival's twenty-five year history, including national recording star Ms. Angie Stone, Mr. Dwayne Johnson, Jr. from Soul-food Jazz and (former) world champions Double Dutch Forces.

Since its inception, the Harambee Festival has been inclusive in its efforts to bring the community together. A testament of its success, the Harambee Festival sees people and organizations coming back again and again, year after year. The hard work and dedication of Benedict College and all participating organizations, exhibitors and vendors continues to sustain a long-lasting legacy of commemoration and celebration of Black History Month through the Harambee Festival.

An integral annual event, the Harambee Festival unifies the community and provides an opportunity not only to celebrate but also contribute to a wealth of African American history in our Nation. I sincerely thank the Benedict College Harambee Festival for its commitment to remembering the past while looking to South Carolina's future.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in paying tribute to all who have contributed to the success of the Benedict College Harambee Festival over the past twenty-five years. It has been a great asset to South Carolina and the broader African American community.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 6

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 1784, to improve timber management on Or-

gon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road grant land, and S. 1966, to provide for the restoration of the economic and ecological health of National Forest System land and rural communities.

SD-366

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Wanda Felton, of New York, to be First Vice President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, Katherine M. O'Regan, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and Arun Madhavan Kumar, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service; to be immediately followed by an oversight hearing to examine financial stability and data security.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine supporting children and families through investments in high-quality early education.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to resume consideration of S. 1486, to improve, sustain, and transform the United States Postal Service.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 1675, to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, S. 149, to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and the nominations of Indira Talwani, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, James D. Peterson, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Wisconsin, Nancy J. Rosenstengel, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, and Debo P. Adebile, of New York, and John P. Carlin, of New York, both to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SD-226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Business meeting to consider H.R. 1206, to grant the Secretary of the Interior permanent authority to authorize States to issue electronic duck stamps, S. 741, to extend the authorization of appropriations to carry out approved wetlands conservation projects under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act through fiscal year 2017, S. 212, to approve the transfer of Yellow Creek Port properties in Iuka, Mississippi, S. 864, to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, H.R. 724, to amend the Clean Air Act to remove the requirement for dealer certification of new light-duty motor vehicles, S. 51, to reauthorize and amend the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act, S. 970, to amend the Water Resources Research Act of 1984 to reauthorize grants for and require applied water supply research regarding the water resources research and technology institutes established under the

Act, S. 898, to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation, S. 969, to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to reauthorize the Act, S. 1077, to amend the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 to provide for the reauthorization of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, S. 1865, to amend the prices set for Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps and make limited waivers of stamp requirements for certain users, S. 1451, to provide for environmental restoration activities and forest management activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin, to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the importation or shipment of quagga mussels, S. 1080, to amend and reauthorize certain provisions relating to Long Island Sound restoration and stewardship, and the nominations of Victoria Marie Baecher Wassmer, of Illinois, to be Chief Financial Officer, Thomas A. Burke, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator, and Kenneth J. Kopocis, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator, all of the Environmental Protection Agency, Roy K. J.

Williams, of Ohio, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife, Richard J. Engler, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, and proposed resolutions relating to the General Services Administration.

SD-406

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Luis G. Moreno, of Texas, to be Ambassador to Jamaica, John L. Estrada, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and Noah Bryson Mamet, of California, to be Ambassador to the Argentine Republic, all of the Department of State.

SD-419

Select Committee on Intelligence
Committee on Armed Services

To hold a closed joint hearing to examine counterterrorism policy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SVC-217

FEBRUARY 11

9 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine certain nominations.

SD-226

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine current and future worldwide threats to the national security of the United States; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SD-G50

FEBRUARY 12

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight to examine the report of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board on Reforms to the Section 215 telephone records program and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

SD-226

Special Committee on Aging

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold a joint hearing to examine the challenges and advantages of senior entrepreneurship.

SD-562

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 4, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 4, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

POLLUTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are used to a world with gloomy news regarding the jarring impact and threats of climate change.

We are experiencing wildfires in the Pacific Northwest this winter. The snowpack is a small percentage of normal, which is not just bad news for skiers now; it means lower river levels in the spring that will affect hydropower production, irrigation for farmers, and further damage to ever-troubled fish runs. California is experiencing its worst drought in 500 years—not really manmade, as some of my Republican California colleagues claim. Although it is interesting, as pointed out in the L.A. Times yesterday in an editorial: “Funny, isn’t it, that folks who question man’s ability to affect the global climate are so quick to assign human causes to the drought?”

There are severe strains on the Colorado River Basin, and 40 million people are heavily dependent on that water throughout the Southwest. Last week,

we heard about the massive penguin die-off due to changing weather patterns. Of course we have been experiencing the polar vortex and wild weather this winter.

With all these bad signs, it was interesting to see a positive message emerge yesterday on the front page of The Washington Post about air pollution in China. To be sure, Chinese pollution still threatens, producing the most carbon emissions on the planet, which portend far worse climate problems in the future for everyone. It causes 1 million premature deaths a year in China and, in fact, threatens the health of west coast Americans, as we regularly breathe Chinese pollution that blows across the ocean.

It is encouraging that China is taking steps to acknowledge the problem, to track and publicize the severe pollution levels when, 5 years ago, they asked the United States Embassy in Beijing to stop publishing that same embarrassing data.

Now the Chinese Government is publishing the information itself and is even ranking the worst offenders. The 10 most polluted Chinese cities have air quality levels 6 to 10 times the pollution of the 10 worst American cities. The Chinese are providing realtime disclosure of pollution that is more ambitious than anything the United States did in the EPA’s highly successful toxic release inventory that dates back almost 30 years.

It is absolutely critical that China acknowledge the problem and hold people accountable for the pollution, but it is even better news that the Chinese are going beyond mere data collection, as they unveiled a \$280 billion plan to improve air quality, including limiting coal use and banning high pollution vehicles.

Isn’t it ironic that the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives is determined to prevent the United States EPA from taking the next steps to clean up our dirty coal plants and protect us from the carbon pollution that is causing such climate disruption, all the while denying the science.

One hopes that the United States will come to its senses while it appears the Chinese are starting to come around. The future of the planet for our children and grandchildren depends upon it.

ALEXANDER MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize Alexander Montessori School for 50 years of providing exceptional educational opportunities for generations of children in south Florida.

Fifty years ago, Beverly McGhee founded Alexander Day School in honor of her parents, Alice and Henry Alexander, in order to provide an early childhood facility for her two children. From the outset, her school has enjoyed a reputation as a place where kids wanted to learn and where the staff and teachers cared about what they did.

Within a few years of the school’s founding, Beverly became aware of what is known as the Montessori Method. Named for Maria Montessori, her teaching philosophy was to foster in children a desire to think independently and be creative. Its environment maximizes independence and includes a strong focus on communication and self-molding for young students.

Beverly became certified as a preschool Montessori teacher and renamed her school Alexander Montessori School. She gathered teachers around her who shared her passion and dedication for providing a quality and caring Montessori environment for children, ones with only the highest standards of excellence.

From modest beginnings of that single kindergarten class, Alexander Montessori School has grown to be one of the largest and most renowned Montessori schools in the country. Today, in south Florida, Alexander Montessori School has two toddler environments, nine children’s houses, and an elementary campus. These are centers where children lead the way, follow their natural talents, and fall in love with learning, an attitude summed up in its motto: “To learn to Love to Learn.”

This independent school remains the only fully accredited American Montessori Society School in our community and one of only 10 throughout the State of Florida. I can relate to Beverly’s story, her spirit, and her relentless dedication to provide children with high quality education.

I am a former Florida certified teacher and founded and was principal of a small private bilingual school in Hialeah. I know the challenges faced by our educators as well as the positive impact that an amazing teacher can have on a young mind.

I am a product of the south Florida school system. I graduated from West

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Miami Middle School and then Southwest Miami High School. I have an associate of arts degree from Miami/Dade College; bachelor's and master's degrees from Florida International University in education; and as an older adult, I completed a doctorate in education from the University of Miami. I am very grateful for the support that I received while I was in school, and I am certain that I would not be the same person without this support.

So ensuring that our children have the same access to a comprehensive education has become a top priority of mine. Our students deserve the best that we can offer them, and that is why I continue to work with strong partners like Alexander Montessori School to constantly improve our school system.

Education is the key to self-empowerment, and teachers like those at Alexander Montessori School are giving our students the tools they need to develop and to excel. Teachers have the power to inspire and to open whole new horizons to our youth, setting them up on a positive path with high hopes and expectations for the future.

For the professionalism and care that Beverly and everyone at Alexander Montessori School have shown in the pursuit of this most noble of professions, I thank each and every one of them. They have shaped the lives of so many students over the last 50 years, and we are truly privileged to have such wonderful individuals taking on this rewarding work in south Florida.

I thank the school again, and congratulate them on a half century of great work. Good luck in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I will now enter the names of the remarkable team members at Alexander Montessori School into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mrs. Beverley A. McGhee, Superintendent
 Mr. James R. McGhee II, Headmaster
 Dr. Joyce McGhee, Headmistress
 Mr. Brette Rothfield, Business Manager
 Ms. Anne Becton, Administrator
 Mrs. Maria McGuire, teacher
 Ms. Brenda Orihuela, teacher
 Ms. Mirnelly Borrero, teacher
 Ms. Sharon Dalton, teacher
 Mrs. Marta Demmer, teacher
 Ms. Maria Luisa Ferro, teacher
 Ms. Soraya Penate, teacher
 Mrs. Grecia Perez, teacher
 Mrs. Beatriz See, teacher
 Mrs. Maria Teresa Vicens, teacher
 Ms. Pamela Earl-Parler, teacher
 Mrs. Linda Habich, teacher
 Ms. Milagros Vargas, teacher
 Ms. Cynthia Arboleda, teacher
 Ms. Anne Becton, teacher
 Mrs. Meghan Camilletti, teacher
 Mrs. Melanie Carlson, teacher
 Mr. Michael Depew, teacher
 Mr. Stephen Falk, teacher
 Ms. Lessie Fleischfresser, teacher
 Mrs. Gretchen Goldstein, teacher
 Ms. Ines Hanna, teacher

Mrs. Ismary Hassun, teacher
 Mrs. Caroline Jacobellis, teacher
 Mrs. Gail Jacobs, teacher
 Mrs. Ellen Kahn, teacher
 Mrs. Maria Claudia Kondrat-Libreros, teacher

Mrs. Mary Kucera, teacher
 Mrs. Robbie Lukes, teacher
 Mrs. Nina McClendon, teacher
 Mrs. Debra Mistretta, teacher
 Mrs. Colette Myers, teacher
 Mrs. Patricia Pittaluga, teacher
 Mrs. Cecilia Richter, teacher
 Mrs. Sandra Salinas, teacher
 Mrs. Janet Sanson, teacher
 Mr. Samuel Steele, teacher
 Mrs. Lauren Stern, teacher
 Mrs. Gladys Tirse, teacher
 Mrs. Virginia Vaca, teacher
 Ms. Jodi Veillette, teacher
 Ann Blau, Campus Secretary
 Jennifer Dipolito, Accounts Payable
 Gioconda Dynes, Accounts Receivable
 Maria Franco, School Secretary
 Odalys Fernandez, Campus Secretary
 Jose Casares, Director of Maintenance
 Marta Valdes, Campus Secretary
 Carol Wolcott, Administrator
 Cathy Rapport, Campus Director

A FAIR MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues to join in the effort to pass the Fair Minimum Wage Act and raise the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour.

Fifty years ago, 200,000 Americans marched on Washington. Appealing to the soul of the Nation, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and his fellow speakers charted out the long journey for equality and justice ahead. In the pamphlet promoting the March on Washington, they listed 10 specific legislative demands. A number of these demands would go on to become some of the most significant achievements of the Federal Government in the postwar era: comprehensive civil rights legislation, desegregation of all school districts, an end to discrimination in Federal housing programs.

It is clear that we have made progress on many of these issues, but for many of us here, the fight for these goals remains unfinished. Let us not forget, though, that the March on Washington was actually called the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

Let us remember number eight on that list of demands: "A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. Government surveys show that anything less than \$2 an hour fails to do this."

On whole, the American economy has made tremendous strides in the last half century. Many in this Congress have been benefactors of that growth, but the American worker has been left

behind. The \$2 an hour that Dr. King and his colleagues called for would be nearly \$15 per hour today when adjusted for inflation.

Despite this fact, many of my colleagues will call the demand for a \$10.10 Federal minimum wage unreasonable. Many will even say this demand for a reasonable wage is rooted in partisan politics. Mr. Speaker, this reasonable demand is rooted in the belief that American workers deserve more.

President Truman said that minimum wage legislation was "founded on the belief that full human dignity requires at least a minimum level of economic sufficiency and security." The call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on the fact that while a single parent making minimum wage earns \$15,080 annually, that is still more than \$400 below the Federal poverty rate.

The call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on the fact that working 40-hour weeks 52 weeks a year, a parent still struggles to feed their family. Think about that during your next paid vacation.

The call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on the fact that a single parent is overwhelmingly likely to be a single mother. Because, while women make up 47 percent of our workforce, they represent nearly two-thirds of minimum wage earners.

Finally, the call for a raise in the minimum wage is based on good economics. I know full well that those opposed to a raise in the minimum wage say that any raise will reduce employment, and at a certain point, it could, but a modest raise to \$10 an hour is nowhere near this theoretical tipping point, and more than six dozen economists agree.

□ 1015

In a recent letter to Congress, they explicitly said:

Increases in the minimum wage have little to no impact on the employment of minimum wage workers, even during times of weakness in the labor market.

The economic recovery has been a very long, slow road for low-wage American workers, and a raise in the minimum wage is the jolt our economy needs. Higher wages quickly turn into increased spending. Increased spending quickly turns into growth.

But minimum wage legislation, like unemployment insurance, is merely the minimum we should be doing for the American worker. Let's remember that, during the March on Washington, the demand directly preceding the call for an increase in the minimum wage was demand number 7:

A massive Federal program to train and place . . . workers . . . on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages.

This body needs to turn its focus on advancing legislation that will create more American jobs and policies that

matter to American workers. I urge my colleagues to support the American worker. Join me in calling for jobs legislation and a reasonable raise of the Federal minimum wage.

THE PRIMACY OF STRONG AMERICAN LEADERSHIP AROUND THE GLOBE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, we deal with a lot of very important issues in this body. In fact, everybody that is going to speak this morning is going to speak about some very important issues. But I would argue that there is no issue more important that we deal with in this body than the issue of American global leadership and the issue of national defense.

I just got back from a security summit in Munich, and I want to share some of my thoughts in talking to our allies and talking to strategic partners around the globe.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is a decline of American leadership around the globe. There is a perception that America is on the retreat from the rest of the world and is an America tired of a decade of war, which I fully understand, and is an America that decides the fight is just not worth it anymore. The decline of American leadership around the world is not just something that we can't do because it is not good, but it is dangerous—not just to us, but to the rest of the globe.

Think about how we got in this position in the first place. It was the failure of American leadership through the nineties to pursue a terrorist jihadist by the name of Osama bin Laden. Instead, this Nation and the President treated him as a common criminal and not as a declared opponent and a war opponent of the United States of America. What we saw was an attack on the World Trade Center, an attack to the USS *Cole*, an attack on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, and then, finally, it culminated in an attack that took 3,000 American lives and woke America up to the reality of global jihadism and terrorism, and the fact that we have people that live solely for the purpose of killing and destroying people that don't see eye to eye with their specific religious ideology.

Failure to confront those terrorists in the 1990s led to that big problem we have today. And what we have seen lately is the same kind of retrenchment by the United States of America—undoubtedly, still the most powerful country in the world. Our enemies no longer fear us, and our allies no longer trust us.

Let me label a few of these areas that have concerned me.

In Iraq—I am a veteran of Iraq—the U.S. Marines actually fought to take

the city of Fallujah and took the most casualties that they have taken probably since Khe Sanh in Vietnam. Today, the black flag of al Qaeda flies over Fallujah. The sacrifice of thousands of Americans is now being confronted by the black flag of al Qaeda because this President, eager to achieve a campaign promise, pulled all the troops out at the end of 2011 and didn't leave a residual force. As unpopular as it may be, if we had left a counterterrorism force in Iraq, we would not be facing this problem today.

I look at a terrible deal that was just struck with Iran, a deal that basically says Iran is allowed to be a threshold nuclear state. Sure, the Secretary and the President will say that we are going from 20 percent enrichment to 5. He doesn't mention that bringing 5 percent enrichment to weapons-grade enrichment actually doesn't take that long. And, oh, by the way, all the surrounding states to Iran think that they are totally entitled to say that they have a right to enrich uranium up to 5 percent, in essence, creating a whole host of Middle East threshold nuclear states. And yet we call this a victory?

I look at Syria—11,000 opponents to Assad, tortured and murdered and labeled with numbers—11,000 people—which made Srebrenica, the thing that launched America to intervene in Bosnia, look small. Eleven thousand opponents to Assad tortured and killed. And you look at Assad, who is purposely targeting the Free Syrian Army and not al Qaeda opposition so that al Qaeda opposition grows to him and he can stand in front of the West and say, "I am the protector." If we get to the point where we look to Assad, a brutal dictator in Syria, as the protector of freedom, God help us.

I look at instability in Lebanon, and I look at one of our greatest allies, Jordan, hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees. I look at Israel, surrounded by instability in the Middle East, and I look at a resurgent China that challenges America all over the globe now, and I look at a Russia that continues to occupy one-third of its neighbor to the south, Georgia. I look at Ukraine's people standing up for freedom. I haven't heard much from this administration.

I am burdened by this lack of American global leadership. I don't care about the politics of it. I don't care about any of this. I care about the future of this country. And what I see is the decline of American leadership in what is still the greatest country around the globe.

INCOME INEQUALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, my friend from Illinois is right. There is a

decline in American leadership, but it is not overseas—not at all. It is here at home.

Since the 1970s, American workers have seen their wages fall or stagnate. The wealthiest American incomes, however, have increased fourfold. Even after 40 years of economic growth, today's generation takes home less than its grandparents did, and high school graduates make 40 percent less than their predecessors did four decades ago.

This problem ought to elicit bipartisan concern, yet many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have shown little or no interest in the consequences of our country becoming so sharply divided by wealth. For many of my Republican colleagues, even talking about it is uncomfortable. It is time to realize that all too many Americans—hardworking Americans—are falling behind.

From 1979 to 2007, wages for the top 1 percent grew 156 percent, while the bottom 90 percent of us saw our wages grow only 17 percent. Since 1983, 75 percent of the growth and wealth has been captured by the top 5 percent, while the bottom 60 percent actually suffered a net decline. By 2010, nearly all middle- and low-income families have made the same hourly wage they did in 2000, despite having raised productivity during that time period by 22 percent. That is not how it is supposed to work. Worse, median family income was 6 percent lower. But this lost decade only caps a trend that has been going on in this country for over 30 years.

In what might be the most telling portrait of how middle- and low-income Americans are being shut out of the new economy, Bloomberg recently reported that 95 percent of wealth generated since the Great Recession went to the richest 1 percent—95 percent went to 1 percent. In real terms, 9 out of 10 people control less wealth than they did before the crash.

In 2012, the top 10 percent of earners took home more than half of the U.S. total income. This is the highest level ever recorded. Income and wealth haven't been this concentrated since before the Great Depression, and we are beginning to rival the gilded age of the late 19th century.

A recent Gallup poll shows that the concerns about inequality have moved beyond academia and into the public consciousness. According to Gallup, two out of three Americans are dissatisfied with income and wealth distribution in the United States, including 54 percent of all Republicans and 70 percent of Independents. The same poll found that many Americans now worry about their ability to find future opportunity, and only 54 percent believe that one can get ahead by working hard. What does that say about the American Dream?

Justice Louis Brandeis once said:

We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both.

Letting a generation of Americans remain underemployed, underpaid, and despairing about their future creates a dangerous cycle of economic and social destruction, and it damages democracy. Nations whose citizens believe that the game is rigged against them are not beacons of democracy. Civic culture corrodes, and space opens for divisive and extreme politics. We have seen that here at home. The new Pope, Pope Francis, recently lamented that the world's inequality is quietly undermining social and political institutions. He gets it.

Last week, the President highlighted how our Nation's wealth and income gaps have become too large to continue to ignore. Congress cannot continue to stand idly by. I urge my colleagues to consider the many bipartisan proposals that would jump-start growth for all Americans. We need to be investing in this country's crumbling infrastructure. My own Put America Back to Work Act, which would reauthorize Build America Bonds programs, would give local government another tool to jump-start the economy and infrastructure projects.

Generations of Americans, starting with our Founders, made their way to America's shores, attracted by the promise of opportunity and the belief that, through hard work, they could get ahead. Unfortunately, that dream is at risk today.

I urge my colleagues to join all of us in preserving opportunity for all Americans, and prevent our Nation from becoming a nation of stark divide between the haves and the have-nots.

A GOVERNMENT THAT GOVERNS LEAST GOVERNS BEST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, in his State of the Union address last week, the President described an economy in which income inequality has deepened and upward mobility has stalled. Unfortunately, in many respects, he is right. The poor are worse off today than we were when President Obama took office. Nearly 7 million more Americans live in poverty today as compared to 2008.

A record 47 million Americans receive food stamps, 13 million more than when President Obama assumed office. Median household income has fallen over \$2,000 in the last 4 years. Seventy-six percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, and the percentage of working-age people actually in the workforce has dropped to the lowest rates in 35 years. A full 92 million Americans are not part of the labor force. They are either unemployed or not even actively looking for work. They are so frustrated with the Obama economy, they have just given

up. When taking into account marginally attached workers—workers who are unemployed but want a job and workers who have part-time jobs who want full-time jobs—the jobless rate today is over 13 percent.

Mr. Speaker, 5 years after this President took office, the state of the Union is not strong. But instead of admitting that his policies have failed, the President offered more Big Government and more class warfare. But, Mr. Speaker, a lack of government isn't the problem, and class warfare isn't a solution. The President says we need to raise the minimum wage and extend emergency unemployment insurance yet again, for the 13th time in his administration.

We should stop thinking small in this country. We are Americans. We should think big. We don't need minimum wages; we need maximum wages. We don't need more unemployment insurance and government dependency; we need jobs and self-sufficiency. The best way to combat income inequality, to restore upward mobility in the American Dream and create a healthy economy is for Washington to get out of the way, whether in the doctor's office, in the job market, or at the gas pump.

That means replacing ObamaCare with patient-centered reforms that will lower the cost of health care without growing government. It means cutting wasteful spending and making reforms to put the Nation on a path towards a balanced budget. It means comprehensive tax reform that rewards work, saving, and investment and allows individuals, families, and businesses to keep more of what they earn. It means rolling back provisions of Dodd-Frank that allow bureaucrats to take away choices, financial services, and products and limit access to credit and take those away from the American people. It means unleashing the energy potential of the United States by ending the war on coal and approving, immediately, the Keystone pipeline. And it means giving the poor a hand up rather than a handout, giving them a job instead of a government check, and giving them the skills they need to escape dependency so that they can achieve their God-given potential.

We can do all this. We can restore the American Dream, and we can restore opportunity and economic growth. And I stand ready to work to get America back on track.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: THE NATIVE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ALABAMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Black History Month and the countless contributions and sacrifices made by notable African Americans to this great Na-

tion. I also stand before you to proclaim the month of February as a time of reflection for Alabama's Seventh Congressional District.

In honor of Black History Month, I thought it would be befitting that we pay honor and tribute to the native sons and daughters of Alabama that have made significant contributions not only to the great State of Alabama, but to this Nation. As representative of the Civil Rights District and a beneficiary of the sacrifices of so many, I have committed to sharing the stories of these extraordinary men and women throughout the month of February so that their contributions will forever be recorded and referenced in our Nation's history.

□ 1030

Today, I again begin with a tribute to Virgil Ware, 13, and Johnnie Robinson, 16. These American heroes and Birmingham natives lost their lives within hours of the historic bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on Sunday, September 15, 1963.

While many of us have heard the heart-wrenching stories of the four little girls that perished in that bomb, many aren't aware that on that same day, Virgil and Johnnie were also victims of unspeakable and senseless violence.

Virgil Ware was born on December 6, 1949, in Birmingham, Alabama, to James and Lorine Ware. He was the third of six children. One of his surviving brothers, Melvin Ware, describes Virgil as a special child who was exceptional in his educational endeavors. While his brothers were preparing for social gatherings, Virgil could be found reading a good book or perusing the encyclopedia. A few months before his death, the eighth-grader expressed to his older siblings that he was looking forward to joining them at the local high school next year. Before Virgil's dreams could be realized, he fell victim to a tragedy that would change the Ware family and this community forever.

Virgil, who sat on the handlebars of his brother's bike, was headed to join his brother on a paper route on the outskirts of Birmingham, Alabama, on Sunday, September 15, 1963. The brothers rode past a group of men who had just left a segregationist meeting in the city. One of the men was told to shoot at the Ware brothers to "scare them." The man fired two shots in their direction. One bullet struck Virgil in his chest and another in his cheek. Tragically, the young boy who loved to read and help his family lost his life on that day. Virgil was the sixth young person to lose his life on that Sunday in Birmingham due to blatant violence.

Just one hour prior to Virgil's death, Johnnie Robinson joined a group of young boys at a local gas station.

Johnnie was born on February 25, 1947, to Martha and Johnnie Robinson, Sr. His younger brother, Leon, describes him as a kid who loved playing baseball and basketball. Ironically, his favorite subject was history. Even at the tender age of 16, he understood that he and his siblings were living in a historic era. He came from a close-knit family and had lost his father in a racially-motivated killing just weeks before his own death.

The afternoon that Johnnie went to the gas station, tensions remained high as local citizens were still reeling from the news of the church bombing and the deaths of the "four little girls." According to accounts that were published in the Birmingham News article, Johnnie and other young boys were being taunted by White teenagers with chants of opposing integration.

There was also reports of rocks being thrown in retaliation in the hours after the bombing. In the midst of all the chaos, Johnnie was killed by a police officer.

Some of our Nation's biggest heroes are those that fought on the front lines in pursuit of equality and justice. However, young Virgil and Johnnie serve as symbols of the heroes of the movement that we don't always recognize. Johnnie and Virgil should be remembered for their important sacrifices that were made, and this history of our Nation should not forget them.

As we celebrate Black History Month and the notable contributions of African Americans to this country, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering these brave young men during the month of February and beyond. Their short lives serve as one of many catalysts for the transformative change in our country. While we know that their destinies were cut short, far too short, we remember them for their impact on the civil rights movement. During their short time on this Earth, these young souls should be counted in the number of our Nation's biggest heroes.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in celebrating the life and legacy of Virgil Ware and Johnnie Robinson, Jr., during this Black History Month period.

WORLD CANCER DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today, February 4, is World Cancer Day. It is a day we remember those lost to this disease while recommitting ourselves and our efforts to eradicating it. This World Cancer Day, people across the globe will speak out in one unified voice in hopes of improving knowledge about cancer and its symptoms while shattering the stereotypes

and misconceptions that stand as barriers to the treatment.

By debunking the myths and bringing the fight against cancer to the global stage, we can make meaningful strides to address an issue that touches individuals, families, and communities worldwide.

This year alone, 1.6 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer, and many of them will be children. As a member of the Childhood Cancer Caucus and a cancer survivor myself, I know how important it is to support each one of those cases with dedication and with care.

So today, let's recognize the thousands of oncologists, support staff, researchers, and families tackling this diagnosis from start to finish. If we work together, from government organizations like the National Institutes of Health, to hospitals and cancer treatment facilities in my home State of Pennsylvania, to passing bipartisan legislation like the Gabrielle Miller Kids First Research Act, we can make this World Cancer Day a success and put an end to cancer in the not-so-distant future.

WORLD CANCER DAY AWARENESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleague from Pennsylvania in recognizing that today, February 4, is World Cancer Day, a day in which we raise awareness about the impacts of cancer worldwide and join forces to work together to find a cure.

If America does not lead the world in cancer research, there is no leadership in cancer research in the world. A newly released report from the American Cancer Society says that the death rate from cancer has decreased by 20 percent over the past two decades. Thirty years ago, less than 50 percent of those who were diagnosed with cancer lived beyond 5 years of their diagnosis. Today, it is 65 percent for adults and 80 percent for children. Cancer research needs to be sustained if it is to be effective.

Ten years ago, 25 percent of all those grants that came into the National Cancer Institute were funded. Today it is less than 8 percent. We are not only losing important research but also losing talented researchers who leave the field because of a lack of public funding for cancer research.

Historically, there were three ways to deal with cancer. You could cut it out through surgery, you could burn it out through radiation, or you could destroy it through toxic chemicals or chemotherapy. Chemotherapy was developed in Buffalo in 1904 at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. After those traditional cancer treatments, with some debilitating side effects, a new genera-

tion about 15 years ago was developed to treat cancer called targeted therapies.

These are therapies that attack fast-growing cancer cells without destroying healthy cells. These targeted therapies led to promising new therapies in breast cancer, like Herceptin, which treated a very difficult cancer, late-stage cancer. Also Gleevec, which was highly effective in treating leukemia.

Today, the prestigious journal Science just declared that in 2013, the most important science discovery was something called immunotherapy. Immunotherapy uses several strategies, including vaccines, to treat the body's immune system to naturally fight cancers.

What the promise is in many clinical trials that are occurring throughout this Nation, including Buffalo's Roswell Park Cancer Institute, is longer remissions without the debilitating side effects.

We have a lot to learn about cancer. It is not one disease; it is hundreds of diseases. Lifestyle plays a very important part in the incidences of cancer, both here in the country and throughout the world. Eighty-nine percent of all lung cancers are due to smoking. Thirty percent of all cancers are a direct result of tobacco use. In our lifetime, one in every three women will develop invasive cancer in their lifetime. One in two men will develop invasive cancer because men smoke more.

We need to know that early detection is also important as well. Less than 10 percent of cancer deaths are attributed to the original tumor. It is when cancer moves, when it advances, when it metastasizes to a vital organ is when cancer becomes lethal. It is when cancer cells crowd out healthy cells and render that organ which we need to live useless.

So today on World Cancer Day, we are reminded about all of the work that has been done, all of the progress that has been made, and all of the progress still yet to be made. We also learned that while it is World Cancer Day, America has a unique role in the history, currently and prospectively, in developing the next generation of cancer treatments.

PROTECT ACADEMIC FREEDOM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, the American Studies Association did a shameful thing. They decided to call an academic boycott of one nation, and that is the State of Israel. Think about that. They looked over every other country of the world and they said basically by omission: Oh, you're fine, and you're fine, and you're fine. It

doesn't matter what is happening there or what is happening there, but we are going to go after one country, Israel, and we are going to call upon a boycott.

The former Israeli Ambassador, Michael Oren, after that happened, he asked this question:

Will Congress stand up for academic freedom?

And the answer is, yes.

I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to join with 134 colleagues, myself included, to send a letter to the American Studies Association to admonish them on what is clearly an anti-Semitic effort on their part. I know that is a very harsh thing for me to say, but there is no other way to describe it. It is anti-Semitic.

I intend to move forward in the coming weeks to offer legislation called the Protect Academic Freedom Act which will prevent these campaigns by prohibiting Federal funds to universities that boycott Israeli academic institutions. Said another way, these organizations are clearly free to do what they want to do under the First Amendment, but the American taxpayer doesn't have to subsidize it. The American taxpayer doesn't have to be complicit in it, and the American taxpayer doesn't have to play any part in it. In fact, what we are doing on a bipartisan basis is calling for Congress to defend academic freedom because we recognize that academic freedom is at the very root of our own freedom.

CONGRESS CAN'T TAKE WATER THAT DOESN'T EXIST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition of H.R. 3964, the so-called Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act.

Mr. Speaker, California is suffering its worst water crisis in modern history. This is a 1 in 500-year drought. For the third year in a row, dry weather conditions and drought-like conditions are hurting so many families in California—farmers, small businesses. If you need to see how bad things have gotten, look at Folsom Lake in my district. It is dry. Over 500,000 residents in my community rely on Folsom Lake as the source of its water. This is how bad it has gotten.

We are doing everything we can to conserve water, but you can't take water when it doesn't exist, and that is why H.R. 3964 is such a bad bill. It is a bill that is taking what doesn't exist. It doesn't create any new water; it just tries to move water from one community to another, but it doesn't exist. You can't take water that is not there. In fact, let me show you how bad things have gotten.

□ 1045

The snowpack in California in the Sierras is the source of water for over 500 million Californians. It is what we rely on. It is our biggest reservoir.

You can see what the snowpack looked like January 2013. Here it is. You got snow right here—that is our biggest reservoir—and this is in the middle of the drought. Here is what it looks like today, January 2014. It is not there. The snow is not there.

So H.R. 3964 suggests taking water that doesn't exist. It is a bad bill. You can't falsely promise water delivery that doesn't exist. The water is not there.

Here is what my suggestion is to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Water is not about Democrats or Republicans. This is a solution that we have to come together. It is about protecting our communities. California is going to go through a devastating summer if we don't come together immediately as Democrats and Republicans to look at how we can conserve water and look for creative solutions on recycling water. But we've got to do this together—not pitting one region against another, not pitting one community against another. We have to come up with creative solutions. We can't just look at today's challenge. We have got to do that. That is an immediate issue. But we have also got to start discussing the future of water in California, looking at issues like storage, looking at issues like water recycling, looking at creative solutions because it is dry.

With that, let's come together as Democrats and Republicans, folks from the north State and the south State, and let's not pit one community against another. Let's solve this issue today for our children.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House of Representatives passed the Agricultural Act of 2014, a 5-year farm bill reauthorization, with bipartisan support by a vote of 251-166. This farm bill is a big win for the Nation's economy and will support jobs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, while making necessary reforms that will save taxpayers billions.

Mr. Speaker, not only does this bill deliver for taxpayers, it is good public policy. We spent over 4 years crafting the measure through dozens of hearings, audits, and other forums for public and stakeholder input.

The bill was produced by the House-Senate conference committee, upon which I served, that was charged with resolving the differences between the

House- and Senate-passed farm bills. Throughout this process, members of the Agriculture Committee have proved that positive movement on important pieces of legislation can be achieved.

This bill repeals direct payments and limits producers to risk management tools that offer protection when they suffer significant losses. Under the measure, limits on payment are reduced, eligibility rules are tightened, and means tests are streamlined to make farm programs more accountable.

The measure provides historic reforms to dairy policy by repealing outdated and ineffective dairy programs. It supports small businesses and beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital.

The agreement reauthorizes numerous research, extension, and education programs, including programs for land grant universities, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the Agricultural Research Service.

This farm bill makes the first reforms to the food stamp program since the welfare reforms of 1996, while maintaining critical food assistance to families in need. It closes the heat and eat loophole that artificially increases benefit levels when States provide nominal LIHEAP assistance.

The bill also includes the Forest Products Fairness Act, a bill I introduced, which would open new market opportunities for timber and forest products by allowing them to qualify for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's BioPreferred program. It contains language codifying the Forest Service's authority to categorically exclude noncontroversial day-to-day activities from the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, assessments. It provides certainty to the forest products industry by clarifying that forest roads and related silvicultural activities will not be treated as a point source of pollution under the Clean Water Act and will no longer be subject to frivolous lawsuits.

It improves the farm bill conservation title through the consolidation of 23 duplicative programs into 13. Overall, the package reduces deficits by \$16.6 billion over 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, for family farms and agribusinesses in my home State that drive the economy with more than \$68 billion in total economic activity annually, this bill is a big win. For individuals and families in my home State that are looking for that next job or a little more take-home pay, this bill is a big win. For the families and individuals that rely on safe and affordable food every day, this bill is a big win.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Senate to quickly pass this bill and get it to the President's desk for his signature. Americans deserve as much.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Compassionate and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless the Members of this people's House. Give them strength, fortitude, and patience. Fill their hearts with charity, their minds with understanding, and their wills with courage to do the right thing for all of America.

In the work to be done now, may they rise together to accomplish what is best for our great Nation and indeed for all the world, for You have blessed us with many graces and given us the responsibility of being a light shining on a hill.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. GABBARD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY AGRIBUSINESS CONFERENCE

(Mr. CRAWFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the service of Arkansas State University Agricultural Economics Professor Dr. Bert Greenwalt.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Arkansas State University Agribusiness Conference, which Dr. Greenwalt has faithfully directed the past two decades. This premier agribusiness conference gathers attendees from across the country to focus on global agriculture, farm policy, commodity market outlooks, and biofuel research.

While maintaining a global focus, Dr. Greenwalt also manages to make the conference pertinent to Arkansas' agricultural producers, regularly bringing State ag leaders and university alumni to the event.

While attending Arkansas State University myself, I had the privilege of having Dr. Greenwalt as an ag policy professor, where I developed the skills necessary to serve on the Agriculture Committee in this body. Each day serving Arkansas' First District, I experience the same kinds of concepts and examples I learned in Dr. Greenwalt's classroom.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the entire Arkansas State University community in honoring the service of Dr. Bert Greenwalt.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, last month, the Social Security Administration announced proposed plans to close the Social Security field office in Amherst, New York, among other regional offices. This proposal is both unnecessary and ill-conceived and threatens the ability of seniors, international students, and individuals with disabilities to access critical services.

In response to this, I plan to introduce the Social Security Administration Accountability Act, which would require that the Social Security Administration provide Congress and local communities with adequate notice and justification for field office closings.

This bill would require that Congress receive a report which includes case-load data, service population, and staffing levels at field offices, as well as the process by which offices are selected for closing.

Madam Speaker, the recent FY 2014 budget appropriated an additional \$11.7 billion to the Social Security Administration for administrative expenses, which should provide the financial stability to alleviate the need to close field offices across the country.

I urge my colleagues to support this request.

REMEMBERING TOM TEW

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart in remembrance of a dear friend and one of Miami's legal giants, Tom Tew. Tom passed away last week at the age of 73 from pancreatic cancer, an unfortunately common and terrible disease. Tom was the cofounder of the Tew Cardenas law firm and worked closely with my husband, Dexter, for many years.

Tom specialized in securities litigation, having represented the Florida Department of Insurance and the Securities and Exchange Commission, as well as having testified before this body on five occasions about securities and insurance fraud. Tom led a full life, including forming an intercollegiate boxing league and supporting the athletics program of our hometown University of Miami Hurricanes.

Tom's lovely and energetic spirit will be greatly missed. He is survived by his loving daughter, Kristina; brother, Jeff; sister-in-law, Maureen; his longtime partner, Marta; and his long-time secretary, Jo Anne.

We will miss you, Tom. You were a good friend to all.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO VICTOR E. PORTUGUES GARCIA

(Mr. GUTIÉRREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to my friend, Victor Portugues Garcia, who passed away this weekend in Puerto Rico. Victor Portugues served as under secretary of Housing for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico from 1972 to 1976 and was an excellent engineer. His wife, Carmen Santa, has been a math teacher for many years, and they raised five children, all of whom graduated from prestigious universities.

I want to say to his family and to all of those who are going to miss him dearly that we are saddened by his passing and his death. To the Portugues family, we know that many people talk about infectious smiles. Victor's was truly an infectious smile. He always had something positive to say, always contributed to helping everyone else, and never asked for anything for himself. I don't know what more you can say about a human being. I know he is resting in peace, and I know that I look forward to being with him when I, too, leave this world.

Thank you, Victor, for all you have done.

THE REENLISTMENT OF STAFF
SERGEANT MARY VALDEZ

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Madam Speaker, on January 21, I attended a USARPAC Sisters in Arms forum in Hawaii, and I met a warrior and a hero. Her name is Staff Sergeant Mary Valdez. I watched in awe, inspired as she stood at attention with her right hand raised, tears streaming down her face as she swore to defend the Constitution, to obey the orders of the President, and to obey the orders of the officers over her.

Her strength and love for our Nation was palpable for everyone in the room, despite her having been savagely raped by a fellow soldier just weeks before her 2011 deployment to Afghanistan. She pressed charges, she took him to trial, and the man who raped her was acquitted and still serves in our United States Army today.

When she spoke after her reenlistment, tears streaming down her face, she said, "I love being a soldier. I love this Army." Her courage, resilience, and commitment to fulfilling her duty is what makes our military the strongest in the world.

We owe it to Staff Sergeant Valdez and all servicemembers to bring about reforms so they are not faced with this kind of adversity. They are fulfilling their duty and their responsibility every day. We must fulfill ours.

CALLING FOR SANDY RELIEF
OVERSIGHT

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remind every Member of this Chamber that just over a year ago this Congress voted to provide \$50 billion in much-needed Hurricane Sandy relief, including to my home State of New Jersey. I fought very hard for that money, and now this Congress has the responsibility and obligation to ensure that the Federal Sandy recovery funds are being distributed properly to the people who need it most. Constituents from my district are still displaced from their homes and are awaiting much-needed help.

According to a report released by the Fair Share Housing Center of New Jersey, low-income individuals are being denied claims at a higher rate than wealthier individuals. There is a need for more transparency on the standards being used to distribute these funds.

Also, a report on where and whom the funds are going to is obviously needed. I urge my colleagues to make sure that proper oversight is conducted and that the funding gets to those communities who are in most dire need.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT
BENEFITS

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HAHN. Madam Speaker, this is the third month that my colleagues and I have asked that unemployment benefits be extended to help our communities. Those benefits expired on December 28, and more than 1.7 million Americans, including 263,000 in California alone, have already lost access to these benefits, and another quarter of a million will be hit by the end of the month if we don't act.

Madam Speaker, if we act now, we can still help our friends and our neighbors who are trying to support their families as they find a new job instead of taking away what may be the only way they can afford food. There are more than 1 million Americans trying to do just that, and we should do everything we can to help them return to the workforce.

Previous Congresses have extended unemployment benefits time and time again with bipartisan support. Why is it that a program that we know helps members of our community and strengthens our economy is suddenly disposable? Let me remind you that these are unemployed workers who deserve our help.

I hope that we are allowed to vote on this bill and extend this vital economic lifeline.

COVERED CALIFORNIA
ENROLLMENT

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the success of California with the Affordable Care Act in bringing some of the highest enrollment numbers across this Nation. I am not surprised to see California leading the way; after all, we are the Golden State.

However, there is so much work still to be done by the 31st of March, which is the deadline for enrolling people this year. And I am going to work very hard, along with my California colleagues. I have reached out to our Covered California executive director, Peter Lee, and asked him to make sure that we enroll every single eligible Californian.

With only 8 weeks left for open enrollment, I am making it my top priority that every qualified resident of my 46th Congressional District is given the opportunity to enroll, and I strongly encourage all of my fellow colleagues to do the same. To make good on the promise of quality and affordable health care, it is not enough to educate. We must make sure everybody is enrolled.

THE FLOOD INSURANCE TRUST
FUND

(Ms. CASTOR of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to urge the Republican leadership here in the House to immediately take up the bill to provide flood insurance relief to millions of Americans across the country and develop a long-term solution for the flood insurance trust fund. Last week, the Senate passed, by a broad bipartisan vote, a bill to provide just such relief by a vote of 67 bipartisan Members in the affirmative.

I urge the House Republican leadership right away to take up the Senate-passed bill in the House for a vote. We already have over 182 bipartisan cosponsors that are ready to act.

Madam Speaker, there is great skepticism that this Republican-controlled House of Representatives will act to protect the middle class and to boost our economy across this country. Well, let's prove them wrong, and let's work together to pass a flood insurance relief bill as soon as possible. We can work together to solve this problem.

□ 1215

YEAR OF ACTION

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, happy Lunar New Year, or as we say in Hawaii, Kung Hee Fat Choy. This is the "Year of the Horse," which has as one of its characteristics decisive action. It is said that it is not the year to procrastinate, and the lack of procrastination will bring success.

Remember President Obama said in his State of the Union, this year we are in the year of action. The people of this great Nation have been waiting for us to show action. Some have just given up hope on us, and you can't blame them. Let us show them that we are capable of doing the job that they sent us here to do by at least addressing critical legislation like creating jobs, restoring unemployment benefits, addressing the minimum wage, reforming the immigration system, and, of course, avoiding the default. Let's show them, Madam Speaker, that we are able to do this because we can.

SOLVING UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Madam Speaker, solving our unemployment crisis is not only about restoring our economy, it is about restoring dignity to tens of millions of Americans. Unemployment means anxiety and insecurity that translates into worse mental

and physical health. Unemployment means lower lifelong earnings, not only for workers but also for their children. It means a loss of dignity that is impossible to quantify.

Madam Speaker, today with nearly 30 million Americans either unemployed or underemployed, we have a moral obligation to solve the crisis. Unemployment is rampant in both red States and blue States. Creating jobs means creating dignity.

We have bipartisan options to build a full-employment society, including proposals to spur public-private investments in infrastructure and close the skills gap, but we must act now.

The mantra of this Congress should be, could be, and must be jobs, jobs, jobs.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 470 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 470

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the

customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Madam Speaker, I want to apologize for being 2 minutes late to come here. I apologize to not only you but also the staff and my friends from the Rules Committee for being late.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 470 provides for a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 3590. This rule makes in order 11 amendments which provide for discussion and opportunities for Members of the minority and the majority to participate in this debate.

Yesterday in the Rules Committee, we held what I consider to be an open discussion about this bill where amendments were fully discussed and debated, and I am pleased to say that there will be these 11 amendments as a result of the action by the Rules Committee.

Madam Speaker, the bill before us today represents a yearlong bipartisan, bicameral legislative process to protect our public lands and to preserve traditional hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting for American sportsmen and sportswomen.

Specifically, H.R. 3590 improves access to Federal lands for hunting and fishing. It protects Second Amendment rights enshrined by the Constitution of the United States and promotes sportsmen's views by giving them a seat at the table through an innovative advisory committee to collaborate with the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture on ways to better conserve wildlife, habitat, and traditional outdoor activities.

American sportsmen are some of the strongest stewards of our Nation's unparalleled natural resources. We have an abundance of natural resources, but they all must be in a protected and stewardship role, and that is what the American hunter does for this country. They direct conservation projects. They establish nonprofit organizations to protect wildlife and precious habitat. Sportsmen are leading advocates to ensure that we leave a stronger, more vibrant America for future generations, and, I might add, we teach our children and the next generation the same so that the legacy that we leave is prepared for our future.

Additionally, according to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting,

and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, American sportsmen contribute roughly \$90 billion in economic activity every year. These resources sustain thousands of American jobs and protect our Nation's rich outdoor heritage. They also provide many of our rural areas of this country with needed jobs, jobs for people who live in rural areas who care very much about conservation and of their local areas to keep them natural.

Unfortunately, all too often the Federal Government erects unnecessary barriers which prevent Americans from participating in the many activities that also should be available on Federal lands. That is why H.R. 3590 is important. It streamlines government regulations to allow for greater access to our Nation's public lands so that all Americans can enjoy everything that our great outdoors have to offer.

As a sportsman myself, I will tell you I have enjoyed our national parks. I have enjoyed State parks and the outdoors, and in particular, as a young Boy Scout growing up all of the way through being an Eagle Scout and an adult leader, I have utilized these resources, which has allowed me an opportunity to know more about America and to be able to pass it on to my sons and others. It is a great way to spend an afternoon or a weekend or a week with your family, the outdoors and learning more about America.

Today I want to thank the Natural Resources Committee Chairman DOC HASTINGS, who is from Washington. He understands the West, and he understands the outdoors. His leadership on this issue was essential, as well as that of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus cochairmen BOB LATTA from Ohio and BENNIE THOMPSON from Mississippi. Both of these men met with me and the committee early on to make sure that we would be prepared for their bills that would come to the floor as a package, with the understanding that on a bicameral, bipartisan basis, we would move this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I rise today in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this bill is a solution in search of a problem. It is an omnibus bill that has been cobbled together in a back room by the Republican leadership. While the Resources Committee has considered some of these bills, not every bill made it through the committee process. In fact, two of the measures in this bill were never reported out of committee, and no committee considered this omnibus bill. So much for regular order.

Madam Speaker, we have a number of major time-sensitive issues that we should be tackling here in this Congress. We should be extending unemployment benefits for the 1.6 million Americans whose benefits expired on December 28, and the 72,000 more who lose them each week we fail to act. We should be raising the minimum wage to help the too many Americans who work two jobs and still struggle to make ends meet. We should be finding common ground on comprehensive immigration reform to finally fix our broken immigration system. We should be bringing to the floor a clean bill to raise the debt ceiling, which yesterday Treasury Secretary Lew said we will hit by the end of the month. Defaulting on our national debt risks another downgrade of our credit rating. But we are not considering any of those items today.

Instead, we have before us another cobbled-together lands bill that goes much further than just expanding hunting and fishing opportunities on public lands. It undermines a number of commonsense, longstanding environmental laws that protect the beautiful lands that outdoor enthusiasts love, and it is loaded up with an array of unrelated provisions, like making it easier to import polar bear trophies.

Madam Speaker, let me remind my colleagues that 75 percent of all Federal lands are open to recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting. There are ample opportunities for hunters and fishermen to pursue these recreational activities, and H.R. 3590 effectively overrides several important, commonsense conservation laws, and elevates hunting and shooting ahead of all other legitimate uses of land. It does so without including several important bipartisan reauthorizations sought by outdoor sportsmen and -women and conservation groups.

Not only is the underlying bill bad policy, the process of bringing this bill is lousy. Despite the fact that this omnibus bill wasn't considered by any committee, the Rules Committee decided to close down the amendment process. The truth is that this rule makes in order every single Republican amendment, while only making in order one-third of the Democratic amendments. So much for openness and so much for fairness, Madam Speaker.

I am particularly disappointed that last night the Rules Committee failed to make in order an amendment that I was proud to offer with the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and several other of my colleagues that would have reauthorized the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program uses royalties from oil and gas drilling to protect and preserve access to Federal and State lands. The stateside program has been especially

important to the creation of parks and recreational facilities in my home State of Massachusetts. The Holt amendment reauthorizing LWCF is critical. This program will expire soon, and it needs to be reauthorized. The Holt amendment is germane and does not require any waivers, yet the Republican leadership blocked it, along with two-thirds of the amendments offered by the Democrats.

□ 1230

Madam Speaker, H.R. 3590 is a bill in search of a problem. We saw a similar package last year that went nowhere in the Senate. I expect a similar fate for this year's version, because gutting environmental laws is a nonstarter for so many Members.

Madam Speaker, we should be focusing our time on the real challenges facing our economy. We should be extending unemployment insurance. It is unconscionable that we are just sitting here doing things like this, things that are going nowhere, while so many of our fellow Americans have lost their unemployment benefits. What are they to do? These are people looking for jobs and can't find them. We should be raising the minimum wage. We should be giving the American people a raise.

My friends on the other side of the aisle complain about all these government social programs. Well, the fact is that in the United States of America you can work full time and still earn so little that you will require things like food stamps and other government subsidies. We should stop subsidizing places like McDonald's or Walmart who don't pay their workers a livable wage.

We should raise the minimum wage. If you work in this country and you work full time, you ought not to have to live in poverty. We should fix our broken immigration system. We should also pass a clean extension of the debt ceiling so that we don't ruin this economy. These are the things we should be talking about. These are the things we should be debating. Those are the priorities facing our country and we are doing nothing. So, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this rule and on the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman from Massachusetts in not only his arguments, many of which were made in the Rules Committee last night as we properly went through, I believe rather meticulously, in answers to what the gentleman brought up. It is important to note that three Democrat amendments were withdrawn. One Democrat amendment was not germane, and several other Democrat amendments I think we effectively said they will be tackled either in another piece of legis-

lation or, because they are a larger bill that needs to be heard by the committee, updated. And, in fact, the land bill is set to be done next year, 2015, with its expiration. The chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Washington, DOC HASTINGS, very meticulously covered his thoughts and ideas about that. And he told the Rules Committee that, in fact, he did believe that it would need to be updated on a bipartisan basis.

DOC HASTINGS, as the chairman, also stated that the majority of his bills that he had brought to the committee, at least under his chairmanship, were done on a bipartisan basis, where there was an agreement within the committee to move the bills, and while there may be disagreements about all the parts of the legislation, that they garnered respect from each other out of their committee. It was not the Republican leadership. In fact, it was the Rules Committee that made the decision based upon testimony that they heard upstairs, listening to the committee chairman, understanding the committee's thoughts and ideas, and then moving appropriately.

The gentleman from Massachusetts does make other points about jobs bills. And I would point to a Congressional Budget Office, nonpartisan CBO report that came out today that talks about the effects of a new update about the Affordable Care Act, which is known, as President Obama alluded to here, as ObamaCare. The word "ObamaCare," when used in that context, will push the equivalent of about 2 million American workers out of the labor market by 2017 as employees decide either to work fewer hours or to drop out altogether, according to the latest estimates from the Congressional Budget Office.

They said that there is a major jump in the nonpartisan agency's projection. It suggests that the health care law's initiatives and the incentives in it are driving business and people to choose government-sponsored benefits rather than work.

CBO estimates that the ACA will reduce the total number of hours worked, on net, by about 1.5 to 2 percent during the period from 2017 to 2024, almost entirely because workers will choose to supply less labor—given the new taxes and other incentives they will face and the financial benefits some will receive.

CBO analysts wrote this in their new economic outlook.

They further stated that the rollout problems with the Affordable Care Act, known as the ACA, last year will mean that only some estimated 6 million people will sign up through the State-based exchanges, rather than the 7 million that the CBO had originally said would sign up.

What this means is that the laws that were passed as a result of President Obama, NANCY PELOSI being Speaker of the House, and HARRY REID

being the Senate Majority Leader, they passed laws which are substantially reducing the number of people who actually work in America. There was a net some 230,000 people that lost their job this last month. The Affordable Care Act continues to be the number one reason why American businesses and small business employers do not hire more workers in this country.

The gentleman is correct that the Democrat leadership as well as ranking members from the Ways and Means Committee and the Budget Committee have approached the Rules Committee and asked for us to extend by 1.3 million people the number of people who would be extended long-term benefits.

I had a discussion with both SANDY LEVIN of the Ways and Means Committee and CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, the ranking member at the Budget Committee, and told them that the Republican Party in the House of Representatives has, since the President initiated this action and it was passed in the House, that we saw where there would be millions of people who would lose their jobs, that we would have unemployment at the numbers that we have, and that there is not one unintended consequence in this. These were well known, they were well understood. They were simply ignored by Democrats and the media as a possible probable outcome.

So I told both these gentlemen when they came to the Rules Committee that I would be very pleased to engage with them on a private basis, as a Member of Congress and them as a Member of Congress, on a way that we could add 1.3 million jobs if we were going to extend the unemployment compensation.

I believe it is immoral for this country to have as a policy extending long-term unemployment to people rather than us working on the creation of jobs. A job is the most important attribute, I believe, in a free enterprise system of a person, a family circumstance—for a husband, a wife, children when they are able at the appropriate age—to be able to have a job, to learn to take care of themselves, to be able to meet their needs, to be able to become engaged in their community and have self-respect enough to know that jobs are important.

I think too much time we have been hung up on—instead of the creation of jobs, we talk about the symptoms that are related to—unemployment and long-term unemployment. In this case, the President of the United States thoughtfully articulates the need for us to make sure we help people, but I believe he errs on the side of not pushing jobs bills, coming to the table as the President—as he said he would when he was a candidate, as he should as President—of working with Republicans and Democrats on well-understood ways that you create more jobs.

The President has chosen not to do this. It continues to be a 5-year pattern. I would note that when we had many of these same issues, or similar, when President Clinton was in office, he worked with Republicans. Granted, they were Republican ideas: balance the budget, welfare reform, cutting taxes, reducing rules and regulations. I do admit that is a complete Republican agenda. But we saw where one Democrat President joined with Republicans to work for a great opportunity for us to grow our economy, to face down other nations who were willing to not only grow their economies at our expense, but to add American workers and a brighter future for all Americans.

The Republican Party House leadership—Speaker JOHN BOEHNER and Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR—have repeatedly stood at this podium for 5 years, and we have a constant theme, and that is: let's work together, not on raising taxes, not on more rules and regulations, not on job-killing health care ideas, but, rather, initiatives that the private sector—CEOs, small business leaders—say will help them to understand better the things that they need to go employ Americans.

Instead, the Democrat majority chose to do a bill, the Affordable Care Act, that at that time more than 55 percent of Americans opposed. We were told wait until you learn about it, you are going to love this; not just read it to learn what is in it, but the longer that you have it out there, it is going to be a real attribute.

Well, let me tell you what. We are going to find out this October when, instead of 8 million Americans are going to lose their health care and have to make decisions, there are going to be 80 million people. It will be at that time, or perhaps slightly before, when the American people will understand it was one party, one group of people—they are called the Republicans—who tried to warn us, who tried to hold some 47 individual votes on individual pieces of the Affordable Care Act that ruin employment, that make taxes even higher and move jobs overseas.

This is why the Republican Party is here today moving this bill. We will be here with a water bill tomorrow on the floor, and we will continue down the pathway of showing the differences of what we are for. We are for the American worker. We are for growing jobs. We believe the GDP is an embarrassment, and we believe that unemployment is immoral and we should add jobs.

So I am going to join my colleague SANDY LEVIN and my colleague CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, and we are going to see if we can craft something that we would have on this floor. But it has got to net add over a million jobs, because that is what America needs, a real answer, not rhetoric.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, let me just say to my colleague from Texas, I think the Republican Party, and especially the Republican leadership of this House, should be ashamed of the obstructionism that has gone on to block every major initiative that this President has put forward to try to create jobs, and I think they should be ashamed of their indifference toward working families in this country.

My colleague talks about the Affordable Care Act. Millions and millions of people now have health insurance who before did not have it. That is just a fact. You may not like it, but it is a fact. Being a woman is no longer considered a preexisting condition with regard to health care. That is a fact. That is a good thing. That is a good thing. I would like to think my Republican colleagues would cheer that. Millions of young people can stay on their parents' insurance while they are looking for a job so they have the security of health care. That is a good thing.

CBO continues to say that the Affordable Care Act will reduce our deficit and repealing it, as my Republican friends want to do, would increase the deficit. That is nuts.

I repeat. What we should be talking about on this floor is extending unemployment insurance for those who have lost it; 1.6 million people lost it on December 28 and 73,000 people have lost it each additional week that has passed. The fact that we don't have a sense of urgency to do something about that is shameful. That is what we should be talking about.

My colleagues say we should have a pay-for, notwithstanding the fact that George Bush extended long-term unemployment benefits on a number of occasions and they never asked for a pay-for. But my colleague from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) came up to the Rules Committee with a pay-for saying we would pay for it with the savings from the farm bill. My friends say, well, that is not enough. I don't know what is enough.

□ 1245

How long does this indifference have to continue?

We need to do immigration reform. We need to raise the minimum wage so that when you work in this country you don't live in poverty. With regard to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we want to extend it for 5 years, not for a year at a time. We want to give communities an opportunity to plan—that is a good thing—and my friends have blocked that. It was germane, and my Republican friends said, no, you can't have a debate and a vote on it on the House floor.

Madam Speaker, I am going to urge that we defeat the previous question. If

we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3370, the bipartisan House companion to the flood insurance premium increase relief bill, which the Senate has already passed. I also want to say to my colleagues that it is an issue we should be talking about now. That is more important than this bill that is before us and that is going nowhere.

To discuss the urgency of passing flood insurance relief, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I would like to thank my colleague from Massachusetts for yielding the time.

I also urge all of my colleagues to vote “no” on the rule and on the previous question so that we can take up and vote on the Senate-passed bill from last week, which would provide some relief to families and businesses across America from these unconscionable increases in flood insurance rates. It would also give us time to work on a bipartisan solution.

Madam Speaker, for the past few months, I have offered on every single piece of legislation moving through the Rules Committee to this floor an amendment that would provide some relief to families and businesses across America on the flood insurance relief.

Here is why it is important.

We are dealing with the unintended consequences of a bill that Congress passed in 2012, which people were not aware of, that was going to really suck our neighbors with these high flood insurance increases, and FEMA did not follow through on their responsibilities. So the best course of action now is to pause. Kudos to the Senate. Last week, by a broad bipartisan vote, 67 members in the Senate passed a flood bill with the input of Realtors, families, businesses, and chambers of commerce from all across the country. It is vital that the House take up this bill right away.

Let me give you a few examples from back home in the Tampa Bay Area.

Paul Page lives in Ruskin, Florida. He says:

My name is Paul Page. I am a retired, 30-percent disabled veteran living in Ruskin, Florida. I need your help now. I purchased my home in December of 2012. My flood insurance was \$1,400 per year, but thanks to the Biggert-Waters Act of 2012, my flood insurance is rising to \$5,400 a year. Please help me now.

James Smith in south Tampa owns property. His premium will go from \$2,000 per year to \$9,000 per year.

Frank and Shirley Davis in Shore Acres in St. Petersburg just listed their home for \$175,000, but they are going to have a new annual premium of \$4,000 that has now negated any chance they have of selling their home.

This is happening all across the country.

Madam Speaker, with this Republican majority, people have called it

the “do-nothing Congress.” They are very skeptical that the Republican-controlled Congress can respond to middle class families and provide economic relief where it is needed. Here is a chance for the Republican majority to step up and address a very severe economic issue for families and businesses all across this country. The longer the Republican leadership puts this off, the greater economic harm it will cause to families and businesses across America.

Vote “no” on the previous question and the rule.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I have great respect for the gentlewoman from Florida. I would like to affirm that she has come to the Rules Committee and that it is the Rules Committee that has been pondering these questions and will continue to.

The Rules Committee, as of several weeks ago, attempted to work with—on a bipartisan basis—the Financial Services Committee, and there were not agreements that were done there on a bipartisan basis, so I think the committee of jurisdiction needs an opportunity to be able to faithfully look at it and to come up with an answer. I think a backstop would be as the Senate has done, which is simply to delay things for 4 years because of this government’s inability to effectively do what they were tasked with doing.

Notwithstanding, I very much appreciate the gentlewoman and her constant comments, not just to me but also to members of the Rules Committee, in order for us to understand that we do have to come up with an answer on this. I wish today were that answer. We will continue to work at it, and I appreciate the gentlewoman very much for her continued insistence with me. I have also told one of my and her colleagues—the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS)—as well as members of the Rules Committee that, on the Republican side, we will continue to work on this, and I expect us to be successful.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I think the Rules Committee ought to stop pondering and maybe start acting.

With that, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING).

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I heard the gentleman from Texas say—and I appreciate his intensity—that he believes it is a flawed insurance policy that is government-sponsored. If that is the case, then it should be delayed, and he is willing to shut down the government to do it. I want to talk about something that is a flawed government insurance plan that is scientifically proven to be wrong—no debate about it—and that should be delayed, too.

I have a family in my hometown of Bourne, Massachusetts, who just

bought a house. They bought that house for \$240,000. They had a \$400 bill—the predecessors did—for flood insurance. They were shocked, and I was shocked: that bill has now increased to \$44,000 a year. If you take away the value of their home, in about 2 or 3 years, with the payments for flood insurance at that rate, it will be the whole value of their home.

I want to also tell you that it is a government taking, in effect, I think, to have this policy in effect because, if they go to sell that home and if someone has to get a mortgage to buy it, as most people have to do, the value of that home is going to be diminished. Someone is probably going to have to pay cash—maybe pay \$100,000 for a \$240,000 home. That is government reaching in, taking the value of their nest egg—of all of their life savings of the place they live—away from them.

Now, I said it is scientifically proven. I want to show you. I went to the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. Their coastal study experts there—scientists, engineers—said that what FEMA did in establishing the maps upon which these rates are based is flawed. In fact, they used the Pacific Ocean methodology on the Atlantic Ocean. That is how fundamental the flaws are.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. KEATING. There is my county in Plymouth, which I represent. By taking this through the appeals process and bringing in the study that I was able to obtain from UMass, they took the whole county of Plymouth in Massachusetts, and it now has this insurance plan delayed.

It shouldn’t just be my county in Plymouth that is delayed. FEMA can’t do this throughout the whole country, as there is not enough time, but it should not just be my county. It should be all of Massachusetts. It should be the Northeast. It should be all the coastal areas and all the river areas in this country. They should be treated with fairness.

All we need on this is a vote. There are now 182 cosponsors, about a third of them Republicans. Let’s get it to the floor. Let’s be fair. When we have scientific evidence about a flawed insurance plan, let’s make sure we get a vote on it.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker and Members of Congress, we should not have to even debate this any further. It is outrageous

that we have learned what we have learned about the failed implementation of FEMA with the Biggert-Waters plan and that we will not do something about it.

Let me just say this: I joined with Mrs. Biggert, and we tried to reform the National Flood Insurance Program. We went about it in a way that we thought would make it possible for people to be able to afford—to pay for—the National Flood Insurance Program and not in a way that would cause them to lose their homes. It passed through this House. It passed through the other body. It went out to FEMA. What did FEMA do? It did not do what we instructed it to do. First of all, we said: Have a study on affordability. The second thing we said was: Look at the way you do mapping and remap it. We encouraged them to get good data to be able to do this work.

They have failed us, and they have failed the citizens of this country. Not only have they failed the citizens of this country, but middle class people in this country—homeowners—are now about to lose their homes. A California family is facing a flood insurance premium increase from \$1,700 per year up to \$22,000 per year—an increase of over 1,100 percent. I have traveled around the country. I was down in Louisiana. We have Members across the country who are representing Florida and New York and California, on and on and on. They are begging this Congress to do something about these unintended consequences.

I was coauthor on the Biggert-Waters bill. I know what we attempted to do. These unintended consequences are just that. It should not be happening this way. This is not a partisan bill. This is a bill that has got support from Democrats and Republicans. You heard the previous speaker talk about 183 Members on this bill. The Senate passed it out with flying colors, and now it is on us. What are we going to do? Are we going to allow middle class families to lose their homes because FEMA has not done its job and has not done it correctly? Are we going to allow these families to be put out of homes that they have lived in for years because now, with these increased premiums, they can't sell them? This is unconscionable. We can do better than this. I can go on and on and tell you about the families and the letters we have received.

It is time for the House of Representatives to consider this legislation. We must address this problem now before one more family suffers from increased premiums, depressed home prices, or the inability to buy or sell their homes. Bring it to the floor. I have talked with the chairman of our committee. I would like everybody to address concerns to the chairman and get this bill to the floor so that we can help our homeowners and our constituents.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in fact, once again, the gentlewoman from Los Angeles, I believe, represents a truth. We need to get this done.

I think the committee last year, as I recall, began a process of re-looking at it, of trying to work through this issue. It is my belief and hope—and I have told members of the committee—that I intend to stay after this, but the Financial Services Committee does have the jurisdiction, and we are looking for an answer rather quickly.

I will continue to work with the gentlewoman from Los Angeles. I will continue to work with the gentleman from Florida, Judge HASTINGS, and I will continue to work with Ms. CASTOR from Tampa on this issue. I know that my dear friend from New York, Congressman MEEKS, has spoken with me a number of times about this.

So it is my hope that the Financial Services Committee will come with a recommendation—with a piece of legislation—on a bipartisan basis so that we can address this, and we will wait until that is accomplished. That is what I have told members of the committee. That is my hope, and I will continue to be engaged in this.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, let me just say that we don't have to wait for the Financial Services Committee to act. The Rules Committee shares jurisdiction on this bill. We should bring this to the floor now.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, last week, I received hundreds of calls and emails from my constituents across the Rockaway Peninsula, Broad Channel, and Jamaica Bay in New York's Fifth Congressional District. Most had been struck hard by the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, and were eagerly hopeful that relief was finally underway with the Senate's passage of the flood insurance relief bill.

My constituents then asked: How long will it take, and when will the House pass the Senate bill? Why is the House not taking up the Senate bill, or why is it being delayed? Let's put politics aside because, if there is ever an issue that should not involve politics, it is this issue, because this storm struck Democrats and Republicans. It struck everybody—rich and poor. Everybody was affected by it. So when will we put those differences aside so that we can get something done?

□ 1300

“Why?” they ask, Madam Speaker.

It is time for us to respond to these Americans who have suffered too long and who need relief now. It is time we hear the voices of hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens who have

been devastated by the unintended consequences and the botched implementation of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Act that led to dramatic increases in the cost of flood insurance. It is time that we on this side of the Capitol take up this legislation and address the problem before one more family suffers from increased premiums, depressed home prices, or the inability to sell their home.

I hope that, unlike what took place when we initially asked for relief, it is not the most extreme wing of the Republican Party that is blocking or stopping real relief for our Nation's homeowners and that we pass this important reform legislation today.

Madam Speaker, it is time that we pass the Homeowners Flood Insurance Act. It is time that we get it done. We need it done today. We need it done right now for relief for American citizens.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, last week, the Senate passed a bipartisan bill to fix the National Flood Insurance Program to protect homeowners from unaffordable rate hikes. It is beyond time for the House to follow suit by passing this bipartisan bill, which will help millions of Americans facing steep flood insurance rate increases, including thousands of residents across the Palm Beaches and Treasure Coast.

The bill includes additional funding for FEMA to redraw flood maps accurately so homeowners do not face erroneous rate hikes in my district and around the country. Any proposed rate hikes must be delayed until the affordability study gives Congress a better understanding of how unaffordable rate hikes would negatively impact the Flood Insurance Program.

I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can pass this bipartisan, commonsense solution that will provide much-needed relief for homeowners across America.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. Chairman, I appeal to you to make this an urgent issue. Urgency, I think, is very critical here. So I rise in opposition to the previous question so that we can consider the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, over 74,000 National Flood Insurance Program claims were submitted in New Jersey from policyholders. To date, the NFIP has paid over \$3.5 billion in

Sandy claims. It has served as a lifeline to thousands of New Jersey residents whose lives were turned upside down by the storm. The funds paid out through those claims have helped our neighbors rebuild their homes and businesses.

Regardless of what political affiliation or persuasion, we are all affected by this. Estimates indicate that the total cost of Sandy will be between \$12 and \$15 billion, making Sandy the second-costliest flood event after Hurricane Katrina.

So, it is true that we need to make changes to ensure that NFIP remains solvent. However, the rollout of the 2012 reforms to NFIP have been fraught with issues.

I am hearing from constituents in towns such as Little Ferry and Moonachie, particularly, which were devastated by Sandy. This is destroying property values and disrupting the real estate markets in the communities of New Jersey and across the country. That is why it is so crucial that we revisit flood insurance reform by passing H.R. 3370.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. I thank the gentleman.

This legislation will prevent premium rate hikes until FEMA completes the affordability study called for in the original Biggert-Waters flood insurance reform legislation, giving FEMA a chance to implement an affordability framework before implementing new rates. The bill establishes an appeal process for remapping and creates an advocate position within FEMA.

Just last week, a bipartisan majority in the Senate did approve this bill, as you already heard. It is time to bring this vital legislation to the floor.

Again, I appeal to the chairman. This is urgent, not simply because we had two major storms in the last few years, but because Americans all over this country are affected one way or another, if not by a storm off the ocean, a snowstorm or even worse. So I ask you specifically to do what you can to put this in front of us as soon as possible.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman from New Jersey, my dear friend, who joins with others of his colleagues who, in fact, most politely and appropriately have brought this issue to the Rules Committee.

I will tell you that there was an assertion made a minute ago that I was unaware of, and that was a jurisdictional issue that evidently the Rules Committee does have. I have tried to be forthright with this the whole time, and I believe it is the right thing for

the men and women of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party who have approached me. I have consistently tried to invoke myself into the process with an answer, through the committee, which I thought was solely the committee of jurisdiction.

I will look at the gentleman from Massachusetts and the gentleman from New Jersey, both very dear friends, who see me every day. I am not trying to evade. I am not trying to obfuscate. I am not trying to pass the buck on this. I have indicated I will be willing to be a part of this compromise. I will look back at the gentleman, my friend, Mr. PASCRELL, and tell him I am personally involved in this. I will continue to be involved.

I am delighted that the Senate came up with their answer, which was a short-term answer, not a fix. I believe that there is a fix that is trying to be looked at right now—one which I think is more amenable to the circumstance. If that effort fails, I will continue to stay in touch with not only the ranking member of the committee, Ms. SLAUGHTER, who has pressed me also, but also with my friends who have approached me today.

I will very respectfully acknowledge that what they are doing here today in coming to the floor to do this is appreciated. What I would say to them is I don't know that voting against the rule, believing they are going to take this down, would get this process done. It is not included in the rule. But I will tell each of my friends that are here today that I am going to continue to work on this, and I intend to have an answer quickly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank my friend for yielding.

Madam Speaker, last week, the President called on Congress to embark on a year of action—one in which we all work together to put opportunity and financial security within the grasp of America's families.

Just a few days later, the Senate took bipartisan action to protect thousands of homeowners in my home State of Florida and across the country from massive premium hikes on their flood insurance. These hikes are breaking the backs of America's families. They are bringing down home values at a time when our housing market is just starting to pick up again.

There is no question that the financial health of the thousands of families who could lose their homes as a result of these premium rate increases has to be an urgent priority of this House. Rather than gutting environmental protections, let's focus on the concerns of real homeowners. Let's pass the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act so that FEMA can reform

the flood insurance program and protect America's families at the same time.

It is urgent that we move forward. I thank the gentleman for making this an urgent priority. The way to do this is to proceed with this today.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act overwhelmingly passed the Senate with bipartisan support. It needs to pass the House of Representatives. We need to stabilize flood insurance rates before families are further impacted by FEMA's poor implementation, inaccurate mapping, and incomplete data, which has led to unimaginable increases in premiums.

We came together on a bipartisan basis in 2012 to reform the National Flood Insurance Program and put it on a path to stability, but Congress never intended to allow the punitive flood insurance premiums FEMA is now imposing on homeowners.

A constituent of mine from Milford, Connecticut, anticipates paying a rate as much as 5,000 percent higher than he was paying. And yes, I have heard from many constituents. The Senate legislation would delay these increases until FEMA completes the study ensuring that new rates are affordable for families, as was called for in the 2012 law.

182 Members of this body, Republicans and Democrats, support a similar bill. We can get this done. We need to get this done. And we can do it today. I call on the Speaker to stop fiddling while Rome burns.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ENYART).

Mr. ENYART. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act up for a vote.

It is crucial that we fix the critical problems created by the rushed implementation of the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012. We cannot ensure the National Flood Insurance Program's long-term viability at the expense of homeowners and potential buyers.

Opponents of the Senate-passed flood insurance bill say that it overwhelmingly benefits wealthy Americans who buy beachfront property. I urge those opponents to come to my southern Illinois district. My district borders more than 150 miles on the mighty Mississippi. The folks who live there are not owners of second homes or vacation rentals, but are middle class families in Jackson, Union, and Alexander Counties, and in the American Bottom in the Metro-East St. Louis area.

Without reform, people in my district and across the U.S. will see their property values plummet. Many of these properties have been family homes for generations and have never once endured flooding.

I urge that we pass this act now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), a cosponsor of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Mr. RICHMOND. Madam Speaker, I will take Mr. SESSIONS at his word, and I believe him to be sincere and genuine in his desire to see this problem fixed.

I would just remind Mr. SESSIONS and Congress that we don't have time to wait on this issue. Every day, there is a sale that is delayed or a sale that doesn't go through because the flood insurance is so high and the new purchaser doesn't want to pay for it. And every day, there is an owner short-selling a house because they have to get out of it, and they can't afford to wait.

So, when we talk about home ownership, we are talking about responsible Americans. We are talking about 1.7 million people in this country that saved up to participate in the bedrock of the American Dream. And now, government and FEMA and Congress are turning a piece of the American Dream into a government-made nightmare, and we have the ability here today to fix this.

Right now, we are not asking for politics. We are not trying to be overdramatic. We are just asking for a solution. We want to fix it. In fact, we are here today talking about a Republican bill that solves the problem. That is because, for me, this is not about politics. It is about people. It is about purpose. It is not about making sure that rich people who own riverfront, lakefront, or oceanfront property are taken care of. It is about our seniors who want a home on Main Street or smack dab in our communities. They saved. They sacrificed. They did everything right. They played by all the rules. And now FEMA has come and decided they are going to create new flood maps.

The sad part about it is, if you are a community and you built levees and increased flood protection and you did it with your own money, FEMA does not even count it, because they didn't pay for it. So communities have saved money to help themselves, like we do in America. If we have a problem, we fix it. My community, which put up millions of dollars to build levees, doesn't even get that recognized because the government didn't pay for it.

Madam Speaker, I would just ask all my colleagues, let's do what is right. Let's help people, and let's put people over politics.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentleman from Louisiana is most accurate when he describes the problems which are associated with the way FEMA has initiated this process.

□ 1315

I will not sit here and beat anyone up over what they did or did not do. I recognize that I have disagreements myself. I have disagreements with myself, as a Member of Congress from Dallas, Texas.

What I would say to the gentleman—and he is sitting right next to the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee—these are issues that have to be resolved, and they are larger, I believe.

What you have heard me say today, I think they are trying to look at solving more than just the extension problem. They are trying to solve some problems. I could be wrong about that. I am not in the negotiation; I am around the negotiation.

But the gentleman, most assuredly, has come to the floor today for the right reason, I believe, with a pretty good message. Everybody is impacted that lives in these areas. We don't need to say one group of people or another or people that live in high-rises or low-rises.

What we do need to say is—and acknowledge, and I do—that each of my colleagues—I have been approached by colleagues on the Republican side and the Democrat side. I intend to stay after this issue, and I respect the gentleman for the way he approached it today, and I owe him. I am looking at him right in the eye. I owe him an answer on this too. I am part of the problem, just as he is, and we have got to find a solution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Madam Speaker, we have a crisis, a crisis in Florida and across this Nation where our constituents are facing skyrocketing jumps in flood insurance premiums, making homeownership unaffordable.

Madam Speaker, floods are not partisan, and homeownership makes communities safer, more secure, and more economically vibrant.

Madam Speaker, let's fix this crisis now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH), my colleague.

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today to urge a "no" vote on the previous question so this House can

bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act up for a vote.

This bipartisan legislation will provide critical relief for families who have been devastated by outrageous flood insurance increases required by recent changes to the Flood Insurance Program.

FEMA's insistence on moving forward with these extreme rate hikes, without first completing an affordability study and certifying that their mapping techniques are accurate, as required by Congress in the Biggert-Waters Act, has created a crisis for working families who can't afford to pay 5 or 10 times more for flood insurance.

Before we ask the American taxpayer to pay 1 cent more in premiums, we need to ensure that FEMA is implementing the Flood Insurance Program in a fair and lawful way.

Now, we are not asking to repeal that law. We are just asking for a timeout while we figure this out, and we are asking that we do an affordability study so that we don't force people out of their homes. There is no sense doing it after the people are gone. We need this done in the right way.

We can help middle class homeowners across the country by voting "no" on the previous question and bringing up the Homeowner Protection Act.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am here with the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee. She and I represent a city built in the desert suffering from a drought. We interrupted our rain prayer meeting to come here and to talk about how flood insurance is critical to the national interest.

We should not burden our economy with a situation in which people can't buy their home, sell a home, live in their home. It is time for us to defeat the previous question motion and take up on the floor of this House a bill that had overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate, that has 182 cosponsors here in the House.

It is time to stop partisan wrangling and deal with bipartisan legislation critical to homeowners from one coast to the other, and yes, a few in Los Angeles as well.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, with great respect to the gentleman, I would, once again, offer an explanation, and that is that what they are talking about with this motion to recommit is not germane to the bill and would not go back to the committee of jurisdiction and so, by

voting against what would be the rule or for a motion to recommit, would not accomplish what the gentleman is trying to do.

That is why I have tried to take, Madam Speaker, as I have tried meticulously, with speaker after speaker, my friends, my colleagues that have a strong opinion about this, I have tried to say to them that I do recognize that, while I don't believe I have the jurisdictional elements within the Rules Committee, that I will continue to work on this, and believe that there can be an answer.

So I would respond back to the gentleman from Los Angeles and tell him, thank you for coming to the floor, but an answer for this really needs to come from the committee, that we need to then work through the Rules Committee and get it on the floor. I am committed to that entire process and will continue to do that.

I thank the gentleman from Los Angeles, my friend, for him taking time to come down, but I don't want him to believe that, by winning a vote on the motion to recommit, that it will have any impact on that endeavor.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I will ask the gentleman if he has any other speakers.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the gentleman. I have no further requests for speakers either.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, first of all, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Again, I urge all my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question.

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the chairman of the Rules Committee expressing his willingness to ponder and reflect and consider and contemplate and speculate on this legislation. But, look, time is of the essence here.

If the House votes to defeat the previous question, you know, we can bring this up. There is no reason why we can't bring this up. The Rules Committee has jurisdiction over this issue too, and if there are any glitches here, quite frankly, the Rules Committee can meet immediately and waive all the rules, because that is what my friends do on so many other bills.

One of the frustrations that we have on our side of the aisle is that my friends in the majority keep on bringing bills to the floor that mean nothing, that are going nowhere.

This issue of flood insurance is a big deal. You have heard from Members from all across the country. They want action now, not sometime in the future. They want it now. By voting to defeat the previous question, we can bring this up, we can deal with this, we can actually help some people in this country for a change and do the right thing.

So I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question, and if they don't defeat the previous question, defeat the rule.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I will, once again, do the very best that I can and, with great respect and appreciation to my very dear friend from Massachusetts—who has been a part of, since I recall at least early December, the discussion in the Rules Committee with the gentleman, his colleague, my colleague, from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS)—Judge HASTINGS pushed this issue appropriately. The members of the committee from Florida have graciously pushed that issue forward.

The bottom line is that I believe the gentleman and I need to meet to speak about the jurisdiction that he refers to. The jurisdiction that I believe that the Rules Committee has is not related to the policy. The policy, which is what the provisions that are contained within the problems that we are talking about today, the policy issues are within the jurisdiction of the Financial Services Committee.

Today, we are on the floor of the House of Representatives with a rule with the jurisdiction to the Natural Resources Committee. The motion to recommit is not germane to the Natural Resources Committee.

So voting, or believing that you could, through a motion to recommit, winning that, and getting this bill on the floor through the previous question is simply not something that I believe is realistic, or something that we should even suggest to people that would happen.

What we are talking about today is a bill with the jurisdiction through the Natural Resources Committee, and I would like to confine my remarks now on the bill that is before the House.

Madam Speaker, I have had the pleasure of growing up as a lifelong Texan but had the opportunity to visit and live in other States in our great United States.

I have had an opportunity to visit national parks, national lands, land that is owned by all the American people. As an active Eagle Scout, and the father of two Eagle Scouts—and my father is an Eagle Scout—we have been in national parks all over this country.

That is what this legislation is about today. It is about national parks and

the use therein. Some number of bills that have been cobbled together, yes, they were cobbled together so that we could come up with a policy, a policy that is trying to be worked on through a group of men and women here in the United States House of Representatives on a bipartisan basis, as well as a bicameral basis.

We had an understanding that we would try and do this about this week early last year. So I want you to know that what we are doing is bringing forth a bill which is important to people in how they deal with their families' recreation, as well as the importance of vital economic help to various areas of the United States.

I have witnessed the educational and recreational opportunities that we are talking about today, and they possess near limitless opportunities for not only my generation but the next generation of Americans who want to enjoy America.

I think that we, today, by this bill, have given us a refreshed new opportunity, on a bipartisan, bicameral basis, to address that issue. That is why I support increasing access to public lands for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting, so others may have this same opportunity.

So I am a "yes" and would encourage my colleagues to be "yes" on what the legislation is about today, not something that is not germane and another issue, which I have tried to appropriately address here today. It is urgent, but that is not what we are doing right here right now.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule, "yes" on the underlying legislation, and to be a part of moving this bill to the Senate, then on to the President's desk.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 470 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the

Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3370.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution. . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of this resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 193, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 34]

YEAS—225

Aderholt	Fleischmann	Latham
Amash	Fleming	Latta
Bachmann	Flores	LoBiondo
Bachus	Forbes	Long
Barletta	Fortenberry	Lucas
Barr	Fox	Luetkemeyer
Barton	Franks (AZ)	Lummis
Benishek	Frelinghuysen	Marchant
Bentivolio	Gardner	Marino
Bilirakis	Garrett	Massie
Bishop (UT)	Gerlach	McAllister
Black	Gibbs	McCarthy (CA)
Blackburn	Gibson	McCaul
Boustany	Gingrey (GA)	McClintock
Brady (TX)	Gohmert	McHenry
Bridenstine	Goodlatte	McKeon
Brooks (AL)	Gowdy	McKinley
Brooks (IN)	Granger	McMorris
Broun (GA)	Graves (GA)	Rodgers
Buchanan	Graves (MO)	Meadows
Bucshon	Griffin (AR)	Meehan
Burgess	Griffith (VA)	Messer
Byrne	Grimm	Mica
Calvert	Guthrie	Miller (FL)
Camp	Hall	Miller (MI)
Campbell	Hanna	Mullin
Cantor	Harper	Mulvaney
Capito	Harris	Murphy (PA)
Carter	Hartzler	Neugebauer
Chabot	Hastings (WA)	Noem
Chaffetz	Heck (NV)	Nugent
Coble	Hensarling	Nunes
Coffman	Herrera Beutler	Nunnelee
Cole	Holding	Olson
Collins (GA)	Hudson	Palazzo
Collins (NY)	Huelskamp	Paulsen
Conaway	Huizenga (MI)	Pearce
Cook	Hultgren	Perry
Cotton	Hunter	Petri
Cramer	Hurt	Pittenger
Crawford	Issa	Pitts
Crenshaw	Jenkins	Poe (TX)
Culberson	Johnson (OH)	Pompeo
Daines	Johnson, Sam	Posey
Davis, Rodney	Jordan	Price (GA)
Denham	Joyce	Reed
Dent	Kelly (PA)	Reichert
DeSantis	King (IA)	Renacci
DesJarlais	King (NY)	Ribble
Diaz-Balart	Kingston	Rice (SC)
Duffy	Kinzinger (IL)	Rigell
Duncan (SC)	Kline	Roby
Duncan (TN)	Labrador	Roe (TN)
Ellmers	LaMalfa	Rogers (AL)
Farenthold	Lamborn	Rogers (KY)
Fincher	Lance	Rogers (MI)
Fitzpatrick	Lankford	Rohrabacher

Rokita	Simpson	Walden
Rooney	Smith (MO)	Walorski
Ros-Lehtinen	Smith (NE)	Weber (TX)
Roskam	Smith (NJ)	Webster (FL)
Ross	Smith (TX)	Wenstrup
Rothfus	Southerland	Westmoreland
Royce	Stewart	Whitfield
Runyan	Stivers	Williams
Ryan (WI)	Stutzman	Wilson (SC)
Salmon	Terry	Wittman
Sanford	Thompson (PA)	Wolf
Scalise	Thornberry	Womack
Schock	Tiberi	Woodall
Schweikert	Tipton	Yoder
Scott, Austin	Turner	Yoho
Sensenbrenner	Upton	Young (AK)
Sessions	Valadao	Young (IN)
Shimkus	Wagner	
Shuster	Walberg	

NAYS—193

Barber	Grayson	Negrete McLeod
Barrow (GA)	Green, Al	Nolan
Bass	Green, Gene	O'Rourke
Beatty	Grijalva	Owens
Becerra	Gutiérrez	Pallone
Bera (CA)	Hahn	Pascrell
Bishop (NY)	Hanabusa	Pastor (AZ)
Blumenauer	Hastings (FL)	Payne
Bonamici	Heck (WA)	Pelosi
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Perlmutter
Bralley (IA)	Himes	Peters (CA)
Brown (FL)	Hinojosa	Peters (MI)
Brownley (CA)	Holt	Peterson
Bustos	Honda	Pingree (ME)
Butterfield	Horsford	Pocan
Capps	Hoyer	Polis
Capuano	Huffman	Price (NC)
Cárdenas	Israel	Quigley
Carney	Jackson Lee	Rahall
Carson (IN)	Jeffries	Rangel
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Castor (FL)	Jones	Roybal-Allard
Castro (TX)	Kaptur	Ruiz
Chu	Keating	Ruppersberger
Ciilline	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kennedy	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke (NY)	Kildee	T.
Clay	Kilmer	Sanchez, Loretta
Cleaver	Kind	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Kirkpatrick	Schakowsky
Cohen	Kuster	Schiff
Connolly	Langevin	Schneider
Conyers	Larsen (WA)	Schrader
Cooper	Larson (CT)	Scott (VA)
Costa	Lee (CA)	Scott, David
Courtney	Levin	Serrano
Crowley	Lewis	Sewell (AL)
Cuellar	Lipinski	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Loeb sack	Sherman
Davis (CA)	Lofgren	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Lowenthal	Sires
DeFazio	Lowey	Slaughter
DeGette	Luján, Ben Ray	Speier
Delaney	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	Lynch	Takano
DelBene	Maffei	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Carolyn	Tierney
Doggett	Maloney, Sean	Titus
Doyle	Matheson	Tonko
Duckworth	Matsui	Tsongas
Edwards	McCollum	Van Hollen
Ellison	McDermott	Vargas
Engel	McGovern	Veasey
Eshoo	McIntyre	Vela
Esty	McNerney	Velázquez
Farr	Meeks	Visclosky
Fattah	Meng	Walz
Foster	Michaud	Wasserman
Frankel (FL)	Foster, George	Schultz
Fudge	Moore	Waters
Gabbard	Moran	Waxman
Gallego	Murphy (FL)	Welch
Garamendi	Nadler	Wilson (FL)
Garcia	Napolitano	Yarmuth
	Neal	

NOT VOTING—13

Amodei	Johnson (GA)	Rush
Andrews	Lujan Grisham	Schwartz
Bishop (GA)	(NM)	Smith (WA)
Cassidy	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman
Gosar	Miller, Gary	

□ 1354

Mr. POLIS and Mses. HANABUSA and BASS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 234, noes 185, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 35]

AYES—234

Aderholt	Franks (AZ)	McClintock
Amash	Frelinghuysen	McHenry
Bachmann	Gardner	McIntyre
Bachus	Garrett	McKeon
Barber	Gerlach	McKinley
Barletta	Gibbs	McMorris
Barr	Gibson	Rodgers
Barton	Gingrey (GA)	Meadows
Benishek	Gohmert	Meehan
Bentivolio	Goodlatte	Messer
Bilirakis	Gowdy	Mica
Bishop (UT)	Granger	Miller (FL)
Black	Graves (GA)	Miller (MI)
Blackburn	Graves (MO)	Mullin
Boustany	Griffin (AR)	Mulvaney
Brady (TX)	Griffith (VA)	Murphy (PA)
Bridenstine	Grimm	Neugebauer
Brooks (AL)	Guthrie	Noem
Brooks (IN)	Hall	Nugent
Broun (GA)	Hanna	Nunes
Buchanan	Harper	Nunnelee
Bucshon	Harris	Olson
Burgess	Hartzler	Palazzo
Byrne	Hastings (WA)	Palouse
Calvert	Heck (NV)	Pearce
Camp	Hensarling	Perlmutter
Campbell	Herrera Beutler	Perry
Cantor	Holding	Peterson
Capito	Hudson	Petri
Carter	Huelskamp	Pittenger
Chabot	Huizenga (MI)	Pitts
Chaffetz	Hultgren	Poe (TX)
Coble	Hunter	Pompeo
Coffman	Hurt	Posey
Cole	Issa	Price (GA)
Collins (GA)	Jenkins	Rahall
Collins (NY)	Johnson (OH)	Reed
Conaway	Johnson, Sam	Reichert
Cook	Jones	Renacci
Cotton	Jordan	Ribble
Cramer	Joyce	Rice (SC)
Crawford	Kelly (PA)	Rigell
Crenshaw	King (IA)	Roby
Culberson	King (NY)	Roe (TN)
Daines	Kingston	Rogers (AL)
Davis, Rodney	Kinzinger (IL)	Rogers (KY)
Denham	Kline	Rogers (MI)
Dent	Labrador	Rohrabacher
DeSantis	LaMalfa	Rokita
DesJarlais	Lamborn	Rooney
Diaz-Balart	Lance	Ros-Lehtinen
Duffy	Lankford	Roskam
Duncan (SC)	Latham	Ross
Duncan (TN)	Latta	Rothenfus
Ellmers	LoBiondo	Royce
Enyart	Long	Runyan
Farenthold	Lucas	Ryan (WI)
Fincher	Luetkemeyer	Salmon
Fitzpatrick	Lummis	Sanford
Fleischmann	Marchant	Scalise
Fleming	Marino	Schock
Flores	Massie	Schweikert
Forbes	McAllister	Scott, Austin
Fortenberry	McCarthy (CA)	Sensenbrenner
Fox	McCaul	Sessions

Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)

Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup

Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, last night, on rollcall Nos. 32 and 33 for H.R. 1791 and H.R. 357, I am not recorded because I was absent. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on both.

Today, on rollcall Nos. 34 and 35 for the Rule on H.R. 3590 and H. Res. 470, I am not recorded because I was absent. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on both.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3590.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 470 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3590.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1406

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, with Mr. NUGENT in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the Sportsmen’s Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act, H.R. 3590, is a package of eight bills that protect the right of American sportsmen to fish and hunt from arbitrary and unjustified bureaucratic restrictions and limitations. It will remove government roadblocks to those activities on certain public lands and guard against new regulations that threaten hunting and fishing.

Mr. Chairman, this is a bipartisan bill. It is cosponsored by the Republican and Democrat chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus, Mr. Latta of Ohio and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and the caucus vice chairs, Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. In addition, Mr. BENISHEK of Michigan, Mr. HUNTER of

Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carmen
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Culler
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi

NOES—185

Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)

Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O’Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Kuster
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—12

Amodei
Andrews
Brownley (CA)
Cassidy
Gosar

Lujan Grisham
(NM)
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Rush

Schwartz
Smith (WA)
Stockman

□ 1404

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

California, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska all deserve credit for leadership on these important issues.

This legislation ensures that Americans' ability to fish and hunt will not be arbitrarily limited by the whim of Federal bureaucrats.

Title I of this bill directly responds to bureaucratic threats posed by the EPA. In 1976, Congress barred the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, from regulating firearms and ammunition. However, this has not stopped attempts to circumvent the law by claiming that, while EPA may not be able to regulate ammunition, it can regulate components of ammunition and fishing tackle. This would be a massive power grab by the EPA despite a clear lack of legal authority.

Banning lead bullets and tackle would increase costs for hunters, sports shooters, and fishermen, and cause economic harm to outdoor sportsmen and the recreation industry. This legislation ensures that the EPA does not—does not, Mr. Chairman—have the authority to regulate ammunition and fishing tackle.

Title II of this bill makes more funding available to States for a longer period of time to create and maintain shooting ranges, which preserves American tradition.

Title III would direct the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to allow, with a permit, commercial filming on Federal lands for crews of five or fewer. This permit would ensure a fair return to the taxpayer in exchange for use of their lands.

Title IV of this bill would allow for the importation of legally taken polar bear hunting trophies from Canada that, through no fault of the sportsmen, have become trapped in a bureaucratic limbo. This is focused squarely on resolving existing permits snarled in red tape and does not open the door to any future imports.

The next two titles of the bill would allow sportsmen across the country to more easily obtain a Federal duck stamp by making them available for purchase online and would protect law-abiding individuals' constitutional right to bear arms on lands owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Title VII establishes a Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee in order to protect the rights of sportsmen while finding a balance with commonsense conservation.

The last title of the bill requires Federal land managers to support and facilitate use and access for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting on Forest Service and BLM land. It protects sportsmen from arbitrary efforts by the Federal Government to block public lands from hunting and fishing activities by implementing an "open until closed" management policy. However, it does not prioritize hunting and

fishing over other multiple uses of public lands.

Hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting are longstanding American traditions that deserve our protection. This important legislation is not a solution in search of a problem. Regrettably, bureaucratic threats to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting are very real. That is why this bill has broad bipartisan support and the endorsement of over 36 sportsmen's organizations. So I again commend the bipartisan sponsors of this package of bills, and I encourage my colleagues to support the legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In the past, I have voted for a number of the sportsmen promotion and protection packages. Unfortunately, it seems this one, with a number of extraneous and detrimental provisions to wilderness, wildlife refuges, and other areas, seems designed to turn what in the past has been a bipartisan consensus in favor of sportsmen's issues into a partisan issue, which is what we do with most everything around here these days, and that is unfortunate because we would be happy to address real problems as they are identified.

□ 1415

In this bill, we are going to essentially amend or override the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Refuge System Administration Act. These are all bedrock environmental provisions which protect public lands and wildlife and have not caused conflicts for sportsmen, hunters, fishers, and others.

Also, we have the throwaway little political thing. The EPA has already said: We don't have the authority to regulate land, and that is the end of it. But we are going to pass a law to say they don't have the authority that they don't have to regulate the land. Okay. Whatever. That is fine.

So then we also have a very broad agreement that hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-dependent activities can and should and have and will, ongoing, take place in wildlife refuges and wilderness areas. In fact, there is so much agreement on this point that existing law clearly supports such activities. As a result, hunting and fishing are popular and commonplace, pursued on public lands, the vast majority of which, outside of national parks in the lower 48, are open to hunting and fishing.

Now, reasonable legislation seeking simply to emphasize the importance of these activities would have been non-controversial, whatever minor adjustments we might need to make. But to have a blanket exemption for operations in the National Wildlife Refuge System from all environmental planning under NEPA, the purpose of such a broad waiver is unclear, the motiva-

tion is unclear. It is definitely and potentially, or at least probably, very—I can't say "definitely." But it could well undermine management in refuges in ways that will actually degrade habitat, which will mean less hunting and fishing opportunities, and degrade water, which means less hunting and fishing opportunities. That seems contradictory to the meritorious title of the bill, which doesn't seem to be reflected in the various parts, some of which have been through hearings, some of which haven't.

Now, the filming on public lands, I haven't heard of the controversy. There are some who purport that there might be some kind of problem for people who want to do hunting and fishing videos, films—I have seen quite a few of them—on public lands. There is no example of a problem that has occurred, but the new authority with a fixed rate of a maximum of \$200 for a permit, no matter how much the impact might be of the film crew, and further, to open the door for the use of motorized equipment in wilderness areas for these filming activities is very, very problematic, objectionable, and unnecessary at this point. Again, there has been nothing brought up in a hearing about a credible complaint from a film company that couldn't do its wildlife film or its hunting film because of restrictions that were placed upon them.

It also would allow the construction of temporary roads. Now, I appreciate the fact the manager's amendment is going to prohibit permanent roads within wilderness areas that are designated necessary for access to hunting and fishing, but even temporary roads in wilderness areas for hunting and fishing are a clear and unnecessary degradation, a violation, of the existing Wilderness Act. And many horseback hunters or hunters who access on foot in my State, I have never been petitioned by them to open up roads into wilderness areas so they can better hunt. They are concerned about the ongoing review and closure of roads by the Forest Service, and I have been actively involved in that.

But in this case, we are saying no. Now we can have temporary roads into wilderness areas, something that no one has ever asked me nor made a case that is necessary for hunting. So it is slightly improved from the early versions, but we are still concerned about temporary roads and that is not something we want in our wilderness areas. I don't think that weakening or changing the definition of "wilderness" helps expand access for hunting and fishing nor the opportunities in those areas.

Also, the bill has some pretty glaring omissions that actually would tremendously benefit the sportsmen's communities. That would be programs that support wetlands conservation, the

preservation of outdoor recreation facilities, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which are key in expanding opportunities or protecting continued opportunities to hunt and fish as we see more and more urban encroachment onto traditional hunting and fishing areas. We could use those tools. We need those tools—they are both expired—and they are not allowed to be part of this package.

There were various other amendments offered that we will get to later in the discussion that were not allowed that could have improved this package. We will go through the amendment process and try to deal with some of the concerns, but at this point, as written and introduced, I would urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), my colleague.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chair, I am interested in title IV in this legislation, which is a good piece of legislation. The provision in title IV of H.R. 3590 has the support of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the President of the United States. This provision is the Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act. It is a bipartisan measure that would make a very limited fix to an issue that affects a number of hunters nationwide.

Prior to the threatened listing of the worldwide polar bear population on May 15, 2008, there were a number of hunters that took hunting trips to Canada under Canadian law and United States law. These hunters followed all the rules at the time and were prevented from bringing in their polar bear trophy due to the threatened listing triggering an importation ban under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

My legislation, H.R. 3590, will allow the Secretary of the Interior to issue permits to only those qualified hunters with legally taken polar bear trophies prior to the May listing date. This legislation will allow up to 41 hunters to import their trophies from Canada.

As a result, roughly \$41,000 would be available to the United States-Russia Polar Bear Conservation Fund to support conservation activities for the shared polar bear population. This is a provision that would bring in revenue for conservation activities that otherwise would not be funded.

As a result, I urge Members to support this legislation and keep in fact these are dead polar bears in storage hunted legally under the premise of Canadian law and United States law. This is a good part of this bill.

By the way, speaking of this bill, it is a good bill. From the State of Alaska

are more parks and more refuges than any other State. The Refuge Department doesn't allow us to hunt on refuges in many areas. The Park Service definitely doesn't allow us to hunt. I am arguing that the park and refuge areas are set aside for the refuge managers themselves and not for the people of America, let alone the people of Alaska.

This legislation is the right way to go. Let's think about public lands, not the king's lands, not the administration's lands, but the lands of the people. This bill is a good bill. I urge the passage of this legislation.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HOLDING). The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DAINES) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HOLDING). The gentleman from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), cochair of the Sportsmen's Caucus.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, let me thank the ranking member of the committee, the gentleman from Oregon, for allowing me to speak in support of this legislation even though he has reserved time in opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013. Today's bill is the product of the work of members of the bipartisan Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, which I serve as cochair. The Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus is the largest caucus in Congress, boasting nearly 300 members. The caucus seeks to advance hunting, angling, shooting, and trapping legislative priorities. Today's bill is comprised of eight individual bills that seek to promote these interests.

Mr. Chairman, not only is hunting and fishing a great passion for millions of individuals like myself, it is also a major contributor to the U.S. economy. Mississippi, home to some of the world's finest duck, whitetail, and sport fishing, contributed \$2.2 billion to the economy in 2011 alone.

My congressional district receives scores of visitors each year, including some Members of this body, who come

to enjoy the vast natural resources that the Mississippi Delta has to offer. When these individuals visit Mississippi, they hire local outfitters, stay in our hotels, eat at our restaurants, pay State hunting fees, and purchase hunting gear like Primos brand hunting calls, which are produced in my district in Flora, Mississippi. In fact, it has been estimated that hunting and fishing supports 33,000 jobs in Mississippi.

Mr. Chairman, the bill before us today makes improvements to a wide range of issues, including the ability to purchase duck stamps online; statutorily establish the Wildlife Hunting and Heritage Conservation Council, which was administratively formed by Secretaries Salazar and Vilsack in 2012. It also reduces a financial burden on States and local governments for target range construction and maintenance. It also excludes commercial ammo and fishing tackle from being classified as toxic substances, which the EPA has agreed. It also directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to issue a permit and assess an annual fee for commercial filming crews of five people or fewer for activities on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. It also allows law-abiding citizens to transport firearms across Army Corps of Engineers projects like the hundreds of miles of levee that I have in my district. And it also opens up more Federal land to hunting and fishing.

Mr. Chairman, while this bill makes tremendous strides to meet the needs of sportsmen, there are several other provisions that were not included in this bill that we must continue to push for, including an overhaul of the Red Snapper Management in the Gulf of Mexico, the ability to convert decommissioned oil rigs to fish habitat, and the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these issues.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3590.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN).

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer my support for H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013, better known as the SHARE Act.

I commend my friend and cochair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, Representative BOB LATTA of Ohio, for his leadership in guiding this bill to the floor.

I am also proud to join with the Sportsmen's Caucus cochairs, both Representative LATTA and Representative BENNIE THOMPSON of Mississippi, and vice chair Representative TIM WALZ of Minnesota in support of this important bill.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I would also like to thank Chairman DOC HASTINGS for his work and cooperation on behalf of America's sportsmen to support this legislation through the committee process.

As a sportsman, I am humbled to advocate for this community and help introduce this legislation to advance priorities for American anglers, hunters, and conservationists.

This commonsense package will expand opportunities for recreation, support fair treatment, and modernize programs for sportsmen, and includes a proposal I authored to allow migratory waterfowl hunters to purchase their annual Federal duck stamp online.

As vice chair of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, I can proudly say that this provision is important to waterfowl hunters across the country. Title V, the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act, is supported by the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and Ducks Unlimited.

I would also like to acknowledge Representative RON KIND as an original cosponsor of the Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act. The gentleman from Wisconsin is a dedicated conservationist and longtime supporter and friend to sportsmen.

There is no cost to taxpayers. There is broad bipartisan support for this innovative idea, and this convenient 21st century delivery system will be utilized by thousands of American sportsmen in the future.

□ 1430

Again, I would encourage my colleagues to support this important package, H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I just inquire as to how much time remains on either side?

The ACTING CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) has 19½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK) has 21½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to this legislation, and I would hope that my colleagues will read it and look before they leap. It is called the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013. Unfortunately, this is mired in a muck of text in the legislation that I think does just the opposite of enhancement. It ought to read, "Kill the Habitat and Wildlife and Enjoy a Dead Forest Act."

This bill diminishes the conservation measures designed to protect the habitat for wildlife by creating loopholes in the Wilderness Act and weakens the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, process.

Title I, for example, amends the Toxic Substances Control Act to prohibit the EPA from regulating toxic substances contained in bullets, angling lures, and other hunting equipment with respect to toxic substances.

It is not just people that are affected by toxic substances; so are animals. Here they prohibit barring lead in bullets. Now, California is a big hunter's State. Guess what? California State law prohibits the use of lead. Why? Because the Federal Government has spent millions, millions, and millions of dollars trying to restore the California condor. Does that count? Ask the Ventana and Post Ranch Inn. Post Ranch is \$1,000 a night—nobody can afford that—but it is filled all the time. Why? Because you can see condors and mountain lions and sea otters and other things that we have protected by protecting their environment.

What does a condor die from? It eats dead things. It eats things that have been killed by bullets. It eats that lead, and guess what? It kills the condor. It is done over and over again. There is no question about this. This is the number one cause of death in condors in California after we spent all this money trying to get them restored. This act wipes all that out.

It is going to hurt the economy, and you know what? People call themselves sportsmen. The sportsmen I know don't want to kill the wildlife by poison or destroying the habitat. That is why the bill passed in California banning lead bullets. This one prohibits States like California from doing that.

Even the military is moving toward pursuing a lead-free environment for their small arms. So it is a serious problem. This bill bans that. This is nuts.

Lead poisoning from ammunition is the way you kill off wildlife, not by a good shot. You kill it off by the poison that is left behind. That is why Governor Brown signed into law a ban on lead bullets, and they phased it in to 2019. This follows what at least 30 other States have already done in regulating lead ammunition in some manner.

So, if we really want to protect and enhance the environment, then we ought to do what the original conservationists did who were the hunters by switching to non-toxic ammunition, and allow them to continue on good conservation efforts, which is the heritage of hunters in this country.

This legislation is a step backwards for sportsmen. I am a fisherman. I certainly don't want to put stuff in the ocean or in lakes that is toxic, and conservation practices protect our public lands, our open spaces, and our wilderness areas.

So, I urge my colleagues to look before you leap. Don't jump in just because there are a bunch of people endorsing this bill. Look at the type. Look what it does. Look at the small

print. I urge you to oppose this legislation until it can really be legislation that will be a Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act. As of now, it deserves your opposition.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield myself 2 minutes of the time.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013, or the SHARE Act.

I would like to talk a little bit about title VIII of the bill, which is the text of a bill that I introduced, the Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act. Like many of my colleagues here in Congress, hunting and fishing are an important part of the lives of the constituents in my district. I grew up in north Michigan, and like many of my constituents, I spent my summers fishing, my Octobers hunting grouse in the U.P. woods.

These traditions of spending quality time outdoors with our kids and grandkids are the kind of things that we must make sure are preserved for generations to come.

Mr. Chairman, this portion of the SHARE Act seeks to create an "open until closed" policy for sportsmen's use of Federal lands. As you know, nearly a quarter of the United States land mass, or over 500 million acres, are managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service. These lands are all owned by all Americans. It is important that the right to fully utilize these lands is ensured for future generations.

Over the years, legislative ambiguity in the Wilderness Act has opened the door for numerous lawsuits over the country. Rather than embracing sportsmen and -women for the conservationists that they are, anti-hunting and environmental groups have pursued an agenda of eliminating heritage activities on Federal lands for years. These groups look for loopholes in the law to deprive our constituents the right to use their own Federal lands.

Recreational anglers, hunters, and sporting organizations, many of whom have endorsed this bill, are supporters of the conservation movement and continue to provide direct support to the wildlife managers and enforcement officers at the State, local, and Federal levels. These dedicated sportsmen and -women from the shorelines of Lake Superior to the beaches of the Pacific Ocean deserve to know that the lands that they cherish will not be closed off to future generations.

This is a bipartisan issue. In fact, Presidents Clinton and Bush both issued executive orders recognizing the value of these heritage activities. It is time we finally closed these loopholes, firmed up the language and made sure that future generations will always be able to enjoy the outdoors—hunting,

fishing, and shooting or just taking a walk in the woods.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield myself an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. Chairman, I would encourage all of my colleagues to join me today in supporting this important piece of commonsense legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how many more speakers does the gentleman have?

Mr. BENISHEK. I have six more speakers, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I have no more speakers except myself, so I would suggest the gentleman go ahead.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES).

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the SHARE Act.

As a fifth-generation Montanan and as a lifelong sportsman, I know that hunting, fishing, motorized recreation, and hiking are simply a way of life for us in Montana. The outdoors is a critical aspect of our culture, and as 30 percent of our State is owned by the Federal Government, we depend on responsible stewardship and public access to these lands. Unfortunately, our Federal Government too often imposes rules and regulations that prevent responsible land use and our freedom to use the land that we pay for.

Roughly 2 million acres in Montana are inaccessible to the public. That is the most of any State in the Nation. Many of our hunting and fishing opportunities are locked away. The SHARE Act is an important bill that will protect Montanans' access to public lands for outdoor recreation. Too often, the Federal Government forgets that hunters, anglers, outdoorsmen—those whose livelihoods and passions rely on the land—respect our outdoor landscape the most and are the best stewards of our public lands.

Here we have the Federal Government trying to expand its authority over lead bullets, keeping millions of dollars spent on ammo and fishing tackle by hunters and anglers from being used for conservation and wildlife management. Like its Senate counterpart, the SPORT Act, this bill would protect our sportsmen and industries that manufacture these goods from these unnecessary regulations.

The SHARE Act would also protect our Second Amendment rights where the administration has tried to constrain them. It ensures that State and local governments are consulted in decisions managing shooting ranges, and it ensures that real outdoorsmen, instead of a bunch of Washington bureaucrats, are advising the administration on conservation and sportsmen issues.

Simply stated, the SHARE Act is an important bill to protect America's outdoor heritage and to ensure the responsible use of our public lands. I urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act, or SHARE Act.

I have introduced this legislation on behalf of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, of which I am the co-chairman with Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON, whom I thank for his work. I also would like to thank Chairman HASTINGS for his support of the various bills contained in this sportsmen's package, as well as to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Chairman UPTON. I would also like to thank all of my colleagues who have introduced the individual bills that make up this package legislation.

As a lifelong hunter and outdoorsman, issues relating to hunting and conservation are extremely important to me. This legislation includes various pro-sportsmen's and pro-sportswomen's items that will help ensure our outdoor traditions are protected and advanced. H.R. 3590 also addresses some of the most current concerns of America's hunters, recreational anglers, shooters, and trappers.

Title III of the bill is legislation I introduced related to public lands filming. This provision directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, for any film crew of five persons or fewer, to require a permit and assess an annual fee of \$200 for commercial filming activities or similar projects on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. This prohibits the Secretary, for persons holding such a permit, from assessing any additional fee for commercial filming activities and similar projects that occur in those areas during public hours.

I have also introduced the language contained in title VII, which permanently establishes the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee. This council advises the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, recreational hunting, and shooting. Authorization of the council is vital to ensuring that hunters maintain an advisory capacity role across future administrations. The passage of H.R. 3590 will not only elevate the stature of the council, it will also provide the levels of certainty and stability necessary to ensure the council's ability to engage in assisting the government in devising and implementing the innovative, long-term solutions that are often necessary to address pol-

icy issues important to sportsmen and sportswomen.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BENISHEK. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LATTA. The passage of H.R. 3590 is important to our sportsmen and -women to allow open access to Federal lands, as well as to provide the needed certainty for the rules surrounding these activities. These hunters and anglers provide a tremendous economic benefit to our country. In 2011, they spent over \$90 billion. In my home State of Ohio, sportsmen and sportswomen spent \$2.85 billion on hunting and fishing. That is more than the revenues for corn, the State's top-grossing agriculture commodity that year.

H.R. 3590 is good for the sporting and conservation communities, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) would remain on the floor for a moment, I would like to direct to the gentleman a question about the filming provision. I am curious as to what problems specifically have been identified regarding filming permits. The second question would be: Is it the gentleman's intent that they should be able to use mechanized filming on tracks and otherwise motorized filming in wilderness areas?

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, first, there are a lot of smaller companies out there that don't have the large film crews and that don't have the large backups when it comes to funding in order to be able to do these types of activities. So I want to make sure that those individuals have that ability to be out there with a smaller fee so they can go ahead and make the films they want to make.

□ 1445

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, as I understand the current process, there is not one large fee. The fees vary in terms of the agency. If it is a one-person crew or a four-person crew, whatever, the fees would be smaller. If it is a mega film coming from Hollywood, they would charge a larger fee, is my understanding.

I am just wondering if there has been a specific case where someone has come to the gentleman and said, Gee, we are a two-person crew, and they want to charge us \$10,000. Do we have any specific examples?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Again, what we have had has come to us from the discussions we had with the sporting community. Again, this is a product of multiple groups coming

together. When we looked at the cost of the fee, et cetera, they thought it would be appropriate at this level of \$200 for the annual fee, again, for these very small groups out there that want to go out and film.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Further, the issue of mechanized filming equipment, motorized equipment being used in wilderness areas. And I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LATTA. That is one of the sections in the title that would permit that.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Does the gentleman feel that we should waive the Wilderness Act for film crews, but not other activities?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. LATTA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Again, when you look at mechanized vehicles, it can be anything from a very small ATV. You might not be talking about a truck, or something like that, but something very small.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, I think this is a solution in search of a problem. We have had no testimony before the committee and no specifics were provided here. I believe it is an overly broad provision. If we had cases where extortionate fees were being charged for small groups or unreasonable fees that weren't following this scale basis that the agency tells me they follow, then I would share the gentleman's concerns.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER).

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman HASTINGS for his support in including H.R. 322, the Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Shooting Protection Act, as title I of the sportsmen's package.

I also want to thank the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus colleagues and the leadership of Chairman BOB LATTA and BENNIE THOMPSON for their efforts to protect sportsmen's rights and preserve our Nation's heritage.

Title I of this measure simply clarifies the existing intent of law regarding EPA's authority under the Toxic Substances Control Act with respect to traditional ammunition and fishing tackle that contain lead components. This legislation would prevent the EPA from expanding its regulatory authority under TSCA into an area where fish and wildlife agencies are better positioned to manage.

What the several antihunting and antifishing groups who insist on the expansion fail to recognize is that the ammunition, firearms, and tackle industries, along with sportsmen and -women, are the ones that are footing the bill to manage, protect, and create the same species' habitat that they claim they are trying to save. There is

no sound evidence of traditional ammo and fishing tackle with lead components causing harm to wildlife populations or human health that would warrant a complete ban.

I would also say that one of my colleagues came to the floor earlier and said that this particular piece of legislation would in fact prevent States like California from banning lead ammunition. That is not true. Doing so in disregard of the intent of the law, the EPA would devastate countless domestic manufacturing facilities, drive up the cost for law enforcement and for our military, destroying thousands of jobs and hurting wildlife conservation funding—all at the expense of the taxpayer, and that is a cost that should not be borne.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman had remained on the floor for a moment, I was going to direct a question to him, which is: Since the EPA has found it does not have legal authority to regulate these substances, why do we need to pass a law to prevent a law from being passed? Which I guess is what we are trying to do here. In case we wanted to ever consider a law to do this, we would say, Well, we already passed a law to prohibit that.

Because the EPA says they don't have the authority to do this, it is not going to happen. There was a petition filed. It was rejected. End of story.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER).

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

The bill protects the Second Amendment rights of visitors to Army Corps recreation lands. The Army Corps of Engineers has more outdoor recreation visitors than the National Park Service or the Forest Service lands. My district is home to many of these recreational lands, such as Lake Raystown or the Youghiogheny River.

While we currently have protections for American's Second Amendment rights in National Park lands and forest lands, the same rights are not protected on Corps properties. This bill corrects that. It removes unnecessary firearm restrictions while maintaining the safety and security of Corps buildings and property.

I urge all Members to support the Second Amendment and vote in favor of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to ask the chairman a question regarding that, since this is under the jurisdiction of our committee and I am not aware that we held a hearing on this issue.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. SHUSTER. I don't believe we did this year, but I think in the past we did.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, I have many Corps areas in my district, and I am not aware of restrictions, except there are restricted areas because a number of these projects have sensitive equipment that operate spillways and dams and other things, and those are high security areas post-9/11.

I am wondering if the gentleman's interpretation of this is that it would allow people to carry sidearms into these high security areas.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. SHUSTER. It protects people's rights, just like in the State forests and other properties of the Federal Government, to carry firearms; law-abiding citizens. I think it is something reasonable, and something I support. I thank the gentleman for the inquiry.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, I am a strong supporter of the Second Amendment, a gun owner myself. I haven't had a single complaint about Corps restrictions in my State, and that would include areas where we have had tampering with machinery that relates to spillways and dams—potential terrorism. I wouldn't want to facilitate terrorism.

If we are talking about general Corps areas and lands being managed, fine, but if we are talking about sensitive, secure areas that have to be protected and guarded, I don't see why we would allow civilian firearm carry within those sensitive protected areas, which would make us vulnerable to terrorism.

Terrorists without a weapon, I suppose they could bring in a weapon anyway. They could violate the law, but if someone were noted bringing a weapon into one of those areas now, they would be asked to leave or apprehended.

So I am concerned about those aspects, and I think that my committee and Homeland Security should have looked at this issue before it was brought to the floor without a hearing.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013.

I would like to speak specifically to title VI of the bill.

The fundamental constitutional right to bear arms must be protected for all law-abiding citizens. Americans deserve the right to exercise their rights to not only enjoy recreational activities, but also provide self-defense for themselves and their loved ones.

In the 111th Congress, this body passed legislation that ultimately became law which allows for guns to be

legally possessed and carried on lands within our National Parks. Following enactment of that legislation, the Army Corps of Engineers immediately issued the following release:

Public Law 111-024 does not apply to Corps projects or facilities. The passage of this new law does not affect application of title 36 regulations.

The Corps administers over 11.7 million acres of land, including 400 lakes and river projects, 90,000 campsites, and 4,000 miles of trails. Much of this land is remote and without quick access to emergency services or law enforcement, so the ability to carry a firearm in the case of emergency is imperative.

This Army Corps policy preempts State regulatory frameworks for transporting and carrying firearms, thus invalidating concealed weapons permits and other State laws that allow law-abiding citizens to exercise their Second Amendment rights.

Title VI of the bill is aimed at protecting these rights by ensuring the right to carry at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Water Resource Development Projects. Specifically, this legislation prohibits the Secretary of the Army from enforcing any regulation that prevents an individual from possessing firearms on these properties, thereby restoring the continuity to Federal law.

Gun owners need to be able to exercise their Second Amendment rights when they are legally camping, hunting, and fishing on Army Corps projects.

I would like to thank my colleague from Ohio, Representative LATTA, for including my bill into this piece of legislation.

I urge Members to support title VI and this legislation as a whole.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I would inquire how many more speakers the gentleman has.

Mr. BENISHEK. We just have one more speaker, and I will close after that.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER).

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman, the ranking member, and the committee as well, for putting in H.R. 2463, the Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act, that Congressman WALZ from Minnesota and myself wrote.

Basically, what this does is allow Americans to use Federal lands that they pay for in order to go out and shoot for sport at target ranges. With fewer ranges today, providing greater flexibility to States for the purpose of maintaining public shooting venues will go a long way to restoring recreational opportunities and promoting gun safety.

In San Diego, there are no public ranges that we can use. We have to go to an indoor range or to someone's private ranch. There are no more public facilities.

The Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act uses existing resources to allow Americans greater access to lands on which to safely practice recreational and competitive shooting. Shooting sports participants already provide significant support to conservation efforts through excise taxes on firearms and ammunition. Public shooting ranges will continue to serve the interests of families and communities, providing a safe place for target practice and instruction while also sustaining jobs and supporting local businesses.

This is a great bill. I would urge my colleagues to support it because shooting—and shooting well—is an American tradition. You shouldn't have to join the Marine Corps to learn that.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would agree with the gentleman. That came out of committee unanimously. It is a true bipartisan proposal. I learned to shoot through the Y in a basement range with a .22. That is where I started. We have got to learn somewhere.

The public lands is another place for families to go and learn to shoot. So that is one of the noncontroversial parts of the bill. In fact, four of the components of this bill could have been brought up yesterday under suspension or even, I believe, unanimous consent. Definitely under suspension. They definitely would have passed them. They have been previously considered by committee, subject to hearings, and the language was agreed upon. Unfortunately, the majority has insisted, although I also believe that the title would get unanimous consent in this body—it is a great title—but sometimes we attach provisions to great titles that aren't necessary or belie that title.

Some of the components of this, which I have talked about—the potential for degradation of wetlands management, wildlife refuge management, intrusions into wilderness areas—are inappropriate and unnecessary. We can do a little political “gotcha”—you voted against this bill that has this great title, so that means you are against sportsmen and fishing and hunters and families enjoying those activities.

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I am not, and very few, if any, Members of this body are. But, be that as it may, we have pointed out a number of the problems in this legislation.

Legislating is really a pretty difficult exercise, to do real things, to do things that actually would benefit our wildlife resources and hunting and fish-

ing activities. One would be Congressman DAINES' proposal to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Every day development proposals move forward that take more and more wildlife areas, more and more wetlands, more and more forests out of access to hunting and fishing and recreation in many cases. The Land and Water Conservation Fund has been a key in protecting those lands, when jeopardized, and purchasing from willing sellers to prevent that kind of development.

Though we are still collecting the tax that funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund—yes, we are collecting the tax. Even the Republicans haven't proposed that we do away with that tax because they are spending Land and Water Conservation Funds on other things; God only knows what. Some of the earmarks in a bill we will take up later this week. I don't know.

But they are spending hundreds of millions of dollars that are supposed to go to benefit sportsmen and -women, hunters, fishers, wildlife, and protect those areas and manage them reasonably with that full access. They are spending that money somewhere else, so they don't want to take away the tax, but they don't want to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. That is a shame, and that would be a much bigger benefit than anything else that we are doing here today.

We have a number of bipartisan wilderness proposals pending: Mr. REICHERT, from Washington State, Alpine Lakes; Mr. BENISHEK, Sleeping Bear Dunes; and others that are pending. Those things would benefit since wilderness does allow hunting and fishing and does provide a degree of protection for those lands that is unparalleled. That would be an experience for horseback hunters, people who walk in on their own two feet. But there are plenty of places to go in a motorized way. It is a little more rare to have an opportunity to do that from horseback or hiking.

But we are not considering those today because those are controversial. So instead, we have this kind of hash that we are calling one thing and doing a number of other things with.

We have the proposal that we have a problem with unidentified film crews who have never come forward, who might be charged too much or need to use motorized equipment in wilderness areas and so, therefore, we are just going to open them up. That is kind of a heck of a way to legislate, really.

We are worried that maybe some units, and definitely the dam areas of the Corps of Engineers, prohibit individuals carrying weapons. That is not exactly an intrusion. They can't carry a weapon into an airport. You can't carry a weapon into the Capitol. You can't carry a weapon into a Federal

courthouse, and you can't carry a weapon to a dam site where tampering with equipment could cause a massive flood or dam failure. It makes a little bit of sense to me, but the bill says, no, that is an infringement on the Second Amendment. I think it is a reasonable step by the government. So we are going to open that up, again, without any hearings identifying any problems with access.

I have a lot of Corps projects in my State. I have never had a constituent call and say, gee, I want to go on to this Corps property and bring my gun. I have got a concealed weapons permit, and I have carried a gun on many Federal lands where there is no restriction, and I supported the park provision last year. But we are creating another imaginary problem so we can add yet another title to this hash of a bill. So I am sorry that we are having to go forward in this way.

I did support a less controversial measure for sportsmen heritage in the last Congress, and even that didn't go anywhere in the Senate. This one already has an affirmed veto threat from the White House, and the Senate isn't going to take it up.

But we can pretend we did something here today, and some people get excited about the fact that we did something here today that will never happen. We could, and it is much harder, agree on a bipartisan measure for reasonable measures to protect people's right to hunt and fish and bear arms, but we are not going to do that. So let's get on with the political show.

Mr. Chairman, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, let me just make a couple of points. I want to make a very, very broad point on what the intent of this legislation is, because it is aimed at uses of public lands.

Now, I have always been of the mind that public lands, particularly Federal lands, unless Congress designates otherwise, then the uses of those lands should be for multiple purposes. Now, obviously recreation, i.e., hunting and fishing, would be part of that.

So what this bill seeks to do, then, is to provide certainty into Federal laws that, indeed, multiple uses—in this case, hunting and fishing and recreational use—will be on public lands. There is nothing really more complicated than that.

What has caused this legislation to be brought forward is because of actions of certain bureaucracies within certain parts of the Federal Government that have a different decision, if you will, or a different idea of that, and they slow down this recreational activity. So this seeks to put certainty in that.

Lastly, let me just respond to the arguments that we heard about the Land

and Water Conservation Fund. Mr. Chairman, that is a program. There are people that think it is a very, very good program. There are those, including me, that feel that sometimes it is not as good as it is simply because you acquire private land for the Federal Government. We can't maintain what we have. That should be a reason for, I guess, pause anyway.

But the reason I think that the Rules Committee did not make that particular amendment in order is for a very, very good reason. We talk about regular order around here. The Land and Water Conservation Fund statute does not expire until 2015. So I know, as chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, that the subcommittee in charge of that particular legislation is going to have hearings and we are going to go through the legislative process in order to reauthorize that.

So to rail against the idea that that amendment was not made in order somehow continues to break the program is simply not the case. The program is in place until it expires in 2015, and I have no doubt that our committee will come up with legislation to do the proper reauthorization.

So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I think it is a very, very good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chairman, our nation's public lands have always required balanced management for a variety of uses for the American people. And while I am pleased to see a public lands bill on the Floor of this House that acknowledges uses beyond oil and gas drilling, I regret that it once again fails to meet the balance necessary to responsibly manage our lands for generations to come.

I don't think there is any disagreement in the House over the importance of outdoor recreation on public lands. More than 75 percent of federal lands are open to hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting. However, in order to ensure that these areas are available for the future, all uses must be balanced with conservation. And today's bill would override critical environmental protections while depriving hunters and fisherman from offering input on land use decisions.

The bill also replaces the only federal advisory committee with a voice for the hunting community with a new council, removing representation from hunting outreach and education groups and sportsmen and sports-women at-large in favor of representatives from the firearms, ranching, and agriculture industries. Finally, it would allow for guns at certain Army Corps facilities, without exemption for public safety or national security concerns.

I have joined with Mr. HOLT and members of the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Caucus to offer an amendment to this bill to clarify that the Secretary of Interior has the authority to plan for a changing climate, which poses a real threat to outdoor recreation through sea level rise, drought, and wildfire. It will also lead to changes in hunting seasons,

migratory patterns, and invasive species populations. While we should be taking action here in Congress to address climate change and its impacts on recreational hunting and fishing, this amendment ensures that we don't limit the Secretary's ability to plan for these developments. I urge my colleagues to support it.

While there are parts of this bill that would get unanimous support from the House, it contains deeply flawed provisions that jeopardize the condition of public lands. I urge my colleagues to reject it and work on a consensus bill that guarantees recreational opportunities for generations of American sportsmen and -women.

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 3590, the SHARE Act of 2013. This bill contains a harmful provision that chips away at the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) by retroactively allowing the import of sport-hunted polar bear trophies as Title IV of the bill. I submitted an amendment to the bill which would have struck Title IV, however the Rules Committee denied the members of this body an opportunity to vote on this issue. I am disappointed this legislation was not brought to the floor under an open rule which would have allowed consideration of my amendment so members could debate this precedent-setting provision.

Polar bears are protected from sport hunting in the United States, including the polar bear population in Alaska. In 2008 the Bush Administration listed the polar bear as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act and the 1972 MMPA protects polar bears and other marine mammals. To allow American hunters to kill them for trophies in other countries is irresponsible and inconsistent with the bipartisan commitment to conserving the polar bear population.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the polar bear is a "vulnerable" species based on a projected population reduction of more than 30 percent within three generations (45 years) due to a decrease in distribution and habitat quality. It is estimated there are fewer than 20,000 to 25,000 polar bears remaining in the wild.

Title IV of this bill exempts 41 trophy hunters who had proper notice of the impending prohibition on import of polar bear trophies. These 41 individuals hunted these bears after the Bush Administration proposed the species for listing as threatened under ESA, and all but one continued to hunt polar bears more than a year after the listing was proposed. Despite repeated warnings from hunting organizations and government agencies that they were hunting at their own risk because trophy imports were unlikely to be allowed as of the listing date, these individuals sport hunted polar bears anyway.

An example of warnings regarding the prospects of importing polar bear trophies comes from hunting rights organization Conservation Force. The group wrote to hunters in December 2007: "American hunters are asking us whether they should even look at polar bear hunts in light of the current effort by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to list this species as threatened . . . The bottom line is, no American hunter should be putting hard, non-returnable money down on a polar bear hunt at this

point." The group also noted in January 2008: "We feel compelled to tell you that American trophy hunters are likely to be barred from importing bears they take this season. Moreover, there is a chance that bears taken previous to this season may be barred as well. American clients with polar bear trophies still in Canada or Nunavut need to get those bears home."

Conservation Force again reminded hunters that the ESA listing "will stop all imports . . . immediately" in April 2008. Later that same month, Safari Club International informed hunters: "If some or all of the polar bear populations are listed, the FWS has indicated that imports of trophies from any listed populations would be barred as of that date, regardless of where in the process the application is."

Congress should not change a law just because a few people did not heed clear and ample warnings. It is an affront to the millions of hunters and sportsmen who followed the law and observed the warning of government agencies and hunting organizations. The hunters that chose to travel to the Arctic to sport hunt polar bears should not receive special treatment. Doing so creates a moral hazard and establishes a dangerous precedent that could encourage rushes to sport hunt imperiled species prior to their formal listing as an endangered species. Those who wish to sport hunt imperiled species should understand they do so at their own risk and cannot rely on allies in Congress to bail them out with a retroactive waiver of critical conservation law.

Congress first carved out a loophole in the MMPA and allowed for more than 900 sport-hunted polar bear trophies to be imported into the United States from Canada in 1994. In 1997, Congress amended the MMPA to allow imports of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada before April 1994, regardless of what population the bear was taken from, and despite the strict prohibition on trophy imports in place prior to 1994. In 2003, Congress amended the MMPA to allow imports of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada before February 1997. This allowed imports regardless of what population the bear is taken from, and as long as the hunter proves that the bear is "legally harvested in Canada."

Today with H.R. 3590, we have yet another effort to allow polar bear imports. This time we are asked to approve an additional 41 trophies on top of the more than 1,000 already Congress previously sanctioned for import. How many times are we going to provide these "one-time" import allowances? Doing this repeatedly undermines the restrictions on killing rare species.

At a time when Congress should be working in a bipartisan basis to address many of the critical issues facing American families, more special treatment for wealthy sport hunters should not be a priority. I am disappointed that my amendment to strike Title IV was not made in order and that the House did not have an opportunity to further debate this matter.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by Chairman HASTINGS. This important amendment includes a provision protecting the hunting, fishing and related treaty rights of all federally recognized tribes with respect to the provisions of H.R. 3590.

Treaties are at the foundation of the government-to-government relationship between the

United States and Indian tribes. Throughout the history of this country, tribal governments signed hundreds of treaties with the United States, often ceding significant portions of their homelands. Many of these treaties included provisions in which the United States made solemn promises to secure and protect the important hunting and fishing rights as well as other rights to sustain Indian people. As we pass laws that affect federal lands, it is important that we ensure the continued treaty rights of all federally recognized Indian tribes.

Rights emanating from treaties between Indian tribes and the United States apply to all federally recognized tribes, whether they were recognized by treaty, an act of Congress, administratively or through a court settlement. This amendment to H.R. 3590 would make it clear in the legislation that the treaty rights, including treaty hunting and fishing rights, and other rights of all federally recognized tribes are preserved and not affected by the other provisions of this legislation. I urge your support for this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. LATHAM). All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule, and shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3590

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act of 2013" or the "SHARE Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.

TITLE I—HUNTING, FISHING AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING PROTECTION ACT

- Sec. 101. Short title.
- Sec. 102. Modification of definition.

TITLE II—TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

- Sec. 201. Short title.
- Sec. 202. Findings; purpose.
- Sec. 203. Definition of public target range.
- Sec. 204. Amendments to Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act.
- Sec. 205. Limits on liability.
- Sec. 206. Sense of Congress regarding cooperation.

TITLE III—PUBLIC LANDS FILMING

- Sec. 301. Purpose.
- Sec. 302. Annual permit and fee for film crews of 5 persons or fewer.

TITLE IV—POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

- Sec. 401. Short title.
- Sec. 402. Permits for importation of polar bear trophies taken in sport hunts in Canada.

TITLE V—PERMANENT ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT

- Sec. 501. Short title.
- Sec. 502. Definitions.
- Sec. 503. Authority to issue electronic duck stamps.
- Sec. 504. State application.

- Sec. 505. State obligations and authorities.
 - Sec. 506. Electronic stamp requirements; recognition of electronic stamp.
 - Sec. 507. Termination of State participation.
- #### TITLE VI—ACCESS TO WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ACT

- Sec. 601. Short title.
- Sec. 602. Protecting Americans from violent crime.

TITLE VII—WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Sec. 701. Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee.

TITLE VIII—RECREATIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING HERITAGE AND OPPORTUNITIES ACT

- Sec. 801. Short title.
- Sec. 802. Findings.
- Sec. 803. Definitions.
- Sec. 804. Recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting.

TITLE I—HUNTING, FISHING AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING PROTECTION ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Hunting, Fishing, and Recreational Shooting Protection Act".

SEC. 102. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION.

Section 3(2)(B) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2602(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (v), by striking " , and" and inserting " , or any component of any such article including, without limitation, shot, bullets and other projectiles, propellants, and primers,";

(2) in clause (vi) by striking the period at the end and inserting " , and"; and

(3) by inserting after clause (vi) the following:

"(vii) any sport fishing equipment (as such term is defined in subsection (a) of section 4162 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) the sale of which is subject to the tax imposed by section 4161(a) of such Code (determined without regard to any exemptions from such tax as provided by section 4162 or 4221 or any other provision of such Code), and sport fishing equipment components."

TITLE II—TARGET PRACTICE AND MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING SUPPORT ACT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Target Practice and Marksmanship Training Support Act".

SEC. 202. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the use of firearms and archery equipment for target practice and marksmanship training activities on Federal land is allowed, except to the extent specific portions of that land have been closed to those activities;

(2) in recent years preceding the date of enactment of this Act, portions of Federal land have been closed to target practice and marksmanship training for many reasons;

(3) the availability of public target ranges on non-Federal land has been declining for a variety of reasons, including continued population growth and development near former ranges;

(4) providing opportunities for target practice and marksmanship training at public target ranges on Federal and non-Federal land can help—

(A) to promote enjoyment of shooting, recreational, and hunting activities; and

(B) to ensure safe and convenient locations for those activities;

(5) Federal law in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, including the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), provides Federal support for construction and expansion of public target ranges by making available to States amounts that may be used for construction, operation, and maintenance of public target ranges; and

(6) it is in the public interest to provide increased Federal support to facilitate the construction or expansion of public target ranges.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this title is to facilitate the construction and expansion of public target ranges, including ranges on Federal land managed by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

SEC. 203. DEFINITION OF PUBLIC TARGET RANGE.

In this title, the term “public target range” means a specific location that—

- (1) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;
- (2) is open to the public;
- (3) may be supervised; and
- (4) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.

SEC. 204. AMENDMENTS TO PITTMAN-ROBERTSON WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 2 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (8) as paragraphs (3) through (9), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) the term ‘public target range’ means a specific location that—

- “(A) is identified by a governmental agency for recreational shooting;
- “(B) is open to the public;
- “(C) may be supervised; and
- “(D) may accommodate archery or rifle, pistol, or shotgun shooting.”.

(b) **EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.**—Section 8(b) of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669g(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “(b) Each State” and inserting the following:

“(b) **EXPENDITURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AREAS AND RESOURCES.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each State”;

(2) in paragraph (1) (as so designated), by striking “construction, operation,” and inserting “operation”;

(3) in the second sentence, by striking “The non-Federal share” and inserting the following:

“(3) **NON-FEDERAL SHARE.**—The non-Federal share”;

(4) in the third sentence, by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(4) **REGULATIONS.**—The Secretary”;

(5) by inserting after paragraph (1) (as designated by paragraph (1) of this subsection) the following:

“(2) **EXCEPTION.**—Notwithstanding the limitation described in paragraph (1), a State may pay up to 90 percent of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.”.

(c) **FIREARM AND BOW HUNTER EDUCATION AND SAFETY PROGRAM GRANTS.**—Section 10 of the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669h-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS.**—Of the amount apportioned to a State for

any fiscal year under section 4(b), the State may elect to allocate not more than 10 percent, to be combined with the amount apportioned to the State under paragraph (1) for that fiscal year, for acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range.”;

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

“(b) **COST SHARING.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Federal share of the cost of any activity carried out using a grant under this section shall not exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the activity.

“(2) **PUBLIC TARGET RANGE CONSTRUCTION OR EXPANSION.**—The Federal share of the cost of acquiring land for, expanding, or constructing a public target range in a State on Federal or non-Federal land pursuant to this section or section 8(b) shall not exceed 90 percent of the cost of the activity.”; and

(3) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) by striking “Amounts made” and inserting the following:

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), amounts made”;

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) **EXCEPTION.**—Amounts provided for acquiring land for, constructing, or expanding a public target range shall remain available for expenditure and obligation during the 5-fiscal-year period beginning on October 1 of the first fiscal year for which the amounts are made available.”.

SEC. 205. LIMITS ON LIABILITY.

(a) **DISCRETIONARY FUNCTION.**—For purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”), any action by an agent or employee of the United States to manage or allow the use of Federal land for purposes of target practice or marksmanship training by a member of the public shall be considered to be the exercise or performance of a discretionary function.

(b) **CIVIL ACTION OR CLAIMS.**—Except to the extent provided in chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, the United States shall not be subject to any civil action or claim for money damages for any injury to or loss of property, personal injury, or death caused by an activity occurring at a public target range that is—

(1) funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government pursuant to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.); or

(2) located on Federal land.

SEC. 206. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING CO-OPERATION.

It is the sense of Congress that, consistent with applicable laws and regulations, the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the Bureau of Land Management should cooperate with State and local authorities and other entities to carry out waste removal and other activities on any Federal land used as a public target range to encourage continued use of that land for target practice or marksmanship training.

TITLE III—PUBLIC LANDS FILMING

SEC. 301. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to provide commercial film crews of 5 persons or fewer access to film in areas designated for public use during public hours on Federal lands and waterways.

SEC. 302. ANNUAL PERMIT AND FEE FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section (1)(a) of Public Law 106-206 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6d) is amended by—

(1) redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), respectively;

(2) striking “The Secretary of the Interior” and inserting “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided by paragraph (3), the Secretary of the Interior”;

(3) inserting “(2) **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.**—” before “The Secretary may include other factors”; and

(4) adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **SPECIAL RULES FOR FILM CREWS OF 5 PERSONS OR FEWER.**—

“(A) For any film crew of 5 persons or fewer, the Secretary shall require a permit and assess an annual fee of \$200 for commercial filming activities or similar projects on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary. The permit shall be valid for commercial filming activities or similar projects that occur in areas designated for public use during public hours on all Federal lands waterways administered by the Secretary for a 12-month period beginning on the date of issuance of the permit.

“(B) For persons holding a permit described in this paragraph, the Secretary shall not assess, during the effective period of the permit, any additional fee for commercial filming activities and similar projects that occur in areas designated for public use during public hours on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary.

“(C) In this paragraph, the term ‘film crew’ includes all persons present on Federal land under the Secretary’s jurisdiction who are associated with the production of a certain film.

“(D) The Secretary shall not prohibit, as a motorized vehicle or under any other purposes, use of cameras or related equipment used for the purpose of commercial filming activities or similar projects in accordance with this paragraph on Federal lands and waterways administered by the Secretary.”.

(b) **RECOVERY OF COSTS.**—Section (1)(b) of Public Law 106-206 (16 U.S.C. 4601-6d) is amended by—

(1) striking “collect any costs” and inserting “recover any costs”; and

(2) striking “similar project” and inserting “similar projects”.

TITLE IV—POLAR BEAR CONSERVATION AND FAIRNESS ACT

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2013”.

SEC. 402. PERMITS FOR IMPORTATION OF POLAR BEAR TROPHIES TAKEN IN SPORT HUNTS IN CANADA.

Section 104(c)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1374(c)(5)(D)) is amended to read as follows:

“(D)(i) The Secretary of the Interior shall, expeditiously after the expiration of the applicable 30-day period under subsection (d)(2), issue a permit for the importation of any polar bear part (other than an internal organ) from a polar bear taken in a sport hunt in Canada to any person—

“(I) who submits, with the permit application, proof that the polar bear was legally harvested by the person before February 18, 1997; or

“(II) who has submitted, in support of a permit application submitted before May 15, 2008, proof that the polar bear was legally harvested by the person before May 15, 2008, from a polar bear population from which a sport-hunted trophy could be imported before that date in accordance with section 18.30(i) of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(ii) The Secretary shall issue permits under clause (i)(I) without regard to subparagraphs (A) and (C)(ii) of this paragraph, subsection (d)(3), and sections 101 and 102. Sections 101(a)(3)(B) and 102(b)(3) shall not apply to the importation of any polar bear part authorized by a permit issued under clause (i)(I). This clause shall not apply to polar bear parts that were imported before June 12, 1997.

“(iii) The Secretary shall issue permits under clause (i)(II) without regard to subparagraph (C)(ii) of this paragraph or subsection (d)(3). Sections 101(a)(3)(B) and 102(b)(3) shall not apply to the importation of any polar bear part authorized by a permit issued under clause (i)(II). This clause shall not apply to polar bear parts that were imported before the date of enactment of the Polar Bear Conservation and Fairness Act of 2013.”

TITLE V—PERMANENT ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT

SEC. 501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Permanent Electronic Duck Stamp Act of 2013”.

SEC. 502. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **ACTUAL STAMP.**—The term “actual stamp” means a Federal migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp required under the Act of March 16, 1934 (16 U.S.C. 718a et seq.) (popularly known as the “Duck Stamp Act”), that is printed on paper and sold through the means established by the authority of the Secretary immediately before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) **AUTOMATED LICENSING SYSTEM.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “automated licensing system” means an electronic, computerized licensing system used by a State fish and wildlife agency to issue hunting, fishing, and other associated licenses and products.

(B) **INCLUSION.**—The term “automated licensing system” includes a point-of-sale, Internet, telephonic system, or other electronic applications used for a purpose described in subparagraph (A).

(3) **ELECTRONIC STAMP.**—The term “electronic stamp” means an electronic version of an actual stamp that—

(A) is a unique identifier for the individual to whom it is issued;

(B) can be printed on paper or produced through an electronic application with the same indicators as the State endorsement provides;

(C) is issued through a State automated licensing system that is authorized, under State law and by the Secretary under this title, to issue electronic stamps;

(D) is compatible with the hunting licensing system of the State that issues the electronic stamp; and

(E) is described in the State application approved by the Secretary under section 504(b).

(4) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 503. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMPS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may authorize any State to issue electronic stamps in accordance with this title.

(b) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall implement this section in consultation with State management agencies.

SEC. 504. STATE APPLICATION.

(a) **APPROVAL OF APPLICATION REQUIRED.**—The Secretary may not authorize a State to issue electronic stamps under this title unless the Secretary has received and approved

an application submitted by the State in accordance with this section. The Secretary may determine the number of new States per year to participate in the electronic stamp program.

(b) **CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.**—The Secretary may not approve a State application unless the application contains—

(1) a description of the format of the electronic stamp that the State will issue under this title, including identifying features of the licensee that will be specified on the stamp;

(2) a description of any fee the State will charge for issuance of an electronic stamp;

(3) a description of the process the State will use to account for and transfer to the Secretary the amounts collected by the State that are required to be transferred to the Secretary under the program;

(4) the manner by which the State will transmit electronic stamp customer data to the Secretary;

(5) the manner by which actual stamps will be delivered;

(6) the policies and procedures under which the State will issue duplicate electronic stamps; and

(7) such other policies, procedures, and information as may be reasonably required by the Secretary.

(c) **PUBLICATION OF DEADLINES, ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS, AND SELECTION CRITERIA.**—Not later than 30 days before the date on which the Secretary begins accepting applications under this section, the Secretary shall publish—

(1) deadlines for submission of applications;

(2) eligibility requirements for submitting applications; and

(3) criteria for approving applications.

SEC. 505. STATE OBLIGATIONS AND AUTHORITIES.

(a) **DELIVERY OF ACTUAL STAMP.**—The Secretary shall require that each individual to whom a State sells an electronic stamp under this title shall receive an actual stamp—

(1) by not later than the date on which the electronic stamp expires under section 506(c); and

(2) in a manner agreed upon by the State and Secretary.

(b) **COLLECTION AND TRANSFER OF ELECTRONIC STAMP REVENUE AND CUSTOMER INFORMATION.**—

(1) **REQUIREMENT TO TRANSMIT.**—The Secretary shall require each State authorized to issue electronic stamps to collect and submit to the Secretary in accordance with this section—

(A) the first name, last name, and complete mailing address of each individual that purchases an electronic stamp from the State;

(B) the face value amount of each electronic stamp sold by the State; and

(C) the amount of the Federal portion of any fee required by the agreement for each stamp sold.

(2) **TIME OF TRANSMITTAL.**—The Secretary shall require the submission under paragraph (1) to be made with respect to sales of electronic stamps by a State according to the written agreement between the Secretary and the State agency.

(3) **ADDITIONAL FEES NOT AFFECTED.**—This section shall not apply to the State portion of any fee collected by a State under subsection (c).

(c) **ELECTRONIC STAMP ISSUANCE FEE.**—A State authorized to issue electronic stamps may charge a reasonable fee to cover costs

incurred by the State and the Department of the Interior in issuing electronic stamps under this title, including costs of delivery of actual stamps.

(d) **DUPLICATE ELECTRONIC STAMPS.**—A State authorized to issue electronic stamps may issue a duplicate electronic stamp to replace an electronic stamp issued by the State that is lost or damaged.

(e) **LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE PURCHASE OF STATE LICENSE.**—A State may not require that an individual purchase a State hunting license as a condition of issuing an electronic stamp under this title.

SEC. 506. ELECTRONIC STAMP REQUIREMENTS; RECOGNITION OF ELECTRONIC STAMP.

(a) **STAMP REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary shall require an electronic stamp issued by a State under this title—

(1) to have the same format as any other license, validation, or privilege the State issues under the automated licensing system of the State; and

(2) to specify identifying features of the licensee that are adequate to enable Federal, State, and other law enforcement officers to identify the holder.

(b) **RECOGNITION OF ELECTRONIC STAMP.**—Any electronic stamp issued by a State under this title shall, during the effective period of the electronic stamp—

(1) bestow upon the licensee the same privileges as are bestowed by an actual stamp;

(2) be recognized nationally as a valid Federal migratory bird hunting and conservation stamp; and

(3) authorize the licensee to hunt migratory waterfowl in any other State, in accordance with the laws of the other State governing that hunting.

(c) **DURATION.**—An electronic stamp issued by a State shall be valid for a period agreed to by the State and the Secretary, which shall not exceed 45 days.

SEC. 507. TERMINATION OF STATE PARTICIPATION.

The authority of a State to issue electronic stamps under this title may be terminated—

(1) by the Secretary, if the Secretary—

(A) finds that the State has violated any of the terms of the application of the State approved by the Secretary under section 504; and

(B) provides to the State written notice of the termination by not later than the date that is 30 days before the date of termination; or

(2) by the State, by providing written notice to the Secretary by not later than the date that is 30 days before the termination date.

TITLE VI—ACCESS TO WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ACT

SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Recreational Lands Self-Defense Act of 2013”.

SEC. 602. PROTECTING AMERICANS FROM VIOLENT CRIME.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Second Amendment to the Constitution provides that “the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed”.

(2) Section 327.13 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, provides that, except in special circumstances, “possession of loaded firearms, ammunition, loaded projectile firing devices, bows and arrows, crossbows, or other weapons is prohibited” at water resources development projects administered by the Secretary of the Army.

(3) The regulations described in paragraph (2) prevent individuals complying with Federal and State laws from exercising the second amendment rights of the individuals while at such water resources development projects.

(4) The Federal laws should make it clear that the second amendment rights of an individual at a water resources development project should not be infringed.

(b) PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF INDIVIDUALS TO BEAR ARMS AT WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.—The Secretary of the Army shall not promulgate or enforce any regulation that prohibits an individual from possessing a firearm including an assembled or functional firearm at a water resources development project covered under section 327.0 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act), if—

(1) the individual is not otherwise prohibited by law from possessing the firearm; and

(2) the possession of the firearm is in compliance with the law of the State in which the water resources development project is located.

TITLE VII—WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SEC. 701. WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 10. WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee (in this section referred to as the ‘Advisory Committee’) to advise the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife and habitat conservation, hunting, and recreational shooting.

“(b) DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretaries with regard to—

“(1) implementation of Executive Order No. 13443: Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation, which directs Federal agencies ‘to facilitate the expansion and enhancement of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitat’;

“(2) policies or programs to conserve and restore wetlands, agricultural lands, grasslands, forest, and rangeland habitats;

“(3) policies or programs to promote opportunities and access to hunting and shooting sports on Federal lands;

“(4) policies or programs to recruit and retain new hunters and shooters;

“(5) policies or programs that increase public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation and the social and economic benefits of recreational hunting and shooting; and

“(6) policies or programs that encourage coordination among the public, the hunting and shooting sports community, wildlife conservation groups, and States, tribes, and the Federal Government.

“(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall consist of no more than 16 discretionary members and 7 ex officio members.

“(B) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The ex officio members are—

“(i) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or a designated representative of the Director;

“(ii) the Director of the Bureau of Land Management or a designated representative of the Director;

“(iii) the Director of the National Park Service or a designated representative of the Director;

“(iv) the Chief of the Forest Service or a designated representative of the Chief;

“(v) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service or a designated representative of the Chief;

“(vi) the Administrator of the Farm Service Agency or a designated representative of the Administrator; and

“(vii) the Executive Director of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

“(C) DISCRETIONARY MEMBERS.—The discretionary members shall be appointed jointly by the Secretaries from at least one of each of the following:

“(i) State fish and wildlife agencies.

“(ii) Game bird hunting organizations.

“(iii) Wildlife conservation organizations.

“(iv) Big game hunting organizations.

“(v) Waterfowl hunting organizations.

“(vi) The tourism, outfitter, or guiding industry.

“(vii) The firearms or ammunition manufacturing industry.

“(viii) The hunting or shooting equipment retail industry.

“(ix) Hunting and shooting sports outreach and education organizations.

“(x) Tribal resource management organizations.

“(xi) The agriculture industry.

“(xii) The ranching industry.

“(D) ELIGIBILITY.—Prior to the appointment of the discretionary members, the Secretaries shall determine that all individuals nominated for appointment to the Advisory Committee, and the organization each individual represents, actively support and promote sustainable-use hunting, wildlife conservation, and recreational shooting.

“(2) TERMS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), members of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a term of 4 years. Members shall not be appointed for more than 3 consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

“(B) TERMS OF INITIAL APPOINTEES.—As designated by the Secretary at the time of appointment, of the members first appointed—

“(i) 6 members shall be appointed for a term of 4 years;

“(ii) 5 members shall be appointed for a term of 3 years; and

“(iii) 5 members shall be appointed for a term of 2 years.

“(3) PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC ADVISORY STATUS.—No individual may be appointed as a discretionary member of the Advisory Committee while serving as an officer or employee of the Federal Government.

“(4) VACANCY AND REMOVAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Any vacancy on the Advisory Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

“(B) REMOVAL.—Advisory Committee members shall serve at the discretion of the Secretaries and may be removed at any time for good cause.

“(5) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—Each appointed member may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which such member was appointed until a successor has been appointed.

“(6) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed for a 3-year term by the Secretaries, jointly, from among the members of the Advisory Committee. An individual may not be appointed as Chairperson for more than 2 consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

“(7) PAY AND EXPENSES.—Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve without pay for such service, but each member of the Advisory Committee shall be reimbursed for travel and lodging incurred through attending meetings of the Advisory Committee approved subgroup meetings in the same amounts and under the same conditions as Federal employees (in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code).

“(8) MEETINGS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall meet at the call of the Secretaries, the chairperson, or a majority of the members, but not less frequently than twice annually.

“(B) OPEN MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be open to the public.

“(C) PRIOR NOTICE OF MEETINGS.—Timely notice of each meeting of the Advisory Committee shall be published in the Federal Register and be submitted to trade publications and publications of general circulation.

“(D) SUBGROUPS.—The Advisory Committee may establish such workgroups or subgroups as it deems necessary for the purpose of compiling information or conducting research. However, such workgroups may not conduct business without the direction of the Advisory Committee and must report in full to the Advisory Committee.

“(9) QUORUM.—Nine members of the Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum.

“(d) EXPENSES.—The expenses of the Advisory Committee that the Secretaries determine to be reasonable and appropriate shall be paid by the Secretaries.

“(e) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND ADVICE.—A designated Federal Officer shall be jointly appointed by the Secretaries to provide to the Advisory Committee the administrative support, technical services, and advice that the Secretaries determine to be reasonable and appropriate.

“(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

“(1) REQUIRED.—Not later than September 30 of each year, the Advisory Committee shall submit a report to the Secretaries, the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate. If circumstances arise in which the Advisory Committee cannot meet the September 30 deadline in any year, the Secretaries shall advise the Chairpersons of each such Committee of the reasons for such delay and the date on which the submission of the report is anticipated.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall describe—

“(A) the activities of the Advisory Committee during the preceding year;

“(B) the reports and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee to the Secretaries during the preceding year; and

“(C) an accounting of actions taken by the Secretaries as a result of the recommendations.

“(g) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Advisory Committee shall be exempt from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

“(h) ABOLISHMENT OF THE EXISTING WILDLIFE AND HUNTING HERITAGE CONSERVATION

COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Effective on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council formed in furtherance of section 441 of the Revised Statutes (43 U.S.C. 1457), the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a), and other Acts applicable to specific bureaus of the Department of the Interior is hereby abolished.”

TITLE VIII—RECREATIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING HERITAGE AND OPPORTUNITIES ACT

SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage and Opportunities Act”.

SEC. 802. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) recreational fishing and hunting are important and traditional activities in which millions of Americans participate;

(2) recreational anglers and hunters have been and continue to be among the foremost supporters of sound fish and wildlife management and conservation in the United States;

(3) recreational fishing and hunting are environmentally acceptable and beneficial activities that occur and can be provided on Federal public lands and waters without adverse effects on other uses or users;

(4) recreational anglers, hunters, and sporting organizations provide direct assistance to fish and wildlife managers and enforcement officers of the Federal Government as well as State and local governments by investing volunteer time and effort to fish and wildlife conservation;

(5) recreational anglers, hunters, and the associated industries have generated billions of dollars of critical funding for fish and wildlife conservation, research, and management by providing revenues from purchases of fishing and hunting licenses, permits, and stamps, as well as excise taxes on fishing, hunting, and shooting equipment that have generated billions of dollars of critical funding for fish and wildlife conservation, research, and management;

(6) recreational shooting is also an important and traditional activity in which millions of Americans participate, safe recreational shooting is a valid use of Federal public lands, including the establishment of safe and convenient shooting ranges on such lands, and participation in recreational shooting helps recruit and retain hunters and contributes to wildlife conservation;

(7) opportunities to recreationally fish, hunt, and shoot are declining, which depresses participation in these traditional activities, and depressed participation adversely impacts fish and wildlife conservation and funding for important conservation efforts; and

(8) the public interest would be served, and our citizens’ fish and wildlife resources benefited, by action to ensure that opportunities are facilitated to engage in fishing and hunting on Federal public land as recognized by Executive Order No. 12962, relating to recreational fisheries, and Executive Order No. 13443, relating to facilitation of hunting heritage and wildlife conservation.

SEC. 803. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND.**—The term “Federal public land” means any land or water that is owned and managed by the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service.

(2) **FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS.**—The term “Federal public land management officials” means—

(A) the Secretary of the Interior and Director of Bureau of Land Management regarding

Bureau of Land Management lands and waters; and

(B) the Secretary of Agriculture and Chief of the Forest Service regarding the National Forest System.

(3) HUNTING.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the term “hunting” means use of a firearm, bow, or other authorized means in the lawful—

(i) pursuit, shooting, capture, collection, trapping, or killing of wildlife;

(ii) attempt to pursue, shoot, capture, collect, trap, or kill wildlife; or

(iii) the training of hunting dogs, including field trials.

(B) **EXCLUSION.**—The term “hunting” does not include the use of skilled volunteers to cull excess animals (as defined by other Federal law).

(4) **RECREATIONAL FISHING.**—The term “recreational fishing” means the lawful—

(A) pursuit, capture, collection, or killing of fish; or

(B) attempt to capture, collect, or kill fish.

(5) **RECREATIONAL SHOOTING.**—The term “recreational shooting” means any form of sport, training, competition, or pastime, whether formal or informal, that involves the discharge of a rifle, handgun, or shotgun, or the use of a bow and arrow.

SEC. 804. RECREATIONAL FISHING, HUNTING, AND SHOOTING.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to valid existing rights and subsection (g), and cooperation with the respective State fish and wildlife agency, Federal public land management officials shall exercise authority under existing law, including provisions regarding land use planning, to facilitate use of and access to Federal public lands, including National Monuments, Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, and lands administratively classified as wilderness eligible or suitable and primitive or semi-primitive areas, for fishing, sport hunting, and recreational shooting, except as limited by—

(1) statutory authority that authorizes action or withholding action for reasons of national security, public safety, or resource conservation;

(2) any other Federal statute that specifically precludes recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting on specific Federal public lands, waters, or units thereof; and

(3) discretionary limitations on recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting determined to be necessary and reasonable as supported by the best scientific evidence and advanced through a transparent public process.

(b) **MANAGEMENT.**—Consistent with subsection (a), the head of each Federal public land management agency shall exercise its land management discretion—

(1) in a manner that supports and facilitates recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting opportunities;

(2) to the extent authorized under applicable State law; and

(3) in accordance with applicable Federal law.

(c) PLANNING.—

(1) **EVALUATION OF EFFECTS ON OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN RECREATIONAL FISHING, HUNTING, OR SHOOTING.**—Federal public land planning documents, including land resources management plans, resource management plans, and comprehensive conservation plans, shall include a specific evaluation of the effects of such plans on opportunities to engage in recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting.

(2) **NO MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.**—No action taken under this title, or under section 4 of

the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd), either individually or cumulatively with other actions involving Federal public lands or lands managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, shall be considered to be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and no additional identification, analysis, or consideration of environmental effects, including cumulative effects, is necessary or required.

(3) **OTHER ACTIVITY NOT CONSIDERED.**—Federal public land management officials are not required to consider the existence or availability of recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting opportunities on adjacent or nearby public or private lands in the planning for or determination of which Federal public lands are open for these activities or in the setting of levels of use for these activities on Federal public lands, unless the combination or coordination of such opportunities would enhance the recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting opportunities available to the public.

(d) FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS.—

(1) **LANDS OPEN.**—Lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, including Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, lands designated as wilderness or administratively classified as wilderness eligible or suitable and primitive or semi-primitive areas and National Monuments, but excluding lands on the Outer Continental Shelf, shall be open to recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting unless the managing Federal agency acts to close lands to such activity. Lands may be subject to closures or restrictions if determined by the head of the agency to be necessary and reasonable and supported by facts and evidence, for purposes including resource conservation, public safety, energy or mineral production, energy generation or transmission infrastructure, water supply facilities, protection of other permittees, protection of private property rights or interest, national security, or compliance with other law.

(2) SHOOTING RANGES.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The head of each Federal agency shall use his or her authorities in a manner consistent with this title and other applicable law, to—

(i) lease or permit use of lands under the jurisdiction of the agency for shooting ranges; and

(ii) designate specific lands under the jurisdiction of the agency for recreational shooting activities.

(B) **LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.**—Any designation under subparagraph (A)(ii) shall not subject the United States to any civil action or claim for monetary damages for injury or loss of property or personal injury or death caused by any activity occurring at or on such designated lands.

(e) NECESSITY IN WILDERNESS AREAS AND “WITHIN AND SUPPLEMENTAL TO” WILDERNESS PURPOSES.—

(1) **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATION.**—The provision of opportunities for hunting, fishing and recreational shooting, and the conservation of fish and wildlife to provide sustainable use recreational opportunities on designated Federal wilderness areas shall constitute measures necessary to meet the minimum requirements for the administration of the wilderness area, provided that this determination shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use, or extraction, motorized recreational access or use that is not otherwise allowed under the

Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), or permanent road construction or maintenance within designated wilderness areas.

(2) APPLICATION OF WILDERNESS ACT.—Provisions of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), stipulating that wilderness purposes are “within and supplemental to” the purposes of the underlying Federal land unit are reaffirmed. When seeking to carry out fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects or provide fish and wildlife dependent recreation opportunities on designated wilderness areas, the head of each Federal agency shall implement these supplemental purposes so as to facilitate, enhance, or both, but not to impede the underlying Federal land purposes when seeking to carry out fish and wildlife conservation programs and projects or provide fish and wildlife dependent recreation opportunities in designated wilderness areas, provided that such implementation shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use or extraction, or permanent road construction or use within designated wilderness areas.

(f) REPORT.—Beginning on the second October 1 after the date of the enactment of this Act and biennially on October 1 thereafter, the head of each Federal agency who has authority to manage Federal public land on which fishing, hunting, or recreational shooting occurs shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) any Federal public land administered by the agency head that was closed to recreational fishing, sport hunting, or shooting at any time during the preceding year; and

(2) the reason for the closure.

(g) CLOSURES OR SIGNIFICANT RESTRICTIONS OF 640 OR MORE ACRES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Other than closures established or prescribed by land planning actions referred to in subsection (d) or emergency closures described in paragraph (3) of this subsection, a permanent or temporary withdrawal, change of classification, or change of management status of Federal public land that effectively closes or significantly restricts 640 or more contiguous acres of Federal public land to access or use for fishing or hunting or activities related to fishing, hunting, or both, shall take effect only if, before the date of withdrawal or change, the head of the Federal agency that has jurisdiction over the Federal public land—

(A) publishes appropriate notice of the withdrawal or change, respectively;

(B) demonstrates that coordination has occurred with a State fish and wildlife agency; and

(C) submits to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate written notice of the withdrawal or change, respectively.

(2) AGGREGATE OR CUMULATIVE EFFECTS.—If the aggregate or cumulative effect of separate withdrawals or changes effectively closes or significantly restricts 1,280 or more acres of land or water, such withdrawals and changes shall be treated as a single withdrawal or change for purposes of paragraph (1).

(3) EMERGENCY CLOSURES.—Nothing in this title prohibits a Federal land management agency from establishing or implementing emergency closures or restrictions of the smallest practicable area to provide for public safety, resource conservation, national security, or other purposes authorized by law. Such an emergency closure shall termi-

nate after a reasonable period of time unless converted to a permanent closure consistent with this title.

(h) NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UNITS NOT AFFECTED.—Nothing in this title shall affect or modify management or use of units of the National Park System.

(i) NO PRIORITY.—Nothing in this title requires a Federal land management agency to give preference to recreational fishing, hunting, or shooting over other uses of Federal public land or over land or water management priorities established by Federal law.

(j) CONSULTATION WITH COUNCILS.—In fulfilling the duties set forth in this title, the heads of Federal agencies shall consult with respective advisory councils as established in Executive Order Nos. 12962 and 13443.

(k) AUTHORITY OF THE STATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this title shall be construed as interfering with, diminishing, or conflicting with the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of any State to exercise primary management, control, or regulation of fish and wildlife under State law (including regulations) on land or water within the State, including on Federal public land.

(2) FEDERAL LICENSES.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to authorize the head of a Federal agency head to require a license, fee, or permit to fish, hunt, or trap on land or water in a State, including on Federal public land in the States, except that this paragraph shall not affect the Migratory Bird Stamp requirement set forth in the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act (16 U.S.C. 718 et seq.).

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill is in order except those printed in House Report 113-339. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 1, lines 5 and 6, strike “of 2013”.

Page 13, line 10, strike “of 2013”.

Page 15, line 2, strike “of 2013”.

Page 15, line 7, strike “of 2013”.

Page 22, line 12, strike “of 2013”.

Page 27, strike lines 13 and 14 and redesignate the remaining clauses accordingly.

Page 29, line 20, strike “shall” and insert “may”.

Page 32, line 13, strike “Effective” and all that follows through line 19, and insert the following: “Upon publication of the first notice required under section 8(c) of the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council formed in furtherance of section 441 of the Revised Statutes (43 U.S.C. 1457), the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a), and other Acts applicable to specific bureaus of the Department of the Interior is hereby abolished.”.

Page 41, lines 17 and 18, strike “this determination” and insert “the provision of opportunities for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting under the authority of this title”.

Page 41, line 20, insert “, road construction or maintenance,” after “access”.

Page 41, lines 22 and 23, strike “, or permanent road construction or maintenance”.

Page 42, line 14, strike “such implementation” and insert “the provision of opportunities for hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting under the authority of this title”.

Page 42, line 16, strike “or permanent road construction or use” and insert “motorized recreational access, road construction or maintenance, or use that is not otherwise allowed under the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.)”.

Page 45, line 18, strike “head”.

At the end of the bill, add the following new title (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE IX—RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS

SEC. 901. RESPECT FOR TREATIES AND RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to affect or modify any treaty or other right of any federally recognized Indian tribe.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment makes several technical and clarifying changes to the bill, and conforms the bill text to that which was favorably reported from the Committee on Natural Resources.

Let me cite just some of the small changes in the amendment:

It includes a savings position regarding the effect of the act on Indian tribes’ treaty or other recognized rights. It clarifies that.

It also provides clearer language that the provision of opportunities to hunt, fish, and shoot on certain Federal lands “shall not authorize or facilitate commodity development, use other extraction, motorized vehicle access, road construction or maintenance or use not otherwise allowed under the Wilderness Act.” That clarifies that.

It also incorporates an amendment filed by our colleague, the sponsor of the legislation, Mr. LATTA, to title VII of the bill to correct a sunset date for the existing advisory council.

So as I understand, the manager’s amendment is something that has been vetted, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I appreciate there are some clarifications in this amendment

which we do support, but there are a few remaining oversights.

There was an amendment by DELBENE and KILMER from Washington State that specified that tribal jurisdiction is not to be infringed upon, where this blanket language in the Hastings amendment protecting tribal rights could well not be read. Supposedly, in a number of places here we are chasing chimeras, you know, illusions, threats, with some of the provisions about the film permitting and that.

But this might be real, which this does not deal with the potential for disputes between tribes and neighboring landowners or between tribes; and so, therefore, it would have been better to have the broader language of DELBENE and KILMER, which specified treaty-protected rights of the individual tribal members are protected, whereas this amendment only protects the rights of the tribe itself. So I worry that we are creating a loophole here that doesn't adequately protect the sovereignty of tribes and all of their members.

The amendment does attempt to address some of the wilderness issues in title VII, the so-called Recreational Fishing and Hunting Heritage Act, which fails to address the wilderness issues in title III, filming on public lands. We have already had extensive discussion of that. No identified problem, no hearing, nobody has ever said we need this, but it is in there. We are going to allow mechanized film crews into wilderness areas.

Then title VII creates a loophole that will allow motorized equipment and vehicles into Federal wilderness areas—now, not with permanent roads, with only temporary roads or driving off-road—to facilitate hunting in wilderness areas or otherwise restricted areas, wildlife refuges and that. And we still find that very problematic.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I urge adoption of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. HANNA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, before line 1, insert the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 3. REPORT ON ECONOMIC IMPACT.

Not later than 12 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of

Interior shall submit a report to Congress that assesses expected economic impacts of the Act. Such report shall include—

(1) a review of any expected increases in recreational hunting, fishing, shooting, and conservation activities;

(2) an estimate of any jobs created in each industry expected to support such activities described in paragraph (1), including in the supply, manufacturing, distribution, and retail sectors;

(3) an estimate of wages related to jobs described in paragraph (2); and

(4) an estimate of anticipated new local, State, and Federal revenue related to jobs described in paragraph (2).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HANNA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. HANNA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the SHARE Act and am pleased to be a sponsor of this bill.

The SHARE Act allows more Americans to enjoy outdoor hobbies such as hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting on public lands. Not only do those activities provide our constituents with enjoyable hobbies and pastimes, they also contribute to our communities by creating and supporting diverse jobs in every congressional district.

When families travel and actively enjoy the outdoors, they spur demand for outdoor products and services and create jobs in the manufacturing, outfitting, retail, lodging, and hospitality industries.

□ 1515

I am proud that the village of Ilion in my congressional district is home to our Nation's oldest continually operating manufacturing company, Remington Arms. Remington manufactures firearms for hunting and recreational shooting and sustains more than 1,400 well-paying union jobs in New York's Mohawk Valley.

Legislators in Washington and in Albany should take concrete steps to support these private sector jobs, not threaten them, and I am pleased the House is taking this action today. By opening new lands for recreational use and by making the joys of the outdoors more accessible to average Americans, we can assist important sectors of our economy without spending taxpayer dollars.

My amendment would simply quantify the economic impacts of this act by detailing how the new recreational opportunities it provides will create jobs, boost wages, and generate new local, State, and Federal revenue. It is my hope that by highlighting the connection between sportsmen-friendly Federal policy and growth in outdoor industries, future Congresses will take additional steps to not only provide our constituents with greater access to

hunting, fishing, shooting, and conservation pursuits but also help grow jobs in the private sector and support these American traditions.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HANNA. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I want to congratulate the gentleman on offering this amendment. I think putting this aspect into this bill will help quantify how important hunting and fishing is if you put an economic component to it. So I congratulate the gentleman.

I plan to support the amendment.

Mr. HANNA. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I believe that the information on the economic impacts of conservation is important. It is something that we don't quantify very well.

As we have pointed out earlier, some of the provisions of this act, unfortunately, will fly in the face of conservation, the benefits of hunting and fishing activities on public lands.

So I think, actually, on balance, the gentleman's requirement here would be very useful information in the future to help land managers who have to make decisions between opening up lands to mining or to oil and gas development versus the benefits the community could realize or has been realizing or will continue to realize from the recreational hunting and fishing.

Federal lands had become essentially a reservoir, a place where these activities are protected, for the most part, from development, with the exceptions of what I had mentioned earlier. They are some of the premiere destinations for hunting and fishing in the country.

Again, the chairman and I disagree over the merits of acquiring some of these lands which are now in private ownership from willing sellers that potentially will otherwise be slated for development, using the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I believe that addressing the Land and Water Conservation Fund proactively would have been useful.

For certain, given the objections to that—because it has not yet quite expired, even though we are underutilizing it and using the tax dollars somewhere else—the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has expired. The Dingell-Wittman amendment was proposed to reauthorize that critical program, and that was not allowed. So that would also be something that would show a measurable benefit.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HANNA. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment to qualify and

quantify the economic impact of the SHARE Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HANNA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. CASTRO OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 27, after line 18, insert the following: “(xiii) Women’s hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach, or education organization.

“(xiv) Minority hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach, or education organization.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I thank Chairman HASTINGS and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for considering this amendment.

Mr. Chair, this amendment concerns the composition of the Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Committee, which will advise the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior on policies and programs related to hunting and recreational activities on Federal lands. More specifically, the amendment adds a requirement that women and minority hunting and fishing advocacy, outreach or education organizations are included as discretionary committee members. Examples of such groups include the Women’s Hunting and Sporting Foundation, Hispanics Enjoying Camping, Hunting, and Outdoors organization, and the African American Hunting Organization.

This will bring the number of groups in that discretionary committee group to 14 from 12.

The groups that I am adding with this amendment were originally included in the committee’s charter. This amendment simply codifies their inclusion. I am proud to offer the amendment to reflect a more diverse perspective on America’s land use.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for offering this amendment. I think that his amendment, since the idea of the whole underlying legislation is to expand as much as we can to those that want to enjoy that, I think his amendment adds to the legislation, and I am prepared to support it.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I yield to the ranking member.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman, and I want to congratulate him on his diligence and on his foresight here to propose this amendment. It was an oversight in replacing the current council with a new membership. I am not exactly certain why we need to do that because we haven’t heard particular complaints.

In any case, this is an improvement upon the newly recommended council to include minorities and women fully engaged, since I see a lot of those folks out in the back country in my State, and I am sure you do in Texas, too.

So I am pleased that for one brief moment here, we have a bipartisan consensus. With that, I congratulate the gentleman.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. I thank both gentlemen and yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. GALLEGRO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. GALLEGRO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 27, after line 18, insert the following: “(xiii) Veterans service organization.”

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGRO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GALLEGRO. Mr. Chairman, I, too, would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their work on this legislation.

I can think of nothing more important than all of us, I think, can agree on than the importance of taking care of our veterans and our veterans’ community, especially now that we have so many wounded warriors coming back. So many groups have taken to outdoor activities as part of the therapy for wounded warriors, making sure that we really approach making them whole again in a very real way, and nature is a huge part of that.

Last night, in fact, this Chamber held a moment of silence to honor veterans in Afghanistan and Iraq. These are folks who have put their country above all else. And what this amendment specifically would do would be to essentially correct what I believe also was an oversight in ensuring that vet-

erans are also included in this Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council Advisory Committee. Again, it is because so many veterans groups now in so many places are popping up where the outdoors is a great part of that therapy and a very important part of the therapy that many of our wounded warriors are receiving.

This advisory committee, as they give their advice to the administration, it is important that they do so with a veteran at the table. It is important that veterans have that voice, and they look at it with the perspective from a wounded warrior or a veteran, someone who has served our country in uniform. What is it that we can be doing to make this experience more meaningful for them?

Again, I appreciate the opportunity very much to offer the amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GALLEGRO. I am happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to say that this amendment, I believe, also will add to the underlying legislation, which, of course, would expand the experience of hunting and fishing. So the remarks I made to his colleague from Texas I think are applicable also to this.

So I endorse this amendment and would tell my friend from Oregon, the ranking member, that is two for two now.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GALLEGRO. I yield to the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Texas is batting .100 here today.

I would like to thank the gentleman for improving the proposed composition of the council. I thought your points about the healing that can come from wounded warriors being in these precious natural areas in our country is very well taken, and I appreciate that.

Not to create any discord at the moment, but there was another amendment that wasn’t allowed by the Rules Committee, offered by the gentleman from California, Representative RUIZ, which is in the purview of the gentleman whose bill is on the floor today, which would have waived recreation fees for veterans with disabilities, and I hope we can revisit that issue in the future.

I congratulate the gentleman on his improvement and his recognition of our veterans.

Mr. GALLEGRO. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGRO).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report of 113-339.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. DEFAZIO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, as the designee of Mr. ELLISON, who is detained at the White House, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 38, strike line 20 through page 39, line 6.

Page 39, line 7, strike "(3)" and insert "(2)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I want to applaud the gentleman from Minnesota, Congressman ELLISON, for bringing this amendment to the attention of the House.

We have had endless debate about the appropriate role of the National Environmental Policy Act in both the Natural Resources Committee as well as the House Committee on Transportation.

The underlying bill, H.R. 3590, includes language which would eliminate the need for the Fish and Wildlife Service to disclose, analyze, and take comments on decisions related to management decisions in national wildlife refuges.

□ 1530

I repeat that. They would not have to analyze or take comments from either side on decisions that relate to management decisions in national wildlife refuges. Never has there been a case made here during the lead-up to this bill, such as there was, and during the debate why we need this very broad NEPA exception which would, if they want to increase hunting, no NEPA analysis, if they want to decrease hunting, no NEPA analysis, no opportunity for the public to be involved in the process.

As we learned during the shutdown, the wildlife refuge system provides a tremendous opportunity—some of it very ephemeral in terms of seasons—for duck hunters, fishermen, and other sportsmen and -women across the country. In some densely populated areas like in Congressman THOMPSON'S district, wildlife refuges are some of the only hunting areas open to the public, and especially the disabled public.

Why do we need to cut the public out, including disabled Americans, veterans, anybody, regarding these special places and their management when no

evidence has been presented that NEPA is in any way an impediment to refuge management? It is just the standard boilerplate: repeal NEPA anywhere, everywhere, all the time, and maybe sooner or later it might stick. But it won't, given the veto threat on this bill and the fact that the Senate isn't going to act on it. But, anyway, it is in here.

There was an amendment to be offered by Congressman BROWN from Georgia—which I was going to strongly support—which would have fixed the bill and probably brought a fair number of votes across the aisle by stripping these extraneous provisions regarding NEPA, wilderness, and everything that is under attack in this bill that doesn't need to be under attack in this bill. But I guess somehow, even though it was made in order, the Republican side has convinced him not to offer the amendment because it would have passed, and it would have made the bill better.

So at this point, at least we could support the Ellison amendment as it relates to national wildlife refuges.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. STEWART). The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess all good things come to an end because I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment. I oppose this amendment because it undermines what I consider to be a fundamental purpose of the law. The fundamental purpose that we are here for today is to protect our hunting and fishing traditions on Federal lands. We are making a clear statement that hunting and fishing are an important use of our multiple-use Federal lands.

This bill establishes a clear policy that Federal lands should be open for hunting and fishing unless specifically closed by a transparent and open Federal process. Let me repeat that, Mr. Chairman, that Federal lands should be open for hunting and fishing unless specifically closed by a transparent and open Federal process.

NEPA requires preparation of an environmental impact statement when a Federal agency proposes to take major Federal action. When H.R. 3590 is enacted in law, there will be no need for a costly and bureaucratic process currently necessary to make lands available for hunting and fishing. That process won't be necessary because it will be the law. Congress has spoken as to what the law is.

Again, this bill is designed to set out an open—unless specifically closed—process on BLM and Forest Service lands. As a result, no major Federal ac-

tion would be needed or would take place to keep these lands open to these traditional important uses of our shared Federal lands.

If there is no administrative action, there is no need for an EIS or NEPA review. However, H.R. 3590 confirms an established understanding of the law that, should an agency move to close Federal lands, the agency should then undertake an open and public process before having the lands closed to our traditional uses.

Now, we know that these provisions are important because they fix a court-created problem regarding the implementation of the 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. We have seen the clear track record that antihunter groups will use to tie up hunting and fishing access to Federal lands with endless lawsuits. This bill reverses this trend and makes our lands open for hunting and fishing. Again, Mr. Chairman, we are making the policy statement that this will be what the law of the land is.

H.R. 3590 directs that our conservation dollars be spent on conservation activities in the field rather than on redundant paperwork and, of course, endless lawsuits. That is the goal of the bill that this amendment would undercut and which would undercut our goal of promoting hunting and fishing.

I urge the defeat of the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I urge defeat of the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF MISSOURI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 44, line 22, strike "Nothing" and insert "Except as provided by subsection (1), nothing".

Page 45, after line 24, insert the following: (1) MOTORIZED VESSELS IN THE OZARK NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAYS.—The Secretary of the Interior—

(1) shall manage the Ozark National Scenic Riverways to allow the use of motorized vessels in a manner that is not more restrictive

than the use restrictions in effect on November 21, 2013; and

(2) may manage the Ozark National Scenic Riverways to allow the use of motorized vessels in a manner that is less restrictive than the use restrictions in effect on November 21, 2013.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present this amendment to H.R. 3590 today, the Sportsmen's Heritage And Recreational Enhancement Act.

As a member of the Natural Resources Committee, I couldn't be prouder of the work that we have done to continue to protect our sportsmen's ability to enjoy the outdoors. As such, I am honored to offer my amendment that would ensure that sportsmen will continue to be able to use motorized vessels in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, a national park contained wholly within my congressional district in southern Missouri.

The Ozark National Scenic Riverways is a popular destination in Missouri for fishing, gigging, and trapping. These activities have traditionally been undertaken by individuals and families for generations. An economy has arisen in my district selling boats, motors, and other products to folks who want to gig, fish, and trap within the rivers.

Recently, the National Park Service has been discussing closing down areas of the park to motorized vessels and further limiting the horsepower of these vessels in other areas. The reduction of boat motor horsepower would limit the number of folks who could be on a boat and restrict access to families. Banning motorized vessels from areas of the park where they are currently allowed would further restrict the public's use and enjoyment of the park.

Banning motorized vessels would also exclude groups from using the rivers that simply have no other options, like the elderly and disabled veterans. Why would the Park Service resort to such drastic measures to block activities that are currently allowed? One explanation is that they don't want folks to be able to utilize the river as they have for the past decades.

My amendment would simply preserve the current park regulations as they are now and how they have been for the last five decades, preventing the Park Service from regulating sportsmen off the river. The Ozark National Scenic Riverways was created for the enjoyment of the public, and it should stay with the public.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I think this amendment is in the spirit of the underlying legislation, which is to make sure that there is access for hunting and fishing. And here we have, as I said in my opening statement, the potential of bureaucratic malaise, I guess, slowing down access to this particular area that the gentleman from Missouri recommends. I think his amendment adds a great deal to this legislation, and I intend to support it.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I certainly am not an expert on the gentleman's district and what the exact issue is here; however, I do know that there has been a proposed management plan that has been out for comment since November 8. It will close on Friday. I would hope that the gentleman and concerned parties on either side of the issue have all weighed in to comment because what we are doing here today in this bill will not become law. It is already guaranteed a veto threat. The addition of this to the bill will not help resolve what is a local issue where the Park Service has to weigh comments from motorized users and non-motorized users and then come to a conclusion weighing those comments and put forward a new management plan. That is the way this is going to get done.

It shouldn't be done from Washington, D.C. We shouldn't be dictating. If we get into every individual land use or access decision being made by every unit of the Park Service, every unit of the Fish and Wildlife Service and their refuges and every unit of the Forest Service and every unit of the BLM, we are going to be pretty busy and be embroiled in a lot of local controversy.

So this, I believe, is premature in that the comment period closes this week and the process will come to a conclusion. Comments will be weighed and a decision will be put out for final comment. It is also, at this point, being added to a bill that is going nowhere.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I just want to clarify something, Mr. Chairman, that has been said here by my friend, the ranking member, that the administration has issued a veto threat. They have not issued a veto threat. They have said, and I will just

read the last line of their Statement of Administration Policy. It says:

The administration looks forward to working with Congress to enact sportsmen and recreation legislation that addresses the concerns raised with certain provisions of H.R. 3590.

Now, in the letter they do say they have problems with four of the eight titles. But to simply suggest that the administration has issued a veto threat on this is simply not correct. And I ask—well, I will let it go.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. CRAWFORD

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

TITLE —EXEMPTIONS FOR TAKING MIGRATORY BIRDS ON CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL LAND

SEC. 01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Hunter and Farmer Protection Act".

SEC. 02. EXEMPTIONS ON CERTAIN LAND.

Section 3 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 704) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) EXEMPTIONS ON CERTAIN LAND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section prohibits the taking of any migratory game bird, including waterfowl, coots, and cranes, on or over land that—

“(A) contains—

“(i) a standing crop or flooded standing crop, including an aquatic crop;

“(ii) standing, flooded, or manipulated natural vegetation;

“(iii) flooded harvested cropland; or

“(iv) an area in a State on which seed or grain has been scattered solely as the result of an agricultural planting, harvesting, or post-harvest manipulation practice, or a soil stabilization practice, that the head of the State office of the Cooperative Extension System of the Department of Agriculture has determined in accordance with paragraph (2) to be a normal practice in that State; and

“(B) is not otherwise a baited area.

“(2) STATE DETERMINATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of a State office of the Cooperative Extension System may make a determination for purposes of paragraph (1)(A)(iv) upon the request of the Secretary of the Interior.

“(B) REVISIONS.—The head of a State office of the Cooperative Extension System may revise a determination under subparagraph (A) as the head of a State office determines to be necessary to reflect changing agricultural practices.

“(C) CONCURRENCE REQUIRED.—A determination or revision under this paragraph shall not be effective for purposes of this subsection unless the head of the State department of fish and wildlife concurs therein.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I consume.

My amendment will provide a limited exemption related to the taking of migratory game birds over farm fields. In short, it clarifies a recent interpretation by the Fish and Wildlife Service about what constitutes a "baited field."

In 2012, the agency warned rice growers that some of their fields that had been rolled—as farmer often do after the harvest to prepare the field to be planted the next spring—could be off limits to waterfowl hunting. That summer's drought led to an early rice harvest in several parts of the country, and heavy rainfall then caused a rare secondary "ratoon" crop to sprout. The Fish and Wildlife Service cautioned that should rice heads emerge in those fields, their guidelines stated that any field work, such as rolling, would make it a baited field where waterfowl hunting would be unlawful.

Waterfowl hunting is a vital industry in my State. Hunters come from the world over to Arkansas' First District, and farmers, small businesses, and the rural communities that dot the delta all rely on the millions of dollars hunters bring with them every year.

My amendment is a commonsense solution that simply states that a field may not be considered baited as the result of normal agricultural practices, as determined by the State Office of the Cooperative Extension Service at the request of the Secretary of the Interior, with concurrence from that State's Fish and Wildlife Service.

I ask for your support for this important amendment that will protect farmers from being punished for simply carrying out long-recognized and responsible agricultural practices.

With that, I yield to the chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I plan to support his amendment.

This is something that it seems like we wrestle with all the time here on the Federal level. There is uniqueness when you are on the ground, but yet we write rules and regulations on the one size fits all. This is clearly a unique situation, and I think the gentleman's amendment clarifies that very well.

I support the amendment.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, we often have conflicts in Oregon. We had a very

substantial conflict relating to geese in terms of farmers' fields. The resolution was that the birds protected by the Migratory Bird Act would continue to be protected, but farmers would be able to hunt with the State license—and I don't know about the gentleman's State whether or not a State license would be required—the birds that were not migratory that were becoming pests and were resident in order to protect their crops.

□ 1545

This substantially resolved the problem.

I don't know if a similar fix would work here, but an amendment that gives an open license on the Migratory Bird Act, which has international implications, the migratory bird treaty, seems to me to be an extreme measure in this case. Therefore, we would oppose the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. CRAWFORD. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD). The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. FLEMING
The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 9 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end of the bill, add the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 805. RESTRICTIONS ON HUNTING IN KISATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST.

(a) HUNTING IN KISATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST.—Consistent with the Act of June 4, 1897 (16 U.S.C. 551), the Secretary of Agriculture may not restrict the use of dogs in deer hunting activities in Kisatchie National Forest, unless such restrictions—

(1) apply to the smallest practicable portions of such unit; and

(2) are necessary to reduce or control trespass onto land adjacent to such unit.

(b) PRIOR RESTRICTIONS VOID.—Any restrictions regarding the use of dogs in deer hunting activities in Kisatchie National Forest in force on the date of the enactment of this Act shall be void and have no force or effect.

(c) ADJACENT LANDOWNERS.—Landowners whose property abuts a unit of the Kisatchie National Forest may petition the Secretary of Agriculture to restrict the use of dogs in deer hunting activities that take place on such unit which abut their property. If the Secretary of Agriculture receives a petition from an adjacent landowner, the Secretary, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, may impose restrictions on the use of dogs in deer hunting—

(1) limited to those units of the Kisatchie National Forest within 300 yards of the boundary of the petitioning landowner's property; and

(2) consistent with subsection (a).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman

from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My amendment today maintains the State of Louisiana's ability to regulate hunting within its borders. In a decision announced March 1, 2012, the Forest Service Regional Forester located way over in Atlanta, Georgia, went over the heads of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to forever prohibit the use of dogs to hunt deer in Kisatchie National Forest.

Deer hunting has a long and important cultural history within the State of Louisiana. When French settlers first came to Louisiana in the 18th century, thickets and dense timber covered the area. Most of these settlers had companion dogs with them, and the most treasured companions were the deerhounds. The use of dogs helped hunters drive the deer from the woods onto trails, and the plentiful herds provided exciting sport and sound nourishment.

The 600-acre Kisatchie National Forest has provided diverse hunting opportunities for decades, including the use of dogs in hunting a variety of animals. Oddly enough, the Regional Forester does not prohibit the use of dogs for hunting raccoon, squirrel, rabbit, and game birds. The dog deer season in Louisiana has been severely restricted in recent years, down from 15 days to 7 days in 2012, and dog deer hunting in the Kisatchie has been limited to certain ranger districts.

According to communication with the Forest Service, seven Southern States allow hunting in the national forest within their borders. They include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Louisiana. However, this is the first time the Forest Service has issued a ban on dog deer hunting or hunting deer with dogs within a specific State.

According to the Forest Service documents, the revenue generated from dog deer hunting, including the care of animals, contributes approximately 18 to 29 direct jobs and results in roughly \$890,000 to \$1.4 million of income from hunting tourism and related activities. By the Forest Service's own assessment, it is likely that economic benefits are currently being lost as hunters leave the area to pursue the sport elsewhere. This is having a tangible economic impact on our State, robbing it of even more jobs.

I would like to emphasize that the State of Louisiana, the Kennel Club, and Safari Club International support my amendment, and a similar amendment was accepted by the House with a voice vote last Congress.

I urge support of this amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FLEMING. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I think this is a good amendment, and I support the amendment. The primary purpose of this legislation is to limit unjustified Federal bureaucratic limitations on hunting and fishing.

I also want to make a point here that it is important to recognize that the authority of States to regulate hunting and fishing should be paramount over the Federal Government. Individual Federal agencies should not preempt State laws, and it sounds to me like that is what the gentleman is talking about in his case.

I think the amendment is a good amendment, and I support it.

Mr. FLEMING. I thank the gentleman, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oregon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, we have talked about major problems confronting this Congress, and here we are now trying to resolve yet another local conflict.

After considerable complaints by private property owners about hunters encroaching on their land to retrieve their dogs that have gotten lost, driving on their land and that, the Forest Service decided because of the intermingled ownership to prohibit dog deer hunting.

Now comes the gentleman who says, well, we are going to reopen it. We will countermand the locally made decision, but we will have a new process where the private landowners can petition the secretary to re-close certain areas of the area that are now closed that he is reopening because of conflicts with their private property. However, these private property owners' petitions will have to go through the dreaded NEPA process, and that is, for deciding something as minor as that, kind of problematic.

You know, I guess maybe we should have a special day here, and I have some beefs with some Federal agencies ongoing that I would like to settle with legislation, too. Maybe we should have an open amendment process some day where every little local issue we have been dealing with with a Federal agency which is contentious between conflicting users will be decided by the United States Congress in Washington, D.C., not at the local level. That is what we are doing here. It is pretty extraordinary.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, I would like to address the issues brought up here.

First of all, the gentleman said there were multiple complaints. This was studied considerably. There was 1,237 responses to a request in 2009, and by October 6, we found that there were 77 percent, a clear majority of the respondents, who were actually in favor of continuing the practice of dog deer hunting. This was requested again in 2011, and there were over 1,300 respondents, and all but 16 were in favor of dog deer hunting and against the Forest Service proposed ban.

The other thing I would like to address, Mr. Chairman, is this was not a locally made decision. This was made in Atlanta. This is the problem. This has been going on for 300 years in the State of Louisiana. It is a big part of our heritage, and somebody over in Georgia, in Atlanta, representing the Federal Government, made this decision, not locally. There was no decision locally. The State supports this. The local residents support it by a vast majority.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Chairman, in closing, I would like to just say that the people of Louisiana want to see this Forest Service ban overturned. This was a decision made outside of our borders. In effect, if you will, even though the people of Louisiana were asked and they gave the correct answer, it was ignored, and the decision was made by someone outside of our borders. This was a decision made by somebody in Atlanta, a Federal employee, interfering with a local issue.

This is a tradition that goes back 300 years, and I think it is pretty obvious that the people of Louisiana support the continuance of hunting deer with dogs.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. FLEMING).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) "An Act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes."

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 376. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. HOLT

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. STEWART). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE IX—CLIMATE CHANGE

SEC. 901. AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO PLAN FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE.

Nothing in this Act limits the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to include climate change as a consideration in making decisions related to conservation and recreation on public lands.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Sportsmen are among the first to notice the effects of our changing climate as changes in seasonal distribution of game and diminished natural habitats becomes more evident. As the climate continues to change, we will experience worse drought, flood, wildfire, and extreme weather events.

For public lands and recreation there, climate change will mean changes in hunting seasons, migratory patterns, and the native and invasive species populations. We will experience sea level rise, wildfire, drought, and other manifestations of climate change. All of these are altering the landscape and changing the existing opportunities for hunting, fishing, and recreation on public lands. These should be considered. These will have a greater effect on sportsmen and on fishermen and hunters than all of the other things we have been talking about today.

More than 75 percent of the Federal lands are open now for recreational hunting, fishing and shooting, but climate change would transform irreversibly, and in fact is transforming irreversibly, our public lands in ways that will limit the ability of sportsmen to enjoy recreational activities in these areas.

So this amendment says the Department should consider those things. In

fact, it is even more limited than that. It says nothing will prevent the Department from considering these things. That is what this amendment is. I would hope that the House will accept this. I have been joined by a number of members of the House Sustainable Energy Coalition in offering this amendment. It is supported by Defenders of Wildlife and the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club and the National Resources Defense Council.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the primary purpose of this underlying legislation is the premise that Federal lands should be open for hunting and fishing recreation rather than being closed. I believe this should be the policy of all of our multiple use Federal lands. The default option should be open regardless of whether your interests are mountain biking, rock climbing, hunting, fishing, logging, building a solar energy facility, mining, wind power, or developing oil and gas. Our Nation's multiple use lands were designed to be used for the benefit of the Nation. This open-before-closed concept is the foundation of what we are trying to do through this legislation.

□ 1600

We are trying to raise the bar of bureaucracy that the bureaucracy has placed between hunters and the outdoors.

Reckless disregard of our Nation's hunting and fishing traditions means too often our Federal lands are closed off arbitrarily, and not just without public input, but against public sentiment.

Now the gentleman is proposing that we give the Secretary another new tool to close lands, without scientific decisionmaking, without accounting for their actions. The gentleman proposes that we simply grant the Secretary the sole authority to dictate that we close off any and all of our Nation's lands from hunting and fishing based simply on the Secretary's mere opinion that hunting and fishing are a threat to our Nation's land because of climate change.

Hunting and fishing are traditions and foundations that this Nation was built upon. They are not burdens to our national lands. They are one of the many purposes of our national lands.

Just yesterday, Mr. Chairman, before the Rules Committee, one of my Democrat colleagues was commenting that he had a BB gun at age 7 and a .22 rifle at age 12. He talked about how, as a young man, he learned to respect guns

and traditions. Yet that same Member is concerned about what children are learning today—the lack of respect for guns and the traditions of the outdoors.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this is one of the many benefits and reasons that we are here today, to help restore the opportunity for hunting and fishing traditions to take root on our Federal lands, to remind our Federal land managers that the exercise of these traditions are not a burden on our lands but one of the foundations of our lands.

Finally, let me say this. Regardless of one's views on our climate, this amendment is not about climate change. It is about granting the Secretary a blank check to ban hunting and fishing. Nothing in the bill changes the Secretary's ability to manage our lands to ensure responsible management. The bill does require lands to be opened, however, before closed; but when closing lands, the Secretary must act in a measured fashion to ensure that our hunting and fishing traditions are protected and valued.

I urge my colleagues to reject what I consider to be an antihunting and -fishing amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, may I ask the time remaining on each side.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey has 3 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HOLT. I thank the Chair.

I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), who is a leader of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition Caucus and a cosponsor of this amendment.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague.

As the cochair of the Green Dogs of the SEEC Caucus, I rise in support of this amendment and proud to cosponsor it.

The bill before us purports to be about expanding opportunities for sportsmen on Federal lands, yet it fails to recognize the significant effect climate change will have on such opportunities. For example, what will climate change mean for hunters who are forced away from parks because of drought or threat of wildfire? As we witnessed this year, wildfire seasons are now longer, larger, and longer-term than ever before because of climate change. The migratory patterns of ducks and, for that matter, the patterns of fish, to name just two species, are also being negatively affected.

What will climate change mean for anglers who find streams drying up and killing fish? Last September, Montana officials closed the Blackfoot River—not the Secretary, they did—the iconic backdrop for the book and film, “A River Runs Through It,” to protect fish from the stress of low-level river flows.

Mr. Chairman, if we really want to protect and expand outdoor recreational opportunities, shouldn't we understand what climate change will mean, not only for hunters, but for the affected wildlife and their habitat?

I urge my colleagues to support this simple, commonsense amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time and advise my friend I have no requests for time. I am prepared to yield back if the gentleman is prepared to yield back.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remaining time just to address a couple of points that my friend, the chair, from Washington has raised.

There is nothing in this amendment that gives the Secretary any new authority. It simply says that the Secretary should consider climate change in policies for managing these lands.

Climate change is the problem that needs to be addressed. You can deny it all you want, but climate change will do more to restrict hunting and fishing and recreation on public lands than these imagined administrative reductions or restrictions or lawsuits or restrictions on lead shot or any of those things.

There are a variety of adaptation strategies to promote resilience of fish and wildlife populations and forests and plant communities and freshwater resources and ocean resources. These are being studied by academic and scientific and, yes, government and non-profit organizations.

A great deal of thought is going into this. We want to make sure that there is nothing that restricts the Secretary from using these best adaptation strategies, these best management practices, to take into account what is real. It is not imagined. The climate is changing. It is affecting the ecology of all of these public lands.

I urge support of this amendment and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I just want to point out that the gentleman wanted to clarify by saying this doesn't give authority, but the Secretary should consider. What if the Secretary considers under current law and then decides to take action?

That is the point of the argument that I made, and that is that that action, then, on climate change could cause limited or no access to our public lands. That is why I said this amendment is kind of cloaked in different clothing, because it does not speak to climate change; in fact, it speaks to the potential closing of our public lands.

I urge my colleagues to vote “no” on the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 11 printed in House Report 113-339.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Mr. KILDEE, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE IX—SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING SNOWMOBILES ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS

SEC. 901. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The clear identification of roads, trails, and areas for motor vehicle use in each National Forest will improve management of National Forest System lands and protect these national treasures, enhance opportunities, and address access for motorized recreation experiences on National Forest System lands and preserve areas of opportunity in each National Forest for non-motorized travel and experiences.

(2) The sport of snowmobiling supports thousands of jobs across the country and provides a variety of enriching recreational opportunities for both families and individuals.

(3) In 2005, the Forest Service promulgated a Travel Management Rule that required travel management plans for off-road vehicles, with the exception of snowmobiles, on all lands managed by the Forest Service.

(4) Under the 2005 Travel Management Rule, the Department of Agriculture deemed that the use of snowmobiles on National Forest System lands presented a different set of management issues and environmental impacts on National Forest System lands than the use of other types of motor vehicles. Therefore, the final rule exempted snowmobiles from the mandatory designation scheme provided for under section 212.51 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, but retained the National Forest System's ability to allow, restrict or prohibit snowmobile travel, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

(5) In 2013, the Ninth U.S. District Court of Idaho ruled in the case captioned as *Winter Wildlands Alliance v. US Forest Service*, Case No. 1:11-cv-00586-REB, ruled that the Forest Service must promulgate travel management rules that include snowmobiles. The Ninth U.S. District Court of Idaho required that the final rule be promulgated by September 14, 2014, barring no additional extension.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Forest Service should continue to allow snowmobiles access to National Forest System lands at the same levels as were allowed as of March 28, 2013, subject to closures for public health and safety at the discretion of the respective agencies, until a final travel management rule is promulgated for snowmobiles.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 470, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, in 1972, President Nixon signed Executive Order 11644, which required that the U.S. Forest Service create travel management plans for the operation of off-road vehicles in our national forests, including snowmobiles. These travel management plans were designed to address the concerns of different users. They can be simple or detailed enough to affect noise, carbon emissions, traffic patterns, and protect animal migratory patterns.

In 2005, the Forest Service finalized its travel management rules for off-road vehicles in the national forest system except for snowmobiles, which were granted an exemption.

Each year, outdoor enthusiasts contribute enormous amounts to our economy, and snowmobiles support thousands of jobs not only in my district, but across the country. Not only do many of our residents enjoy snowmobiling, but it attracts significant tourism to areas like Eagle and Summit and Grand Counties and actually creates jobs in those areas.

Although snowmobiles were exempted from this rule, individual forest managers were still able to restrict snowmobile travel as appropriate on a case-by-case basis through individual travel management plans which met the unique needs of each area.

In 2013, however, a Federal District Court in Idaho in the *Winter Wildlands Alliance v. U.S. Forest Service* ruled the Forest Service must develop an overarching travel management rule that includes snowmobiles to comply with President Nixon's original executive order.

This amendment states that while the National Forest Service develops this travel management plan, it is a sense of Congress that the Forest Service should continue to allow snowmobiles on Federal lands during this rule's development with the same restrictions that were in place prior to the *Winter Wildlands Alliance* decision to ensure that the ability of snowmobilers to recreate is not interfered with because of this period where we are developing our permanent policy.

Given the breadth of outdoor activities, it makes simple sense that public lands should be available for multiple uses, including snowmobiling. About a quarter of Americans who participate in outdoor recreation enjoy motorized vehicles as part of that activity. Like other outdoor enthusiasts, snowmobilers contribute to communities by renting equipment, staying in hotels, purchasing souvenirs, enjoying local restaurants, and more.

As off-road vehicle use expands, it becomes increasingly important for the U.S. Forest Service to issue its rules to determine whether areas are open or closed to snowmobiles. This sense of Congress will allow that certainty that will allow our tourism industry to continue and our residents to continue to enjoy snowmobiling.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POLIS. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I say on a personal note, I was looking for you on the floor at the end of last week. I was prepared to take Seattle and offer you 34 points. I think you probably would have taken that bet.

I just want to make this point. If the gentleman will say that the results on the gridiron in New Jersey last Sunday, if the gentleman will say that the better team won—and you don't have to make any other adjectives—but if the gentleman will say that, I will be more than happy to accept this amendment.

Mr. POLIS. I will be happy to say on the record that the better team on that particular day won. There is still some doubt about whether that was, in fact, the Denver Broncos that took the field.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Well, I knew that the gentleman would find something to say.

I just want to say, dealing with the amendment, I think this amendment, again, in the spirit of adding more activity on Federal lands, I think this adds to it. I am prepared to support the amendment.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the chair.

I yield to the ranking member, Mr. DEFAZIO.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I congratulate Mr. POLIS and Congressman KILDEE, who is detained at the White House, for offering this amendment.

I appreciate that the majority has accepted it. This will be a temporary provision until such a time as the final rule is adopted. There was never, I don't think, intent to have this sort of a blanket ban on snowmobiles, and this would correct that error by the Forest Service as they go through a deliberative process on where, when, and how snowmobiles will access Federal forest lands on a unit-by-unit basis.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Washington for his remarks. You know that when the defense of one team scores more points than the offense of the other team, your team is not in good shape. But I congratulate the gentleman on the 12-second, fastest ever score in a way that was quite embarrassing for the Broncos, but we will be back next year. We look forward to challenging in the NFL.

I appreciate the support from both the chair and the ranking member for Mr. KILDEE's and my amendment. This rule will help the U.S. Forest Service improve management, prevent the disruption of the tourism industry, allow for the continued enjoyment of residents in snowmobiling, and ensure that off-road vehicles are used in a manner that protects natural resources, minimizes conflict with other users, and provides and protects motorized recreation.

Until we finalize the travel plan, snowmobilers will be able to, under this sense of Congress, enjoy their favorite activity, and communities should continue to reap the economic benefits of hosting these winter sport enthusiasts.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek time in opposition?

Seeing none, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MULLIN) having assumed the chair, Mr. STEWART, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

□ 1615

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-90)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the na-

tional emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2014.

The situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and fatal attacks against international peacekeeping forces.

Since the inauguration of President Alassane Ouattara in May 2011, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has made progress in advancing democratic freedoms and economic development. While the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and its people continue to make progress towards peace and prosperity, the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 4, 2014.

SHERIFF WINDERS

(Mr. HOLDING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, last week, North Carolina lost a real leader and a good man—my loyal friend, Sheriff Carey Winders of Wayne County. He was only 57 years old.

Carey was one of the youngest men to be elected as sheriff in Wayne County, and 2015 would have marked his 20th year of service. He was dedicated to the people he served and respected by all. Carey was a lifelong member of Union Grove Free Will Baptist Church, where he met his wife of 33 years, Teresa. Family was everything to Carey. Carey had three daughters—Jessica, Ashley and Carianne—and two granddaughters.

Mr. Speaker, Carey was devoted to Wayne County and driven by his faith, his family and his commitment to the citizens who put their trust in him. While it is a dark time in Wayne County, we know that the light of his life and his principled example will illuminate this community in the days ahead.

THE GOP DOCTORS CAUCUS: THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2013, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, here we are now in February 2014, and the second session of the 113th Congress has begun. The administration still has to deal with daily headlines speaking of the disaster of—you guessed it—the Affordable Care Act. I have to sometimes refer to that as the "Unaffordable Care Act."

Today, the news came from the non-partisan CBO, the Congressional Budget Office. My colleagues are all familiar with that. Their report states that the administration's rosy projections are a mere fairy tale. If you take a dive into these numbers from the CBO, Mr. Speaker, you will see last year's goals amended lower as the low participation and atrocious rollout of the exchanges have finally caught up with those estimates.

Let me just give you, colleagues, a few highlights:

The CBO lowered the estimate of exchange enrollees to 6 million. That is 1 million less than they estimated at this time last year. Now, this isn't all that surprising given the problems with the Web site—healthcare.gov—and the rest of the implementation of ObamaCare, but it definitely reinforces the notion that this plan is not working.

The CBO estimates that 31 million Americans will still be uninsured in 2024. Colleagues, when this bill was being discussed in Energy and Commerce way back in 2009—in 2008 even—the Democratic majority at the time said there were 45 million people who were uninsured. That number really shrunk down considerably when you realized that there were a number of people who were eligible for Medicaid who just didn't know it. It could have been as many as 10 or 11 or 12 million. Obviously, there are a lot of people in this country illegally uninsured but who are not eligible. Then there were the people making \$75,000 a year in their households who could afford health insurance but who just chose, because of the Constitution—their personal liberty—to pay as they went. It is not something I recommend. The CBO estimates now that in 2024—10 years later—after its passage and full implementation on October 1 of this year, 2014, that there will still be 31 million Americans uninsured. What have we really solved here? It doesn't sound like we have really helped very much.

Now, this bill was sold to the American people as the solution to eliminating the uninsured. Instead, the bill only, really, adds cost in the form of very expensive mandates to everyone who already had insurance. A lot of them now are just saying, Heck, I will be one of these who will go bare. I will, maybe, set up my own savings account

for health care, and will put \$100 a month—or whatever—in a checking account and get a physical when I need it annually or biannually, and I will pay my own way—that has happened—and pay the little fine of \$95.

So that is what is happening, and it is quite a legacy for the President's signature piece of legislation. I don't think it is the legacy that he anticipated, and it is certainly not the one that he wants today.

Finally, there is the headline from the newspaper, *The Hill*. Most of us read that, don't we, colleagues? We read all of these newspapers if we don't run out of time. In *The Hill* today, here is its headline: "CBO: O-Care Slowing Growth, Contributing to Job Losses"—with "O" standing for "ObamaCare."

The CBO projects that the law will reduce labor force compensation by 1 percent from 2017 to 2024, twice the reduction it previously had projected. This will decrease the number of full-time equivalent jobs by 2.3 million in 2021, and this is up from the previous estimate of 800,000. There is a big difference, my colleagues, between 2.3 million and 800,000. This is remarkable. Through a combination of higher health care costs, resulting in lower compensation and perverse incentives for folks to not work as much in order to preserve their subsidies, it is truly not the American Dream.

The administration, Mr. Speaker, continues to push for more money for jobs programs, yet, at the same time, it continues to fight for a bill that has yet to work and will lead to rewarding people for working less. What were these jobs programs? Just get rid of—what can I call it?—the worst bill, maybe, that has ever been passed in the history of this body, of this Congress. The Affordable Care Act has given us higher costs, not lower. It has performed much worse than was promised, and it will incent our citizens to work less. That is not what we want. That is really not what they want.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the administration to give in to reality and to let us repeal this bill. I don't think it is the first choice to just sit back and see it collapse under its own weight. You hear that expression a lot. I think that very well could happen, but let's take, maybe, a more responsible approach.

Mr. Speaker, I would say this to the President:

Mr. President, let's take a more responsible approach, and you work with the Congress—with Republicans and Democrats, with the House and the Senate. You get more engaged than you have ever been before, and work with us. Let's repeal it, and let's start over with something that truly does work, because we all agree that we have the greatest health care on the face of this Earth. Why is it that people pay thousands of dollars to get on a jet plane to fly from other countries to

go to the Mayo Clinic or to Sloan-Kettering or to the WellStar Health System in my district, the 11th of Georgia, to get their health care, to get their surgery, to get their treatment for cancer? You don't see people from this country going in the opposite direction, because they get that good care here. So, Mr. President, we can work together. We can. The American people want us to. They don't want one side jamming the other. They do want us to work together.

I want to take some time during this Special Order hour that our Republican leadership has afforded us. I hope some of my colleagues from the House GOP Doctors Caucus will be joining me momentarily, and I will yield to them as this is the opportunity for us to explain to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle what needs to be done and how we can work together and clearly get this done and get it done in a timely fashion, if not this year, certainly in the 114th Congress.

This Doctors Caucus that I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, is something that I put together a number of years ago, and we are now up to about 22 members. I say "doctors." There are a lot of categories of doctors, but I am talking about doctors who work specifically in the health care space, which is one-sixth of the economy of this country. These doctors can be medical doctors. They can be dentists. They can be psychologists. They can be advanced practice nurses. Indeed, even hospital administrators are part of this group because they know. They understand that in our caucus we have, probably, 600 years of accumulated clinical experience. That means there is a little gray around the sideburns on a few of us.

This knowledge—this expertise—our leadership on the Republican side recognizes that. Our committee chairs on Energy and Commerce and on Ways and Means and Education and the Workforce—every one of those committees that has any jurisdiction over health care—understand that, and they look to us. They look to us for expertise and guidance and explanations just as we who have worked in the health care sector before we got elected to the Congress look to educators, look to accountants, look to attorneys in their previous lives to help us on issues that we are not so up to date on or on which we don't have that level of expertise. That is the way it should be, and that is the way it should be, in my opinion, on both sides of the aisle.

□ 1630

So we Doctors Caucus meet, if not weekly, at least every 2 weeks. We talk about issues. We have been talking about this Affordable Care Act for the last 3 years and going through it section by section and trying to have a thorough understanding. We bring understanding to the table, but everybody

can learn something that they didn't know in a 2,700-page bill. That is the due diligence that we have done over these last several years.

When we read in the media or we hear from the Democratic side of the aisle, or either in the House of Representatives or from the Majority Leader HARRY REID and the Democratic majority in the Senate, saying, well—or even, Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States. How many times have we heard him say: If you have an idea, if you have a better plan, bring it to me, bring it to me; I am all ears; I want to listen? And we have done that.

I value the opportunity to be here today to explain some of the things that have been done and that they have really come through the House GOP Doctors Caucus. One of our members is my colleague from Georgia, an orthopaedic surgeon, Dr. TOM PRICE. Dr. TOM PRICE and I served in the Georgia Senate. We are medical colleagues: he, an orthopaedic surgeon; I, an obstetrician. Now we have been in the Congress together for 10 years. And so he is a very active member of this House GOP Doctors Caucus, and he has a bill.

To just set the record straight, colleagues, let me tell you about Dr. TOM PRICE's bill, H.R. 2300, Empowering Patients First Act. Well, that bill is not 2,700 pages, but it is a comprehensive bill. A lot of the sections in that bill are individual ideas that have come from the Doctors Caucus. I am proud that he has included a number of my suggestions in regard to medical liability reform and other things. And so, it is a compendium of ideas.

It is a very good bill, a very good alternative. It is market driven. It does not interfere with the doctor-patient relationship, that sanctity, and it is a sanctity. Dr. PRICE understands that, and every member of the House GOP Doctors Caucus understands that. This bill, believe me, has the opportunity to get traction and, when it is brought to this House floor, to pass this Chamber.

Now, at the same time, we just heard, Mr. Speaker, in recent days that the Senate has drafted a bill. It doesn't have a number yet, but Dr. TOM COBURN, the OB/GYN family practitioner from Muskogee, Oklahoma, whom I have worked very closely with, the Doctors Caucus has worked very closely with, and Dr. BARRASSO and Dr. JOHN BOOZMAN. So, the Senate Republican doctors and the House Republican Doctors Caucus have worked together.

Dr. COBURN, along with Senator BURR from North Carolina and Senator ORRIN HATCH, one of the most senior and thoughtful and brilliant Members of the Senate from the State of Utah, they have this bill. They call it the Patient Choice, Affordability, Responsibility, and Empowerment Act, the acronym, Patient CARE Act from the Senate.

So, we are right there, Mr. President. With all due respect, we have ideas. We have Dr. PRICE's bill. We have Dr. COBURN's bill. We have other members of the Doctors Caucus. And the Doctors Caucus in the Senate is smaller, but we are here to help. We want to help. We truly want to bring down the cost of health care and maintain that quality that we are so proud of. It can be done. It can, indeed, be done.

Let me talk a little bit about the economy in regard to current law, PPACA, ObamaCare, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. ObamaCare has forced employers to cut hours, and as a result, part-time employment has gone through the roof. It has already forced many businesses to choose between, on the one hand, hiring new workers or providing health coverage. Mr. Speaker, they just can't do both.

President Obama always says health costs are rising at the lowest rates ever. Well, that is not because of his bill. That is because the economy is dragging. His bill has not helped the health care industry. The costs are lower because people are not seeking care; they don't have the money. And so, yeah, sure, the overall costs of health care are going down, but that is not a good thing. That is a bad thing.

The Obama administration delayed the job-killing employer mandate for a full year so that doesn't go into effect, colleagues, until January 1 of 2015, 11 months from now. It has left the rest of Americans on the hook for this massive tax hike. The bill adds costs to running a business, massive tax increases, and of course, as I said at the outset, higher monthly premiums.

You know, one of the promises the President made, among many that he failed to keep, was that the average cost, of a health insurance premiums would be \$2,500 a year lower than pre-ObamaCare.

Just the opposite has happened. And I don't think he ever said anything about what the deductible would be, Mr. Speaker. But in some of these policies, an individual deductible might go from \$1,000 a year to \$3,000 a year, and a family deductible from \$3,000 a year to \$8,000 a year. That is a 200 percent increase, a doubling of the monthly premiums. It creates just enormous uncertainty across large corporations, small businesses, and, of course, particularly the one-sixth of our economy that is the health care industry.

Think about the medical device tax and what it is doing to jobs in that industry. The medical device tax has already forced companies like Michigan-based Stryker Corporation to cut a thousand jobs. Boston Scientific canceled plans to build new facilities in the United States, instead moving these high-paying, highly technical, and innovative research jobs across the pond, overseas.

Let's look for a moment at the effect on small businesses. I speak often, and I know all of you do, too, on both sides of the aisle, because we go back home and we face our constituents; we have to, and we should. But I speak with these small business owners in the 11th District of Georgia, northwest Georgia, and my four counties. I want to know how President Obama's health care law has affected the day-to-day operations of their companies.

Well, ObamaCare has not even been fully implemented because of all these executive orders and the fiats that come down and the waivers that are granted to certain ones but not others. So ObamaCare really has not been fully implemented, even though the date is passed, but job creators and employees in Georgia and nationwide are already feeling the pain. Across the board, they have expressed frustration with its new rules and the "moving target" regulations, the increase in health care costs, and, of course, the uncertainty that they hate. This law has certainly created a heck of a lot of that, hasn't it, colleagues?

ObamaCare has forced employers to cut hours; and as a result of that, part-time employment has gone up, as I said a few minutes ago. It has already forced many businesses to choose, again, do I hire that 50th worker or do I just say no, I am going to take two part-time workers instead of one full-time? Or, even worse, I am going to hire that 50th worker, but I am going to drop health care coverage, Mr. Speaker, for all of my employees. And while I get a waiver for the first 30, for the next 20, I am going to pay \$2,000 a year per employee that will go into the exchange.

One Georgia businessman who employs 47 people told me that ObamaCare has forced him to hire subcontractors instead of hiring new full-time employees. Another owner who has 49 workers recently purchased a robot instead of hiring new welders. That robot doesn't have to feed a family of four. It may be very efficient, but the robot doesn't have a heart and doesn't have anxiety.

On Main Street, uncertainty and higher costs get even worse when a company needs to create more than 50 jobs, as I just mentioned, creating a barrier to job creation and the expansion of their business.

ObamaCare forces employees to work fewer hours to stay on as part-time workers. It is estimated that ObamaCare will require American job creators, families, and health care providers to spend—get this, colleagues—more than 127 million hours a year on compliance. The EPA couldn't have been more onerous than this bill, and they are pretty darned onerous.

One Georgia businesswoman has been forced to hold numerous meetings on company time for her employees to

help them understand the paperwork involved in trying to get health care. Besides a loss in productivity, these new rules are costing her. She recently hired an outside health care expert just to ensure she is running her company "by the books."

Mitzi Smith's small plumbing company in Marietta, Georgia, is known for its quality and its compassion and the excellence of its workers; and yet they are struggling to hold on, even with a wonderful reputation, because of this law.

Providing relief for taxpayers by delaying these costly mandates for 1 year is not enough, and I will continue fighting to dismantle every single piece of this train wreck law. I pledge to the people of Georgia that that is what I am going to do. It is an accountability pledge. It is not a term limit pledge. It is just to say, Look, I am not up here to be a potted plant. You have hired me to be your voice to speak for you on issues like this one. There are others. But I think now, as we approach the elections of 2014, what is more important than putting people back to work and providing them assurance that they can keep their doctor, they can keep their hospital, they can keep the health care that they want, not larded up with a bunch of funded mandates, really, that are causing those premiums to go up that they don't need and they don't want?

□ 1645

It is a one-size-fits-all. And in health care, one size, colleagues, and you know this, one size doesn't fit all.

I mentioned a few minutes ago about the excise tax, the 2.3 percent on medical devices. Let me mention a couple of companies that have been in touch with my office concerning this issue.

Smith & Nephew medical company announced in February that it will lay off almost 100 workers in their Tennessee and Massachusetts plants.

Cook Medical, a very familiar name, has canceled plans to open five, count them, five United States factories because the tax, this medical device tax, would cost them \$20 million a year in the coming years. And remember, colleagues, this medical device tax is not on their profits. This is a tax on their revenue, so it is much more onerous than if it were just a tax on their profit.

Boston Scientific, planning for a more than \$100 million charge against earnings in 2013, has now built, get this, a \$35 million research facility in not Boston, but in Ireland, and is building a \$150 million factory in China.

Stryker Corporation, based in Michigan, blames the tax for 1,000 layoffs.

Zimmer, based in Indiana, is laying off 450 people and taking a \$50 million charge against earnings.

Medtronic, one of my classmates from Georgia Tech was the CEO of

Medtronic, brilliant man, retired now, but I will never forget him. He was brilliant at Georgia Tech and throughout his entire career, and he was the CEO at a time for Medtronic. They make heart valves and many lifesaving medical devices. They expect an annual charge against earnings of \$175 million.

Covidien has cited the tax in explaining 200 layoffs and a decision to move some production to Costa Rica and Mexico. I have nothing against Costa Rica or Mexico, great countries, great people, but, you know, when we are looking at an unemployment rate of 6.7 percent—if you believe that, it is probably closer to 15 percent when you count all the people that have just given up. They have been unemployed for over a year and they are just out of it, they are not even counted anymore.

So, I could go on and on and on and give you examples. I will give you one more.

A Guthrie, Oklahoma, Taco Bell has cut its full-time employees' hours to 28 per week or less. If you had a job and you got to work 28 hours a week, colleagues, I don't know about y'all, but I would need three of those jobs to support my family and my children and help support my grandchildren.

Former employee Johnna Davis said, and I quote Johnna, "They informed everybody," the company, "that nobody was considered full-time any longer . . . that everybody was now considered part-time, and they would be cutting hours back to 28 or less due to ObamaCare."

Spiritwear, an Idaho-based clothes company that specializes in licensed college and football team colors and logo apparel is poised to more than double their business this year.

Mr. Speaker, that is great news, isn't it?

However, the company is on the cusp of having 50 full-time employees. She is upset that what seems to be her best solution, hiring independent contractors, would give her less control—and it would—over worker hours and how much involvement they can have in other parts of the company.

Darden Restaurants, parent company of such well-known and very good restaurants as Olive Garden and Red Lobster and Longhorn Steakhouse, they tested making some workers part-time last year. The chain has decided not to make all full-time workers part-time, but it has not ruled out a broader shift toward that very thing, part-time work.

Then in January 2014, Target announced that they would no longer provide health care coverage for their part-time employees.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 29 minutes remaining.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we have some time left, but I think,

colleagues, that you get the picture here. We have a real problem right here in River City—and by that, I mean the Nation's Capitol, but I also mean the entire country—and we have to do something about it.

We can't just keep kicking the can down the road, as we have done with Medicare and Social Security, needed reforms, protections, strengthening to make sure that these programs are there for our children and our grandchildren.

But here we have created a whole new entitlement program that really, when you look at it, it is punishing both our seniors and our young because it is forcing the young people who finally reach that 27th birthday, and they can no longer, now, be on their parents' health insurance plan. Maybe they have been living at home, post-college, and the parents have finally just said, Honey, you are just going to have to move out. We need our space. We need a little privacy.

These young people have a job, and they want to move out with a friend or someone that they went to school with. They want to move on with their lives. They are adults now, and they have got a job, and they find that, to get health insurance, it is astronomical. Yet the salary that they make, their entry-level salary, is too much to make them eligible for a subsidy.

So what are they going to do? They are going to pay that fine, that \$95 fine, and maybe even when it gets to \$600, they are going to pay that, and they are going to go bare. I use that as an expression of being not having health insurance coverage. They may be 10-foot tall and bulletproof. They may take care of themselves. They may not do skydiving and some risky sort of behavior. But you never know when that Mack truck is going to run you down and you are going to end up in the emergency room.

So we want to make sure we get this right. So far we have gotten it totally wrong. But we can do better. We will do better. We need to do it in a bicameral, bipartisan way.

I mentioned my colleague, Dr. PRICE, and his bill. I mentioned my other colleagues on the House GOP Doctors Caucus as we continue to work on things, my cochair, Dr. PHIL ROE, a fellow OB/GYN from Tri-Cities, Tennessee, former mayor of Kingsport or Johnson City. We can do it and we will do it.

But, Mr. President, you said, if you like what you have, you can keep it. You also said, if anybody, Member of Congress, has a better idea, bring it to you and you will consider it. Well, I have mentioned two bills here tonight. We have other ideas, and you have 2½, almost 3 years left in your second term. You want a legacy? We are going to help you have a legacy, and a good one, but you have got to work with us. It is a two-way street.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

FOREIGN POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives and this great deliberative body that we are part of. I appreciate the delivery of Mr. GINGREY a little bit earlier.

I wanted to take us, if I could direct your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the situation in the Middle East. And we know that the implication in our Constitution is that the President conducts the foreign policy. I would teach that class if I had the time, and I don't disagree with that.

But also, this Congress has responsibility. We have responsibilities, for example, that are specific within the enumerated powers of the Constitution. And if anyone thinks that the House of Representatives or the United States Senate or Congress itself, as a body, doesn't have a voice on foreign policy, I would direct them to the enumerated power of the power to declare war.

Certainly, we have also foreign policy responsibilities here, and we appropriate funds for foreign aid and a good number of other resources that go to help out countries that are either our allies or hopefully will become our allies one day. There is a lot that we do that has to do with foreign policy. We have a Foreign Affairs Committee. We have a Select Committee on Intelligence. We have Armed Services. All of those things are committees that deal with issues that have to do with our foreign relations and our foreign policy.

So, because of that, Mr. Speaker, a number of us in this Congress have taken a responsibility to step forward and be engaged in foreign policy, and also to have a voice and be better informed than simply letting the message come from the White House.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AND THE DROUGHT IN CALIFORNIA

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I see that my friend from Utah has just filed the rule, and I appreciate the gentleman from Utah, not only what he has done here today, but his leadership. I want to take a moment to make the message here as the topic that is coming up now is a rule that was referenced by the gentleman from Utah about the San Joaquin Valley and the drought in California.

I have traveled out there, and I have been there to see about 250,000 of 600,000

acres that were manmade drought. And now we have nature-made drought that is coupled with the manmade drought, and I intend to support the legislation that comes to the floor tomorrow.

I thank especially the California delegation for leading on this and helping the rest of the country understand how important the water issues are around the country.

I have worked with water and water management all of my professional life, and these issues come close to home when you either need water or you can't get rid of it. And that is what this bill is tomorrow. It is about needing water and directing it to the best resources.

But if I would, Mr. Speaker, revert back to the topic at hand, and that is the topic of the foreign policy and the very solid constitutional claim that Congress has to be engaged in foreign policy, to help manage that foreign policy and to appropriate resources to foreign policy.

To that end, a number of us in this Congress, and not nearly enough of us, have been involved in foreign policy and free trade agreements and traveled to a good number of countries to engage with people in other parts of the world to help stitch together and knit together our relationships that are so important.

□ 1700

So if I could, Mr. Speaker, I would like to first paint the big picture of what the world looks like. I will offer a little bit of history first and then paint a picture of how the globe looks today.

I will take us back to World War II, which was the most dramatic shift in power that the world has seen, at least in my understanding of history. We saw the clash of the Imperial Japanese and the Nazi regimes that threatened to swamp the entire world. Having fought back a world war on two fronts, in Asia across the Pacific and in Europe, here in America, we see this as the time that America rose to become a superpower. As we saw then, immediately after World War II, we saw the Cold War begin, and the Soviet Union formed as a product, a part at least, a product of World War II, clashing with the United States in that Cold War that lasted for 45 years.

It was two different ideologies. It is free enterprise, capitalism, it is God-given liberty challenged up against the forces of the former Soviet Union, which were atheistic and communistic and a managed economy from top down.

We saw what happened. We saw how that was resolved, Mr. Speaker.

It was described, I think, best by Jeane Kirkpatrick, who was the Ambassador for Ronald Reagan to the United Nations, when she said, some time around 1984, as she stepped down as Ambassador to the United Nations,

she said, What is going on in the world, in this Cold War, in this clash, this competition between the two huge ideologies, what is going on between the Soviet Union and the United States is the equivalent of playing chess and Monopoly on the same board. And the question is, Will the United States of America bankrupt the Soviet Union economically in the Monopoly part of the game before the Soviet Union checkmates the United States of America in the chess component of the game?

Monopoly and chess on the same board. The Russians, building missiles and expanding their military capability and trying to outdo the United States to the point where we would have to capitulate while we were pushing our economy. This growing, dynamic free enterprise economy was competing against the managed economy, the communist economy of the Soviet Union.

And what happened was, the monopoly game, the monopoly winners won out, and the Soviet Union was bankrupted, and because of that, the country collapsed and imploded upon itself around about 1991, and they had to reform back around to—they could say former Soviet Union, Russia—Russia and some of its federation countries, safer for the world because that clash of the two huge ideologies has been diminished significantly. The threat of a nuclear war has been diminished significantly thanks to Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Pope John Paul II, and some will say Gorbachev.

Those four personalities engaged together were the leadership that brought about the dynamic that brought an end to the Cold War. In the aftermath of the Cold War, there were those sitting around—cold warriors—to celebrate the end of the Cold War, a victory for the free world. Not only the United States, but our allies. A victory for the free world.

As they celebrated, they got ready to raise their glasses, one of them, one of them said, Just a minute. Don't be too soon to celebrate because think of this: The world will not long tolerate a lone superpower. There will be allegiances and alliances made that you have not imagined that will line up against the United States, and if those forces line up against the United States—and they will—we will find ourselves with competition and enemies that we have not seen before in the world. Some of those will be an alliance that does include Islamic nations lined up against the United States.

That statement was made in the late part of 1991, I believe it was, and that would be at least a decade, roughly a decade before the attack on the United States on September 11, 2001. That very prescient comment that was made before they celebrated the end of the Cold War, before the glasses went up, Mr.

Speaker, there was a realization that we would have new enemies that would form, and they would form coalitions against us.

So because of that, we should be aware of where we are today. Those enemies that have formed against us, a lot of them have been radical Islamists that have decided that they want to kill Americans because they disagree with our ideology. We should not believe that somehow it is just a matter of, we live in one place on the globe, and others live in another place, and we end up at war with each other with people trying to kill us. That is not the circumstances in that way.

Instead, it is competing ideologies. People that have a different belief system. People that believe that they need to have enemies so that they could demonize those enemies and mobilize their people, and if they can mobilize their people against a demonized enemy, they have a better chance of hanging onto power.

Those are the circumstances in Iran, where they describe the United States of America as being "the great Satan," and it is the public policy of Iran to declare America to be the great Satan. They teach it in their schools, and they are spinning centrifuges for the purposes of developing nuclear weapons and a means to deliver them. The President has contended that his negotiations with Iran have slowed down their nuclear weapons effort, and perhaps they will be able to talk Iran into stopping their nuclear efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I will take you back to September of 2003, where I sat in on a meeting with Ambassadors to the United States from France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, and they sat around with a group of Members. The discussion was about whether we should open up negotiations with Iran on their nuclear capability, and after I listened to the three of them and every Member that was around that table, of which there were not very many. I was the low man on the seniority totem pole at the time. I had to wait my turn to speak, of course. Then I asked the Ambassadors, Why are you here? What is your objective in meeting with us to have this discussion about opening up negotiations or a dialogue with Iran? Their answer was, We want to you open up dialogue with Iran so that you can help us because we think that our three countries—France, the United Kingdom, and Germany—at the table with the United States, we have a chance of convincing the Iranians not to continue any further with their nuclear endeavors. September 2003.

I listened to that response, and I said, If we open up negotiations or open up dialogue with Iran, what are you prepared to do, then, if we take step one into these negotiations? Their answer was, We want to open up dialogue. That is our objective, as if there wasn't a step two, three, four, or five.

But we know that once you have opened up the dialogue, you have to be willing to follow through with something. So I said, If the United States steps up to negotiate with Iran, and it is clear that they have an objective to develop a nuclear weapon and a means to deliver it, if the United States steps up and opens that dialogue, then you are suggesting that we enter into formal negotiations. In those negotiations, you understand that if we fail to convince Iran that they should stop nuclear development, are you prepared, then, to go to the United Nations for a resolution? Are you permitting sanctions against Iran? If the sanctions aren't effective, are you prepared to blockade Iran? If you are prepared to blockade Iran, and the blockade is not effective, and they continue to develop a nuclear weapon, and somebody has got to step up to that line in the sand with men and equipment and munitions and military supplies and put blood on the line along with the treasure, are you prepared to step up to that line in the desert sand? Of course the Ambassadors were real nervous about that discussion long before I got to the part about the line in the sand in the desert.

As they expressed their will, which was, Let's just open up dialogue, they had to also recognize that when you open up dialogue, you start down the path of dialogued negotiations, United Nations resolution, sanction, blockade, and eventually, if Iran is committed, there is going to be a showdown.

I said to them, You see, if we start down this path, we have to be prepared to follow all the way through, and let's understand that we are prepared before we start because I will tell you that Iran is committed to developing a nuclear weapon and a means to deliver it. They are committed. It isn't just a feint on their part. It isn't just a motion in that direction. They are committed, and if we aren't committed to go all the way to putting that line in the sand and lining up on that line in the sand and following through—and I said these words this way—then Iran will play us like a fiddle, and when this is all done, they will have their nuclear weaponry, and they will have their means to deliver it, and we will just look like a bunch of foolish negotiators.

Mr. Speaker, I bring this up because now here we are, these 10-plus years later. Iran is in a position where they would like to have the rest of the world think that they have slowed down and maybe given up on their efforts to develop nuclear. They still take a public position that they never really were developing a nuclear weapon, that they were just enriching uranium for the purpose of generating electricity in their oil-rich country. Of course no one should have ever bought that from the beginning.

But our administration seems to think that if they negotiate in good faith, the Iranians are going to negotiate in good faith. I think it indicates some naivete about the minds of the people that want nuclear weapons.

A nuclear weapon capability is far more valuable to Iran in their negotiations than talking nice to the United States. Especially, why do they care about us four friends if they are teaching their children to hate us? If we are the great Satan, they don't have a lot to gain in public opinion in Iran by talking to the United States.

So we should understand their motives. Their motives are to dominate that part of the world with a nuclear capability to threaten that part of the world. They have already said that they have targets chosen in the United States. That is an Iranian public position today, and if you look at the method that they could have to deliver a nuclear weapon, which might only be weeks or months away—

We can have inspectors in Iran that are examining anything that we want to examine, but that doesn't mean the Iranians don't decide that they are going to throw a public relations tantrum and kick all of the inspectors out of Iran and only be 2 or 3 months from having that nuclear weapon.

So they can choose now when the time is right for them, when the time is right for them politically to make that move. Even if they have slowed this down and even if they are not putting more centrifuges in place, the question is, are they still spinning? What happened to the enriched uranium? Even if they dilute their enriched uranium down below 20 percent, it is another chemical reaction to enrich it again—it doesn't take very long—at best, they have slowed their operations down in order to pick up \$4 billion or more into their economy that they need. Their economy is suffering because of the sanctions.

So we are being played again. It is just part of the fiddle. We are being played like a fiddle. We have been played like a fiddle for the last 10 years. The conviction and the resolve from our leaders isn't strong enough, and I have said from this floor, Mr. Speaker, that if I were the lead guy, the lead person on negotiations with Iran—and I will just take us back to the Ahmadinejad era so we can think of the personality on the other side of that—we would do it this way:

I would just simply back-channel information probably through the Swiss in the diplomatic channel, back channel in to the Ahmadinejad and the mullahs, and it would be this, presuming that I were calling the shots here on foreign policy.

It would be, Mr. Ahmadinejad and Iranian mullahs, I have decided—we, here in the United States—but I have decided the date beyond which you will

not be allowed to continue your nuclear endeavor, and I have taken the liberty to put an "X" on the calendar that sets that date. Now, you don't know that date, but I do, and beyond that date, you will not be allowed to continue your nuclear endeavor whatsoever it takes to do so, and it will be dramatic, and the world will know. You will certainly be the ones to get the first announcement because that is when the kinetic action starts. That is the implication—not the word.

Then I would say, But, you know, if you hustle up and decommission and tear down your nuclear development equipment and you do that with our inspectors to our satisfaction or with an intermediary that we can trust, we will help you with that, and we will help you with some resources to do so. We will even help you with public opinion so that you can save face as you back up from this clash of civilizations that is bound to come if we let you go down this path.

Again, Mr. Ahmadinejad, you don't know that date, but I do, and we can forestall the inevitable if you decommission and tear this down. But you have got to mean it. It can't be a bluff. It has got to be a real "X" on the calendar. It has got to be a real date. Maybe no one else knows it. Maybe only the leader of the free world knows that date. But he has got to mean it.

Short of that, we get played like a fiddle, and here we are, stretching this thing out again, with the world an ever more dangerous place in that part of the world. I can stand there and listen to the intellectuals and say—Europe, for example, and I mentioned the foreign travel, and listen to them say, Well, of course a nuclear capable Iran is preferable to a military strike to take it out. They utter that in the same fashion that people in this country would utter, Well, of course it is the CO₂ emissions from U.S. industry that is one day going to cause the Earth's temperature to go up, as if somehow that was the conventional knowledge that was accepted by everyone.

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Mr. Speaker, I reject that way of thinking. The idea that a nuclear-capable Iran is peripheral to a military strike to take it out isn't a rational conclusion that one can draw. You have to start with a flawed premise to get to that conclusion and say it is rational. There are a lot of rational conclusions that are built upon false premises, I might add, and that would be one.

A nuclear-capable Iran threatens all of the Middle East. Their immediate target would be Tel Aviv. And Tel Aviv, by the way, is not very highly populated with anything other than Jewish people, which would be their ideal target. So it is a short missile

strike from Iran to Tel Aviv. They know that. They certainly know that in Israel. And today what they know is they don't have the level of confidence that the United States is standing quite as strongly next to Israel as we have in the past. That message has been sent by our President in our foreign policy for some time.

The idea that Israel should go back to the '67 borders, as if somehow the '67 borders were defensible, well, they were defended in '67 and they were defended in '73, but they expanded their defensive borders because of that. Israel traded some land for peace. It didn't work out very well. The Gaza Strip is a place to launch attacks on the Israelis from Lebanon, and Hezbollah is occupying large chunks of Beirut in Lebanon. That becomes a place where there are now some tens of thousands of missiles that are lined up there aimed at Israel, an ever more dangerous place.

Somehow we think that we can talk nice to the Iranians and they are going to treat us nice and somehow good reason is going to get something accomplished with negotiations. Mr. Speaker, it is very rare to ever see a diplomatic error take place in negotiations. Instead, you have to have leverage, and that leverage is going to be economic, military, or perhaps political. It could come mostly from other entities. If you don't have those forces in place and something that you can give, do, or give up, you are not going to just get, well, we like you, Mr. President, and you said that if we unclenched our fist, you will extend your hand. I didn't see Iran unclench its fist, but I saw our hand extended. And some of our hand was played, and some of our hand—or whole cards have been seen now and shown to the other side. It is a very, very dangerous proposition.

Looking over there in the same neighborhood as Syria, it became the issue du jour that Syria had weapons of mass destruction. It is hard to make the case in this Congress that Syria had weapons of mass destruction, that, of course, none of them came out of Iraq, because it is conventional belief over on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that Iraq didn't have weapons of mass destruction, regardless that Saddam gassed his own people, regardless that we did secure yellowcake uranium in Iraq. We did take it out of Iraq and transport it across the Atlantic Ocean, down the St. Lawrence Seaway and up to Canada so it could be converted into power generation. In spite of all that, nobody seems to think that any of that could have gotten across the border or any weapons of mass destruction, such as gas, could have gotten across the border into Syria, even though we all agree that Assad used gas against his own people.

We would like to put an end to that. But once the President showed his

hand on that and the British lost the vote on the floor—I believe it was in the House of Commons—the President came to Congress and said, well, now I want to strike Syria, and why don't you give me the authority to do that? That was an implied directive, Mr. Speaker, not a direct one, not a formal one. It was clear that neither the House nor the Senate had an appetite to go into military action in Syria.

So we fell back on Putin and the Russians to be the negotiators with the weapons of mass destruction in Syria. We saw the promise that the gas was going to be accumulated, picked up and transported out of Syria by the end of the year. That was the end of last year, not the end of this year, Mr. Speaker. So now it is going to take perhaps another 6 months and another and another and another.

It is a static position in the world now where Syria has digressed down to the point where it is hard to find a friend in Syria. The President said here in this very Chamber at his State of the Union address last week that we are going to oppose the regime and we are going to support our friends in Syria. It is hard to find friends in Syria. This conflict may have gotten to the point where there is nobody. Neither side is a side that is either going to support us or one that we should support. My message is that Syria has devolved downward into a very difficult, static, and ugly situation with a lot of blood and death that threaten to spill over.

Of course, we have the nuclear threat that has slowed down but not necessarily been suspended in Iran. In the rest of our foreign relations around that part of the world, we are 2½ years or more into the Arab Spring, and in almost every one of those changes—some regime changes, some civil war, and some that reached a static impasse—the result of that hasn't been favorable to U.S. interests, and you can go country after country, the conflicts around.

So several Members and I took a trip over into that part of the world right before Christmas to assess the situation. We need to do that because assessing the situation from here, it turns out that there is a lot of information that is not very reliable that comes out of the White House and the State Department with regard to that part of the world. So we traveled into Egypt, into Lebanon, into Libya, and into Israel, among other places. We met with their top leaders in most all of those countries and on down the line. Of course, we met with our State Department and got the in-country briefing.

It works out that the short version is that Lebanon is a mess. I think it is intractable, and I don't know how you resolve it. In Libya, the civil war didn't resolve it. The radical militant

Islamists still control Benghazi, and it is not safe enough to go there for their government, let alone for representatives of our government. So Libya is at an impasse. They would like to be able to put together a functioning government in Libya, and I am impressed with some of the people that are in leadership there. But if they can't control Benghazi, Benghazi militants can come in and threaten Tripoli, for example, and have.

Egypt, though, Mr. Speaker, has turned, I think, in a very good and positive direction in that they rose up and threw Morsi out. Morsi—the face and the voice of the Muslim Brotherhood in the country of the origin of the Muslim Brotherhood—was rejected by the Egyptian people, and 30 to 33 million of 80 million Egyptians went to the streets mid last summer to demand that Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood be taken down and out of the government. It was a popular uprising. And with the pleadings of the popular uprising, then you saw the Egyptian military take charge. We have met with them, myself eye to eye at least twice and at different levels within the government and two different trips over there.

They have written a constitution, one that protects even Christian religious interests there and commits resources to rebuilding our burned churches in a place like Egypt. They have ratified a constitution in that election the 14th and 15th of January. Now you have elections set up for a parliament, and behind that, a Presidential election. I expect we will see a legitimate civilian government in Egypt sometime in less than a half a year. At that point, the voice of the Egyptian people at least is structured to be heard through the government, a relatively new experience for the Egyptians.

So there is a lot that has been turning in the world, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned the threat to Israel, that we need to stand more closely with them, shoulder to shoulder, and make an even stronger commitment to support them. They are going to have to face up to and they are going to have to decide if they have to take action against an existential threat, which is a nuclear-capable Iran.

We need to decide whom we are going to be friends with. It is not the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Even though it looks like this administration has lined up with the Muslim Brotherhood, it is not the Muslim Brotherhood. The American people don't support the Muslim Brotherhood, and they don't support the militant wings and arms that are components of the Muslim Brotherhood and those affiliates of those militant wings and arms that might say they are not but operate in concert, especially in places like Syria.

We need to understand that this world is lined up to some degree

against us. We have had friends in that part of the world that go back deep and long. Egypt is one of those countries. It was 1954 when President Eisenhower made it clear that he was going to stand with the Egyptian people. We have had them as allies, and we have worked military operations in the Sinai for a long time. We need to restore those relationships with the Egyptian people and I think the soon-to-be-legitimized civilian government of Egypt. We need to let people know, like the United Arab Emirates, that we are going to stand with them as they are going to stand with us. We want to stand with the moderate interests in the Middle East that want to engage in petroleum production, diplomacy, and the growth of their own economies.

We have had a good strong interest in the Middle Eastern part of the world, and it has been fractured time after time after time by the results of radical Islamists and Muslim Brotherhood coming into these countries throughout this long, long period of the Arab Spring, summer and fall times 2.5.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation is looked to by the rest of the world to lead. That means we need to have a strong State Department, a strong foreign policy, and a clear and coherent moral message. It has got to be that we stand with our friends. We should understand that just because there is an election in a country, that doesn't mean that democracy is going to be manifested or it is going to be the solution.

Mr. Speaker, we need a stronger foreign policy, we need more Members of this Congress taking an interest, and we need a President that gets it right.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2954, PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3964, SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah (during the Special Order of Mr. KING of Iowa), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-340) on the resolution (H. Res. 472) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2642. An act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 5, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4649. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter regarding a report on the number and characteristics of members of the Armed Forces serving on Active Duty who were diagnosed with breast cancer; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4650. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities in Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4651. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations, Elko County, NV, [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4652. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Golden Parachute Payments (RIN: 2590-AA08) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4653. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Executive Compensation (RIN: 2590-AA12) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4654. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting a notice of a proposed lease with the Government of Sweden (Transmittal No. 03-14) pursuant to Section 62(a) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4655. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of

State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4656. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the former Liberian regime of Charles Taylor that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4657. A letter from the Director, Office of Human Resources, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting three reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4658. A letter from the Chief Financial Officer, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting the Board's Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4659. A letter from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting a letter reporting that the Office of Government Ethics did not conduct or initiate any competitions in FY 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4660. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period April 1, 2013, through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4661. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Annual Report of the Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties for the period between January 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4662. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revocation of Class E Airspace; Danville, IL [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0657; Airspace Docket No. 13-AGL-24] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4663. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Sisseton, SD [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0641; Airspace Docket No. 13-AGL-7] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4664. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30933; Amtd. No. 3568] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4665. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Corporation Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2009-0811; Directorate Identifier 2008-NE-41-

AD; Amendment 39-17715; AD 2013-26-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4666. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turboprop Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-1004; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-34-AD; Amendment 39-17719; AD 2013-26-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4667. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Chariton, IA [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0255; Airspace Docket No. 13-ACE-4] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4668. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Gainesville, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0586; Airspace Docket No. 13-ASW-1] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4669. A letter from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled "Review of Medicare Contractor Information Security Program Evaluations for Fiscal Year 2011"; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 472. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-340). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. THOMPSON of California (for himself, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. FARR, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. ESTY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Mr. PETERS of California):

H.R. 3986. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to adjust the phaseout of the health insurance tax credit for geographic variations in the cost-of-living; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD (for himself, Mr. JONES, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 3987. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 3988. A bill to supplement the Secretary of the Army's existing authorities to review the operations of reservoirs; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 3989. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals a deduction for amounts contributed to disaster savings accounts to help defray the cost of preparing their homes to withstand a disaster and to repair or replace property damaged or destroyed in a disaster; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 3990. A bill to prevent and mitigate identity theft, to ensure privacy, to provide notice of security breaches, and to enhance criminal penalties, law enforcement assistance, and other protections against security breaches, fraudulent access, and misuse of personally identifiable information; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska (for himself, Mr. WALDEN, Ms. JENKINS, and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 3991. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MULVANEY (for himself, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. PALAZZO):

H.J. Res. 108. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to limit the number of terms that a Member of Congress may serve; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DENT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. REED, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. SPEIER):

H. Res. 473. A resolution expressing support for designation of February 4, 2014, as National Cancer Prevention Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

171. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to House Resolution No. 571 memorializing the Congress to pass and the President to sign the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 3986.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 & 18

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 3987.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment XVI.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 3988.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 3989.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 3990.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 3991.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H.J. Res. 108.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V: "The Congress, whenever two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states, or by conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate."

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 12: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 32: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 104: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 149: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 164: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan and Mr. SIRES.

- H.R. 184: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 279: Mr. DENHAM and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 311: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 383: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 411: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 455: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. KILMER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 486: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 543: Mr. PETERSON and Ms. CHU.
H.R. 594: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 795: Mr. BURGESS, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. AMODEL, and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 831: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 920: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 946: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 1010: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 1070: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 1091: Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 1141: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 1179: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1249: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.R. 1250: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1381: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 1423: Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 1528: Ms. GABBARD, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 1563: Mr. BISHOP of Utah and Mr. WOLF.
H.R. 1692: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 1696: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 1726: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. PETERS of California, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 1750: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 1761: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 1771: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 1775: Mr. COURTNEY and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1779: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 1798: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 1801: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 1821: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1857: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 1953: Mr. DINGELL.
H.R. 1998: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 2028: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 2203: Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 2261: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 2300: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 2305: Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 2376: Mr. MARINO.
H.R. 2387: Mr. HANNA, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Ms. MENG, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ROONEY, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 2429: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. OLSON, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. DUFFY, and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 2451: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 2470: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 2506: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 2509: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 2553: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2575: Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.
H.R. 2591: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2656: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 2662: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 2737: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2780: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 2841: Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3040: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3121: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3211: Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 3303: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 3306: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3310: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 3331: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 3338: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
H.R. 3344: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3395: Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 3461: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 3488: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 3505: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. MICHAUD, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 3522: Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 3530: Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 3541: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. WILLIAMS.
H.R. 3546: Ms. CHU.
H.R. 3555: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 3563: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3576: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HANNA, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 3590: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. MICA, and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 3600: Ms. BASS, Ms. CHU, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3608: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 3658: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3689: Mr. NUNNELEE.
H.R. 3725: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. CARTER.
H.R. 3774: Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. COHEN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 3775: Mrs. ELLMERS.
H.R. 3790: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER and Mr. ROONEY.
H.R. 3829: Mr. JONES, Mr. STEWART, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. FORBES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 3837: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 3854: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 3857: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3865: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3914: Mr. MORAN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 3921: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 3930: Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. LATTA, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. ROONEY, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 3933: Ms. JENKINS.
H.R. 3969: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 3972: Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3973: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. BURGESS.
H.R. 3979: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DENT, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 3982: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.J. Res. 47: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H. Con. Res. 26: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
H. Res. 36: Mr. DENHAM.
H. Res. 55: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H. Res. 231: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H. Res. 283: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H. Res. 284: Mr. SESSIONS.
H. Res. 302: Ms. MATSUL.
H. Res. 418: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H. Res. 428: Mr. MASSIE.
H. Res. 440: Ms. BORDALLO.
H. Res. 442: Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. JONES, Mr. BARR, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BYRNE, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. MICA, and Mr. FINCHER.
H. Res. 447: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H. Res. 456: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. NUGENT.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative GRIJALVA, or a designee to H.R. 2954—To authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative NAPOLITANO, or a designee to H.R. 3964 the Sacramento-San Joaquin Emergency Water Delivery Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

SENATE—Tuesday, February 4, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the fountain of every blessing, we lift our hearts in praise to You for You have done marvelous things. You direct our steps each day, guiding us with Your powerful providence and showering us with undeserved mercies. You hear our prayers and speedily supply our needs. Bless today the work of our lawmakers, empowering them with unceasing awareness and openness of heart. Give them wisdom and courage to glorify You through their work. May their thoughts, words, and actions be acceptable to You for You are our rock and our redeemer. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 297.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the farm bill. The time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings. At approximately 2:35 p.m. there will be a rollcall vote on the

adoption of the farm bill conference report.

VISIONARY REMARKS

Mr. REID. While the President pro tempore is here, I want to make a brief comment.

The headlines over the last couple of days have been about the death—in my opinion—of one of the great actors of our time, Philip Seymour Hoffman. He obviously died from a drug overdose of heroin.

The reason I wanted to say a word while the President pro tempore is presiding is because the Governor of Vermont was very visionary in directing his State of the State remarks this year to the scourge of heroin addiction that is sweeping the Nation. It really is a scourge.

According to everything I have been able to learn, it is kind of unique. We have people who start off with some kind of prescription drug and then wind up with this stuff that has been prepared by purveyors of evil. They don't know what is in it. There are some who believe they use baby laxative or other ingredients that look like heroin. It is a terrible shame.

I will send the Governor a letter, but I want to make sure my good friend from Vermont personally tells the Governor what a—I can't find a better word—visionary he was in the remarks he gave a few weeks ago.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the RECORD will indicate that I opened the Senate in my role as President pro tempore, and now the distinguished Senator from New Jersey is in the Chair.

I wish to respond to the distinguished senior Senator from Nevada and thank him for what he said.

I was in Montpelier, which is our capital, on Friday, and I spent some time with Governor Peter Shumlin, who did his State of the State message on this subject, as the distinguished Senator from Nevada has said. I talked to him about it. I will call him later this morning and tell him what the leader said. I am also going to wear my hat as chair of the Judiciary Committee and do a hearing on this issue.

Ours is a very special and very precious State, but I think it points out that every State in the Union can face this problem. While on the national news this morning, Governor Shumlin was great and focused the attention of this issue on many States.

I will close by saying to my dear friend from Nevada that I appreciate his comments. He knows how precious

Vermont is to me and Governor Shumlin, and I will make sure the Governor knows what he said.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

A MAN OF STATURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I had a meeting with a number of Senators this morning, and one of the topics of conversation was the Presiding Officer's first speech—the so-called maiden speech—he gave last night. It was stunningly good, substantive, and it came from the heart. That is what many Senators told me this morning, and I agree. As I told the Presiding Officer last night, I had to go to a quick meeting, so I watched most of it from my office. The Senator's speech was so important. The speech focused on dealing with people who are in need.

This good man, who is presiding over the Senate now, is a man of stature. He is extremely talented academically. He is a Stanford graduate and decided he would do public service. In the process of doing public service, he identified with the people who needed help.

He moved into a neighborhood that you would not think a mayor of the city would live in, but he did that because he wanted to feel the pulse of the people. It is obvious from the speech given last night that the Presiding Officer does understand the pulse of the people of his State.

We all admired him before he got here, and we admire him even more now.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1982

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk entitled S. 1982 due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1982) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last night I had the good fortune to spend some time with the President, along with MICHAEL BENNET and others. It was worth commenting on that meeting with the President about the address he gave a week ago to the Congress and to the Nation.

He addressed Congress and the Nation and described the challenges facing families in America. Wages are far

too low, the cost of education is far too high, and there are simply far too few jobs.

Each of these challenges places another stumbling block in front of Americans striving to enter the middle class, as well as the middle class trying to do their best to hang on to their status as part of the middle class. The middle class is being squeezed. The rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, and the middle class is being squeezed really hard.

Unless we open the doors of opportunity, every child in this Nation—our grandchildren—will no longer be able to do what we expect our grandchildren to be able to accomplish. Every child in this Nation—our grandchildren—will have to work longer and harder than we did just to get by, let alone just to get ahead.

Yesterday I read a story with interest. It was a long, well-researched story in the *New York Times*. It was in the business section. That piece argued that the richest families and the most successful corporations in America should be just as worried about these trends—the shrinking middle class—as the Presiding Officer and I are.

The article described the widespread failure of businesses that cater to the middle class. I repeat that: The widespread failure of businesses that cater to the middle class. Why? Because the middle class is going away.

While high-end retailers such as Barneys and Nordstrom flourish, mid-priced retailers such as JCPenney and Loehmann's stumble. Loehmann's actually filed bankruptcy. While posh restaurant chains such as Capital Grille prosper, more modest eateries such as Red Lobster are sinking.

The *Times* wrote:

As politicians and pundits in Washington continue to spar over whether economic inequality is in fact deepening, in corporate America there really is no debate at all. The post-recession reality is that the customer base for businesses that appeal to the middle class is shrinking as the top tier pulls even farther away.

Industry analysis says businesses that sell luxury goods to the top 1 percent are booming. Over the past 30 years, the top 1 percent has had their wealth increase three times while during that same 30-year period of time the earning capacity of the middle class has been cut by 10 percent.

Sadly, businesses such as Family Dollar, which caters to the growing ranks of working families barely scraping by, are also thriving. Why? Nordstrom is a great place. I love Nordstrom. They have a great return policy. I am glad they are doing well. But Family Dollar is thriving because many people who were middle class are now poor.

Families are not going out for spaghetti and meatballs. They are not even going out for hamburgers like they used to. They are not buying their

kids new jeans or backpacks. They pass them down from child to child.

I can remember—it has been over a year ago—when I went to this program in North Las Vegas, NV. There are a lot of poor people in North Las Vegas. They were giving away backpacks with some pencils and paper. It was before school started. Those backpacks were so—I don't want to denigrate the wonderful things that people did—cheap. The backpacks had names of businesses on them.

These children lined up with their parents for as far as you could see. They were desperate for a backpack. It was not a very good one, but they didn't have one. So they are not buying their kids backpacks like they used to. Purchases that once seemed to be modest treats have become unaffordable luxuries.

While the economy is growing in spite of this trend, economists worry that the growth is unsustainable. One economist told the *Times*:

It's going to be hard to maintain strong economic growth with such a large proportion of the population falling behind. We might be able to muddle along—but can we really recover?

That is the question.

In other words, our fortunes are bound together. A shrinking middle class isn't just a problem for families in the middle; it is a problem for businesses, large and small. It is a problem that should worry the top 1 percent of wealthy Americans as much as it worries the 99 percent who are under that 1 percent. Can we really recover when so many of us are falling behind? It is a fair question and an extremely troubling question. Our entire economy is at risk unless we act now to protect and grow the middle class whose purchase power is the backbone of our economy.

How can we do that? We can create some jobs which we as a Congress have not done because every time we try, there is obstruction from the Republicans. But to achieve this goal of protecting and growing the middle class, President Obama called for common-sense investments in our future. He has called for investments in 21st century infrastructure—those old-fashioned structures such as roads and bridges and dams—as well as the new, including renewable energy projects such as solar, wind, and geothermal, which would create lots and lots of jobs; then cutting-edge technology such as the new Tesla vehicle, an all-electric vehicle. I have spoken with Elon Musk who is talking about building another big factory someplace in the West.

Investment in universal preschool is so important. Other countries are doing it. Why don't we have it mandatory for every 4-year-old?

And affordable college. Seated next to me is the assistant leader. He identified a problem years ago which is that

kids are being burdened with debt, trying to go to college. Frankly, a lot of the money these young men and women borrow goes to schools that don't produce anything.

Investments in medical research. My colleagues heard me cough. I, for the first time in my life, a couple of weeks ago got the flu. I never had the flu before. I wasn't very sympathetic with people who missed work because of the flu. I am now sympathetic. The flu is devastating. I was so sick. At my home in Searchlight, we didn't have a thermometer. By the time we had someone bring one over from Vegas, my fever was very high. I started the medication Tamiflu not as early as I should have, and it turned into bronchitis.

The reason I mention this—again, speaking about my friend, the senior Senator from Illinois—he went yesterday to NIH, the National Institutes of Health. I went there a couple of months ago. We should be embarrassed by what we have done as a Congress to NIH. We have cut them. And the reason I mention my flu is because when I went there, I learned they are so close to having a flu shot that covers all flu—everything. They are so close. What do they need to go the extra mile? More money. The devastation of sequestration has hurt the National Institutes of Health significantly. Chairman MURRAY did some good work to help in the future, but money we have lost because of sequestration is gone. We have not been fair to the National Institutes of Health. They are doing lifesaving work there, and other countries are trying to match what we have done with the National Institutes of Health. They can't; we are way ahead, but we will not remain ahead unless we put some money into the National Institutes of Health.

We need to help companies that build their products here in America. I go out of my way to buy New Balance shoes, running shoes. Why? They are made in America. The suit I am wearing, Hickey Freeman, is made in America, and I am proud of that.

The President also called on Congress to increase the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour—a huge step forward guaranteeing that no American working full time lives in poverty as they now do, as the Presiding Officer so well illustrated last night. This proposal of raising the minimum wage has been endorsed by seven Nobel Prize-winning economists. I don't know the political persuasion of these Nobel Prize-winning economists, but they are all persuaded that what we have done to the working poor is wrong and we have to do something about it. The proposal would raise millions of families out of poverty and give tens of millions of children a shot at graduating from college, securing high-paying jobs, and joining the middle class.

There is something else Congress should do to prevent hundreds of thousands of Americans from descending into poverty: Extend unemployment benefits. In the month we have cut off these benefits because of obstruction by my Republican colleagues the country has lost more than \$2 billion in purchasing; the State of Nevada \$30 million. So we could do something now to prevent hundreds of thousands of Americans from descending into poverty. A 57-year-old woman—I read a part of her letter yesterday—said: How do you think I feel going from friend to friend to sleep on their couch? Couch surfing we call it. She said: That only lasts so long. I am selling everything I have. I don't have a home. I am trying to sell everything I have so if I get an opportunity for a job interview, I can buy gas for my car.

We must extend unemployment benefits because 1.6 million people have been out of work for months. These benefits will ensure that more than 2.3 million children have nutritious meals and a safe place to sleep while their parents hunt for jobs. Renewing emergency unemployment insurance would prevent Americans who have worked hard to get ahead from losing their grip on the ladder of success. Restoring unemployment benefits is by no means enough to secure our shrinking middle class, but it certainly is a good first step.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

EPA OVERREGULATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, over the past several years, I have often come to the floor of the Senate to draw attention to the Obama administration's radical environmental agenda and the deeply harmful effects it is having on the people of Kentucky. The Environmental Protection Agency's war on coal is the most obvious and tragic example.

Today I wish to highlight this administration's environmental agenda at perhaps its most absurd. At the heart of our story is a 2½ inch minnow—a 2½ inch minnow called the duskytail darter—a 2½ inch minnow called the duskytail darter.

Last week, the Obama administration sided with this minnow over the economic well-being of thousands of people in southeastern Kentucky who live near or depend on Lake Cumberland as a major driver of commerce, tourism, and recreation. The Obama administration did this by determining that the presence of the darter in the lake's tributaries meant that the raising of the lake's water level must be further delayed.

Lake Cumberland is a signature tourist destination in my State and one of the economic pillars of McCreary, Clinton, Laurel, Russell, Pulaski, and Wayne Counties. The water level of the

lake was lowered back in January of 2007 due to problems with the dam which feeds the lake.

The past 7 years of reduced water levels have not only hurt small businesses that rely on tourism but have also strained local governments, as local towns have had to lower their water intake. Marinas have had to spend valuable dollars on both ramp upgrades and dock relocations—dollars that could have been spent on growing businesses, hiring new workers, and enhancing local commerce.

In addition, the drawdown of water has deterred tourism, as a misperception has been created among potential visitors that the lake is no longer suitable for boating, fishing, and water sports.

Every year, Lake Cumberland brings to the local community \$200 million in economic activity and employs, on average, 6,000 people. Understandably, those in the local community have been anxious to see the water levels returned to their normal level, after 7 years of reduced water level.

2014 was supposed to be a great year for Lake Cumberland, as Kentuckians would mark the end of 7 years' worth of repairs to the dam and, therefore, reduced water levels and fewer visitors. Now, suddenly, the Obama administration has announced that the water level cannot be raised because it could potentially have a harmful effect on this minnow, the duskytail darter, which is on the endangered species list.

The absurdity of the Obama administration's posture on this issue is manifest. First, the administration is protecting a fish from water. Let me get this straight: Protecting a fish from water? The radical environmentalists in the Obama administration don't want this fish to be exposed to too much water? What is next, protecting birds from too much sky?

Second, the administration took this action because raising the water could—could, not would—potentially—potentially—have an adverse effect on this poor little minnow. Of course, anything in the universe could have an adverse effect on this minnow. To the people of southeastern Kentucky, the President's year of action is apparently beneficial only if you have gills.

The story of the darter would be humorous if it weren't so harmful to the economic well-being of thousands of southeastern Kentuckians. This misguided policy will have deeply harmful consequences for this region of Kentucky.

Carolyn Mounce, who is responsible for promoting tourism at Lake Cumberland at the Somerset/Pulaski Convention and Visitors Bureau, put it best when she said: “[This is] bureaucracy run amok!” Bureaucracy run amok, said Carolyn Mounce. She just returned from attending travel and tourism shows in Cincinnati and Louisville 2 weeks ago.

She said:

The shows were crowded . . . people wanted to talk about Lake Cumberland. They were excited about returning the lake to normal operation. And now this.

J.D. Hamilton, who operates Lee's Ford Resort Marina in Lake Cumberland in Nancy, KY, was also disappointed to learn of this announcement. Disappointed is an understatement, as his business has been stifled by the lowering of water over the last 7 years. In response to this announcement, he said, “The Corps is keeping its word to the fish but not to the economy.”

So, yesterday, my friend and colleague Senator RAND PAUL and I, along with our colleagues in the House, Congressman ROGERS and Congressman WHITFIELD, wrote the administration calling for an end to this intolerable further delay. I hope the Obama administration will take heed and concern itself more with endangered jobs and endangered livelihoods of actual Kentuckians and Americans than with the possible endangerment of this apparently water-averse minnow.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL ADAM D. PEAK

Mr. President, I wish to speak about a young man from my State who gave his life while serving this Nation in uniform. LCpl Adam D. Peak of Florence, KY, was tragically killed by an improvised explosive device in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, on February 21, 2010. A member of the U.S. Marine Corps, he was 25 years old.

For his service in uniform, Lance Corporal Peak received many medals, awards, and decorations, including the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the NATO International Security Assistance Force Medal.

Born on August 30, 1984, Adam was a native of Florence, where he grew up with a reputation as a performer who made his friends and family laugh with his quick wit. He and his older sister Sara would quote movie lines back and forth to each other in a blink of an eye, and Adam especially liked to entertain his younger sister Angela. “Adam was sarcastic with a dry sense of humor, and could get people to laugh all the time,” says Adam's mother Diana. “I guess what I loved most about him was his love for his sister, who was born with Down Syndrome. He had unlimited patience with her, and I knew that when his dad and I were gone, he would take care of Angela.”

Although Adam did not get a chance to have a family of his own, he loved kids. “He was like a second father to a lot of the other Marines' kids,” says his sister Sara. Adam's mother certainly agrees. “He loved kids and

thought that someday he would have a large family," she says. "He played Santa every year for his friend's family, and the kids loved him."

Adam attended Boone County High School, where he graduated in 2002. He then attended Thomas More College in Crestview Hills, KY. In school, he was active in the Alpha Delta Gamma fraternity, the Saints Club, the Education Club, and the Villa Players Theater Club. His mother Diana particularly remembers Adam's interest in theater. "He developed a love for the stage while in college at Thomas More," she says. "He started out behind the scenes, but his friends got him on stage for a play and he loved it. He appeared in many productions while at school."

Richard Shuey, a business administration professor at Thomas More, taught Adam in three classes. Adam "was one of those really nice, clean-cut northern Kentucky kids," Richard says. "Always polite and interested in doing well, and obviously a true patriot."

One of Adam's fraternity brothers, Caleb Finch, remembers him as "a big-hearted, free-spirited, fun-loving guy who would do anything for anybody."

After graduation from Thomas More, Adam enlisted in the Marine Corps in July of 2007. By December of that year he had been promoted to the rank of lance corporal. Adam's younger brother Sean enlisted in the Marines as well, and the two brothers served together in the same unit in Iraq in 2008. "Their personalities were night and day," says Robin Peak, Adam's sister-in-law. "But they always had each other's backs and were there together." In October 2009, Adam and Sean were deployed to Afghanistan, both as members of the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, Two Marine Expeditionary Force, based out of Camp Lejeune, NC. Sean accompanied his brother back home for burial, and Adam was laid to rest with full military honors in Taylor Mill, KY.

Mr. President, we are thinking of Adam's loved ones today, including his parents Bruce and Diana, his brother Sean, his sisters Sara and Angela, his sister-in-law Robin, and many other beloved family members and friends.

The loss of LCpl Adam D. Peak is tragic. Indeed, it is only appropriate that this Senate pause to honor his service and recognize his sacrifice.

I hope his family can take some comfort from the fact that both the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the country as a whole are grateful for and honored by the heroism and courage Adam displayed in his entirely too short life. The example he set for his loved ones and his country will not be forgotten.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014— CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, a bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The assistant majority leader.

COMMENDING SENATOR BOOKER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I address the farm bill, I would like to make two other points. The first is to commend the Presiding Officer. Yesterday he gave his first speech on the floor of the U.S. Senate. About 20 of us were here and listened carefully. I am glad I did. It was time well spent. It was a speech which the Presiding Officer clearly not only worked on but believes in, and it showed. He addressed the plight of working Americans, and particularly those who have lost their jobs, and the responsibility of this Congress and this Nation to stand by these families while they are in transition looking for new opportunities.

I sat here and listened and watched as the Presiding Officer spoke to this subject, addressing specific people he has met in his State who told him their stories. I thought to myself: I have met quite a few in Illinois in like circumstances. I wish every Member of the Senate would do what the Presiding Officer has done—visit the towns, the restaurants, the veterans centers, and other places where unemployed people gather and listen to them.

The point the Presiding Officer made so convincingly was those who dismiss the unemployed as just lazy people have never met them. They are not lazy. They are workers who want to work again. What they are asking for is a helping hand, and the Presiding Officer made that point so eloquently yesterday.

What was particularly good for me, having served in the Senate for a number of years, was to hear a new Member of the Senate, in his first speech, really reach back to the values that inspired many of us to run for this position. It is easy to become jaded after you have been here for a while and been engaged in the petty political fights that take place here with some frequency. It is easy to forget why you asked your family to stand behind you when you ran, why you sacrificed to try to come to this place, and why each of us—some 1,200 or so who have had this distinct honor to serve in the Senate—should

not miss the opportunity to bring our values and passion to the floor every single day.

So I thank the Senator from New Jersey, our Presiding Officer, for an extraordinary maiden speech, first speech on the floor of the U.S. Senate. It was one of the best.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Secondly, I would like to address the issue that was raised by my colleague from the State of Kentucky. The State of Kentucky is just south of Illinois. We have coalfields too. Almost 75 percent of our State has coal under the ground. We mine that coal—not like we used to, but we still mine it and use it, and we have coal miners and coal companies, and coal is an important part of the Illinois economy.

The Senator from Kentucky came to the floor today to really take exception to a decision by the Environmental Protection Agency as it affected coal country in Kentucky. I do not know anything about the particulars of his complaint involving the Cumberland Lake and the Endangered Species Act, so I will not address that, but I would like to address one, more general topic.

To argue that the Environmental Protection Agency is the enemy of coal country is to completely ignore what has been in the newspapers for the last several weeks. There are 300,000 people in the State of West Virginia who are afraid to drink the water because of a leak from a tank that had a chemical solution used for cleaning coal. These people worry that drinking this water, cooking with this water, even bathing in this water is a danger to them. And where did they turn for some indication of safety for their families? This part of America—West Virginia, coal country, just like Kentucky and Illinois—turned to the Environmental Protection Agency. Of course they did. Is it safe? Can my child drink this water safely? Can I use it for cooking?

So to argue that the Environmental Protection Agency is the enemy of coal country is to ignore the obvious. They can make wrong decisions. We all do. Agencies do. But time and again, when we are in trouble, when it comes to something as basic as the safety of our drinking water, we turn to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and ask them to help us determine whether that water is safe.

Let me add parenthetically, Mr. President, your predecessor, Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, was a leader, and I was happy to be his partner in trying to get to the bottom of the danger of many of these chemicals. Most Americans mistakenly believe this government reviews the toxicity or danger of all the chemicals in use in this country. In fact, only a small percentage is ever reviewed by the government. We, in fact, trust those who make and sell these chemicals to do

the right thing, and many times they betray that trust and sell something dangerous which we discover later after the damage has been done.

Again, the role of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control, the role of the Federal Government in monitoring these chemicals for the safety of businesses and families and individuals across America is essential whether you live in the cities of Newark or Chicago or coal country, USA. So if we are going to go to war against the Environmental Protection Agency, let's at least be honest about the critical role they play. I hope that is remembered as we reflect on some of the things said on the floor this morning.

Mr. President, this is the conference report for the Agricultural Act of 2014. Senator STABENOW was on the floor earlier. She has stepped off now. She has poured her heart and soul into this document and into this work. Two years ago we passed the farm bill on the floor of the Senate—2 years ago. She did it with Senator ROBERTS of Kansas. I voted for it, and I thought it was an exceptional effort on her part. It went to the U.S. House of Representatives—as is the custom under the Constitution—to wither and die 2 years ago.

Then a year ago they said let's try again. Let's pass the farm bill again in the U.S. Senate in the hopes that the U.S. House of Representatives will take it up—a year ago. So a year ago Senator STABENOW and Senator ROBERTS sent this measure to the House of Representatives for consideration, and again it languished. It may have been one of the longest running conference committees in the history of Congress, but thank goodness for the perseverance of Senator STABENOW and many others; they produced this document.

For those who do not live in farm country, this may seem like a foreign text, but for those of us who do live in farm country, just reading the table of contents will tell you the important elements of this bill and why it is so critically important to Illinois and virtually every State in the Union.

I commend Senator STABENOW. As I said, she really poured her heart and soul into this document. There are provisions in here that many of us may never really appreciate that she fought for over a long period of time. I am going to acknowledge a few of those during the course of my formal remarks. But while she is here on the floor, let me give special credit to my colleague. She really took on this task and did it in an extraordinary way.

After years of expirations and short-term extensions, primarily due to the problems and inaction in the House of Representatives, this bill finally is going to provide farmers in Illinois and across the Nation with some guarantee of certainty on their future.

Compared to the pre-sequester budget levels—that is budget talk around here for past budgets—this bill is going to save \$23 billion over the next 10 years. This conference report before us works to do four things: invest in energy and research, help our rural communities grow—those of us who represent smalltown America know how important that is—ensure stability for our farmers who face the vicissitudes of weather and markets, and provides food assistance for those most in need both here and overseas.

These are amazing and important goals. I am glad Senator STABENOW and all the conferees applied themselves to make this happen. I am disappointed by one provision. I know Senator STABENOW will not be surprised. Despite modest reforms, we still provide extraordinary outside premium support for many farmers who buy crop insurance.

In fairness, this bill eliminates a price support program that was no longer defensible, a program that paid farmers in good times as well as bad. So it was not what it was designed to be, emergency help for farmers in need. She eliminated the direct payment program, by and large. That, to me, is a step forward.

Instead, this bill moves farmers toward crop insurance. Most of us, stepping back, say: That sounds like a responsible thing to do. A farmer buys an insurance policy, so if things go bad on the farm, a flood, a drought, some other problem, or the prices happen to be disastrous when the farmer goes to market, the insurance policy will make sure they can live to plant again. That is a good thing. But as I have said several times, any time you put the two words "Federal" and "insurance" in the same sentence, I advise my colleagues to step back and ask some questions. This is not insurance as you envision it. It is not a matter of automobile insurance, where the automobile owners pay enough in premiums to create a reserve to cover the exposure of accidents.

This is different. Under the Crop Insurance Program, similar to many Federal insurance programs, there is a massive Federal subsidy: 62 percent of the reserves that are necessary to make the program function are provided by the Federal Treasury, not by premiums paid by farmers. So it is a good program. It is a valued program. It is critically important. But let's keep our mind on the reality. It is heavily subsidized by the Federal Government.

Senator TOM COBURN of Oklahoma, a very conservative Republican, and I decided to offer an amendment which said: If you are a farmer whose income is over \$750,000 a year, we will reduce, slightly, the government's subsidy of your crop insurance. Over \$750,000 in income, we will reduce, slightly, the 62-

percent Federal subsidy on your crop insurance. You will pay slightly more in premiums because you are able to. You are better off than most.

This passed not once but twice on the floor of the Senate. As it turned out, the conferees, primarily from the House, hated this provision like the devil hates Holy water. So they struck this provision from the bill. That is unfortunate. Not only did we pass it twice, the House had passed on the floor an instruction to conferees to include it. Members wanted to be on record saying they liked this idea. When the conferees got their hands on it, they lopped it right out of the bill.

Let me ask the Presiding Officer to hold on to that thought for a moment while I get into another section of the bill. The areas where the House conferees worked up an appetite was when it came to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the so-called Food Stamp Program.

Again, let me commend Senator STABENOW as chairman of the Agriculture Committee. She called me several times to tell me about the battles she had to wage to protect the food stamp program.

Let's talk about the program for a minute. Almost 15 percent of households across America have trouble keeping food on the table. SNAP, the food program, provides 47 million Americans with essential food assistance. Eighty-three percent of the households that receive food stamps include a child or a person with disability or a senior citizen. Nearly 1 million veterans use the Food Stamp Program each year in America.

In Illinois, over 2 million people, almost one in seven residents, rely on SNAP benefits to buy the food they need. Who are these people? Who in the world needs food stamps in a great State such as the State of Illinois? Let me tell you about two or three of them.

One of them was the elderly lady whom I met at the Irving Park Methodist Church food pantry. She was on a walker. She had a very short haircut, suggesting that perhaps she had been through some chemotherapy or radiation. She soldiered her way right up there to get a bag of groceries. She sat down and I talked to her.

I said to her: Can you tell me a little bit about how you are doing.

Sure Senator. I am doing OK. I get \$800 a month in Social Security.

I said: How in the world do you live in Chicago on \$800 a month?

Ain't easy, Senator. Got to pay the rent. Got to pay the utility bills and the basics. She said: I come to this food pantry and one other one. Each one of them gives me 3 days' worth of food. So I get about 1 month, 6 days' worth of food, out of the two food pantries. I thank them for that. I get food stamps worth about \$130 a month.

That is it, folks. That is what she lives on, an elderly person. When the

House Republicans said what we need to do is cut \$40 billion—that was their original recommendation—\$40 billion out of food stamps, they apparently had never met this lady and what she was up against or they might have met a couple of workers whom I had a press conference with on Sunday in Chicago, working full time and qualifying for food stamps. One was a fellow who worked on the west side of Chicago at a used car lot. Does it all, he said—cleans the cars, shovels the lot, sells the cars, and gets paid \$8.25 an hour, which is our State minimum wage—four kids, his wife is sick and cannot work.

He gets food stamps. He needs them to put food on the table for the kids, for a full-time worker at a minimum wage job. Then on the other side was a lady who is a waitress. She told the story of being a single mom. Her son is now 19. She is heading him off to the City College of Chicago. That is a great deal. But she works a job which has a guaranteed minimum wage in Illinois of about \$4.50 an hour. That is what waitresses are guaranteed—tipped wage. Nationally, the tipped wage is \$2.13 an hour. She said: I do not work in a fancy restaurant. I am lucky to come home with \$10 or \$20 in tips in a day.

So do the math. She said: Some days they do not call me in to work. I get nothing. She relies on food stamps too, a woman who is ready to work and works hard, standing all day, waiting tables. So in come the House Republicans saying we need to come down hard on these people, these lazy people on food stamps. I wish they would meet some of those folks who use food stamps to get by, to survive. These people are our neighbors. They are hard-working people who lost their jobs or got sick. They are seniors living on a limited fixed income.

This bill does cut \$8 billion out of SNAP, the Food Stamp Program. I understand the cuts that were made. I think Senator STABENOW and others have done these carefully. I do not want any fraud in this program. She does not either. We think we have tightened it so it will not affect the payments to those who are truly eligible and those who need the help. Yet it will make sure the taxpayers are treated fairly as well.

But look at the contrast. Some of the conferees walked into this hearing and said that farmers who make almost \$1 million a year should not have any reduction in their subsidy for crop insurance, but people such as the lady at the Irving Park Methodist Church food pantry, being paid \$800 a month, we ought to take a hard look at the \$130 a month we give this lady. That is upside down. That does not reflect the values of this country or the priorities we need to face.

I thank the Senator from Michigan. She worked long and hard, was a real

champion when it came to SNAP, the Food Stamp Program. Incidentally, the good news is, as the economy improves and people get back to work, the number of people on food stamps is going down, which is what we want to see. But does it not say something about us as a nation, a caring, compassionate Nation, that we are going to be there to help those families living in our towns and our States, going to our churches, when they are struggling to put food on the table?

Why was that such an inviting target for some of the House conferees? I do not understand that. There is a lot of money that can be saved in government. We do not want to waste a penny of it. But let's focus primarily on those who can afford to pay and are getting a Federal subsidy as opposed to those who are just struggling to get by and are asking for a helping hand. This bill does so much. I could not even start to describe all of the different areas dealing with risk on the farm, key investments in energy and research, ag research, programs to help rural communities grow, and helping those in need.

Most importantly, this reauthorization gives Illinois farmers certainty about farm programs. They need it. That is something they have not had for the last 3 years. I am going to support this bill. I wish we had been able to preserve the provision that Senator COBURN and I included. But I believe, on balance, it is an important step forward in farm country across America.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, as the Senate turns its attention this week to the farm bill conference report, my thoughts turn to the Wild West to put its provisions in context. Frankly, its 950 pages lend themselves to talking about the good, the bad, and the just plain ugly.

I mention the good, because while this farm bill falls far short of gaining my support, it is not entirely without provisions worth highlighting. Conferees, including a one-term extension of the Payments in Lieu of Taxes, or the PILT Program. That gives temporary predictability at least for counties with low tax bases due to Federal land ownership and provides Congress with time to chart a long-term solution in this regard.

In addition, the bill authorizes permanently the stewardship contracting authority. This is a critical land management tool that allows us to proactively reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. It is one I have long called for. While reforms to the liability requirements are also included, the report fails to include necessary flexibility on cancellation ceilings. That is something I will continue to work on in the future.

Sadly, when it comes to the bad, there is not enough time to list all of

the items in the report that should make any lawmaker cringe who is concerned about our crushing national debt or those of us trying to reform agriculture policy.

Rather than truthfully trimming the already generous agriculture safety net, taxpayers should prepare for yet another round of entirely new alphabet soup subsidy programs. The Senator from Illinois explained very well the Crop Insurance Program that is so heavily subsidized, 62 percent.

I think all of us with auto insurance or other types of insurance would love to have that kind of contribution from the Federal Government. This report does not even provide commonsense reforms that limit waste and largess to sustained hallmarks of agriculture subsidies. The report also fails to limit agricultural payments to those who are actually involved in farming.

It cannot even provide a reasonable income limit, as was discussed by the Senator from Illinois, for those who already receive crop insurance subsidies. Incomprehensibly, any renegotiation of the arrangement between crop insurers and the Federal Government would be required to be revenue neutral, despite billions of dollars in taxpayer savings having been found in previous renegotiations.

This bill is purported to be fiscally conservative because it saves \$16 billion or so in tax dollars. Before we pat each other on the back in this regard, we need to remember that Congress has a pretty dismal record of actually knowing how much farm bills are going to cost.

According to Taxpayers for Common Sense, "The last two farms bills are on pace to exceed their Congressional Budget Office score by more than \$400 billion, and there's no assurance that this farm bill will be any different."

Let's get to the ugly. For years, direct payments have been one of the clearest signs of what needs to be changed in Federal spending. The Federal Government has been handing out roughly \$5 billion a year to farmers regardless of whether they are farming the land. I want to pay tribute to the Senator from Michigan who has fought to end these direct payments.

The Senate did a pretty good job there, but the House did not. I myself have long sought to end these direct payments. I was encouraged with the Senate action to end these payments outright. But despite our fiscal situation, the best we could get in the House was allowing direct payments to continue, albeit slightly reduced for cotton, for 2014 and 2015.

This conference report purports to end direct payments but ends them in name only for cotton. Let's be clear. It simply renames direct payments for cotton for 2 years. They will now be called transition payments. Cotton growers will continue to receive payments until—wait for it—the other new

subsidy programs created in this report come online.

Perhaps, instead of western movies, I should have conjured up images of Shakespeare to describe this fiscal tragedy: a government-funded handout by another name is still a government-funded handout. It is also worth recalling that when originally created in 1996, in the 1996 farm bill, direct payments went by the name AMTA payments or Agricultural Market Transition Assistance payments.

It would appear that for some commodities, there will always be a transition from something to something else that will result in a taxpayer-funded handout.

According to the CBO score, the report actually takes the zero cost from the Senate proposal and the \$443 million cost from the House proposal and compromises at a higher cost of \$556 million in 2015. That is some compromise, to go well above both the House and the Senate numbers.

While the 10-year score for the transition payments in the report is lower than the House proposal, the first-year costs are actually higher. It is at this point that one can simply stop being surprised at what will happen when it comes to farm subsidies. Sadly, rather than a blockbuster of fiscal sanity, taxpayers are going to be saddled with what looks to be another rerun of missed opportunities to reform Federal agricultural policy. Although livestock groups have decried the absence of fixes to ongoing regulatory problems, and fiscal conservatives are chafing at the continued waste in spending, this report is still likely to be adopted.

There are other issues addressed, and I am pleased that some of this will end up on the President's desk, but I cannot support this conference report. I will continue to push for real fiscal discipline and sound agricultural policy.

I should note I remember when I first came to Congress, or about 1 year after, I came to the floor of the House to rail against the farm bill at that time, the 2002 reauthorization. We had gone in the 1990s from the Freedom to Farm Act to the Farm Security Act. For those of us conservatives who talk about moving from freedom to security and all that means, that was actually in the title of the bill, and we haven't improved much since that time. That was more than a decade ago. I have to say we should have made progress that was simply not made in this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. I rise today to discuss legislation that benefits all Americans, and particularly my home State of Ohio.

I appreciate Senator FLAKE's comments. I admire his integrity and his focus on waste in government for the decade or so that I have known him—

longer than that. I think he makes good points in this legislation. We come down on different sides in the end. Some of the things he had talked about, eliminating a lot of direct payments, were especially important and were made possible by legislation Senator THUNE and I introduced.

This is an ongoing process to improve this bill every year. Every 5 years I am hopeful we can do that. I thank Senator FLAKE for his comments.

This bill is bipartisan. It reduces the deficit, it helps farms, helps families, helps our economy, and it helps our environment. It saves 23 billion taxpayer dollars. It provides certainty and support to one of the Nation's largest job creators, agriculture. Food and agriculture together are about one in seven jobs in Ohio. Agriculture-related businesses such as food processing, fertilizer and feed sales also are part of Ohio's largest industry.

I thank Senator COCHRAN and Senator STABENOW for getting us to this point. They have been dogged in their support for our Nation's farmers and our rural communities.

I have spoken with Ohio's corn and soybean growers, as well as members of the Ohio Farm Bureau. On Friday I spoke and met with a group of 300 farmers, members of the Ohio Farmers Union, in Columbus. They have told me the importance of passing a 5-year farm bill. They especially emphasized the certainty, finally, of this bill. They can make the planning and planting decisions that business people and farmers need.

I have traveled across Ohio's 88 counties and listened to farmers from Minster to Millersburg, who have told me they want a leaner, more efficient, and market-oriented farm safety net. Taxpayers deserve that too.

This bill is a reform farm bill. It eliminates direct farm payments, links crop insurance to conservation compliance, and it reforms our risk management programs—all important things in agriculture policy.

Ohio farmers were clear they wanted a farm bill that eliminated those direct payments and provided the risk management tools they needed when times are bad, but without the market-distorting policies that ensure farmers are planting for the program and not the market. Unfortunately, that was happening far too often.

In the last 6 or 7 years during my time in the Senate, leading up to the 2007-2008 farm bill and the 2013-2014 farm bill, I held some 25 roundtables with farmers and rural development people around my State. Working with my colleagues Senator THUNE and Senator DURBIN, we were able to streamline the farm safety net and make it more market oriented. Our bill, the Aggregate Risk and Revenue Management Act, is the basis for the Agricultural Risk Coverage Program, which was in-

cluded in the commodity title. By reforming commodity programs to better align with the market instead of simply sending out checks—even when times were good and in many cases to people who don't need them—this bill will provide farmers with increased risk management tools while improving the integrity of these programs.

The bill incorporates many portions of the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act that I introduced. We know too many farmers struggle to find local markets for their products. Too many Ohioans are also unable to access fresh and affordable food. This legislation helps to put them together. Whether by improving Farmers Market Promotion program, or the Value Added Producers grant, this bill makes a significant investment in local and regional food production and marketing.

We know what has happened in rural America in terms of development. While agricultural prices have been such that farmers have been prosperous enough and that many in rural America are doing OK, rural development is still an issue as people move out of the these communities looking for jobs.

Whether it is bringing broadband to southeast Ohio or a water and sewer project in Henry County or a low-interest loan to Buckeye Power, this bill will make sure rural communities have the tools, the programs, and capital that they need to succeed.

My State is home to approximately 130 companies that use agricultural crops to make new biobased products, ranging from natural pet foods to paint, soy ink, toner, and plastics. Last week, USDA Secretary Vilsack and I toured a Columbus plastics factory, where they are working to make more of their products with biobased feedstocks instead of oil. We know what that means for renewable energy in our State. Our homegrown products can replace imported oil in our everyday products. This is a win for our local economies and for Ohio farmers.

We also know the importance of helping young farmers. If someone goes to any farm organization meeting, farmers are typically in their fifties, sixties, and seventies. We don't see enough in their twenties, thirties, and forties. In this legislation, we will help to recruit, train, and retrain the next generation of farmers. That is part of this conference report. USDA needs to redouble its efforts, particularly in making capital available, and ensure that young and beginning farmers are able to succeed.

The bill streamlines and, in my opinion, improves USDA's conservation programs. That is so important in the western Lake Erie basin of the Great Lakes. We have seen what has happened with algae blooms east of Toledo along places like Port Clinton and Sandusky. It is reaching almost as far east as Lorain. We are seeing the problems

it causes to water quality, recreation, tourism, and to development along the lake that is so important.

The House wanted, on the SNAP issue, to slash food stamps by \$40 billion. We fought back. Our conference committee rejected every proposal passed by the House to cut off the assistance to workers and their families who have fallen on very hard times. When we couple what some in this body want to do with cutting unemployment, failing to extend unemployment insurance, failing to raise the minimum wage, making huge cuts in Food Stamp Programs, this was a huge victory in our conference committee.

This bill needs to pass. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to pass it and send it to President Obama so he can sign this bill at the end of this week or the beginning of next week.

Before I leave the floor, I do want to speak in great detail about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, and the nutrition title of the bill. SNAP benefits are very modest and are essential part of our nation's social safety net. The average SNAP household gets just over \$9 a day in benefits or \$1.46 per person per meal. Yet, for people that are food insecure, SNAP is the difference between putting food on the table or going hungry.

When there is an economic downturn, SNAP responds to support those who need assistance: the elderly, children, and working families. When we last strengthened the program in the 2008 farm bill, we ensured that a strong SNAP was there for families and communities. We saw the caseload rise from 28 million people in 2008 to over 47 million people today.

Too often, we forget that those who rely on SNAP are real people, and not just some statistic. I want to tell you about a couple of those people. Doris, from Reynoldsburg, is a 60-year-old who was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer in 2009. The doctors only gave her 6 months to live, but nearly 5 years later, she continues to fight. Because of her illness, she had to quit her work and she lost her health insurance. Doris has worked all her life and saves the little money she has to pay her bills and rent on time. Since she is on disability, she is eligible to receive \$16 a month in SNAP benefits. After the cuts to the program that went into effect on November 1, her benefit is now \$10 per month. She's too young to collect Social Security, so each week she and a friend drive to Columbus to the Mid-Ohio food bank for fresh produce.

Roxanne lives in northeast Ohio and is a home-health aide. She's a single mother and has four growing children under the age of 17. Roxanne works more than 60 hours per week, but relies on SNAP to help her make ends meet and ensure her children have enough to eat. For the past 3 years she has received about \$400 per month; after the

November cut to SNAP, her family now receives \$335 per month. Unfortunately, this usually only lasts through the third week of the month. As she has tried to stretch her income, she has been forced to choose between serving her family healthy fruits and vegetables or ordering off the dollar menu at a fast food restaurant. Roxanne never thought she would be in a situation where she would have to rely on a food pantry to help her feed her family.

I am proud that we were able to maintain a robust and responsive nutrition assistance program. The conference has rejected every proposal passed by the House to cutoff assistance to workers and their families who have fallen on very hard times. Rather than arbitrarily impose new and harsher time limits on how long unemployed workers may receive SNAP benefits, the bill strengthens SNAP employment and training program capacity. It provides modest but meaningful improvements in program administration and clarifies and codifies technical but important aspects of eligibility policy. The bill supports new anti-fraud initiatives, requires strong but efficient data matching in program administration, and supports keeping program retail operations up-to-date with the evolving food retailing environment.

There has been criticism about this bill's SNAP savings—which are far more modest than the House's proposal to cut \$40 billion from SNAP. I appreciate these concerns. This bill achieves savings by correcting a quirk in the SNAP benefit calculation that allows some State agencies to give households higher benefits by allowing them to deduct more income from their shelter costs.

SNAP benefits are based on the size of the household and how much money it has available to buy food. This amount is determined by subtracting out essential costs that households must pay and cannot use to buy groceries. For example, households with high shelter costs relative to their income have less money for buying food. Shelter costs include rent or mortgage payments and the cost of utilities such as heating and cooling. Rather than trying to document each household's utility costs over the course of a year, the rules allow States to set a standard utility allowance, "standard allowance," for households with these expenses. This standardization enormously reduces the time and paperwork required to calculate income. Almost every State uses the standard allowance, and most require it to be used to budget utility costs and do not allow any option to claim actual expenses.

Program rules have long recognized that the receipt of Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, aid is a simple method of determining if households incur utility costs. A few States have authorized

households to receive negligible LIHEAP assistance—generally only \$1—merely to get them higher benefits. This was not the intention of connecting the standard allowance to LIHEAP. This bill closes this loophole by requiring that a family's LIHEAP payment must be at least \$20 in order to qualify for the standard allowance solely on the LIHEAP connection. LIHEAP funds are very limited and at this dollar level States would no longer be able to fund the broad-based benefits for SNAP households that some now offer.

This change does not affect anyone in my State of Ohio, but I recognize that this will not be an easy adjustment for households that are affected. I expect that the Department will ensure that State agencies do not summarily deny the standard allowance to households that received a nominal LIHEAP payment. State agencies and the USDA must work with families so they can determine whether they have any heating or cooling costs that would qualify for the standard allowance regardless of LIHEAP. These costs are most likely a bill from a utility company, but could be a charge from a landlord.

As I have said, this farm bill ends the policy whereby some States give \$1 of payment to most if not all SNAP households. I am concerned that many if not most of these households really do have heating and cooling costs and need the standard allowance to get an adequate and correct benefit. So I expect that USDA will work with State agencies to ensure that households have a meaningful opportunity to claim these costs so that they get the right amount of benefits.

Finally, I'm concerned about the very quick implementation requirement for this provision. If a State is not able to implement within 30 days, I don't think SNAP households should be held responsible. I hope that my friend Secretary Vilsack will find a way to ensure that households who may continue to receive higher benefits because the State agency was not able to implement this policy change within 30 days will not be held accountable for mistakes arising from such an aggressive implementation schedule.

There are a number of other provisions that do not result in benefit cuts to households, but change eligibility rules or codify common practices. I would like to turn to them now.

The title codifies longstanding SNAP student eligibility policy. While SNAP remains unavailable to most college students, low-income people on SNAP who are trying to gain skills and credentials needed for immediate employment can access SNAP.

Historically, most college students have not been eligible for SNAP and this bill does nothing to expand their eligibility. But at a time when workers need to continually acquire new and

better job skills, States have concluded that many participants can be best served by enhancing their vocational skills through training offered by State career and technical education networks. These networks offer training and education that aims at enabling students to keep or qualify for new jobs. Many times the programs are offered by community colleges which are considered part of the higher education system. I want to be sure that SNAP State education and training programs can connect SNAP recipients to this type of vocational education because in the long run it has the greatest potential to help people achieve lasting self-sufficiency. Giving people a stark choice between putting food on the table today or getting a job credential that will help them get a job tomorrow is counterproductive. By helping people stay in a vocational program, we can support them so they can better support themselves.

The bill clearly stipulates that the farm bill can support this type of education, and that students in these courses can continue to get food assistance. This reinforcement of current policy is an opportunity for the Department to work more closely with State agencies to establish better connectivity with their State career and technical networks to strengthen energy and training programs. We want worker training programs that will help people learn the skills necessary to get the good paying job they want so they will no longer need SNAP benefits. In the long run, this is a much better investment than supporting programs that result in procedural sanctions that churn households on and off the program in the short run but do little to improve self-sufficiency in the long run. Another provision tightens eligibility policy to make sure that people who enjoy substantial lottery or gambling winnings are ineligible for SNAP and will not become eligible until such time as they meet the normal income and resource standards for SNAP. This provision responds to a few isolated instances in which a SNAP recipient reaped a State lottery windfall. While such cases are extremely rare, we want to be certain that they are taken into account.

I expect that the Department will construct rules that will target these extraordinary cases without burdening State agency workers and recipients with unproductive reports. The first issue is how to define "substantial." I believe the intent of Congress was to identify really extraordinary windfalls that change lifestyles, and not winnings that reflect good fortune but will be rapidly dissipated by paying major bills or addressing overdue car or home repair issues.

Crucial to implementing this is how the State SNAP agency learns about these winnings. This bill requires State

SNAP agencies to work with any in-State gaming authorities to establish a mechanism to report substantial winnings. We envision a process that will rely entirely on agency-to-agency reports. Our intent is twofold. First, the only truly reliable source of this information will be the State gaming or lottery commission. It will offer much more dependable and authoritative information about winnings than recipient reports. Second, we want to avoid cluttering notices on responsibilities for reporting and action on changes with items about extraordinarily rare events such as a lottery windfall. This would run the risk of distracting participants from reporting much more frequent and important events such as changes in income and household membership. We want to maintain reporting requirements that are sharp, clear, focused, and short. We do not intend for this provision to trigger any additional household reporting or require additional questions on application and certification forms.

Another issue is regaining eligibility for those who had enough winnings to be disqualified from SNAP. The bill provides for applying the regular financial eligibility standards to these households if they apply for SNAP again. We intend this to mean the normal gross and net income eligibility guidelines and the dollar-limited resource eligibility thresholds specified in the Food and Nutrition Act, and expect that normal verification rules will be applied.

The bill reinforces policy on the eligibility of felons. Felons fleeing from law enforcement or violating their parole or probation are ineligible for SNAP. This bill highlights the ineligibility of those felons convicted of crimes such as murder and armed robbery who violate their parole or probation. Ex-offenders who have completed their sentences and comply with any parole conditions placed on their release, and who are otherwise eligible for food assistance through SNAP, remain eligible for assistance. But persons on the run from justice after committing one of these crimes should not be eligible based solely on technicalities about how the crimes are designated under some jurisdiction's criminal code.

This provision should not affect current application procedures which ask applicants about fleeing felon and probation violation issues. Rather, we believe that eligibility workers must receive clear guidance on especially serious crimes that should be treated as felonies.

The bill addresses program integrity concerns about multiple requests for electronic benefit transfer, EBT, card replacements. EBT cards are routinely replaced for a wide variety of valid reasons. State agencies need to be able to quickly replace them so families can

continue to buy food. A small number of households frequently request replacement cards; we are concerned that a small subset of these households may be misusing their cards and benefits. The bill aims to require States to seek explanations from households with an excessive number of card replacement requests while preserving strong procedural protections for households. We envision it to work as follows: USDA is required to set a standard for excessive requests for card replacements. I think that the floor should not be fewer than 4 replacements over the course of a year. States must seek explanations from households that exceed this threshold as to why another card is needed prior to re-issuing a card. The process must allow households the opportunity to immediately provide the explanation because of the critical importance of maintaining access to food assistance. Any delay in working with the household freezes their food purchasing. I expect the Department to monitor this process and examine how long households are going without cards. Even if a State's computer lists the household as eligible, if it cannot access its benefits, it might as well not be. Any policy that denies a household effective food assistance should be treated as the equivalent of an eligibility cut-off.

Replacement cards can be needed for a wide range of legitimate reasons. Cards can be stolen, damaged, or simply lost. Some people may not understand that the cards are reusable, or may confuse a PIN problem with a card problem. Because some people are particularly vulnerable to these problems, this bill requires that rules will establish protections for persons with disabilities, homeless persons, and crime victims. Some people with disabilities may require accommodations or authorized representatives.

The bill does not allow for using this process to suspend or terminate SNAP participation. Program rules spell out procedural standards for acting on evidence of intentional program violations. These standards enable State agencies to pursue recipient fraud in a manner that protects the due process rights of the accused. If a State believes that its evidence about multiple card replacements indicates an intentional program violation, it must replace the card and use its established disqualification procedures such as administrative disqualification hearings or court actions. It cannot force a household member to submit to an interview in order to get access to its benefits.

I want to highlight two areas where the bill provides more resources to improve program integrity. First, we are giving the Department more resources to enhance its retail store monitoring through more data mining and analysis. We recognize that the Department

has been actively using its data base of retailer transactions and want to enable more activity in this area.

Second, we're authorizing funding for Federal-State partnerships to implement pilot projects to combat trafficking. I expect that the Department will seek and select State agencies that demonstrate sound and fair procedures for determining fraud.

The bill has several provisions that I worked on that will better link SNAP retailer policy to evolutions in retail technology and marketing. The Secretary is authorized to test the use of mobile technologies in SNAP. This could really help SNAP customers shop at retailers such as farmers markets and vegetable stands that are unable to install traditional debit card machines but may be able to connect to smart phone applications. This provision was included in my Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act. But as we expand ways to accept benefits, we must maintain program integrity. That is why we are starting with a pilot project to test mobile technology in SNAP, including protections for recipients such as bans on any food price markups. We expect USDA to carefully examine program integrity issues as part of a required feasibility report, and would not expect any expansion of mobile technology unless the report shows a satisfactory level of integrity. The Department needs rock solid means of ensuring that mobile devices approved for a seemingly legitimate retailer do not end up in disqualified or other dishonest retailers' facilities.

This bill also allows pilot projects to test the feasibility of allowing the online purchase of food with SNAP benefits. More retailers are offering food delivery based on an online transaction. Food delivery can make the program more accessible to individuals who may have trouble getting out to shop. Again, any new way of redeeming benefits must meet high program integrity standards. The bill specifies that the Department must stop any growth of online transactions if we can't achieve the strong level of integrity that we expect. While the provision makes clear that delivery fees associated with online purchases may not be paid with SNAP benefits, I also expect USDA to set standards for the fees to ensure no adverse effect on food security. If consumers are paying an inordinate amount for delivery or other fees this could undermine food security. Most SNAP recipients are expected to spend a considerable amount of their own money to buy a nutritionally adequate diet, and if they are paying large delivery fees they may not be able to do that.

I would like to point out that in the mainstream retail environment these new mobile and online technologies do not rely on photo identification or other biometric information to author-

ize payments and maintain integrity, nor do standard credit or debit card transactions. A longstanding principle of SNAP benefit use has been that the SNAP retail transaction should look like any other debit card transaction to customers and retailers. I am concerned that USDA has approved State requirements for photos on SNAP cards to be presented at the point of purchase. This is not a condition for a regular credit or debit transactions—in many if not most cases, cardholders swipe their own cards without handing them over to a cashier. The SNAP retail environment should be consistent with general practice. The Department's regulations provide that, and they ought to be enforced.

While benefits have been issued and used successfully through EBT cards for years, there have been a few instances when cards failed to operate. In the event of a natural disaster or a major crash of the EBT system, participants may be in even greater need of assistance and must be able to use their benefits to purchase food. This requires the capacity to quickly and efficiently issue manual vouchers to affected individuals. We expect USDA to allow a switch to manual vouchers when EBT card use is undermined by major systems failures or natural disasters. States must be able to understand the criteria for issuing vouchers so that they can act quickly when a problem threatens access to food assistance, such as the cancellation of cards affected by a data breach.

The bill requires State agencies to use the Department of Homeland Security system to validate immigration status. This system—the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements—is already used by most State agencies. This bill does not change immigrant eligibility, or require anything new or different from applicants in the certification process.

The bill also requires States to have a system for verifying income and eligibility. SNAP has longstanding, rigorous, and specific verification standards. We intend that States have a system for verification and believe that all now do. We are not mandating the imposition of any specific matching requirements such as the match requirements under section 1137 of the Social Security Act. These matches were required 20 years ago and were not productive. We made them optional in the 1996 welfare reform legislation and intend that they remain optional. We expect States will employ verification systems that employ timely and useful matches with reliable sources of data.

One of the most important measures in the bill is authority and funding for pilot projects to enhance the Employment and Training Program. This bill provides support for up to ten projects and a rigorous independent evaluation of the impact of the projects on SNAP receipt, employment, and earnings.

I know that all of my colleagues share the goal of seeing more Americans earning enough so they do not need SNAP. I believe that this is best achieved through strong work programs, and not arbitrarily cutting off food benefits to people who can't find jobs. People are not choosing unemployment and SNAP over gainful employment. There simply aren't enough jobs. The ratio of the number of unemployed persons to relative to the number of job openings has been improving steadily but remains at historically high levels—about 3 unemployed people for every job opening. As a comparison, when the recent recession started this ratio was 1.8 unemployed people per job. So I think we need to do more to help SNAP participants successfully compete for the increasing number of jobs that we hope will be there as the economy continues to recover.

Employment and Training, E&T, has been a component of SNAP since 1987, but very little is known about its efficacy. E&T has afforded States substantial flexibility to design work programs and leverage Federal matching funds. The result has been a wide variation in the types and scope of services offered. While the most prevalent components are job search and job search training, followed by workfare, more States are offering career and technical education in recognition that many SNAP participants need significant skill building and education. In terms of funding, some States invest substantial amount of State funds to realize the Federal match, while many States rely exclusively on the 100 percent Federal grant to fund program components. So we have a program with huge variations but we don't know what works. And because we are not confident that we are getting results, fiscal support for the program has been tepid; the basic Federal grant was \$75 million in 1987 and is only \$79 million today.

What we do know is that SNAP reaches a very large number of employable low-income people. E&T presents a real opportunity to reach these Americans with better services. And this is a population we need to reach more effectively. A recent report by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia shows that low-income workers were much less likely to get skills training than better off workers. In other words, the people who most need training the most are the least likely to get it. So we need to do a better job of reaching low-income workers with training opportunities, and make sure that the services offered can help people get ahead.

What we want to do here is test different approaches to work and training programs and find which produce the best results. For far too long, we've reauthorized this program because we all want SNAP participants to be better

off, but we haven't invested in learning if we are succeeding or how we can do better.

We envision a comprehensive approach to choosing the pilot projects that will incorporate a range of services and serve a range of SNAP recipients with different needs. This does not mean that every pilot must serve a wide range of participants with a wide range of services, but rather that USDA will approve a group of pilot proposals that as a whole will provide different services and reach different types of participants. The bill specifies that the pilots as a whole must reach able-bodied adults without dependents, people with low skills or very limited work experience, and people who are already employed.

Current law requires State E&T programs to be coordinated with their statewide workforce development systems. We expect that these pilots will at least be coordinated, and hopefully leverage existing infrastructure such as one-stop career centers and career and technical education networks. The bill provides for contributing funds from Federal, State, or private sources.

I want to briefly touch on employed persons who get SNAP. These are people who have shown that they can get a job but are not earning enough to make ends meet without help from SNAP. So we are interested in approaches that can help the working poor improve their circumstances. While hopefully many people will earn enough to no longer need or qualify for SNAP, others may increase their earned income but remain eligible for a smaller SNAP benefit. But they will be better off, and program costs will be reduced.

In many cases, stronger work supports could enable people to get a job or work more hours at their current job. For example, if some parents had better childcare, they may be able to take jobs that offer longer hours or better wages. Similarly, transportation support such as bus or transit passes may enable people to take a first job or get a better job. In many cases, people may be able to qualify for jobs without further training, but can't take the jobs because of issues like child care. So I see work supports—particularly child care—as a very promising E&T component that some pilot projects could support. I also believe increasing the minimum wage will help low-wage workers, but I will speak more on that issue at a later date.

Pilots may also test private sector employment as a component. This may be subsidized or unsubsidized employment. We expect USDA to ensure that any employment components adhere to the full range of worker protection standards in the Food and Nutrition Act and in other laws on issues such as workplace safety and health, wages and hours, workman's compensation, and

family leave. In addition, the Department should examine whether any additional protections are needed.

If employment components are presented as an E&T requirement, new issues arise around sanctions because the State agency may not know the circumstances when an assignment does not work out. But the basic principle holds: no one should be sanctioned unless he or she willfully refused an assignment without good cause. People may not be able to keep up with jobs because of changes in schedules, transportation, child care, or sometimes because they lack the skills that an employer wants. None of these situations should lead to a sanction. Current program rules have addressed situations such as transportation and child care problems. In an employment component, a new issue arises if people are dismissed for a lack of competence. There is a real difference between refusing to work and not being able to work competently. If people are not working out in a job, maybe they need more training. Maybe they would be better in a different job. They do not deserve a sanction. We expect that State agencies—not employers—will make these decisions based on policies set out by the Department that address very specific criteria for when a sanction may be invoked in an employment component.

To get the best results from pilot projects, I think that individual assessment of participants is going to be important to get people in the right component. Pilots need to assess people's work history, education, skills, and child care and transportation situation to understand which component can help them the most. I expect the Department to examine assessment procedures as part of its monitoring. We see a strong independent evaluation as critical to the success of these pilots. The Department may use project funds for this purpose, as well as for Federal costs of managing the projects and any evaluation contracts. We expect that the evaluation will look at the impacts of different interventions such as job search, workfare, vocational training, and remedial education on different types of SNAP recipients in different local labor markets. Most importantly, we expect that the study will identify impacts on SNAP receipt and impacts on employment and earnings, including whether reductions in SNAP are attributable to higher earnings. The bill also allows the Department to authorize State-initiated reviews of their projects which can supplement the Federal evaluation.

I am pleased that these pilots strengthen the work component of SNAP without creating incentives to end assistance for people who can't find work or curtailing the ability of States with struggling labor markets economies to secure waivers of current time

limits. Pilot participation by participants may be mandatory or voluntary. It is my understanding that if participation is mandatory, an individual who fails to comply with any work requirements may lose his or her SNAP benefits under the same rules that would have applied if she or he committed the same acts while assigned to the E&T program instead of the pilot. As the bill authorizes unsubsidized work as an allowable pilot activity for the first time, we expect the Secretary to issue guidance describing what I think are very limited circumstances under which a working person who loses a job could be sanctioned. Only if a person willfully refuses to continue a job without good cause should sanction policy come into play.

I turn now to some other modest improvements in program implementation.

The bill requires State agencies to use the Department of Health and Human Services' National Directory of New Hires to check on whether SNAP applicants have jobs. Currently States may use this data base to check on the employment of SNAP recipients. The bill requires States to check the National Directory data when a household applies for SNAP to enhance eligibility determinations. There is no expectation of matching during the period of certification. We expect the Secretary to issue rules to set standards to ensure that State matching practices are efficient and effective. As an example, it would seem prudent to focus matches on employable household members and not spend time and money on matches with children, elderly, and disabled members. The Secretary should work with the Department of Health and Human Services to fashion rules that balance the potential gains in payment accuracy with State administrative costs.

More Federal programs are implementing standards for exchanging information in an automated environment. This bill requires SNAP to develop these standards. More electronic data exchanges can help both participants and administrators. However, the strong privacy and confidentiality requirements of the Food and Nutrition Act must be preserved.

The bill tightens policy on using funds for program informational activities while preserving the authority to get information out so that people can make informed choices about the program. Let us review a little history. In the 1996 welfare reform law, we prohibited using Federal funds for recruitment. The idea was that support for information about the availability of help for grocery bills was okay, but we did not want to cross a line to persuade people to enroll if they already had learned about the program and decided to forego benefits.

Over the last decade, we have made enormous strides to extend food assistance to eligible families. USDA, States, and a wide range of community organizations have worked hard to inform low-income people about the availability of SNAP. And as we have changed the name of the program from the Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and States have branded their own programs differently, the need to get out clear information has never been greater. I want to commend USDA and its partners inside and outside government for helping to make SNAP a more effective anti-hunger program. In this bill we have drawn some bright lines for the Secretary to use in funding information efforts. First, no support for partnerships with foreign governments. Second, no contracts based on “bounties” that tie compensation to the number of people enrolled. And finally, re-affirmation that recruitment is not a legitimate activity for SNAP funding. I think the first points are clear and want to expand on the last one. Giving people information about the availability and benefits of the program to enable them to make informed choices about managing family food budgets to put enough food on the table is a legitimate use of Federal funds. If it crosses over into pushing people who have made an informed choice not to apply to apply, then we have a recruitment situation that the Conferees do not support. As long as households have the knowledge and access to participate if they so desire, what they actually decide is up to them.

Providing positive information about the program and why or how to apply or assisting them in navigating a complex application process is not recruitment and remains an allowable activity and cost. We expect SNAP to continue to provide people with the information they need to make informed decisions about participation, while ensuring that all funds for public information are used responsibly and judiciously.

Finally, I would like to raise a problem about issuance that this legislation does not address—because we thought that earlier legislation did. Staggered issuance refers to spreading the issuance dates for loading benefits on to EBT cards over a period of time—generally 10 but sometimes 15 days or more. This way you don’t have so many SNAP households shopping on the same day. It benefits both retailers and their customers because stores are less crowded. The Food and Nutrition Act provides two key participant safeguards when a State agency moves to staggered issuance: first, no household can go beyond 40 days without an allotment, and, second, no household’s allotment may be reduced for any period. I have become aware that the Depart-

ment has been approving plans that recognize only one of these provisions; plans simply extend some households for 40 days between issuances. This means that an allotment designed to cover 30 days must now cover 40 days. Benefits are simply inadequate to stretch this far.

When a 30 day benefit must be stretched over 40 days, the daily benefit is clearly reduced. And since we eat every day, the daily benefit is a meaningful measure of benefit reduction. I am troubled that this important protection in issuance law is seemingly being ignored, and urge the Department to re-examine this situation and require supplemental issuances when States are implementing staggered issuance. Staggered issuance should be beneficial to all concerned. It should not increase hunger during transition months. Referrals to food banks during those months are a poor use of food bank resources and completely unnecessary given the act’s requirement that households not suffer a loss of benefits—which having to stretch the same allotment over a longer period certainly is. Food banks are already being stretched thin and it should not be policy for SNAP recipients to rely on local food banks because benefits are stretched over this longer time period.

All in all, this farm bill represents 2 years of hard work by both Agricultural Committees. The nutrition title is not my ideal; the benefit reductions obtained by requiring significant utility assistance in order to qualify for the standard utility allowance will be painful for those households affected by it. But I believe it is a narrowly targeted way of strengthening the program, and with other modest improvements, makes the title worth supporting. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, it is my understanding Senator BENNET is going to be due here shortly. I should be done by that time and ask unanimous consent that I take about 15 minutes of Senator CORNYN’s time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, January 2014 may go down on record as the coldest of the months in United States history. Between the freezing temperatures from last week’s polar vortex storms, much of the Nation experienced record cold weather at least once or twice, and this has been going on

now for the last 3 years. While we won’t have official nationwide temperature data for January for a few more weeks, we do have preliminary figures. Throughout the entire month, over 2,387 daily cold temperature records were set around the country, and many of those were in my State of Oklahoma. At least 49 of these daily records occurred on January 6 and 7 when the first round of the polar vortex hit. In Tulsa yesterday it went down to 2 below zero. That was a recordbreaker—that had held since 1912. That was the last time it got that cold. The same day in Enid, OK, it got down to minus 3. In Bartlesville—and this may be wrong, but the figure showed it was actually minus 14, making it even colder than the South Pole, where it was only minus 11.

The cold weather is continuing into February. Many schools canceled classes today around the State of Oklahoma because of the cold weather. It snowed more than 2½ inches in Tulsa yesterday, 5.2 inches in Henryetta, just south of Tulsa.

There was an article in the Daily Oklahoman. They have a great zoo over there, but they reported that the grizzly bears refused to go outside their habitat yesterday because it was too cold.

I know many in the media cry foul when I talk about global warming when it gets cold outside, but is this really any different from the President talking about global warming on a hot day in June of last year when he announced his climate action plan? No one seemed to mind that, but there seems to be a different set of rules when we talk about how cold it has been, which it has been for the last 3 years.

When we experience extreme cold like we have had the last few weeks, everyone in their right mind takes a step back and wonders if global warming is really happening. When you look at the facts, you just have to wonder. Consider this quote from the journal *Nature*, which stated that over the last 15 years, “the observed [temperature] trend is . . . not significantly different from zero [and] suggests a temporary ‘hiatus’ in global warming.”

This is something that has been a pattern for a long period of time. I can recall—and I am going from memory now—from the time they started keeping these temperatures, we started the first cold spell of recent history in 1895, and that lasted until 1918; 1918 turned into another warming area that went to 1945; and 1945 to 1975 was again another cooling spell and, of course, from 1975 to 2000. So we know what has been happening.

The President has not acknowledged this fact. In fact, on multiple occasions he has said—and this is something he has said over and over—“the temperature around the globe is increasing

faster than was predicted even 10 years ago." Unfortunately for his talking points, the data that has been reported in *Nature* magazine, the Economist, and even in the United Nations IPCC report shows that is just simply not true.

Two weeks ago, in a hearing we had in the Environment and Public Works Committee, my friend Senator SESSIONS pressed EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy on this point, asking her whether the President's statement was true. Ultimately, after running around the question for a few minutes, she said, "I can't answer that." You may not think this is an important fact, but it is. The President's entire climate action plan and efforts to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are built fully on the fact that global warming is happening and that we are all going to die if we don't do something about it.

What we all need to be aware of is that the impact of the President's climate action plan, when implemented, will be stunning. It will completely adopt global warming policies and the implementation of regulations like cap and trade. The President has already done a stunning amount of this work already. We have been able to uncover that in the first 4 years he was in office, he actually spent—and people are not aware of this—\$110 billion of taxpayer money on global warming-related activities.

The cap-and-trade legislation we have debated over the last 10 years carries a price tag of \$300 billion to \$400 billion a year. It would have been the largest tax increase in American history. It was soundly defeated—a bill in the Senate—but through the climate action plan the President is now trying to accomplish by regulation what he couldn't achieve through legislation.

We have heard the term "the imperial President" being used recently. Well, listen to what was stated in the State of the Union Message, and these are the words he used: "We are going to set new standards on carbon pollution from power plants." What he is saying is this: We couldn't pass it for 12 years with four bills to do that. We can't get more than 25 percent of the Members to vote for it, so we are going to do it through regulation.

The first round of greenhouse gas regulations was proposed in the first week in January. These regulations, if finalized, would impose strict regulations on new powerplants that would make it impossible to build a coal-fired powerplant. You may wonder: Do we really need coal anymore with all the new energy we have coming onto the market, with the natural gas and the shale deposits and all that? The answer is yes.

Before I go into that discussion, I think it is important to point out a problem with the timing of the new

rules proposal. I had a chart here—I don't have it with me right now—that showed that when I was ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee—and this would have been way back in October 2012—we released a report highlighting the administration's actions to delay the finalization of costly environmental regulations until after the 2012 Presidential elections. Whether it was the farm dust rule or the ozone standard, the President punted regulation after regulation until after the election to minimize the influence it would have on voters. It appears that is exactly what is happening today with the first round of greenhouse gas regulations for the construction of new powerplants.

As we know, under the Clean Air Act new rules for powerplants must be finalized within 1 year of the proposal's publication in the Federal Register—that is what kicks it off, when it is written in the Federal Register—or the proposed rule is invalidated. This is important because after announcing his climate action plan, the President ordered the EPA to "issue a new proposal by no later than September 20, 2013." The EPA proposed a new rule on September 20, but it did not publish in the Federal Register until January 8, 2014—this past January. Had the EPA published this rule in the Register on the same day they proposed it on September 20, 2013, they would have been forced to finalize the rule by September 20, 2014, which would be 6 weeks before the 2014 elections.

This reveals an astounding double standard and is consistent with the remarks made at the State of the Union. On the one hand, the President says we don't have time to delay action on global warming. He says we must act before it is too late. But on the other hand, his actions show that it is OK to wait to finalize rules that will harm the economy until after the elections. Ultimately, this hypocrisy reveals that the administration is fully aware that the EPA's greenhouse gas regulations will put a drag on the economy, and now that we are starting to see strains of our electricity markets develop, the cost is becoming real to consumers.

Consider American Electric Power, one of the country's largest electric companies. They are the ones that actually supply the power for my State of Oklahoma. Last week, during the recent cold weather, they reported they were running 89 percent of the coal generation they scheduled to retire in 2015. But these coal-fired powerplants, which were critical to keeping homes all around the country warm during these cold temperatures, are going to be shut down because of President Obama's environmental regulations.

American Electric Power said: What it should make everyone think about is, what are we going to do when the generation is not available? We need to

be thinking about reliability and resilience in extreme times, not just the status quo.

If this recent cold weather occurs again in a year or two from now, once these plants are shut down, there simply will not be enough electricity available to keep homes and businesses warm. If cold weather pushes electricity demand up to the point where remaining powerplants are overloaded—the ones that haven't been shut down by the President—it could result in massive blackouts, and when Americans need their electricity it won't be there. It would be as if we were living in the 1600s and everyone will be cold. Again, the annual cost of this would be in excess of \$300 billion to \$400 billion that would be a hit on the GDP. And this does not even begin to measure the suffering we would have to experience.

The President, as he has done with ObamaCare, may just say that these plants can stay open, that he won't enforce these new rules he is creating, but I don't think that is realistic. American Electric Power's warning comes in the wake of regulations the President has already finalized. The new ones that are being developed will make things even worse by making coal-fired powerplants impossible to build or keep open. What has been a steady source of cheap electricity will be gone in just a few short years.

I have long said the Clean Air Act was never intended to regulate greenhouse gas emissions; it was written only to include the most egregious, harmful air pollutants, not carbon dioxide and other harmless greenhouse gases.

Surprisingly, even some Democrats are starting to publicly agree with me. Last week, at an Energy and Commerce Committee meeting over in the House, Congressman JOHN DINGELL from Michigan, a staunch Democrat, said, "Like most members of this committee, I think the Supreme Court came up with a very much erroneous decision on whether the Clean Air Act covers greenhouse gases. Like many members of this committee, I was present when we wrote that legislation, and we thought it was clear enough that we didn't clarify it, thinking that even the Supreme Court was not stupid enough to make that finding."

That is a direct quote from JOHN DINGELL. So I wish the Supreme Court would have sided with Congressman DINGELL.

As things now stand, the EPA is poised to put the Nation out of business with greenhouse gas regulations that would cost the entire economy some \$300 billion to \$400 billion.

Every year I always calculate the number of people in my State of Oklahoma who file Federal income taxes. This \$300 billion to \$400 billion cost would mean about \$3,000 per family of

those who file Federal income tax returns. So it is a huge amount, and it would be the largest tax increase in history. Out of this concern, I am introducing a commonsense bill today, the Electricity Reliability and Affordability Act, which will allow States to keep their powerplants open if they believe it is necessary to maintain electricity, reliability, and affordability. In other words, the States can opt out.

American Electric Power's announcement should cause all of us great concern, but the EPA is not listening. States have long protected and conserved their environments with great success, and State governments are in a much better position to determine which powerplants should and should not remain open, despite the regulations.

I know my friend from Colorado is waiting to take the floor, so the last thing I will say is that in the State of the Union Message, the President made the statement that he is going to go ahead and do this, regardless of the fact that we have killed this legislation four times over the last 12 years. And at that time, I was talking about \$300 billion to \$400 billion as the cost, but that would have been the cost if this had been legislation. Specifically, talking about legislation such as the Lieberman-Warner act and several of the others, that would regulate sources with at least 10,000 tons of CO₂ emissions. However, if you do it by regulation and not legislation, that would have to be under the Clean Air Act, which would regulate systems of 250 tons of CO₂ a year. So while the legislation would have regulated the CO₂ emissions for powerplants, refineries, and major factories, if the President is able to do it through regulations, that would cover every school, every church, and every apartment house in the Nation. So it is very significant.

I know that right now we are on the farm bill, but we have to remind people that this is something that has been just announced that they are going to be doing.

I remember when Lisa Jackson was the Director of the EPA. She was appointed by President Obama. I asked her the question: If we are to regulate this and one of these bills would pass, which means we would be regulating CO₂ emissions, would this have the effect of reducing CO₂ worldwide?

She said: No, because that would only apply to the United States of America.

That is not where the problem is. The problem is in China, India, in Mexico, and other places.

So I remind my fellow Members this is something very serious and worthy of consideration at this time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Oklahoma for yielding.

I wish to speak about the farm bill which, thanks to months and months and actually years of tireless work by Chairwoman STABENOW, Ranking Member COCHRAN, and other conferees on the bill, Democrats and Republicans in both Houses of Congress—thanks to all of this work, we are going to be able to pass this bill this afternoon.

There are 16 million people working in agriculture in our country. These workers and our rural communities are demanding the certainty which comes with a long-term bill. I am pleased to say we are passing not a 2-month extension, not a 10-minute extension, not an "I hope we get it done tomorrow before we leave town" extension but a genuine 5-year farm bill, which is going to give us a lot of certainty.

This bill eliminates direct payments made to farmers regardless of market conditions or what they planted and prioritizes what is working for producers; namely, crop insurance.

I have spoken on the floor before about Colorado's battle against historic drought conditions. Some of our farmers lost half their corn yields in 2012. It is hard to imagine any business losing half its production in 1 year, but that is what has happened to many Colorado corn producers. Mr. President, 2013 was a little better for corn in our State, but it is hard to celebrate when producers still face significant losses fighting against this dry soil. The Crop Insurance Program is what is keeping these farmers and rural economies in business during these tough times. That is why it is a priority.

That is why we should have passed it 1 year ago, 2 years ago, but today we finally have the chance to do it.

Beyond crop insurance, another key highlight of this bill is its conservation title. I spoke last week on the floor about the revamped easement programs, and the important linkage between conservation practices and crop insurance which has been preserved in this conference agreement.

But beyond those highlights, the bill places a new emphasis on water conservation, which is so important to the West. Programs such as EQIP and the Regional Conservation Partnerships Program are going to be critical as the West faces record drought conditions brought on by climate change. New conservation tools, coupled with crop insurance to help hedge risk, will help our producers as we move into a new normal of a drier American West.

The conservation title programs help producers, but they also help the fish in our rivers and the wildlife on our lands.

Here is a great illustration of why sportsmen groups support this bill. This is a photo taken of my friend John Gale hunting pheasants in Yuma County, CO. The Conservation Reserve Program, CRP—a program reauthorized through this farm bill—provides

important habitat for pheasants and other upland birds all across the country. The land surrounding this photo is all CRP land.

The program protects habitat but also helps hold highly erodible soils in place—such as the soil in Baca County, CO, where over 250,000 acres are enrolled in CRP. As the Presiding Officer may know, Baca County in many ways was the epicenter of the area devastated by the Dust Bowl of the 1930s. Thanks to CRP, Baca County has weathered recent droughts a lot better than their forefathers did. Healthy grasslands, open landscapes, and abundant wildlife are a fundamental part of the West, to be a part of the West, and we need to preserve those grasslands, those open spaces, and our species. That is what the conservation title of the farm bill does. A lot of people don't know about it, but it is a very important part of the farm bill.

As a result, this farm bill is supported by over 250 conservation and environmental organizations—groups such as Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, National Wildlife Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the National Rifle Association, among others.

This legislation not only ensures we have healthy croplands and grasslands but also prioritizes the health of our forests—an issue of huge importance to western States as we deal with our massive wildfires.

Here we can see the Waldo Canyon fire from 2012. I chair the agriculture subcommittee on forestry, and we held a hearing on wildfires not too long ago. We looked at the terrible fires which have raged across the West, the budgetary nightmare they have caused, and Washington's inability to understand what we are actually facing out there. My clearest takeaway from this hearing was that when it comes to our forests, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

If we prioritize the fuel mitigation work on the front end, we will save on fire suppression and recovery costs on the back end. If we don't, we will break our budget and not preserve our forests. The Congressional Budget Office has found that for every \$1 we invest in forest health, we save \$5 in costs associated with wildfire.

This farm bill conference report makes these investments and gives the Forest Service new tools to treat areas in need of restoration and mitigation. This bill makes commonsense reforms, reduces the deficit, and will bring certainty and continued prosperity to rural America. It passed the House last week with broad bipartisan support.

I strongly urge a "yes" vote when we vote on the farm bill conference report later today. With all the uncertainty our farmers and ranchers are facing in these tough times, in these drought times, it is the least we can do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and friend from Colorado for his words about the farm bill. He and I are an example of how this bill is important to every region of the country. His kind of farming is very different than our kind of farming, but they are equally important to our States.

I rise to talk about the farm bill. This bill is a long time coming. There has been back-and-forth between the two Chambers, the House and Senate, and between various regions, probably most famous, South versus Midwest farming, but that is not the only one—different types of crops and different types of farm products. It may be sugar, milk, soybeans or corn. Who knows what it is going to be.

Nonetheless, I am happy to report that finally this bill overcame the partisan gridlock we have seen in Washington. I am sorry it took so long. I know last year the House basically blew up this bill on kind of “my way or the highway” politics. I thought that was very unfortunate. But here we are with a bipartisan farm bill, one that got a huge vote in the House and I hope will get a huge vote in the Senate.

I am glad this cut, cut, cut ideology did not prevail, because when we look at this bill and how important it is, not just to my State but to every State in the Union and so important to the U.S. economy—this bill is very important to the Nation’s economy and to the future of our Nation.

Agriculture is something we do in this country better than anybody else in the world. We do a lot of things great in this country, and we should be proud of those, but no one does agriculture better than the good old United States of America. Our farmers, our producers, our agribusiness do incredible work. We literally are the envy of the world. It is a core strength of the U.S. economy.

It is critical to keeping our Nation’s economy strong that we have a strong agricultural sector. It is critical to our Nation that we have strong rural communities and to a large extent—not completely but a lot of what this bill is about is helping rural communities.

Not everyone in this country lives in the big cities or lives in the suburbs. This bill will help every American in lots of ways, no matter where they live, whether they live in the biggest city in the country or the smallest town out in the countryside. But it will also help millions and millions of hard-working people and their families in rural America. Why in the world would we want to let ideological fights and partisan bickering jeopardize this economic powerhouse we built for ourselves? Nonetheless, today we have overcome that.

This legislation is a win-win for everyone. We have seen Democrats and Republicans from all regions of the country come to the floor to talk about this farm bill, why it is important to them and why it is important that it pass.

Just a few of the provisions in there:

There are market protections for our farmers and ranchers all over the country.

The PILT Program is so critical to a number of western States but certainly a number of our counties in Arkansas. We have counties in our State where literally half or more of their land is Federal. They can’t get any tax base off of it, so PILT helps to fix that.

The Catfish Inspection Program. We don’t subsidize catfish, but we have the inspection program to make sure imported catfish meet U.S. standards. This is critical. We want a safe and good food supply. There is a big emphasis on exports. We all know we have a terrible trade deficit. Our trade deficit would be horrendous if it wasn’t for agriculture.

Of course, there is nutritional assistance for hard-working families in this country. We have the richest, most bountiful, most blessed Nation in the history of the world, and we have people who are hungry. These nutrition programs in many cases are the difference between life and death.

This bill also focuses on conservation. Not everyone is a farmer, but there are millions of people all over this country who love to enjoy the great outdoors. They like to go hunting, they like to go fishing, and other activities. Conservation programs are critical to keep habitat where it is and critical for large sections of our economy. Hunting and fishing is a huge part of our economy, not just in Arkansas but all over the country.

The rural development programs are essential for rural America. We know there is everything from wastewater programs in here to rural housing, to all kinds of programs. But rural development programs are critical for the quality of life in rural America.

I am the first to say this bill isn’t perfect. I think all of us agree this is a series of compromises. There are probably things each one of us would do differently if we could change a provision or two in the bill, but it is a good bill. It is going to provide and stabilize good jobs and economic security for our country.

Our agricultural producers not only feed us and clothe us, but they feed and clothe the world. In the Senate we hear every day from the business community. They want more certainty. They want more stability. This bill provides that in the agricultural economy. Our farmers, producers, and others deserve that same certainty and stability, and this bill provides that.

In closing, I would read a quick passage from James 5:7. I was going to

read it from King James, but I will paraphrase it. Be patient, therefore, brothers . . . see how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the Earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and late rains.

Our agricultural producers have been patient long enough. They have waited and waited and waited on this legislation. I sincerely hope all of us will give this bill strong consideration. This bill provides good common ground. It provides economic security. It continues the safe and abundant food supply that we have in this Nation.

I hope Members on both sides of the aisle will join me in voting yes for this conference report today.

I yield the floor.

MILK PRICING FORMULA

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from Michigan, her committee and staff for their tireless work that has brought this farm bill to fruition. Further, I greatly appreciate the Senator’s willingness to discuss an issue that is absolutely critical for dairy farmers in the Northeast: prehearings to review the Federal pricing formula for class III and class IV milk.

Ms. STABENOW. I want to thank the Senator from Maine. This legislation addresses many aspects of agriculture including dairy. During our deliberations we heard clearly from various dairy stakeholders who argued that the class III and class IV milk product pricing systems are outdated and not responsive to the needs of producers or consumers.

Mr. KING. The senior Senator from Maine and the junior Senator from New York authored the provision included in the Senate farm bill which required USDA to address the pricing formula for class III and class IV milk through a public, transparent prehearing process. Their work has been essential in moving this conversation forward.

As the Senator from Michigan well knows, milk pricing policy is a complex, convoluted, and controversial business and challenging to handle in a package such as the farm bill. Does the Senator believe that the USDA, which is charged with stabilizing farm income; conserving soil, water, and other natural resources, and ensuring the availability and quality of food and fiber products, should provide an opportunity for a thoughtful, balanced process for addressing essential dairy pricing structure?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes, the USDA has the economists and experts that can analyze various alternatives to the current system of pricing milk—and if the system is not working well for most of the players in the dairy industry, especially the farmers, the Department should make changes. A public, thoughtful and thorough discussion of those alternatives needs to take place,

guided by nonbiased people who are focused on the goal of creating the best policy.

Mr. KING. I thank the Senator for her response. The dairy producers in Maine have told me that they believe that it will take just such a thorough review of proposals from interested parties, to help address concerns from industry, assist with the stabilization of the price of milk and provide greater certainty for dairy producers.

Does the Senator agree that the Secretary has the authority and ability to conduct a prehearing procedure to consider alternative pricing formulas for class III and class IV milk products?

Ms. STABENOW. Yes, I believe that not only does the Secretary have the authority to act upon a petition, but as was said earlier, the USDA has the ability to conduct a thoroughly researched prehearing procedure to consider alternative pricing formulas for class III and class IV milk products and that would be welcomed by the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Mr. KING. I understand that the Dairy Industry Advisory Committee has recommended that the Secretary take such action and review interested party proposals to address class III and class IV pricing formula changes in a participatory and transparent manner.

Ms. STABENOW. Yes, that is correct; the Dairy Industry Advisory Committee has recommended such action. Further, I believe that a study of pricing alternatives, followed by a rigorous prehearing process, would cut to the heart of the issue. This would not only clear the air on many of the disagreements that plagued the farm bill debates but might even reduce the reliance on temporary stopgap government supports through better financial connections for all sectors of the dairy industry with the consumer value of dairy products.

Mr. KING. The dairy producers that I have spoken with are calling on the USDA Secretary to undertake a study of alternatives and to agree to hold prehearings on such alternatives as a basic component of the USDA's fundamental mission to the dairy industry. They believe it is time for Congress to direct the USDA to take the bull by the horns and to ensure that all regions of the United States can sustain viable dairy sectors and meet local, national and international demand for high quality U.S. dairy products.

Ms. STABENOW. I am happy to assist dairy farmers in their efforts and will contact the Secretary to ask that he take action on a prehearing request.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today, I will vote nay on the Agricultural Act of 2014, also known as the farm bill.

Florida's economy and the livelihoods of many family-owned businesses and workers rely on a vibrant agricultural industry. Unfortunately, this farm bill goes far beyond agricultural

programs and includes antipoverty programs and renewable energy programs, among other spending measures that total nearly \$1 trillion.

With Washington facing a \$17 trillion debt and another debt ceiling increase in a few weeks, this bill does not undertake any fundamental reforms to ensure every taxpayer dollar is being properly spent to secure our Nation's food supply instead of needlessly growing government or continuing the status quo on programs that need reform.

For example, Food Stamp Programs are an important part of our safety net, but we should have a separate debate on these and other antipoverty programs with the goal of empowering States to better design these programs to help their people escape poverty.

While energy innovation is an important debate and will be a key economic growth driver in the 21st century, we should be discussing renewable energy and biofuels programs in the context of energy policy, not lumping them in to this bill that is supposed to be about securing our Nation's food supply.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today we will pass the final conference report for the farm bill, called the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013. This important bipartisan bill protects jobs and identifies new reforms that will ensure the long-term success of our Nation's agricultural industry. I would like to thank Chairman STABENOW for her leadership and commitment to getting this bill passed. In addition, I would like to thank Senator COCHRAN for his work on this bipartisan bill.

The U.S. citrus industry is facing a devastating disease called greening, for which we know no cure and which kills the citrus tree within 5 years. The disease is spread by an insect called the Asian citrus psyllid. Citrus greening spreads quickly and, because of its dormancy period, has often already destroyed surrounding groves once it has been discovered.

In a 2012 report, University of Florida researchers found that the disease cost Florida's economy \$4.5 billion and 8,000 jobs between 2006 and 2012. Florida was ground zero, but the disease is spreading to every citrus-producing State, including Texas, California, and Arizona. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has already affirmed this emergency with the citrus quarantine for Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, and Mississippi as well as parts of California, South Carolina, and Arizona in October 2012. If we don't do something, soon we won't have a domestic citrus industry.

The farm bill sets up a new research initiative especially for the citrus industry within the existing Special Crop Research Initiative, which is called the Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program. The primary goal of this program is to help fund research to find a

cure to citrus greening and save the U.S. citrus industry.

The new Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program will ensure the close collaboration between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the citrus industry stakeholders, and the relevant entities engaged in scientific research under this program. The farm bill directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture to consult closely and regularly with the industry stakeholders in the formulation, consideration, and approval of research projects and grants performed under this program and will give great weight to input from these stakeholders. This close coordination will ensure the research program will advance the research for citrus greening and other threats to the U.S. citrus industry.

Because of the devastating nature of the citrus greening disease, I worked to make sure the citrus program established guaranteed funding in the farm bill. Senator STABENOW agreed and worked with other members of the farm bill conference to include \$125 million in mandatory funding for the citrus research program. Money in this grant program will go toward scientific research aimed at addressing diseases, domestic and invasive pests, and other challenges to the U.S. citrus industry, helping to also disseminate the research findings to growers.

In this age of economic uncertainty, Congress should be doing everything it can to improve our economic situation. In this case, we are doing just that by saving an industry that is vital to not only Florida's economy but to Texas, California, Louisiana, Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, and the Nation as a whole.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, while this is far from a perfect bill, I am pleased that the Senate will pass the Agriculture Act of 2014. This legislation—a result of more than 2 years of deliberation—reaches a compromise that protects small farmers, fights hunger, and saves taxpayers more than \$16 billion.

I thank Chairwoman STABENOW and Ranking Member COCHRAN, along with leaders in the House of Representatives, for their hard work in reaching this agreement.

This year's farm bill makes targeted investments in our Nation's agricultural and nutrition sectors while eliminating some of the wasteful subsidies that cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The bill supports our rural economies and helps protect our farmland and forests for generations to come. And it makes historic investments in fruit and vegetable farming and in organic agriculture.

During negotiations on this bill, I worked with Chairwoman STABENOW and Senator LEAHY to ensure that new dairy programs will adequately protect New Hampshire's small farms, which

are struggling to deal with high feed costs and volatility in milk prices. I am hopeful that the new dairy program will provide stability for New Hampshire's dairies and create an environment in which these family-owned businesses that are so important to our State's economy can grow and thrive.

I am particularly pleased that the conference report includes language nearly identical to my bipartisan legislation, the Oilheat Efficiency, Renewable Fuel Research and Jobs Training Act.

This important provision will reauthorize the widely supported National Oilheat Research Alliance, NORA, the oilheat industry's national program for research and development, consumer education and technical training. It will allow the industry to continue funding vital national oilheat efforts for 5 years—at no cost to local, State or Federal governments.

Consumers will benefit from the development of improved and efficient equipment, increased safety through technical training, and the availability of up-to-date information regarding safety practices and fuel conservation. Importantly, these objectives will be achieved without raising consumer costs. NORA provides a direct path for responsible, domestically produced and efficient energy consumption without raising consumer costs. Its inclusion in the farm bill is good for consumers, American businesses, and the environment and will provide tangible value for the country for many years to come.

I also thank Chairwoman STABENOW and Senator WYDEN for working with me to preserve the Environmental Protection Agency's treatment of regulating forest roads as nonpoint sources through State-adopted best-management practices. This approach will allow for the continued sustainable development of working forests in New Hampshire.

In New Hampshire, more than 100,000 people rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program each month to keep from going hungry. The farm bill reauthorizes SNAP and other critical programs that help millions of American families put food on the table. The bill also contains important reforms that will provide food for our Nation's food banks and improve low-income Americans' access to fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods.

The legislation also improves consumer access to local foods with increased funding for farmers' markets. In recent years, interest in supporting local agriculture has grown significantly. New Hampshire currently has more than 70 farmers markets across the State, with nearly 30 open through the winter. Americans want to know where their food comes from, and farmers want to be able to sell their products in their communities.

The farm bill significantly increases funding for programs that support small and beginning farmers, including greater support for grant programs that enable small farmers to invest in improving the value of their products.

One dairy farmer from Landaff, NH, accessed these programs to help her grow her cheese-making business. Because of the grant, she was able to hire two full-time employees and several part-time employees, and her second-generation farm now sells award-winning cheeses in stores and restaurants around the country. These are the kind of job-creating investments we need to be making in rural America.

However, while the legislation implements some reforms to subsidy programs that will save taxpayer dollars, it does not go far enough in cutting wasteful spending.

Senator MCCAIN and I worked to repeal a duplicative catfish inspection program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which has already cost taxpayers \$20 million over the past 5 years and has yet to inspect a single fish. Unfortunately, this bill does nothing to end this unnecessary and wasteful program.

I am also disappointed that this bill continues the Federal Sugar Program with no changes. Taxpayers were forced to pay nearly \$300 million last year to bail out the sugar industry, in addition to the \$14 billion this wasteful program has cost consumers and businesses over the past 5 years. The high price supports and strict trade restrictions continued with no reform in this bill will ensure that sugar remains the most tightly controlled commodity in America.

This bill also continues the wasteful practice of providing subsidies to large and wealthy farm businesses with no meaningful payment limits. Some programs in the bill will allow huge farming operations to receive unlimited subsidies, and the new crop insurance program includes no individual caps or means testing requirements.

The Senate-passed bill would have reduced subsidy payments for the wealthiest farmers, but this provision was removed from the final conference report. And there was no consideration of implementing a provision I offered with Senator TOOMEY to place a reasonable cap on crop insurance subsidies that would have saved taxpayers \$3.4 billion over the next 10 years.

As we confront our Federal debt and deficit and as millions of families across the country are tightening their belts, we cannot justify unlimited subsidies for wealthy farmers and giant agribusinesses.

While I will continue working to end wasteful farm bill programs and protect taxpayers, I support this legislation because it supports New Hampshire farmers and our State's rural communities, reduces the deficit, in-

vests in healthy foods, and helps prevent low-income Americans from going hungry.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, reauthorization of the farm bill presented an opportunity to make much needed changes in our agriculture policy to rein in taxpayer subsidies for big agribusiness, support the growth of small farms and local food systems, and ensure that our constituents in need do not go hungry. Unfortunately, despite the extraordinary efforts of Chairwoman STABENOW, the reforms included in the bill before us today fall much too short.

Most troubling is that the bill cuts more than \$8 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. I cannot support reducing hunger assistance for the most vulnerable Americans while creating new crop insurance programs, increasing crop insurance spending by \$5.7 billion, and continuing to subsidize the wealthiest farmers. As such, I will oppose this bill.

The nutrition cuts are particularly challenging in my State, where roughly 1 in 6 Rhode Islanders receive SNAP benefits—a reflection of the challenging economic times in our State, where the unemployment rate remains above 9 percent, the highest in the country. According to a survey by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, more than 15 percent of Rhode Islanders are food insecure, meaning they do not always know where they will find their next meal and thus are at risk of hunger. And this number has grown over the last 5 years, from 58,000 households to more than 66,500 today. Many local food banks like the Rhode Island Community Food Bank—are struggling to keep pace as the need for food assistance grows. The SNAP cuts in this bill cannot be easily made up by food banks and other charitable organizations even with increased funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

While the conference agreement does not include the far more damaging policy changes proposed by the House, it will reduce benefits for about 850,000 low-income households by an average of \$90 a month, according to the Congressional Budget Office. This is on top of the across-the-board cut that hit all SNAP households last November when the benefit boost under the 2009 Recovery Act expired. When these cuts went into effect, families of 4 lost an average of \$36 a month, while single-person households lost an average of \$11. Without the Recovery Act boost, SNAP benefits will average less than \$1.40 per person per meal in 2014. Now we are asking some of our most vulnerable constituents to get by with even less—all while growing the safety net for the wealthiest farmers and the crop insurance industry. This is unacceptable.

As I noted, these remain trying economic times, with many Americans still struggling to find work or working

low-wage jobs that do not provide the resources necessary to meet basic needs like food. This is not the time to cut a lifeline benefit like SNAP. I am deeply disappointed that some of the savings generated in this bill were not reinvested into SNAP to help meet the need for food assistance across this country.

Unfortunately, the conference agreement also maintains the duplicative USDA catfish program—a program that both the House and the Senate have voted to repeal, the Government Accountability Office has called wasteful, and the administration proposed defunding in its fiscal year 2014 budget. This program would require seafood processors to comply with USDA regulations for catfish while the FDA would continue to oversee inspections for all other seafood. According to the GAO, repealing this program would avoid duplication of Federal programs and save taxpayers millions of dollars annually. We should be finding ways to make government processes more efficient, not less.

While I am unable to support the conference report because of the deep cuts to SNAP and inadequate reforms to crop insurance and farm subsidy payments, I would like to acknowledge several provisions in this bill, including several that will support the development of local and regional food systems and improve the affordability of and access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income families. I am particularly pleased that the bill includes many measures from a bill that I cosponsored, Senator BROWN's Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act, that will increase funding for specialty crop block grants to support research and promotion of fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops. Another measure is the enhancement of the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program to aid direct producer-to-consumer marketing channels and local food sales to retailers and institutions.

The bill also allows Community Supported Agriculture operations to redeem SNAP benefits and creates Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grants, providing \$100 million over 5 years for a national pilot to incentivize the purchase of fruits and vegetables at farmers markets by SNAP participants. A similar program has already been successfully implemented in Rhode Island. Farm Fresh Rhode Island runs the "Bonus Bucks" program where every \$5 in SNAP benefits spent at a farmers market allows low-income individuals to receive an additional \$2 to spend on fresh vegetables, fruit, eggs, fish, meats, and cheeses produced by local farmers and fishermen. Within the first year that "Bonus Bucks" was implemented, Farm Fresh Rhode Island saw a 675 percent increase in the amount of SNAP spent at their markets. In 2013, 22 Rhode Island farmers markets up

from 8 in 2008, have booths that can accept EBT cards.

It is exciting to see the ingenuity of our States replicated at the national level in ways to help ensure that low-income families have access to nutritious local foods. These types of programs also help grow local food economies by encouraging purchases from local producers. A win-win.

The bill also makes several changes to enhance and promote conservation. Requiring farmers to comply with conservation practices in order to receive taxpayer-supported subsidies on crop insurance will help further the conservation of natural resources and ensure that our farmers remain good stewards of the land.

Thankfully, the conferees rejected a harmful amendment included in the House bill that would have had far-reaching consequences by prohibiting States from regulating agricultural products within their jurisdiction. This bill also makes it a federal crime to attend or bring a child under the age of 16 to an animal fighting event—a slightly modified version of a bill I cosponsored that was introduced by Senator BLUMENTHAL.

The conference report also includes legislation to reauthorize the National Oilheat Research Alliance, NORA. I have cosponsored bills to reauthorize this program during the last several Congresses and am glad it will now become law. NORA seeks to strengthen and improve the oil heating industry through education and training and improving home heating efficiency. With more than 1 in 3 Rhode Islanders dependent on fuel oil to heat their homes this winter and heating oil prices on the rise, it is important to reauthorize NORA.

While Chairwoman STABENOW's efforts helped to ensure some positive provisions and reforms, the bill simply does not go far enough. It wisely eliminates direct payments but restores some of those cuts by creating new crop insurance programs, while not going far enough to limit commodity and crop insurance subsidy payouts. The bill does not even include an amendment that I cosponsored and was passed in the Senate to set income limitations for crop insurance making a very modest 5 percent reduction for farmers making over \$750,000 annually.

We must do more to ensure that farm subsidies are available to the small and medium-sized farms that need it most and rein in the taxpayer subsidies to large, wealthy farming operations. And we certainly should not be paying for expensive farm programs by cutting SNAP, thereby placing additional burdens on those who are struggling to make ends meet.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of the bipartisan farm bill conference agreement before us today. This 5 year bill provides certainty to

both the producer and the consumer. It's a jobs bill supporting 16 million jobs across the Nation. It also is a reform bill that cracks down on fraud and abuse and ends direct payments.

Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Maryland. We have 12,800 farms and 350,000 Marylanders employed in the industry. Poultry is Maryland's largest agricultural industry followed by nursery grown plants and dairy.

Maryland's Eastern Shore is home to a \$1.4 billion poultry industry responsible for over 5,000 jobs. There are nearly 1,000 chicken farms and three processing plants. In fact, one in seven jobs on the Eastern Shore is poultry related.

For poultry growers, this bill continues the supplemental agriculture insurance assistance which provides disaster aid. This program lapsed in 2011, and this bill makes the program retroactive to 2012. This means Maryland's chicken farmers will continue to get disaster payments. The bill also continues to allow farm operating loans for poultry growers who do not qualify for operating credit at other lenders.

This farm bill requires country-of-origin labeling, which I have long supported. Every consumer has the right to know where their food comes from on their dinner table. I acknowledge there are some in the poultry industry that oppose these requirements. I think it is the right thing to do.

For Maryland's 500 dairy farms, the bill creates two new price and income support programs. The Dairy Production Margin Protection Program takes into consideration the high price of feed costs. This is a first for dairy programs and a win for dairy farmers struggling to survive with escalating variable and fixed operation costs. The premium cost to participate in this program will be very low for Maryland's small dairy farmers. The Dairy Production Donation Program will guarantee a profit for dairy farmers when the market becomes over saturated.

This legislation is important to the Chesapeake Bay conservation efforts. It includes the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, a new competitive program. The bill provides \$100 million annually for this program. The Bay Watershed will compete with eight other regions for these critical conservation dollars. This bill also ties farmers' conservation compliance to crop insurance. This means if your land is not compliant, you will not receive a premium subsidy.

For sugar producers and refineries, the bill continues the existing Sugar Program. The U.S. Sugar Program supports over 140,000 American jobs, including 500 jobs at Domino Sugar located at the Port of Baltimore. Significant reforms to this program will put these jobs at risk and they may be shipped overseas.

This bill helps Maryland's growing specialty crop and organic farmers by gradually increasing specialty crops block grants from \$55 million a year in 2014 to \$85 million in 2018. Maryland receives more than \$1.7 million from this program. The bill also increases organic research funding to assist farmers transitioning to organics.

The bill makes modest reforms to the food aid program following a similar path as the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. I support the reforms in the bill and believe this is another step in the right direction to allow more locally purchased food.

Finally, I would like to address food stamps, now called SNAP. I am for food stamps and always will be. We have approximately 800,000 Marylanders receiving food stamp benefits. In November, I visited the Maryland Food Bank with my House Democratic colleagues. We announced that we were standing up for SNAP and opposing the House's harmful cuts to the program.

During my visit, I met Tracey Coleman, a hard-working Marylander whose husband was laid off through no fault of his own when the steel plant in Baltimore closed last year. Tracey has three kids, including a daughter with special needs. She shouldn't have to choose between her son's asthma medication and a family meal. Tracey had nowhere else to turn. She signed up for SNAP benefits to keep food on the dinner table for her family.

I personally thank Senator STABENOW for working so hard to protect SNAP families in this bill. She fought off the House Republicans that wanted to gut the program, cutting \$40 billion from SNAP and axing SNAP benefits for 4 million people, including putting 77,000 Marylanders at risk. I am happy to report no American will lose their benefits under this bill—not one. Most important to me, no Marylander will see their benefits reduced from the reforms in this bill.

I know some of my colleagues are going to vote against the bill because of the changes to the standard utility allowance calculation that will reduce benefits for their constituents. I understand. But what we all have to understand is that a compromise is a compromise and Senator STABENOW fended off the worst. I was recently in her shoes negotiating the appropriations bill with the House. It is tough.

I commend Senators STABENOW and COCHRAN for their hard work on this bill. I urge all my colleagues to support this bill. It is good news for American farmers and consumers.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today I will support final passage of the conference report of the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013. The conference report is particularly important to my home State of Michigan, where agriculture, the State's second-largest industry, supports one in four jobs.

While the legislation presented contains many laudable provisions, I am deeply disappointed that the final conference report includes cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP. SNAP benefits provide nutrition assistance to millions of families. It is distressing that we are reducing food stamp support for those families.

While I oppose the SNAP cuts, the positives of this legislation are important enough that it deserves support. I applaud the work of my colleague from Michigan, Senator STABENOW, whose leadership as the chair of the Agriculture Committee helped craft this important compromise. This legislation makes critical reforms, reduces our deficit, and brings certainty to farmers and business owners.

This legislation is more than just a farm bill. This legislation covers conservation, nutrition assistance, crop insurance, international food aid, forestry and so much more.

This legislation makes significant modifications to help farmers better manage their risk by eliminating direct payments to farmers and replacing it with two new risk management programs. This will ensure farmers receive support only when there is a drop in farmers' income. This legislation also creates a new and voluntary insurance program to protect dairy farmers from losses. It also includes valuable reforms to disaster assistance. Of note is the creation of a permanent livestock disaster assistance program and retroactive coverage for orchardists and nursery growers who have recently been affected by droughts and winter storms.

Importantly, this legislation also strengthens agriculture research programs, such as the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. This investment in specialty crops is vital to Michigan, which leads the nation in growing a wide variety of specialty crops including tart cherries, blueberries, cucumbers, dry black and red beans, and cranberries.

I am pleased the conference agreement retains important conservation provisions that will help protect our water and air quality, restore fish and wildlife habitat, and improve flood control. The agreement consolidates 23 existing conservation programs into 13 programs which should streamline implementation. Further, conservation compliance is tied to crop insurance, which should ensure that basic conservation practices are implemented more broadly. Conservation provisions in the farm bill will help prevent soil erosion, reduce water runoff and pollution, and shift production away from sensitive lands. In addition, the conference agreement retains the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which should benefit Great Lakes water quality and improve fish and wildlife habitat.

The bill also includes a 1-year extension of the Payments in Lieu of Taxes—PILT—Program, which provides funding to rural communities to help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable Federal lands within their boundaries. Each year, Michigan typically receives about \$2.5 million under PILT, funding that is vital for providing essential services such as education, law enforcement, and emergency response.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I too rise to speak on the farm bill.

Similar to many Nebraskans, I am relieved that a final conference agreement has been reached and will provide much needed certainty for both producers and consumers. This legislation accomplishes a great deal. It provides risk management and disaster assistance programs. It promotes environmental stewardship. It bolsters export opportunities. It encourages rural development, advances research, helps beginning farmers and ranchers, and delivers nutrition assistance to our needy families.

While the bill is not perfect, it is the result of compromise and a long collaborative legislative process.

One of the most challenging issues for lawmakers was addressing nutrition assistance programs, which comprise 80 percent of the farm bill's total spending. With one in every seven Americans receiving supplemental nutrition assistance, it is important to strengthen the program's integrity and its accountability, while better targeting programs to serve those in need.

I am also pleased the bill empowers States to help capable adults enroll in work programs to reduce reliance on taxpayer assistance. The bill provides tools to reduce waste, fraud, and abuse, including cracking down on trafficking through data mining, terminal ID, and other measures.

While these are all steps in the right direction, it is disappointing that the bill will not achieve additional savings from nutrition programs, which are projected to cost more than \$756 billion over the next decade.

True farm programs—the commodity programs and crop insurance—only comprise about 14 percent of all of the farm bill spending, but they account for more than half of the savings under this proposed bill. In fact, the commodity title contributes more savings than any other title in the entire farm bill.

The legislation makes significant reforms to farm policy. Direct payments are repealed and replaced with risk management that offers protection only when warranted by significant price or revenue declines. In Nebraska, agriculture is our No. 1 industry, and it is one of which we are very proud. Our farmers and ranchers take on an enormous amount of risk. They endure the

elements every day as they work to feed the world and responsibly take care of our natural resources.

I am pleased this farm bill maintains and strengthens one of the most important risk management tools for our farmers, and that is crop insurance. This is a very successful public-private partnership that helps farmers invest in their own risk management by purchasing insurance policies so they are protected from adverse weather or market conditions.

This legislation also provides needed disaster assistance to livestock producers. Unfortunately, the Livestock Forage Program and the Livestock Indemnity Program both expired in 2011 under the last farm bill. In 2012, livestock producers experienced the most devastating loss of pasture, rangeland, and forage in decades due to widespread drought, affecting approximately 80 percent of our country.

Then, in October of 2013, an unexpected early fall blizzard killed more than 20,000 cattle, sheep, horses, and bison in the Dakotas and in my State of Nebraska. While those affected by these hardships have been without assistance for more than 2 years, this farm bill will now help producers to rebuild those herds and sustain their ranching operations.

I also appreciate that this farm bill continues our commitment to strong conservation programs. The bill consolidates and streamlines those programs, providing landowners with incentives and assistance to protect and improve our land, our water, and our air.

Agriculture continues to be a bright spot for U.S. trade, thanks in part to the successful export promotion programs, and those are reauthorized in this bill as well. An independent study conducted for USDA in 2010 found that for every dollar expended by government and industry on market development, U.S. food and agricultural exports increased by \$35. Through the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program, we can expect increased demand for U.S.-grown agricultural products and commodities.

This farm bill also continues investment in rural development, providing assistance to communities to build that very critical infrastructure and access to credit to help grow small businesses.

Also supported by this farm bill are critical agricultural research initiatives which allow American producers to innovate, to become more efficient and productive with fewer and fewer resources. Moreover, the bill also provides support for developing technologies that reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Finally, this bill provides some needed regulatory relief for the agricultural industry. I am very pleased the bill in-

cludes an amendment I offered to fix bureaucratic hurdles impacting farmers' access to seeds. This bipartisan amendment, cosponsored by Senator CARPER, ensures that EPA does not treat biotech seeds as pesticides when those shipments are imported.

I was disappointed, though, that the conference did not include language to address one of the worst regulatory challenges confronting farmers: EPA's overregulation of on-farm fuel storage under its Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Program.

The House farm bill included an SPCC relief provision, and the Senate unanimously passed a similar amendment which I cosponsored to reduce farmers' SPCC compliance burdens during consideration of the Water Resources Development Act. There is bipartisan agreement on both sides of the dome that this regulation needs to be fixed. The farm bill did provide the perfect opportunity for getting this relief enacted into law, but that chance was missed. However, I stand ready to work with my colleagues to ensure we don't miss another opportunity to address this issue—to fix this issue—and we can do that during the WRDA conference.

As I said, this bill is not perfect, but on balance this farm bill goes a long way in promoting opportunity and providing certainty for both producers and consumers. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the final passage of the farm bill.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

MR. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor for the third time to express my opposition to the farm bill—obviously not in total, but to certain provisions of it, particularly provisions I had a hand in writing—and to set the record straight, once again.

I come here because several of my colleagues have approached me indicating confusion on whether the payment limits provisions I fought for are in this bill or not in this bill. People are going to tell colleagues there are payment limitations in this bill, but I am here to set the record straight with facts. They don't accomplish what I tried to accomplish, and they are even much more liberal than in existing law in regard to my amendment.

My original payment limit provisions included a \$50,000 individual/\$100,000 married couple cap for the shallow loss programs shown as Price Loss Coverage—PLC—and the Agricultural Risk Coverage—ARC—programs. In this bill farmers will have to pick one of those programs for the next 5 years.

The conference report allows individual farmers to get \$125,000 and married couples to get \$250,000 from the PLC and the ARC programs.

This is where this has really exploded because what I just referenced is a 150-

percent increase over what my limits allowed—the limits that passed the Senate without discussion and limits adopted in the House of Representatives on a 230-to-194 vote. That is just a plain, simple fact—a 150-percent increase over what my limits allowed. The conference report allows the PLC and ARC programs to pay out 150 percent more than my limits did.

This intentional change by the conference committee allows each farmer to get significantly more from these new countercyclical programs that are not even World Trade Organization—or, as we say around here, WTO—compliant.

Another way of looking at this, under the 2008 farm bill, an individual farmer could only get \$65,000 from the countercyclical program. Under this bill, they can get \$125,000 from the countercyclical program. That means they almost doubled what the countercyclical program will pay out compared to current law.

Furthermore, some university analysis has already shown the high target prices for certain crops in this bill will likely have a 70- to 80-percent chance of triggering payments through the PLC program any given year of this farm bill.

So, I say to my colleagues, please don't buy what my opponents are selling on this issue, or at least trying to sell. My payment limits are not in this bill. The result of that is going to be a countercyclical program that will be much more market-distorting than the current ones for a few crops. How can it not be more distorting? The PLC program is designed to trigger more often and pay out larger amounts than the old countercyclical program for certain crops in the 2008 farm bill.

That is just a plain, simple fact. I am sorry if proponents are having a tough time acknowledging that publicly, but that is what this bill actually does. Their bill does lots of things, but brilliantly reforming Title I is not one of them.

I am sure we have been told that this bill reforms. It is like some of the opponents of payment limits still thinking this is 1975 or some year back then. Back then, the national debt was still measured in billions and the WTO didn't even exist. Unfortunately for them, things are very different today. Recently, the WTO declared our cotton program noncompliant, and we happen to have a \$17 trillion national debt. But worse than this, I say to my colleagues, is the fact that these amendments were adopted on the floor of the Senate, and they were adopted in the House of Representatives by a 230-to-194 vote. They should not have even been subject to negotiations.

The moral authority of the people of the United States was behind what both Houses did. Because we have a \$17 trillion national debt, we ought to be

able to save this \$387 million that this amendment would have saved. It had the moral authority of a majority of the House and the Senate, which moral authority should not have been overridden by a handful of people sitting in conference.

I stress this latter point for one simple reason: Rule XXVIII of the Senate says if things are the same in both Houses, they should not be conferenceable. I say this to my friends, not that this bill is going to go down to defeat and we start over again and maybe accomplish what I want to accomplish, but to make sure other conferences do not abuse the Senate rule like this conference abused the Senate rule; and also to tell my colleagues here that, both working with what rules maybe we can get through the U.S. Department of Agriculture or on some other piece of legislation, I intend to pursue these goals that I sought, and I intend to keep reminding my colleagues of Senate rules being violated by conferees that should not have been violated.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the many ways ObamaCare continues to negatively affect Americans.

Yesterday, the Washington Post published an article exposing yet another problem with healthcare.gov. I would like to share a couple of excerpts from that article. The article begins:

Tens of thousands of people who discovered that HealthCare.gov made mistakes as they were signing up for a health plan are confronting a new roadblock: The government cannot yet fix the errors. Roughly 22,000 Americans have filed appeals with the government to try to get mistakes corrected.

Those mistakes, according to the Post, include being overcharged for health insurance, being directed to the wrong insurance program or being wrongly denied coverage.

So what is the status of those appeals?

The Post reports:

For now, the appeals are sitting, untouched, inside a government computer. And an unknown number of consumers who are trying to get help through less formal means—by calling the health-care marketplace directly—are told that HealthCare.gov's computer system is not yet allowing federal workers to go into enrollment records and change them.

So let me summarize here. Mr. President, 22,000 Americans are either without insurance or are paying too much for insurance as a result of mistakes made by the Federal health exchange.

Healthcare.gov contains no appeals process. Attempts to find recourse by other means have been unsuccessful, and the administration's response is basically: Tough luck.

President Obama was interviewed by FOX News' Bill O'Reilly this weekend.

One of the topics they covered was healthcare.gov's problems.

The President said:

The goods news is that right away we decided how we're going to fix it. It got fixed within a month and a half. It was up and running, and now it's working the way it's supposed to.

Let me repeat that The President of the United States said: ". . . now it's working the way it's supposed to. . . ."

Well, tell that to the 22,000 people wondering why there is no appeals process on the Web site or why their paper appeals are stuck in a computer system at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, where, the Post says, the appeals process is currently stopped because "the part of the computer system that would allow agency workers to read and handle appeals has not been built."

When Bill O'Reilly asked President Obama about the Web site problems, the President responded by saying that—and I quote again—"I don't think anybody anticipated the degree of problems that you had on healthcare.gov."

That is not an excuse. It was the President's job to ensure that people in the administration were anticipating the problems that would occur, and the President owes the American people an explanation of why he did not because this is not just a story of bureaucratic incompetence. It is the stories of the tens of thousands of individual Americans who are suffering as a result of the Web site glitches and who are wondering how they will afford their health care under ObamaCare—Americans like Addie Wilson, whose story is highlighted in the Post article.

Addie is a 27-year-old who makes just \$22,000 a year. She was sure she would qualify for a subsidy on the exchanges, and she was absolutely right. She did—only healthcare.gov did not tell her that.

So Addie phoned one of the call centers, which told her to sign up at the more expensive price she was quoted and to appeal the decision later.

Since her old insurance plan was on its way out and she needed surgery in January, that is what she did. Now she is stuck paying \$100 more a month than she should be paying, along with a deductible that is \$4,000 higher than it should be. That too-high of a deductible is of particular concern since she incurred huge hospital bills in January when she was forced to have surgery. If she does not get relief from the appeals process, she could end up paying \$4,000 in medical bills that she should not have to pay and cannot afford.

But it is not just the Web site that is driving up Americans' medical bills—it is the law itself. As awful as Addie's situation is, at least maybe she will get help eventually. For millions of other Americans, their high deductibles are no mistake.

For too many Americans on and off the exchanges, the reality of the so-called Affordable Care Act has been a staggering increase in health care costs.

Some family plans on the exchanges carry deductibles of almost \$13,000. That is more than some families will spend this year on their mortgage.

Upper-income families may be able to absorb these costs—and some limited help is available for lower-income families—but what middle-class family can afford \$13,000 a year in medical costs?

Too many families around the country will be putting on hold their plans to buy a home or send their kids to college because they have to devote every spare dollar to paying their health care bills.

On top of crippling cost hikes, many of these same families are facing the loss of doctors and hospitals, as insurance companies narrow their networks in response to ObamaCare's mandates.

So far I have only mentioned the personal devastation ObamaCare is causing. But ObamaCare is not just affecting families' pocketbooks; it is affecting the economy as a whole.

In response to ObamaCare's burdensome mandates and new taxes, businesses are cutting employees' hours, declining to hire new employees, and abandoning their plans to expand. That means fewer jobs available for the millions of Americans looking for work and fewer opportunities for career growth and advancement.

In fact, just this morning, there was a story in the Wall Street Journal, and it references the Congressional Budget Office report that estimates now that the impact of this law through the year 2024 will mean 2.5 million fewer jobs—2.5 million in job losses as a result of ObamaCare. It is so much so that you see many of the very labor unions that supported and wholeheartedly endorsed ObamaCare when it passed coming out now and saying "[i]t would be a sad irony"—and I am quoting from a letter that went out from several of the labor unions—" [i]t would be a sad irony indeed if the signature legislative accomplishment of an Administration committed to reducing income inequality cut living standards for middle income and low wage workers." The letter also says that the ObamaCare law "undermines fair marketplace competition" and that they are "bitterly disappointed." This comes from labor unions in this country that wholeheartedly endorsed this law when it passed several years ago.

The American people have endured 5 years of economic stagnation, and ObamaCare has been making things worse.

The President has called for 2014 to be a year of action, but I have seen no evidence that he plans to address the

causes of our sluggish growth or provide relief for the millions of Americans struggling with crippling health care costs.

Republicans have a number of health care proposals, from comprehensive plans like that proposed by Senators COBURN, HATCH, and BURR, to common-sense ideas to lower costs by allowing businesses to pool together to negotiate lower rates, and by allowing insurance companies to sell health care plans across State lines to promote more competition and give people more choices.

If the President really wanted to make health care more affordable and accessible, he would abandon this government takeover of one-sixth of our economy and work with Republicans to pass real health care reform. But given the President's record, I am not holding my breath that is going to happen.

But at the very least—the very least—I hope the President will see his way to supporting bipartisan proposals to improve the economy and to open new jobs and opportunities to struggling Americans.

Just last Friday, the Obama State Department released its fifth environmental impact study on the Keystone XL Pipeline. Once again, the review found that the pipeline would have no significant impact on global carbon emissions. Senators and Representatives of both parties support this job-creating measure. It is high time for the President to approve the pipeline and open the 42,000 shovel-ready jobs it will support.

He should also pick up the phone that he keeps talking about to call the Senate majority leader to tell him to stop obstructing bipartisan trade promotion authority legislation that would help American farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and job creators gain access to a billion new consumers around the globe.

The President and the majority leader held a White House meeting yesterday, we are told, yet an aide reported that there was no discussion of the majority leader's antitrade comments last week.

Given this legislation's importance for increasing American jobs, it is difficult to understand why the President would not bring this bill up at that meeting.

Finally, the President of the United States also should join the vast bipartisan majority in the Senate that supports repeal of the job-killing ObamaCare medical device tax, which is forcing American companies to send jobs overseas.

The President will be visiting the Democrats' retreat tomorrow, which would be a prime opportunity for him to get on the same page with his party in support of these bipartisan measures.

Republicans are ready and willing to work with the President and with

Democrats, and we hope we will have willing partners to do the things that are necessary to get people back to work, to create jobs, to grow our economy, and to help provide and build a better future for middle class families in this country.

The American people should not have to wait any longer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, once again, the President of the United States has failed to meet the statutory deadline to propose a budget. In fact, he has missed the deadline so many times that people hardly notice anymore. Failure seems to become the rule, not the exception. The President has now missed the budget deadline five times since he took office in 2009. By comparison, his three White House predecessors missed the deadline a total of four times in 20 years. Five times under President Obama; four times in the last 20 years under his three immediate predecessors.

All totaled, it is now the 18th time that the Obama administration has missed a legal deadline related to the Federal budget. I guess the President and his administration consider the law purely an advisory matter not binding on them. The law is for other people, not for this President and for his administration, seems to be their attitude.

The reason this is so important is because, as we all know—whether it a family budget or a budget for your business—setting a budget is where you establish your priorities: the things you have to have, the things you would like to have but maybe need to put off, and then those things you really cannot afford. That is how you budget. That is why it is so important.

But if your budget includes massive amounts of new spending, along with firm opposition to major reforms, you would have no choice but to ask for a huge tax increase. The President, I do not think, wants to put himself on record again, like he did last year, for another huge tax increase, nor does he want his party's members, who are running for election in 2014, to have to cast the hard vote on the President's own budget.

Last year, his 2014 budget proposal would have raised taxes by roughly \$1 trillion—a trillion-dollar tax increase. That is on top of the \$1.7 trillion that taxes have gone up during the last 5 years under this administration.

It looks as if the President's priorities are more taxes, more spending, and more debt.

But if those sorts of priorities led to robust economic growth and job creation, we would see one of the strongest economic recoveries in American history. But the truth is more taxes, more spending, and more debt are not a

recipe for economic growth and job creation—just the opposite.

We are seeing the evidence of that right now. We are suffering through the weakest economic recovery since the great recession in modern history. Actually, we are seeing the weakest economic recovery since the Great Depression right now. There are a lot of reasons, but the Congressional Budget Office has given us some reasons that I want to talk about just briefly.

They talk about ObamaCare and its impact on job growth and economic growth. As a matter of fact, the Affordable Care Act, the President's signature legislative accomplishment—the Congressional Budget Office said the number of full-time workers will go down by 2 million in the coming years as a result of the Affordable Care Act. So in addition to people getting cancelled policies or sticker shock and finding out that their health care costs did not go down, they went up, or finding if you like your doctors you cannot keep them, what we are finding is that these same people may find themselves out of work as a result of the policies in the Affordable Care Act.

The Congressional Budget Office looked primarily at how employers would respond to a new penalty for failing to offer insurance to employees who worked more than 30 hours. That response would include cutting people's hours, hiring fewer workers, and lowering wages for new jobs. I know my friends on the other side of the aisle agree with the President when he said we ought to raise the minimum wage.

Well, one of the problems is the President's own health care policy that they all voted for is killing full-time work and putting people in part-time work, meaning that their weekly wages have been depressed. For them the answer is not to deal with the source of that problem, which is ObamaCare, but to fix wages at 40 percent higher than they currently are per hour, which we know—economists tell us and it is intuitively true—is going to put more people out of work, put more pressure on workers.

Perhaps one of the most distressing things about the Congressional Budget Office's report today is what they said, what the prospects look like for the President's remaining term in office. The Congressional Budget Office does not see unemployment falling below 6 percent for the rest of President Obama's term—6 percent for the remainder of his term.

Yet, despite all of this, the President still will not get behind genuine progrowth reforms. He will not support genuine reforms of our existing programs such as Medicare and Social Security that would actually save them and put them on a fiscally sustainable path. He has no plan for controlling our national debt.

I went back and looked. Last time Congress came within one vote of passing a balanced budget amendment, do you know what the national debt was then? It was \$4.85 trillion. Do you know what it is today? It is in excess of \$17 trillion, with no end in sight. So the truth is Republicans have put forward ideas for streamlining Federal regulations, for mitigating the negative effects of the Affordable Care Act and for replacing ObamaCare with patient-centered reforms that would cut costs, broaden quality insurance coverage, and improve patient access. But so far, the majority leader and the President have shown zero interest in trying to work with Republicans to solve our Nation's most serious economic challenges, which are having a direct impact on the American people.

Instead, the President said he is going to go it alone. He has a pen; he has a phone. But as I have suggested before, one of the things he could do that would put Americans back to work almost immediately and make us more North American energy-independent would be to sign the Keystone XL Pipeline.

I know my time is expired. I ask unanimous consent that the three articles I was referring to on the CBO report be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 4, 2014]

CBO: HEALTH-CARE LAW WILL REDUCE JOBS BY TWO MILLION

(By Zachary A. Goldfarb and Sarah Kliff)

The Affordable Care Act will reduce the number of full-time workers by more than two million in coming years, congressional budget analysts said Tuesday in the most detailed analysis of the law's impact on jobs.

After obtaining coverage through the health law, some workers may forgo employment, while others may reduce hours, according to a report by the Congressional Budget Office. Low-wage workers are the most likely to drop out of the workforce as a result of the law, it said. The CBO said the law's impact on jobs mostly would be felt after 2016.

The agency previously estimated that the economy would have 800,000 fewer jobs in 2021 as a result of the law. In that analysis, the CBO looked primarily at how employers would respond to a new penalty for failing to offer insurance to employees who work more than 30 hours a week. That response would include cutting people's hours, hiring fewer workers and lowering wages for new jobs.

On Tuesday, the agency released a more detailed estimate that includes how ordinary Americans would react to those changes by employers. Some would choose to keep Medicaid rather than take a job at reduced wages. Others, who typically do not work full-time, would delay returning to work in order to keep subsidies for private insurance that are provided under the law.

As a result, by 2021, the number of full-time positions would be reduced by 2.3 million, the agency said.

The reduction in employment from the health care law "includes some people choosing not to work at all and other people

choosing to work fewer hours than they would have in the absence of the law," the CBO said.

The law also estimated that the botched rollout of the health law's Web site may reduce the number of people who will sign up for coverage by 1 million through March 31, the CBO estimated. Initially, the agency predicted 7 million would have signed up by then.

In its new analysis, the CBO said it had reduced its estimate of how many Americans would sign up for the insurance through the online marketplaces "in light of technical problems that impeded many people's enrollment in exchanges in the first months of the open enrollment period."

The CBO said that the program would catch up over time, with a total of 13 million Americans signing up in 2015 and 24 million by 2017.

Late last month, the Obama administration announced that about 3 million Americans had signed up for private health plans so far under the federal health exchange and separate exchanges that are being run by 14 states.

The administration and the CBO agree there should be a surge of sign-ups near the March deadline to apply for coverage in 2014.

The CBO estimated that 84 percent of the U.S. population would have health insurance in 2014, rising to 89 percent within a few years. Medicaid, the program for the poor expanded under the law, should add 6 million more people this year.

At the same time, the CBO reported that the federal budget is rapidly shrinking and is projected to decline to \$514 billion this year, providing fresh evidence that the problem that has been Washington's obsession for the past several years has become far less urgent.

Tax hikes, spending cuts and faster economic growth have helped close the deficit, which topped \$1 trillion for several years following the onset of the Great Recession.

The budget deficit would equal 3 percent of the total size of the nation's economy this year—what many economists see as a healthy level. The deficit is expected to decrease to \$478 billion next year, or 2.6 percent of the size of the economy.

One of the more troubling aspects of the CBO report was its assessment of long-term economic growth.

The CBO said that the economy will continue to enjoy a solid recovery for the next several years, but will slow to a pace of expansion of 2.2 percent a year from 2018 to 2024.

Much of the slowdown has to do with fewer workers active in the economy—mainly a result of baby boomers retiring.

The slow growth the economy will reduce taxes by \$1.4 trillion of the next years, leading to a larger than expected deficit by 2024 \$1.07 trillion, or 4 percent of the size of the economy.

The CBO said it would still take until 2017 for the unemployment rate, currently at 6.7 percent, to fall to 5.8 percent, and may not reach 5.5 percent until 2024.

Today, the agency said the economy is about six million jobs short of where it should be.

[From The Hill, Feb. 4, 2014]

CBO: O-CARE SLOWING GROWTH, CONTRIBUTING TO JOB LOSSES

The new healthcare law will slow economic growth over the next decade, costing the nation about 2.5 million jobs and contributing to a \$1 trillion increase in projected deficits,

the Congressional Budget Office said in a report released Tuesday.

The non-partisan group's report found that the healthcare law's negative effects on the economy will be "substantially larger" than what it had previously anticipated.

The CBO is now estimating that the law will reduce labor force compensation by 1 percent from 2017 to 2024, twice the reduction it previously had projected.

This will decrease the number of full-time equivalent jobs in 2021 by 2.3 million, it said. It had previously estimated the decrease would be 800,000.

It said this decrease would be caused partly be people leaving the workforce in response to lower jobs offered by employers, and increased insurance coverage through the healthcare law.

It also said employer penalties in the law will decrease wages, and that part-year workers will be slower to return to the work force because they will seek to retain ObamaCare insurance subsidies.

The healthcare law isn't the only reason the CBO is projecting slower economic growth between 2014 and 2023, however. It also cited inflation and lower productivity as reasons why it was lowering its projections.

The slower growth will mean less tax revenue, which will add to the deficit. Instead of adding \$6.3 trillion in deficits from 2014 to 2023, the government will add \$7.3 trillion, CBO now projects.

By 2023, the gross debt of the United States will be \$26 trillion, up from a projected \$25 trillion. A year later the debt will rise to \$27 trillion as the \$1.074 trillion deficit for fiscal 2024 is added in.

"Most of the increase in projected deficits results from lower projections for the growth of real GDP and for inflation, which have resulted in projected revenues between 2014 and 2023 by \$1.4 trillion," CBO explained.

CBO now thinks the economy will grow at 3.1 percent in this fiscal year, which ends in October, rather than the 3.4 percent growth it predicted last year.

The unemployment rate is projected to fall to 6.7 percent by the end of the year, much lower than the 7.6 percent CBO saw for 2014 previously. The budget office does not see unemployment falling below 6 percent for the rest of President Obama's term, however.

In the near term, the CBO is projecting smaller deficits.

The budget office says that legislation enacted since last May has reduced deficits by \$400 billion.

For 2014, the deficit is slated to be \$514 billion, an improvement of \$46 billion from last year's projection.

In 2015, the deficit falls to \$478 billion. That is still higher than the last full year of the Bush administration when the deficit was \$458 billion, but it is a steep drop from the \$1 trillion deficits of most of the Obama years.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

MS. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in asking for the passage of the farm bill that we are going to have a vote on shortly. I thank my colleague from Michigan, the Chair of the Agriculture Committee, for her unbelievable work on this very important policy for America. I know she understands these issues well because, while everybody thinks of Michigan as a manufacturing State, it also is a very big agricultural

State. We share a lot of the same crops, being kind of on a northern plateau: apples and wine and a variety of others. I certainly thank her for her help and support in getting an important new program in our school lunches for very nutritious peas and lentils, called pulse crops, and to thank her for her input.

I rise today to talk about the importance of the farm bill, because it is a jobs bill for our Nation. Two years ago I joined my colleague Senator JOHANNES from Nebraska and sent a bipartisan letter with 44 Senators saying it was time to act on the farm bill because we thought it was so important for our economy as we were still struggling coming out of a recession. Today it is finally here, that opportunity to put all of that hard work into a bill that goes to the President's desk.

Agriculture employs 16 million Americans, and it produces exports worth \$115 billion of agricultural products to markets around the world. I do not think we always focus on that. A lot of times we come out here and we talk about the individual crops in our State or the individual focus. But what we really need to understand is it is a very big product for the United States.

We live in a very competitive global economy. One of the biggest advantages we have in this global economy is that we in the United States of America know how to grow things. So the emerging middle class around the world can now afford to eat higher quality products. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce CEO Tom Donohue put it best in a speech he gave about the global marketplace last year. He said:

You play to your strength. You leverage your advantages and then you find ways to improve them. And one of the greatest strengths in America is agriculture.

Mr. Donohue said those remarks as an example of what innovation is driving in American agriculture. He is absolutely right, because not only do we know how to grow things but we also know how to innovate. There is a lot of innovation going on in the ag economy. In fact, there are some people in the Pacific Northwest who say now there is as much investment going into new innovations in agriculture as there was recently in high tech or even green energy. So people get it. It is a great investment.

I have seen in Washington State cutting-edge research done at our lab in Prosser for new wheat rotation crops in the Palouse, to savvy entrepreneurs making connections like getting Washington cherries into the new Korean market. So simply put, this is a growing, growing opportunity for the U.S. economy.

American farmers and businesses are seeing demands for their products rise on two fronts: First, American consumers want to buy their products directly from the farms in their commu-

nities, so that means the farms are creating products for exactly what their end customer wants. Because they are doing that, they can make more money on delivering to the end customer exactly the kind of product they want.

Secondly, a rising middle class in places such as Asia to South America wants to use their new-found spending power on purchasing our products as well. So this farm bill helps on both of those fronts. Again, thanks to the chairwoman from Michigan. It helps get more goods to the market, whether that is a farmer's market around the corner from your local supermarket, or whether that is a new market in South Korea.

In 2030, China's middle class will have 1 billion people. That is up from 150 million today. India's middle class will grow by more than 800 percent. Maybe because we sit on the Pacific, just like the Presiding Officer, he knows how important it is to get products to those marketplaces.

In 2012, the United Nations reported that the world will need 70 percent more food by the middle of the century. This is a tremendous opportunity but only if Congress acts today and passes the farm bill. We need to maintain our investment in research and exports so American farmers can thrive and win in the expanding global marketplace. I am confident if we do that, our farmers and our businesses—and we make sure that they have a level playing—will win.

But other countries are playing for keeps too. Every farmer around the world wants access to that rising middle class. The European Union spent \$700 million on export promotion for food products in 2011. That is nearly three times as much as America spent. China is planning to boost its agricultural investment over the next decade. It is a sentiment that I heard in October when I visited one of our wholesalers when he was talking to an overseas client. He was talking about export and agricultural leaders in Washington State and how other countries were starting to use particularly the apple market to try to open new opportunities.

That is why we need to increase opportunities within the farm bill and to move forward on trade deals that help open the door to new agricultural markets. That will help unleash an entrepreneurial spirit we need to be aggressive about. Many people have heard of Walla Walla—or maybe you have not or maybe you thought that was a term. But Walla Walla is a great community in the southeast corner of our State with 30,000 people. It is deeply tied to the global economy. It has wine and wheat and peas and lentils. The farmers there, I know, are very appreciative of the Colombia Free Trade Agreement. They thanked me many times for making sure that got passed. I can

tell you that many of those farmers went to Bogota to try to sell wheat to the growing Colombian middle class. That is what entrepreneurship in America is all about.

So Congress must not dampen our entrepreneurial spirit. Farmers need to start this season and make sure they can put long-term plans in place. Then the seeds that will be planted, the fields that will be harvested, the crops that will be shipped, the smart, targeted investment toward those new international markets will be done. That is what this farm bill is about.

The bill, I can tell you, is a compromise. Again, I thank the chairwoman for her hard work, because I know how hard she worked on forging those compromises. I can tell you that it cuts SNAP far more than I would have cut it. I was one of 26 Senators who voted for the amendment by my colleague from New York offered to restore those cuts. But it is time we move forward.

I want to take a second to talk about three reasons why people should be for this farm bill. First, as I talked about, it continues to expand the export programs that are so important for America's new markets. While I might have been for a more robust program, some of my colleagues obviously have not quite understood why this is such a great benefit to market U.S. products around the globe. I think some people think of big global corporations and things; why do we need that?

Well, I can tell you, when I am talking about apples or cherries or pears, these are not big corporations. They are a collection of hundreds or thousands of farmers working together. When MAP helps target getting people in the Asian market to consume those products, it is a win-win situation for America.

Secondly, this bill funds research, making our crops stronger and healthier and more competitive.

Third, it starts initiatives on products such as a pulse crop that I think can be so beneficial to us over the long run with new, as I said, school lunches, but just healthier products.

Our new farm bill will do the research on specialty crops that are so important for us in the Pacific Northwest. This is the first time in this farm bill that the reauthorization makes long-term investments in specialty crop block grant programs and specialty crop research initiatives. Again, I thank the Senator from Michigan for her help on that, understanding how important these specialty crops are.

I think everybody in America and around the world knows the brand of Washington apples. I can tell you, I have been in the Chinese marketplace and seen how people took off the Washington label, particularly on Fuji apples, and tried to stick it on other apples, because they knew if that sticker

was on that apple, everybody in China would consume those apples even though they were not really Washington Fuji.

So what this specialty research initiative does is say we are not going to let apples and pears and cherries basically constantly fall off the radar as it relates to research, but they will be a permanent part of a program for research and have a block grant program so they can basically continue to do the research that is needed.

Again, if any of my colleagues have ever had a chance to visit the research facilities within their State, they will know what I am talking about. If they haven't, they should go and do it.

But when we are fighting against or upon a competitive field with Israel, China, or anybody else when it comes to apples, we constantly have to answer questions about phytosanitary issues, and we have to constantly talk about ways we can make sure we gain access to those marketplaces. Science and research are the only ways we can fight some of these trade barriers that exist when our products can't get into those countries. So we need to make sure we continue to fight that.

Lastly, I am very pleased about pulse crops—peas, lentils, things like chickpeas. I am sure a lot of people ate a lot of hummus over the weekend while they were watching the Super Bowl and the Seattle Seahawks victory. Hummus is a crop that has exploded 500 percent in the last 15 years. It is definitely a product people have been consuming all over the world for a long time, but we in the United States are starting to consume more of it. The fact that product has had such a huge increase has given our farmers in Washington State great opportunity. But this product is also a very healthy product and one that we fought hard to make sure would be included in a new school lunch program, something where students could get access to a high-protein, high-fiber product that certainly is more affordable for our schools. With the research that is going to go on on pulse crop derivatives and the fact that school lunches are now going to have the opportunity to serve pulse crops more aggressively, we are very excited about this farm bill.

I thank my colleagues in the Senate, Senators CRAPO and RISCH. I also thank my colleagues from South Dakota and North Dakota for helping because both States are very big on these pulse crops. They certainly helped to make sure this stayed in the conference report.

To all of my colleagues, please vote for a bill that will really help our economy, will help us tackle the growing middle class around the world and keep America putting great products on those market shelves and help create more jobs in the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am proud of what we were able to accomplish in the nutrition title of the Farm Bill. It achieves important reforms in SNAP, but also protects food assistance for families, many of whom never dreamed that they would need help putting food on their table. We are adopting important reforms to clarify the law or rules in a few places where members had legitimate concerns. At the same time, and perhaps more importantly, we are rejecting many draconian proposals that would have caused serious harm to program participants by slashing benefits or kicking families off of SNAP, undermining the primary purpose and the basic framework of the program.

Let's start by reviewing some of the improvements we made to SNAP to address concerns around minor eligibility issues.

In Michigan, we discovered two lottery winners were continuing to receive benefits after winning a million dollars. In a program with 46 million participants, this really is an example of a very rare problem. Nevertheless, we want to make absolutely clear in federal law that individuals who win the lottery are not eligible for SNAP. So we tightened rules in a way to ensure that not even one lottery winner can get SNAP. But we also wanted to make sure that this prohibition does not result in a burdensome new requirement to ask all applicants and participants if they had recently won the lottery.

The provision requires that State SNAP agencies and local lotteries and gaming commissions set up data-sharing to ensure that the SNAP agency is informed when individuals win substantial sums of money. A SNAP agency can then take action to contact the winning participant and review their eligibility in light of these major winnings. I'm pleased that we managed to find a way to address this problem without imposing new requirements on the millions of struggling low income households who participate in this program. There is no need to put questions about the lottery or gambling on the application form, and we expect USDA to ensure that won't happen. In other words, this change allows us to use our data and technology to prevent this extremely rare event from happening again without putting new burdens on participants.

States will apply regular income and asset tests apply to lottery winners—if someone has winnings that make them ineligible, they can be disqualified from SNAP. But if that person paid off debts or was able to finally afford costly home repair or health care and now had income that made them eligible, they have every right to receive SNAP benefits.

Another area of eligibility that follows the same principle on implementation is eligibility for ex-offenders felons who are fleeing criminal justice. Current SNAP law prohibits people with criminal records who are fleeing from law enforcement or violating the terms of their parole from participating in SNAP. Because criminal law is a complicated mix of federal and State statutes and definitions, members wanted to make very clear that people committing odious crimes would be ineligible for SNAP if they were fleeing or violating their parole. This does not apply to any convicted criminal who satisfies his or her debt to society by serving out the sentence and complying with any court order. So, it's a narrow group of people that we're highlighting. For that reason, we do not expect any changes to the SNAP application and eligibility process. Applicants are already asked about their fleeing felon status, so we expect that additional inquiries about applicants' criminal records will not be necessary.

We did include one provision that will result in a cut to SNAP benefits for some households. Some States have been providing as little as \$1 in heating assistance for the sole purpose of qualifying recipients for higher benefit. While I agree that SNAP benefits are often insufficient to cover a family's food needs over the course of a month, the very structure of SNAP is meant to award benefits based on how much money a family has available to purchase food. Providing \$1 in heating assistance skews benefits away from this income and expense based system. So the change we made means a SNAP recipient now must receive \$20 in heating assistance to qualify for the Standard Utility Allowance. If you do not receive at least \$20 in low income heating assistance, you will need to produce a utility bill. This is intended to make the energy assistance a real contribution to the actual expenses of a poor household. Congress never intended to permit households that don't have heating or cooling costs because they are included in rent or covered by the landlord to get a deduction as if they did have expenses. The law is ambiguous on this point, so this bill would clarify the issue.

When we decided to make this change, I insisted that we do it in a way that did not harm any household that had actual heating or cooling costs, including costs passed on by a landlord or shared with another family. That means we expect USDA to make three things a priority when overseeing State implementation of this change. One priority is that anyone currently getting this \$1 in energy assistance must be given a chance to show whether they have energy costs of any kind. I think many of these households will have these costs and qualify for the deduction that raises their benefits.

That's how the current program works in the majority of States that do not offer this minimal energy assistance. States must give households a chance to document actual costs. I expect USDA to provide guidance to States to ensure that reflects many different living scenarios that low-income households experience are taken into account when implementing this change.

The second priority for USDA is to make clear that this change should have no effect on anyone currently receive a more typical LIHEAP payment. We continue to support the connection between SNAP and LIHEAP and do not expect these changes to cause problems for the majority of people who rely on and receive LIHEAP, or are applying and are likely to receive it, in getting the SNAP utility deduction. I know this puts the burden on States to make sure their application process and benefit calculations are performed in a way that allows them to determine everyone eligible for the deduction based on receiving energy assistance. We expect households to be given the opportunity to attest to their participation in LIHEAP. Many States offer that option to households now, and we do not intend to change that. We expect that a State SNAP agency could certify that its State does not provide LIHEAP payments of less than \$20 per year. This would mean there is no need for households to provide information about the amount of LIHEAP they receive or the method or frequency of those payments. We expect the Secretary to monitor this change closely and help States come up with the least burdensome implementation options available. Because CBO did not assume any savings from reduced benefits in States that have not implemented this practice, we expect the Secretary to implement this change in a way that is consistent with the intent to not impact those States.

Although we did provide States the flexibility to phase in the provision for most participating households, I remain concerned that the timetable for implementation of these changes is short. For new applicants and households, the provision is effective just 30 days after enactment. Under SNAP regulations, States will be protected from being cited for errors during the first few months after enactment. However, low-income households do not have the same administrative protection. It is possible that they could receive higher benefits as a result of the State not being able to convert its systems quickly enough. I urge the Secretary to work with States to waive any household liability that results from receiving slightly higher benefits because States were unable to implement the provision in a timely manner.

Let me turn now to a significant outcome in the nutrition title. I am particularly pleased with the reforms that

we have proposed to SNAP's employment and training program. A key element of that effort is a new demonstration project to test innovative strategies to help build individuals' skills and employability. The majority of adults enrolled in SNAP who can work do. Even more work just before or just after their participation in SNAP. Nevertheless, all of the conferees had a shared goal of exploring whether there were ways that SNAP could more affirmatively support SNAP participants' desire to work and improve their and their families' situation. We agreed to look for ways to help adults get the training, support and encouragement to find suitable employment. Of course, we had to do this in an environment with very constrained resources.

We worked on a package of ideas that would make better use of existing federal resources, provide modest new sums of money for SNAP employment and training and provided funding to test innovative new approaches. We wanted to be sure that by the time of the next reauthorization we would have a better sense of what kinds of services States were offering, what was producing results for families, and that USDA would have more capacity to oversee an employment and training effort.

The bill provides \$200 million to for up to 10 State pilot projects that will test new strategies to support individuals to return to work, enhance their skills to improve their earnings, and address households' barriers to work. The pilot will operate within SNAP's employment and training program framework, but we have also expanded the types of activities that can be offered. Now States will have the option to include activities offered through the State's cash assistance as well as supportive services that are allowed under SNAP. States can use the funding to cover the mandated supportive services, such as child care, for participants in the pilot. Moreover they can test whether supportive services such as child care or transitional housing are appropriate interventions on their own. After all, a mother with safe, stable high quality child care is far more likely to be able to look for and maintain employment than one without such help. Similarly an individual with a place to live is far more likely to find and keep employment than someone without housing.

It was important to me to include unsubsidized employment as an allowable activity because that's ultimately what we want all job training participants to find. This required some careful consideration. Private employment is a different kind of activity than a class or program run and monitored by the State. States, very understandably, will have very limited ability to oversee private employment situations. So

we wanted to ensure that the kinds of protections that exist in the private labor market, such as workplace protection laws, health and safety standards and wage and hour protections also apply to any private employment programs under SNAP employment and training programs. We also made clear that placements into unsubsidized employment cannot displace an existing worker at the employment site. That has long been the rule under other types of SNAP employment and training programs, and we expect the same here. I expect that USDA will issue comprehensive standards that incorporate all existing SNAP protections as well as the appropriate private employee protections such as the Fair Labor Standards Act into the requirements for offering unsubsidized employment. Despite that responsibility, I hope USDA shares my excitement that including unsubsidized employment as an education and training activity is an unprecedented opportunity to support low-income individuals as they enter or rejoin the workforce.

I specifically focus on one challenge in offering unsubsidized work. The pilot projects will allow States to apply SNAP's sanction policy to any individual who is assigned a work activity, but willfully refuses, without good cause, to take an action that he or she could safely take. In the traditional education and training setting, it is usually—though not always—relatively straightforward to determine whether an individual has complied. Did the person participate in the required activity? If not, did the person have good cause, like sickness, not to do so? But in the unsubsidized work placement, it may be difficult to make the correct assessment when an individual does not meet the work requirement. The private employer may have reduced work hours or transferred the individual into a position for which they are clearly not qualified. Such action does not speak to the individual's willingness to work. Because of the inherent challenges in determining compliance with unsubsidized work activities, the pilot program requires clear evidence that an individual willfully refused to take a safe and proper action without good cause before the State can subject him or her to sanctions. I also encourage the Secretary to issue guidance about the very limited circumstances under which a person who is working could be sanctioned for losing his or her job. When someone who is working loses the job for reasons beyond their control, we want to ensure they are not doubly punished by losing SNAP benefits as well.

The only way we will know if the pilot projects are succeeding is if we have a high quality, longitudinal evaluation. So any State applying to conduct a pilot must also participate in a comprehensive evaluation to determine

what works and what doesn't. We want to measure actual outcomes—employment and changes in earnings, as well as documented improvements in a participant's skills, training and experience, since successfully completing a job training program is not a guarantee of immediate employment. We also want to better understand how to ensure that the assessment of each job training participant helps match the individual with the training or support best suited for their needs. After all, if a job training volunteer really just needs help with child care or transportation in order to accept a job offer, we don't want that person assigned to job search or workfare. Assessment is already a requirement under federal rules. Gaining more insight into how a good assessment and assignment system can improve participant outcomes may be one of the most cost-effective lessons we can hope to gain from this effort.

This is an area where I want to thank my fellow conferees for all of their hard work. We came to the conference with very different ideas about what the issues facing the program and clients are, and what SNAP's approach towards promoting work out to be. We spent a tremendous amount of time educating ourselves about the issues, the opportunities and the risks of various approaches. I believe we ended up with a stronger program that encourages work without penalizing those who are willing to work but unable to find a job in this economy. The pilot program represents a true compromise and an important step forward in helping low-income Americans succeed in the labor market.

In addition to the pilot projects, the bill requires States to begin measuring actual individual-based outcomes from participating in job training. We directed USDA to compile and analyze this information so we can learn what kinds of services work best to provide SNAP participants with the skills and experience they need to find employment. Because matching an individual's employment needs to an appropriate program or service is critical to positive employment outcomes, this review should include a focus on the individualized assessment that is required of SNAP work registrants. As I mentioned earlier, this is an aspect of employment and training that is already required. Understanding individuals' needs and abilities is crucial to matching them to a job training or work program where they can succeed. That is the first important step in making future improvement in the program. We were very clear that successful outcomes can mean more than a full-time job placement. We expect that the State outcome data reflect this by including measures of improved employability, like educational attainment, credentials and work experience.

We also expect USDA's analysis to acknowledge the reality that getting suitable employment may take more than the completion of a job training course. This admittedly increases the attention both USDA and the States must place on their education and training programs, but it will give us invaluable information about how best to meet the needs of SNAP participants.

Another area of the legislation where we made some important investments is enhancing USDA's efforts to combat fraud. The agency has done a remarkable job of identifying and preventing fraud and trafficking; even as household and retailer participation grew drastically, fraud remained at a historic low percentage. So we targeted every small area we could to improve the integrity of the program.

We've increased funding for USDA to address retailer fraud through data mining and expand State and federal partnerships to combat retailer fraud. Historically, States have pursued household fraud and USDA has dealt with retailer fraud. But, in some cases, the fraudulent activity involves both types of parties, so we're creating pilot projects to see how collaboration can help stretch resources. While States have done a good job with their responsibility to prevent and prosecute fraud, some States have developed troubling techniques that pressure innocent low-income households to admit wrongdoing. When USDA selects States to partner with, we intend that they prioritize States that have a record of addressing fraud through investigations, hearings and actual third-party findings of fraud. We urge USDA to take a close look at States that have a high number of disqualifications that come from client confessions in the absence of investigations. States that are ready to take on new responsibilities under the pilot must be those that ensure their disqualifications are in fact a result of documented fraud.

Another provision deals with a rare, but important, participant integrity issue. SNAP benefits are paid on a debit card we call Electronic Benefit Transfer or EBT cards. Clients use these at the grocery store to buy food just like any other consumer. Clients who lose their card can request replacements. That's an important customer service feature which ensures needy households don't lose the assistance they need. However, some households requesting multiple replacements may raise red flags. Multiple card replacements might be an indication that the household needs help in how to use the debit card. In other cases, multiple replacements could be an indication that an individual in the household is trying to sell the card.

The farm bill requires the household to provide an explanation when they request an excessive number of replace-

ments in a given year. In order for this to be helpful in fighting fraud, rather than become a burden on innocent households that struggle to keep their cards, we added a set of protections that USDA must implement. After consultation with the Department, we expect they would consider it excessive if a household requested more than four replacement cards per year. USDA's own analysis indicates that fraud is only an issue when the requests are that frequent. Second, the provision requires that households be given the flexibility in how they want to provide their explanation. In particular, States may not require households to go to the local SNAP office or to be interviewed about their card loss. The goal was to avoid undue burdens on households, including those who are working, are homebound, or who may not have the means to travel to a SNAP office. This provision also does not empower the State to withhold household benefits based on the household's explanation. If the State questions the validity of the household's reason, we encourage the State to pursue a fraud investigation. SNAP has processes in place already for program violations and we expect these processes to be followed. This provision does not expand or alter that authority.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that this process is not just a way to identify potential fraud; it's also a way to identify households that need help in using the benefits they are eligible for. There are many perfectly legitimate reasons to need a new card, and we intended that this integrity measure not entrap households that have done nothing wrong. That's why we require USDA to include specific protections for the homeless, people with disabilities and victims of crime. My colleague, Senator HARKIN, has led the way in championing the needs of people with disabilities and making clear that federal programs have an obligation to provide such individuals accommodation. We expect this provision to result in States' intensifying their efforts to identify and assist individuals who would benefit from more assistance.

SNAP retailers operate within a rapidly changing food retail environment. We've seen fundamental changes in the way food is sold since the last farm bill, so the conferees sought to make some changes in the way SNAP benefits can be redeemed. This farm bill will direct USDA to conduct pilots to test both mobile technologies, like smart phone apps, and online technologies. These pilots offer an exciting opportunity for farmers markets and other small retailers who find the point-of-sale EBT equipment to be too expensive or cumbersome. They also provide access to SNAP recipients that may have real physical or geographical challenges in getting to the store. But one of the risks of embracing new technology is that bad actors will find a

way to defraud the program. So we included a set of protections, for both recipients and retailers, and expect USDA to carefully monitor the pilot programs for evidence of fraud. This may require USDA to develop standards of transparency and recordkeeping for mobile technologies that differ from those used in traditional brick-and-mortar stores. Most online retailers charge a fee for the delivery of food. For low-income SNAP participants, fees like that can really cut into their food budget. We were clear that SNAP benefits cannot be used to pay for any delivery fee or premium, and we required that the cost of food be the same as the in-the-store price, but we cannot prevent retailers from charging for delivery. So we urge USDA to pay special attention to these fees and be willing to deny participation to entities that cannot ensure that fees will be minimal. We also want USDA to assess whether fees undermine the ability of a household to afford an adequate diet with SNAP benefits.

Since we are moving towards adapting SNAP to emerging retail trends, I'd like to note what we did not do in this bill. First, we have not removed the requirement that SNAP households be treated the same as other customers. Whatever steps States and USDA take to modernize benefit redemption methods cannot result in overt identification of SNAP households, such as SNAP-only lanes in grocery stores.

Because technology continues to evolve, we included several provisions that have to do with "data matches." Data matching is where the SNAP agency or eligibility worker can check information about SNAP participants' household circumstances with third party data bases. When done well, this is a cost effective means to test the veracity of client statements as well as to catch information that client may fail to provide the program. If done poorly, data matching can result in lots of confusing data matches that do not actually improve verification. We don't want States to undertake data matching for data matching's sake. The point is to empower States with good information at the right time to inform effective eligibility processing.

First, we include a provision to add federal standards for data exchanges to SNAP so that SNAP can more easily share data with other programs. This is a commonsense provision that will ensure that across the various State and federal programs, our systems can "talk" with one another. SNAP law and the privacy act protects client's personal privacy and this authority does not change that obligation.

Second, we required States to use the Department of Health and Human Services' National Directory of New Hires (NDNH). This database primarily is for State child support agencies to learn information about the employ-

ment of noncustodial parents who live or work in other States and States currently have the option to use it for SNAP. By requiring its use at the time a household is certified for SNAP, we believe it can help States determine eligibility and the correct level of benefits. We do not, however, dictate how States must use the data.

Third, the bill codifies the existing State practice of verifying immigration status by using the Citizenship and Immigration Services database for immigrants' status through the federal Systemic Alien Verification for Entitlements program. Currently in SNAP, States have the option to use SAVE and nearly every State currently does. The Food and Nutrition Act references SAVE and another database, the Income Eligibility Verification Systems, or IEVS, in the same place in the Social Security Act. I want to make clear that we are only mandating States use SAVE. We did not intend to change anything about how States use IEVS—use of that database would continue to be optional for States. Longstanding SNAP policy has required rigorous verification procedures, and IEVS is one of many ways to get information to ensure correct eligibility decisions.

We want States to have a plan for using the data available to them. The goal is not to require data matches that States know to be unhelpful, or where they determine it is not cost-effective to do so. Moreover, we are not pressing States to run afoul of simplified reporting and check these databases between reviews. In our last two farm bills, we took great pains to reduce needless paperwork burdens on States and households between certifications. These changes are not meant to override the framework of simplified reporting. Instead, States will use third-party data to make periodic reviews as accurate as efficiently possible while always providing participants the ability to challenge data matches they believe to be inaccurate.

The nutrition title also takes steps to ensure that federal funds used to inform Americans about the SNAP cannot be used in inappropriate ways. To be clear, USDA has done a fine and necessary job getting information about SNAP to low-income households that struggle to put food on the table. The program cannot be effective if those who may need it are unaware of its existence or believe they are not eligible. Moreover, outreach and program promotional materials can be helpful to improving program integrity. Applicants and clients who are informed about their responsibilities and educated about what the application process entails will be better prepared to complete the application and renew process. That's likely to increase program accuracy, reduce fraud and enhance overall efficiencies.

It's important that we provide low-income households with accurate infor-

mation about the program, just as we do with Social Security or Medicare benefits. That's the only way that individuals can make the right choice for them about whether or not to apply. In this bill, Congress continues to support this kind of information sharing, while clarifying that aggressive recruitment, including recruitment outside of the United States, is not permissible. Recruitment is trying to persuade or convince someone who has made an informed decision not to apply to change his or her mind. That hasn't been a permissible activity, and the bill simply codifies that practice. Providing and producing positive information about the program and the benefits of applying or assisting households to navigate the complicated application process would still be permitted. We expect the agency will continue to provide necessary information while ensuring that education funds are used appropriately.

As I said at the start, this bill is not perfect. I much prefer to be discussing more ways we could better ensure SNAP benefits were adequate to help families have enough healthy food throughout the month. However, I continue to believe this farm bill protects SNAP, which is the best defense we have against hunger in our communities. We have continued the long tradition in the Agriculture Committee of bipartisan support for the program. This was not an easy task, given how far apart the House and Senate were just a few months ago. This farm bill is an important step in dealing with the most important food and agricultural issues facing the nation today. I urge my colleagues to support it.

I understand we will recessing for lunch in a moment, but there are some very important people I would like to thank today. I wish to take this moment before we have the final vote to do so. I know, listening to other colleagues, as we come to major pieces of legislation, at the end they talk about the importance of their staff. I have come to realize just how powerful those words are. I have been blessed with an incredibly talented, hard-working staff. They are the reason we are here today talking about the Agricultural Act of 2014. Every single one of them should be very proud of their contribution, as I am proud of them.

This certainly starts with our staff director Chris Adamo. We have been on speed dial for so long, I am sure I will be doing that probably out of habit from now on, day and night. I appreciate his incredible leadership, tenacity, talent, and hard work. Chris deserves a tremendous amount of credit for leading us with his team. I thank him.

I also thank Joe Schultz, who is our chief economist. No matter what the problem, he seemed to make the numbers add up, whether it is the commodity title, crop insurance, or dairy.

When at the very end it became very clear that after 3 years of hard work and passing a dairy policy, it wouldn't get the support of the House Republicans and we were going to have to rewrite it in a week and a half—which was no small thing—Joe continued to give us the right kind of advice. I am proud to say that we started with a commitment to have \$23 billion in deficit reduction, counting our sequestration and spending cuts, and we have ended with \$23 billion in deficit reduction and spending reductions in agriculture. Joe has been a huge reason why we have been able to get there.

I thank Jonathan Cordone, who is our chief counsel. He made sure we were right on the process and worked specifically on issues such as trust funds with many colleges and around the complex areas to help them to be able to meet the issues of their States. There were important issues, such as payment reforms and a number of legal issues. He has been an incredibly valuable and important member.

Russ Benham is our counsel on regulatory issues. Some of the trust fund issues we had to address related to regulatory issues and forestry issues. We are very proud that in this bill there is an agriculture advisory committee to the EPA, moving forward on rules. It is extremely significant to have the voice of agriculture involved with the EPA in a formal way. In this and so many other areas, Russ has been very instrumental.

To our conservation team, Tina May is amazing. She is going back to the USDA next week to help lead the implementation, which gives me confidence that this is really going to be done as we intended. Tina May's brilliance in strategy, negotiation, and commitment on these issues is unmatched. Her team is Kevin Norton and Hanna AbouElSeoud. The area of conservation is really landmark in reforms, protecting our land, water, conservation compliance, and setting real standards around strong conservation practices and in forestry as well. These are important areas that we have addressed in forestry and international food aid—America's opportunity to fulfill our values around the world and create more flexibility for us to help feed a hungry world.

Karla Thieman is also on speed dial. The very last phone calls I was making and emails before we wrote and finalized the conference report were with Karla and Chris. Our energy title is about jobs and about energy efficiency. I am so proud of what we were able to do; a landmark energy title; livestock disaster assistance, all of the areas that support livestock and, again, dairy. Karla was our lead on dairy. I think we may have finally stopped waking up in the middle of the night, dreaming about dairy policy. I am not sure, but we are getting there.

Cory Claussen led our efforts on farm credit and beginning farmers. I am so proud we have added our veterans to the support there. I thank him so much.

Brandon McBride—rural development, jobs, and quality of life in rural America. Brandon led our effort to make sure we were strengthening tools for businesses and local units of government and all of those who count on rural development; also research, a new research foundation and partnership, a real commitment to research in a way we have not seen before. I thank Brandon for leading that effort.

Of course, on nutrition, fruits and vegetables, Jacqlyn Schneider and Katie Naessens led an extremely complicated area. Jacqlyn had to negotiate some very difficult areas. I am proud to say that we rejected every harmful policy in the House bill. Because of Jacqlyn and Katie's efforts, we have a strengthened commitment to organics and farmers markets, fresh fruit and vegetables for our children's schools, and so many other areas in which we are beginning to change the paradigm about local food systems and strengthening opportunities for local markets for our farmers.

Grant Colvin has worked so hard on commodities as well as livestock and trade and, of course, exports. They are so very important to us. It is an area of real strength and jobs for our country. I thank Grant for all of his expertise.

As staff assistants, Alexis Stanczuk and Kyle Varner helped the entire team every step of the way. They have been there to help us on every single project, every single effort we needed help with. I thank Alexis and Kyle.

Jessie Williams and Nicole Hertenstein are clerks. Their entire team basically kept the whole thing together. They made sure we were doing the right thing on point. I thank Jessie, Nicole, and their team as well.

Finally, I would like to thank my personal staff.

Bill Sweeney, my chief of staff, has been with me in a multitude of different capacities—from telling the story on the floor with our charts to making sure we had a coordinated team between the Agriculture Committee staff and all of the talented people on my personal staff, as well as wonderful strategy advice. Bill, as my chief of staff, I am proud to say, has been invaluable in this process.

Matt VanKuiken, my legislative director, worked as a team every single step of the way.

Our press team, when we looked at telling the story of the new farm bill approach, Cullen Schwarz, Ben Becker, Alex Barriger, Will Eberle, and Matt Williams—they were telling this story and getting the facts out every step of the way.

My State team, led by my State director Teresa Plachetka, Kali Fox,

Mary Judnich, Brandon Fewins, Korey Hall, Jeremy Hosking, and Adrian Walker—they made sure Michigan's voice was heard in every part of this bill, a tremendous amount of hard work. This bill is better, certainly, for Michigan as a result of all their efforts.

Kasey Gillette in Senator REID's office worked as our partner on everything.

Gary Myrick, Trish Engle, Tim Mitchell, and all of our floor staff—I thank them for all of their patience as we have passed this once, passed this twice, and finally we are going to pass the conference report this afternoon.

I also thank legislative counsel Michelle Johnson-Wieder and Gary Endicott.

I thank Senator COCHRAN's staff of T.A. Hawks and James Glick for their partnership and excellent work.

Finally, I thank Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack and the USDA. The technical expertise we have received on every single section has been absolutely invaluable. When it came to the final days on dairy, the Secretary played a very critical role in helping us get the compromise that will allow us to meet the goals and address farmers all over the country.

Last but not least, I thank the Congressional Budget Office, which we called on day and night. We appreciate their efforts.

I appreciate the patience of the Presiding Officer, who allowed me to speak at this time to make sure we had a chance to say thank you to a lot of folks who deserve, as usual, a tremendous amount of credit for getting this done. They are the folks behind the scenes who have made this happen. I am very proud of each and every one of them.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014— CONFERENCE REPORT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 20 minutes equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. If no time is yielded, time will be equally charged to both sides.

The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, we have heard a lot from colleagues the last 2 days about just how important this farm bill is, and that is because there is so much more in this bill than what we would call a farm bill. It is really 12 different pieces of legislation, from farm to research, to fruits and

vegetables, to energy across the board all put together in something we call the farm bill.

This is, most importantly, a major bipartisan jobs bill that makes sure the 16 million people who work in agriculture—from Michigan to Mississippi, to Minnesota, to Oklahoma, and everywhere in between—have the support they need.

This is an exports bill that will help expand opportunities for American agricultural exports, one of the few areas where our Nation maintains a healthy, robust trade surplus.

This is a research bill that will make a permanent long-term commitment through a new public-private foundation and other investments that will allow us to find solutions to pests and diseases and focus on innovations for the future.

This is an energy bill that will help create the next generation of biofuel to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and will help farmers and rural small business owners generate their own power to improve energy efficiency and lower their costs for their businesses.

This is an economic development bill that will help rural businesses and communities get broadband Internet access so they can find new customers and compete and connect around the country and around the world.

This is a conservation bill that helps farmers and ranchers protect our precious land and water resources. This is our country's largest investment in conservation on private lands that we make as Americans. Most of our land is privately owned. It includes a historic new agreement between commodity and conservation groups that ties conservation compliance with crop insurance so we are being the best possible stewards of our land.

This bill will save taxpayers money and conserve our lands and waters for years to come by preserving millions of acres of wildlife habitat, which in turn has helped rebuild populations of ducks and quail and pheasants, among others. That is why the bill has the strong support of the National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, the Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, and the World Wildlife Fund, which are only a handful of the more than 250 conservation groups that have endorsed this farm bill.

This is a nutrition bill that makes sure families have a safety net, just as we do for farmers. The savings in food assistance comes solely through addressing fraud and misuse while maintaining and protecting critical benefits for those who need help, most often temporarily, putting food on the table for their families while they get back on their feet after having lost their job.

It strengthens the integrity and accountability of SNAP, making sure every single dollar goes to families in need while they get back on their feet.

It gives our children more healthy food options in schools and will help bring more healthy, locally grown food into our communities.

This is a deficit reduction bill that will save taxpayers \$23 billion. All together we have cut spending, a portion of it accounts through sequestration, the rest in additional spending in this bill, where we have voluntarily—as I have often said—voluntarily agreed to cut spending in our own area of jurisdiction. By the way, that \$23 billion is more than double the amount of agricultural cuts recommended by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles Commission.

This is a reform bill that contains the greatest reforms to agricultural programs in decades. We have finally ended direct payment subsidies which are given to farmers even in good times. Instead, we move to a responsible risk-management approach that only gives farmers assistance when they experience a loss. This farm bill is focused on the future, not the past. This bill is taking a critical step toward changing the paradigm of agriculture and the broad range of agricultural production in this country.

This bill has the support of over 370 groups and counting from all parts of the country and ideological backgrounds. That is because as we wrote this bill we worked hard to find common ground to develop a bill that works for every kind of agricultural production in every region of our country. We worked hard and together—and I want to thank my ranking member, the distinguished senior Senator from Mississippi, for his leadership and partnership in this effort—we have included valuable input from both sides of the aisle and from the House and the Senate. I wish to thank all of our colleagues for their ideas, for their willingness to put partisanship aside and work together. This is an example of how we can get work done, and I hope it is just one step of a productive year moving forward.

Thanks to all that work, we have arrived at a farm bill that works for all of America—for families and farmers, for consumers, for those who care so deeply about protecting our lands and our water. This bill will strengthen agriculture for years to come. It is time to pass it. It is time to get it to the President for signature.

Every single Senator in this Chamber has constituents who work and benefit from agriculture, and certainly just coming from lunch today we should each be thanking a farmer for the safest, most affordable food supply in the world.

After 491 days without a farm bill, our constituents need us to get this done. I urge colleagues to join in a bipartisan way, as we have throughout this process, to vote yes on this farm bill and to give our farmers, our ranchers, and the rest of the 16 million peo-

ple who work in agriculture the farm bill they deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I first of all want to commend the distinguished Senator from Michigan for her outstanding leadership of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. As we proceeded from the hearings to review those suggestions being made for change and modernization of our agriculture act to the final days of committee hearings and now full debate in the Senate and in the House, it comes to this final vote.

Last night there was a decisive vote of 72 to 22 to end debate on the farm bill. That reflects the appreciation and respect the Senate has for the work of this committee, led by our distinguished chairman, the Senator from Michigan. So I thank her, as well as our House committee counterparts, FRANK LUCAS of Oklahoma and ranking member COLLIN PETERSON of Minnesota, as well as the members of their staff, as we worked our way through the conference between the House and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry leadership.

I wish to thank, too, our majority staff director Chris Adamo and all of Chairwoman STABENOW's staff for their hard work in developing this farm bill. Our committee clerk Jessie Williams and her staff have also provided great assistance throughout this process. They have worked diligently and competently and thoughtfully on this legislation. Their dedication to developing the bill and the conference report led to long days, many working weekends, and we do owe them a very strong debt of gratitude and commendation for this work product.

My staff director T.A. Hawks has been at the job, it seems like, day and night for a long time to help make sure we pass a bill that reflects the sentiment and the suggestions for this Congress for modernization of our agriculture legislation. James Glueck also worked closely with T.A. Hawks and has been a trusted adviser. I am grateful for his good help as well.

All of our staff members have done great work in helping move the farm bill to a successful conclusion and the approval by the Senate of this work. They are: Anne Hazlett, Steven Wall, Ben Mosely, Julian Baer, Keith Coble, Andrew Vlasaty, Taylor Nicholas, Chris Gallegos, Darrell Dixon, Kevin Batteh, and Nona McCoy. My personal office agriculture LA Daniel Ulmer also was involved in the work of this committee and advising me personally as we worked our way to the conclusion of our responsibilities. He worked very closely with the committee to help develop the farm bill; likewise, chief of staff Bruce Evans, legislative director Adam Telle, legislative aide

Bennett Mize, and others from my staff have added valuable input into this process, and I appreciate their good work.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I realize we will be having the vote at 2:35, so let me just take one more moment to stress how important it is that we recognize this was an effort in good faith between the House and the Senate and Republicans and Democrats.

I too wish to join with my ranking member Senator COCHRAN in thanking the chairman in the House FRANK LUCAS. He and ranking member COLLIN PETERSON were true partners with us as we moved through this process.

We actually started about 2½ years ago when the supercommittee on deficit reduction at that time asked each committee to come up with a way to reduce the deficit, to cut spending in their area of jurisdiction. We decided to do it a little differently. Chairman LUCAS and I talked and we decided the four of us would get together and actually come up with a House-Senate, Democratic-Republican recommendation that would be solidly supported by all sides. So it was a prenegotiation on the farm bill that we were going to be doing in the next year.

So in July, August of 2011, we sat down and started going through ways we could save dollars. We all agreed direct payment subsidies could no longer be justified and needed to be eliminated. We also knew it was important to have a safety net for our farmers, and disaster assistance for our ranchers and farmers as well, and that we needed to help them manage their risk. We came up with an approach which took part of the dollars we cut and put it back into strengthening risk management tools, such as crop insurance—which is just like any other insurance: you pay a premium, you get a bill—not a check—and you don't get any kind of help unless you have a loss.

But we also took a look at other areas of the farm bill. We found there were 23 different conservation programs. Every time somebody had a good idea, we added a new program. We thought, let's go back and really take a look at this. If we were starting from scratch, how would we put together all these important programs and do it in a way that is more user friendly for farmers and ranchers and organizations that work on land and water preservation. So we went from 23 to 13 programs and put them in 4 different buckets, or subject areas, and we saved money.

Then we looked at every part of the farm bill. I asked our staff not to talk about programs but principles: What should we be doing? What should the farm bill be doing for agriculture, for farmers, ranchers, families, consumers,

rural communities, job creators? Let's not protect programs. Let's look broadly at principles.

So we did that, and we ended up eliminating about 100 different authorization programs, consolidating, cutting down on duplication, doing what I think Americans are asking us to do in every part of the Federal Government.

We then turned around to set priorities about where to invest, because it is not just cutting for cutting's sake, it is trying to make things work better, be more effective, and save precious dollars, but at the same time investing in the future—investing in that which will strengthen agriculture, create jobs, strengthen rural communities, and new opportunities for the broad array of production, what consumers are asking for in organics, local food systems, and so on.

So we basically put together a plan that started with the deficit reduction process, the supercommittee, and we made a recommendation of \$23 billion in cuts and deficit reduction. We all know that the broader deficit reduction process did not proceed, but we decided to keep the commitment to that \$23 billion, and so we have. We have moved forward. Part of the cuts now that we have put into place have been accounted for by the Budget Office as part of sequestration. Most have not. But when we add it all up, it is still \$23 billion that we started with back in 2011, when the four of us together decided to sit down and listen to each other, understand each other, find common ground, and make some tough decisions about how we could do things better in the area of agriculture and the farm bill.

As we come to a close, I again thank colleagues who have given such valuable input and been involved every step of the way. I hope everyone will feel a sense of pride that this is something we have done together—that people expect us to do together, which is do our job, to make decisions and to govern, and to operate in a way which allows us to listen to each other, find common ground, and get our work done.

Madam President, I yield back all remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time has expired.

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on adoption of the conference report.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 21 Leg.]

YEAS—68

Alexander	Graham	Mikulski
Baldwin	Hagan	Moran
Baucus	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Hatch	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Portman
Blunt	Heitkamp	Pryor
Boozman	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Hoeben	Risch
Brown	Isakson	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Johanns	Sanders
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Coons	Landrieu	Thune
Crapo	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	Levin	Udall (NM)
Durbin	Manchin	Vitter
Enzi	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Menendez	Wyden
Franken	Merkley	

NAYS—32

Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Reed
Blumenthal	Grassley	Roberts
Booker	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Coburn	Lee	Shelby
Collins	Markey	Toomey
Corker	McCain	Warren
Cornyn	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Cruz	Murphy	

The conference report was agreed to.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, did we move to reconsider and lay on the table the previous vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. COCHRAN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, would the Presiding Officer tell me the pending business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950.

Mr. REID. The motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297 is the pending business; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is correct.

Mr. REID. I withdraw my motion to proceed.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

Mr. REID. Madam President, what is now pending before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. S. 1845, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1845) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) amendment No. 2631, relating to extension and modification of emergency unemployment compensation program.

Reid amendment No. 2632 (to amendment No. 2631), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 2633, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2634 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 2633), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2635 (to amendment No. 2634), of a perfecting nature.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITHDRAWN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask that the pending motion to commit be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the pending amendment No. 2631.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Could we have order in the Chamber.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be in order.

Mr. MCCONNELL. We have a number of ideas on this side of the aisle to promote economic growth and job creation, and we would like the opportunity to offer amendments to implement these ideas.

For example, Senator PAUL has an amendment to create economic freedom zones to help struggling areas of our country to recover from the economic downturn. Senator TIM SCOTT'S SKILLS Act would improve job training programs for the very long-term unemployed that this extension is actually designed to help. In addition, Senators AYOTTE, COLLINS, PORTMAN, and others have been working very hard—Senator COATS as well—to come up with a path forward on a meaningful offset that would extend unemployment benefits without adding to the deficit.

Their ideas have so far been blocked. So I would like to ask the majority leader to modify his request to provide for an orderly process for amendments. I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendments and motions be withdrawn and that the minority and majority sides be permitted to offer amendments in alternating fashion so that these important ideas can be considered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the majority leader so modify his request?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, when we last dealt with unemployment insurance, I offered a unanimous consent request at that time that would have allowed up to 20 relevant amendments—20.

Mr. President, my friend, the Republican leader—he is again, through a lot of words, saying: We do not want this. We are not going to help you pass it.

There is more than one way to filibuster a bill. Providing for an endless number of amendments is one of those ways to kill this bill.

Mr. President, what we are going to do here is offer a fully paid for 3-month extension of unemployment insurance. Simple as that. Simple as that. That is what the Republicans said they wanted, and we agreed to do it.

We will not agree to an unlimited number of amendments. I look forward to hearing from my Republican colleagues if they have a proposal that is different than this, which is, again, a different way of saying: We do not care about unemployment compensation as it is now focused, and we are not going to support it.

In the meantime, I object to an order providing amendments without limit and without any commitment to vote on passage of the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to table the pending amendment No. 2631.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 22 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Corker	Johanns
Ayotte	Cornyn	Johnson (SD)
Baldwin	Crapo	Johnson (WI)
Barrasso	Cruz	King
Baucus	Donnelly	Kirk
Begich	Durbin	Klobuchar
Bennet	Enzi	Landrieu
Blumenthal	Feinstein	Leahy
Blunt	Fischer	Lee
Booker	Flake	Levin
Boozman	Franken	Manchin
Boxer	Gillibrand	Markey
Brown	Graham	McCain
Burr	Grassley	McCaskill
Cantwell	Hagan	McConnell
Cardin	Harkin	Menendez
Carper	Hatch	Merkley
Casey	Heinrich	Mikulski
Chambliss	Heitkamp	Moran
Coats	Heller	Murkowski
Coburn	Hirono	Murphy
Cochran	Hoeven	Murray
Collins	Inhofe	Nelson
Coons	Isakson	Paul

Portman	Schatz	Udall (CO)
Pryor	Schumer	Udall (NM)
Reed	Sessions	Vitter
Reid	Shaheen	Warner
Risch	Shelby	Warren
Roberts	Stabenow	Whitehouse
Rockefeller	Tester	Wicker
Rubio	Thune	Wyden
Sanders	Toomey	

NOT VOTING—2

Kaine Scott

The motion was agreed to.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

AMENDMENT NO. 2714

Mr. REID. On behalf of Senator REED of Rhode Island, I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. REED of Rhode Island, proposes an amendment numbered 2714.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2715 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2714

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 2715 to amendment numbered 2714.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 7 days after enactment.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion on the Reed of Rhode Island amendment and ask that it be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Reed (RI) amendment No. 2714 to S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Barbara Boxer, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Jeff Merkley, Angus S. King, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 2716

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a motion to commit S. 1845, with instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance with instructions to report back with the following amendment numbered 2716.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2717

Mr. REID. I have an amendment to the instructions at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 2717 to the instructions of the motion to commit.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "8 days" and insert "9 days".

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2718 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2717

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes amendment numbered 2718 to amendment numbered 2717.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "9 days" and insert "10 days".

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows: Senators.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Barbara Boxer, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Jeff Merkley, Angus S. King, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons.

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—Motion to Proceed

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived for the cloture motions just filed and that Wednesday, February 5, 2014, count as an intervening day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I want to take a moment to explain where we are. Over the last few months, we have been struggling to find a way to help some desperate people in our country. It is hard to find a way to convince our Republican colleagues that these people are in a desperate situation and to join with us in extending unemployment insurance benefits for 1.6 million of our fellow citizens.

Last month, we tried to pass a bipartisan bill that would simply extend those benefits on a short-term basis for 3 months. All but a few Republicans voted against proceeding to that measure. Republicans complained that we had not paid for the extension, so we offered them a paid-for 11-month extension. Every Republican voted against the cloture motion, every Republican, and all but one Republican voted against cloture on the bipartisan 3-month extension. So today we are trying yet again, offering an amendment that extends unemployment benefits for 3 months and pays for that extension, not a disputed, controversial extension and certainly not a controversial pay-for. Our alternative also includes something that Senator COBURN has been talking about for several months, an amendment to prevent millionaires from getting unemployment benefits, because it has happened. A person won a lottery and still got unemployment benefits.

Thursday, we are going to vote on cloture on that amendment, one that is paid for and would take care of this issue for lots of people. After that have we will vote on cloture on the bill, as amended. In the meantime, I am pleased to continue discussions with Senators about setting up votes on the relevant amendments.

The Republican leader's proposal is an absolute absurdity. I don't know why they just don't come out and say we are not going to do this, we are not going to extend unemployment benefits. But they have alternating amendments, and they want amendments related to—George Mitchell, who was the

Democratic leader for a period of time that I served here, a wonderful human being, his statement was don't depend on the Republicans; they will break your heart every time, and that is what they are doing. They are breaking our hearts, and 1.6 million people, their hearts are broken.

The main proponent of this bill has been JACK REED of Rhode Island. JACK REED and I have a contest—I wish we didn't—and that is which State, Rhode Island or Nevada, has the highest unemployment number.

We care about this greatly, but others care about this. I am sure there are some Republicans who care about it, but why are they hung up on this foolishness that they can only do it if one time they have alternating amendments? They wouldn't take 20 amendments.

There are a handful of Republicans who tried very hard and worked in good faith with Senator REED of Rhode Island. But the problem is they have no control over the tea-party-driven Republicans who make up most of this Republican caucus.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. We are at a critical moment. It has been 38 days since the emergency unemployment compensation expired, forcing now not 1.6 million but 1.7 million Americans off an economic cliff and also draining \$2.2 billion from State economies, and this is according to estimates based on data from the Department of Labor and the Ways and Means Committee Democrats. This has had a huge impact on families and a huge impact on the economy throughout this country.

Congress should be doing everything to focus on creating jobs and improving our economy. This week we have an opportunity to do that. That is why we should vote to renew unemployment insurance and help put more Americans back to work.

Restoring these benefits is an imperative. We must do it. We have to act with a sense of urgency. People are out there every day looking for employment. They are doing everything they can to support their families and themselves. While this modest level of support helps them stay afloat, what they really want is a job. So our constituents, who are trying so hard and doing what they need to do in order to provide for themselves and their families, are looking to Congress to uphold its end of the bargain.

Many of our constituents are running out of options. The rent is coming due. The telephone bill is coming due, and without a phone they can't actively compete for work. There is no way employers can get hold of them.

College tuition is coming due for middle-aged people who are out looking for jobs, for their children, and some people who are paying their way

through college. They are being squeezed from all sides, and the expiration of these benefits is hurting not only them but it is hurting our economy overall.

Time is of the essence. It has been 7 weeks since Senator HELLER and I introduced a bipartisan short-term plan that was designed to provide immediate relief. We tried different permutations of extending these benefits, provisions the other side said they wanted, but to this point without success.

I must say that I have found not only Senator HELLER but many of my colleagues on the other side both thoughtful and willing to contribute—Senator COLLINS, Senator COATS, Senator PORTMAN, and so many others, who are sincere in trying to get this done. But what we have to do is get over this 60-vote threshold, at least to provide this immediate relief of 3 months to our constituents.

Again, the face of those unemployed in this downturn is a bit different than in the past. We are hearing and seeing more and more middle-aged workers who have worked all their lives and for the first time are confronted with unemployment. They sent out hundreds of resumes. They sought job interviews, many times unsuccessfully. They are squeezed because they are trying to support parents at the same time they are trying to support children who are in college or young adults who are at home.

This is a tremendous toll on people who have worked hard all of their lives. They are simply asking us to step up, as we have done consistently in the past, and give them some modest support while they search for work.

We are 1 month into 2014 and still debating a 3-month fix. At some point, we will reach the point where the retroactive benefits will be greater than the benefits going forward for the 3-month fix. That is not a place we want to be, not for people who have worked hard. The only way to qualify for unemployment insurance is to be working and then, through no fault of your own, to be dismissed from your work—and you still have to look for work. That is the whole program. So it is not right.

I think we have to move forward, and we have done this on a bipartisan basis three times under President Ronald Reagan, five times under George W. Bush, with overwhelming majorities on a bipartisan basis, no question. In fact, most times they were completely unpaid for. It was emergency spending, not only because people needed the emergency aid, but it is a great form of economic support to our economy.

The CBO estimates that if we fail to extend for the full year these benefits, we will lose 200,000 jobs over 2014, at a time when our first priority should be to put more jobs in the marketplace.

We have a plan today that is short term, 3 months, retroactive to Decem-

ber 28. It is fully paid for by extending pension smoothing for 4 more years.

In addition to paying for these benefits, it will reduce the deficit by \$1.2 billion over 10 years, so we have a mechanism that not only helps people but also goes to the issue of the deficit, which is another pressing concern, particularly to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

This offset has been used before. It passed 79 to 19 as part of the 2012 MAP-21 transportation bill. This is a non-controversial pay-for. It has been proposed by Members on both sides of the aisle with various proposals requiring pay-fors.

We have an urgent need, a very short-term focus, and a noncontroversial pay-for, and I will urge my colleagues, let's support this, let's move this. If there is work to be done on the architecture of unemployment insurance, if there are other collateral issues or issues that could be thrown into the mix, let's get this done and then let's focus on those issues.

This amendment also incorporates a measure that Senator COBURN has proposed that would bar millionaires, individuals making over \$1 million, from qualifying for unemployment insurance. This measure has been unanimously supported 100 to 0 in this Chamber, so we thought we would go ahead and put that in as an additional measure that would be embraced by everyone in the Chamber.

This is an issue that has huge support among the American public. There is a FOX News poll that says over two-thirds of Americans support and want Congress to act now to extend unemployment insurance.

Let me again thank my colleagues on the other side who have worked very sincerely and very diligently to come up with a solution. I say to them: Thank you. I appreciate it.

My concern is helping—as their concern is—those constituents who are getting increasingly desperate. We share this. Now what we have to do is find a pathway forward.

I hope, because of the short-term nature of this bill, because of the non-controversial pay-for, that we can get this done, and then I think we can embark on a much more expansive review on a much more expansive set of issues with respect to UI and other issues that have come before the Chamber. It is time to vote—vote aye—to get this measure passed.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

2012 BENGHAZI ATTACK

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the attack on our consulate on September 11, 2012. I am here to talk about the fact that four brave Americans were murdered that day by an act of terrorism.

One of those murdered was our Ambassador to Libya when those four Americans were killed at Benghazi at our consulate.

I really want to talk about what I believe is a pattern of misinformation, misimpressions, and, frankly, misleading the American people about what happened there and, during an election season, what was represented about the attack on our consulate on September 11. Let me walk through some of the situation and the tangled web that was woven here.

First of all, right after this attack occurred—we know that on September 16 Ambassador Susan Rice appeared on behalf of the administration on every major Sunday television show, and during that time people rightly wanted to know what happened. This was a big deal. An ambassador had been murdered, along with three other Americans in Libya, where we had gone in to remove, working with our NATO partners, Qadhafi and really had established alliances with Libya. So here we have a murdered Ambassador on September 11, and that day Ambassador Rice, during the context of a Presidential election, went on every Sunday television show, and when she was asked about what happened on that day, she blamed it on the spontaneous reaction to a hateful video.

Recently, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence did some very good bipartisan work looking at what happened with regard to the attack at the consulate. That report contains something very telling. That report found that “contrary to many press reports at the time, eyewitness statements by U.S. personnel indicate there were no protests at the start of the attacks.” In fact, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA received an email sent from the CIA’s Chief of Station in Tripoli to him on September 15—4 days after the attacks occurred—and in that email the Deputy Director of the CIA, Mike Morell, was told the attacks were “not an escalation of protests.” Not an escalation of protests.

Why is that important? It is important for many reasons because what ends up happening during this period is that Ambassador Rice is going on the Sunday shows to talk about this. She is designated to do this on behalf of the administration. We have always wondered why. Why did she go on, as opposed to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton or perhaps then-Secretary Pannetta, the Secretary of Defense? But she is sent that day onto the Sunday shows, and on those shows she said this was a direct result of a heinous video—protests that came as a result of this video.

Yet the day before, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA had already gotten an email from the people on the ground—eyewitness statements. There were survivors, people who survived

this attack and who were interviewed to find out what happened. As you would in any situation where you have had a terrorist attack or a murder case, you are going to talk to the eyewitnesses on the ground. So there were eyewitnesses, and they were spoken to. As a result of those eyewitness interviews, the day before she goes on those Sunday shows, the Deputy Director of the CIA is told that there was not an escalation of protests, that what has been reported is not the case. Yet she went on the show and said that anyway.

What is even more troubling is that this information is communicated to the Deputy Director of the CIA, and somehow there are talking points prepared that don't reflect this information. Moreover, somehow this information that was given to the Deputy Director of the CIA was not given to the President—or, I don't know, maybe they didn't like the story they received because during that period of time, if we look at this, on September 11 the President gave many media interviews during this period. It was during a Presidential election.

On September 18, which is 7 days after the attacks on the consulate, 2 days after Susan Rice went on the Sunday shows, the President is on the Dave Letterman show. We have all watched the comedy show, the Dave Letterman show, and Dave Letterman asks the President about the attacks in Benghazi. On that show he talks about the video, this heinous video being a cause of what happened and the attack at the consulate. Yet, on September 15, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA already had some information that said this is not an escalation of protests. There were interviews done of the survivors on the ground. Yet on the Dave Letterman show a week later—in fact, 3 days after this information is received by the Deputy Director of the CIA—we have the President talking about the video.

But it gets worse. Nine days later—9 days after the attack, so on September 20—the President gives another interview at the Univision Town Hall. This is 5 days after the Deputy Director of the CIA is given this information, apparently coming from the survivors. And what does the President say?

What we do know is that the natural protests that arose because of the outrage over the video were used as an excuse by extremists to see if they can also directly harm U.S. interests.

That is what he says when he is asked about the attacks on our consulate.

So here we are 9 days after the attack, 5 days after this information is given to Mike Morell, the then-Deputy Director of the CIA, and yet we have another interview on "The View," another popular show, 13 days—almost 2 weeks after the attack on the con-

sulate, and again the President of United States talks about this being about the video and a reaction to the video.

So here we have the work that was done on this—clear misinformation about what happened that day and a very troubling pattern in the context of an election, where on those Sunday shows Ambassador Rice made sure to tell everyone Al Qaeda has been decimated because that was the narrative during this time period, that Al Qaeda has been decimated. So if this was a terrorist attack, that would be problematic to that narrative.

In fact, we had testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee from then-Defense Secretary Panetta. When he testified before the Armed Services Committee, he said clearly:

There was no question in my mind it was a terrorist attack.

In fact, he said:

When I appeared before the committee 3 days afterwards, I said it was a terrorist attack.

Secretary Panetta made clear he knew from the beginning this was a terrorist attack. Yet the President, on September 12, even though the day of it he said, "We won't tolerate any act of terror"—he is asked directly by the interviewer, Mr. Kroft from "60 Minutes," "Mr. President, this morning you went out of your way to avoid the use of the word terrorism in connection with the Libya attack. Do you believe this was a terrorism attack?" The President said, "Well, it's too early to tell exactly how this came about, what group was involved, but obviously it was an attack on Americans." The President refused then to call it what it was, what his own Secretary of Defense knew—that it was a terrorist attack—because, of course, we know the narrative at the time was that Al Qaeda had been decimated, and if it was a terrorist attack, it didn't quite fit with that narrative.

In fact, recently the President gave an interview on FOX News with Bill O'Reilly—on February 2—and this is what he said when he was asked about the attack on the consulate:

We revealed to the American people exactly what we understood at the time. The notion that we would hide the ball for political purposes when a week later we all said in fact there was a terrorist attack taking place the day after I said it was an act of terror, that wouldn't be a very good coverup.

I guess the President, when he told Mr. O'Reilly that, forgot about the interview he had given on "The View," which was almost 2 weeks after this event—13 days after it.

Almost 2 weeks later he was asked by Ms. Behar:

I heard Hillary Clinton say it was an act of terrorism. Is it? What do you say?

Well, no act of terrorism then. He doesn't acknowledge it. He said:

We're still doing an investigation. There's no doubt that [with] the kind of weapons

that were used, the ongoing assault, that it wasn't just a mob action.

This is in the context, of course, where his Secretary of Defense said he knew right away it was an act of terrorism. In fact, he came to the Armed Services Committee 3 days after and said it was an act of terrorism. Yet, again, within a week he isn't saying it was an act of terrorism when he is directly asked if it was an act of terrorism.

In this recent interview with Mr. O'Reilly the President talked about the security at the consulate. In fact, there was a strong report recently done by the Senate Intelligence Committee on a bipartisan basis. In fact, one of the issues they raised deep concerns about is that the State Department should have increased its security posture more significantly in Benghazi based upon a deteriorating security situation on the ground and that the threat reporting on the prior attacks against westerners in Benghazi—and there were many cables leading up to this too that had been made public—warned there was sufficient warning that security should have been increased at the consulate.

The President acknowledged that in his recent interview with Mr. O'Reilly, where he said:

In the aftermath what became clear was that the security was lax, that not all the precautions that needed to be taken were taken.

That is certainly confirmed by the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee. So if that is the case, why is it that Ambassador Susan Rice was on the Sunday shows on September 16—she is sent on the shows to talk about what happened that day, and she responds in this fashion to this question directly and specifically asked by Chris Wallace in that interview:

He says:

Terror cells in Benghazi had carried out five attacks since April, including . . . a bombing at the same consulate in June. Should U.S. security have been tighter at that consulate given the history of terror activity in Benghazi?

What is her response? Well, we obviously did have a strong security presence.

She was on several shows—ABC with Jake Tapper; she was on "Face the Nation" with Bob Schieffer. During the course of those interviews, she was asked about the security at the consulate, and she described the security at the consulate that day as significant and substantial. What was the basis for that? Did anyone give her information that "security was significant, substantial and strong" that day? Because there was absolutely no evidence of that. In fact, everything in this investigation has shown that security was absolutely lax at that consulate, unacceptably so given the prior history of intelligence at the consulate, given the

prior attacks that had been made on the British and on the Red Cross, and unfortunately this really was a death trap.

So in the context of an election, why is she—and the President as well—not only pushing the video story but also saying that the consulate security was strong, it was substantial, it was significant, when there is no evidence to support that? It all goes to the contrary.

There has been a lot of discussion about the video. Ambassador Rice goes on the Sunday shows and she talks about the video. She talks about the causal effect of the video in terms of the attacks on the consulate. What she essentially says is this: This was a direct result of a heinous and offensive video which was widely disseminated and which the U.S. Government had nothing to do with and which we have made clear is reprehensible and disgusting. And we have also been very clear in saying that there is no excuse for violence, that we have condemned it in the strongest possible terms.

This “direct result of a heinous and offensive video,” which she said on all those Sunday shows and which the President then also talked about in the interviews: 1 week later on David Letterman; the interview, 9 days after the attack, on Univision; and the interview almost 2 weeks later on “The View”—why are they still talking about the video?

From the beginning, I have thought the talking points were fascinating. These talking points were created for dissemination. Ambassador Susan Rice was given these talking points, she said she relied upon them, and there are serious deficiencies with these talking points.

Even so, I challenge people to find any reference to a video in these talking points. I have looked and looked, and I couldn't see the word “video” in these talking points anywhere. Yet we have Ambassador Susan Rice, on behalf of the administration, on September 16 on every Sunday show, talking about the video. We have the President of the United States on David Letterman 1 week later, then 9 days later, after the attack, on Univision, and almost 2 weeks later, 13 days later on “The View” talking about a video. Yet there isn't a reference to a video in these talking points. I have never understood. Where did the video story come from? Do you think we will ever get the answer? I think we deserve an answer to that, especially now.

Because of the recent Senate intel report, we know that the Deputy Director of the CIA, the day before Ambassador Rice first appeared on those Sunday shows to tell this story, received this email which reported that the attacks were “not/not an escalation of protests.” So if it is not an escalation of protests—let's look at these talking

points again. These talking points do not refer to a video. We are not sure how that story got told.

Why is it that the talking points that went out say: Available information suggests that the demonstrations in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against our U.S. diplomatic post in Benghazi and subsequently its annex and that they were participating in violent demonstrations. Why wasn't what they learned the day before taken into account in terms of what was represented to the American people? I think a bigger question is, How is it that the Deputy Director of the CIA can receive relevant and important information and that information never gets to the President of the United States as late as 9 days later? On September 24, on “The View,” he is still talking about this video. Yet it turns out the video never had anything to do with this. It really raises so many questions in terms of the tangled web of this whole situation.

I have yet to talk about what was an incredible change in these talking points, which was the removal of the reference to Al Qaeda. Before they went through various modifications, the original set of talking points talked about Al Qaeda or the potential of Al Qaeda-affiliated groups being involved in these attacks. Of course, that now has been confirmed by the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee report recently revealed. But at the time, the reference to Al Qaeda was removed from these talking points. It was removed from these talking points, and Ambassador Rice was free to go on the Sunday shows on September 16, and she said Al Qaeda had been decimated. Imagine if the talking points kept the reference to Al Qaeda. Do you think she would have gone on every Sunday show and said Al Qaeda had been decimated? I would hope not because it was not true that Al Qaeda had been decimated, as evidenced by the attack on our consulate.

So we still don't know who removed the reference and what happened with these talking points. But what really troubles me is the Deputy Director of the CIA, through the Senate Intelligence Committee report, received this email on September 15 which said the attacks were not an escalation of protests. He worked on these talking points. He was part of the group who actually had feedback on the talking points that went out the door. Yet somehow this wasn't included.

The Al Qaeda reference was removed, and apparently no one, even after receiving the actual eyewitness interviews of what happened on the scene, ever thought to go to the administration—the President of the United States—and correct him: By the way, we are not sure this video really pans

out, that it is a demonstration and that this is a protest in response to a video. Somehow that doesn't get up the chain of command? We have big problems if this kind of information is not getting up the chain of command. Why those representations were made when there was intel that contradicted it has never been answered.

Finally, and most of all, the President said he was going to bring the individuals who committed these attacks to justice. Yet no one has been brought to justice. The families who lost loved ones deserve to have these terrorists brought to justice. And what we have seen in some of the reports—the intelligence committee itself essentially identifies that more than 1 year after the Benghazi attacks, the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks have still not been brought to justice.

The intelligence community has identified several individuals responsible for the attacks. Some of these individuals have been identified with a strong level of confidence. So why hasn't anyone been brought to justice? Why haven't we pursued this to pick up the people who committed these terrorist attacks and to hold them accountable? The victims deserve justice, and they have not seen justice. I hope we will get those who murdered our Ambassador and three other brave Americans on September 11, 2012, and bring them to justice. It is totally unacceptable that has not yet happened.

We have seen press reports of people like Abu Khattala—reported to have established Ansar al-Sharia, an Al Qaeda-affiliated group, and identified as a prior commander of this group—identified by witnesses as being there that night during the attacks on our consulate, and yet we haven't picked him up or anyone else. In fact, he is sitting at cafes, and press in the United States are able to find him, interview him, talk to him, and yet we haven't brought him or anyone else in. There have been news reports that there may be a secret warrant for him, but he hasn't been brought in. Where is the attention to this?

I have talked about this tangled web which has been woven, which is really troubling in terms of the misimpressions and misleading nature of how this has been represented to the American people. But I hope we will all focus on bringing the people who committed these terrorist attacks to justice because the victims of these terrorist attacks deserve justice.

The terrorists who committed these acts against our consulate need to know that we are coming after them and that we are going to hold them accountable. If you commit a terrorist attack against our country, you should not be in a position to be out drinking coffee in a cafe. You need to be held accountable.

We need to send a message to other terrorists: Don't mess with the United

States of America, because right now they are getting the opposite message with no one being held accountable for the terrorist attacks on our consulate on September 11, 2012.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I commend the Senator from New Hampshire for her stirring remarks on the terrorist attacks in Benghazi and urge that we pay heed to the words she said. It is striking—the Senator from New Hampshire has said more about that terrorist attack than our Commander in Chief has ever said.

We are at a time where Tolkien's classic "The Hobbit" is one of the best-selling, most popular movies in the country. "The Hobbit" is a fantasy story. In Washington, we were visited with fantasy last week in the President's State of the Union Address. I would like to talk about the contrast, concerning foreign policy, between the fantasy presented to the American people and the cold, hard realities of the dangerous world in which we live—which is only getting more and more dangerous.

In his State of the Union Address last week, President Obama gave some revealing clues as to how he believed the United States should interact with the rest of the world.

On the whole, his remarks encourage Americans not to worry too much about international challenges. He suggested the situations in Syria and Iran are being definitely managed by American diplomats; that Al Qaeda is now a regional nuisance that can be outsourced to surrogates; that our relationship with Israel is defined by the Palestinian peace process, which will also be resolved in short order through American diplomacy; and that our interest in Ukraine is to express support for the abstract principle that all people should peacefully participate in their own governance. In this rosy scenario, difficult challenges such as the deadly terrorist attacks on Benghazi on September 11, 2012, or the long and painful ordeal of Pastor Saeed Abedini in an Iranian prison simply do not exist.

I wish we all lived in the utopian world President Obama painted last week. But in just a week, numerous news reports have come out to suggest that picture belongs far more in the world of fantasy than reality. In the interests of being honest with the American people—which I wish our Commander in Chief had done—I would like to contrast reality with what we were told last week.

On Syria, in the State of the Union Address, the President claimed:

American diplomacy, backed by the threat of force, is why serious chemical weapons are being eliminated, and we will continue to

work with the international community to usher in the future the Syrian people deserve—a future free of dictatorship, terror, and fear.

That is truly a rosy scenario. Yet, what is the reality? On Sunday, just 4 days after the President delivered the State of the Union Address, Secretary of State John Kerry reportedly told a congressional delegation that the administration's Syria policy is on the brink of collapse. Syria's chemical weapons are purportedly being destroyed through the intervention of Vladimir Putin in what was a major diplomatic victory for the Russian strongman. But we have learned in recent days that this process has not proceeded as promised. The Syrians have ignored their deadlines and only 4 percent of the stockpiles have been eliminated, undoubtedly because Assad knows there is no compelling reason for him to comply. As for what the Syrian people deserve, after 3 years of rudderless U.S. policy, over 130,000 are dead, millions are refugees displaced across the region, and the oldest Christian communities on the planet are threatened with extinction. Assad is entrenched and Al Qaeda is in control of the opposition. Sadly, as a result of the President's mismanagement, today we have no good options in Syria. Yet not a word of that made it into his State of the Union Address.

On Iran, the President claimed:

It is American diplomacy, backed by pressure, that has halted the progress of Iran's nuclear program . . .

The reality is quite different. No enriched uranium has been destroyed—not a pound—and no centrifuges have been dismantled. The Iranians quickly refuted the President's claim in the State of the Union, announcing, quite publicly, that they have not halted their progress in the slightest. America's closest ally in the region, the nation of Israel, has called this a "very, very bad deal." Indeed, Prime Minister Netanyahu has referred to it as a "historic mistake." Yet the President proceeds on and the Senate refuses even to allow a vote on reimposing sanctions to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability. There has been no renunciation of Iran's State sponsorship of terrorism that killed Americans in Lebanon and in Saudi Arabia and in Afghanistan and in Iraq. The mullahs have gone on a hanging spree, executing some 40 people in the first two weeks of January alone. Meanwhile, billions of dollars are flowing into the country, both through relaxed sanctions and Iran's reemergence as a legitimate business partner because of this administration's misguided deal. Indeed, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani might almost be forgiven for publicly gloating that "the Geneva deal means the surrender of the big powers in front of the great nation of Iran." I wish he was not speaking the

truth. That reality did not emerge on the House floor last week.

On the House floor, the President claimed:

If John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan could negotiate with the Soviet Union, then surely a strong and confident America can negotiate with less powerful adversaries today.

The reality is the claim that we are negotiating with Iran from a position of strength and confidence is a blinkered view of reality because it isn't even clear our President is negotiating towards actual victory. Capitulation is not victory. President Obama announced in the State of the Union that in order to keep negotiations going, he would veto any additional sanctions Congress might pass to pressure Iran to actually stop pursuing nuclear weapons—a position that is supported not only by his current administration, but expressly by his former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has good reason to announce publicly he has no "fear" of Congress. When Ronald Reagan negotiated with the Soviets, he did it from a clear, strategic perspective of "we win, they lose," standing for U.S. national interests. He was facing an existential threat that he defined as "the Evil Empire." There was no danger or misunderstanding of what the goal was or who was going to be doing the surrendering. As a result of his leadership, the Cold War was won without firing a shot. Today, on Iran, we are tragically repeating the mistakes of the past—in particular, the mistakes of the Clinton administration—in relaxing sanctions on North Korea for the same empty promises that they would cease developing nuclear weapons only to have North Korea use the billions of dollars we sent to them—or allowed to go to them—to develop nuclear weapons. The difference is the North Korean leader is motivated by staying in power, which means some form of rational deterrence is hopefully possible. In Iran, the supreme leader has made clear his desire to destroy the nation of Israel and as a result of the billions of dollars going to Iran right now, the risk is unacceptably high that we discover the same thing that happened in North Korea happened in Iran, except that we discover it because Iran, in pursuit of Jihad, detonates a nuclear device over Tel Aviv or New York or Los Angeles. Not a word of that was acknowledged in the President's speech.

On Al Qaeda, President Obama claimed:

While we have put Al Qaeda's core leadership on a path to defeat, the threat has evolved, as Al Qaeda affiliates and other extremists take root in different parts of the world—in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, and Mali, and we have to keep working with partners to disrupt and disable those networks.

The reality is that whatever path Al Qaeda is on, it does not currently appear to be towards defeat. The recent

assertion by a State Department spokeswoman that Ayman al-Zawahiri is the only core Al Qaeda member left and that thus the threat has been decimated by the President is demonstrably false. For starters, Zawahiri is no mere abstract threat. He explicitly called for attacks on the United States on September 10, 2012, the day before the terrorist attack that claimed the lives of four Americans in Benghazi, including the first U.S. ambassador killed on duty since 1979. Zawahiri is actively involved in directing Al Qaeda groups that are active in Syria. But core or not core—whatever that means—the reality is that Al Qaeda has been at war with the United States for more than two decades and the attacks of September 11, 2001, are only the most spectacular of a series of attacks and attempted attacks launched at us. Trying to parse this threat to make it seem less deadly, to make it seem like less of a threat to Americans, will not make it so. We need to confront what attacked us in 2001. We cannot defeat radical Islamic terrorism when the President seems unwilling to utter the words “radical Islamic terrorism.” Indeed, the recent Senate Select Committee on Intelligence documented that what attacked us in Libya in 2012 is the very same thing that attacked us on September 11, 2001. We should not aim simply to disrupt or to disable Al Qaeda terrorists. We should aim to defeat them.

On Israel, in the State of the Union, the President had one mention of Israel in that speech. He said:

American diplomacy is supporting Israelis and Palestinians as they engage in difficult but necessary talks to end the conflict there; to achieve dignity and an independent state for Palestinians, and a lasting peace and security for the State of Israel—a Jewish State that knows America will always be at their side.

The reality is sadly much different. Over the weekend, we saw a diplomatic spat play out in the press over allegations that Secretary of State Kerry is actively working behind the scenes to encourage European countries to threaten Israel with boycotts if the Israelis don't agree to whatever framework Mr. Kerry will propose in two weeks. Rather than threats from the U.S. Secretary of State, and rather than tweets from National Security Advisor Susan Rice criticizing Israel, instead, the United States should stand unequivocally with our friend and ally, the nation of Israel. We should reaffirm Israel's unique status as a strong, democratic ally in the Middle East, a uniquely Jewish State, and that the United States appreciates the excruciatingly difficult security situation in which Israel finds itself with the threat of a nuclear Iran, and that the United States will vigorously defend Israel from attacks, from international institutions, from legal onslaughts, and from attempts to undermine Israel's

economy through punitive boycotts, and that the United States is unshakably committed to preserving Israel's security, regardless of the status of the peace process.

I commend to my colleagues the recent remarks Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper gave in Israel. Those are the remarks of an ally standing strong with Israel and appreciating the incredible value that Israel provides to our national security and to peace in the world. I wish our President could speak with a fraction of the clarity and solidarity with Israel that the Canadian Prime Minister recently provided.

On Ukraine, the President claimed:

In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have a right to express themselves freely and peacefully and to have a say in their country's future.

The reality is the day after the State of the Union, Ukraine's former President said that the country teeters on the brink of civil war. Protesters have been brutally tortured and murdered. Indeed, one opposition leader described how he was recently crucified. The Ukrainian people's constitutional rights have been trampled. This former Soviet republic has been wrenched away from a proposed trade agreement with the EU and a path towards membership in NATO and instead thrust back into Russia's sphere of influence by a corrupt and autocratic leader, depriving the United States of an important economic and security partner.

We need to tell this story. We need to look for concrete actions we can take right now to demonstrate real support for the opposition, to demonstrate real support that Ukraine is welcomed by the West, and that we will not accede to Putin's efforts to reassemble the old Soviet Union and place Ukraine under its domination.

We can start by immediately offering a free-trade agreement to Ukraine and partnerships to help them build natural gas infrastructure so they need not remain dependent upon Russia, which uses natural gas to blackmail them, and we could immediately release exports of liquid natural gas from the United States in conjunction with helping with that infrastructure.

Surely, the people gathering in the frozen snow of Maidan Square, crying out for the freedom of the West, deserve more from the leader of the free world than mere blandishments about abstract universal rights.

If you are standing in the frozen streets of Kiev, being beaten, bleeding—naked, as one opposition leader was—and yet standing proud for freedom, empty generalities from the President do you very little good.

On Benghazi, the President claimed nothing. We all remember last fall, during the debates in the Presidential election—just over 1 year ago—when the President emphatically stated no one cared more about the terrorist at-

tack that happened in Benghazi than he did. Yet in the year and a half that has followed, the word “Benghazi” seems never to leave his lips. The reality is we have four Americans murdered in a preventable attack, and that is what the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded in a bipartisan manner; that this was preventable by Al Qaeda terrorists, and more than 16 months later, no one in Washington or Libya has been held accountable.

Congress and the American people, and particularly the families of the fallen, deserve the answers that only a joint select committee of Congress could get. Yet, sadly, the majority leader and Democrats in this Chamber are blocking a joint select committee. “What difference does it make,” former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asked. It makes all the difference in the world to ascertain the truth.

I will note, even though he said not a word about Benghazi in the State of the Union, he was forced to say something this week when he was interviewed by Bill O'Reilly. Before the Super Bowl, when Bill O'Reilly asked him about Benghazi, what is striking—and I would urge everyone to go and watch and listen to what the President said—Bill O'Reilly asked him: Did Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta tell him that night that the attacks were the works of terrorists? Mr. O'Reilly asked that question, and yet the President, over and over and over, refused to answer a simple yes or no, did Leon Panetta tell him it was the act of terrorists. He did not want to answer that question, and indeed he did not.

For those of us who have spent some of our career in a court of law, the technical term for his answer was “nonresponsive,” and were a judge there, he would have directed the President to answer the question that was put to him; nor did the President say one word about why the talking points were scrubbed to eradicate any mention of terrorism and the Al Qaeda affiliates involved.

We need accountability. We need accountability for those four brave Americans who lost their lives to terrorism and need to know why no one has been held accountable in the State Department, nor have any of the terrorists who committed that attack been brought to justice.

On Saeed Abedini, the American pastor brutally imprisoned in Iran, President Obama in the State of the Union Address said nothing. The reality is an American citizen has been wrongly imprisoned in Iran for more than 1 year simply for professing his Christian faith. All of us are blessed to live in a land where the Constitution guarantees us religious liberty. Yet a Christian pastor, going to Iran, professing his faith, was thrown in a pit of a jail.

There is no more compelling evidence that the Supreme Leader in Tehran

represents the very same repressive Islamist regime today that he has for so many years and that his goal is not peaceful rapprochement with the West but the preservation of his own power.

The President of the United States should be standing and demanding Pastor Saeed Abedini's release, not making his captors into diplomatic partners. Indeed, it is notable, in the midst of our negotiations in Geneva, the nation of Iran transferred Pastor Saeed Abedini from one horrible prison to an even worse prison, where they keep their death row, where they send people to die, and he did so on the anniversary of Iran's taking Americans hostage—what is referred to in Iran as "Death to America Day." That was not accidental. That was meant to thumb their nose at our Nation, and the President—instead of standing for an American wrongfully imprisoned for preaching his Christian faith—the President instead chose, in the State of the Union Address, to say not a word.

The President concluded his speech on foreign policy by saying:

Finally let's remember that our leadership is defined not just by our defense against threats, but by the enormous opportunities to do good and promote understanding around the globe—to forge great cooperation, to expand new markets, to free people from fear and want. And no one is better positioned to take advantage of those opportunities than America.

The reality is, if this past week has proven anything, that American leadership is not defined by global opportunities to do good and promote understanding. American leadership is defined by defending and promoting the values that have made our Nation great.

We do not do this by ignoring unpleasant realities, refusing to acknowledge the terrorist attack in Benghazi, sending administration officials out to claim it is not a terrorist attack but the result of an Internet video or refusing to stand for an American wrongfully imprisoned in Iran for preaching his Christian faith, and we do not do this by refusing to admit failure but by standing and facing our challenges, accepting responsibility for our actions, and speaking out with a clarion voice for the freedoms we enjoy—freedoms that should be the aspiration of every man and woman on the planet.

Leading from behind does not work. As a result of this administration's misguided foreign policy, the world has become a much more dangerous place in the last 5 years. U.S. national security interests have been endangered dramatically. We see nations such as Russia increasing their sphere of influence, while the threats to the security of men and women throughout America grow and multiply.

Standing strongly with like-minded allies and encouraging others to seek freedom is not disinterested do-gooding; it is vital work that will pro-

mote the security and prosperity of the United States of America, something I believe is ultimately in the interest of all mankind.

I wish, when the President of the United States stood on the floor of the House of Representatives to address the Nation and to address the world, that when he spoke of foreign policy he had not embraced a foreign policy fantasy that disregards the cold, hard reality of the dangerous world we live in and the consequences of receding U.S. leadership.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION
EXTENSION ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise to address two issues. The first is what is before us. That is the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. The second is something that should be before us; that is, the confirmation of the U.S. attorney for Minnesota. This will be the third time in a few days that I have spoken on this issue, which I will continue to do so until this gets done.

I rise in support of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. I know we are making progress on a proposal that extends Federal support for emergency unemployment compensation for 3 months and is fully offset.

I have spoken about the need to extend Federal support for unemployment insurance, and I would like to thank Senator JACK REED and Senator DEAN HELLER for their bipartisan leadership on this issue.

Unemployment insurance provides a critical lifeline. Workers pay into the program so it will be there when they are looking for work. Unemployment insurance helps families pay the mortgage or rent and put gas in the tank. Federal support for unemployment insurance is crucial for those Americans who exhaust their State-funded benefits and are still looking for work.

Throughout my time as the Senate chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I have focused on the continuing problem of long-term unemployment. Last month, I issued a Joint Economic Committee report that makes the clear economic case for extending Federal support for unemployment insurance, which keeps those Americans afloat, those Americans who are continuing to search for work.

The long-term unemployment rate now stands at 2.5 percent, nearly twice as high as when these benefits expired during the last recession.

We already know the consequences of allowing the Federal benefits to expire are not good. At the end of last year, 1.3 million workers lost all unemployment benefits, and another 3.6 million jobless workers could lose their benefits this year.

In my home State, roughly 9,200 people lost benefits at the end of last year and about 65,000 workers could lose their unemployment insurance by the end of this year.

Now is not the time for Congress to cut off extended unemployment insurance for those people who have been actively looking for work for more than 26 weeks.

These are not the people, as you know, who benefited from the uptick in the stock market over the last few years. They do not have stock portfolios. They are not checking the stock rate. They have not noticed that it has gone down a little bit recently, and they have not noticed that it went up all last year. They are just trying to put food on their table and keep a roof over their head. They are people who live in our States and who are our neighbors.

I have heard from countless Minnesotans who are sharing their stories with me about how unemployment insurance is a lifeline for their families and that ending Federal support for the long-term unemployed would be devastating.

I am sharing some of these letters because they tell the stories of hard-working Americans who are doing their best to look for work and support their families.

Linda from Little Falls wrote:

Dear Amy,

Please, please, please fight to extend the emergency unemployment past the end of the year. My husband and I are both still unemployed, by no fault of our own, and are both over 55. We are having a very difficult time finding employment, and to stop this program would be devastating for us and many others that we know. My husband was at his job for 37 years and they closed the doors, and I made more than some of the more junior people in my office, so I was let go first.

Think of that: a couple, the man working at his job for 37 years, the woman more senior at her job saying she was let go because she made more money than others in the office.

She ends by saying:

Please help to get this extended. I feel like the people who are still left jobless are being forgotten!

Thank you. . . .

Second letter, Donna from Prior Lake. She says this:

. . . Having worked for over 30 plus years of my life, I am currently unemployed. I have applied for over 300 positions during the last 6 months. I do not expect a handout but I was really disappointed when I found out that I could no longer receive unemployment insurance after the 28th of December. . . .

It's not that I am not trying to work, or that I am not looking for a position, but I am 55 years old and my full time job right now is to find a job. I am looking for temporary, full time, part-time, contract work. I would like to know that my congress people are doing the same for me. Donna.

Thirty-plus years of working. She is 55 years old. She has applied for over

300 positions. That is who we are talking about here. These are the people we are talking about when we talk about this kind of long-term extension of unemployment. It is something I hope my colleagues will keep in mind as we move forward and get this done and get this passed.

ANDREW LUGER NOMINATION

Now I would like to turn to another matter. The only thing these two have in common is they are both kind of victims of stalled-out situations of gridlock. The second one is about one person, but it is not really about one person, it is about a system of justice and it is about a decision on the part of the United States, part of our Founding Fathers, the part of our Congress that is going way back, that we would have a U.S. attorney in most States in this country, that we would have a U.S. attorney who would be charged with enforcing the Federal laws, that the Congress would have a role in deciding who that U.S. attorney would be, that the President would recommend, would appoint someone, and then the Congress has the job of simply deciding if that person is qualified or not for the job.

But it is not even just about one person or one system of government, it is also about the people who work in the U.S. attorney's office, in the case of the district of Minnesota, over 100 people, over 50 people who are prosecutors working in the office who deserve to have a full-time leader in the U.S. attorney's job.

For 2½ years, 888 days—I counted each day—Minnesota has not had a full-time U.S. attorney. It is a modern-day record. During those years, from August 2011 to August 2013, B. Todd Jones was responsible for doing two jobs. He was the Minnesota U.S. attorney, and as those of us involved in the long vote in this Chamber that lasted over 8 hours remember, he was also the Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. They had not had a full-time confirmed Director for 7 years. So he went in after the mess with Fast and Furious and was willing to be the Acting Director. At the same time he was the U.S. attorney for Minnesota. As you can imagine, there was a lot of work and cleanup to do at the ATF. That was where he was focused for most of his time.

Meanwhile, the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota kept going. But at some point after 2½ years, you cannot keep going on your own. Over the summer, the Senate finally confirmed B. Todd Jones as Director of the ATF, leaving the Minnesota U.S. attorney's position finally open for good. Even before the confirmation of B. Todd Jones, Senator FRANKEN and I, upon the recommendation of our bipartisan U.S. Attorney Advisory Committee, had already recommended Andy Luger, Assistant U.S. Attorney, to fill the position. That was 197 days ago.

In November, President Obama nominated Andy Luger to become the new U.S. attorney. The Judiciary Committee approved his nomination unanimously on January 9. Our colleague from Texas, Senator CRUZ, had no objection to this nomination. We had no objections on the committee, which is saying a lot, because we have a lot of different people from different backgrounds and different political views on the committee.

Usually when people speak on nominations on the floor, it is because they are fighting to get someone through because there is an objection. This is not at all the case in the case of Andy Luger, who is trying to be the U.S. attorney for Minnesota.

What has happened in past cases with U.S. attorneys? Over the past 20 years, 4 Minnesota nominees to be U.S. attorney, appointed by Republican and Democratic Presidents alike, were confirmed within a day of when they passed out of the committee. During this timeframe, all of the nominees were confirmed within an average of 9½ days of being voted out of committee.

It has been 26 days since Mr. Luger was approved by the committee. It is time that we do the right thing by quickly confirming him to make sure that Minnesota has its highest law enforcement officer in place.

I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY for his help on this. He actually also has a U.S. attorney who is pending for the District of Iowa.

Why is the U.S. attorney important? I thought our pages would be interested in this fact, because we are going to be talking a lot about the U.S. attorney over the next few weeks if this keeps going on. The position of U.S. attorney is a law enforcement post that the Founders regarded as so vital that they created it during the very first Congress in the Judiciary Act of 1789. This is the same act that created the Attorney General and the structure of the Supreme Court and the lower courts. According to the act, each judicial district would be provided with:

a person learned in the law to act as attorney for the United States . . . whose duty it shall be to prosecute in each district all delinquents for crimes and offenses cognizable under the authority of the United States, and all civil actions in which the United States shall be concerned . . .

The U.S. attorney is a position so necessary that President Zachary Taylor appointed Henry Moss—this is a name you may not have heard of before—to the post within 2 days of Minnesota becoming a State. So back then somehow they are able to get it done in 2 days. Now, we have been waiting 888 days. But in 2 days they were able to get a U.S. attorney in the job when Minnesota first became a State.

Since 1849, the District of Minnesota's 31 U.S. attorneys have upheld

the rule of law, the Constitution, and the rights of our State's citizens and tirelessly pursued justice on their behalf. This quick action by President Taylor and the speed with which the Senate has confirmed past U.S. attorneys for Minnesota shows how much our government has historically valued this position.

These people have not been used as pawns in some kind of a fight over other issues, they have simply been confirmed. We have simply gotten it done. I think we can all agree, given what we have seen with the heroin cases that are on the rise all over the country in the last few months—this has certainly come to our attention in Minnesota. In Hennepin County alone, 60 opiate-related deaths in 1 county in our State in just 6 months of the year. So I think we can all agree that the importance of this position is no less important than it was in 1789 when this job was created.

Since the founding of the country, we have recognized the great authority placed in the hands of U.S. attorneys to uphold the rule of law, to protect our freedoms, and to exercise their power responsibly and only for just ends. A 1935 Supreme Court decision called *Berger v. United States* has gained iconic status for Justice Sutherland's description of a prosecutor's duty to follow the rule of law, serve justice, and play by the rules. Justice Sutherland so aptly wrote:

The United States Attorney is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all; and whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done.

As such, he is in a peculiar and very definite sense the servant of the law, the twofold aim of which is that guilt shall not escape nor innocence suffer. He—

And we could say he or she for the modern day.

—may prosecute with earnestness and vigor—indeed, he should do so. But, while he may strike hard blows, he is not at liberty to strike foul ones. It is as much his duty to refrain from improper methods calculated to produce a wrongful conviction as it is to use every legitimate means to bring about a just one.

That is the kind of statement that rings as true today as it did nearly 80 years ago. The men and women in the Minnesota U.S. attorney's office exemplify the professionalism, high ethical standards, and unwavering commitments to the rule of law and public safety that we expect of prosecutors. They work to protect public safety by focusing on offenders who harm our communities: terrorists, the "worst of the worst" violent criminals and drug traffickers, and major financial fraudsters.

They also work closely with local law enforcement to ensure local and Federal resources are used efficiently and

effectively to prevent crime and lock up criminals.

For example, the office won a conviction in a \$3.65 billion Ponzi scheme case, the second biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. Now this case was originated when, in fact, they had a full-time U.S. attorney. Most of the prosecution did take place when they had a full-time U.S. attorney in the office. Of course, with a major case like this, you would want a full-time U.S. attorney there to make critical decisions.

Also the office has an ongoing terrorism investigation that has led to charges against 18 people for aiding the terrorist organization al-Shabaab—8 of whom have been convicted, some receiving sentences of up to 20 years in prison.

So at some point, as that investigation continues, one wonders why the United States of America would want to have an office overseeing and prosecuting major terrorist cases without having a full-time U.S. attorney. I do wonder if this would ever happen in New York City or in the city of Chicago. I hope people keep this in mind as they look at the situation.

Other major accomplishments of the office include Operation Highlife, a major drug trafficking investigation involving more than 100 local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers that resulted in 26 indictments, 25 guilty pleas, and sentences of up to 200 months in prison.

Operation Brother's Keeper, a successful investigation and prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang, took 22 dangerous criminals off the streets. This does not sound like a case that should be handled by an office that does not deserve a full-time U.S. attorney. That would be the prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang.

Or how about Operation Malverde, which received national attention, and was a prosecution of 27 defendants associated with a Mexican drug cartel, including the apprehension of the cartel's regional leader, and sentences as high as 20 years in prison.

The office also recently played a key role in shutting down a major synthetic drug seller in Duluth. This head shop was a major problem. They went after this head shop. They prosecuted the owner. The owner was recently in his house and was found to have over \$700,000 in plastic bags hidden in his bathroom. They won that case.

These are just a few of the major cases that office has worked on in recent years. I will be telling you more in the days to come.

After 888 days without a full-time boss, these hard-working people deserve a leader, and Mr. Luger is the right person for the job. Again, I am not up here speaking about this because anyone in the Senate objects to Mr. Luger for the job.

It is time we vote on Mr. Luger's nomination. In the past, as we know, U.S. attorney nominations have simply gone through on voice votes, without much hurrah, within a few days after they go through the committee. Mr. Luger is a dedicated public servant and has the breadth of experience, strength of character, and commitment to justice that makes him a well-qualified candidate to serve as Minnesota's next U.S. attorney. I have no doubt that he will uphold the principles Justice Sutherland sought in that opinion in a U.S. attorney. I urge my colleagues to support Mr. Luger's confirmation and to finally give the Minnesota U.S. attorney's office and its hard-working prosecutor the full-time U.S. attorney they deserve.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I am very pleased that we were able to vote on and pass a badly needed and long-overdue 5-year farm bill today and that we are finally on the verge of enacting the legislation into law with the President's signature.

With one in five jobs in Minnesota connected to agriculture, passing this bill has been a top priority of mine. I have been working on it for over 2½ years, along with a large number of my colleagues, and I have gone all around Minnesota talking to farmers and businesses. They tell me not only did they want a 5-year farm bill, but they needed a 5-year farm bill so they could plan for the future. Well, we finally have gotten it done.

There are so many important pieces to this bill, and I want to speak about a few of them today.

When I meet with farm leaders and visit farms all across Minnesota, I hear over and over about the importance of providing farmers with a strong safety net. There is a lot of uncertainty when it comes to farming. Once a farmer puts his crop into the ground, the crops are vulnerable to drought, to too much rain, to disease, and different kinds of pests and to other natural disasters. In 2012, for example, we witnessed a terrible drought that devastated the Nation's corn and soybean crops and forced ranchers to cull their livestock.

All of these safety net programs in the bill are important because they protect our farmers and ranchers, and they also protect American consumers by making sure families have a reliable, domestically produced supply of food.

The bill provides disaster assurances for livestock producers. It contains a dairy program so our dairy producers have the certainty they need. It contains a sugar program to help protect our sugar growers, American sugar growers.

Minnesota is home to a large number of beet sugar growers, and the sugar industry provides thousands of good-paying jobs, American jobs, and billions of dollars to the economy of our region. I fought to make sure we kept this vital program in place.

This bill also includes crop insurance so farmers have certainty with respect to their planting decisions.

One of the things the farm bill does, which was very important to me and to so many people, is to link the crop insurance program to conservation. Minnesota farmers are good stewards of the land and understand how critical conservation is, and so do our hunters and our anglers. With this provision in the farm bill, when our farmers receive the crop insurance benefits, they also agree to implement conservation practices that are good for our land and for our water.

In addition to a strong safety net in the conservation provisions, the bill also contains many provisions that are very important to Minnesota agriculture. For example, I pushed to include provisions to support beginning farmers. With the average age of farmers in Minnesota approaching 60, we need to invest in a new generation of farmers and ranchers. That is why the beginning farmer and rancher program has been a priority of mine. This important program will support training and education for beginning farmers, and it will help new farmers overcome the steep financial hurdles they often face when starting.

I am also very proud of the comprehensive energy title of the bill, which I helped to author. The energy sector in agriculture produces jobs and supports rural communities in Minnesota and across the country. The energy title includes programs such as the Rural Energy for America Program—or REAP—which provides farmers and rural business services with loans and grants so they can invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy to reduce their energy bills.

It also includes programs to help rural America develop advanced biofuels that will help wean the Nation off of foreign oil. It also includes programs to help move the Nation away from a foreign petroleum economy, the way products are increasingly made out of homegrown renewable biomass. Those are only some of what I fought for in the bill. The bill does all of these critically important things while also reducing the deficit by billions of dollars.

Like all bipartisan compromises, the bill is not perfect. In particular, I am

not happy with the cuts to the nutrition program on which so many low-income families rely. I am somewhat relieved in the end these cuts were closer to what was in the original Senate bill than the draconian cuts the House of Representatives had called for and passed in their bill. I appreciate the tough job, though, my colleagues had on their hands to arrive at a final compromise.

At the end of the day, this is an incredibly important piece of legislation that I and many colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been working to get over the finish line. I am pleased we have finally come together to pass a bipartisan 5-year farm bill that will make needed reforms and give farmers the certainty they need to plan for the future. The bill we passed will not only support rural America but our entire Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Last week President Obama came to Congress and delivered the State of the Union Address. He admitted that under the Obama economy too many Americans are still out of work. The President didn't admit that his policies were to blame, but he did promise to act. He said: "Wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that's what I am going to do." What the President promised all of us he promised the country last week.

I believe the President could start by coming clean about how his health care law is hurting jobs and harming middle-class Americans.

Just this morning, the Congressional Budget Office put out their estimate that the President's health care law will reduce the number of full-time workers by 2.3 million people by the year 2021. That includes people who will lose their jobs, people who will have their hours cut, and mostly people who will decide not to work. This is one of the perverse incentives in this terrible law. It actually encourages able-bodied people to not work. We are already faced with the lowest labor force participation rate we have seen in 35 years and this number they have come out with—over 2 million fewer jobs in our economy. When we were debating the health care in the Senate and the CBO came out with their estimate based on the way they read the law before it went into effect, they said this could negatively impact jobs and the economy to the tune of 800,000. Now we are at 2½ times that many—over 2 million fewer jobs—and as a result specifically of the health care law. We should be doing all we can to increase labor force participation. The health care law actually pushes it in the opposite direction.

The Congressional Budget Office also said this morning that the health care

law will provide health insurance to 2 million fewer people this year than previous estimates had expected. One of the main reasons Democrats insisted they needed to pass this law in the first place was to cover uninsured people. Now the Congressional Budget Office doesn't even expect it to do the job the Democrats intended it to do very well.

The law is raising costs, it is hurting middle-class Americans, and not even helping the people the Democrats told us it was going to help in the first place. President Obama promised last week to act and to do something to create jobs. What we see in this health care law is actually reducing jobs and reducing the number of people working. There are other things the President could do to help create jobs. The first thing, though, would be to work with Republicans to help repeal the health care law and come up with reforms that will actually work.

He could also look at a number of the options on the energy front that would help the private sector create jobs—no government money needed.

The President says he wants to do things that don't require legislation. Without any legislation at all, the President could approve the Keystone XL Pipeline and expand opportunity for thousands of American families.

Over the past 5 years, a small number of lawyers, consultants, bureaucrats, and environmental activists have made a living over haggling about the pipeline. Meanwhile, the President has turned his back on middle-class people who are in need of jobs, desperate need of jobs—people living in Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, other States.

TransCanada submitted its application for a permit to build the Keystone XL Pipeline more than 5 years ago. Ever since, President Obama has wasted America's time and money grasping for excuses in order for him to be able to reject it.

The State Department's latest environmental review confirms yet again that the pipeline shows no significant environmental impact, and it will support more than 42,000 jobs. Last summer, the President sneered at those jobs. He said they were just "a blip relative to the need." For out-of-work Americans, those jobs are more than a blip. For them, this is more than a pipeline, it is a lifeline. It is way past time for President Obama to quit stalling and to finally do the right thing for those Americans.

They say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. Yet the Obama administration has been doing the same thing over and over.

We have had a draft environmental impact statement. We have had a supplemental environmental impact statement, we have had a final environmental impact statement, then we have had a draft supplemental impact

statement, and Friday we had the final supplemental environmental impact statement.

People at home listening to this would say why would it take 2 years—and it did, it took 2 years—to go from the supplemental draft environmental impact to the draft supplemental environmental impact statement. It makes no sense at all. This is the fifth report by the State Department and the conclusion is always the same. They could do this report another 5 times or another 50 times. The result is still going to be the same. It is a simple cost-benefit analysis. The cost is no significant environmental impact. The benefits are at least 42,000 jobs and a chance to reduce our dependence on overseas oil.

Now that the complaints from the far-left environmental extremists have been debunked, what do they say? According to the news reports, some will have protests and some are planning lawsuits. The Washington Post had a story this Sunday entitled "For pipeline, the 'gut check' moment." It talked about some of the fanatical anti-energy protesters who refuse to accept the science. They want to pressure the President and Secretary of State Kerry to make sure these jobs never get created. This is one good quote: "Neva Goodwin, co-director of the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University and a contributor to Kerry's past campaigns, said that she will be opposing the pipeline in another way."

The article quotes her as saying: "I am working with an informal network of political donors that will be pushing Kerry to do the right thing."

Political donors and activists on the left are committed to killing this pipeline, regardless of the science, regardless of the middle-class jobs, and regardless of what is in the best interests of the country.

I find it astonishing that former Energy Secretary Steven Chu said yesterday, on this very point, what about the science, what about the cost-benefit analysis. President Obama's former Secretary of Energy said yesterday: "The decision on whether the construction should happen was a political one, not a scientific one." So much for the President of the United States saying the decision would be based on science.

The President's activist base will be mobilizing and fighting against good American jobs. So what does the administration itself say? It says it wants to wait for some more opinions.

The White House Chief of Staff said Sunday that the President wants officials from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Energy Department, and other agencies to tell him what they think. I know what the former Secretary of Energy thought. He said the decision on whether the construction should happen was a political decision, not a scientific one.

You don't need to look any further. Look at the history of the project. TransCanada applied to build this pipeline more than 5 years ago. The Obama administration has set deadlines and said it would make a decision. First, it was the end of 2011; then it was after the election in 2012; and then it was at the end of 2013. That is what President Obama promised Republican Senators when he met with us last March. The administration has missed every deadline, broken every promise. It is interesting because the last time the Senate voted on the subject, 17 Democrats joined every Republican to support the pipeline.

The Obama administration is still trying to find a way to evade and to avoid having to make a decision. This really ought to be embarrassing to an administration. President Obama was elected to make decisions. The science is settled. The President should be embarrassed when his former Secretary of Energy says the decision on whether the construction should happen was a political one and not a scientific one.

Any objections have been heard; they have been answered. There are no more excuses. It is time for the President to make up his mind. Is he going to follow the science or just the politics? He should approve the Keystone XL Pipeline. He should do it now. He should do the job he was elected to do so middle-class Americans can do the jobs they desperately want to do.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, what is the parliamentary situation?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 1963.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, last week, Attorney General Eric Holder appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee for a regular oversight hearing. I appreciated the Attorney General's cooperation and willingness to appear before the Committee to discuss a variety of important matters. His testimony reminded us of the Justice Department's central role in carrying out the policy of Congress to support our Nation's law enforcement officers and first responders.

There is one vital program that provides support to the families of fallen law enforcement officers and other first responders, and that is the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program—the PSOB. I am proud to have authored legislation that has expanded and improved the PSOB in important ways so that we honor the sacrifices made by

our law enforcement officers and first responders. From my Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act to the Dale Long Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act, I have fought to make sure that all of the families who have lost an officer or first responder are honored. We got those laws passed to honor the service of these dedicated first responders and we exercised considerable oversight to make sure the program was administered fairly and efficiently. We wish we didn't need the PSOB program because it is a reminder to Americans about the dangers law enforcement officers face every day. But because they do face those dangers, we need the program. I thank the Attorney General for his leadership and commitment to making this program more responsive to Congressional intent and more effective for grieving families.

Sadly, in 2013, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund reported that 111 law enforcement officers in the United States were killed in the line of duty. This preliminary data reflects an eight percent decrease from the number of officer fatalities in 2012, and amounts to the fewest line of duty deaths in more than five decades. This trend is good news, but Congress must not let up on its effort to increase officer safety. Every single line-of-duty death represents enormous tragedy for the families but also for the communities of these officers.

For decades, Congress has been steadfast in its support of law enforcement officers, and has traditionally maintained policies to increase officer safety and well-being. Until recently, Congress has acted decisively in support of those who dedicate themselves to protecting their communities. As someone who had the privilege to serve in law enforcement for 8 years, I am so proud of what we have done in the past. But now, for some reason, there are some in Congress who do not believe the support of law enforcement officers and first responders can be a Federal responsibility. I disagree. I remain committed to fighting for all of our State and local law enforcement officials.

Last fall the Senate Judiciary Committee reported two important bills to support our Nation's law enforcement officers. Both bills would help protect the lives of law enforcement officers. Both have been approved in this body for immediate passage by every single Democratic Senator. Unfortunately, there are some Republican Senators who continue to obstruct passage of both bills in the Senate. I worry that some are putting ideology ahead of the safety of our law enforcement officers.

More than a decade ago, a Republican Senator from Colorado, Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, and I joined forces—again, because both of us had a law enforcement background—and we authored the Bulletproof Vest Partner-

ship Grant Act. We worked across the aisle to get both Republicans and Democrats to support us, and we created a grant program that has assisted State and local law enforcement agencies in purchasing more than 1 million protective vests.

In fact, Madam President, I remember a police officer who testified before the Judiciary Committee telling us how much he loved law enforcement, but what he loved even more was his family, his parents, his wife, and his children. When he talked, he said: I came within a second of never being with them again. He said: This is what saved me. He pulled up from under the desk a bulletproof vest and we could see the slugs stuck in it. He said: I was ambushed and had a cracked rib, but later that day I saw my family. Without this vest and the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act, I never would have seen my family again.

Between 2000 and 2010, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act has been reauthorized three times by unanimous consent. Bulletproof vests have saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers. These are officers who put their own lives on the line. They do not stop to say: Wait a minute, how did people vote on the bulletproof vest act? They respond when they are called.

Unfortunately, since 2012, a few Republican Senators have blocked passage of this bill and thwarted the vast majority of senators who want to see this program reauthorized so that it can continue to save the lives of those who keep our communities safe. There is no dispute that the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program saves lives. In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in February 2012, the Government Accountability Office noted that since 1987, bulletproof vests have saved the lives of more than 3,000 law enforcement officers. I am disappointed we can't all come together to promote the safety of our Nation's law enforcement officers who put their lives on the line every day to ensure our safety. It is our duty to support them and I call on all senators to stand with them and pass this important legislation.

Madam President, I remember walking down the street in a town in Colorado and a police officer in uniform walked up to me and asked: Are you Senator LEAHY? I said: I am. He tapped his chest, and you could hear the thunk, thunk of the bulletproof vest, and he said: I want to thank you, and I want to thank Senator Campbell. That is all he said. I was choked up listening to him.

The Judiciary Committee also reported the National Blue Alert Act. This is a bipartisan bill. It passed the House of Representatives by an overwhelming majority of Republicans and Democrats. The National Blue Alert Act would create a national alert system to notify all State and Federal law

enforcement agencies with critical information when an officer is injured or killed in the line of duty. I am a proud cosponsor of it. It is sponsored by Senator CARDIN and Senator GRAHAM, a key Democrat and Republican. This bill would help apprehend a fugitive suspected of seriously injuring or killing a law enforcement officer and who is fleeing through multiple jurisdictions. It defies common sense that any senator would object to this legislation, which contains no fiscal authorization and is universally supported by law enforcement leaders across the country.

In recent weeks, some Senators have expressed concern for the safety of law enforcement officers in the context of the Senate confirmation process. I do not question that these Senators are as concerned as I am about the safety of law enforcement officers, but I invite those who have expressed concern before the cameras for the well-being of law enforcement officers to come here and support the two bills I have discussed today and end the needless obstruction of this proven commonsense legislation. Do your press conferences, if you want. Say you are in favor of law enforcement. Who is going to be against law enforcement? But then prove it. Let us get these passed.

I am proud that every Democratic member has supported it, and most Republicans do. Those few who are opposed, let us vote. In the coming weeks, as the Senate moves closer to recognizing our Nation's fallen law enforcement officers during National Police Week in May, I intend to come to the floor to seek unanimous consent to pass these long-stalled bills. If Senators want to oppose them, fine, vote against them, but they ought to be willing to join me on the floor and explain those objections to the thousands of law enforcement officers and families who will soon gather in Washington to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their fellow citizens.

Our law enforcement officers risk their lives every day to keep us safe. They deserve a Congress that does more than just talk about their service. They deserve protection.

One of the saddest days I ever spent as State's attorney was going to the funeral of a police officer killed in the line of duty. It was a snowy day in Vermont. The snow was falling gently from the sky, and there were several miles of police cars—their blue lights reflected against the white snow. Such a peaceful scene—but not for the family of that police officer. I said to myself that I would do everything I could to protect them, and I appreciate those Republicans and Democrats who have joined me on this. We cannot bring back a fallen officer but we can and we must work together to protect the next one who may come under fire. I call on

friends from across the aisle to join all the rest of us, and your fellow Republicans who have already joined, to protect law enforcement officers. Let us immediately reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act, and let us pass Senator CARDIN and Senator GRAHAM's National Blue Alert Act.

We have many—I know in my office—who have worked on this. I will mention Matt Virkstis, whose background is at the Vermont Law School, that some in this body are well aware of, such as our distinguished Senate Parliamentarian. But I also appreciate all those police officers—and I have no idea what their politics are—who come in to say thank you to those of us who have supported the Bulletproof Vest Partnership program. It is such an easy thing to do. It should be noncontroversial. Let us get back to the days where, when we have something noncontroversial, we just pass it. Together we can honor the service of those who keep us safe.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I see my dear friend is here, so I will not suggest the absence of a quorum. I yield the floor, and I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

THE DEBT AND DEFICIT

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I returned to the Senate in 2011 to tackle what I believed to be the greatest challenge facing our country, and I have devoted much of my first 3 years in this returned term on working to achieve a debt reduction agreement that would put our Nation on a path to fiscal health and fiscal responsibility.

I have been involved in discussions for endless hours and days and months with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—Republicans and Democrats—with the administration and with outside groups over trying to put together a long-term deficit and debt reduction plan that will put us on the path to fiscal health, to finding a way forward to deal with our ever mounting debt.

I am committed to working with my colleagues and the administration on this issue because I believe, ultimately, the most important thing we can do for the future of our country, for future generations—the most important legacy we can leave during our term of service here—is to solve our Nation's fiscal crisis.

Recently, we have heard relatively little about this. Despite efforts which have been ongoing for the last 4 to 6 years, we have not come to a resolution; we have not come to an agreement which puts us at the beginning of a path to resolve this problem. Yet each year it mounts. Our debt dramatically increases. We continue on deficit spending.

Even though we have made a few efforts to reduce deficit spending to half of what it has been—at least for this

coming year, based on the sequester and the implication of that—it is also clear that this is temporary. It is also clear that whether we reduce it in half or not, the other half still amounts to more than half a trillion dollars of excess spending, driving our debt higher and higher.

I am privileged to serve as the senior Republican Senator on the Joint Economic Committee. We spend a fair amount of time looking at the projections for the future and how they ought to shape our actions here in the Congress, as well as how we should work with the administration in terms of dealing with this issue.

The Congressional Budget Office is a nonpartisan group who deals with numbers, not with politics—at least they are not supposed to. They bring about their annual “Budget and Economic Outlook,” which was released today. Looking at it is shocking. Never has my conviction been stronger than today when I read this outlook which has just been released. It addresses issues important for all of us. I am going to talk about just the top 10. But if this is not a siren call to us to refocus our efforts on this issue, we are going to regret to the end of our lives not having taken action to begin the process of getting this country's fiscal health and responsibility back in order.

Again, this is the Congressional Budget Office—a nonpartisan group established by this body to deal with numbers and give us facts and projections from economists who give us the opportunity then to look at how we shape policies.

I was stunned by the CBO report, and I would like to share the shocking findings. I hope every Member of Congress will look at this. I am going to distribute it on behalf of the Joint Economic Committee so we have access to this. But it ought to send a shock wave through all of us, and it ought to provide us with the courage and the will to step up and do what I think we all know we need to do.

Finding No. 1. The national debt has exploded over the last several years. Gross Federal debt in 2014 is projected to reach \$17.7 trillion, which is a figure larger than our entire economy and an increase of over \$7 trillion in just the last 5 years under this President.

Point No. 2. CBO projects cumulative deficits from 2014–2023 to be \$1 trillion larger than last year's projection for the same time period.

Last year was startling enough. Now we learn—after 1 year of sequestration, holding down spending, and speeches on this floor saying we are getting control of this, CBO comes along and says the cumulative deficits from 2014 to 2023 will be \$1 trillion larger than they thought just last year. So while we are congratulating ourselves for holding down spending, we are told we are adding \$1 trillion more than was projected and anticipated last year.

Now we are dealing with the so-called Affordable Care Act—yet to be proven to be affordable. CBO says that ObamaCare will reduce the number of full-time workers by 2.3 million people through 2021. At a time when this was sold as a plan to put Americans back to work, as something that would reduce our deficit because we would get control of out-of-control health care spending, we are told by the Congressional Budget Office that the number of full-time workers will decrease by 2.3 million. This is a significant increase from the last estimate of 800,000 during the same time period. So we have gone from an 800,000 projection not that long ago to 2.3 million.

Point No. 4. Mandatory spending—particularly our health and retirement security programs—is crowding out all other priorities. The Congressional Budget Office once again has said that as we look at our total budget, the mandatory spending continues to crowd out all other spending priorities.

This figure stood out and stunned me because it is the first time I have seen such an extraordinary jump in the mandatory spending percentage of our total spending.

On mandatory spending, CBO says interest on the debt is projected to consume 94 percent of all Federal revenues 10 years from now, squeezing out funding for all other priorities. Squeezing out? Eliminating. We are entering the season when interest groups from our State come with many creative and innovative ideas as to how they could better spend or spend more money on their particular programs.

They come in and say, “We are here to encourage you to increase spending for medical research at the National Institutes of Health” or, “We are here to have you understand how important scholarship grants, Pell grants, and others are for enrollment of students in our States” or, “We are here to talk about the need to improve our infrastructure, to pave our roads and fill potholes and build and repair and establish new infrastructure for the movement of water, sewage treatment.” On and on it goes. We can go right down the list of literally hundreds of requests as to how tax dollars ought to be spent to better improve our States, to better improve our health, to better improve our education, to better improve a whole range of things, including support for national security.

I have to look them in the eye and say: Every year we have a smaller pot of money percentage-wise of our budget to apply to all these discretionary spending programs which Congress has to approve every year.

I say: I am really not here to argue about whether money for the National Institutes of Health is more important than money for education grants or money for infrastructure development or any other endeavor in which the Federal Government is involved.

Every year all of these are going to be faced with less money to fund these programs. Some of them ought to receive less and some of them ought to be closed and the waste and fraud ought to be eliminated. Nevertheless, there are essential functions that need to be funded, and they won't be able to be funded adequately and will continue to shrink as the mandatory spending runs out of control.

But to think that of all the revenue—all the tax dollars that come into the Treasury 10 years from now, 94 percent will be spent on programs we have no control over and won't be available for any of the things I mentioned and dozens—if not more—of programs. It is simply unsustainable. Ninety-four percent. Six percent left to provide for our national security and national defense, our institutes of health, education, infrastructure development, manufacturing innovation, research and development—you name it.

CBO also said Social Security is in jeopardy. They project that Social Security “will continue to run cash flow deficits every year during the next decade.” And the disability insurance trust fund will be insolvent by 2017. That is 3 years away.

Let me repeat that. The Congressional Budget Office said that at the current rate the Social Security disability insurance trust fund will be insolvent in 3 years.

They also said mandatory spending on health care programs is exploding.

We have heard it said on this floor and we have heard it mentioned in the State of the Union Address and by the administration numerous times, that we are getting control of our exploding health care costs through the Affordable Care Act. In 2013 the Federal Government spent \$861 billion on Medicare, Medicaid, and other major health care programs. This year the collective cost is expected to reach \$933 billion and then nearly double by the year 2024 to \$1.8 trillion. I don't call that getting control of our health care costs. Yet this mandatory spending part of our budget will continue to grow to the point where we simply have no money left for any other function of government.

All this, of course, is based on interest rates and the assumption as to what they will be. CBO says interest on our debt is set to double. Annual interest payments on the national debt are estimated to more than double over the next 10 years from 1.3 percent of our gross domestic product in 2014 to 3.3 percent of GDP in 2024. And we know from the past that estimates of what will happen with interest rates will drive that rate higher, particularly as our fiscal crisis gets more desperate.

Point No. 8. Again, the Congressional Budget Office says: We have a spending problem and not a taxing problem. Projected revenues will exceed the 40-year

historical average of gross domestic product this year and outpace growth in our economy over the next 10 years.

So they say the problem isn't too little revenue. That is going to continue to pour in here as we continue to raise taxes. But you can't raise taxes fast enough or adequate enough without, one, destroying our economy or limiting our economy, but, secondly, to keep pace with the spending, which will hit its projected average of 20.5 percent this year and over the next 10 years outpace economic growth to a greater degree.

CBO notes that “after 2024, the long-term trajectory of spending will drive up debt to nearly unprecedented levels.

Let me repeat that. This is a quote from the Congressional Budget Office: “After 2024, the long-term trajectory of spending will drive up debt to nearly unprecedented levels.”

CBO suggests that such an upward path would ultimately be unsustainable.

Point No. 9. Labor force participation will continue to decline over the next several years. CBO projects that labor participation will drop to 62.5 percent by the end of 2017, fueled in part by the mandates in the Affordable Care Act and negative impact on job creators as a result.

Point No. 10. The Congressional Budget Office suggests that even these dire projections may be overly optimistic. CBO projects real economic growth of 3.1 percent, which is notably higher than private sector and IMF estimates of 2.4 percent to 2.8 percent. CBO says that it “would probably trim its projection of GDP growth” in 2014, based on late-2013 data. So the numbers we are dealing with today may be overly optimistic. As dire as this report is, it may be that we are underestimating the damage that will come from our inability to control spending and put us on a path to fiscal health.

This isn't another siren alerting Washington to the stark reality of our country desperately needing a real debt reduction agreement; this is, a five-alarm fire. Our fiscal house is engulfed in flames. The question is, When are we, who have been given the responsibility by the people we represent, going to have the courage to stand and do something about this, to put out this fire?

We cannot overlook the fact that our Nation is facing record deficits as far as the eye can see. We are careening on an unsustainable, unstable fiscal path. We need all hands on deck to address this now—not tomorrow, not after the next election. How many times have we heard, after this next election, we need to dig down and roll up our sleeves and take on this challenge. We need to do this now because the threat is now.

A credible, long-term plan to reduce our debt and put our country back on a path of fiscal health and economic

growth and opportunity is the only way we can preserve the America we enjoy today or have enjoyed in the past. It is the only way to preserve that for future generations. So I think we have a generational responsibility that is as important as any we have faced before.

Many say our legacy rests on what we do here. Whether that is true, we certainly will be measured by what we do or what we don't do relative to this particular crisis. Again, this is not a Republican conservative standing and saying: This is how I see things. I am simply reciting how the entity we turn to, the Congressional Budget Office—a neutral body which just does the math and then draws conclusions from it—actually, we draw the conclusions; they put the numbers down. This is what the Congressional Budget Office has told us. These are stunning numbers, much more than any of us anticipated. I think there has been a little lull of us thinking: Well, we have things under control. We had sequester; that was kind of messy, but it did save some money. Now we have a budget. We are going forward and back to regular order.

What is regular order? Regular order is continuing to spend more than a one-half trillion dollars more than we bring in, in revenue. Raising taxes, according to CBO, is not going to solve the problem; that just hinders economic growth.

So those of us on both sides of this body who have worked to address these issues now, not later; those of us who have worked with the administration—and I was part of a small group working with the administration over a 7-month period of time with the President directly and with some of his top advisers to try to put something in place, as modest as it was or as it seemed to end up being—and we were not even able to complete that. That burden, that responsibility, that legacy rests on our shoulders. That duty rests on our shoulders, to acknowledge these facts, acknowledge these numbers, and to understand what impact it is going to have on the future of this country, our children and grandchildren, everybody's children and grandchildren, and perhaps even our generation.

So I will be distributing this report from Republicans on the Joint Economic Committee. I am hoping our report sends out yet another alarm, and we will not simply rest on the fact that we have made a baby step here in terms of getting some control over our spending. But as we turn around—akin to a little grass fire over here that we put out across the street while the five-alarm is burning away, blazing away, and we are saying we will deal with it later. We can't deal with it later. We must deal with it now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with the Senator from Hawaii for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND INNOVATION ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I am on the floor with my colleague Senator SCHATZ from Hawaii to talk about our recent introduction of a piece of legislation entitled "The College Affordability and Innovation Act of 2014," which we introduced along with our good friends Senator MURRAY of Washington and Senator SANDERS of Vermont.

By way of framing the conversation we will have today, I wish to speak about one particular college that maybe paints a picture of the crisis we are in today with respect to the mounting cost that confronts kids and families when they want to get a college education and the variety of outcomes—the frankly surprising and often shocking variety of outcomes—that students are getting when they show up at the doors of institutions of education, particularly institutions of for-profit education. Corinthian College is a school in California—not a small one but a pretty big college. It has about 100 campuses in 25 different States. Let me give some statistics about Corinthian College. After about a year, over half of the students who enroll drop out. When they are finished with their education, whether it be to a degree or not, about one-third of all students who go to Corinthian default on their student loans. If 56 percent isn't a bad enough number in terms of 1-year dropout rates, after 4 years, only 6 percent of all the kids who walk in through the doors of Corinthian College get a degree—6 percent of those kids.

Affordability isn't an argument in favor of this school either. For a legal assistant degree, they charge \$28,000, but down the street at a community college a person can get that same degree for \$2,500. They have a 35-percent default rate, a 6-percent 4-year graduation rate, and degrees that can cost 14 times as much as comparable local schools.

Guess what. The Federal Government rewards this school with \$1.6 billion in Federal aid every year and \$500 million in Pell grant money every year. So this example, which frankly can be repeated over and over, especially in the for-profit world, speaks to the challenge we have.

We have done a very credible job over the course of the last few years in keeping down the interest rate we charge students who want to take out loans to go to school. No one has worked harder on this issue inside this body and outside this body than the

Presiding Officer. But we also have to have a concurrent conversation about the sticker price of college because it can't be enough that we are facilitating student borrowing; we actually have to try to engage in a real effort, using Federal leverage, for the first time perhaps in our history of Federal higher education policy, to push the cost of tuition down in the first place. That is what the College Affordability and Innovation Act seeks to do.

As Senator SCHATZ will talk about, there aren't a lot of issues that are much more important to the middle class than the cost of higher education. We both know that. We have partnered on this piece of legislation in part because not only are we not that far away from the time in our lives when we were in college, but we are paying back our student loans and saving for our kids' education, so we get how much of an annual budget can be taken up in paying for both prior and saving for future college. So we attack this problem in two ways—and I will just briefly speak about the first way and then I think the Senator from Hawaii can speak a little bit about the second method.

First, we think it is time for a little bit more innovation when it comes to the way in which college is structured. There is no magic to the fact that today one has to sit in a classroom for 4 years, taking a requisite amount of credits, in order to get a degree. There is a lot of interesting innovation happening out there where a small subset of schools are saying: Wait a second. Maybe there is a different way to do it.

For instance, maybe we should award a degree based on the competencies a student gets, regardless of whether the student needs 2 years or 3 years or 4 years to get that degree or, for instance, maybe we should give students who show up at their freshman year of school with prior learning more credit for that, whether they got that experience studying at a high school or in the work force or in the military. Some students don't have to start as a freshman; some students can start as a sophomore or a junior.

Maybe it is a renewed effort to consolidate graduate programs with undergraduate programs. I think President Obama is right; one doesn't need 7 years to become a lawyer in this country. It doesn't make a lot of sense that one has to essentially spend 10 to 15 years in education and training to become a doctor. We can consolidate graduate and undergraduate programs.

But whatever we do, we have to admit that one of the easiest ways to reduce the cost of a degree is to reduce the time it takes to get a degree. So the first part of our bill focuses on giving some grants to a small number of schools to build out the right way to do competency-based degree programming or initiatives to give greater credit for

prior learning or consolidations of graduate and undergraduate degrees.

We introduced this piece of legislation because we think it is time to start having a real conversation about what the Federal Government can do to control and lower the price of college education. It is breaking the bank for families. We can do something about it. If we didn't have any tools at our disposal, maybe this wouldn't be a worthwhile conversation, but we give out \$140 billion in Federal aid every year, and it is about time we start demanding some accountability for that money, whether it is accountability for cost or accountability for quality. It doesn't make sense for taxpayers to be sending \$1.6 billion a year to a school with a 6-percent graduation rate, a 38-percent loan default rate, and prices that are simply not competitive in the landscape of college education.

I am pleased to be on the floor with my colleague Senator SCHATZ, and I am happy to turn the floor over to him.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Connecticut for his partnership on this legislation. He has been a real friend and a true partner. We are happy to have the support of Senator MURRAY from Washington as well as Senator SANDERS. They have been working on this issue for a long time.

This is the middle class issue of our time. It doesn't just belong to college-aged students; it belongs to all of us. Senator MURPHY spoke about how important it is for those of us who have young children and are beginning the process of trying to save for our children's college education, but it also belongs to the grandparents' generation. So many people are thinking about whether they can help their kids to ameliorate their existing student loans or their grandkids to be able to afford college.

As Senator MURPHY mentioned, we spend almost \$150 billion in some form or fashion on Federal financial aid for institutions of higher learning, and that is good. That is a matter of national strategy. That is about the American dream. That is about the premise that the President talked about in his State of the Union Address, which is that if people work hard and play by the rules, they can move up the economic ladder. Higher education is one of the best ways to do that. It always has been in the United States of America. But here is the problem. The Senator from Connecticut talked about an individual example, but let me give the aggregate data.

Over the last 10 years, we have spent 20 percent more and we have gotten 25 percent less. We are spending 20 percent more and we are getting 25 percent less. That means that although our investment in higher education and theoretically in college affordability

has increased, the net cost for students has gone up by 25 percent. We now have more than \$1 trillion in student loan debt. It is the second largest source of debt, to mortgage interest, and it has now outpaced credit card debt.

This is a real crisis not just on the consumer level but as a matter of economic strategy for our Nation, because to the degree and extent that young people or people who want retraining or people who want to get a culinary degree or become a master carpenter or who want to become an architect or a doctor start to evaluate higher education and decide it is not a good value anymore, that doesn't just impact their individual family or their individual community but it impacts our national economic strategy.

College is no longer affordable to many people, and that is despite the fact that we are spending more in raw dollars and in inflation-adjusted dollars than ever before.

Senator MURPHY talked about the innovation portion of this legislation. We also have an accountability portion of this legislation. Here is the basic premise: As an institution of higher education, if you are a for-profit, if you are a not-for-profit, or even if you are a public institution, it is not the Federal Government's job to determine what your mission may be. And certainly if you are a private for-profit, we are not here to dictate your organization's mission. But a for-profit institution has no special right to Federal funding. If you are going to receive billions of dollars in Federal subsidies, we think it is reasonable, as we endeavor to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, that we tie some reasonable public policy strings to those dollars.

All we are saying is that we want institutions of higher learning—and especially their leadership—to wake up every morning and not think first about profits, not think first about how they are going to market to find more customers, but to think about access and affordability. And what we are saying is that different institutions may have different missions. A community college has a different mission than a training institute, and a 4-year institution has a different mission than a graduate institution. That is all fine, and that is why we have established in this legislation an independent commission, comprised of experts, to determine what matrix of incentives and possible penalties would be appropriate for each institution.

But here is the bottom line: We are spending more and getting less, and we are spending \$150 billion. This system is not working, and we are pleased to have the support of several of our colleagues. We are going to be enlisting the support of many others.

I am looking forward to continuing the conversation with the Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. I thank Senator SCHATZ.

Here is another statistic to think about: It was not so long ago that we ranked first in the Nation with respect to 25-year-olds to 35-year-olds with college degrees, and that was not only a source of immense pride for this country but really the genesis of our economic greatness—that we turned out more college-educated young people than any other country in the world. In a very short period of time we slipped from 1st to not 2nd or 3rd or 4th but to 12th. We are now 12th in the world with respect to the number of 25- to 35-year-olds with college degrees.

Part of the reason for that is that a lot of other countries have caught up to the United States. But the crisis in this country is no longer just a crisis of access. That was the buzzword for a long time, that we needed to increase access to college. We now have a crisis of completion in which millions of students are starting school and not finishing for a variety of reasons but largely because of the astronomical cost.

Today the majority of students are not graduating in 6 years. So the issue about affordability is not just about attracting more kids into the doors of college—because I will tell you, as I am sure Senator SCHATZ does, I talk to a lot of kids who graduate high school and do not apply to schools in my State because they are scared off by the cost and they do not believe they are going to be able to put together the family resources to pay for it—but we also are losing a generation of workers because it is taking young people now 6, 7, 8 years to complete a degree, and often many of them are never completing that degree while still taking on loan after loan and getting stuck in the worst possible situation whereby they have thousands of dollars in debt and no certificate to bring into the workforce.

So our effort is an effort to address cost because we care about access, but it is also an effort to address cost because we care about completion, and that is one of the big problems we have in our system today.

Mr. SCHATZ. I think the Senator is exactly right about that one. Let me give you some data. In 2011 only 38 percent of undergraduate students in a 4-year institution graduated on time. So when you think about the cost of college, you think about the per-year cost. But if it is taking 6 or 7 years, then the per-year cost is not as important as how realistic it is for you to finish on time. Just to be clear, those data could be skewed by the fact that there are part-time students and all the rest of it. That is not what we are talking about here. It is simply hard to finish on time.

But there is hope on the horizon. For instance, the University of Hawaii has

undertaken a program called 15 to Finish. The basic idea is that students, especially in their freshman year, need to know that they need those 15 credits. They need to get help from their counselors so that by the time they are in their sophomore year, they are well on their way to completing their major of choice in the 4-year period of time.

The challenge now is that given that legislatures have cut funding to institutions of higher learning—and as a result you have fewer counselors and fewer people to assist in the student services office—oftentimes you do not get real counseling with respect to what you need until it is too late, and then you find that you are on a 5- or 6-year plan. Your family may not have made the financial arrangement that puts you in a position to be on the 5-year plan.

From a revenue standpoint, if your mission as an institution—for-profit or not-for-profit—is just to fill those seats and to generate those dollars, then that does not matter to you. But the challenge we have right now is that the institutions—the publicly traded ones—have pressures to generate profits. But even the not-for-profits and even the public institutions—the Universities of Hawaii and the Universities of Connecticut—have had their funding reduced by the legislatures. So their CFOs are trying to figure out new revenue streams, and as long as they can keep enrollment up, that enables them to go back to their legislature and say: We are in the black.

What we are saying is that is not good enough. We are not asking you to be in the black. We certainly understand the need to be fiscally responsible. We certainly understand the need to generate tuition revenue. But here is the thing: The point of higher education is for students to be able to move up that economic ladder, and to the extent that not only is it not accomplishing that goal, but it is actually doing the opposite for some of our students, they end up with a mountain of debt and either no degree or a degree that they find does not make them employable in the marketplace. That is a national shame. That is why we have to address this issue.

The good news is we believe we are spending a sufficient amount of money on the Federal level so we can effectuate these changes just by saying: If you want to receive Federal dollars for your institution of higher learning, then we are asking you to focus on access and affordability.

I want to give one last piece of data because it actually shocked me, even as much as I have been working on this issue. The for-profit institutions comprise about 12 percent of the students and 30 percent of the Federal dollars. Madam President, 12 percent of the students and 30 percent of the Federal dollars.

So while there are institutions that are for-profit that are doing great work and there are not-for-profits and public institutions that have to do a lot better, let's call it like it is.

One of the major challenges here is we have to wrap our arms around undue profits and publicly traded companies that are generating profits and spending Federal dollars on marketing to students and not providing very much in the way of value.

Mr. MURPHY. Let's be clear as to what we are talking about here. We believe we are talking about a pretty light hand of accountability in the sense that we are really going after the true outliers. The Senator talked about the work happening at the University of Hawaii or the University of Connecticut. We do not imagine that any flagship university is going to run afoul of these accountability standards. I, frankly, do not believe many public universities at all are going to run afoul of these standards. We are really talking about the handful of outliers that have just absolutely abysmal retention rates, graduation rates, default rates, or tuition increase rates.

We are also talking about, we think, a pretty nuanced process to try to bring those schools around before they lose eligibility for funding. Our bill says that if you are not meeting these standards, you have a pretty long period of time in which you would be on probation with no practical effects, in which you could set upon an action plan to improve your affordability or outcomes. Then if, after that period of time, you still were not hitting your benchmarks, then you lose 10 percent of your Federal aid, then 20 percent, and then finally, in the fourth or fifth years, you would become ineligible. That is plenty of time for a university to correct. But if a school that is starting out with a 6-percent graduation rate cannot improve that over 5 years, why on Earth would we continue to send \$1 billion to that school when it could be used for students who are attending schools that care a lot more about quality education?

Mr. SCHATZ. I think the Senator is exactly right. We had the Senator from Indiana talking about debt and deficits and making sure we spend every Federal dollar intelligently. Right now, we are simply not spending this money in the most efficient and efficacious way possible. That is what this legislation is about.

Senator MURPHY and I talked about how it might have been a little more politically satisfying in the short run to put hard caps on college tuition and precipitous goals that would have been very easy for us to articulate. But the fact is, given that you have different institutions with different missions and you have great work being done at the community college level, at the certificate level, and at the 4-year and

at the graduate level, we wanted to account for the different missions, and we wanted to make sure we did not create the kind of incentive program that, for instance, would prevent an institution from wanting to take a kid in who is from a lower income area and maybe, statistically speaking, is more likely to default on his or her loan.

We really want, as a matter of policy, to focus on access. So it is access; it is affordability; it is the consistency with the mission. But here we are spending \$150 billion—more than we ever have—on this national priority, and our results are worse than ever. So the status quo cannot stand, and I am really looking forward to working with my colleague on this important issue.

Mr. MURPHY. As we wrap up our time on the floor, when my great-grandfather came to this country, he knew that without a college education he could get a job pretty easily that would be able to put food on the table, have decent health care for his family, even provide him with a little bit of a pension that would take care of him. His son, my grandfather, followed him into that same profession, working for a ball bearing factory in New Britain, CT.

While those jobs still exist, they are getting rarer and rarer. For the next generation to succeed, we know they need access to a college degree. They are not getting that access to completion because we have been woefully inadequate in using the tools at our disposal at the Federal level to try to put pressure on colleges to deliver on both affordability and outcome.

We hope the introduction of the College Affordability and Innovation Act will allow us to open a new front in the debate on higher education to promote the idea of reducing the sticker price of college.

I thank my colleague for joining me, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for about 15 minutes, perhaps as many as 17 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I come to the floor today for the 57th consecutive week that the Senate has been in session to urge my colleagues to wake up to what carbon pollution is doing to our atmosphere and oceans.

I have described Congress as surrounded by a barricade of lies. Today I will be more specific. There is not just lying going on about climate change; there is a whole carefully built apparatus of lies. This apparatus is big and artfully constructed, phony-baloney organizations designed to look and sound as if they are real, messages honed by

public relations experts to sound as if they are truthful, payroll scientists whom polluters can trot out when they need them, and the whole thing big and complicated enough that when you see its parts, you could be fooled into thinking it is not all the same beast. But it is, just like the mythological Hydra—many heads, same beast. So this speech is going to be about that beast.

A recent research article published by Dr. Robert Brulle, a professor of sociology and environmental science at Drexel University, describes the beast.

He joins a tradition of scholarship in this area, including work by Naomi Oreskes, Aaron McCright, and Riley Dunlap, each of whom has studied the forces behind climate denial; and David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz, who explored chemical and lead industry campaigns to deceive Americans about the dangers of those products.

The intricate, interconnected propaganda web and funding network of this climate denial beast encompasses over 100 organizations, including industry trade associations, conservative think tanks, and plain old phony front groups for polluter interests. It has even co-opted media outlets, a phenomenon I chronicled in an earlier speech about the Wall Street Journal editorial page becoming a tool of polluter propaganda.

So let's take a look at this climate denial beast, and how polluter money and dark money flows through its veins. This chart from Dr. Brulle's report shows the complex interconnection of the beast's major players. The green diamonds are the big funders, the Koch-affiliated foundations, the Scaife-affiliated foundations, the American Petroleum Institute, and so on.

The blue circles are the who's-who of climate denial groups: the Heartland Institute—they are the group that compared folks concerned about climate change to the Unabomber, to give you a sense of what sort of people they are—the American Enterprise Institute, right here, the Hoover Institution, the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, the Mercatus Center, to name just a few.

The purpose of this network, to quote the report, is "a deliberate and organized effort to misdirect the public discussion and distort the public's understanding of climate."

To misdirect and distort. The coordinated tactics of this network, the report shows, and I will quote again, "span a wide range of activities, including political lobbying, contributions to political candidates, and a large number of communication and media efforts that aim at undermining climate science."

That is the beast. Big money flows through it, more than half a billion dollars. The Drexel University report chronicles that from 2003 to 2010, 140

foundations made grants totaling \$558 million to 91 organizations that actively oppose climate action. It looks like a big beast to build just to propagate climate denial. But if you look at carbon emissions from fossil fuels, which in 2011 EPA estimated to be over 5.6 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide—so take 5.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide and then multiple that by the social cost of carbon, the economic and health costs that the polluters cause and inflict on the rest of society, which OMB recently set at \$37 per metric of CO₂—5.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide emitted, \$37 per metric ton of CO₂ on the social cost of carbon. Just 1 year's emissions will cost roughly 200 billion—with a B—dollars. So the stakes are pretty high for the polluters. If they were to pay for the harm they are causing, half a billion dollars through the beast, over 7 years, to get away with \$200 billion of harm every year is a bargain.

More than that, a lot of this machinery was already built. The beast did not spring up at once full grown, it grew over time—in industry-fueled campaigns to obscure the dangers of cigarette smoke, of acid rain, of ozone depletion. Who knows. There are probably parts of it that go back to the benefits of requiring seat belts and airbags in cars.

Looking back on the effects of these industry-funded campaigns of denial, we see that real people were hurt. But the denial machinery stalled action and made the wrongdoers money. It worked. So now the climate denial machine, the beast, is calling plays from the same playbook and even using many of the same front organizations.

So who is behind this base? Unfortunately for the proponents of transparency, a large portion of the funding is not traceable. Much of the money fueling the beast is laundered through organizations which exist to conceal donor identity. Some of the organizations examined by Dr. Brulle get over 90 percent of their money from hidden sources. Indeed, more than one-third of these organizations get over 90 percent of their money from hidden sources. The biggest identity laundering shop is Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund. Indeed, it is by far the biggest source of funding in this web. These twin entities reported giving a combined \$78 million to climate denier groups between 2003 and 2010, and they refused to identify their funders.

According to the Drexel report, the Donors Trust and Donors Capital funding operation does double duty. It is the "central component" and "predominant funder" of the denier apparatus, and at the same time it is the "black box" that conceals the identity of contributors.

Interestingly, anonymous funding through Donors Trust and Donors Capital fund has grown in tandem with dis-

closed funding from fossil fuel polluters declining, anonymous dollars up, disclosed dollars down. As we see here, Donors Trust and Donors Capital donations to the beast went from 3 percent of all foundation funding in 2003 to more than 23 percent in 2010.

At the same time, for example, the Koch brothers' affiliated foundations declined from 9 percent of all foundation funding in 2006 down to 2 percent by 2010. The same is true for other polluter-backed foundations. The Exxon-Mobil Foundations wound down its disclosed funding of organizations in the climate denier network and basically zeroed out by 2007.

It makes perfect sense. Why would the Koch brothers and ExxonMobil come under fire for obviously funding climate denial when Donors Trust and Donors Capital creates a mechanism for polluters to secretly fund the base?

Plus, the phony-baloney front organizations within the beast can pretend they are not funded by polluter money. Everybody wins in this identity-laundering charade except the public, obviously, whom this elaborate construction is designed to fool.

The product of the denial apparatus is a complex ruse to delegitimize the science that supports curbing carbon emissions, foisted on the American people with all of the financing and fantasy of a Hollywood blockbuster production. Here is Dr. Brulle describing what you see when you look behind the actors who appear in the media spotlight. I will quote.

The roots of climate-change denial go deeper . . . Just as in a theatrical show, there are stars in the spotlight. In the drama of climate change, these are often prominent contrarian scientists or conservative politicians. . . . However, they are only the most visible and transparent parts of a larger production. Supporting this effort are directors, script writers, and, most certainly, a series of producers, in the form of conservative foundations.

Frankly, this apparatus is a disgrace. When the inevitable happens, and the impact of climate change really starts to hit home, people will want to know—Americans will want to know, people around the world will want to know why, why we did not take proper steps in time. It is not as if there is not enough scientific evidence for us to act. Why not? This denial operation, the beast, will then go down as one of our great American scandals, like Watergate or Teapot Dome, a deliberate, complex scheme of lies and propaganda that caused real harm to the American people and to our country, all so that a small group of people could make more money a little longer.

The fact that one of our great political parties is in on the scheme will be to its lasting shame. There is an old hymn that says, "Turn back O man, forswear thy foolish ways." It is time for our denier colleagues to turn back and forswear their foolish ways. If they

do not, there will be a day of reckoning and a harsh price to pay.

Every day, more and more Americans realize the truth, and they increasingly want this Congress to wake up. They know climate change is real. As the President said in his State of the Union Address:

The debate is settled. Climate change is a fact.

Sir Winston Churchill once said this:

Owing to past neglect, in the face of the plainest warnings, we have now entered upon a period of danger. . . . The era of procrastination, of half-measures, soothing and baffling expedients, of delays, is coming to its close. In its place we are entering a period of consequences. . . . We cannot avoid this period; we are in it now.

Well, we are now in a period of consequences. We have got to break the back of the beast and break the barricade of blandishments and lies that the beast has built around Congress. This campaign of denial, this beast, is as poisonous to our democracy as carbon pollution is to our atmosphere and oceans. With money and lobbyists and threats, it has infiltrated itself in an unseemly influence in our government. For the sake of our democracy, for the sake of our future, for the sake of our honor, it is time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICIES

Mr. HATCH. I wish to take a few minutes to talk about our Nation's international trade policies. Specifically, I wish to discuss efforts to renew trade promotion authority, or what we call TPA. The most recent authorization of TPA expired nearly 7 years ago. Since that time, Republicans have, by and large, expressed support for renewing it.

In August 2010, U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk testified that the Obama administration needed TPA to conclude ongoing trade negotiations. However, after that time, little was done to move the ball forward on renewing TPA. In September 2011, Minority Leader MCCONNELL and I offered an amendment on the Senate floor to renew trade promotion authority for President Obama.

Unfortunately, despite strong support from the Republican caucus, a number of Democratic Senators actively opposed our efforts, and it received virtually no Democratic support. As a result, our efforts failed.

In March 2013, then-Acting USTR Marantis again expressed the administration's support for renewing TPA and pledged to work with Congress to get it done.

In June 2013, United States Trade Representative Michael Froman, during testimony before the Senate Finance Committee, formally requested on behalf of President Obama that Congress renew TPA.

Throughout most of 2013, I worked with Chairman BAUCUS and Chairman CAMP of House Ways and Means to craft a bipartisan bill to renew TPA, one that could pass through both Houses and the Senate. We introduced our bill in January.

Last week, in his State of the Union Address, President Obama asked Congress to pass TPA legislation so his administration could complete negotiations on two very ambitious and important trade agreements. While I thought President Obama could have spoken more forcefully on this matter, his call for TPA renewal was clear and unambiguous. Yet so far the call appears to be going unheeded—or should I say among Democrats in the Senate.

Why is TPA so important, trade promotion authority? I think some additional context is necessary.

The administration is currently in the midst of negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, an Asia-Pacific trade agreement that is currently being negotiated between the United States and 12 other countries, including some of the world's largest economies, such as Japan, Canada, and Mexico.

The Asia-Pacific region represents more than 40 percent of the world's trade and, as a group, TPP countries represent the largest goods and services export market for our country, the United States of America.

On the other side of the world, the United States is negotiating a bilateral trade agreement with the 28 countries of the European Union. This is called TTIP. The United States and the EU generate over half of the world's economic output. Total goods trade alone, however, between the United States and the EU amounts to over \$1 trillion a year. Investment flows represent another \$300 billion a year on top of that.

Together, these two trade agreements have the potential to greatly expand access for U.S. products in the foreign markets around the world. Most importantly, they would help to grow our economy and create jobs at home.

These two separate trade agreements and negotiations represent what is the most ambitious trade agenda in our Nation's history. While everyone knows that I am a pretty outspoken critic of the Obama administration, I believe the administration deserves credit on this front. But if these negotiations are going to succeed, Congress must approve TPA.

Because of the unique structure of our government, our country needs TPA. Our trading partners will not put their best deal on the table unless they know the United States can deliver on what it promised.

TPA empowers our trade negotiators to conclude agreements and provides a path for passage in Congress. That is why every President since FDR has

sought trade promotion authority. No economically significant trade agreement has ever been negotiated by any administration and approved by Congress without it.

Put simply, if Congress does not renew TPA, the TPP negotiations and the TTIP negotiations with the European Union will almost certainly fail. That is why it is so disconcerting to me to see how some of my colleagues across the aisle have responded to the President's call for TPA renewal. TPA is one of the few issues where both parties can and should be able to work together to achieve a common goal.

I know that I, along with my Republican colleagues, stand ready and willing to work with the administration to approve TPA as soon as possible. I think I have a reputation of working across the aisle and bringing people together. This is one I want to bring people together on—and I shouldn't even have to argue about it, but I do.

I believe the bipartisan bill Chairman BAUCUS and I recently introduced to renew TPA would receive strong bipartisan support in the Senate if it were allowed to come up for a vote. Indeed, I am confident that the vast majority of my colleagues would join me in supporting the bill, both Democrats and Republicans.

The problem is Republicans are not in the majority in the Senate. It is the Democrats who control the agenda. Unfortunately, the President's call to renew TPA does not appear to be a priority for some of the Democrats, certainly the leadership of the Democrats.

The question is, Will Senate Democrats work with the President on this issue? I don't know the answer to that question, but I have to say that things don't look very good to me. Instead of robust support for the President and his trade agenda, the response we have seen from some Democrats has ranged from awkward silence on TPA to outright hostility. Needless to say, I am extremely disappointed by this.

The issue is fairly simple. If we want to grow our economy through trade, Congress must approve TPA and do so soon. The President can play a unique and key role. By forcefully advocating for TPA renewal, he can help turn some of the skeptics in his party around.

Recently, the Financial Times published a powerful editorial which outlined the need for TPA and the role the President must play for TPA to succeed.

According to the editorial:

Twenty years ago, President Bill Clinton pulled out all the stops to push through approval of the controversial North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada. He was able to squeak through a narrow victory by deft lobbying of lawmakers and a willingness to make a strong case for globalization to the American public. Mr. Obama is lagging behind his predecessor on both counts. The case for TTIP and TPP are

both strong. The time for Mr. Obama to make these arguments has arrived. He has every incentive to succeed. Failure to secure [TPA] would be a grievous blow to his presidency.

I understand there are some powerful critical forces that leave some of my friends on the other side of the aisle to oppose international trade. However, let's be clear: If we fail to approve TPA, we will be doing our Nation and our economy a great disservice. International trade is good for our country. It is one of the few tools Congress has to grow our economy that does not add to the Federal deficit. As I mentioned, Senator BAUCUS and I, along with Chairman CAMP, have negotiated and introduced a bipartisan, bicameral TPA bill. It is, in my opinion, the only TPA bill that stands a chance of getting passed in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have a choice. They can either work with the Republicans to pass our bill and empower our country to complete these important trade agreements, or they can throw up more roadblocks and cast more uncertainty on the President's trade agenda.

As I stated, Republicans stand ready to work with President Obama on these issues and to help these trade negotiations to succeed. For the sake of our country and our economy, I sincerely hope my Democratic colleagues and friends in the Senate are willing to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I come to the floor to discuss the recent report by the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, which contains updated estimates of the insurance coverage provisions of the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare.

It was just on Sunday the President told Bill O'Reilly of Fox News—in front of all America on Super Bowl Sunday—that his health care bill is working. Today, the Congressional Budget Office has changed that tune. We learned from the report that ObamaCare will now cost us \$2 trillion. People may recall President Obama told the country his bill would cost less than \$1 trillion. We also learned that we are expected to lose—expected to lose—2.5 million full-time jobs over the next 10 years. Finally, the CBO says exchange subsidies under the ACA will reduce incentives to work.

Let me go over that again. President Obama told the country his bill would cost less than \$1 trillion. Now the CBO says it will be \$2 trillion. We are expected to lose 2.5 million full-time jobs over next 10 years. Finally, CBO says exchange subsidies under the ACA will reduce incentives to work.

If this is working, what does “broken” mean to this President?

As I am reading this report and accompanying reaction, the most recent updates sound hauntingly familiar. In fact, I believe this is something that I and my colleagues spoke about every day during the debate on health care reform. We questioned at that time whether the CBO estimates accurately reflected the impact of ObamaCare on the American people, which leads to why I am on the floor as of this evening. This is about accountability, folks.

During the debate, we questioned whether the scoring done by the CBO was fraught with gimmicks or an unrealistic belief that Medicare would achieve significant savings in the future.

I have serious concerns with the accuracy of the scoring done on ObamaCare and its portrayal of the impact of this legislation versus the stated benefits for the American people.

We cannot keep doing this. There are peoples' lives at stake, peoples' lives that we are dealing with. The CBO projections during the health care reform debate seemed to significantly underestimate the negative impact of ObamaCare. Because of those projections, supporters were able to jam it through—one vote, everybody knows about that vote—and now the American people have to pick up the tab on the CBO's errors.

I am calling for hearings in the Finance Committee, upon which I sit, to demand CBO come before the committee and explain to the Congress and the American people why and how its scores, which led to the passage of ObamaCare, did not tell the whole story. This is about accountability for past actions, and we must ask the question, the difficult question, an unfortunate question: Was this political? Were the books cooked?

CBO needs to take the responsibility for the differences between their projections and the most recent updates just released as of this morning. We must have accurate estimates on the costs and benefits of the legislation so we can do our jobs. This shouldn't be about politics or gaming the system. This is about peoples' lives, and it is our responsibility to get that right. Let the hearings begin. Let the CBO provide answers. The CBO must answer this Congress and America.

I yield back the remainder of my time, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROTECTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, on December 22, 2004, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the beginning of a second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. As we enter the final year of this international campaign we should remind ourselves of the importance of protecting indigenous populations and take stock of what has been achieved and what more needs to be done.

I have always believed that as we advance and defend our national interests around the globe we must also fulfill our moral obligations. As chairman or ranking member of the subcommittee that funds the Department of State and foreign operations for over two decades, I have had a unique vantage point from which to watch globalization evolve and test our Nation's commitment to its ideals. As the world's population swells, technology advances, and competition for energy and natural resources intensifies, the rights and needs of indigenous populations are threatened by governments and corporations seeking to exploit the ground on which they have built their lives and preserved their cultures and the wealth beneath it.

This has been the reality for too many indigenous cultures, and it is no surprise that they are among the most vulnerable and disenfranchised populations on Earth. These groups have distinct ways of life and histories, tied to land they have inhabited and protected for thousands of years. But their established roots rarely afford them representation in governments that hide behind laws and regulations proclaiming equal treatment for indigenous populations who have virtually no role in the political process.

Recognizing that indigenous peoples have unique rights and needs that the rest of humanity has a responsibility to protect, several years ago I undertook to create the position of advisor for indigenous peoples' issues at the U.S. Agency for International Development. I am pleased that USAID recently established this office to implement and coordinate a comprehensive, U.S. Government strategy on indigenous peoples, with specific goals, guidelines, benchmarks, and impact assessments, including support for indigenous peoples' organizations.

The selection of Brian Keane to fill this role is an early indicator that it

will be addressed proactively. Brian, who has devoted his professional life to these issues, will work to ensure that U.S. Government policies and programs around the world are carried out in a manner that respects the rights of indigenous peoples and responds to their needs. Brian's work in indigenous communities all across the globe, and his advocacy on behalf of indigenous peoples to inform international policy making, has prepared him for his task.

This position must not be merely a symbolic post. From the Amazon rainforest to the Kalahari Desert, indigenous peoples have for centuries faced existential threats due to racism, greed, misguided policies of forced assimilation, and indifference. However, for the surviving groups, the length of their struggle belies the acuteness of the threat. In Brazil, the Guarani people have been driven from their land and are plagued by alcoholism, poverty, and a suicide rate many times the national average, replaced by expanding sugarcane farms.

Anthropologists explain that the loss of land by indigenous groups often leads to social disintegration and economic dependence on the state, as we know only too well from our own experience. We see it in places like Botswana, where the San people, traditionally nomads, have been uprooted from their ancestral lands to make way for diamond mines, forced into settlements, and exposed to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Their way of life, which the Botswana Government should be protecting, instead is being destroyed.

The circumstances of each indigenous culture, whose members total as many as 400 million people worldwide, differs from continent to continent but they face similar threats. To defend their rights, protect their land, and preserve their cohesiveness, a key policy change is needed. We must commit to honoring the principle of free, prior, and informed consent.

For too long, governments, often including our own, have paid lip service to consulting native populations as a substitute for obtaining their consent for actions that directly affect them. More often than not, such consultations have been cursory or conducted in a manner that divides members of indigenous communities against each other. I am pleased that in 2010 President Obama formally declared our Nation's support for the U.N. Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, reversing the position that the United States had held since the declaration's adoption in 2007.

While that was a positive step, combatting discrimination against indigenous peoples requires more than policy statements, it requires action. That is why I want to highlight the ongoing threat to these populations and call attention to the new position of advisor for indigenous peoples' issues.

In today's globalized world, ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples is everyone's responsibility. Respect for their rights is not only necessary for their continued survival as distinct cultures but also to help ensure the well-being of the entire planet. Whether we are talking about biodiversity protection, climate change or sustainable development, indigenous peoples have much to offer. Their ancestral knowledge, developed over millennia, has been vital to preserving what is left of the world's critical ecosystems and can play a key role in finding solutions to challenges that humanity is currently facing.

I look forward to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, a high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly that will take place at the United Nations in September of this year. Its main objective is to share perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples and to pursue the objectives of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The World Conference provides an important chance to give real meaning to the principles expressed in the declaration and is a historic opportunity for the United States to lead the international community by putting forward a concrete plan of action aimed at ensuring that the collective rights of indigenous peoples, including the right to free, prior and informed consent, are recognized and respected.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I wish to speak about the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. I am joined on the floor today by my friend Senator BAUCUS, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, to stress the program's importance.

Today CHIP provides health coverage to over 37,000 children in West Virginia and over 8 million children across the United States in working families who cannot afford private health insurance. These kids deserve a healthy start in life. They are our future leaders and decisionmakers. They deserve the opportunities this program provides.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER for speaking today on this important issue. I have always admired the Senator's hard work and dedication to provide health coverage not just to the children of West Virginia but children across the United States. He has been a real inspiration to me and many of our colleagues.

Back in 2007 and 2009, Senator ROCKEFELLER and I worked together with fellow Democrats and Republicans to reauthorize CHIP. The legislation brought legislators together from both sides of the aisle because CHIP was not about politics, it was about helping

kids. Even 10 years prior to that, the original legislation that created the Children's Health Insurance Program passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. CHIP has always been very popular. Bottom line is this program works. It works for children and it works for America.

Unfortunately, while this program has been authorized through the year 2019, the funding expires next year. I believe it is critical for the Senate to continue to fund CHIP beyond 2015 in order to continue to provide essential health coverage to our lower income children and pregnant women. I regret I will not be here to carry on the work of helping these families.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. I agree with Senator BAUCUS. Without the funds to run this program, millions of children will lose health care coverage. Before CHIP was established in 1997, 23 percent of low-income children were uninsured. Today, according to the Urban Institute, that number has dropped to 12.8 percent. I believe that number should be zero; no child should be without access to the coverage they need to grow up healthy and happy. Thanks to this program and other sources of coverage, we are on our way to achieving full coverage: more than 9 out of 10 American children now are insured.

Studies have shown that children enrolled in CHIP have demonstrated improvements in their ability to pay attention in class, school attendance, reading scores, and participation in school and childhood activities.

Our efforts are working but we must do more. We must continue to work to enroll kids who are eligible but not yet covered. We must ensure that funding for this essential lifeline for families does not expire. I, too, regret I will no longer be in the Senate in 2015 to continue this work. That is why I hope that we can solve the problem this year, and I am very glad my good friend, the senior Senator from Montana, and I could come to the floor today to deliver this important message.

VOTE EXPLANATIONS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, due to my flight being canceled, I regret having missed a vote on February 3, 2014. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of the motion to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, a bill to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, due to an unanticipated family emergency, I was unable to cast a vote on February 3, 2014, relative to rollcall vote No. 20 to invoke cloture on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013.

Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

2014 OLYMPIANS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the great accomplishments of the many New Hampshire athletes who will be representing the United States this month in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. These athletes have all exhibited incredible dedication to their respective sports and have proven their remarkable abilities in competitions among their peers. A selection to the U.S. Olympic team is a tremendous honor and a fitting reward for their many years of hard work.

In New Hampshire, growing up on the snow is a way of life. With access to the unparalleled beauty and terrain of the White Mountains, thousands of miles of trails, and nearly 1,000 lakes, Granite Staters are at home on the snow, on the ice, and in the air.

New Hampshire is proud to acknowledge our State's Olympians and is excited to show the world their talents during the Sochi games.

Nick Alexander of Lebanon, NH, will be competing in ski jumping. As the 2013 U.S. National Champion on the K90 ski jump, we are excited to see Nick build on his impressive showings at the Continental Cup and National Large Hill Championships as he competes for Team USA.

Sean Doherty of Center Conway, NH, will be competing in the biathlon. We hope to see Sean, a first-time Olympian, continue his accomplishments from the International Biathlon Union Junior World Championships last year and excel at this year's Olympics.

Nick Fairall of Andover, NH, will be competing in ski jumping. As a first-time representative of Team USA, we have been impressed with Nick's performances in World Cup events and his victory at the National Large Hill Championships. We are looking forward to watching him compete on the Olympic stage.

Julia Ford, of Holderness, NH will be competing in alpine skiing. A first-time member of Team USA, we hope to see Julia perform as she did in the U.S. Championships and North American Cup races. As the 2011 NorAM downhill Super G and super combined champion and 2012 NorAm overall and downhill champion, we are eager to cheer Julia on in Sochi.

Kris Freeman of Thornton, NH, will be competing in cross-country skiing. As a well-decorated Nordic skier and representative of Team USA for the fourth time, I hope that Kris will be able to build upon his past experiences and excel at this year's Winter Olympics. We are proud to have Kris representing New Hampshire once again.

Chas Guldmond of Laconia, NH, will be competing in snowboarding. A first-

time member of Team USA, Chas has built an impressive resume in slopestyle competitions, and we hope that his success will continue in his Olympic debut.

Julia Krass of Hanover, NH, will be competing in freeskiing. A first-time participant in the Olympics, we are excited to watch 16-year-old Julia compete in the inaugural ski slopestyle event.

Bode Miller of Franconia, NH, will be competing in alpine skiing. As the most decorated US male skier in World Cup history and five-time representative of Team USA, Granite Staters are excited to see Bode compete again and hope to see him repeat his impressive, three-medal performance from the 2010, Vancouver Olympics.

Leanne Smith of North Conway, NH, will be competing in alpine skiing. As a representative of Team USA for the second time, we hope that the combination of her previous Olympic experience and her success in recent World Cup events translates into victory this year.

DJ Montigny of Dover, NH, will be coaching three women on the freeskiing team. A first time coach at the Olympics, DJ was named Freeskiing International Coach of the Year in 2013. We look forward to DJ helping lead Team USA athletes to victory in Sochi.

Many additional Olympians have been educated, coached, trained, or even competed in New Hampshire. These athletes with Granite State ties include Kacey Bellamy, Team USA, ice hockey; Sophie Caldwell, Team USA, cross-country skiing; David Chodounsky, Team USA, alpine skiing; Hannah Dreissigacker, Team USA, biathlon; Susan Dunklee, Team USA, biathlon; Nolan Kasper, Team USA, alpine skiing; Hannah Kearney, Team USA, freestyle skiing; James Van Riemsdyk, Team USA, ice hockey; Ida Sargent, Team USA, cross-country skiing; Mikaela Shiffrin, Team USA, alpine skiing; Katey Stone, Team USA, Head Coach, ice hockey; Sara Studebaker, Team USA, biathlon; and Andrew Weibrecht, Team USA, alpine skiing.

It is my honor to congratulate these New Hampshire athletes. I wish each of them and all of Team USA the best of luck as they seek to bring home the gold at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

PITTSBURGH OPERA'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the Pittsburgh Opera on their 75th anniversary. Since its founding by five dedicated women in 1939, the Pittsburgh Opera has consistently worked to foster new generations of artists and fans by making opera accessible to a diverse audience. The stated mission of the Pittsburgh

Opera is "to culturally enrich Pittsburgh and the tri-state area, and to draw national and international attention to the region". Roughly 31,000 people attend one of their five opera productions each year.

Over time, the Pittsburgh Opera established its own orchestra, has become a leader in the use of supertitles, and forming the Resident Artists Program to train young artists and increase awareness of opera, developing community programming throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. In so doing, the company has served not only Pittsburgh and the tristate area, but has become a respected national organization, attracting such luminaries as Luciano Pavarotti, Beverly Sills and Joan Sutherland.

The Pittsburgh Opera has also been an invaluable steward for the future of opera and Pittsburgh's arts culture through its focus on environmental sustainability and fiscal management. In 2008, the company moved to new headquarters in the historic George Westinghouse Air Brake Factory, a cultural landmark that became the oldest LEED-certified building in Pittsburgh in 2011, making the Pittsburgh Opera the first opera company in the United States to receive LEED certification in the operations and maintenance category.

Similarly, in 1997, general director Mark Weinstein sought, through financial management and long-range strategic planning, to ensure a sound future for the Pittsburgh Opera, increasing the company's assets and establishing a gold standard for financial management in the industry. This planning, as well as the establishment of the Artistic Excellence Project to raise funds for engaging elite singers and directors, has ensured that the Pittsburgh Opera will continue to serve as a cultural centerpiece of Pittsburgh and a respected leader in the greater opera community.

Again, I want to congratulate the Pittsburgh Opera on the impressive achievement of their 75th anniversary. I wish them the best and look forward to their continued enrichment of the arts community both in Pittsburgh and nationwide.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the Pittsburgh Opera, the seventh oldest opera company in the United States. The Pittsburgh Opera is currently engaged in its 75th season, and I would like to congratulate them on this momentous anniversary. The company started in 1939 when five ambitious women were determined to bring opera to their community. Within a year, these women had assembled musicians, singers, sets, costumes, and lighting, and produced the opera company's first performance, Offenbach's "The Tales of

Hoffman" at Carnegie Music Hall. Before long, the Pittsburgh Opera Society, under the leadership of general director Dr. Richard Karp, had become a fully professional organization.

The Pittsburgh Opera is not only recognized as an asset to southwestern Pennsylvania, but it is known throughout the international opera community for the fine skill and artistry of its productions. It has welcomed numerous celebrity vocalists over the years, and the company's notoriety only continues to grow and attract more talent. I believe that the Pittsburgh Opera has been undeniably successful in fulfilling its stated mission "to culturally enrich Pittsburgh and the tri-state area, and to draw national and international attention to the region," and I think that the 31,000 Pittsburghers and visitors who attend the opera's productions annually would agree.

The Pittsburgh Opera is also dedicated to fostering the development of future opera talent. The company has established and nurtured a resident artist program that ranks among the top five in the country and has the distinction of being the only program in the United States that trains singers as well as stage directors. These artists present two fully staged productions of their own and also develop a variety of general music programs to perform at public schools, community centers, and libraries.

Six years ago, after nearly 70 years without its own center, the Pittsburgh Opera acquired and renovated the original home of the George A. Westinghouse Air Brake Co. in Pittsburgh's historic Strip District and transformed it into a state-of-the-art home for the development and production of opera. This structure is the oldest LEED-certified building in Pittsburgh, and it is a fitting home for an opera company with such a rich history and a promising future.

Again, I want to recognize the Pittsburgh Opera on its 75th anniversary. I wish them nothing but success in the next 75 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FREEMASONS CONFERENCE

• Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today I wish to join grand master Gerald E. Piepiora and the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland in welcoming the 2014 Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America, which will be convening in Baltimore from Sunday, February 15, to Tuesday, February 18. This annual meeting is the largest gathering of grand masters in the world and the first time they have come to Baltimore. This delegation of grand masters represents 2 million Freemasons from all 50 States; Washington, DC; Puerto

Rico; the Provinces of Canada; and the United Mexican States. In addition, a delegation of grand masters representing Freemasons from around the world also will be attending the conference.

Throughout their history, Freemasons—the oldest and largest fraternity in the world—have dedicated their lives to cultivating good moral character both within themselves and in their communities. The Masonic fraternity is dedicated to caring for those less fortunate and to giving back to the community, contributing well over three quarters of a billion dollars annually to philanthropic causes in North America alone.

Maryland Masons have carried on this tradition since 1787 by serving their communities with local scholarship programs, student assistance, volunteerism, educational support, and other charitable activities. Maryland Masons make important contributions to the quality of life of Marylanders at every stage of life, including the Maryland Child Identification Program that provides free identification and protection against the problem of missing children; free childhood language disorder clinics; transportation to regional Shriners Hospitals for children with orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate; and retirement housing and continuing care for Masons and their families.

I urge my colleagues to join me in welcoming this distinguished group of international guests to Maryland and in wishing the masons of Maryland continued success in their pursuit of fraternity, brotherly love, and truth.●

REMEMBERING WALTER J. "JIMMIE" FEW

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we often note in our record the passing of government and business leaders of renown, and that is appropriate. But it is also fitting to pause to reflect on some of those millions of American citizens who reflect in their lives the highest and best ideals of their faith and of America.

Jimmie Few of Mobile, AL, was one such person. I first got to know him when, in 1991, we took part in a mission to Russia as part of a United Methodist Church delegation. This was shortly after the fall of communism. We spent over a week in the small city of Vyksa, 5 hours east of Moscow. We roomed together in the home of a Russian family. This was the first chance the people of Vyksa had to actually meet and get to know Americans. Frequently, one of the Russians would, with surprise, say, "You look just like us!"

Jimmie was a very large man and naturally took charge. When an agreement was concluded, Jimmie would

seal it with a firm—very firm—handshake. He loved the Russians. Indeed, after this he made some 19 more trips, assisting with orphanages, schools, and Bible schools as well as advising Russians on economic matters. Jimmie was a very experienced small businessman. He bought an orphanage a needed van on one occasion and fixed a road to the orphanage in another.

This kind of humanitarian, religious mission is not unusual for Americans. Thousands of such trips are occurring now involving hundreds of thousands of Americans who make trips to meet with millions around the globe. They don't focus on the rich and powerful; they focus on those in need, the poor and the children. No nation in the history of the world has ever matched such selfless giving. It reflects well on the United States, surely creating greater understanding among peoples, and it is in harmony, certainly, with the spirit of Jesus, which has inspired so many.

While Jimmy's business success and health suffered in recent years, his good life of service to his Lord and to others exemplifies the best in humanity.●

REMEMBERING COLONEL WILLIAM EDWARD CALLENDER, SR.

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today, I would like to pay tribute to COL William Edward "Bill" Callender, Sr., U.S. Army, Retired. Bill was a friend, a national hero proven in combat, a man who loved his family, and a man who committed himself to service to others. To an exceptional degree, he loved his country and most especially, he loved and honored those who served her in uniform.

The scripture says, in describing faith as more than intellectual assent, but action, that when Abraham was called, he "went." When Bill's Nation called him, he went—even into great danger. And, to a most unusual degree, throughout the remainder of his life, he continued to hear that call and he went—in service to others in a host of ways and especially to veterans.

I believe Bill Callender was one of Alabama's most valuable citizens. Vivian Cannon, of the Mobile Press Register, wrote at the time of his receipt of the Distinguished Flying Cross, given for his actions on that harrowing day in Vietnam when he flew his chopper into a very hot landing zone to insert and later that day to extract American soldiers who were under heavy fire—a very fine piece on these events. Her article quotes a letter he wrote to his wife shortly after the events that included this line: "By the grace of God, we came out OK." Such courageous actions cannot be bought with money. They arise from the character of the hero, from love of country and from loyalty to comrades.

It is part of the American sense of duty. Former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates talks about it in his new book, "Duty." When the President and we in Congress send our magnificent soldiers into harm's way to achieve a military objective deemed important, there is also a duty owed them and their dependents of the highest order. It is a bond that must never be broken.

Perhaps Bill never forgot that experience in Vietnam and others like it that were up close and personal to him. There were those badly wounded he flew out for life saving care, those killed in action, and those young, anxious faces he looked into when he flew them into areas of great danger where lives would be lost and where, by the grace of God, Bill had been spared.

Thereafter, he began a lifetime of service to them and America. And serve he did—with joy and enthusiasm, wisdom and judgment, and responsibility.

By nature, he was supportive and affirming. He was just a "good guy" and "humble," says Wallace Davis of Volunteers of America. I admired him greatly. He was a leader in the best sense of the word. He gave good advice and insight. I valued his judgment. He led by example.

When my senior military advisor, COL Pete Landrum, came to the Mobile area, we asked Bill to arrange meetings for veterans and sought his input on key issues. He was the go-to guy. In fact, few, if any, veterans activities in the area happened without his leadership and contribution.

Serving on the important Battleship Commission, his tireless advocacy for the new Veterans Cemetery, working with the Veterans Administration and Congress and others, and his vigorous support for the Honor Flight Program just reflect some of his work. He truly gave himself for many good causes.

Bill leaves behind his wonderful wife, Jacqueline Bachar Callender; his 3 daughters, Ginger (Jay) Hawkins, Cyndi Callender and Tammy (Jeff) Hadley; 12 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren, and many great friends who are feeling his loss but can take comfort in the knowledge that we have had the privilege of being in the presence of a remarkable man who lived a wonderful life, consistent with the great heritage of America.●

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13396 ON FEBRUARY 7, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—PM 29

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Com-

mittee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2014.

The situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which has been addressed by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 1572 of November 15, 2004, and subsequent resolutions, has resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and fatal attacks against international peacekeeping forces.

Since the inauguration of President Alassane Ouattara in May 2011, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has made progress in advancing democratic freedoms and economic development. While the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and its people continue to make progress towards peace and prosperity, the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 4, 2014.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 357. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, to make other improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1791. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and

State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 5:33 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2642. An act to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 357. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, to make other improvements in the laws relating to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

H.R. 1791. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1982. A bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1996. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, February 4, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1901. An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4520. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pesticides; Satisfaction of Data Requirements; Procedures to Ensure Protection of Data Submitters' Rights" (FRL No. 9904-32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4521. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cyantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9388-7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4522. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "[alpha]-Alkyl-[omega]-Hydroxypoly (Oxypropylene) and/or Poly (Oxyethylene) Polymers Where the Alkyl Chain Contains a Minimum of Six Carbons etc.; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9394-2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4523. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Diflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9904-27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4524. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds" (RIN1557-AD79) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4525. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds" (RIN1557-AD44) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4526. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Legal Office, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Removal of Transferred OTS Regulations Regarding Recordkeeping and Confirmation Requirements for Securities

Transactions Effected by State Savings Associations and Other Amendments" (RIN3064-AE06) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4527. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Legal Office, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds" (RIN3064-AD05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4528. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Legal Office, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests In, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds" (RIN3064-AD85) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4529. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Protection System Maintenance Reliability Standard" (RIN1902-AE74) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4530. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Rule R307-107; General Requirements; Breakdowns" (FRL No. 9902-49-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4531. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code—Permit: New and Modified Sources" (FRL No. 9904-24-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4532. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances" (FRL No. 9399-1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4533. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans; Utah: Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Greenhouse Gas Permitting Authority and Tailoring Rule"

(FRL No. 9903-27-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4534. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Attainment Plan for the Philadelphia-Wilmington, Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Delaware Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard" (FRL No. 9905-88-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4535. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Approval of Texas Motor Vehicle Rule Revisions" (FRL No. 9906-03-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4536. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Section 5000A Transition Relief for Individuals with Certain Government-Sponsored Limited-Benefit Health Coverage" (Notice 2014-10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4537. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Deadline to Submit Opinion and Advisory Letter Applications for Pre-approved Defined Benefit Plans is Extended to February 2, 2015" (Announcement 2014-4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4538. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applicable Federal Rates—February 2014" (Rev. Rul. 2014-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4539. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Time under Section 301.9100-3 to Elect Portability of Deceased Spousal Unused Exclusion Amount" (Rev. Proc. 2014-18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4540. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Determining the Amount of Taxes Paid for Purposes of the Foreign Tax Credit" ((RIN1545-BK41) (TD 9634)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4541. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the

Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Guidance for Determining Stock Ownership" (RIN1545-BL01) (TD 9654) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4542. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Import Restrictions Imposed on Certain Archaeological and Ecclesiastical Ethnological Material from Bulgaria" (RIN1515-AD95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4543. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Review of Medicare Contractor Information Security Program Evaluations for Fiscal Year 2011"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4544. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0067); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4545. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-182); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4546. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-183); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4547. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations: Changes to Authorized Officials and the UK Defense Trade Treaty Exemption; Correction of Errors in Lebanon Policy and Violations; and Publishing Recent Changes to Parts 120, 127, and 128 in Final Form" (RIN1400-AD49, 1400-AC37, and 1400-AC81) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4548. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2014-0011—2014-0013); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4549. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2013 Performance Report to Congress for the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4550. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2013 Performance Report to Congress for the Biosimilar User Fee Act";

to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4551. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a performance report relative to the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4552. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Performance Report for fiscal year 2013 for the Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA); to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4553. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Performance Report for fiscal year 2013 for the Generic Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4554. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Performance Report for fiscal year 2013 for the Animal Drug User Fee Act (ADUFA); to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4555. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Evaluation Findings—Performance Improvement 2013-2014 Report"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4556. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits" (29 CFR Part 4022) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4557. A communication from the Program Manager, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Institutes of Health Loan Repayment Program" (RIN0905-AA43) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4558. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Current Good Manufacturing Practice for Medicated Feeds" (Docket No. FDA-2013-N-0002) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4559. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Advisory Committee; Pharmacy Compounding Advisory Committee" (Docket No. FDA-2013-N-1687) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 16, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 270. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio.

S. Res. 333. A resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Richard G. Frank, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services.

*Tamara Wenda Ashford, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

*R. Gil Kerlikowske, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Customs, Department of Homeland Security.

*L. Paige Marvel, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Max Sieben Baucus, of Montana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

Nominee: Max S. Baucus.

Post: Beijing, China.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: 0.
2. Spouse: 0.
3. Children and Spouses: 0.
4. Parents: 0.
5. Grandparents: 0.
6. Brothers and Spouses: 0.
7. Sisters and Spouses: 0.

*George James Tsunis, of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Norway.

Nominee: George James Tsunis.

Post: Oslo, Norway.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date and donee:

1. Self: \$-5,000, 12/31/12, Menendez, Robert (D); \$50,000, 10/30/12, Majority PAC; \$50,000, 10/17/12, Majority PAC; \$25,000, 10/02/12, House Majority PAC; \$25,000, 09/28/12, House Majority PAC; \$12,500, 09/28/12, Majority PAC; \$12,500, 09/04/12, Majority PAC; \$-2,500, 08/16/12, Robert, Dan (D); \$25,000, 07/30/12, New Dir. for America; \$50,000, 07/02/12, New Dir. for America; \$25,000, 06/06/12, New Dir. for America; \$2,500, 06/10/12, Tester, Jon (D); \$25,000, 05/16/12, New Dir. for America; \$2,500, 04/20/12, Nelson, Bill (D); \$2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); \$2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); \$2,500,

03/18/12, Berman, Howard L (D); \$2,500, 03/13/12, Jeffries, Hakeem (D); -\$2,500, 03/09/12, Snowe, Olympia (R); \$30,800, 02/29/12, DNC Services Corp (D); \$2,500, 02/22/12, Hochul, Kathleen (D); \$2,300, 02/03/12, Andrews, Robert E (D); \$2,500, 02/03/12, Pelosi, Nancy (D); \$2,500, 02/03/12, Pelosi, Nancy (D); \$2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); \$2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); \$1,000, 01/21/12, NorPAC; \$462, 12/30/11, Democratic Party of Virginia; \$252, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Wisconsin; \$714, 12/16/11, Democratic Exec Cmte of FL; \$462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Colorado; \$462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Nevada; \$462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of NC; \$546, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of PA; \$672, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of Ohio; \$2,500, 09/30/11, Obama, Barack (D); \$2,500, 09/30/11, Obama, Barack (D); \$30,800, 09/30/11, DNC Services Corp (D); \$2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); \$2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); \$2,500, 06/03/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$2,500, 06/03/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$5,000, 03/31/11, DCCC; \$400, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,100, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,500, 03/13/13, Reid, Harry (D); \$5,000, 03/01/11, Forward Together PAC; \$2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); \$2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); \$2,400, 12/13/10, Kerry, John (D); \$2,400, 12/13/10, Kerry, John (D); \$10,000, 10/07/10, Democratic Party of IL; -\$2,300, 07/17/10, Specter, Arlen (D); \$9,100, 03/31/10, DSCC; \$1,000, 03/29/10, Democratic Cmte of NY State; -\$2,100, 03/10/10, Bayh, Evan (D); \$431, 02/16/10, Thompson, Glenn (R); \$30,400, 10/30/09, DCCC; \$2,400, 09/29/09, Diaz-Balart, Lincoln (R); \$2,400, 09/28/09, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); \$2,400, 09/28/09, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); \$2,400, 09/17/09, Reid, Harry (D); \$2,400, 08/11/09, Titus, Dina (D); \$5,000, 08/10/09, Lycopom County Dem Cmte; \$2,400, 06/30/09, Cantor, Eric (R); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); \$600, 06/22/09, Thompson, Glenn (R); \$2,400, 06/22/09, McMahon, Michael E (D); \$2,400, 06/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); \$2,200, 06/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); \$2,400, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); \$2,200, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); \$2,400, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); \$2,200, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); \$2,400, 04/30/09, Reid, Harry (D); \$30,400, 03/31/09, DSCC; \$2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); \$2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); \$2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); \$2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); \$2,400, 03/25/13, Giannoulis, Alexander (D); \$2,400, 03/25/13, Giannoulis, Alexander (D); \$2,400, 02/27/09, Space, Zachary T (D); \$2,400, 01/29/09, Space, Zachary T (D).

2. Spouse: Olga Tsunis; \$-5,000, 12/31/12, Menendez, Robert (D); \$-2,500, 08/16/12, Roberti, Dan (D); \$21,600, 06/21/12, DNC Services Corp; \$2,500, 06/08/12, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); \$2,500, 06/08/12, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); \$2,500, 06/05/12, Vilsack, Christie (D); \$2,500, 06/05/12, Vilsack, Christie (D); \$2,500, 05/04/12, Lugar, Richard G (R); \$2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); \$2,500, 03/26/12, Bilirakis, Gus (R); \$2,500, 03/09/12, Berman, Howard L (D); \$-2,500, 03/09/13, Snowe, Olympia (R); \$2,300, 02/03/12, Andrews, Robert E (D); \$2,500, 02/03/12, Nancy Pelosi (D); \$2,500, 02/03/12, Nancy Pelosi (D); \$2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); \$2,500, 02/02/12, Berkley, Shelley (D); \$462, 12/30/11, Democratic Party of VA; \$2,500, 12/22/11, Grimm, Michael (R); \$2,500, 12/22/11, Grimm, Michael (R); \$252, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of WI; \$714, 12/16/11, Democratic Exec Cmte of FL; \$462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of CO; \$252, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of NV; \$462, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of NC;

\$672, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of OH; \$546, 12/16/11, Democratic Party of PA; \$2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); \$2,500, 09/30/11, Snowe, Olympia (R); \$30,800, 09/28/11, DNC Services Corp (D); \$2,500, 09/28/11, Obama, Barack (D); \$2,500, 09/28/11, Obama, Barack (D); \$2,500, 09/27/11, Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana (R); \$2,500, 06/30/11, Republican National Cmte (R); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Cardin, Ben (D); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); \$2,500, 06/22/11, Gillibrand, Kirsten (D); \$2,500, 06/03/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$2,500, 06/03/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$400, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,100, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$2,500, 03/23/11, Roberti, Dan (D); \$5,000, 03/01/11, Forward Together Pac; \$2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); \$2,500, 03/01/11, Warner, Mark (D); \$2,300, 07/17/10, Specter, Arlen (D); \$30,400, 03/31/10, DCCC; \$9,100, 03/31/10, DCCC; \$2,400, 10/29/09, Shelby, Richard C (R); \$2,400, 10/29/09, Shelby, Richard C (R); \$-2,400, 10/23/09, Feingold, Russ (D); \$2,400, 10/23/09, Feingold, Russ (D); \$4,800, 10/15/09, Feingold, Russ (D); \$2,400, 09/23/09, Bilirakis, Gus (R); \$2,400, 09/17/09, Reid, Harry (D); \$2,400, 08/14/09, Meeks, Gregory W (D); \$2,400, 08/14/09, Meeks, Gregory W (D); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Sarbanes, John (D); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Casey, Bob (D); \$2,400, 06/30/09, Casey, Bob (D); \$30,400, 06/17/09, DSCC; \$2,200, 08/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); \$2,400, 06/04/09, Ackerman, Gary (D); \$2,200, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); \$2,400, 05/20/09, Schumer, Charles E (D); \$2,200, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); \$2,400, 05/11/09, Lowey, Nita M (D); \$2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); \$2,400, 03/31/09, Maloney, Carolyn B (D); \$2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); \$2,400, 03/30/09, Carney, Chris (D); \$2,400, 03/25/09, Giannoulis, Alexander (D); \$2,400, 03/25/09, Giannoulis, Alexander (D); \$2,400, 02/27/09, Space, Zachary T (D); \$2,400, 02/27/09, Space, Zachary T (D).

3. Children and Spouses: James George Tsunis (6 years), N/A; Eleni Tea Tsunis (3 years), N/A; Yanna Maria Tsunis (2 years), N/A.

4. Parents: Eleni Tsunis; \$2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); James Tsunis (Deceased).

5. Grandparents: (Deceased).

6. Brothers and Spouses: None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Anastasia Tsunis; \$2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$2,500, 07/26/11, Menendez, Robert (D); \$1,603, 09/28/09, Giannoulis, Alexander (D).

*Colleen Bradley Bell, of California, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Hungary.

Nominee: Colleen Bell.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to Hungary.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: -\$2,300, 2/13/2009, Ken Salazar via Salazar for Senate (REFUND); \$5,000, 3/22/2009, PAC for a Change; \$2,300, 9/16/2009, Bono Mack, Mary via Mary Bono Mack Committee; \$2,400, 10/21/2009, Reid, Harry via Friends for Harry Reid; \$2,400, 10/21/2009, Reid, Harry via Friends for Harry Reid; \$10,000, 11/30/2009, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; \$1,000, 12/31/2009, Bennet, Michael via Bennet for Colorado; \$15,200, 4/22/2010, California Victory 2010—Donation recipient DNC Services Corporation/Demo-

cratic National Committee; \$250, 6/5/2010, Waltz, John via John Waltz for Congress; \$15,200, 7/16/2010, DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; \$2,000, 10/6/2010, Giannoulis, Alexander via Alexi for Illinois; \$35,800, 4/11/2011, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipients Obama for America and DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; \$2,500, 5/9/2011, Whitehouse, Sheldon II via Whitehouse for Senate; \$2,500, 5/9/2011, Whitehouse, Sheldon II via Whitehouse for Senate; \$1,000, 8/8/2011, Feinstein, Dianne via Feinstein for Senate; \$1,000, 9/6/2011, Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine for Virginia; \$5,000, 11/1/2011, CORYPAC, Inc; \$1,500, 11/10/2011, Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine for Virginia; \$2,500, 11/10/2011, Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine for Virginia; \$2,500, 12/9/2011, Cantwell, Maria via Friends of Maria; \$2,500, 12/9/2011, Cantwell, Maria via Friends of Maria; \$1,000, 1/10/2012, Wasserman Schultz, Debbie via Debbie Wasserman Schultz for Congress; \$35,800, 1/26/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipients Obama for America and DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee; -\$5,000, 1/31/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012 (REFUND); \$2,500, 3/8/2012, Kennedy, Joseph P III via Joe Kennedy for Congress; \$1,000, 3/9/2012, Women on the Road to the Senate: 12 and Counting—Los Angeles Donation recipient—Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; \$2,500, 3/16/2012, Nelson, Bill via Bill Nelson for US Senate; \$2,500, 3/16/2012, Nelson, Bill via Bill Nelson for US Senate; \$250, 3/20/2012, Brownley, Julia via Julia Brownley for Congress; \$5,000, 6/19/2012, Menendez, Robert via Menendez Senate; \$1,000, 6/20/2012, Brownley, Julia via Julia Brownley for Congress; \$2,500, 6/27/2012, Kennedy, Joseph P III via Joe Kennedy for Congress; -\$2,500, 6/29/2012, Menendez, Robert via Menendez for Senate (REFUND); \$2,500, 9/28/2012, Off The Sidelines PAC; \$1,000, 10/23/2012, Carmona, Richard via Carmona of Arizona; \$1,000, 10/31/2012, Heitkamp, Heidi via Heidi for Senate; \$1,000, 10/31/2012, McCaskill, Claire via McCaskill for Missouri; \$2,500, 2/5/2013, Senator Jeanne Shaheen; \$5,000, 3/26/2013, PAC for a Change; \$5,000, 3/26/2013, Cory Booker for Senate; \$2,600, 5/2/2013, Friends of Mark Warner.

2. Spouse: Bradley Bell; \$2,300, 12/4/08, Boxer, Barbara via Friends of Barbara Boxer; \$2,300, 12/4/08, Boxer, Barbara via Friends of Barbara Boxer; \$1,300, 2/19/08, Obama, Barack via Obama for America; \$1,300, 2/19/08, Obama, Barack via Obama for America; -\$1,300, 2/19/08, Obama, Barack via Obama for America (REFUND); \$1,000, 7/5/2013, Cory Booker for Senate; \$35,800, 4/11/11, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipients Obama for America and DNC Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee.

3. Children and Spouses: None.

4. Parents: Sheila Bradley; \$200, 2/21/2009, Charles Wheelan For Congress.

5. Grandparents: None.

6. Brothers and Spouses: None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Shannon Bradley; \$500, 1/25/12, Obama Victory Fund 2012—Donation recipient Obama for America.

*Robert C. Barber, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Iceland.

Nominee: Robert Cushman Barber.

Post: Reykjavik, Iceland.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, donee, date, and amount:

1. Self

A. Individual Federal Candidates: Berkley, Shelley via Berkley For Senate, 10/04/2012, \$250; Cardin, Benjamin L via Ben Cardin For Senate 12/19/2011, \$300; Carnahan, Robin via Robin C. for Senate, 03/15/2010, \$200; Clark, Katherine via Clark for Congress, 03/07/2013, \$200; Coakley, Martha via Martha Coakley For Senate Committee, 09/03/2009, \$2,400; 12/22/2009, \$500; Conway, John William (Jack) via Conway For Senate, 04/26/2010, \$250; 06/25/2010, \$200; Critz, Mark via Mark Critz For Congress Committee, 05/12/2010, \$500; Duckworth, Tammy L. via Duckworth For Congress, 10/29/2012, \$500; Ellsworth, Brad via Brad Ellsworth for Senate, 08/19/2010, \$200; Franken, Al—Franken for Senate, 02/06/2011, \$200; Giannoulis, Alexi via Alexi for Illinois, 01/15/2010, \$100; Gillibrand, Kirsten Elizabeth via Gillibrand For Senate, 06/02/2010, \$250; 09/21/2010, \$250; 06/29/2011, \$500; Harkin, Thomas Richard via Citizens For Harkin, 07/25/2011, \$250; Hodes, Paul W via Hodes For Senate, 02/08/2010, \$1,000; 03/01/2010, \$200; 09/30/2010, \$500; Kaine, Timothy Michael via Kaine For Virginia, 06/30/2011, \$1,000; 03/15/2012, \$500; 10/05/2012, \$500; Keating, William Richard via The Bill Keating Committee, 10/21/2010, \$500; 09/13/2012, \$500; Kennedy, Joseph P III via Joe Kennedy For Congress, 05/11/2012, \$1,000; 09/17/2012, \$500; Kerrey, J Robert via Nebraskans For Kerrey, 06/12/2012, \$500; Khazai, Alan via Citizens For Alan Khazai, 03/03/2010, \$500; Kuster, Ann McLane via Kuster For Congress, Inc., 09/29/2009, \$250; 12/14/2009, \$250; 05/17/2010, \$250; 08/18/2010, \$250; 10/21/2010, \$250; 06/23/2011, \$500; 09/30/2011, \$200; 03/31/2013, \$200; Lewis, John R. via John Lewis For Congress, 05/23/2012, \$300; Lincoln, Blanche L via Friends Of Blanche Lincoln, 09/29/2010, \$500; Markey, Edward John via The Markey Committee, 02/25/2013, \$1,000; 02/28/2013, \$1,000; McGovern, Jim via Re-Elect McGovern Committee, 03/04/2013, \$250; Murphy, Patrick J. via Patrick Murphy For Congress 11/19/2009, \$500; 06/16/2010, \$500; Murphy, Scott M via Scott Murphy For Congress, 04/16/2009, \$250; 06/03/2010, \$250; Obama, Barack via Obama For America, 05/23/2011, \$2,000; 08/02/2011, \$250; 09/12/2011, \$219; 09/12/2011, \$781; 01/20/2012, \$1,000; 03/03/2012, \$494; Owens, William via Bill Owens For Congress, 10/20/2009, \$500; 09/24/2010, \$200; Ross, Michael via Michael Ross Exploratory Committee, 12/20/2011, \$200; Seals, Dan via Seals for Congress, 10/20/2010, \$200; Shea-Porter, Carol via Carol Shea-Porter For Congress, 03/30/2009, \$500; 09/10/2009, \$1,500; 03/04/2010, \$300; 03/04/2010, \$700; 06/25/2010, \$500; 09/30/2010, \$500; 06/27/2011, \$1,000; 06/30/2011, \$1,000; 03/26/2012, \$200; 03/26/2012, \$300; 07/07/2012, \$500; 03/31/2013, \$500; Sowers, Tommy via Tommy Sowers For Congress, 09/17/2010, \$250; Tierney, John F via John Tierney For Congress, 09/10/2012, \$500; Tsongas, Nicola S via The Niki Tsongas Committee, 08/14/2012, \$300; 09/30/2011, \$100; Udall, Tom via Udall For Us All, 02/05/2013, \$500; Vilsack, Christie Via Christie Vilsack For Iowa, 12/13/2011, \$500; Warren, Elizabeth via Elizabeth For MA Inc, 09/02/2011, \$1,000; 09/20/2011, \$239; 03/18/2012, \$1,000; 06/25/2012, \$250; 09/02/2012, \$1,000; Warren, Setti via Warren for Senate, 10/27/2011, \$100; Wasserman Schultz, Debbie via Debbie Wasserman Schultz For Congress, 03/28/2012, \$1,000; Whitehouse, Sheldon II via Whitehouse For Senate, 02/22/2011, \$500; 11/03/2011, \$500; 10/15/2012, \$300; B. Federal Party Committees: Democratic National Committee Services Corporation/Democratic National Committee, 06/17/2009, \$5,000; 5/07/2009, \$1,000; 08/02/2009, \$25; 03/30/2010, \$3,000; 12/02/2010, \$250; 03/31/2012, \$1,006; 10/25/2012, \$2,500; Democratic Congressional Campaign Com-

mittee, 01/18/2010, \$150; Massachusetts Democratic State Committee, 05/15/2009, \$250; 01/18/2010, \$150; 04/07/2010, \$500; 04/14/2010, \$250; 07/23/2010, \$1,000; 09/02/2012, \$1,000; 10/30/2012, \$1,000; 05/17/2013, \$250; New York Protection Fund, 04/09/2009, \$250; C. Multi-candidate Committees, Obama Victory Fund, 05/23/2011, \$2,000; 08/02/2011, \$250; 09/12/2011, \$1,000; 11/06/2011, \$100; 01/20/2012, \$1,000; 03/03/2012, \$1,500; 10/25/2012, \$2,500; New Hampshire Victory Fund, 09/30/2010, \$1,000; Massachusetts Future Fund, 09/02/2012, \$1,000; D. Other: Emily's List, 09/23/2010, \$250.

2. Spouse: Bonnie A. Neilan: none.

3. Children and Spouses: Nicholas O'Neill Barber: none. Benjamin Neilan Barber: none. Alexander Cushman Barber: none.

4. Parents: Kathleen C. Barber—deceased. Robert K. Barber—deceased.

5. Grandparents: Mary P. Barber—deceased. Frank A. Barber—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Peter K. Barber: Coakley, Martha via Martha Coakley for Senate Committee, 12/22/2009, \$500; Murphy, Patrick via Patrick Murphy for Congress, 11/24/2009, \$250; Obama, Barack via Obama for America, 08/31/2012, \$250; Shea-Porter, Carol via Carol Shea-Porter for Congress, 09/07/2009, \$2,400; 09/18/2012, \$500; Warren, Elizabeth via Elizabeth for MA, Inc., 11/11/2011, \$250. Marygrace D. Barber (spouse): none. Frank O. Barber: none. Jacqueline Barber (spouse): none.

7. Sisters and Spouses Kathleen O'Neill: Delbene, Susan K via Delbene for Congress, 08/26/2010, \$250; Obama, Barack via Obama for America, 08/25/2012, \$500; 10/11/2012, \$500; 10/26/2012, \$250. Thomas Leschine (spouse): none. Jennifer B. Phillips: Obama, Barack via Obama for America, 03/01/2012, \$5. Jerry L. Phillips (spouse): none.

*Keith M. Harper, of Maryland, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the UN Human Rights Council.

*Puneet Talwar, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs).

*Frank A. Rose, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Verification and Compliance).

*Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

*Arnold A. Chacon, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Director General of the Foreign Service.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 1987. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1988. A bill to allow States to waive regulations promulgated under the Clean Air

Act relating to electric generating units under certain circumstances; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. COATS):

S. 1989. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 1990. A bill to prohibit aliens who are not lawfully present in the United States from being eligible for postsecondary education benefits that are not available to all citizens and nationals of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 1991. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals a deduction for amounts contributed to disaster savings accounts to help defray the cost of preparing their homes to withstand a disaster and to repair or replace property damaged or destroyed in a disaster; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 1992. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a standard definition of therapeutic foster care services in Medicaid; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 1993. A bill to protect individuals who are eligible for increased pension under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the basis of regular aid and attendance from dishonest, predatory, or otherwise unlawful practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 1994. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the availability of breastfeeding support, supplies, and counseling under the TRICARE program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 1995. A bill to protect consumers by mitigating the vulnerability of personally identifiable information to theft through a security breach, providing notice and remedies to consumers in the wake of such a breach, holding companies accountable for preventable breaches, facilitating the sharing of post-breach technical information between companies, and enhancing criminal and civil penalties and other protections against the unauthorized collection or use of personally identifiable information; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. HAGAN (for herself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. HELLER, Mr. TESTER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. VITTER):

S. 1996. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. Res. 343. A resolution establishing a Select Committee of the Senate to make a full

and thorough investigation of the unauthorized disclosures of apparently classified information concerning the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including programs affecting Americans, to make findings based upon the investigation, and to make recommendations based on the investigation and findings; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 344. A resolution congratulating the Penn State University women's volleyball team for winning the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Volleyball Championship; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to provide a permanent deduction for State and local general sales taxes.

S. 127

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 127, a bill to provide a permanent deduction for State and local general sales taxes.

S. 162

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 162, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act of 2004.

S. 411

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 430

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to enhance treatment of certain small business concerns for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences, and for other purposes.

S. 577

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 577, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the distribution of additional residency positions, and for other purposes.

S. 583

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 583, a bill to implement equal protection under the 14th article of

amendment to the Constitution for the right to life of each born and preborn human person.

S. 723

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 723, a bill to require the Commissioner of Social Security to revise the medical and evaluation criteria for determining disability in a person diagnosed with Huntington's Disease and to waive the 24-month waiting period for Medicare eligibility for individuals disabled by Huntington's Disease.

S. 769

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 769, a bill to designate as wilderness certain Federal portions of the red rock canyons of the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin Deserts in the State of Utah for the benefit of present and future generations of people in the United States.

S. 888

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 888, a bill to provide end user exemptions from certain provisions of the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

S. 1069

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1069, a bill to prohibit discrimination in adoption or foster care placements based on the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of any prospective adoptive or foster parent, or the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child involved.

S. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1442

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1442, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the minimum low-income housing tax credit rate for unsubsidized buildings and to provide a minimum 4 percent credit rate for existing buildings.

S. 1448

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1448, a bill to provide for equitable compensation to the Spokane Tribe of Indians of the Spokane Reservation for the use of tribal land for the production of hydropower by the Grand Coulee Dam, and for other purposes.

S. 1697

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1697, a bill to support early learning.

S. 1770

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1770, a bill to provide for Federal civil liability for trade secret misappropriation in certain circumstances.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCHE) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1875, a bill to provide for

wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 1909

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1909, a bill to expand opportunity through greater choice in education, and for other purposes.

S. 1933

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1933, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, and for other purposes.

S. 1948

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1948, a bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program.

S. 1950

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1977

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) were added as cosponsors of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 21

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 21, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that construction of the Keystone XL pipeline and the Federal approvals required for the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline are in the national interest of the United States.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from

Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN:

S. 1987. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing a bill that would provide critical authority to the Department of Veterans Affairs to use enhanced-use leases to engage in public-private partnerships in order to provide supportive housing for homeless veterans at the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Medical Campus in California.

Homelessness is a tragedy, and I am deeply concerned that it plagues many of our Nation's brave and honorable veterans. I would like to make you aware, that Los Angeles has the largest concentration of homeless veterans in the United States, currently estimated to be 6,300. What is even more unacceptable is that two buildings on the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Campus that can potentially provide supportive housing for a portion of these veterans are currently vacant due to a lack of Federal funding.

There is good news, though. The community of Los Angeles has expressed great interest in leveraging private resources and forging a partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs to make progress in using these facilities to provide housing and hope for homeless veterans in the area. However, giving this authority to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs requires legislative action, and so I am happy to present to you today the solution that is required.

You should be aware that the solution I am proposing is a finely crafted fix to a previous action Congress took in 2007 to safeguard the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Campus. I moved in 2007 to prohibit the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to lease or sale any property on the West Los Angeles Campus, due to concerns that these authorities would likely be abused at the detriment to Los Angeles' veterans. Specifically, broad authorities were being used for commercial development displacing prop on the West Los Angeles Veteran Affairs Department, and risked reducing or eliminating the important services this campus provides to veterans. Today is a new day, and my bill will allow a very tightly limited authority to enter into enhanced-use leases at two spe-

cific vacant buildings on the campus to be used for the sole purpose of providing supportive housing for veterans who are homeless.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this modification of lease authority in order to make real progress using private dollars to deliver on our promise to California's veterans who have bravely served in the defense of the entire United States. I look forward to working with my colleagues on enacting this authority as soon as feasible.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 343—ESTABLISHING A SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE TO MAKE A FULL AND THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES OF APPARENTLY CLASSIFIED INFORMATION CONCERNING THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY INTELLIGENCE-COLLECTION PROGRAMS, OPERATIONS, AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING PROGRAMS AFFECTING AMERICANS, TO MAKE FINDINGS BASED UPON THE INVESTIGATION, AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE INVESTIGATION AND FINDINGS

Mr. MCCAIN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

Whereas since June 2013, publications have revealed details about certain National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans;

Whereas such publications appear to be based in substantial part on unauthorized disclosures of classified information concerning intelligence collection;

Whereas the unauthorized disclosure of classified information is a felony under Federal law;

Whereas the National Security Agency relies on Federal agency contractors to carry out important aspects of its national security mission;

Whereas the extent of reliance on contract positions may unwisely increase the number of individuals with potential access to classified information and may increase the risk of unauthorized disclosures;

Whereas such unauthorized disclosures may cause damage to United States national security interests, intelligence sources and methods, and relationships with key allies;

Whereas senior officials in the intelligence community may have misled Congress or otherwise obfuscated the nature, extent, or use of certain intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities of the National Security Agency, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans;

Whereas the provision of incomplete or inaccurate information by officials of the intelligence community has inhibited effective congressional oversight of certain intelligence-collection programs, operations, and

activities of the National Security Agency, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans, and undermined congressional and public support of these programs;

Whereas intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities of the National Security Agency have been valuable to combating terrorism and ensuring the security of the homeland;

Whereas some such programs, operations, and activities that are the subject matter of the unauthorized disclosures may not have been authorized, or may have exceeded that which was authorized, by law, or may not have been permitted under the Constitution of the United States; and

Whereas a Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies was established by the President and issued a final report entitled "Liberty and Security in a Changing World" on December 12, 2013: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATION.

There is established a select committee of the Senate to be known as the Select Committee on the Investigation of leaks concerning certain activities of the National Security Agency (hereinafter in this Resolution referred to as the "Select Committee").

SEC. 2. FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES.

(a) **GENERAL DUTIES.**—The Select Committee is authorized and directed—

(1) to make a full and thorough investigation of the unauthorized disclosures that have occurred since June 2013 of apparently classified information concerning the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans;

(2) to make findings based upon the investigation carried out under paragraph (1);

(3) to submit to Congress and the President recommendations based on the investigation carried out under paragraph (1) and the findings made under paragraph (2); and

(4) to take any actions necessary and appropriate to carry out paragraphs (1), (2), and (3).

(b) **PARTICULAR DUTIES.**—Without abridging in any way the authority conferred upon the Select Committee in subsection (a), the Senate further expressly authorizes and directs the Select Committee to make a complete investigation and make findings and recommendations related to the following:

(1) The unauthorized disclosures of apparently classified information concerning the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans that have occurred since June 2013, including—

(A) the circumstances under which unauthorized disclosure occurred;

(B) the extent of the damage done to United States national security interests, intelligence sources and methods, and relationships with key allies; and

(C) how such damage may be mitigated.

(2) Contracting by the National Security Agency, in particular—

(A) the extent of reliance by the Agency on contract employees to carry out important aspects of the national security mission of the Agency;

(B) the extent to which contractors with access to classified information were properly vetted;

(C) the sufficiency of internal controls to ensure only properly cleared contractors

with a need to know had access to classified information;

(D) whether adequate remedial measures have been put in place to address identified deficiencies in the foregoing areas; and

(E) whether any oversight or legislation is needed to reform any issues identified by the use of Federal contractors in the intelligence agencies.

(3) The nature and scope of National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities, including intelligence-collection programs affecting Americans, that were the subject matter of the unauthorized disclosure, including—

(A) the extent of domestic surveillance authorized by law;

(B) the legal authority that served as the basis for the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities that are the subject matter of those disclosures;

(C) the extent to which such programs, operations, and activities that were the subject matter of such unauthorized disclosures may have gone beyond what was authorized by law or permitted under the Constitution of the United States;

(D) the extent and sufficiency of oversight of such programs, operations, and activities by Congress and the Executive Branch; and

(E) the need for greater transparency and more effective congressional oversight of intelligence community activities.

(4) Whether existing laws of the United States are adequate, either in their provisions or manner of enforcement, to safeguard the rights and privacies of citizens of the United States.

(5) The terrorist activities that were disrupted, in whole or in part, with the aid of information obtained through the National Security Agency intelligence-collection programs, operations, and activities that were the subject matter of those disclosures and whether this information could have been promptly obtained by other means.

(6) The findings and recommendations of the Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies established by the President, including—

(A) the feasibility, costs, and benefits of such findings and recommendations; and

(B) the legislative action that would be required to implement those findings and recommendations.

(7) The need for specific legislative authority to govern the operations of the intelligence collection activities and practices of the National Security Agency, including recommendations and proposals for legislation.

SEC. 3. MEMBERSHIP.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subsection (b), the Select Committee shall be composed of 14 members as follows:

(1) The chairman and vice chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

(3) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(4) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(5) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate.

(6) The chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(7) One Senator selected by the majority leader of the Senate.

(8) One Senator selected by the minority leader of the Senate.

(b) **ALTERNATIVE MEMBERSHIP.**—If the chairman, vice chairman, or ranking member of a committee referred to in paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a) declines to serve on the Select Committee, then the majority leader of the Senate in the case of a chairman, or the minority leader of the Senate in the case of a vice chairman or ranking member, shall designate a member from that committee to serve on the Select Committee.

(c) **DATE.**—The appointments of the members of the Select Committee shall be made not later than 30 days after the date of adoption of this Resolution.

(d) **VACANCIES.**—Any vacancy in the Select Committee shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(e) **CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN.**—

(1) **CHAIRMAN.**—The members of the Select Committee who are members of the majority party of the Senate shall elect a chairman for the Select Committee by majority vote.

(2) **VICE CHAIRMAN.**—The members of the Select Committee who are members of the minority party of the Senate shall elect a vice chairman by majority vote.

(f) **SERVICE.**—Service of a Senator as a member, chairman, or vice chairman of the Select Committee shall not be taken into account for the purposes of paragraph (4) of rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

SEC. 4. RULES.

(a) **GOVERNANCE UNDER STANDING RULES OF SENATE.**—Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Resolution, the investigation and hearings conducted by the Select Committee shall be governed by the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) **ADDITIONAL RULES AND PROCEDURES.**—The Select Committee may adopt additional rules or procedures if the chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee agree, or if the Select Committee by majority vote so decides, that such additional rules or procedures are necessary or advisable to enable the Select Committee to conduct the investigation and hearings authorized by this Resolution. Any such additional rules and procedures—

(1) shall not be inconsistent with this Resolution or the Standing Rules of the Senate; and

(2) shall become effective upon publication in the Congressional Record.

SEC. 5. AUTHORITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Select Committee may exercise all of the powers and responsibilities of a committee under rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

(b) **POWERS.**—The Select Committee may, for the purpose of carrying out this Resolution—

(1) hold hearings;

(2) administer oaths;

(3) sit and act at any time or place during the sessions, recess, and adjournment periods of the Senate;

(4) authorize and require, by issuance of subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the preservation and production of books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, documents, tapes, and any other materials in whatever form the Select Committee considers advisable;

(5) take testimony, orally, by sworn statement, by sworn written interrogatory, or by deposition, and authorize staff members to do the same; and

(6) issue letters rogatory and requests, through appropriate channels, for any other means of international assistance.

(C) AUTHORIZATION, ISSUANCE, AND ENFORCEMENT OF SUBPOENAS.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—Subpoenas authorized and issued under this section—

(A) may be done with the joint concurrence of the chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee;

(B) shall bear the signature of the chairman or the vice chairman of the Select Committee or the designee of such chairman or vice chairman; and

(C) shall be served by any person or class of persons designated by the chairman or the vice chairman of the Select Committee for that purpose anywhere within or without the borders of the United States to the full extent provided by law.

(d) ENFORCEMENT.—The Select Committee may make to the Senate by report or Resolution any recommendation, including a recommendation for criminal or civil enforcement, that the Select Committee considers appropriate with respect to—

(1) the failure or refusal of any person to appear at a hearing or deposition or to produce or preserve documents or materials described in subsection (b)(4) in obedience to a subpoena or order of the Select Committee;

(2) the failure or refusal of any person to answer questions truthfully and completely during the person's appearance as a witness at a hearing or deposition of the Select Committee; or

(3) the failure or refusal of any person to comply with any subpoena or order issued under the authority of subsection (c).

(e) ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—The Select Committee shall have, to the fullest extent permitted by law, access to any such information or materials obtained by any other department or agency of the United States or by anybody investigating the matters described in section 3.

(f) AUTHORITY OF OTHER COMMITTEES.—Nothing contained in this section shall affect or impair the exercise of any other standing committee of the Senate of any power, or the discharge by such committee of any duty, conferred or imposed upon it by the Standing Rules of the Senate or by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 812, chapter 753).

(g) QUORUM.—

(1) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—A majority of the members of the Select Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of reporting a matter or recommendation to the Senate.

(2) TESTIMONY.—One member of the Select Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony.

(3) OTHER BUSINESS.—A majority of the members of the Select Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting any other business of the Select Committee.

(h) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—Each member of the Select Committee shall have an appropriate security clearance.

(i) VIOLATIONS OF LAW.—

(1) REPORTS OF VIOLATION OF LAW.—If the chairman and vice chairman of the Select Committee, or a majority of the Select Committee determine that there is reasonable cause to believe that a violation of law may have occurred, the chairman and vice chairman by letter, or the Select Committee by resolution, are authorized to report such violation to the proper Federal, State, or local authorities. Any such letter or report may recite the basis for the determination of reasonable cause.

(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to authorize the release of documents or testimony.

(j) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Select Committee shall have authority to make recommendations for appropriate new legislation or the amendment of any existing statute which the Select Committee considers necessary or desirable to carry out this Resolution.

SEC. 6. REPORTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the appointment of members to the Select Committee, the Select Committee shall submit to the Senate and the President a final report on the results of the investigations and studies conducted pursuant to this Resolution, together with any recommendations for Congress and the President based on the investigation and findings of the Select Committee.

(b) INTERIM REPORTS.—The Select Committee may submit to the Senate such interim reports as the Select Committee considers appropriate.

(c) FORM OF REPORTS.—Each report submitted under this section shall be submitted in unclassified form to the greatest extent possible, and may include a classified annex if necessary.

SEC. 7. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.

(a) STAFF.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Select Committee may employ in accordance with paragraph (2) a staff composed of such clerical, investigatory, legal, technical, and other personnel as the Select Committee, or the chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee, considers necessary or appropriate.

(2) APPOINTMENT OF STAFF.—The staff of the Select Committee shall consist of such personnel as the chairman and the vice chairman shall jointly appoint. Such staff may be removed jointly by the chairman and the vice chairman, and shall work under the joint general supervision and direction of the chairman and the vice chairman.

(b) COMPENSATION.—The chairman and the vice chairman of the Select Committee shall jointly fix the compensation of all personnel of the staff of the Select Committee.

(c) REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.—The Select Committee may reimburse the members of its staff for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses incurred by such staff members in the performance of their functions for the Select Committee.

(d) SERVICES OF SENATE STAFF.—The Select Committee may use, with the prior consent of the chair of any other committee of the Senate or the chair of any subcommittee of any committee of the Senate, the facilities of any other committee of the Senate, or the services of any members of the staff of such committee or subcommittee, whenever the Select Committee or the chairman or the vice chairman of the Select Committee considers that such action is necessary or appropriate to enable the Select Committee to carry out its responsibilities, duties, or functions under this Resolution.

(e) DETAIL OF EMPLOYEES.—The Select Committee may use on a reimbursable basis, with the prior consent of the head of the department or agency of Government concerned and the approval of the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate, the services of personnel of such department or agency.

(f) TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Select Committee may procure the temporary or intermittent services of individual consultants, or organizations there-

(g) PAYMENT OF EXPENSES.—There shall be paid out of the applicable accounts of the Senate such sums as may be necessary for the expenses of the Select Committee. Such payments shall be made by vouchers signed by the Chair of the Select Committee and approved in the manner directed by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate. Amounts made available under this subsection shall be expended in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Committee on Rules and Administration of the Senate.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this Resolution:

(1) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—The term "classified information" has the meaning given that term in section 804 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3164).

(2) INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The term "intelligence community" has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003).

SEC. 9. EFFECTIVE DATE; TERMINATION.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Resolution shall take effect on the date of the adoption of this Resolution.

(b) TERMINATION.—The Select Committee shall terminate 60 days after the submittal of the report required by section 6(a).

(c) DISPOSITION OF RECORDS.—Upon termination of the Select Committee, the records of the Select Committee shall become the records of any committee designated by the majority leader of the Senate with the concurrence of the minority leader of the Senate.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, since June of 2013, there have been steady and persistent unauthorized disclosures of apparently classified information regarding the activities and practices of the National Security Agency, NSA. These disclosures have caused grave damage to the United States. They have harmed our relations with friends and allies and harmed our ability to combat threats to the United States. They have also undermined public support for U.S. intelligence programs by casting doubt on the candor of key officials, the permissibility of the NSA's activities, the efficacy of the government's oversight, and whether legitimate privacy interests are properly taken into account in connection with important surveillance activities.

Last month, the President proposed some changes to how our Nation conducts certain intelligence collection activities. But the President's proposals left many crucial questions unanswered. Now is the time for Congress to improve how it executes its constitutional oversight duties—to examine certain intelligence collection activities and practices and ensure that we are fulfilling our obligation to protect both the security of our Nation and the freedom of our citizens.

The vital issues at stake here are complex, broad, and cut across many areas of jurisdiction of established congressional committees, including national security, intelligence, technology, commerce, foreign affairs, and privacy. For these reasons, today I am introducing legislation calling for the establishment of a Senate Select Committee to investigate how these leaks

occurred and to make findings and recommendations for legislation to address these issues which are vital to American national security.

SENATE RESOLUTION 344—CONGRATULATING THE PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2013 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 344

Whereas on December 21, 2013, the Penn State University Nittany Lions won the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association ("NCAA") Women's Volleyball Championship in Seattle, Washington with a hard-fought victory over the University of Wisconsin Badgers in a thrilling four-set match;

Whereas the Penn State University Nittany Lions have won 5 of the last 7 NCAA women's volleyball championships and 6 overall, matching the Stanford University Cardinal for the most NCAA Division I women's volleyball championships by a single program;

Whereas the Penn State University Nittany Lions concluded the 2013 season with a record of 34 wins and only 2 losses, and a 16th Big Ten Conference title;

Whereas 4 Nittany Lions players were selected for the 2013 NCAA All-Tournament team and junior setter Micha Hancock was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player;

Whereas head coach Russ Rose was named the 2013 National Coach of the Year and has been at the helm of the Nittany Lions women's volleyball team for 34 seasons, never winning less than 22 games in a season; and

Whereas this season, Coach Rose and his staff depended on 4 seniors to lead by example on the court and in the classroom, as best illustrated by Ariel Scott and Maggie Harding, who were each awarded prestigious academic honors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Penn State University women's volleyball team for winning the 2013 National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship;

(2) commends the Penn State University women's volleyball team players, coaches, and staff for their hard work and dedication; and

(3) recognizes the Penn State University students, alumni, and loyal fans who supported the Nittany Lions on their way to capturing a record-tying sixth National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2714. Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

SA 2715. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, *supra*.

SA 2716. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, *supra*.

SA 2717. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, *supra*.

SA 2718. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2717 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, *supra*.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2714. Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the "Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014".

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Extension of emergency unemployment compensation program.

Sec. 3. Temporary extension of extended benefit provisions.

Sec. 4. Extension of funding for reemployment services and reemployment and eligibility assessment activities.

Sec. 5. Additional extended unemployment benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

Sec. 6. Flexibility for unemployment program agreements.

Sec. 7. Ending unemployment payments to jobless millionaires and billionaires.

Sec. 8. Funding stabilization.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) **EXTENSION.**—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking "January 1, 2014" and inserting "April 1, 2014".

(b) **FUNDING.**—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting "and" at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

"(K) the amendment made by section 2(a) of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014;"

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 3. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111-5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking "December 31, 2013" each place it appears and inserting "March 31, 2014"; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking "June 30, 2014" and inserting "September 30, 2014".

(b) **EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.**—Section 5 of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking "June 30, 2014" and inserting "September 30, 2014".

(c) **EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.**—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking "December 31, 2013" and inserting "March 31, 2014"; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking "December 31, 2013" and inserting "March 31, 2014".

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking "through fiscal year 2014" and inserting "through the first quarter of fiscal year 2015".

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) **EXTENSION.**—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking "June 30, 2013" and inserting "September 30, 2013"; and

(2) by striking "December 31, 2013" and inserting "March 31, 2014".

(b) **CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.**—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) **FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.**—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board \$62,500 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. 6. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) **FLEXIBILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before December 1, 2013, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after December 29, 2013.

(b) **PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.**—Nothing in title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall preclude a State whose agreement under such title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this Act if the

State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

SEC. 7. ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO JOBLESS MILLIONAIRES AND BILLIONAIRES.

(a) **PROHIBITION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments of unemployment compensation (including such compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970 and the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations

Act, 2008) to an individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than \$1,000,000.

(b) **COMPLIANCE.**—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify the individual’s adjusted gross income was not equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 in the preceding year.

(c) **AUDITS.**—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) **STATUS OF APPLICANTS.**—It is the duty of the states to verify the residency, employ-

ment, legal, and income status of applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining an individual’s eligibility under this Act.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 8. FUNDING STABILIZATION.

(a) **FUNDING STABILIZATION UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.**—The table in subclause (II) of section 430(h)(2)(C)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016	90%	110%
2017	85%	115%
2018	80%	120%
2019	75%	125%
After 2019	70%	130%”.

(b) **FUNDING STABILIZATION UNDER ERISA.**—(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The table in subclause (II) of section 303(h)(2)(C)(iv) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 is amended to read as follows:

“If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016	90%	110%
2017	85%	115%
2018	80%	120%
2019	75%	125%
After 2019	70%	130%”.

(2) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Clause (ii) of section 101(f)(2)(D) of such Act is amended by striking “2015” and inserting “2019”.

(B) **STATEMENTS.**—The Secretary of Labor shall modify the statements required under subclauses (I) and (II) of section 101(f)(2)(D)(i) of such Act to conform to the amendments made by this section.

(C) **STABILIZATION NOT TO APPLY FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN ACCELERATED BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION RULES.**—

(1) **INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.**—The second sentence of paragraph (2) of section 436(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “of such plan” and inserting “of such plan (determined by not taking into account any adjustment of segment rates under section 430(h)(2)(C)(iv))”.

(2) **EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.**—The second sentence of subparagraph (B) of section 206(g)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1056(g)(3)(B)) is amended by striking “of such plan” and inserting “of such plan (determined by not taking into account any adjustment of segment rates under section 303(h)(2)(C)(iv))”.

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2014.

(B) **COLLECTIVELY BARGAINED PLANS.**—In the case of a plan maintained pursuant to 1 or more collective bargaining agreements, the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2015.

(4) **PROVISIONS RELATING TO PLAN AMENDMENTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—If this paragraph applies to any amendment to any plan or annuity contract, such plan or contract shall be treated as being operated in accordance with the terms of the plan during the period described in subparagraph (B)(ii).

(B) **AMENDMENTS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—This paragraph shall apply to any amendment to any plan or annuity contract which is made—

(I) pursuant to the amendments made by this subsection, or pursuant to any regulation issued by the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary of Labor under any provision as so amended, and

(II) on or before the last day of the first plan year beginning on or after January 1, 2016, or such later date as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

(ii) **CONDITIONS.**—This subsection shall not apply to any amendment unless, during the period—

(I) beginning on the date that the amendments made by this subsection or the regulation described in clause (i)(I) takes effect (or in the case of a plan or contract amendment not required by such amendments or such regulation, the effective date specified by the plan), and

(II) ending on the date described in clause (i)(II) (or, if earlier, the date the plan or contract amendment is adopted), the plan or contract is operated as if such plan or contract amendment were in effect, and such plan or contract amendment applies retroactively for such period.

(C) **ANTI-CUTBACK RELIEF.**—A plan shall not be treated as failing to meet the requirements of section 204(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 411(d)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 solely by reason of a plan amendment to which this paragraph applies.

(d) **MODIFICATION OF FUNDING TARGET DETERMINATION PERIODS.**—

(1) **INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.**—Clause (i) of section 430(h)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “the first day of the plan year” and inserting “the valuation date for the plan year”.

(2) **EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.**—Clause (i) of section 303(h)(2)(B)

of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1083(h)(2)(B)(i)) is amended by striking “the first day of the plan year” and inserting “the valuation date for the plan year”.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The amendments made by subsections (a), (b), and (d) shall apply with respect to plan years beginning after December 31, 2012.

(2) **ELECTIONS.**—A plan sponsor may elect not to have the amendments made by subsections (a), (b), and (d) apply to any plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, either (as specified in the election)—

(A) for all purposes for which such amendments apply, or

(B) solely for purposes of determining the adjusted funding target attainment percentage under sections 436 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and 206(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 for such plan year.

A plan shall not be treated as failing to meet the requirements of section 204(g) of such Act and section 411(d)(6) of such Code solely by reason of an election under this paragraph.

SA 2715. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 7 days after enactment.

SA 2716. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 8 days after enactment.

SA 2717. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike "8 days" and insert "9 days".

SA 2718. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2717 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike "9 days" and insert "10 days".

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Wednesday, February 12, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct an oversight hearing to conduct a hearing entitled "The Indian Law and Order Commission Report: A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer."

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Negotiations on Iran's Nuclear Program".

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 3 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10:15 a.m. in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Privacy in the Digital Age: Preventing Data Breaches and Combating Cybercrime."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL AND CONTRACTING OVERSIGHT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, "Fraud and Abuse in Army Recruiting Contracts."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND WILDLIFE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 4, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate office building to conduct a hearing entitled, "Examination of the Safety and Security of Drinking Water Supplies Following the Central West Virginia Drinking Water Crisis."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOREIGN TRAVEL FINANCIAL REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the

Senate herewith submits the following reports for standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the

Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Susan Collins:									
Canada	Dollar		336.00						336.00
Total			336.00						336.00

Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res 179 agreed to May 25, 1977

SENATOR BARBARA A. MIKULSKI,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Jan. 23, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Carl Levin:									
Belgium	Euro		30.00						30.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		103.00						103.00
United States	Dollar				11,505.70				11,505.70
Peter K. Levine:									
Belgium	Euro		30.00						30.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		61.00						61.00
United States	Dollar				11,505.70				11,505.70
William G.P. Monahan:									
Belgium	Euro		30.00						30.00
Afghanistan	Afghani		86.00		11,505.70				11,591.70
Senator John McCain:									
Canada	Dollar		543.80						543.80
Christian D. Brose:									
Canada	Dollar		702.12			258.00			960.12
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
Canada	Dollar		553.13						553.13
Senator Tim Kaine:									
Canada	Dollar		662.14						662.14
Mary Ann Naylor:									
Canada	Dollar		553.13						553.13
Karen Courington:									
Canada	Dollar		553.13						553.13
* Delegation Expenses:									
Canada	Dollar					6,882.75			6,882.75
Senator John McCain:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		430.84						430.84
United States	Dollar				10,828.80				10,828.80
Christian D. Brose:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		380.25			47.00			427.25
United States	Dollar				10,828.80				10,828.80
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		347.45						347.45
United States	Dollar				10,828.80				10,828.80
* Delegation Expenses:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal					3,126.26			3,126.26
Libya	Dinar					1,054.00			1,054.00
United Arab Emirates	Dirham					946.41			946.41
United Kingdom	Pound					900.00			900.00
Senator Tim Kaine:									
Bahrain	Dinar		584.97						584.97
United States	Dollar				9,099.20				9,099.20
Mary Ann Naylor:									
Bahrain	Dinar		560.33						560.33
United States	Dollar				9,099.20				9,099.20
* Delegation Expenses:									
Bahrain	Dinar					1,169.86			1,169.96
Senator John McCain:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia				668.08				668.08
United States	Dollar				7,996.60				7,996.60
Christian D. Brose:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		776.60						776.60
United States	Dollar				8,270.60				8,270.60
Elizabeth O'Bagy:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		699.44						699.44
United States	Dollar				8,270.60				8,270.60
* Delegation Expenses:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia					3,071.92			3,071.92
Total			8,355.41		109,739.70	17,456.20			135,551.31

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State and the Department of Defense under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR CARL LEVIN,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Jan. 24, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Joseph Mendelson III:									
United States	Dollar				10,206.60				10,206.60

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Poland	Zloty		1,366.37						1,366.37
Bettina Poirier:									
Poland	Zloty		791.53						791.53
Total			2,157.90		10,206.60				12,364.50

SENATOR BARBARA BOXER,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, Jan. 27, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 30, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Jason Park:									
Singapore	Dollar		1,299.13						1,299.13
United States	Dollar				12,581.30				12,581.30
Shane Warren:									
Singapore	Dollar		2,184.71						2,184.71
United States	Dollar				14,691.40				14,691.40
Total			3,483.84		27,272.70				30,756.54

SENATOR MAX BAUCUS,
Chairman, Committee on Finance, Jan. 27, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator John Barrasso:									
Canada	Dollar		639.48						639.48
Delegation Expenses:									
Canada	Dollar					1,044.89			1,044.89
Senator John Barrasso:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		357.70						357.70
Bahrain	Dinar		191.18						191.18
United States	Dollar				10,747.10				10,747.10
Charles Ziegler:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham		357.70						357.70
United States	Dollar				10,268.10				10,268.10
* Delegation Expenses:									
United Arab Emirates	Dirham					512.83			512.83
Bahrain	Dinar					110.00			110.00
Senator Bob Corker:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		351.67						351.67
Oman	Riyal		266.44						266.44
Bahrain	Dinar		253.03						253.03
United States	Dollar				11,228.20				11,228.20
Michael Gallagher:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal		361.67						361.67
Oman	Riyal		309.81						309.81
Bahrain	Dinar		1,356.88						1,356.88
United States	Dollar				10,862.20				10,862.20
* Delegation Expenses:									
Saudi Arabia	Riyal					1,016.35			1,016.35
Oman	Riyal					2,433.92			2,433.92
Bahrain	Dinar					1,761.90			1,761.90
Senator Christopher Murphy:									
Germany	Euro		305.00						305.00
Belgium	Euro		545.00						545.00
United States	Dollars				12,023.00				12,023.00
David Bonine:									
Germany	Euro		305.00						305.00
Belgium	Euro		545.00						545.00
United States	Dollars				12,023.00				12,023.00
* Delegation Expenses:									
Germany	Euro					2,027.59			2,027.59
Senator Christopher Murphy:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		358.68						358.68
United States	Dollar				8,719.40				8,719.40
Jessica Elledge:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		455.00						455.00
United States	Dollar				9,907.30				9,907.30
* Delegation Expenses:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia					2,047.94			2,047.94
Senator Marco Rubio:									
United Kingdom	Euro		1,186.00						1,186.00
United States	Dollar				12,189.80				12,189.80
Jaime Fly:									
United Kingdom	Euro		1,373.54						1,373.54
United States	Dollar				12,168.80				12,168.80
* Delegation Expenses:									
United Kingdom	Euro					46.44			46.44
Michael Henry:									
Bahrain	Dinar		560.32						560.32
United States	Dollar				9,099.20				9,099.20

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
* Delegation Expenses:									
Damian Murphy:	Bahrain	Dinar					584.83		584.83
	India	Rupee							890.00
	Sri Lanka	Rupee	890.00						942.80
	United States	Dollar			3,742.30				3,742.30
* Delegation Expenses:									
Michael Pheasant:	India	Rupee					188.00		188.00
	Kenya	Shilling	764.00						764.00
	Tanzania	Shilling	552.11						552.11
	Germany	Euro	332.94						332.94
	United States	Dollar			7,303.20				7,303.20
Michael Schiffer:	China	Renminbi	385.00						385.00
	Vietnam	Dong	279.22						279.22
	United States	Dollar			5,527.10				5,527.10
* Delegation Expenses:									
Christopher Socha:	China	Renminbi			393.89				393.89
	Georgia	Lari	1,190.38						1,190.38
	United States	Dollar			3,890.30				3,890.30
* Delegation Expenses:									
Dana Stroul:	Georgia	Lari					128.64		128.64
	Bahrain	Dinar	1,366.75						1,366.75
	United States	Dollar			2,379.40				2,379.40
Caroline Vik:	Bahrain	Dinar	1,180.00						1,180.00
	United States	Dollar			2,047.20				2,047.20
* Delegation Expenses:									
Ana Unruh-Cohen:	Bahrain	Dinar					704.76		704.76
	Poland	Zloty	1,391.37						1,391.37
	United States	Dollar			3,627.20				3,627.20
Jesse Young:	Poland	Zloty	1,231.37						1,231.37
	United States	Dollar			3,716.80				3,716.80
Total			20,585.04		151,469.60		13,001.98		185,056.62

* Delegation expenses include payments and reimbursements to the Department of State and the Department of Defense under the authority of Sec. 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended by Sec. 22 of P.L. 95-384, and S. Res 179 agreed to May 25, 1977.

SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, Jan. 28, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1, TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Brian Walsh	Dollar		738.00		12,168.00				12,906.00
Total			738.00		12,168.00				12,906.00

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Jan. 27, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Kyle Parker:	Poland	Zloty	2,993.42						2,993.42
	United States	Dollar			1,389.90				1,389.90
Erika Schlager:	Poland	Zloty	3,724.00						3,724.00
	United States	Dollar			1,354.60				1,354.60
	Austria	Euro	2,281.00						2,281.00
	United States	Dollar			3,237.00				3,237.00
	Ukraine	Hryvnia	1,686.67						1,686.67
	Switzerland	Franc	465.00						465.00
	United States	Dollar			3,357.60				3,357.60
Janice Helwig:	Poland	Zloty	3,725.81						3,725.81
	United States	Dollar			2,950.20				2,950.20
	Tajikistan	Somoni	1,486.00						1,486.00
	Kazakhstan	Tenge	327.00						327.00
	United States	Dollar			11,341.50				11,341.50
Mischa Thompson:	Poland	Zloty	1,339.65						1,339.65
	Germany	Euro	1,597.66						1,597.66
	United States	Dollar			4,262.00				4,262.00
	Morocco	Dirham	524.00						524.00
	Monaco	Euro	854.28						854.28
	United States	Dollar			6,713.80				6,713.80

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Marlene Kaufmann:									
Monaco	Euro		1,281.42						1,281.42
United States	Dollar				1,056.00				1,056.00
Fred Turner:									
India	Rupee		1,064.00						1,064.00
United States	Dollar				10,310.37				10,310.37
Orest Deychakiwsky:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		2,125.67						2,125.67
United States	Dollar				2,067.30				2,067.30
Allison Hollibaugh:									
Ukraine	Hryvnia		1,833.40						1,833.40
United States	Dollar				2,991.80				2,991.80
Total			27,308.98		51,032.07				78,341.05

SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
Chairman, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Jan. 8, 2014.

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22
U.S.C. 1754(b), REPUBLICAN LEADER FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 2013

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Ted Cruz:									
South Africa	Rand		2,009.01						2,009.01
Total			2,009.01						2,009.01

SENATOR MITCH MCCONNELL,
Republican Leader, Jan. 14, 2014.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DONNELLY. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, with the concurrence of the Republican leader, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 629; that there be 60 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote, without intervening action or debate on the nomination, the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the record; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Mr. DONNELLY. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 344 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 344) congratulating the Penn State University women's volleyball team for winning the 2013 Na-

tional Collegiate Athletic Association women's volleyball championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DONNELLY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 344) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 1996

Mr. DONNELLY. I understand that S. 1996, introduced earlier today by Senator HAGAN, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1996) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

Mr. DONNELLY. I now ask for its second reading but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 6, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1845, the Unemployment Insurance Extension Act, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; and that the filing deadline for first-degree amendments to S. 1845 be 9:45 a.m. and the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to the Reed amendment No. 2714 and S. 1845 be 10:45 a.m. on Thursday; finally, that the cloture vote on the Reed amendment be at 11 a.m. on Thursday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. DONNELLY. The Senate will not be in session tomorrow to accommodate issues conferences for each caucus. There will be up to two rollcall votes at 11 a.m. on Thursday. We also expect to consider the nomination of Senator BAUCUS to become Ambassador to China.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 6, 2014, AT 9:30 A.M.

Mr. DONNELLY. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:58 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

DISCHARGED NOMINATION

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs was discharged from further consideration of the following nomination under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 7, 2009 and the nomination was placed on the Executive Calendar:

*MICHAEL G. CARROLL, OF NEW YORK, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

*Nominee has committed to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING PACIFIC CONSERVATORY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts (PCPA) located at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, California.

During its 50 years, PCPA has become a nexus of artistic talent on the Central Coast. Over the course of that time it has nurtured thousands of students and provided an oasis for patrons of the arts.

Founded in 1964 by Donovan Marley, the newly formed company quickly gained local support, and in 1965 Santa Maria voters approved \$1 million in funding to build the Performing Arts Center building on the Allan Hancock College campus. It was eventually named the Marian Theatre, after Allan Hancock's wife, Marian Hancock. In the summer of 1974, an outdoor theater was constructed in just 58 days to host outdoor summer performances in Solvang, CA. Decades later, these venues continue to put on incredible performances for Central Coast residents.

The heritage of PCPA, however, is not just in landmark buildings, but in the cultural legacy that it has provided for generations. In fact, many of the nation's greatest actors had their beginnings at PCPA and its alumni include Academy Award winners Robin Williams, Kathy Bates, and Mercedes Ruehl.

Many of us on the Central Coast remember our first experience at a PCPA performance, and I know that it will continue to delight us with its excellence for years to come. I applaud the PCPA for its years of dedication to bringing the performing arts to the Central Coast with an unmatched level of quality, passion, and talent. Congratulations on fifty years of excellence.

RECOGNIZING MR. WALTER TOOLE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to recognize my good friend Mr. Walter Toole for his receipt of the 2013 Danniell J. Petro Bright Future of West Orange award. This award is given "in recognition of entrepreneurial tenacity and steadfast determination that facilitate opportunity through investment in community and lifelong relationships that keep our future bright."

Walter and his wife, Patricia, purchased the historic Bray Hardware store in 1983. Over the

past 30 years, the Toole family has expanded their business and opened numerous stores across Central Florida. The company concentrates its business locally, and its remarkable growth continues to strengthen the local economy and provide employment for hardworking Floridians. I am a long-time customer of Toole's Ace Hardware, and have experienced first-hand the exceptional service that characterizes the Toole family stores.

I am pleased to congratulate Walter on receiving the 2013 Bright Future of West Orange award, and I thank him for his dedication to the Central Florida community.

CONGRATULATING THE GLMV CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2014 MEMBER RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor a select group of business leaders who make our communities strong. Illinois's Tenth District has a long tradition of business innovation and excellence, and year after year more business add to that legacy.

Each year, the Green Oaks, Libertyville, Mundelein and Vernon Hills (GLMV) Chamber of Commerce recognizes a few exceptional individuals for achieving success in the business world and for practicing good citizenship in and for the community.

It is my great honor to congratulate the recipients of the GLMV 2014 Member Recognition Dinner Awards:

Entrepreneur of the Year: Alexa and Seth Holzwarth of LexiWynn; Restaurateur of the Year: Scott Fine of Fine's; Community Service Award: Dr. Robert Rosenberg of Advocate Condell Medical Center; Civic Leadership Award: Sedrik Newbern of Phoenix Insurance; Member of the Year: Brian Logsdon of Corner Bakery Cafe; Volunteer of the Year: Lars Rasmussen of World Financial Group. Distinguished Service Award: Don Peterson of Marketing and Sales Services.

These noteworthy award recipients embody the hardworking, forward-thinking and community-oriented spirit that makes the Tenth District of Illinois such a special place.

Their leadership and success exemplify a model for their fellow businesses, and I congratulate them on receiving these distinctions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank the GLMV Chamber of Commerce for everything it does. Local businesses are the foundation of our communities, and the GLMV Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to keeping those foundations strong.

THE PASSING OF DR. THOMAS LUMSDEN

HON. DOUG COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, my district lost a cherished member of our medical community when Dr. Thomas Lumsden passed away on January 17, 2014. "Dr. Tom's" life of service touched thousands of families in Northeast Georgia, and he will be dearly missed.

Dr. Tom was born in Nacoochee Valley on May 20, 1925. His strong work ethic was evident from an early age, as he graduated the valedictorian of Nacoochee High School in 1942. Five years later, he married India Dyer Lumsden while studying at the Emory University School of Medicine, from which he graduated in 1949. After completing an internship at Atlanta's Grady Hospital, he served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps at Regensburg, Germany for two years. Dr. Tom then worked as the assistant resident in general surgery at Atlanta's VA Hospital from 1952 to 1953 before returning to Northeast Georgia.

Dr. Tom established his family practice in Helen in 1953, and became an organizing partner of the Habersham Medical Group in Clarkesville two years later. Focused on surgery and obstetrics, and Dr. Tom delivered more than 4,000 babies over the course of nearly four decades on staff at Habersham County Medical Center. Remarkably, for more than 30 young families, Dr. Tom had delivered mother or father—or both—and delivered their children years later. He continued his service even after retiring from his practice in 1993, working part time as a medical staff member at the Lee Arrendale State Prison.

In addition to his practice, Dr. Tom served as president of the Habersham County Medical Society, president of the Ninth District Medical Society, chairman of the Medical Association of Georgia's Rural Health Committee, and on the American Medical Association's Council on Rural Health. He became a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Practice in 1972 and was named Physician of the Year by the Medical Association of Georgia. He was a charter member and Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Dr. Tom's civic involvement extended well beyond the medical community. He served as Mayor of Helen, Councilman for the city of Clarkesville, and Assistant Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop 5. Dr. Tom and his family joined First Presbyterian Church of Clarkesville in 1955, and over the years he served that body as an Elder, Sunday school teacher, and pastoral search committee member. He helped form the first EMS service in Clarkesville and trained first responders in the Clarkesville Fire Department. An avid historian, Dr. Tom was an authority on local history

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

and archeology. He even published a book, "Nacoochee Valley, Its Times and Its Places," in 1989. He amassed a large collection of local artifacts during his life, which became the heart of the Sautee-Nacoochee Valley History Museum at the Sautee Nacoochee-Arts and Community Center.

In light of how many lives he touched during his decades of selfless service, Dr. Tom will certainly be missed in Northeast Georgia. My prayers and thoughts are with India and the rest of Dr. Tom's family as they mourn their loss.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF NELLEANN RUTH HAMM BELL

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and service of Northwest Florida's beloved Nelleann "Nell" Ruth Hamm Bell who passed away on January 31, 2014. Mrs. Bell was a loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and a leader in the community. Northwest Florida mourns her loss.

Mrs. Bell was born in Birmingham, Alabama, where she lived before moving with her family to Pensacola, Florida. She and her husband, Dr. Reed Bell, both attended Pensacola High School and graduated in 1947. They later married and started a family. Mrs. Bell supported her husband and helped raise their six children, as Dr. Bell served as the Medical Director of the Sacred Heart Children's Hospital.

In the late 1970s, Mrs. Bell became heavily involved in politics and civil society. She founded the Pensacola chapter of the Florida Federation of Women for Responsible Legislation, and thanks to her dedicated leadership, she became the organization's president. In this capacity, she worked with other organizations, such as the Eagle Forum, to promote pro-family legislation. Mrs. Bell was also deeply committed to improving the lives of people in her local community, and she made an immense impact on countless individuals through her founding of Our Mother's Home, a maternity home for unwed mothers. In addition to her leadership and service, Mrs. Bell was a woman of tremendous faith who was fully committed to serving the Lord.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the life of Mrs. Nell Bell. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers and sincerest condolences to her six children, Rev. William R. Bell, Jr.; Mitzi Peters; Terry Bush; Former Florida Supreme Court Justice Kenneth Bell; Lance Bell; and Brian Bell; 20 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; family and friends. Mrs. Bell will be truly missed, and her contributions to Northwest Florida will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO JACK WYATT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to our country, state and community are exceptional. We have been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent to make their communities, and country, a better place to live and work. Jack Wyatt is one of these individuals. Jack's many accomplishments are wide ranging, as he has made his mark as a successful businessman, a decorated member of the military and an active supporter of the community. On February 4, 2014, Jack will be honored by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors for all he has done.

Jack is the true definition of an American patriot and hero. A 35 year veteran, Jack represented his country proudly, serving in four theaters of war during his long career. He has truly seen it all, being shot down, and eventually rescued, while in Vietnam. It is no surprise that he holds commendations from five former United States Presidents. Jack has since retired as a Captain in the Navy Reserve, though his advice and expertise remain highly sought after. In the early 1990s Jack turned down an Admiralship in Washington DC, as it meant that he would have to move from his beloved city of Corona, California, out east to the Pentagon.

From 2000 to 2001, Jack was assigned to lead a special project by the Navy's Chief of Information, Thomas Jurkowski, in conjunction with his tasking by the Secretary of the Navy, Richard Danzig, and Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. The project, "Vision 21," was created to develop a "lessons learned" program following Operation Desert Storm and Operation Allied Force. Due to the success of the program, Jack and many members of his team were awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. More recently, Jack became an advisor to the United States Secretary of the Navy on strategy planning, international affairs, and policy, and also served as Public Affairs Advisor to the Commander of the Naval Reserve Force of Western Region, San Diego.

Not only has Jack served his country proudly, he has also contributed to his community's economic and developmental growth. After retiring from active duty, Jack began a long career, spanning 28 years, with Southern California Edison. His focus in management and public policy development garnered the company increased success. Jack went on to become Regional Director for the Inland Empire from 1985 to 1999, and his responsibility covered three counties and 56 cities, with an annual revenue base of \$3.5 billion dollars.

With his influence and knowledge of the industry, Jack took a leap of faith and started his own company, Strategic Connections, Inc. (SCI) in 1999. This organization of professionals and specialists advises executives and public officials on a wide array of utility issues including service, leadership and strategy. With Jack's guidance, the company has grown

to be a leader in the industry within Southern California.

I have come to know Jack well through many years working together on a variety of projects in California. I can personally attest to his incredible work ethic, professionalism, and positive attitude. In light of all Jack has done for Southern California and our country, it is only fitting that he be honored by the Board of Supervisors for his more than 30 years of dedicated commitment to our community. Jack's honorable service and tireless passion for public service has contributed immensely to the betterment of our country, state and community. I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many individuals are grateful for his service and salute him on this great milestone.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for votes on Monday, February 3, 2014, due to Flights #4634 and #4065 being cancelled out of Charleston International Airport, and Flight #1750 being subsequently cancelled out of Charlotte International Airport. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: H.R. 1791: Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act: "Yes." H.R. 357: GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013: "Yes."

IN RECOGNITION OF THE COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS OF PALMA YANNI

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Palma Yanni, who has been named Lady of the Year by UNICO, the nation's largest Italian-American service organization. Palma Yanni was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania to Casper and Rose Torchia Adamo. She was raised in Scranton and graduated from Scranton Technical High School. She is a former member of St. Anthony's Church in Scranton, and is now a member of St. Peter's Cathedral. Prior to raising her own family, she worked at JC Penney and the Holly Shop in downtown Scranton. While her children were in school, she was an active member of the PTA and served as President.

Through her work with local service organizations, Palma has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to community service. She has been an active member of the Scranton Chapter of UNICO's Ladies Auxiliary for the past 30 years, holding offices of Corresponding Secretary and President and is a member of the Board of Directors, where she has chaired and assisted in many Auxiliary events.

In 2003, when women began to join, Palma began working with the Scranton Chapter of UNICO. She was elected Second Vice President in 2009 and in 2011 became the first

woman to serve as President of the Scranton chapter of UNICO—the largest chapter in the country. She also serves on the Board of Directors and was elected Chair of the Board in 2012. Palma was also named President of Ladies Auxiliary of the North Scranton Knights of Columbus, is a member of St. Joseph's Center Auxiliary and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic, and volunteers with "Family to Family" and St. Peter's Cathedral.

Although she has just recently earned national recognition, Palma Yanni has been a pillar of the Scranton service community for decades. She remains an active member in the Scranton UNICO chapter, volunteering and working on all local functions and events. I am proud to congratulate Palma Yanni on being named UNICO's Lady of the Year, and thank her for her decades of leadership and selfless dedication to serving others.

RECOGNIZING NICK J. MANCE

HON. WILLIAM L. ENYART

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. ENYART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedicated community service of Mr. Nick J. Mance as he marks his 20th anniversary as a Trustee for Southwestern Illinois College.

Mr. Mance was elected to then Belleville Area College's Board of Trustees in 1993 and has been continuously re-elected since that time. His fellow Board members chose him to serve as the Board's Chair in 2001 and have re-elected him to this post each year since. In addition to his many duties as Board Chair, Mr. Mance works enthusiastically with the administration, faculty, and staff on the Facilities and Finance and the Planning and Policy Committees and the Strategic Planning Council, and has served on all of the Board's standing committees. Also, he has served as the Illinois Community College Trustee Association's Regional Chair and is an ex-officio member of the Southwestern Illinois College Foundation Board of Directors.

Mr. Mance is a certified public accountant and a partner in The Mance Leahy Group accounting firm in Columbia, Illinois. He helped found the company in 1991 with his partner, one employee and only one client. After 22 years in business, the firm has numerous employees and more than 1,000 clients.

As a Cahokia, Illinois resident, business owner, taxpayer, husband, father of three, grandfather of three, and past Chair of the Cahokia School District No. 187 Board, Mr. Mance chose to pursue a seat on the Southwestern Illinois College Board because he believed he could help ensure access to quality education for area residents, contribute to the success of the community college, and contribute to the success and growth of the Southwestern Illinois region.

Mr. Mance has consistently and actively helped SWIC maintain its longstanding accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, and achieve model-institution recognition from the HLC for its Academic Quality Improvement Program initiatives and achieve-

ments by insisting on the highest academic standards and state-of-the-art classroom technology.

During his longstanding service to the Board of Trustees, Mr. Mance has been a proponent of capital development projects, including the construction of the Information Sciences Building, Liberal Arts Complex, and Schmidt Art Center at the Belleville Campus, and extensive expansions and renovations at the Red Bud and Sam Wolf Granite City campuses. Mr. Mance was one of the driving forces behind renaming the institution Southwestern Illinois College in 2000 to better reflect the college's 2,100-square-mile district; and renaming the Granite City Campus, the Sam Wolf Granite City Campus, in 2007 in honor of fellow SWIC Trustee and longtime legislator Sam Wolf.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to Mr. Nick J. Mance for his 20 years of service as a Trustee of Southwestern Illinois College and to wish him the very best in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 12, I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 1513. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 32, I was unable to vote on rollcall No. 32 due to inclement weather which prevented me from traveling from Williamsport, PA to Washington, DC. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONGRATULATING MUSIC EDUCATOR KENT KNAPPENBERGER

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Westfield Academy and Central School educator, Kent Knappenberger on receiving the Music Educator Grammy Award. Mr. Knappenberger, a middle school and high school music teacher in Westfield, New York, was recently announced as the inaugural winner of this prestigious award.

Mr. Knappenberger, who holds a Master's Degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, accepted the award on January 25th in Los Angeles, California at the

Special Merit Awards Ceremony & Nominees Reception with his wife, Nannette, and children in attendance. Kent was selected from over 30,000 initial nominations from all 50 States.

The Music Educator Award was created this year to bring attention to the lasting impact that teachers can have on their students both in and out of the classroom. Mr. Knappenberger is a world-class example of an educator whose 25 years of experience has had profoundly positive impacts on students' lives. In fact, Kent was nominated for this Grammy Award a total of three times—twice by former students and once by a former student's mother. This is a fitting example of the impact he has on the local community and his students' lives.

I once again congratulate Kent Knappenberger on receiving this Grammy Award and wish him continued success at Westfield Academy for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING ILLINOIS' 11TH DISTRICT FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize two intelligent and distinguished students from my district for receiving one of the most competitive merit-based grants in the world.

The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is a prestigious international exchange program that serves to cultivate knowledge and understanding between citizens of the United States and those across the globe.

Since its creation in 1946, the program has funded graduate study, research and teaching endeavors for over a quarter of a million people in 155 countries.

After a rigorous selection process based on academic achievements and leadership potential, Ms. Natalie Cain, a native of Darien studying at the University of Miami, and Mr. Matthew Ropp, a native of Oswego studying at Northern Illinois University, were selected for this prestigious program, where they will continue their studies in the fields of public health and English, respectively.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating the achievements of these two individuals and I wish them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING POLICE OFFICER JASON WELLS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize police officer Jason Wells of Pearland, Texas. On October 24, 2013 Officer

Wells was involved in a severe off-duty motorcycle accident. This accident left Officer Wells with several broken bones, and his left leg had to be amputated below the knee. Officer Wells is a single father to two young children, and previously protected our Nation honorably as a Marine.

Officer Wells still has a long road to recovery ahead of him. I'm pleased to be part of a community that has rallied to support him by hosting benefits for this hero. The proceeds will help fund Officer Wells' rehabilitation and the prosthetic limb he needs to get back on patrol. Every day in communities across America, police officers risk their lives to keep us safe. On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I am honored to recognize Officer Wells. Our community is proud of Officer Wells for his service to protect Pearland, Texas and our nation. We wish him the best in his recovery.

CELEBRATING MS. JACKIE PEER,
RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 WOMEN
IN MANUFACTURING STEP
AWARD

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Jackie Peer, recipient of the 2014 STEP Award from the Manufacturing Institute. I am pleased to recognize her contributions to Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc., her industry, her community in Eastern Washington, and our nation.

Seeking to inspire the next generation of female talent, the STEP Award recognizes women in science, technology, engineering, and production roles who have made significant achievements in manufacturing.

Manufacturing is revitalizing our economy and making America strong. Investments in manufacturing, engineering, and science multiply across the economy, creating jobs and growth in other sectors. While today's manufacturing industry, is competitive, high tech, safe, and working hard to encourage women into the field, manufacturers still have difficulties finding the skilled workers they need. Part of this skills gap is due to the lack of women in the industry. While women make up 50 percent of the U.S. workforce, they make up only 24 percent of the manufacturing workforce. Passionate about developing the next generation of workers for the electric power industry, Ms. Peer is also working to encourage other women to enter the science, technology, and engineering industries.

Ms. Peer joined Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. (SEL) in 1996 as an application engineer. During her career at SEL, she has managed the research and design of distribution relays and controls as well as time and communications products—significant and essential products used by electric utilities around the world. The developments and offerings achieved under Ms. Peer's leadership have resulted in reliability improvements to the electric power grid and have helped drive the growth of SEL's U.S.-based manufacturing.

Ms. Peer has also led technical marketing and regional sales and services teams within the company. Her passion for workforce development led to her current role as the director of SEL University, a department within SEL dedicated to training the next generation of power system engineers. She also recently started a group called Women in Engineering to help women at SEL foster collaboration, create dialogue around everyday topics and challenges and to provide mentorship and support.

Ms. Peer is a senior member of the Society of Women Engineers as well as a member of IEEE, IEEE Women in Engineering (WiE), IEEE Women in Power (WiP), the American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE), and the American Marketing Association. She holds a bachelor's of science in electrical engineering from Washington State University.

So today, I rise to acknowledge and thank Ms. Jackie Peer for her years of dedication and hard work. I also want to congratulate her for setting an example of professional excellence and advocacy of women in manufacturing, as well as her commitment to Eastern Washington.

JOHN P. STANTON

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a life of faithful service and dedication.

John Patrick Stanton was the youngest of four children born to Irish immigrant parents in Philadelphia in 1928. After his graduation from high school, he entered the U.S. Navy serving in the Pacific Theater of World War II.

Upon returning, he went to LaSalle University on the GI Bill and eventually married his wife of 63 years, Harriet—together they were parents to 12 children and 46 grandchildren.

Aside from a large and loving family, Mr. Stanton leaves behind a legacy of compassion in the way of the Pro-Life Coalition of South-eastern Pennsylvania and other pro-life groups.

Mr. Stanton was a tireless advocate for the unborn and a recognizable site each week ministering to young mothers at women's clinics in the city. Through his commitment to his faith and his calling, he saved the lives of countless families and brought many others into religion.

For his witness, Mr. Stanton was recognized with a number of awards and honors, and eventually would earn a master's degree in religious education from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary—ensuring that his teaching would continue.

John P. Stanton passed away peacefully on January 31, 2014 at the age of 86. While he is gone, his service to his country, his community, his family and his faith will remain.

CELEBRATING TEX AVERY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the artistry and influence of Tex Avery. A leading innovator of a distinctly American form of popular culture, Avery created iconic cartoon characters adored the world over by young and old alike and pioneered a new and lasting approach to animated storytelling.

Avery, born in Taylor, TX in 1908, was a man of many gifts: animator, cartoonist, voice artist, director. A central figure during the Golden Age of Hollywood Animation (1935–55), his work was marked by speed, sarcasm, and irony. Collaborating with top shelf artists like Chuck Jones and legendary voice actors like Mel Blanc, Avery created Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Droopy, and developed Porky Pig and Chilly Willy. Youngsters loved their cartoons' action and slapstick; grownups loved the sly dialogue and clever commentary.

Avery's artistry reflected the joy of a nation leading the world yet restlessly seeking new ways to express itself. He wasn't afraid to innovate and regularly pushed the boundaries of the cartoon form. His characters would speak directly to the audience, object to the plot of the adventure they were starring in, or leap out of the end credits. Yet Avery understood that cartoons had to be more than just animated hijinx featuring colorful characters. A lifelong perfectionist, he would add or cut frames out of the final negative of a cartoon short if he felt a gag's timing was not precise.

Avery's importance to animation cannot be overstated. He saw things differently, changed them, and pushed the art of cartoons forward. His impact is as permanent as the characters he created are beloved.

Tex Avery's tremendous legacy will be honored February 22, 2014 by the Taylor, TX Conservation and Heritage Society with a memorial being placed in Heritage Square. I join all who appreciate fearless innovators in celebrating his enormous contributions to animation and American culture.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 33, I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 357. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

IN CELEBRATION OF JOHN
BLANKENSHIP'S RETIREMENT

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to celebrate the retirement of John Lee

Blankenship. For the past 43 years, Mr. Blankenship has made it his life's work to protect and serve the citizens of Brazoria County. In February 1971, John Blankenship enrolled in the Angleton Police Department Academy because several of his friends were officers. Six months later, John graduated from the Academy and joined the ranks of the Angleton Police Department. John's sense of duty did not stop with the Angleton PD; he also joined and became a member of the Angleton Volunteer Fire Department.

As years went by, John's dedication enabled him to move up the ranks to become Criminal Investigator for the Brazoria County District Attorney's office in 1984. Nine years later, John was again promoted, this time to Chief Investigator. Throughout his career, John had received numerous recognitions for his achievements in law enforcement. In 1983, he was awarded the Investigator of the Year Award by Brazoria County Sheriffs Department. In 2001, John was named an Officer of the Year Finalist by the 100 Club of Brazoria County. Most recently, in 2013, John was awarded the Chuck Dennis Memorial Award, Prosecutor Investigator by the Texas District and County Attorney's Association.

While retirement may take some getting used to, John and his wife of 44 years, Maggie, have plans to take an Alaskan Cruise, as well as a road trip in his motorhome to various destinations throughout the United States. It is my great hope that you will enjoy retirement with your darling wife, two beautiful children, Mindy and Chara, and their families including your four wonderful grandchildren. Thank you, John, for your 43 years of service. Your commitment and dedication to God, family, the citizens of Brazoria County, and the great State of Texas has been unparalleled and for that we recognize you today on the floor of the 113th Congress.

VIEWS ON FARM BILL SECTION
12313

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House agreed to the conference report on H.R. 2642, the Farm Bill. Section 12313 of this legislation addresses an issue that should not go unnoticed, and I would like to make its intent clear.

In the 112th Congress, the House passed H.R. 2541, the Silviculture Regulatory Consistency Act, introduced by Representative HERRERA BEUTLER. The stated intent of this legislation was to return Clean Water Act permitting of silvicultural operations around forest roads to the same standards that applied before recent court decisions created uncertainty about which standards should be used. Before court actions, a Clean Water Act permit was not required for nursery operations, site preparation, reforestation and subsequent cultural treatment, thinning, prescribed burning, pest and fire control, harvesting operations, surface drainage, or road use, construction, and maintenance. Permits were only required for activi-

ties that involved rock crushing, gravel washing, log sawing and log storage. That standard has worked for many years, and I support continuing that standard.

However, as originally written, H.R. 2541 could have created legal ambiguity on what should be covered with a Clean Water Act permit. I introduced an amendment to H.R. 2541 in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee clarifying that activities exempt from permitting are limited to the silvicultural activities specified in the bill, and not all silvicultural activities. The language I sponsored and set forth as an amendment of this bill is generally the same as that in Section 12313 of the Farm Bill. Thankfully, the Farm Bill addresses this issue without ambiguity. Put simply, those activities which required a Clean Water Act permit in the past should continue to do so. Those which did not should continue to be exempt.

I appreciate Representative HERRERA BEUTLER's efforts on this issue and I am pleased that this issue has been addressed without ambiguity.

HONORING PORT RICHMOND ON
PATROL "PROP" ON THEIR 25TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the Port Richmond On Patrol, better known as "PROP," as it celebrates 25 years as a town watch and civic organization in the City of Philadelphia.

In 1988, in the wake of the Sean Daily murder that rocked the close knit blue collar neighborhood of Port Richmond when a 17 year old local teenager was beaten and killed by another group of teens, a handful of neighbors sprung into action to keep their neighborhood safe.

Three women were instrumental in the birth of PROP: Phyllis Hackimer, Helene LaBenz, and Jackie Saier. These women were involved from the very beginning, working to keep their neighborhood and their kids safe and secure the streets of Port Richmond. PROP Townwatch started out at Phyllis' kitchen table with coffee and pound cake. The first meeting drew hundreds of people wanting to be the eyes and ears of Port Richmond in the 24th Police District.

Through the years, PROP patrolled the streets of Port Richmond every Friday and Saturday night, both in personal vehicles and even on foot patrol, and then initiated the "Eyes and Ears on Your Block" program that invited neighbors to look around and hear what's happening on their block and street and encouraged them to report suspicious behavior.

Hackimer and LaBenz have shared a stoop on Port Richmond's 3600 Gaul Street for decades and raised their kids alongside one another as next door neighbors and friends. Saier, who lives at Almond and Westmoreland Streets, is a walking encyclopedia of Port

Richmond history and family ancestry and can usually be found on her porch watching over A&W playground.

PROP has always put the betterment, safety, and security of Port Richmond as their goal and mission statement and have consistently worked hand and hand with the Captain and Police Officers of the 24th Police District.

PROP was also one of the first town watches in the City of Philadelphia to embrace and participate in the National Night Out Program, which they still help organize every August in a citywide event. Furthermore, PROP is a proud ally of Operation Town Watch, an organization dedicated to the development and promotion of organized law enforcement-affiliated crime and drug prevention programs. Members include: Neighborhood, Crime, Community, Town and Block Watch Groups; law enforcement agencies; state and regional crime prevention associations; and a variety of businesses, civic groups and concerned individuals working to make their communities safer places in which to live and work.

HONORING JEFFREY CHEATHAM

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember Jeffrey Cheatham, who died on October 3, 2013, at the age of 51. His mother and my friend, Patricia McVay, tells me that his life was full of adventure and love, and he will be missed by many. As I thought about how challenging this time is for Jeff's family and friends, a few thoughts struck me.

First, I couldn't help but think of the parable of the talents, and how that story reminds us that we ought to make the most out of what we are given each and every day. The parable describes a master who traveled away and left his money with his servants. Upon his return, he discovers that two of his servants invested and doubled the value of their portions, while one servant hid the money and protected it. The master rewarded the two who made the most of their time and his wealth, and punished the one who didn't take advantage of the opportunity. The bigger picture here is simple—we all have limited time, and we have to make the most out of what we are given.

I think Jeff's approach to life and those around him is a good example of that. From what I've been told, Jeff lived a life that was truly in service to others, and he made the most out of his time. His good attitude, jokes and infectious smile were known to many, and I was told several stories of how he took a friend's parents to chemo then treated them to a lunch after, or how, when he was in school, he gave lunch money to a classmate, or even just how his smile could really light up a room. The gift of life is significant, and there can be an even greater gift in truly living and making the most of your time—as Malcom Forbes' tombstone says: "While alive, he lived."

Second, Jeff's passing should also serve as a reminder of the many challenges and difficulties faced by those who choose to put on the military uniform. Coming from a military

family and serving four years in the Air Force, Jeff was no stranger to those challenges, and as such, we should honor and remember the sacrifices he and all our service members make.

I have no doubt that Jeff leaves behind many fond memories with his friends and family, especially his three children, Jenna, Kylie, and Phillip. I join his family in being saddened by this loss, but I'm comforted in knowing that there are many people out there who got to experience Jeff's kindness, and who will miss him dearly.

FEMA FLOOD INSURANCE RATE
INCREASES

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, my Rhode Island communities have been battered. They have been battered by the financial crisis and a slowly recovering economy, and they have been battered by Mother Nature, from the floods of 2010 to Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Now, as we finally emerge from the worst economy since the Great Depression, our citizens who managed to hold on to their homes through economic hardship and uncertainty are facing yet another challenge—sharp rate increases to their flood insurance policies.

We need to pass the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act today, and send it on to the President for his signature. Our communities cannot wait any longer for relief from steep rate increases. Rhode Island families have told me they are facing flood insurance rates upwards of \$35,000, and they are scared of losing their homes. This is simply unconscionable.

This legislation passed the Senate last Thursday with a strong bipartisan vote of 67–32; 182 bipartisan Members in the House are cosponsors of the House companion legislation. There is no reason for the Republican House Leadership to deny us a vote on this critical relief.

Implementing a delay in rate increases will give FEMA the time it needs to complete an affordability study and develop recommendations to assist homeowners who cannot afford their premiums. Without it, thousands of our middle-class homeowners will continue to suffer from the uncertainty of not knowing whether the cost of flood insurance will make homeownership unaffordable.

I urge my colleagues to support consideration of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, and provide immediate relief for our families and communities.

HONORING DRAPER INC.

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Draper Inc. in Spiceland on being

named America's Healthiest Workplace by Healthiest Employers, a leader in corporate wellness and health analytics.

This company, in my home district, was ranked first place among 100 national finalists. The prestigious award included a year-long selection process and involved companies of all sizes and industries.

Draper established a safety and wellness committee to raise awareness of the stressors that drive unhealthy habits. That committee has increased its capacity to giving Draper employees the tools to succeed. The committee members volunteer their time to plan, organize, and run wellness events.

Draper is an example of a company rallying around physical activity and healthy living to improve an entire community's quality of life.

As members of Congress, we need to continue to promote and encourage health and overall wellness in our communities. In turn, our wellness initiatives will encourage a healthier American people.

HONORING ROSY CHU

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Rosy Chu for her extraordinary career in television and community affairs on the occasion of her retirement. Ms. Chu is retiring after more than forty-two years of dedicated service with KTVU FOX 2 and KICU TV36, where she has served as Director of Community Affairs and Public Service since 1989.

A proud San Francisco native, Ms. Chu graduated from San Francisco State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Communication Arts. She was one of the first women of Asian descent to work in the television industry, and was the first Asian American woman to host and produce a regularly scheduled talk show in the San Francisco Bay Area. She began her career with KTVU FOX 2 in 1971 as a secretary in the art department before moving on to a number of producer roles. From 1985 to 1988, Ms. Chu was the Producer of "2 at Noon," which was the first newscast outside The Ten O'Clock News on KTVU FOX 2. She became the Director of Community Affairs and Public Service in 1989.

During her tenure at KTVU FOX 2, Ms. Chu has served as an ambassador for the station and has been a tremendous asset to the community. She has assisted non-profit agencies, service organizations and community interest groups in obtaining access to media to roll out key messages on social needs and issues. Ms. Chu reached a broad constituency through hosting and producing "Bay Area People," a long-running and award winning public affairs program featuring educational and community issues. Ms. Chu has also traveled throughout California, China and Australia, allowing her to meet with diverse members of communities to host and produce a number of documentaries.

Ms. Chu is keenly committed to community leadership. She joined Asians in Mass Media

and the National Asian American Telecommunications early in the start of her career. Ms. Chu served on the founding Board of Directors for the San Francisco Chapter of the Asian American Journalist Association, in addition to being the first Asian American on the Board of Governor's for the San Francisco Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. In 2005, Ms. Chu was inducted into the exclusive Silver Circle Club of the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences, Northern California Chapter.

She has also earned myriad accolades, including eight nominations and one award from the Northern California Emmy Awards. She has been recognized by numerous community groups and national organizations including: the Take a Bigger Role Life Savers Video Excellence Award; the National Association of Broadcaster's Children's Television Award; the New York Film and Video Festival Awards; California School Boards Foundation Documentary Media Award; the California Teachers' Association Media Excellence Awards and American Women in Radio and Television.

In 2010, Ms. Chu was recognized by the Asian American Journalist Association's Honor Roll of Asian American Pioneers in Journalism as one of the first Asian American public affairs producer-hosts and managers in United States television. She was awarded the "2012 Powerful Women of the Bay" by the Black Women Organized for Political Action.

Throughout her prolific career, Ms. Chu has been praised for her commitment and contributions to the community and to KTVU FOX 2 and KICU TV36. She has worked tirelessly in building community outreach and enhancing the lives of the community she serves through advocacy and raising awareness on critical social issues.

On behalf of the residents of California's 13th Congressional District, Ms. Rosy Chu, I salute you. I thank you for a lifetime of service and congratulate you on your many achievements. I wish you and your loved ones all the very best as you transition to this exciting new chapter of life.

HONORING ROUND ROCK, TX,
POLICE CHIEF TIM RYLE

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Round Rock, TX, Police Chief Tim Ryle. With his retirement approaching, he will soon close out his incredible service to my hometown and begin the next chapter of his life.

A native Texan, Ryle carries on the family tradition of law enforcement service into its third generation. He began his career in Round Rock in 1983 and steadily rose through the ranks before being named Chief in October 2011. During his 31-year career, he's seen the Round Rock Police Department grow from a small town police force into a skilled and mobile law enforcement agency capable of providing safety to this rapidly growing city.

Ryle understood effective police work at its most basic level. A unifying force for area law

enforcement leaders, he brought together the region's chiefs, sheriffs, along with the County and District Attorneys, for regular meetings to coordinate strategies and share best practices. Ryle was among the first chiefs in the nation to implement mandatory physical fitness standards for all officers. Another lasting legacy was his devoted work to fund a public safety training facility. All these achievements have made a real difference in the lives of residents.

Chief Ryle led his department with dedication, honesty, and integrity. Due in large part to his leadership, Round Rock is now one of the safest cities in the country. Locals could always sleep well knowing their safety was Ryle's first priority.

Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have made a difference in the world; Chief Tim Ryle doesn't have that problem. I join the grateful citizens of Round Rock to wish him only the best in the years ahead.

EFFORT UNDERWAY BY THE STANDARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MAY RESTRICT ACCESS TO LEGAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose efforts currently underway by the Standards Review Committee of the American Bar Association (ABA) that may unintentionally restrict access to legal education for students of color and negatively affect minority serving institutions.

Five years ago, a broad based, national coalition of groups that included all of the national bar associations of color helped craft the current ABA accreditation standard regarding bar passage. That standard balanced the need for quality assurances with the goal of maintaining access to law school for students of color. It required law schools to demonstrate that three out of their last five graduating classes got an ultimate pass rate of at least 75% or an average of 75% over five years.

Since then, as part of the ABA Council of Legal Education's application for re-recognition, the Department of Education as the accrediting agency for law schools, the Department reviewed this standard, did not find any problems with it, and renewed the Council's accrediting authority.

Now the Council's Standards Review Committee is proposing to change this standard to rigidly require schools to demonstrate that every one of its graduating classes achieved an ultimate pass rate of 75 percent in every year, regardless of the pass rates in the jurisdictions where the school's graduates sit for

the exam, or else the school would face an immediate sanctions hearing, which is the first step in revoking a school's accreditation.

The SRC has acknowledged that it hasn't done a study and does not know the effects of its proposal. Instead of undertaking the work needed to justify raising its bar accreditation requirement, it has taken a shortcut. This shortcut will potentially limit enrollment for students of color, and affect many minority serving institutions, including law schools affiliated with historically black colleges and universities.

A wide-ranging coalition—over forty letters express opposition to this standard. Included among the groups opposing the change are the Society of American Law Teachers, Clinical Legal Education Association, ABA Council of Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline, Historically Black College and University Law School Deans, deans of other schools, the National Bar Association, Hispanic National Bar Association, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association, National Native American Bar Association, and the Congressional Black, Hispanic, Asian Pacific, and Progressive Caucuses.

People care about this issue because the Standards Review Committee proposal would create a perverse incentive for law schools to limit enrollment solely to students with high standardized test scores. When law schools face accreditation review, their only way to remedy perceived deficiencies is to reduce the chance that students will not pass the bar. The ranks of lawyers reflect a different reality. Many students enter law school with adequate but not stellar standardized test scores and prove through hard work and ability to succeed, graduate, pass the bar, find a job, and contribute meaningfully to the legal profession.

Another issue is not immediately evident, but equally damaging. The National Bar Association has posted in its SRC comments on the proposal, a study worth reading. The study shows that students of color tend to sit for the bar exam in state jurisdictions where the bar exam is harder, and bar passage rates are lower. Schools that graduate these students will fare worse under the proposal than schools with a higher percentage of students that remain in state and tend to have a higher percentage of Caucasian students. I note here that law schools affiliated with historically black colleges and universities have produced some of the most important African American leadership throughout the history of this nation. The proposal's potential effects warrant in-depth study to ensure they are fully understood.

This is one of the issues, raised by many of those who have written to the Standards Review Committee—that the committee is making policy without data. The Council of Legal Education controls the only available data on the ultimate pass rates of particular schools in particular jurisdictions, but despite repeated requests, it has not undertaken a careful impact study before moving forward on this fundamental policy change.

This is why we believe that the Standards Review Committee bears the burden of conducting a careful ultimate pass rate study of the pass rates achieved by particular schools in particular jurisdictions before moving forward on this proposal. To date, it risks unintentionally discriminating against schools that graduate large numbers of students of color.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by restating the American Bar Association's own arguments in support of diversity in the legal profession. The ABA has outlined four powerful rationales for why it must focus its energies on helping to diversify the legal profession:

The Democracy Rationale—that lawyers and judges play a unique role in our democratic institutions, and a more diverse judiciary and legal profession will create greater trust and confidence in the fairness of our mechanisms of government and in the rule of law.

The Business Rationale—that businesses must be responsive to their increasingly diverse customers and clients, here and around the world, and lawyers who are culturally diverse can help businesses reach and better serve these diverse populations.

The Leadership Rationale—that lawyers often play leadership roles in our society, both in and out of politics, and a more broadly inclusive legal profession is essential to providing under-represented groups with access to these roles.

The Demographic Rationale—that by 2042 or sooner, America will be a country of color, in which a majority of her citizens will be people of color.

These arguments reflect the import of expanding access to the legal field, not making it harder.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 33, I was unable to vote on rollcall No. 33 due to inclement weather, which prevented me from traveling from Williamsport, PA to Washington, DC. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 32, I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 1791. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, February 5, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 5, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable REID J. RIBBLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Senate passed the farm bill conference report, something the House did almost 2 weeks ago. I want to thank my House and Senate colleagues who stood firm and voted against the conference report because of the egregious cuts to SNAP, formerly known as food stamps. I am especially proud and thankful that none of my Massachusetts colleagues voted for the bill. Unfortunately, I think many of those who voted for this bill will ultimately come to regret their vote.

Now that the fight over SNAP funding and the farm bill is over, it is time to look forward and once again refocus on how we can end hunger now. Despite the attacks on the poor that come from the Republican leadership in this Congress, there are good things that are happening among the antihunger community, and there are opportunities out there that we can take advantage of as we work to end hunger now.

Every day, millions of hungry kids are able to eat a nutritious meal because of the school lunch program. In fact, 29 million children in more than 98,000 schools and residential child care institutions participate in the school lunch program on a typical day. Nearly 20 million kids receive their lunch at either a reduced price or free.

The school lunch program is a lifeline for these kids who come from poor families. It is not their fault that their parents don't earn enough for them to put food on the table. For most of these kids, this is the only nutritious meal, and in some cases, the only meal they will eat on a weekday. That is why this program is so important.

Imagine what happens to a child who goes to school hungry. It is harder for that child to pay attention in class, leading to difficulty learning and also leading to challenges in terms of their development, mentally and physically. Kids who go without food are literally at a disadvantage to those who are eating healthy meals. They are starting from a much worse position, and it is because America decides not to help.

That is changing. Participation in the school lunch program is strong, and the good news is that participation in the school breakfast program is rising.

I want to highlight a recent report from the Food Research and Action Center, or FRAC, as they are commonly known. FRAC reports that 311,000 more kids received school breakfast than the previous year.

We all know how important breakfast is. Our parents all told us to eat a healthy breakfast so we can learn and grow. I tell my kids the same thing every day, even though they don't always pay attention. The school breakfast program is a critical part of ensuring that kids from poor families are able to start the day off right; that they don't start the school day off hungry, so they can learn properly and they can develop.

Unlike the school lunch program, where the meal is served during the school day when kids are already in school, many of these school breakfast programs take place before school starts. Because of that starting time, millions of kids don't participate in the school breakfast program. That is why this report from FRAC is so encouraging. Schools are starting to offer breakfast free of charge to all children, not just kids who qualify based on income. Schools are moving breakfast out of the cafeteria and into the class-

room after school starts, something that is known as Breakfast After the Bell.

I am pleased that a new Federal program called Community Eligibility, a program in seven States that allows high-poverty schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students without the need for an application, is increasing daily breakfast participation. FRAC found that daily breakfast participation rose by 5 percent in these seven States compared to 2½ percent in nonparticipating States.

We can do better, but this is encouraging. Kids who eat healthy, nutritious meals do better in school and have fewer problems as they grow up. School meals are a critical part of ensuring that kids eat properly. School breakfasts are a big part of the equation. FRAC found that if all States increased participation so they reached 70 poor kids with breakfast for every 100 that ate lunch, 3.8 million children would have been added to the breakfast program, and States would have received more than \$964 million in added Federal nutrition funding in 2012 and 2013.

We should be proud of the work that USDA and States and localities are doing to increase breakfast participation. As we move towards a reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, we must remember these important programs and build on them. We must do everything we can to end hunger now, and improving on the school breakfast program is just one way to do it.

All of us, Mr. Speaker, both Democrats and Republicans, need to step it up in our battle to end hunger. We should all be ashamed that so many in our country, including millions of our children, go hungry. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, many of the actions that have been taken by this Congress have made hunger worse in this country. We are the richest country in the history of the world. Surely we can do better. Surely we can end hunger now.

EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. NUNNELEE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, Tupelo, Mississippi, the town of my birth and my hometown, is known for a lot of things: the birthplace of Elvis Presley; we are the headquarters of the Natchez Trace Parkway. One of the things we are also very proud of is we are the very first TVA city.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Many people around America think of the difference between rural America and city as the difference between whether you have a shopping mall, a lot of nice restaurants, things like that. Eighty years ago, the differences between rural and urban America were even more stark. That is why today it is my privilege to rise as we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Tennessee Valley Authority. In the 1930s, rural America did not have many of the basic things of life like electricity, running water, and a lot of the things that we consider frills today, like radio, music, and news.

As a result, many Americans, particularly younger generations of Americans, were migrating from the small towns and the farms across rural America and moving to the larger cities. Seeing this shift, a couple of visionary members of the Congress, including my predecessor, Mississippi Representative John Rankin, and Senator George Norris from Nebraska, made it their mission to bring electricity to rural America.

On May 18, 1933, the Tennessee Valley Authority was created by this Congress in an effort to improve the living conditions and the economic conditions for seven southern States, including Mississippi. In 1934, President Roosevelt came to Tupelo, Mississippi, and literally flipped the switch to turn on the lights. Shortly after that, north Mississippi became one of the Nation's earliest regions to begin to adopt rural electrification.

Over the past 80 years, the Tennessee Valley Authority has been committed not only to providing reliable, cleaner, and low-cost energy, but also committed to the economic well-being of our region across the Tennessee Valley.

They have worked with local power companies, directly served customers and regional, State, and community development organizations. TVA works to create economic development opportunities around our region, collaboratively focusing on attracting and retaining jobs, capital investment, and helping our communities prepare for growth.

I was once told by my friend and former TVA Chairman Glenn McCollough that the mission of TVA could be summed up in three phrases: keep the lights glowing; the economy going; and the river flowing. Well, for 80 years, TVA has done just that. With current leadership like Richard Howorth from Oxford, who is currently on the TVA board of directors, TVA is helping our region achieve success.

The electricity provided by TVA has helped attract opportunity and success for thousands of people in Mississippi and throughout the valley, allowing them to show the world that we are a friendly, reliable and competitive workforce.

So on this day of commemoration, I say happy 80th anniversary, TVA, and

my wish for you is a prosperous and successful future.

IRAN SANCTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, there is no area of foreign policy that produces greater concern amongst American citizens than the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran. Whether Democrat, Independent, or Republican, there is remarkable unity across the ideological spectrum that we must do everything in our power to prevent that outcome.

We have heard the steady drumbeat over the years that Iran is moving closer and closer to achieving nuclear capability. We have seen the regime engage in dangerous provocations and offer support to Hezbollah and other militant groups that have threatened the stability of the region and caused significant concerns for our allies and friends.

The Obama administration worked with our international partners to impose crippling sanctions on Iran. Those sanctions covered Iran's banking, energy, shipping, shipbuilding, insurance, and broadcasting sectors, and even gold and precious metals.

Now, after decades of tension between the United States and Iran and the escalating international pressure of sanctions and isolation, we have seen positive steps in relatively quick succession. After the election of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in 2013, I joined over 130 of my colleagues calling on President Obama to "utilize all diplomatic tools to reinvigorate ongoing nuclear talks," including the potential that "bilateral and multilateral sanctions be calibrated in a way that they induce significant and verifiable concessions."

Those diplomatic overtures, coupled with the debilitating sanctions on Iran's energy and banking sectors, yielded the historic phone call between President Obama and President Rouhani, the first direct contact between leaders of our two nations in 34 years, and, ultimately, the signing of the Joint Plan of Action representing real progress towards a nuclear agreement.

There remain ample reasons to question the prospects of a long-term agreement with Iran. We have heard the President 1 week ago in this very room speak of the challenges for negotiators, cautioning "they may not succeed. We are clear-eyed about Iran's support for terrorist organizations like Hezbollah, which threaten our allies, and the mistrust between our nations cannot be simply wished away."

Now, Members of Congress in both Chambers are discussing legislation for new and expanded sanctions. Our constituents, deeply concerned with the

Middle East and strongly in favor of peace, are asking us what we think, how we would vote, and what we should do as a Congress and as a nation.

I have had the honor of serving on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and as a Member have regular access to the classified assessments of the professionals in our intelligence community, who provide a much fuller and clearer picture of the situation in Iran. I cannot tell you what the information is here or anywhere else because it is appropriately classified, but based on the classified briefings I have received on the situation in Iran and the Joint Plan of Action, I am very reluctant to support any additional sanctions at this time.

Mr. Speaker, given the importance of this issue to all Members and the stakes involved in preventing a nuclear-armed Iran, I think many of my colleagues would be in a much better position to evaluate the options before us if they also had access to the very classified briefing from which I regularly benefit. That is why I wrote a letter to the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, and Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI last week asking them to convene a classified briefing for Members of the House of Representatives.

All of us could have had access to classified materials or request a briefing if we wanted one on a case-by-case basis, but the point is that we are facing a crossroads as a nation, and we are facing a crossroads as a Congress, and I want us to be as informed as possible.

I understand the mistrust between the United States and Iran, and the desire of some in this body to seek additional sanctions, even as we are implementing the terms of the 6-month agreement.

□ 1015

We need clear-eyed, apolitical, informed decisionmaking so we can make the best possible choices on behalf of our constituents and the Nation.

I believe my colleagues would find great value in the classified briefing and come away with greater confidence in the work of the administration and our international partners.

I have been convinced that now is not the time to consider additional sanctions, but I want my colleagues to make up their own minds and to do so with as much information as possible, so I renew my request for classified briefings as soon as they can be arranged.

I have every confidence that if talks falter or we have evidence that Iran is not abiding by the terms of the Joint Plan of Action, the Congress will not hesitate to take appropriate actions, including imposing new sanctions on Iran. But with Iran at the negotiating table, taking steps to halt enrichment

and submit to enhanced inspections and monitoring, it is worth giving diplomacy the chance to succeed.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT WILL SLOW ECONOMIC GROWTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, CBO, issued a report stating the Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as ObamaCare, will slow economic growth over the next decade substantially more than previously predicted. According to yesterday's report, the Affordable Care Act could lead to 2 million fewer workers in the workforce between now and 2017, which is nearly three times as high as CBO's earlier predictions. What is even worse, this number is supposed to rise in later years to the equivalent of 2.5 million jobs by 2024.

According to The Hill newspaper:

The agency, CBO, also said employer penalties in the law would decrease wages, and part-year workers would be slower to return to the workforce because they would seek to retain ObamaCare insurance subsidies.

We cannot afford more blows to jobs. We cannot afford more blows to the American workforce. We cannot afford more blows to our economy. We as policymakers should be focused on breaking down barriers to employment in order to increase wages.

Mr. Speaker, the administration better get better at explaining this law to the American people or start working with this body to repeal and fix it. The American people deserve better. The American people deserve jobs.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM SCANDAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, before turning to the subject at hand, I really hope that people look at the CBO report that was referenced by my good friend from Pennsylvania, and you will find that the 2 million people who would no longer be working, are not going to increase unemployment. The unemployment rate will be lower. There are people who are trapped in the workforce now because they can't afford health care. The Affordable Care Act will actually enable some people to retire who want to retire or stop working a second job. Read the report and find out that this is actually a very positive signal.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am here today to reference something else that was in the newspapers. The papers are filled

with scandal about the nuclear weapons program. The real scandal is not the cheating or drug use by people with their finger on the nuclear button. The scandal is that these people are there on the job at all, with these nuclear weapons; jobs and nuclear weapons that should no longer exist.

Don't get me wrong. The alleged drug use by the people who stand watch daily with a finger on the nuclear trigger, or that were cheating on their proficiency exams, is outrageous, but it is scandalous that we are frozen in time linked to a nuclear Cold War past and committed to wildly wasteful spending.

These are weapons that have never been used in 69 years, that did not deter the 9/11 attackers, and cannot help us in our major strategic challenges today. They have never been used in battle since World War II, but they have almost been used by miscalculation and mistake.

In Eric Schlosser's recent book called "Command and Control," there are terrifying examples of what were termed "broken arrows," nuclear mishaps.

A nuclear bomb was accidentally released over South Carolina, landing in Walter Greg's backyard, leaving a 75-foot wide, 30-foot crater, leveling his home. Luckily, it failed to trigger the nuclear explosion.

In North Carolina, a B-52 fell into a tailspin carrying two hydrogen bombs, each 250 times more powerful than Hiroshima.

There were numerous instances when our bomber fleet, which used to be on the runway idling, on alert 24/7, was prone to catching on fire while packed with nuclear bombs.

A few years ago, there was a B-52 which flew across the country unknowingly carrying six nuclear-armed air-launched missiles.

By no stretch of the imagination, do we need these 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles on alert, plus nuclear armed bombers, all on top of our nuclear submarine-based missiles? We don't need a fraction of this weaponry. At most, we need perhaps one scaled-down system. There is nobody left to deter. We are competing in Russia in the Winter Olympics right now.

A small portion of one of these delivery systems is all the nuclear deterrence we could ever possibly need. The larger and more complex the infrastructure is not just more expensive, but more prone to mistake.

We are talking about upwards of \$700 billion over the next 10 years in operations, modernization, new systems, new nuclear submarines. It is outrageous. It is dangerous. Let me put that in context. \$750 billion is more than the Federal Government will spend on education in its entirety in the next 5 years.

It is time for Congress and the American people to put an end to this.

STOP OUTSOURCING AMERICAN JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the further outsourcing of American jobs through more unfair trade agreements. The Obama administration is currently working on the next executive branch job-killing so-called "free trade" agreement. They are calling it the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP.

The contents of this agreement have been kept secret from the American people and Members of Congress and, as well, the general public wherever they might live. The administration is using the same old failed trade model called "fast track" to negotiate this, which means whatever they negotiate, we don't get to see, and then they bring it up here under a fast track procedure. That process ties our hands. They bring it up in one lump-sum vote, with no amendments allowed. And they usually do it in a lame-duck session of Congress after election and just try to ram it through, usually very late in the evening, often in the early morning hours.

Since fast track was first used, the United States has accumulated red ink—trade deficits, more imports coming in here than exports going out—for nearly three decades. We have accumulated over \$9 trillion in trade deficits. If you want to know why we have a budget deficit, it is because we have a trade deficit. We have outsourced too many jobs to low-wage havens. Go out and try to buy anything made in America; right? The American people know this inherently. More than 7 million good-paying American manufacturing jobs have been lost since fast track was first passed.

Every poll of U.S. opinion tells this Congress: What do the American people care about? Jobs and the economy. Jobs and the economy. They care about economic recovery. So why is this administration using the same old model that goes back to 1975? Now they are looking at the Pacific, the Pacific region, as if we haven't had relations with some of those countries before. But every other agreement has resulted in red ink. The American people want job creation, not job outsourcing.

Actually, if this President were to refurbish this failed trade model and really fix it, it would be the first time in modern history that our trade policy would yield job creation in this country, net job creation in this country and real income growth for the American people.

Now, let's look at a couple dimensions of this.

The trade deficit in 2012, the last year for which we have confirmed numbers, was half a trillion dollars, \$534 billion. That alone resulted in over 2

million lost jobs in this country. That number has just been getting worse with each passing decade, more and more jobs lost.

Let's look at some of the countries. Let's take China. The trade deficit in 2000 with China was about \$83 billion. It has increased four fold. It has quadrupled. In 2012, for which we have confirmed numbers, we had over \$315 billion in trade deficit with China. Every billion equals 4,000 lost jobs in this country. So we are net negative with China—a job loss of over 1,200,000 more U.S. jobs.

With Japan, we have been solidly negative for decades. In 2012, our trade deficit with Japan was \$76 billion.

With Mexico, they said after NAFTA, oh, it is going to be great for America; there are going to be millions of jobs in the United States. Wrong. Our jobs were outsourced. In fact, in the year 2000, we had a \$24 billion deficit with Mexico. By 2012, that had gone up three times more to \$61 billion in the red—in the red—our jobs going there, their exports coming here, not the reverse. That's 244,000 more lost jobs. The numbers don't lie.

In Korea, we had a discussion with some of the President's advisers. They said, well, you know, that was supposed to be the new trade model, the Korean trade deal that this President proposed was going to change everything. Well, guess what? We are in the red with Korea, too. In 2000, we already had a \$12 billion trade deficit. Yes, more red ink. After the new Korean free trade deal, in 2012, it has nearly doubled. It is \$16.6 billion. And in 2013, just through November, it is nearly \$20 billion. That is a doubling of the trade deficit with Korea and 80,000 more lost U.S. jobs.

So if this fast track free trade is such a great trade model, how is it working for the American people? It isn't. None of these trade deals are working. It might be working for certain transnational corporations who can pay their investors more because of the profits they are making off of cheap labor in low wage haven and the lack of environmental regulations in these other countries, but it is not working for the benefit of the American economy, the American people. It is time to change the trade model.

Let me just put two other numbers on the record here. We have over 1.5 million Americans over 45 years of age who still are unemployed. These are people who have worked their whole lives. We can't even get them unemployment benefits and their jobs have been shipped out someplace else.

Mr. Speaker, later in the week I will talk about the cost of environment degradation in this country because of imports that are not properly regulated by the Department of Agriculture coming over our border and doing harm from coast to coast. It's long, long over due for a new trade model that benefits

our nation and creates jobs here at home.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Andrew Chaney, First and Calvary Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Missouri, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You equipped the Founders with great resilience as they sought Your wisdom in establishing our Nation. With that same power that inspired our patriots, bless these Members of Congress today. Lift them up, O God.

When they feel discouraged, when negative thoughts seem to dominate, when the winds are against them, strengthen their minds and spirits with an inner faith that only You can provide.

As we are now united in prayer, unite their efforts. Help them leave bitterness by the wayside. May their decisions consider the hopeful faces of parents, children, elderly, soldiers, veterans; that each person in every district will be blessed by the strong leadership of this Congress.

As many voices compete for their attention, create a sanctuary for them to pause, reflect, and hear Your voice. Equip them with a courage that constantly reminds them that "with God, all things are possible."

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the

ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. ANDREW CHANEY

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, today I have the honor of introducing my friend, Reverend Dr. Andrew Chaney.

Reverend Chaney is a third-generation minister. He serves as the senior minister at the historic First and Calvary Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Missouri, a church that is a special place to me and my family. Reverend Chaney serves as an important spiritual voice for me and the Springfield community.

Congress has a longstanding tradition of beginning each session day with a prayer. I am privileged and honored to have the opportunity today to welcome Reverend Dr. Andrew Chaney to the people's House as he opened today's session with a prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MESSER). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

FAIR AND REASONABLE FLOOD INSURANCE RATES

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Florida has been an overly responsible—and even generous—partner in the National Flood Insurance Program.

In the last 20 years, Floridians have paid four times in premiums than we have seen returned in claims. Yet FEMA is raising thousands upon thousands of policy premiums to absurd levels, easily doubling, tripling, or quadrupling them, and in some cases far higher.

These radical changes are counter-intuitive and are forcing hard-working, diligent, and responsible families from their homes. It is time to take a step back and rein in this agency and its harmful belief that this is a potential path forward.

Families in our communities need and deserve relief from these ridiculously high premiums. I will continue to work with my colleagues on trying to find a reasonable solution to this crisis, one that will address the immediate needs of local homeowners.

WE CANNOT AFFORD BAD TRADE DEALS

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, trade of course can be good for Americans and our economy, but we cannot afford bad trade deals. Bad trade deals exacerbate inequality. It makes the ladder of opportunity harder to climb for working people.

Twenty years ago, Washington passed NAFTA, and the results have been devastating to our economy for working people. Over 850,000 U.S. jobs left for Mexico, and our trade deficit skyrocketed from \$100 billion to \$700 billion. Before fast track authority, the U.S. had a trade surplus.

Fast track and the Trans-Pacific Partnership are not right for the American people. We must have more transparency. We must have more disclosure. We must have good trade deals that reflect the fact that the United States workers produce great services and products.

The trade deals need to reflect that, not have a race to the bottom for which we go to the cheapest markets around the world to compete with good American workers who make fair pay. It is not the right thing. I am for trade, but not bad trade agreements that are conducted in secret.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S AMERICA

(Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, welcome to President Obama's America: where labor force participation rates are the lowest since 1978; where good-paying jobs are scarce; where many health insurance premiums are skyrocketing or being canceled; where jobs bills sent to the Senate collect dust on HARRY REID's desk; where the State Department concluded that the job-creating Keystone XL pipeline poses little environmental risk, yet the President has not approved it; where yesterday the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office

released a report stating that ObamaCare will have substantially larger negative effects on the economy than anticipated.

The CBO projects the number of full-time workers to fall by 2.3 million, while increasing financial burdens on our children and grandchildren.

I urge the President: use that pen to approve House-passed jobs bills; use that phone to work with Congress, and let's work together to relieve the burden that so many of your policies have placed on the backs of the American people.

PROTECTING AND PRESERVING THE GREAT LAKES

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, this afternoon I look forward to addressing the Great Lakes Environmental Summit.

The history of Buffalo is deeply rooted in the Great Lakes, as easy access to Lake Erie fueled a thriving manufacturing industry. Our future is also bright thanks to growing public and private investment in the waterfront.

Moreover, the Great Lakes support 1.5 million jobs and \$62 billion in wages per year. A report by The Brookings Institution found that every \$1 invested in restoration generates \$2 in economic benefit and up to \$4 in economic activity through jobs, development, and increased property values.

But in order to realize these benefits, we must protect from outside threats, like nutrient runoff, invasive species, and harmful algae blooms.

I commend the work of advocates like the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the Environmental Protection Agency, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeepers, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, and my colleagues on the Congressional Great Lakes Task Force for taking action on protecting and preserving this vital natural resource.

PRESIDENT'S BROKEN PROMISE

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker and my colleagues, too many middle class Americans are out of work or worried about losing their job, and the House has passed dozens of bills to help them. More are in the works as we speak, including important legislation that fosters more trade and opportunities for growth. In Washington, it is often referred to as TPA, trade promotion authority.

But around the country from our farms to our factories, this means jobs. It means making it easier for our workers—including the 1.4 million in Ohio whose jobs depend on trade—to be

able to compete with China and the world's growing economies.

This initiative has support from Members of both parties, including President Obama himself. Unfortunately, like many of our jobs bills, his party's leaders in the Senate are standing in the way. The President needs to use his bully pulpit as only an American President can and change their minds. He can do that today when he addresses Senate Democrats.

I certainly hope and expect he will help us move this bill forward on behalf of American workers. Otherwise, all the talk about a "year of action" would appear to be just another broken promise.

APPLAUDING CVS CAREMARK

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud CVS Caremark's decision to stop selling cigarettes and other tobacco products in its more than 7,600 stores across the United States. CVS, which is headquartered in my district in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, is leading the way in promoting public health and wellness, and I hope other pharmacies will follow their example.

I would particularly like to thank Larry Merlo, the president and CEO of CVS Caremark; Helena Foulkes, the president of CVS Pharmacy; and their board and their staffs for their commitment to putting people over profits. As one of the Nation's largest retail and pharmacy chains, CVS Pharmacy has helped countless Rhode Islanders and people all across this country better manage their health.

The negative impacts of tobacco are well known—lung cancer, diabetes, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis—and cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States.

Taking this product off their shelves continues CVS Caremark's long tradition of helping people improve their health and wellness, and it undermines Big Tobacco's active marketing to future generations of Americans to persuade them to take up this deadly habit. I salute CVS Caremark in their efforts to help Americans live longer, healthier lives, and I am so proud of their decision and their corporate leadership.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR KIDS ACT

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MESSER. Madam Speaker, lots of kids in America go to a great school, but too many kids don't, and that is not okay. The simple truth is that too

many families live in neighborhoods with bad schools. They can't afford to move, and they can't afford tuition to go to a better school either.

There is another way. Imagine a system not limited by ZIP Code, where education dollars follow the child and every family in America can afford to send their child to the school of their choice. This dream could become reality under the Scholarships for Kids Act. We filed the bill today. It gives States the option to use Federal education funds for scholarships to lower-income families, empowering these families to choose the best opportunities for their kids.

Let's stop defending the indefensible and start imagining a great future for every child in America.

□ 1215

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS FOR SNOWMOBILES IN MICHIGAN

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the House of Representatives for passing my amendment yesterday, which will help preserve access to the National Forest System lands for snowmobiles in Michigan and across the Nation, the same access that has long been granted for responsible snowmobilers.

In Michigan, snowmobiling has long been an important part of our State's heritage. Half of my home State's 6,300 miles of snowmobile trails are on public land. Each year, families in my district head into the woods to partake in this winter recreational activity.

Snowmobiling supports our economy, particularly in northern Michigan. Each year, snowmobiling pumps over \$200 million into my State's economy, supporting thousands and thousands of jobs. Nationally, it is even greater: \$26 billion in economic activity annually, and over 100,000 jobs directly related to the snowmobile industry and the over 225,000 miles of groomed trails that people ride on.

My amendment supports these jobs, promotes conservation, and ensures snowmobilers that they will be able to continue to enjoy our incredible winters while preserving the natural beauty of our national forests.

CBO'S LATEST ECONOMIC REPORT ON OBAMACARE

(Mr. MICA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MICA. Madam Speaker, I come before my colleagues today as someone who comes from a family that at times did not have health care. I think we

can do a much better job, and we should do a much better job, helping people get health care.

Like some predicted on both sides of the aisle, they said that the way ObamaCare was crafted it could result in a train wreck. We didn't really know, but now we do know. The facts are out. Everyone has seen the rollout, which was a disaster.

Every American should be stunned to see the Congressional Budget Office report today. You should read that: 2.5 million people will lose their jobs. That doesn't even consider the ones who have already been put to part-time status when they are trying to feed their families, make a living, and put gas in the car.

Here we have more people losing jobs because of this. Look at this, how many people will see a smaller amount in their paycheck thanks to ObamaCare.

This isn't a partisan document. This is something that is put out that has analyzed the impact, and it could be devastating.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S PROPOSALS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, last week, President Obama laid out a series of proposals: "build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class" and revive and sustain a core tenet of our American system—as he put it: "the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead."

I could not agree more with many of the President's proposals. Increasing the minimum wage, supporting job training and education, and ensuring equal pay for equal work are all necessary to meet the serious economic challenges of our time: stagnant wages and the lack of upward mobility.

But the President's push for fast track authority for the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement, or TPP, flies in the face of these reforms. Twenty years after the NAFTA agreement involving Mexico and its \$10 a day wages, we know that the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which includes Vietnam and its 28 cents per hour minimum wage, will depress wages. It will lead to the offshoring and the loss of American jobs.

Raising American's living standards, restoring the middle class, creating American jobs, and increasing wages—those are our economic goals. That is what we should achieve as a society. The Trans-Pacific Partnership fails on all of these goals, and we should defeat fast track.

THANKING THE CLEVELAND/BRADLEY COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(Mr. DESJARLAIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Madam Speaker, last week, I had the honor of attending the Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce annual meeting, where Mrs. Margaret Schenck and Mr. Bob Card Both received awards for their devotion to free market values and dedication to our community.

I want to thank these individuals, along with the entire Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce, for their ongoing fight to grow and support local businesses.

Organizations like this Chamber of Commerce show that American small business owners and entrepreneurs are doing their part in growing jobs and strengthening our economy.

Now it is time for Washington to live up to its end of the bargain. We must eliminate the numerous regulatory roadblocks that are being imposed upon businesses and holding them back from reaching their full potential. We know the path to prosperity will not be paved by Washington bureaucrats. Rather, a brighter future will be secured by groups like the Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber of Commerce who seek to foster innovation and empower local businesses.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in support of comprehensive immigration reform.

Our borders remain vulnerable, employers game the system by hiring undocumented workers, and millions of individuals are living in the shadows.

This status quo fails to meet the needs of businesses, is unfair to workers, and is holding back economic growth and opportunity in New Hampshire and all across this country.

Congress must prioritize the consideration of bipartisan legislation to comprehensively reform and modernize our immigration system: H.R. 15, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act.

It has been over 200 days since the Senate passed similar reform legislation, and it is long past time for the House of Representatives to do the same.

Republicans and Democrats must work together to take this common step to better secure our country and to reward those who work hard and are strengthening our economy.

Comprehensive immigration reform would strengthen our borders, combat

illegal immigration, and create new opportunities for individual achievement and the pursuit of the American Dream.

Madam Speaker, I implore you: bring this important bill to the floor.

PRESIDENT SHOULD ACT ON KEYSTONE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, for more than 1,960 days, the President has refused to approve the construction of the Keystone pipeline. The President has incorrectly blamed the delay on harmful environmental impacts, but last week, the State Department released a study confirming what House Republicans have been saying for years: the Keystone pipeline will not harm the environment.

The President is placing politics over job creation. On Monday, former Energy Secretary Steven Chu acknowledged that the administration's decision is strictly political and has no scientific backing.

The President says he wants to create jobs, but his inconsistent actions have prevented over 120,000 immediate shovel-ready jobs. The President has said these are temporary jobs, but he is wrong. These are permanent jobs at MTU of Graniteville and Michelin of Lexington, producing engines and earthmover tires for oil sands recovery in Alberta, Canada.

The most environmentally secure method of transportation is by pipeline, and the President should join Congress in developing Keystone for jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

FLOOD INSURANCE RATES

(Mr. KILMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on the House of Representatives to take action to prevent enormous flood insurance rate hikes from going into effect for homeowners all across this country. This is about the basic principle of housing affordability.

Recently, I met with Realtors, homeowners, insurance agents, and mortgage brokers in my neck of the woods. They shared with me just how dramatic the impact has already been in our region.

One perspective home buyer in Grays Harbor County was shocked to find that their flood insurance quote came out to a whopping \$13,000 per year. After paying \$600 to show that the property was elevated, the insurance

quote was still more than the monthly mortgage payment would have been, and the deal fell through.

This policy has already led to a rapid and substantial decline in property values in a part of my district that already struggles with double-digit unemployment and can't afford another round of congressional disfunction.

Madam Speaker, the Senate has already acted. Let's do the same and immediately take up the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

TRIUMPH OF FLIGHT MONUMENT

(Mr. TURNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TURNER. Madam Speaker, my hometown of Dayton, Ohio, is the birthplace of aviation. At the turn of the 20th century, Orville and Wilbur Wright, bicycle repair shop owners in Dayton, invented the first airplane, ushering in the era of modern aviation.

From their efforts, America led the development of an entire new industry. It revolutionized commerce, communication, travel, and our national defense.

Today, Ohio continues to help the Nation reach new heights in aviation and in the aerospace industry.

For example, in Dayton, the field where the Wright brothers developed and flew "the world's first practical aeroplane" is now part of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the largest Air Force base in the world and home to the Air Force Research Laboratory, dedicated to advancing aerospace technologies.

That is why I am here today to congratulate the efforts of the Wright Image Group, a team of resolute individuals who are preparing to construct a new monument for America to promote our Nation's accomplishments in air and space.

Calling it the "Triumph of Flight," seen here, they will place a massive replica of the 1905 Wright flyer 250 feet in the air above the crossroads intersection of Interstates 70 and 75.

Madam Speaker, this monument's innovative design will remind us of the Wright brothers' achievements and excite and inspire future generations.

This monument site will honor the great achievements of Ohio aviation and aerospace leaders, including the Wright brothers, John Glenn, and Neil Armstrong.

I congratulate them again on the innovative design, and we look forward to this monument rising between Interstates 70 and 75.

DEBT CEILING

(Mr. HONDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has been urging Congress to act before Friday's debt ceiling deadline, but here we are again with no signs of legislative progress, with rumors of a ransom that Republicans will demand before Congress will be allowed to do its job.

The Treasury Department is once again being forced to resort to extraordinary measures to continue financing the government.

These games of chicken are dangerous. They are irresponsible, they have led to turmoil in the markets, and they have cost our economy billions. We have avoided disaster in the past and I believe will avoid it this time. In any game of chicken, one side always must blink. But what happens when neither side blinks? Disaster.

I ask my colleagues to help me install a permanent fix that would end the brinkmanship surrounding the debt limit.

My H.R. 233 allows the debt limit to be raised unless a supermajority of Congress votes to block such action. This would permanently shift the role of Congress to disapproving debt ceiling increases instead of being forced to approve them.

My approach has been introduced by Senators SCHUMER, BOXER, and HIRONO in the Senate, and has been endorsed by a growing chorus of economists and outside thought leaders.

I urge my colleagues to join me in pursuing these permanent, necessary reforms.

ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH

(Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, Philip Seymour Hoffman, a gifted and talented actor, didn't have to die. His death is all too common. In the past 6 years, heroin use has doubled, with 1 million ER visits and several thousand deaths that will occur this year from an overdose.

This is not just a law enforcement issue but a public health issue because addiction is a mental disease.

Many treatments for addiction are modeled on peer support like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, valuable and important organizations that provide a pathway to helping a person overcome an addiction through peer support, but peer support is only support. It is not the whole treatment.

In Time magazine, a parent whose son died of a drug overdose said:

I did everything I could, but I failed him. Everything included eight residential treatment programs and four outpatient programs.

Addiction programs don't always do everything right. Ninety percent of those who enter treatment programs

don't receive evidence-based treatment. The fact is there is a lack of mental health professionals, broken Federal policies, and a severe shortage of acute care facilities.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in sponsoring the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, H.R. 3717. Let's get people the help they need.

□ 1230

CORPORAL G. ROBERT SMITH

(Mr. WENSTRUP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, from 1942 to 1949, the African American marines who trained at Montford Point Camp, North Carolina, fought intolerance and segregation, yet they continued to serve their Nation proudly.

I am honored to have one of these men, World War II veteran Corporal G. Robert Smith, amongst the ranks of constituents in Ohio's Second District.

I am personally grateful for Corporal Smith's service and dedication to our Nation, and I would like to offer my sincere congratulations for being recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal. Corporal Smith lives up to the high standards that characterize the United States Marine Corps. The statement "once a marine, always a marine" is a reminder that these standards carry on long after the uniform has been put away.

Corporal Smith, your fellow Americans take pride in your military service and your contributions to your community after that service.

The freedom and liberty that we enjoy today is due, in large part, to the sacrifices made by individuals like Corporal G. Robert Smith.

Corporal Smith, Semper Fi.

THE FOUR CHAPLAINS

(Mr. STIVERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 71st anniversary of a dramatic sacrifice made by four U.S. Army chaplains during World War II on February 3, 1943. On that day, the USS *Dorchester* was torpedoed by a German submarine, and it sunk. Out of that tragedy came the story of the four chaplains.

Four U.S. Army chaplains of different faiths—one rabbi, one Roman Catholic priest, one Methodist, and one Baptist minister, Clark Poling, who was born in Columbus, Ohio—came together on that day on the *Dorchester*. As the *Dorchester* began sinking, they began to calm the men and organized an orderly evacuation, but it quickly became clear that there weren't enough life jackets.

In a true display of heroism and bravery, the four chaplains removed their own life jackets and gave them to others. They helped as many men as they could on lifeboats, and then they linked arms, recited prayers, and sung hymns as the ship went down. These heroic actions must never be forgotten.

I would like to thank the Wilmington, Ohio, American Legion post and the many American Legion posts and VFW posts across the country that helped tell this story this week. We must never forget.

BUREAUCRACY STANDING IN THE WAY OF PROGRESS

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, Americans want us to work together to help our economy grow, to support job creation, and to create opportunity for every American to succeed, but far too often our own government gets in the way of American job opportunities—stifling innovation and hindering job creation.

The construction of the Keystone pipeline means thousands of jobs to Americans who are looking to get back to work—it means engineering, construction, energy, transportation, and manufacturing jobs—but our own government continues to stand in the way.

The Congressional Budget Office now says the administration's health care mandates will damage economic growth and will lead to as many as 2.3 million American workers losing their jobs because of what this government has decided to do to them. These are real consequences for real families.

Mr. Speaker, our economy isn't struggling because of the efforts of the American people. No. Our economy struggles because of bloated, expensive, and destructive bureaucracy that stands in the doorway of progress. As this government grows, opportunity shrinks. It is time that this Congress removes the weight of this government off the backs of the American people.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2954, PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3964, SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 472 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 472

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the

House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-35. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-34. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered

only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARDNER). The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days during which they may revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, the resolution provides a structured rule for the consideration of two separate bills: H.R. 2954, which is the Public Access and Lands Improvement Act, and H.R. 3964, which is the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act.

It provides for an hour of general debate, each measure equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule makes in order five amendments to H.R. 2954 and eight to H.R. 3964, and of those amendments made in order, nine are Democrat amendments. So this is a fair and generous rule. It will provide for a balanced and open debate on the merits of both of these important pieces of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank my friend, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have real problems facing our Nation. The measures before us today are partisan and have no chance of becoming law. My friends across the aisle would rather pick po-

litical battles than propose real solutions. We worked together on the farm bill, on the budget, and on the omnibus appropriations bill, and I hope that soon we will pass a bipartisan Water Resources Development Act conference report. Instead of continuing in a bipartisan manner, however, we are here once again considering partisan bills that will not become law. For example, H.R. 3964 is a far-reaching measure of drastic and immediate consequences for its chosen winners, yet the bill was introduced only a week ago and with only Republican cosponsors.

California is in the middle of a terrible drought. Some Californians are already reporting that no water comes out when they turn on their taps. They need a real solution. We have got our water issues in Florida. There is not enough of it in places that need it and too much of it where it is not needed. Yet my friends across the aisle have decided to handpick when states' rights don't matter and to take the opportunity to blast California's prerogative.

California has a plan—the Bay Delta Conservation Plan—that has been worked on in a unanimously important way. Instead, this legislation has turned a legitimate crisis into a justification for a power grab, prioritizing junior water rights holders over those with senior rights. I respect my colleagues from California, but the Governor is responsible for the entire State, and he expressly rejects the measure before us today.

Mr. Speaker, Californians already have, as I have said, a water use plan in place. The plan is a result of long, detailed discussions and carefully crafted policy. Yet this bill would substitute—indeed, preempt—the will of the people with a reactionary Federal policy. Specifically, the bill preempts California law, eliminates Endangered Species Act protections for salmon and other fisheries, overturns existing Federal law, as well as undermines existing agreements and court orders related to water use in California.

Moreover, this bill will not fix the problem, which is simple—there is not enough water. H.R. 3964 will not end the drought. It will not create more water. Simply put, it will only decide who will go thirsty.

California's secretary for natural resources, John Laird, wrote to the relevant committees:

The bill falsely holds the promise of water relief that cannot be delivered because, in this drought, the water simply does not exist.

How and when to direct water is very similar to problems we face in the Everglades. Without an ongoing flush of water into the ocean, seawater intrudes upon the delta. You then wind up with saltwater inland, and then you might as well not have any water at all.

I didn't have to deliberate long to decide against this bill. California, the State the bill supposedly helps, is strongly opposed to it. Let me be very clear. That means the Governor and those who are critical to it are opposed. I understand that there are members of the California delegation who do support this matter, and I respect that. I can't say it any better myself. The only way we are going to help California is to realize that you can't play politics with a person's drinking water.

Turning now to the other piece of legislation, H.R. 2954 is no better either substantively or procedurally. My friends across the aisle continue to play fast and loose with their pledge to address one issue at a time. That is what they said. H.R. 2954 is 10 unrelated bills stitched together. Some of the provisions we are looking at today are not controversial, but rather than pass noncontroversial provisions through less contentious means, my friends have packaged them together with partisan measures for rank political purposes.

□ 1245

It is Frankenstein's parliamentary monster.

The other day at the Rules Committee, my friends across the aisle talked about how much they love national parks, and shared their experiences hiking and visiting the parks with their families. Yet they are still bringing H.R. 2954 to the floor, a bill that would greatly hamstring the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the United States Forest Service in their capabilities to protect public land and endangered species.

These 10 bills are designed to influence or dictate management decisions about the conveyance or disposal of Federal lands. They tie the hands of public land managers and give away millions of dollars worth of Federal land to local governments without ensuring the land is used in the public's best interest.

They include drastic changes to regulations related to grazing policy and waive or undermine existing environmental law. Some of these provisions would be significantly less controversial were it not for the unnecessary provisions waiving environmental protections. It is no secret my friends across the aisle look to undermine, if not eliminate, the National Environmental Policy Act at every chance they can.

These are the kinds of policies that leave 300,000 West Virginians without water to drink or bathe. We don't know the effects of the chemicals that spilled into the drinking water for 300,000 West Virginians. We don't know yet how much or even specifically what was spilled. The lasting damage to West

Virginia's water supply can't be predicted. That is why it should be an exemplar for why we need to have careful environmental regulations everywhere.

Mr. Speaker, week after week, my Republican colleagues continue to bring up partisan bills that offer no relief to hardworking Americans. I believe that this institution is better than that and must change course.

I am astounded that we haven't authorized unemployment insurance.

Let me repeat that. I am astounded that we have not reauthorized unemployment insurance for now what is 1.6 million Americans. With each passing day, more families face the threat of losing their homes. With each passing day, our roads, bridges, schools, parks, ports, airports, and railways continue to degrade due to lack of adequate investment. With each passing day, Americans burdened by long-term unemployment see little, if any, action in the House of Representatives to give them hope.

With so many Americans and their families enduring difficult times, we cannot afford to wait any longer. Americans deserve peace of mind and a government that functions.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. My good friend from Florida was correct in at least one aspect. There are two bills that are involved in this particular rule, one which involves 10 different sections dealing with land issues that are critical to 10 States chagrined that they have to come to Congress for redressing their grievances. The other one deals with water issues.

To explain that water issue, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), the sponsor of that particular bill.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, as a farmer in the Central Valley, I grew up there—born and raised—on my own personal farm with my family. We have struggled with this water fight for years, even before I was born. This isn't a new issue. It is something that has been talked about for years. The problem is we have talked about it long enough. We have got to do something. We have got to make a difference for these people.

When they talk about unemployment benefits, these people in my district would rather have a job. You turn on that water and they will be back to work. We have got farmers in my district that are literally laying people off today, putting more people on the unemployment line, because of environmental regulations.

Yes, there is a drought going on. That has been going on. It has happened in the past. We have got at least 10 in our recorded history in California.

When you look at what our forefathers have done, they created an infrastructure to allow us to prepare for those droughts, and what these regula-

tions have done is allowed water to go out into the ocean and not be in place to prevent us from this disastrous situation we face today.

That is what we are fighting over today. We want to make sure that that infrastructure is used and our taxpayer money is put in place so that when those projects are there, we have water to supply our farms and our communities.

Over the last year, as a Member of Congress, and the 2 years before that as a member of the State house, and before that as a farmer, I have always dealt with and talked with my locals—and especially my local elected officials. My city councils, my city managers, my board of supervisors all come to me with the same issue:

What are we going to do? We have got 40 percent of our water this year for our city; we have got 50 percent of our water for our city; we have got 20 percent of our water for our farmers. How are we going to take care of our communities? How are we going to take care of these people. How are we going to allow them to be successful?

This is one of the solutions.

When we talk about solutions, I am fine and happy to work with Members on long-term solutions like the Bay Delta Conservation Plan, as long as it delivers water. I am fine talking about the water bond, as long as it delivers water infrastructure for our Valley.

We have to make sure that the crisis that we are facing today is addressed. Because it is a crisis; it is affecting people today. We are seeing people being laid off. Yes, that is putting a huge dent in our resources because we have to pay these people because they are not working because of a program, because of regulations that were put into place that allowed that water to go out into the ocean for absolutely no good reason.

So this has had an impact on my district. We are going to continue to fight, and yes, this is a solution. If the other side has a solution to bring to the table and be part of the conversation, I am happy to hear it and happy to negotiate. Until then, we are going to continue to fight on our side and push this forward.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), a former member of the Rules Committee.

Ms. MATSUI. I wish to thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3964.

California is currently experiencing a record drought. Up until just last Thursday, it had been 54 days without rain in my district of Sacramento. That is almost 2 months. To put this in context, Sacramento is experiencing a

130-year record for low rainfall, a record that dates back to 1884.

With 2013 being the driest year on record since the Gold Rush, and 2014 being the third year of a drought cycle, we are being pushed to make do with less water than ever before.

A statewide drought emergency has been declared, and my district of Sacramento is doing its part by instituting a mandatory reduction in water use. My constituents are required by law now to reduce their water use 20 to 30 percent. Fines for multiple offenders will reach \$1,000.

Moreover, in the Sacramento region, the Folsom Reservoir is at dangerously low levels and is currently only at 17 percent of capacity.

Unfortunately, there is no silver bullet to solving California's water issues. The issue of water in California has been debated for so many decades because it is such a critical issue for the State. As a daughter of a Central Valley farmer who grew up on a farm, I deeply understand the value of and the controversy over water.

In northern California, we have done our best to balance our watershed to provide water for our farms, cities, and habitat.

To say this bill will help the drought is grossly misleading and, frankly, irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, even if we pumped as much water south as possible, it still wouldn't be enough. The problem is a lack of rain. There is simply no more water to pump from the Delta.

Mr. Speaker, instead of working together, this bill only further divides our State. My district, the city of Sacramento, the Sacramento region, and northern California as a whole, strongly oppose this bill. Some of the concerns include the loss of the State's right to manage its own water, the decimation of environmental protections for our Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the ability to manage Folsom Reservoir for the benefit of the Sacramento metropolitan area and, most importantly, the overall instability that this bill would create in California.

We cannot afford to give up California's right to control its own water future. The stakes are much too high. I urge my colleagues to strongly oppose this legislation.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. MCNERNEY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start by stating that I am strongly opposed to H.R. 3964, for a variety of reasons, but primarily because it does nothing to address California's drought. However, I

would like to raise two points about the bill's process and debate.

I offered an amendment that would sunset provisions of this bill in the 2015 water year. I did this because the bill's authors stated that the bill is intended to be a short-term measure. Yet my amendment to limit the duration of the bill was prevented from coming to the floor for a debate.

I offered another amendment, which was actually proposed by the bill's authors. A few weeks ago, the Speaker, the majority whip, and the bill's authors held a press conference in California, where they bemoaned the fact that the Senate would not come to the negotiating table to address long-term water shortage issues.

I agree with them that a bipartisan discussion in both Houses of Congress is appropriate. That is why I offered an amendment, using their own suggestions, to establish a joint select committee to address drought issues in the West. It would be comprised of 10 Members, just as the bill's author recommended, and would work out a comprehensive solution.

That proposal, too, was rejected, as was a similar amendment by my California Valley colleague, Mr. COSTA. We wanted to bring the House and the Senate to the table but are being denied the tools we need to do just that. How can the bill's authors claim they want a bicameral discussion, yet deny a vote on this issue—one which they just advocated for?

I am trying to establish a set of guidelines with what the bill's authors say they want, but they won't even allow it.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I appreciate the gentleman's frustration. Those very proposals were offered by Chairman LUCAS in the farm bill and rejected by the Senate.

I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Ms. ESHOO), with whom I served previously on the Intelligence Committee and who is a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Ms. ESHOO. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in fierce opposition to the bill that is being considered because it throws decades of State and Federal water law out the window, and, in the process, it would kill thousands of jobs in the Bay area and elsewhere on the west coast, while pitting water users against one another.

Salmon fishing is one of California's oldest industries. Today, the Bay-Delta salmon fishery is not nearly as healthy as it once was, but it still supports thousands of jobs up and down the entire west coast. This bill would dry up what is left of the once legendary salmon fishery industry.

Here are some of the laws that this bill would gut or override. I think everyone should fasten their seatbelts:

The California Constitution;

The Reclamation Act of 1902;

The Central Valley Project Improvement Act;

The State and Federal Endangered Species Act;

The National Environmental Policy Act;

The San Joaquin River Settlement Act;

The Wild & Scenic River Act protections for the Merced River.

If that is not enough for everyone in the House to know, then there isn't anything else to know.

Vote against this bill. It is horrible.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, the last time California had a severe multiyear drought, something very different happened. Democrats and Republicans, people from the northern part of the State, the southern part, and inland came together around a historic bipartisan set of water reforms.

I was fortunate to help author some of that. I chaired the Water Committee in the State legislature. National newspapers like The New York Times called it the most important thing California had done for water in 60 years.

This bill repeals it. Full stop.

□ 1300

To offer this as a solution would be laughable if it weren't such a serious offense to real solutions in California water.

The Bay Delta Conservation Plan which my friend referenced is over if this bill passes because the premise of that plan is coequal goals for the environment and water supply reliability; and when you preempt that and repeal it, there is no basis for that plan to move forward at all.

You had better include, in fact, some funding for the Federal courts if this bill passes because, instead of a solution, you are going to be unleashing a wave of litigation unlike anything the State of California has ever seen.

It is going to hurt the San Joaquin Valley, and it is going to hurt every other part of the State that needs constructive solutions, not a new water war.

We have over 100 years, Mr. Speaker, of deference by the Federal Government to the State of California and to all other Western States in administering our water rights system. That was made very clear by Chief Justice Rehnquist in *California v. The United States* in the 1970s.

The principle of State administration of water rights under the public trust doctrine is part of the California Constitution, and the California Supreme Court has made it clear that that is a bedrock of California water law.

The California Legislature, in that historic 2009 package, called that the fundamental principle of California water, and it is repealed by this vastly overreaching expansion of Federal authority offered cynically today as a solution.

I know some people across the aisle like to talk about the 10th Amendment. They like to rail against expansion of Federal authority and Federal overreach. Well, we are living in a very glass house here today, Mr. Speaker, because this is the most overreaching expansion of Federal authority that I could ever imagine on something as basic as water rights in the Western United States.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), who is a member of the Education and Workforce Committee and a former chair of the relevant committee having to do with the environment.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank my colleagues who have spoken out against this legislation.

This legislation is in no way a solution to the problems that we have in California with the continuing drought. This legislation is simply a legislative temper tantrum.

They don't want to nuance what has to be nuanced. They don't want to have each area of origin be taken into consideration. They don't want to balance urban/rural. They don't want to balance agriculture/technology.

This is what the Governor is having to do. This is what the resource agency is having to do. This is what the entire State legislature is focusing on, trying to figure out how all of California survives the drought.

This one just says what we will do is we will kick over the barn upstate there. We will take their water and we will be okay.

Well, why doesn't San Diego look up north and say, you know what? We will kick over the barn. We will take their water, and we will be okay.

This is the greatest intrusion into State water rights that we have seen in this legislature, and that is why Governors of other Western States understand the principles that are engaged here are an absolute attack on their States also. That is why Representatives from those States opposed this legislation last time it was presented, and they will oppose it again this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman.

So you have a bipartisan coalition in the States trying to work this out, from every economic sector, from every environmental sector, for the benefit of the State of California.

This drought doesn't have to end in this rainy season. It can go on another year and another year.

This legislation is destructive, destructive of our trying to make sure that every facet of the California society and its economy survive, and that is why this bill should be rejected. It is an assault on fundamental states' rights that every other Western Governor recognized the moment this bill was introduced, and that is why they oppose it. They join the Governor of California, the resource agency of California, in opposition to this bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we gave the House an opportunity to consider flood insurance reform which the Senate has already adopted, but unfortunately it was denied. As incongruous as it might be, we consider it such an important issue, while we are here talking about an equally important issue, drought, to bring up this measure having to do with flood insurance. It is an important issue for families across the Nation, so today we will provide that opportunity again.

If we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to this rule to bring up a bill that will delay flood insurance premium hikes and provide financial relief to thousands of American families and, specifically, families in Florida.

To discuss our proposal, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD), my good friend.

Mr. HORSFORD. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question and allow us to vote on legislation to address the Nation's concerns about flood insurance and to come up with a comprehensive water plan to address our drought.

Last month, the Senate voted overwhelmingly to approve the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act. And the headline of the American Banker article says it all: "House GOP Blocks Vote on Senate-Passed Flood Insurance Bill."

"Florida Governor Scott Urges Speaker Boehner to Take Up Flood Insurance Fix," by the Palm Beach Post.

This bipartisan legislation provides a 4-year timeout on rate increases triggered by a property's sale or a flood map update for a property with previously grandfathered rates. The bill

also creates a flood insurance advocate to investigate homeowner complaints of rate quotes.

During a recent trip back to my home State in Nevada, my constituents told me that these increases can be excessive and unfair. It is a problem that they want addressed now.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and to allow us to bring up this previous question and offer an alternative.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, before I go into complete pivot to non-germane issues, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES) to talk about how the first bill deals with water diversions, not water consumption.

Mr. NUNES. I want to thank the chairman for allowing me to speak on this important bill.

Mr. Speaker, today we are going to hear, Mr. Speaker, a lot of falsehoods. But we need to get to the bottom of why are we hearing those falsehoods, because, for 40 years in this body, people have made a career of using water as a weapon.

Why? Because they never liked the fact that farmers and farm workers were making what was once a dry area of the State the Garden of Eden of this world. They never liked that.

Why? Because they don't want to have to admit to themselves, when they live in their beautiful cities of Hollywood and San Francisco and all these great cities that are on the coast of California, beautiful areas, it is a desert. They don't have any water either.

So they wanted to keep our area, where I grew up, they wanted to keep it as a desert because they feel bad about the destruction that they have done on the coast of California. So if they can keep inland California in its original state, they would be happy with that.

But for the farmers and the farmworkers that are losing their farms, farmworkers are out of jobs. We are going to lose 30,000 jobs probably this year. It is an inconvenient truth that for 40 years this body has been preempting State law and taking water away from one region and dumping it and wasting it out to the ocean.

You started with the Endangered Species Act, State preemption. In 1992, a lot of talk about how we are gutting the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. That bill was a State preemption. We have no way to fix the problems in California because of all the State preemptions that have been done by the left in this body over four decades.

So I found it fascinating the Members of Congress that were getting up to speak about how we are going to kill the fish, and this water is so important for these fish; and the little Delta smelt, we have got to keep them and keep the habitat.

Well, there is a little more truth to that, Mr. Speaker. Let me tell you what they are really hiding.

And I apologize to the viewers at home. This is what they are hiding: sewer discharge into the delta, killing their precious little fish. Every one of the cities in the San Francisco Bay, Sacramento, the delta, sewage runs right into the waterway, kills the little fish.

It is pretty startling, isn't it?

They don't talk about that, do they?

The other little thing that they don't talk about is, where does their water come from? Because they live in a desert, too. People don't realize that. You go visit San Francisco, visit Silicon Valley, people think, oh, that is a beautiful area. Green lawns, people water their lawns. They don't have any water, Mr. Speaker, either, because, conveniently, this body preempted State law, took water from our area in the Sierra Nevadas, which is about 200 miles away. But worse than that, they went into a national park to take the water.

What national park? Yosemite National Park. They went to Yosemite, one of the treasures of our national park system, and they took this valley, and they put a dam so that they could create this lake.

Now, look, I want the people of San Francisco and the bay area to have water. I don't want them to be like our communities and not have any water. But we have to tell the truth, Mr. Speaker. They dammed up this valley to create this water, but then it doesn't go to the delta to protect their little fish that they care so much about. No, Mr. Speaker. It gets piped over to San Francisco. Here is the pipe. This is the Sierra Nevadas. They catch the water. They pipe it all over the bay area, Silicon Valley, San Francisco, discharge their sewer into the bay, take pristine water from our area to feed their families, grow their grass.

I don't see any of them up here saying that they are going to tear down this system, dump this water into the bay to protect their stupid little fish, their little delta smelt that they care about. We don't see that, Mr. Speaker, because they don't want to tell the truth. This isn't about truth telling. This is about money and power, millions of dollars.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. NUNES. So all of the radical environmental groups that were created in this country started where? In that little epicenter of Hollywood and San Francisco on the west coast of California.

Lawsuits, lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit, millions of dollars went to trial lawyers. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? Those millions of dollars that

came from my community to pay off these rich lawyers, we don't know how many millions it was because it is hidden from the taxpayer. It is hidden from the American people, sealed by court order. Why don't they come out and tell us how much money they made?

Millionaires off of government, used the government to make millions. Used the government to dump sewage into the water to kill the fish; dam up Yosemite to bring the water from Yosemite for fresh water while our people, farmers and farmworkers, lose their jobs.

It is an inconvenient truth, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), my good friend.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, anyone watching this debate, I think, understands why the American public is so turned off by this Congress. This is a bill which was brought to the floor in a hyperpartisan process, bypassing the committee, hyperdivisive, and it is going absolutely nowhere. In the meantime, we have an economy which needs this Congress to act.

A few days ago, the Senate did act on a bipartisan basis to pass the Menendez-Isakson Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which will help coastal properties that are now locking up because of skyrocketing flood insurance premiums which the Senate bill will fix.

Again, 182 cosponsors in the House, bipartisan. We have the support of the Bankers Association, Realtors, housing advocates, a broad consensus, broad bipartisan support. It will help the real estate market, which will drive this recovery in a positive direction.

Let's act on that, amend the rule. Let's bring up the flood insurance relief program and put this underlying bill back to committee where it belongs, where many of these thorny issues can be worked out by Members on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the State of California.

Pass the flood insurance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. COURTNEY. Let's pass this flood insurance measure. In southeastern Connecticut, coastal properties, again, if you talk to the Realtors, you talk to the bankers, these properties are locking up because of the increase in flood insurance premiums.

We can change that today, right now. Get this bill to the President for signature. Let's get this recovery moving. Let's listen to the American people who want to see bipartisan action that is focused on the number one issue facing this country, which is getting a strong economic recovery.

□ 1315

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. If the Speaker would forgive me for trying to get us back on the subject matter of the bill in front of us, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) to talk about the water bill.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition has erupted into a veritable Mount Vesuvius of misinformation on the California water bill, and I would like to address a couple of the major points that they have raised.

This does not preempt State water rights. It specifically invokes and protects the water rights against infringement by any bureaucracy—local, State, or Federal. This is a legitimate constitutional function of the Federal Government that dates back to the 14th Amendment, and it is made essential by the unique relationship between the Federal and State governments with respect to California water policy, the mixture of both the Central Valley project and the State water project.

To the ridiculous comment that this is a theft of northern California water and that northern California is united in its opposition, nothing could be further from the truth. On the contrary, this bill protects the north from any attempt to override established California water rights law in reallocating water from the north.

Just to illustrate this, I would point out that it was these provisions in the last session of Congress that the California Association of Water Agencies specifically pointed to in support. They said this: The bill, if enacted, now contains provisions that would not only protect the interests of senior water rights holders in the Sacramento Valley but would also provide significant material water policy improvements to current Federal law. The bill, if enacted, would provide an unprecedented Federal statutory express recognition of and commitment to California's State water rights priority system and area of origin protections.

Finally, to the argument that we cannot make it rain, there is not enough water to go around. Well, that is true. One of the reasons is because in this third year of drought, we have dumped a total of 1.6 million acre-feet of water into the Pacific Ocean that was desperately needed to support the threatened human population of California.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN), my good friend.

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge a "no" vote on the previous question so that we may immediately consider H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Mr. Speaker, communities in my home State say, We cannot wait for relief from steep flood insurance rate increases. Rhode Island families have told me that they are facing flood insurance rates upwards of \$35,000, and they are scared of losing their homes. If these rates fully go into effect, in many cases, families are going to be paying more for flood insurance than they are for their mortgage. Unless we act, we could potentially see whole middle class neighborhoods wiped out because they will drown not because of a flood but because they will drown under the weight of the cost of flood insurance. This is simply unconscionable.

Implementing a delay in rate increases, Mr. Speaker, will give FEMA time to complete an affordability study and develop recommendations to help homeowners afford their premiums. Without it, thousands of middle class homeowners will continue to suffer from the uncertainty of not knowing whether the cost of flood insurance will make homeownership unaffordable.

This legislation passed the Senate Thursday with a strong bipartisan vote. The House companion has 182 bipartisan cosponsors. I urge my colleagues to support consideration of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act to provide immediate relief for our families and our communities.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), who is the ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services.

I wish to make clear to my friend on the other side who continues to say that he wants to bring us back to the subject matter of this underlying bill that the minority has been granted a motion to recommit, and that motion to recommit is just as relevant as the underlying bill.

To speak to this issue, then, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. WATERS. I thank the gentleman from Florida for allowing me to take some time to be on this floor to plead with my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle to join with us in support of our middle class citizens who now have their homes at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I plead with the opposite side of the aisle to join with what is a bipartisan piece of legislation, a bicameral piece of legislation, legislation that was passed out by the Senate that would correct the unintended consequences of the Biggert-Waters Act.

Why am I so passionate about this? First of all, I was a coauthor of the Biggert-Waters Act. It was a bill that we got together on where we tried to reduce the debt that we are confronted with, providing assistance and subsidies to our homeowners.

Many of our homeowners, as you know, across this country are put at risk. Their homes are destroyed through natural disasters. We have to be available to them through this kind of insurance program, the National Flood Insurance Program.

So we have the Senate, we have Republicans, we have Democrats who have all joined in with us to do something very simple: delay this for a time period. Delay this for 4 years so we can get on FEMA, and FEMA can get it right.

FEMA messed up the Biggert-Waters bill. We said, You have to do an affordability study. They did not do that. We said, You have to get your mapping and your remapping right. They have not done that. We said, Get a credible database. They have not done that.

We have got to correct FEMA. There is no reason why people should be having their premiums increased by 500 percent. This is wrong. We can do something about it. Don't stand in the way of coming to the assistance of American citizens who depend on us in their time of trouble.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA) who is a dear personal friend of mine. He and I share concerns about issues related to Florida as well as this Nation, as it pertains to flood insurance.

Mr. GARCIA. I would like to thank my colleague from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to echo the words of the previous speaker. Like the gentleman, though, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so that we can take up a more important vote, so we can take up the strongly bipartisan Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

During this Congress, we have spent far, far too much time on issues that divide us rather than on bipartisan issues that unite us. The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act is just that kind of bipartisan legislation that should be at the top of the House's agenda. It would relieve homeowners of crushing premium rate increases, strengthen our housing market, and support economic recovery. That is why this legislation has such strong bipartisan support.

The Senate passed this bill by a 67-32 margin. The House companion bill has 182 cosponsors, including 56 Republican cosponsors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in voting to take up the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act today. It just can't wait. It is time to make a difference. For this reason, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can take up this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, because of rising flood insurance rates, people are literally walking away from their homes. I recently heard from Robin and Derek, a South Florida couple whose landlord had increased their rent to cover the property's rising flood insurance rates. The rent increase made staying in their home too expensive for Robin and Derek. Despite searching, they were unable to find another affordable house in the area. After nine years of calling South Florida home, they were forced to leave Florida and move north to Pennsylvania. The couple had to find new jobs in a new town. Their young daughter had to be pulled from her childhood home, her school, and all of her friends.

Mr. Speaker, this is not right. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing that by voting to take up the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act today. This can't wait. We have to act to protect hardworking Americans from these exorbitant rate increases before anyone else is forced to walk away from their home.

For this reason, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can pass this bipartisan, commonsense solution and provide much-needed relief for homeowners in South Florida and across America.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 30 seconds to my good friend from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. There is great concern in the real estate community. It is very difficult to acquire flood insurance at some of the prices that are being quoted.

I think it is exceedingly important that we adhere to the words of Ranking Member WATERS: What is the rush? Why not get the study? Why not do that which we intended to do before we arrived at this position in our history?

My hope is that we will heed her words.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that my friends across the aisle have failed to recognize the irony in bringing these bills together to the floor at the same time.

The California water bill is an acknowledgement of how important clean water is, while the public lands bill undermines our ability to keep that water clean. It would be funny if it

weren't the absolute truth of the matter.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, meteorologists are calling the high-pressure zone at the root of the drought in California "the ridiculously resilient ridge." In that spirit, one could say that the Republicans' resistance to extending unemployment insurance, fixing our aging infrastructure, raising the debt ceiling, fixing flood insurance, and passing comprehensive immigration reform is also a resilience worthy of the same adverb.

I believe that it is time for Congress to get serious about moving our country forward. The motion to recommit is particularly relevant to all of us in this Nation as it pertains to flood insurance, and this underlying bill, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) said earlier, is horrible.

I ask unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker, to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question. I urge a "no" vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I have appreciated the tone and the tenor of today's discussion and all the words that have been said on all the bills that are before us.

We have the opportunity of making the desert bloom if we do things in the appropriate way. We have done it in the past. We can do it in the future.

I recognize that most of the debate has been on the one bill in this particular issue which deals with the issue of water in California. Totally ignored was the other issue that is equally significant, especially to the 10 States that have an interest in that, dealing with land policy.

You see, there is a role for government if government is efficient and effective and compassionate and uses common sense. As I have worked with individuals, both on the ground from the Forest Service and the BLM, who live in the communities and know those people, they are usually fair, efficient, and effective people. They get it. But the further they ascend or are removed from the people and go up into the hierarchy of the administration, as they tend towards Washington, D.C., they tend to forget people and the importance of helping people, and they become hamstrung, as agencies, with a blind obedience to policy and to regulation so that the agencies become inefficient and ineffective. They lack compassion, and they are certainly devoid of common sense.

For example, we have one of the titles here that deals with islands off the coast of Florida, in 1946, given to those counties. They were told, as they had done that, that they could not sell the land, they could only lease it, which means that homeowners and businesses on this island that had been Federal property can now pay no property tax that helps the entire community to defend not only those areas but also keep the public lands open. It is an unfair situation.

Now think of this: This is property the Federal Government does not own, they do not need, they do not use, and yet they still control, by policy, what they are doing on that land which, I am sorry, is a silly policy that simply hurts the people.

□ 1330

We have the same thing across the country in Alaska. In Anchorage, there are 3 acres—3 measly acres—in the middle of the city, a city surrounded by Federal land, and you have to come to Congress because the rules and policy of the administration—the agencies—hurt people and lack common sense by denying Anchorage the ability to use that land efficiently, as they wish. Once again, this is land the Federal Government does not own, they don't need, and they don't use, but they still control what the local government can do with that particular piece of property.

In Nevada, Fernley, Nevada, they are willing to pay the government just to leave them alone. All the land they want is within the city boundaries of Fernley. Once again, in this case, the Federal Government does not need this property, and they don't use this property. They simply insist on controlling it. What we need to do is simply get them out of the way so we can help the community to move forward.

It seems amazing that at many of our land agencies we simply have a gridlock as we have a highly centralized bureaucracy that values power over the principle of actually helping people. If Congress has to be involved in moving 3 acres in the middle of one community, that is a preposterous situation which we find.

I recently read a book that dealt with my church members living in Communist East Germany who had a very difficult time finding places in which they could build chapels so they could worship. If they found an area, simply a vacant space, they had to find equivalent private property to give to the state because the state government in East Germany insisted there was no net loss of property by the state. What I find amazing is we in America, with these land agencies, have that exact same philosophy: there can be no net loss of property to the government. That means either we are wrong today or Communist East Germany was cor-

rect back then, and I really don't think it is the latter.

We have another piece of property in North Carolina. In 2007, the government came up with a management plan. It was agreed to by the community, not happily, but they agreed to it. They did a biological survey and they found out that this plan does nothing to impede or harm any of the species available at Cape Hatteras. Yet the next year there was a lawsuit, and the land agencies, instead of fighting for what they knew was right and they had agreed to, caved, in a sue-and-settle settlement, which harmed the people living in that area. It hurt those people who were making their livelihood after the tourism going to Cape Hatteras.

Yes, in this case, the Federal Government owns the property and uses the property, but their control of the property is a total lack of common sense and a total lack of compassion and hurts the people who live there.

During the Clinton administration, the Clinton administration identified land in the Federal Government control that was not needed and that was useless. However, trying to find what those lands are requires you to go to 150 different sites to look in 150 different books. Why would they not put that on a computerized system so that anyone can have access to it and there is transparency in what we do and do not have? Yet the agency simply says that, even though that is a good idea, they are simply quite too busy to actually accomplish that task. In a response that makes the rollout of ObamaCare look well-managed, why do we need to understand where these lands are?

I will take a simple example. The Forest Service had land in one of my communities that they had owned for 40 years and did not know they actually had; and when the community wanted to expand their cemetery and did the title search, we finally found out this actually was Forest Service land. Needless to say, even though the locals wanted this land transferred and they didn't need it and they hadn't used it in decades, it still took 4 years to try and get this Congress to actually authorize it to take place, and then the Forest Service still charged the community \$6,000 to do the paperwork to transfer the land over.

We have, in the middle of one of our National Guard units, BLM land that they don't need and they don't use, and yet we are still trying to get them to transfer the land over to the State of Utah so they can build needed infrastructure on a National Guard base that is still owned technically by the BLM.

That is why we need to understand what this is. We have a simple system, but we have bureaucratic lethargy in this country.

We have a mountain lookout, a historical site in Washington that was

historic before wilderness was created in that particular area, and to try to shore up that lookout so it doesn't collapse, they were then sued by an agency. And some judge back on the west coast decided you have to send helicopters in there to tear it down because you couldn't actually make those kinds of improvements in a wilderness area on a piece of property that is revered by that community and they want to keep it there. Even the environmental community uses that as a staging point for their hikes and trails in that area. But this is a decision that is silly, and we have to make that decision by this summer to save that historic site.

In Yosemite National Park in California, a horrific fire destroyed both public and private lands. We now look at the fact that most of the private lands are now 60 percent recovered. They have gone through to take out the dead wood and the dead timber. They are starting the reforestation process. But on the public side of that land, we are still going through an evaluation process that even under an expedited system simply means that it will be until late summer before they can actually finish that, and then the lawsuits get to start.

Now, look, if you don't remove that dead timber, that burned timber within a year, it is totally useless, and all it does is become infested and becomes a source and a fuel for a future fire in a State that we have already heard is in their third year of drought and desperately needs the water for other things rather than fighting a fire.

These bills in this section of land try and solve these problems so we finally force the agencies to do that which helps people instead of hindering people's process. We find a situation where the agencies, today, of our government are inefficient, they are ineffective, and they lack compassion, which actually hurts constituents, hurts people, and they do not have common sense. That is why this package is so important, and it is important to do it now to help people.

It is simply sad that we are in a situation where Congress has to push the agencies to do the right thing. We should be better than that. We can do better than that, and that is what these bills attempt to do.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to reiterate that this rule is fair, it is appropriate, as appropriate and as fair as are the underlying measures that are being presented to Congress in this rule.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 472 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

Sec. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to

clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

Sec. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3370.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member con-

trolling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 226, nays 196, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 36]

YEAS—226

Aderholt	Cantor	Ellmers
Amash	Capito	Farenthold
Bachmann	Carter	Fitzpatrick
Bachus	Chabot	Fleischmann
Barletta	Coble	Fleming
Barr	Coffman	Flores
Barton	Cole	Forbes
Benish	Collins (GA)	Fortenberry
Bentivolio	Collins (NY)	Foxx
Bilirakis	Conaway	Franks (AZ)
Bishop (UT)	Cook	Frelinghuysen
Black	Costa	Gardner
Blackburn	Cotton	Garrett
Blumenauer	Cramer	Gerlach
Boustany	Crawford	Gibbs
Brady (TX)	Crenshaw	Gibson
Bridenstine	Culberson	Gingrey (GA)
Brooks (AL)	Daines	Gohmert
Brooks (IN)	Davis, Rodney	Goodlatte
Broun (GA)	Denham	Gowdy
Buchanan	Dent	Granger
Bucshon	DeSantis	Graves (GA)
Burgess	DesJarlais	Graves (MO)
Byrne	Diaz-Balart	Griffin (AR)
Calvert	Duffy	Griffith (VA)
Camp	Duncan (SC)	Grimm
Campbell	Duncan (TN)	Guthrie

Halla	McKinley	Ryan (WI)
Hanna	McMorris	Salmon
Harper	Rodgers	Sanford
Harris	Meadows	Scalise
Hartzler	Meehan	Schock
Hastings (WA)	Messer	Schweikert
Heck (NV)	Mica	Scott, Austin
Hensarling	Miller (FL)	Sensenbrenner
Herrera Beutler	Miller (MI)	Sessions
Holding	Mullin	Shimkus
Hudson	Mulvaney	Shuster
Huelskamp	Murphy (PA)	Simpson
Huizenga (MI)	Neugebauer	Smith (MO)
Hultgren	Noem	Smith (NE)
Hunter	Nugent	Smith (NJ)
Hurt	Nunes	Smith (TX)
Issa	Nunnelee	Southerland
Jenkins	Olson	Stewart
Johnson (OH)	Palazzo	Stivers
Johnson, Sam	Paulsen	Stockman
Jordan	Pearce	Stutzman
Joyce	Perry	Terry
Kelly (PA)	Petri	Thompson (PA)
King (IA)	Pittenger	Thornberry
King (NY)	Pitts	Tiberi
Kingston	Poe (TX)	Tipton
Kinzinger (IL)	Pompeo	Turner
Kline	Posey	Upton
Labrador	Price (GA)	Valadao
LaMalfa	Reed	Wagner
Lamborn	Reichert	Walberg
Lance	Renacci	Walden
Lankford	Ribble	Walorski
Latham	Rice (SC)	Weber (TX)
Latta	Rigell	Webster (FL)
LoBiondo	Roby	Wenstrup
Long	Roe (TN)	Westmoreland
Lucas	Rogers (AL)	Whitfield
Luetkemeyer	Rogers (KY)	Williams
Lummis	Rogers (MI)	Wilson (SC)
Marchant	Rohrabacher	Wittman
Marino	Rokita	Wolf
Massie	Rooney	Womack
McAllister	Ros-Lehtinen	Woodall
McCarthy (CA)	Roskam	Yoder
McCauley	Ross	Yoho
McClintock	Rothfus	Young (AK)
McHenry	Royce	Young (IN)
McKeon	Runyan	

NAYS—196

Andrews	DeLauro	Jones
Barber	DelBene	Kaptur
Barrow (GA)	Deutch	Keating
Bass	Dingell	Kelly (IL)
Beatty	Doggett	Kennedy
Becerra	Doyle	Kildee
Bera (CA)	Duckworth	Kilmer
Bishop (GA)	Edwards	Kind
Bishop (NY)	Ellison	Kirkpatrick
Bonamici	Engel	Kuster
Brady (PA)	Enyart	Langevin
Braley (IA)	Eshoo	Larsen (WA)
Brown (FL)	Esty	Larson (CT)
Brownley (CA)	Farr	Lee (CA)
Bustos	Fattah	Levin
Butterfield	Foster	Lewis
Capps	Frankel (FL)	Lipinski
Capuano	Fudge	Loeb
Cárdenas	Gabbard	Lofgren
Carney	Galleo	Lowenthal
Carson (IN)	Garamendi	Lowe
Cartwright	Garcia	Lujan Grisham
Cassidy	Grayson	(NM)
Castor (FL)	Green, Al	Luján, Ben Ray
Chu	Green, Gene	(NM)
Ciulline	Grijalva	Lynch
Clark (MA)	Gutiérrez	Maffei
Clarke (NY)	Hahn	Maloney,
Clay	Hanabusa	Carolyn
Cleaver	Hastings (FL)	Maloney, Sean
Clyburn	Heck (WA)	Matheson
Cohen	Higgins	Matsui
Connolly	Himes	McCollum
Conyers	Hinojosa	McDermott
Cooper	Holt	McGovern
Courtney	Honda	McIntyre
Crowley	Horsford	McNerney
Cuellar	Hoyer	Meeks
Cummings	Huffman	Meng
Davis (CA)	Israel	Michaud
Davis, Danny	Jackson Lee	Miller, George
DeFazio	Jeffries	Moore
DeGette	Johnson (GA)	Moran
Delaney	Johnson, E. B.	Murphy (FL)

Nadler	Richmond	Speier	Hunter	Miller (MI)	Schock	Polis	Schrader	Titus
Napolitano	Roybal-Allard	Swalwell (CA)	Hurt	Mullin	Schweikert	Price (NC)	Scott (VA)	Tonko
Neal	Ruiz	Takano	Issa	Mulvaney	Scott, Austin	Quigley	Scott, David	Tsongas
Negrete McLeod	Ruppersberger	Thompson (CA)	Jenkins	Murphy (PA)	Sensenbrenner	Rahall	Serrano	Van Hollen
Nolan	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (MS)	Johnson (OH)	Neugebauer	Sessions	Rangel	Sewell (AL)	Vargas
O'Rourke	Sánchez, Linda	Tierney	Johnson, Sam	Noem	Shimkus	Richmond	Shea-Porter	Veasey
Owens	T. Titus	Titus	Jones	Nunes	Shuster	Roybal-Allard	Sherman	Vela
Pallone	Sanchez, Loretta	Tonko	Jordan	Nunnelee	Simpson	Ruiz	Sinema	Velázquez
Pascrell	Sarbanes	Tsongas	Joyce	Olson	Smith (MO)	Ruppersberger	Sires	Visclosky
Pastor (AZ)	Schakowsky	Van Hollen	Kelly (PA)	Palazzo	Smith (NE)	Ryan (OH)	Slaughter	Walz
Payne	Schiff	Vargas	King (IA)	Paulsen	Smith (NJ)	Sánchez, Linda	Smith (WA)	Wasserman
Pelosi	Schneider	Veasey	King (NY)	Pearce	Smith (TX)	T. Tierney	Speier	Schultz
Perlmutter	Schrader	Vela	Kingston	Perry	Southerland	Sanchez, Loretta	Swalwell (CA)	Waters
Peters (CA)	Scott (VA)	Velázquez	Kinzinger (IL)	Peterson	Stewart	Sarbanes	Takano	Waxman
Peters (MI)	Scott, David	Visclosky	Kirkpatrick	Petri	Stivers	Schakowsky	Thompson (CA)	Welch
Peterson	Serrano	Walz	Kline	Pittenger	Stockman	Schiff	Thompson (MS)	Wilson (FL)
Pingree (ME)	Sewell (AL)	Wasserman	Labrador	Pitts	Stutzman	Schneider	Tierney	Yarmuth
Pocan	Shea-Porter	Schultz	LaMalfa	Poe (TX)	Terry			
Polis	Sherman	Waters	Lamborn	Pompeo	Thompson (PA)			
Price (NC)	Sinema	Waxman	Lance	Posney	Thornberry			
Quigley	Sires	Welch	Lankford	Price (GA)	Tiberi			
Rahall	Slaughter	Wilson (FL)	Latham	Reed	Tipton			
Rangel	Smith (WA)	Yarmuth	Latta	Reichert	Turner			
			LoBiondo	Renacci	Upton			
			Long	Ribble	Valadao			
			Lucas	Rice (SC)	Wagner			
			Luetkemeyer	Rigell	Walberg			
			Lummis	Roby	Walden			
			Marchant	Roe (TN)	Walorski			
			Marino	Rogers (AL)	Weber (TX)			
			Massie	Rogers (KY)	Webster (FL)			
			McAllister	Rogers (MI)	Wenstrup			
			McCarthy (CA)	Rohrabacher	Westmoreland			
			McCaul	Rokita	Whitfield			
			McClintock	Rooney	Williams			
			McHenry	Ros-Lehtinen	Wilson (SC)			
			McKeon	Roskam	Wittman			
			McKinley	Ross	Wolf			
			McMorris	Rothfus	Womack			
			Rodgers	Royce	Woodall			
			Meadows	Runyan	Yoder			
			Meehan	Ryan (WI)	Yoho			
			Messer	Salmon	Young (AK)			
			Mica	Sanford	Young (IN)			
			Miller (FL)	Scalise				

NOT VOTING—9

Amodei	Fincher	Miller, Gary
Castro (TX)	Gosar	Rush
Chaffetz	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz

□ 1405

Messrs. FARR and DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan and Mr. BLUMENAUER changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 190, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 37]

AYES—229

Aderholt	Coffman	Franks (AZ)	Andrews	Doyle	Larsen (WA)
Amash	Cole	Frelinghuysen	Barber	Duckworth	Larson (CT)
Bachmann	Collins (GA)	Gardner	Barrow (GA)	Edwards	Lee (CA)
Bachus	Collins (NY)	Garrett	Bass	Ellison	Levin
Barletta	Conaway	Gerlach	Beatty	Engel	Lewis
Barr	Cook	Gibbs	Becerra	Enyart	Lipinski
Barton	Costa	Gibson	Bera (CA)	Eshoo	Loeb
Benishek	Cotton	Gingrey (GA)	Bishop (GA)	Esty	Lofgren
Bentivolio	Cramer	Gohmert	Bishop (NY)	Farr	Lowenthal
Bilirakis	Crawford	Goodlatte	Blumenauer	Fattah	Lowe
Bishop (UT)	Crenshaw	Gowdy	Bonamici	Foster	Lujan Grisham
Black	Culberson	Granger	Brady (PA)	Frankel (FL)	(NM)
Blackburn	Daines	Graves (GA)	Braley (IA)	Fudge	Luján, Ben Ray
Boustany	Davis, Rodney	Graves (MO)	Brown (FL)	Gabbard	(NM)
Brady (TX)	Denham	Griffin (AR)	Brownley (CA)	Gallego	Lynch
Bridenstine	Dent	Griffith (VA)	Bustos	Garamendi	Maffei
Brooks (AL)	DeSantis	Grimm	Butterfield	Garcia	Maloney,
Brooks (IN)	DesJarlais	Guthrie	Capps	Grayson	Carolyn
Broun (GA)	Diaz-Balart	Hall	Capuan	Green, Al	Maloney, Sean
Buchanan	Duffy	Hanna	Cárdenas	Green, Gene	Matheson
Bucshon	Duncan (SC)	Harper	Carney	Grijalva	Matsui
Burgess	Duncan (TN)	Hartzler	Carson (IN)	Gutiérrez	McCollum
Byrne	Ellmers	Hastings (WA)	Cartwright	Hahn	McDermott
Calvert	Farenthold	Heck (NV)	Castor (FL)	Hanabusa	McGovern
Camp	Fincher	Heck (NV)	Chu	Hastings (FL)	McIntyre
Campbell	Fitzpatrick	Hensarling	Cielline	Heck (WA)	McNerney
Cantor	Fleischmann	Herrera Beutler	Clark (MA)	Higgins	Meeks
Capito	Fleming	Holding	Clarke (NY)	Himes	Michaud
Carter	Flores	Hudson	Clay	Hinojosa	Miller, George
Cassidy	Forbes	Huelskamp	Cleaver	Holt	Moore
Chabot	Fortenberry	Huizenga (MI)	Clyburn	Honda	Moran
Coble	Fox	Hultgren	Connolly	Horsford	Murphy (FL)
			Conyers	Hoyer	Nadler
			Cooper	Huffman	Napolitano
			Courtney	Israel	Neal
			Crowley	Jackson Lee	Negrete McLeod
			Cuellar	Jeffries	Nolan
			Cummings	Johnson (GA)	O'Rourke
			Davis (CA)	Johnson, E. B.	Owens
			Davis, Danny	Kaptur	Pallone
			DeFazio	Keating	Pascrell
			DeGette	Kelly (IL)	Pastor (AZ)
			DeLaney	Kennedy	Payne
			DeLauro	Kildee	Pelosi
			DeBene	Kilmer	Perlmutter
			Deutch	Kind	Peters (CA)
			Dingell	Kuster	Peters (MI)
			Doggett	Langevin	Pocan

NOT VOTING—12

Amodei	Gosar	Nugent
Castro (TX)	McCarthy (NY)	Pingree (ME)
Chaffetz	Meng	Rush
Cohen	Miller, Gary	Schwartz

□ 1413

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SPORTSMEN'S HERITAGE AND RECREATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 470 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3590.

Will the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1415

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, February 4, 2013, amendment No. 11 printed in House Report 113-339, offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), had been disposed of.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 113-339 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 6 by Mr. DEFAZIO of Oregon.

Amendment No. 10 by Mr. HOLT of New Jersey.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for each electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. DEFAZIO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded

vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 185, noes 237, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 38]

AYES—185

Andrews	Grijalva	Nolan
Barber	Gutiérrez	O'Rourke
Bass	Hahn	Pallone
Beatty	Hanabusa	Pascarell
Becerra	Hastings (FL)	Pastor (AZ)
Bera (CA)	Heck (WA)	Payne
Bishop (NY)	Higgins	Pelosi
Blumenauer	Himes	Perlmutter
Bonamici	Hinojosa	Peters (CA)
Brady (PA)	Holt	Peters (MI)
Braley (IA)	Honda	Pingree (ME)
Brown (FL)	Horsford	Pocan
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Polis
Butterfield	Huffman	Price (NC)
Capps	Israel	Quigley
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Rangel
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Richmond
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruiz
Cartwright	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Castor (FL)	Keating	Salmon
Chu	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda T.
Cicilline	Kennedy	Sanchez, Loretta
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clay	Kind	Schiff
Cleaver	Kuster	Schneider
Clyburn	Langevin	Serrano
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Cooper	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Lipinski	Sherman
Cummings	Loeb sack	Sinema
Davis (CA)	Lofgren	Sires
Davis, Danny	Lowenthal	Slaughter
DeFazio	Lowe y	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lujan Grisham	Speier
Delaney	(NM)	Stewart
DeLauro	Luján, Ben Ray	Swalwell (CA)
DelBene	(NM)	Takano
Deutch	Lynch	Takano
Dingell	Maffei	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Doyle	Carolyn	Tierney
Duckworth	Maloney, Sean	Titus
Duffy	Matsui	Tonko
Edwards	McCaul	Tsongas
Ellison	McCollum	Van Hollen
Engel	McDermott	Valadao
Eshoo	McGovern	Vargas
Esty	McNerney	Veasey
Fattah	Meeks	Vela
Foster	Meng	Velázquez
Frankel (FL)	Michaud	Visclosky
Fudge	Miller, George	Wasserman
Gabbard	Moore	Schultz
Gallego	Moran	Waters
Garamendi	Murphy (FL)	Waxman
García	Nadler	Welch
Grayson	Napolitano	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	Neal	Yarmuth
Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod	

NOES—237

Aderholt	Bachus	Barrow (GA)
Amash	Barletta	Barton
Bachmann	Barr	Benishek

Bentivolio	Guthrie	Petri
Bilirakis	Hall	Pittenger
Bishop (GA)	Hanna	Pitts
Bishop (UT)	Harper	Poe (TX)
Black	Harris	Pompeo
Blackburn	Hartzler	Posey
Boustany	Hastings (WA)	Price (GA)
Brady (TX)	Heck (NV)	Rahall
Bridenstine	Hensarling	Reed
Brooks (AL)	Herrera Beutler	Reichert
Brooks (IN)	Holding	Renacci
Broun (GA)	Hudson	Ribble
Buchanan	Huelskamp	Rice (SC)
Bucshon	Huizenga (MI)	Rigell
Burgess	Hultgren	Roby
Bustos	Hunter	Roe (TN)
Byrne	Hurt	Rogers (AL)
Calvert	Issa	Rogers (KY)
Camp	Jenkins	Rogers (MI)
Campbell	Johnson (OH)	Rohrabacher
Cantor	Johnson, Sam	Rokita
Capito	Jones	Rooney
Carter	Jordan	Ros-Lehtinen
Cassidy	Joyce	Roskam
Chabot	Kelly (PA)	Ross
Coble	King (IA)	Rothfus
Coffman	King (NY)	Royce
Cole	Kingston	Runyan
Collins (GA)	Kinzinger (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Collins (NY)	Kirkpatrick	Ryan (WI)
Conaway	Kline	Sanford
Cook	Labrador	Scalise
Costa	LaMalfa	Schock
Cotton	Lamborn	Schrader
Cramer	Lance	Schweikert
Crawford	Lankford	Scott, Austin
Crenshaw	Latham	Sensenbrenner
Cuellar	Latta	Sessions
Culberson	LoBiondo	Shimkus
Daines	Long	Shuster
Davis, Rodney	Lucas	Simpson
Denham	Luetkemeyer	Smith (MO)
Dent	Lummis	Smith (NE)
DeSantis	Marchant	Smith (NJ)
DesJarlais	Marino	Smith (TX)
Diaz-Balart	Massie	Southerland
Duncan (SC)	Matheson	Stivers
Duncan (TN)	McAllister	Stockman
Ellmers	McCarthy (CA)	Stutzman
Enyart	McClintock	Terry
Farenthold	McHenry	Thompson (PA)
Farr	McIntyre	Thornberry
Fincher	McKeon	Tiberi
Fitzpatrick	McKinley	Tipton
Fleischmann	McMorris	Turner
Fleming	Rodgers	Upton
Flores	Meadows	Wagner
Forbes	Meehan	Walberg
Fortenberry	Messer	Walden
Fox	Mica	Walorski
Franks (AZ)	Miller (FL)	Walz
Frelinghuysen	Miller (MI)	Weber (TX)
Gardner	Mullin	Webster (FL)
Garrett	Mulvaney	Wenstrup
Gohmert	Murphy (PA)	Westmoreland
Goodlatte	Gibbs	Whitfield
Gowdy	Gibson	Williams
Granger	Gingrey (GA)	Wilson (SC)
Graves (GA)	Gohmert	Witman
Graves (MO)	Nunes	Wolf
Griffin (AR)	Nunnelee	Womack
Griffith (VA)	Olson	Yoder
Grimm	Owens	Yoho
	Palazzo	Young (AK)
	Paulsen	Young (IN)
	Pearce	
	Perry	
	Peterson	

NOT VOTING—9

Amodei	Gosar	Rush
Castro (TX)	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Chaffetz	Miller, Gary	Woodall

□ 1419

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Chair, On rollcall No. 38, I was unavoidably detained (the DeFazio Amendment No. 6). Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. HOLT

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 181, noes 242, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 39]

AYES—181

Andrews	Green, Al	Napolitano
Barber	Green, Gene	Neal
Bass	Grijalva	Negrete McLeod
Beatty	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Becerra	Hahn	O'Rourke
Bera (CA)	Hanabusa	Pallone
Bishop (NY)	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Blumenauer	Heck (WA)	Pastor (AZ)
Bonamici	Higgins	Payne
Brady (PA)	Himes	Pelosi
Braley (IA)	Hinojosa	Perlmutter
Brown (FL)	Holt	Peters (CA)
Brownley (CA)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Butterfield	Horsford	Pingree (ME)
Capps	Hoyer	Pocan
Capuano	Huffman	Polis
Cárdenas	Israel	Price (NC)
Carney	Jackson Lee	Quigley
Carson (IN)	Jeffries	Rangel
Cartwright	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Castor (FL)	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Chu	Kaptur	Ruiz
Cicilline	Keating	Ruppersberger
Clark (MA)	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda T.
Clarke (NY)	Kennedy	Sanchez, Loretta
Clay	Kildee	Sarbanes
Cleaver	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clyburn	Kind	Schiff
Cohen	Kuster	Schneider
Connolly	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Larsen (WA)	Scott, David
Cooper	Larson (CT)	Serrano
Courtney	Lee (CA)	Sewell (AL)
Crowley	Levin	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Lewis	Sherman
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Loeb sack	Sires
DeFazio	Lofgren	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lowenthal	Speier
Delaney	Lowe y	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	Lujan Grisham	Takano
DelBene	(NM)	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Luján, Ben Ray	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	(NM)	Tierney
Doggett	Lynch	Titus
Doyle	Maffei	Tonko
Duckworth	Maloney,	Tsongas
Duffy	Carolyn	Van Hollen
Edwards	Maloney, Sean	Vargas
Ellison	Matsui	Veasey
Engel	McCollum	Vela
Eshoo	McDermott	Velázquez
Esty	McGovern	Visclosky
Fattah	McNerney	Wasserman
Foster	Meeks	Schultz
Frankel (FL)	Meng	Waters
Fudge	Michaud	Waxman
Gabbard	Miller, George	Welch
Garamendi	Moore	Wilson (FL)
García	Moran	Yarmuth
Grayson	Murphy (FL)	
	Nadler	

NOES—242

Aderholt	Graves (GA)	Perry
Amash	Graves (MO)	Peterson
Bachmann	Griffin (AR)	Petri
Bachus	Griffith (VA)	Pittenger
Barletta	Grimm	Pitts
Barr	Guthrie	Poe (TX)
Barrow (GA)	Hall	Pompeo
Barton	Hanna	Posey
Benishek	Harper	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Harris	Rahall
Bilirakis	Hartzler	Reed
Bishop (GA)	Hastings (WA)	Reichert
Bishop (UT)	Heck (NV)	Renacci
Black	Hensarling	Ribble
Blackburn	Herrera Beutler	Rice (SC)
Boustany	Holding	Rigell
Brady (TX)	Hudson	Roby
Bridenstine	Huelskamp	Roe (TN)
Brooks (AL)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (AL)
Brooks (IN)	Hultgren	Rogers (KY)
Broun (GA)	Hunter	Rogers (MI)
Buchanan	Hurt	Rohrabacher
Bucshon	Issa	Rokita
Burgess	Jenkins	Rooney
Bustos	Johnson (OH)	Ros-Lehtinen
Byrne	Johnson, Sam	Roskam
Calvert	Jones	Ross
Camp	Jordan	Rothfus
Campbell	Joyce	Royce
Cantor	Kelly (PA)	Runyan
Capito	King (IA)	Ryan (OH)
Carter	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Cassidy	Kingston	Salmon
Chabot	Kinzinger (IL)	Sanford
Coble	Kirkpatrick	Scalise
Coffman	Kline	Schock
Cole	Labrador	Schrader
Collins (GA)	LaMalfa	Schweikert
Collins (NY)	Lamborn	Scott, Austin
Conaway	Lance	Sensenbrenner
Cook	Lankford	Sessions
Cotton	Latham	Shimkus
Cramer	Latta	Shuster
Crawford	LoBiondo	Simpson
Crenshaw	Long	Smith (MO)
Cuellar	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Culberson	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)
Daines	Lummis	Smith (TX)
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Southerland
Denham	Marino	Stewart
Dent	Massie	Stivers
DeSantis	Matheson	Stockman
DesJarlais	McAllister	Stutzman
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Terry
Duffy	McCaul	Thompson (PA)
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Thornberry
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Tiberi
Ellmers	McIntyre	Tipton
Enyart	McKeon	Turner
Farenthold	McKinley	Upton
Fincher	McMorris	Valadao
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Wagner
Fleischmann	Meadows	Walberg
Fleming	Meehan	Walden
Flores	Messer	Walorski
Forbes	Mica	Walz
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Weber (TX)
Foxx	Miller (MI)	Webster (FL)
Franks (AZ)	Mullin	Wenstrup
Frelinghuysen	Mulvaney	Westmoreland
Gallego	Murphy (PA)	Whitfield
Gardner	Neugebauer	Williams
Garrett	Noem	Wilson (SC)
Gerlach	Nugent	Wittman
Gibbs	Nunes	Wolf
Gibson	Nunnelee	Womack
Gingrey (GA)	Olson	Woodall
Gohmert	Owens	Yoder
Goodlatte	Palazzo	Yoho
Gowdy	Paulsen	Young (AK)
Granger	Pearce	Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—8

Amodei	Gosar	Rush
Castro (TX)	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Chaffetz	Miller, Gary	

□ 1426

Ms. SINEMA changed her vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM) having assumed the chair, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 470, she reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

□ 1430

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. In its current form, I am.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Sean Patrick Maloney of New York moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3590 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Page 3, after line 24, insert the following:

SEC. 103. PROTECTING WATER SUPPLY FOR PUBLIC RECREATION AND SAFE DRINKING.

Section 4 of the Toxic Substances Control Act (15 U.S.C. 2603) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) PROTECTING WATER SUPPLY FOR PUBLIC RECREATION AND SAFE DRINKING.—Not later than one year after the enactment of this subsection, any manufacturer or processor of a chemical or mixture that has the potential to contaminate water supplies used for public recreation or drinking water provided by a public water system shall generate and provide to regulatory agencies data sufficient to understand the risks such chemical or mixture would present to human health and the environment as appropriate, including studies of the chemical or mixture’s cancer-causing effects, reproductive toxicity and neurotoxicity. Exposing the public or the environment to such chemical or mixture without generating such studies shall be considered a prohibited act under this Act.”.

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 805. JOBS TO REBUILD AMERICA.

Subject to appropriations, the text of H.R. 2428, as introduced on June 19, 2013, (the “SAFE Bridges Act”), is hereby enacted into law.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill. If adopted, it won’t kill the bill. If adopted, the bill will proceed to final passage immediately, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with many of those on the other side on much of the underlying bill. Let’s open our public lands to recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting. Let’s make it easier to maintain public shooting ranges. No argument from me. But we can and should make this bill better, and my amendment will do just that.

Preserving our public lands and common spaces also means investing in the critical infrastructure that allows us to bring our families there safely. That is why the bipartisan SAFE Bridges Act should be in this bill to ensure that our Nation’s highways and bridges are safe.

But the biggest omission in this bill is the failure to protect our citizens from toxic spills that would threaten our water supplies.

A few weeks ago, we all woke up to learn that 300,000 people in West Virginia couldn’t drink their water. A mother trying to put her child in the bathtub couldn’t turn on the faucet. A father mixing baby formula for an infant couldn’t trust what came out of the tap.

For more than a week, families couldn’t do things that each of us do every day. Hundreds were hospitalized. Because businesses had to lock their doors, even people making the meager Federal minimum wage of \$7.25 couldn’t go to work. Businesses were shut down, and they couldn’t provide for their families.

Schools shut down. Anxious and worried residents by the thousands lined up every day for National Guard troops to supply them with safe water.

This happened right here in America, and not in some foreign country. It happened for a reason. It happened because one greedy operator thought it made sense not to inspect and maintain a storage tank with thousands of gallons of a toxic chemical right next to the water supply.

You can’t tell me that the free market took care of that problem. Tell that to the hundreds of thousands of

West Virginians who can't drink their water.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment ensures companies making chemicals with the potential to contaminate water supplies are simply required to report the hazards of these chemicals. It is pretty simple.

In my neck of the woods, the New York City watershed delivers approximately 1.4 billion gallons of water to my district, supplying it to millions of people every day. If this spill on the Elk River had happened on the Hudson River, we would be talking about a different problem in the order of magnitude that would affect millions and millions of people.

Have we lost so much faith in ourselves acting together that we can't protect the American people from this kind of toxic spill? If this House isn't doing this and if we aren't protecting a mom or dad trying to give baby formula to their child, what are we doing here?

Again, I join many of you in supporting the underlying emphasis of this bill. Let's get government out of the way for our hunters, anglers, and sportsmen. A dad should be able to share that first marksmanship experience with his son or daughter, like my dad did with me and my brothers.

To preserve these freedoms, government needs to get out of the way at times, but surely it must also protect us at times from those who would destroy these treasures for profit.

It was Teddy Roosevelt, after all, who said:

Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance.

If we really want to protect the national beauty of our country, it starts with protecting something as fundamental as our water.

Mr. Speaker, if we don't do this, we are doing nothing, and if those on the other side will not use that gavel in this House to protect the American people, then some of us on this side would like to borrow it for a while—because we will.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I probably said this before, but I will say it again:

Here we go again.

The underlying bill before us is a bipartisan bill, with bipartisan sponsors from the Sportsmen's Caucus, to allow access to our public lands for people to enjoy hunting and fishing. That is what the underlying bill is.

Furthermore, during the debate on the bill and its amendments yesterday, we adopted some three or four Democrat amendments because they added to the bill. This is a bipartisan bill.

So what happens in a motion to recommit? Here we go again.

The essence of this motion to recommit would be to broadly expand the powers of the Environmental Protection Agency.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the MTR and "yes" on the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 187, noes 231, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 40]

AYES—187

Andrews	Delaney	Kelly (IL)
Barber	DeLauro	Kennedy
Bass	DeBene	Kildee
Beatty	Deutch	Kilmer
Becerra	Dingell	Kind
Bera (CA)	Doggett	Kirkpatrick
Bishop (NY)	Doyle	Kuster
Blumenauer	Duckworth	Langevin
Bonamici	Edwards	Larsen (WA)
Brady (PA)	Ellison	Larson (CT)
Braley (IA)	Engel	Lee (CA)
Brown (FL)	Eshoo	Levin
Brownley (CA)	Esty	Lewis
Bustos	Farr	Lipinski
Butterfield	Fattah	Loebsack
Capito	Frankel (FL)	Lofgren
Capps	Fudge	Lowenthal
Capuano	Gabbard	Lowe
Cárdenas	Gallego	Lujan Grisham
Carney	Garamendi	(NM)
Carson (IN)	Garcia	Luján, Ben Ray
Cartwright	Grayson	(NM)
Castor (FL)	Green, Al	Lynch
Castro (TX)	Green, Gene	Maffei
Chu	Grijalva	Maloney,
Cicilline	Gutiérrez	Carolyn
Clark (MA)	Hahn	Maloney, Sean
Clarke (NY)	Hanabusa	Matheson
Clay	Hastings (FL)	Matsui
Cleaver	Heck (WA)	McCollum
Clyburn	Higgins	McDermott
Cohen	Himes	McGovern
Connolly	Hinojosa	McKinley
Conyers	Holt	McNerney
Cooper	Honda	Meeks
Costa	Horsford	Meng
Courtney	Hoyer	Michaud
Crowley	Israel	Moore
Cuellar	Jackson Lee	Moran
Cummings	Jeffries	Murphy (FL)
Davis (CA)	Johnson (GA)	Nadler
Davis, Danny	Johnson, E. B.	Napolitano
DeFazio	Kaptur	Neal
DeGette	Keating	Negrete McLeod

Nolan	Ruppersberger	Takano
O'Rourke	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (CA)
Pallone	Sánchez, Linda	Thompson (MS)
Pascrell	T.	Tierney
Pastor (AZ)	Sanchez, Loretta	Titus
Payne	Sarbanes	Tonko
Pelosi	Schakowsky	Tsongas
Perlmutter	Schiff	Van Hollen
Peters (CA)	Schneider	Vargas
Peters (MI)	Scott (VA)	Veasey
Pingree (ME)	Scott, David	Vela
Pocan	Serrano	Velázquez
Polis	Shea-Porter	Visclosky
Price (NC)	Sherman	Wasserman
Quigley	Sinema	Schultz
Rahall	Sires	Waters
Rangel	Slaughter	Waxman
Richmond	Smith (WA)	Welch
Roybal-Allard	Speier	Wilson (FL)
Ruiz	Swalwell (CA)	Yarmuth

NOES—231

Aderholt	Gingrey (GA)	Nugent
Amash	Gohmert	Nunnelee
Bachmann	Goodlatte	Olson
Bachus	Gowdy	Owens
Barletta	Granger	Palazzo
Barr	Graves (GA)	Paulsen
Barrow (GA)	Graves (MO)	Pearce
Barton	Griffith (VA)	Perry
Benishek	Grimm	Peterson
Bentivolio	Guthrie	Petri
Bilirakis	Hall	Pittenger
Bishop (GA)	Hanna	Pitts
Bishop (UT)	Harper	Poe (TX)
Black	Harris	Pompeo
Blackburn	Hartzler	Posey
Boustany	Hastings (WA)	Price (GA)
Brady (TX)	Heck (NV)	Reed
Bridenstine	Hensarling	Reichert
Brooks (AL)	Herrera Beutler	Renacci
Brooks (IN)	Holding	Ribble
Broun (GA)	Hudson	Rice (SC)
Buchanan	Huelskamp	Rigell
Bucshon	Huizenga (MI)	Roby
Burgess	Hultgren	Roe (TN)
Byrne	Hunter	Rogers (AL)
Calvert	Hurt	Rogers (KY)
Camp	Issa	Rogers (MI)
Campbell	Jenkins	Rohrabacher
Cantor	Johnson (OH)	Rokita
Carter	Johnson, Sam	Rooney
Cassidy	Jones	Ros-Lehtinen
Chabot	Jordan	Roskam
Coble	Joyce	Ross
Coffman	Kelly (PA)	Rothfus
Cole	King (IA)	Royce
Collins (GA)	King (NY)	Runyan
Collins (NY)	Kingston	Ryan (WI)
Conaway	Kinzinger (IL)	Salmon
Cook	Kline	Sanford
Cotton	Labrador	Scalise
Cramer	LaMalfa	Schock
Crawford	Lamborn	Schrader
Crenshaw	Lance	Schweikert
Culberson	Lankford	Scott, Austin
Daines	Latham	Sensenbrenner
Davis, Rodney	Latta	Sessions
Denham	LoBiondo	Sewell (AL)
Dent	Long	Shimkus
DeSantis	Lucas	Shuster
DesJarlais	Luetkemeyer	Simpson
Diaz-Balart	Lummis	Smith (MO)
Duffy	Marchant	Smith (NE)
Duncan (SC)	Marino	Smith (NJ)
Duncan (TN)	Massie	Smith (TX)
Ellmers	McAllister	Southerland
Enyart	McCarthy (CA)	Stewart
Farenthold	McCaul	Stivers
Fincher	McClintock	Stockman
Fitzpatrick	McHenry	Stutzman
Fleischmann	McIntyre	Terry
Fleming	McKeon	Thompson (PA)
Flores	McMorris	Thornberry
Forbes	Rodgers	Tiberi
Fortenberry	Meadows	Tipton
Foster	Meehan	Turner
Fox	Messer	Upton
Franks (AZ)	Mica	Valadao
Frelinghuysen	Miller (FL)	Wagner
Gardner	Miller (MI)	Walberg
Garrett	Mulvaney	Walden
Gerlach	Murphy (PA)	Walorski
Gibbs	Neugebauer	Walz
Gibson	Noem	Weber (TX)

Webster (FL) Wilson (SC) Yoho
Wenstrup Wittman Young (AK)
Westmoreland Womack Young (IN)
Whitfield Woodall
Williams Yoder

NOT VOTING—13

Amodei McCarthy (NY) Rush
Chaffetz Miller, Gary Schwartz
Gosar Miller, George Wolf
Griffin (AR) Mullin
Huffman Nunes

□ 1444

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 268, nays 154, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 41]

YEAS—268

Aderholt Davis, Rodney Hultgren
Amash Denham Hunter
Bachmann Dent Hurt
Bachus DeSantis Issa
Barber DesJarlais Jenkins
Barletta Diaz-Balart Johnson (OH)
Barr Duffy Johnson, Sam
Barrow (GA) Duncan (SC) Jones
Barton Duncan (TN) Jordan
Benishkek Ellmers Joyce
Bentivolio Enyart Kelly (PA)
Bilirakis Farenthold Kilmer
Bishop (GA) Fincher Kind
Bishop (UT) Fitzpatrick King (IA)
Black Fleischmann King (NY)
Blackburn Fleming Kingston
Boustany Flores Kinzinger (IL)
Brady (TX) Forbes Kirkpatrick
Bridenstine Fortenberry Kline
Brooks (AL) Foxx Labrador
Brooks (IN) Franks (AZ) LaMalfa
Broun (GA) Frelinghuysen Lamborn
Brown (FL) Gallego Lance
Buchanan Garamendi Lankford
Bucshon Gardner Latham
Burgess Garrett Latta
Bustos Gerlach Lipinski
Byrne Gibbs LoBiondo
Calvert Gibson Loeb sack
Camp Gingrey (GA) Long
Campbell Gohmert Lucas
Cantor Goodlatte Luetkemeyer
Capito Gowdy Lummis
Carter Granger Maloney, Sean
Cassidy Graves (GA) Marchant
Castor (FL) Graves (MO) Marino
Chabot Green, Gene Massie
Clay Griffin (AR) Matheson
Cleaver Griffith (VA) McAllister
Coble Grimm McCarthy (CA)
Coffman Guthrie McCaul
Cole Hall McClintock
Collins (GA) Hanna McHenry
Collins (NY) Harper McIntyre
Conaway Harris McKeon
Cook Hartzler McKinley
Cooper Hastings (WA) McMorris
Costa Heck (NV) Rodgers
Cotton Hensarling Meadows
Cramer Herrera Beutler Meehan
Crawford Holding Messer
Crenshaw Horsford Mica
Cuellar Hudson Miller (FL)
Culberson Huelskamp Miller (MI)
Daines Huizenga (MI) Mullin

Mulvaney Rogers (AL)
Murphy (FL) Rogers (KY)
Murphy (PA) Rogers (MI)
Neugebauer Rohrabacher
Noem Rokita
Nolan Rooney
Nugent Ros-Lehtinen
Nunes Roskam
Nunnelee Ross
Olson Rothfus
Owens Royce
Palazzo Runyan
Paulsen Ryan (OH)
Pearce Ryan (WI)
Perlmutter Salmon
Perry Sanford
Peterson Scalise
Petri Schock
Pittenger Schrader
Pitts Schweikert
Poe (TX) Scott, Austin
Polis Sensenbrenner
Pompeo Sessions
Posey Sewell (AL)
Price (GA) Shimkus
Rahall Shuster
Reed Simpson
Reichert Sinema
Renacci Smith (MO)
Ribble Smith (NE)
Rice (SC) Smith (NJ)
Richmond Smith (TX)
Rigell Southerland
Roby Stewart
Roe (TN) Stivers

NAYS—154

Andrews Garcia
Bass Grayson
Beatty Green, Al
Becerra Grijalva
Bera (CA) Gutierrez
Bishop (NY) Hahn
Blumenauer Hanabusa
Bonamici Hastings (FL)
Brady (PA) Heck (WA)
Braley (IA) Higgins
Brownley (CA) Himes
Butterfield Hinojosa
Capps Holt
Capuano Honda
Cárdenas Hoyer
Carney Israel
Carson (IN) Jackson Lee
Cartwright Jeffries
Castro (TX) Johnson (GA)
Chu Johnson, E. B.
Cicilline Kaptur
Clark (MA) Keating
Clarke (NY) Kelly (IL)
Clyburn Kennedy
Cohen Kildee
Connolly Kuster
Conyers Langevin
Courtney Larsen (WA)
Crowley Larson (CT)
Cummings Lee (CA)
Davis (CA) Levin
Davis, Danny Lewis
DeFazio Lofgren
DeGette Lowenthal
Delaney Lowey
DeLauro Lujan Grisham
DelBene (NM)
Deutch Luján, Ben Ray
Dingell (NM)
Doggett Lynch
Doyle Maffei
Duckworth Maloney,
Edwards Carolyn
Ellison Matsui
Engel McCollum
Eshoo McDermott
Esty McGovern
Farr McNeerney
Fattah Meeks
Foster Meng
Frankel (FL) Michaud
Fudge Moore
Gabbard Moran

NOT VOTING—9

Amodei Huffman
Chaffetz McCarthy (NY)
Gosar Miller, Gary

Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

□ 1450

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on February 5 2014, I was absent for rollcall votes 40 and 41.

Had I been present for rollcall vote 40 I would have voted "yes." And had I been present for rollcall vote 41 I would have voted "no."

SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3964.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 472 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3964.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1454

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes, with Mr. POE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the House today is considering H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act.

Like California, my central Washington district is heavily dependent on irrigated water to support our local economic and agriculture industry. I understand the importance of having a stable, reliable water supply, and I also understand the economic devastation that is caused when the water supply is

Miller, George
Rush
Schwartz

shut off, particularly when the shutoff is avoidable.

California is facing an emergency situation. For years, San Joaquin Valley farmers have been fighting against Federal regulations and environmental lawsuits that have diverted water supplies in order to help a 3-inch fish. In 2009, there was a deliberate diversion of over 300 billion—that is “billion,” Mr. Chairman—gallons of water away from farmers. As a result, thousands of farmworkers lost their jobs, unemployment in some areas reached 40 percent, and thousands of acres of fertile farmland simply dried up.

As chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, I have traveled to Fresno, California, and seen the effects of natural and manmade drought firsthand. We have held multiple hearings and heard the pleas of communities that simply want the water turned back on and their livelihood restored.

We have seen farmers, Mr. Chairman, who normally help feed the Nation being sent to wait in line at food banks and, in some cases, being served carrots that are normally grown in this area that are from China.

That is why, last Congress, the House of Representatives passed bipartisan legislation to restore the flow of water to avoid future droughts. In fact, the Senate did not take up a single water bill in this last Congress, even after we had passed our legislation.

So, once again, we are back here on the floor of the House with legislation to help California communities once again facing water shutoffs. But now, Mr. Chairman, the situation is much more dire.

The lack of rainfall has exacerbated the manmade drought, and last month, the California Governor declared a state of emergency. A manmade drought coupled with a natural drought equals disaster and requires immediate action. Of course, these conditions could have been partially avoided if only the Senate had acted on the House-passed legislation last year.

This comprehensive solution before us today, almost identical to what the House passed the last Congress, would restore some water deliveries that will be cut off due to Federal regulations and environmental lawsuits, ensure a reliable water source for people and fish, secure water rights, and save taxpayer money by ending unnecessary and dubious government projects.

Mr. Chairman, I want to stress that this crisis does not just impact California, but it has rippling effects across the entire Nation. California’s San Joaquin Valley is the salad bowl for the world and provides a significant share of the fruits and vegetables for our country.

Food grows where water flows. When there is no water, our food supply suffers, resulting in higher food prices

across the country and increased reliance on foreign food sources.

This bill is a chance to right the regulatory wrongs of the past, to end future manmade droughts, and to protect the jobs and economic livelihoods of farm families and their workers.

The people of the San Joaquin Valley cannot wait any longer, Mr. Chairman, for Congress to act. As the title of this bill suggests, it is truly an emergency for many, and time is running out. I sincerely hope that, unlike the last Congress, our Senate colleagues will take up this bill or propose a meaningful alternative to it, then we can come together and figure out where we disagree and then agree on a final package. These communities facing massive unemployment deserve nothing less.

This bill is supported, Mr. Chairman, by the entire Republican California delegation, and I commend my colleagues from California for their hard work in getting this bill to the floor today. So I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1500

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would invite my colleague to visit southern California to check with the rest of California on how we are handling the drought.

Ninety-eight percent of California, as shown by this map, is in drought. We are entering the third year of drought, the driest on record in California.

This bill, H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act, targets California’s Central Valley only and was introduced 1 week ago with no hearing, no markup, no conversation, nothing, a partisan bill, introduced only by California Republicans, with no meaningful conversation or cooperation with the rest of the California Members, who are all facing similar drought impacts. It is similar to H.R. 1837 from 2011 in the last Congress, and it died in the Senate, as was pointed out.

According to the California Department of Water Resources, the snowpack in the Sierras, the largest reservoir in the Central Valley Project System, was 6 percent of normal. Last week, the National Drought Monitor found that 98 percent of the State is experiencing moderate to severe drought—so dry in California that in the first 18 days of January, the State saw 289 fires that burned 721 acres, including the Colby fire partly in my district.

The State has hired nearly 100 more firefighters and used a super water scooper airplane, at a time when California should be experiencing its wettest month.

California Natural Resources Secretary Laird said it best in a letter:

“This bill falsely holds the promise of water relief that cannot be delivered because, in this drought, the water simply does not exist.”

This legislation, instead, reallocates water in a way that erroneously elevates junior water rights uses above all other water needs, including municipal, fisheries and environmental uses.

It repeals existing State law for water use in California, establishing a very harmful precedent for other States. It repeals sections 104, 107, 108, 110, 204, and 401 that explicitly waive State law or reclamation law. It repeals historic California water rights and decades of carefully balanced water compromises. It undermines California and other States’ abilities to manage its own resources. It overturns nearly 20 years of environmental and conservation protections under the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, CVPIA, and the Endangered Species Act, and ignores the best available science demonstrating the negative effects on species. We are, in fact, a species too, the human species.

It repeals the Federal and State agreement on the court-ordered San Joaquin Restoration Settlement Act. It prohibits Federal or State governments from exercising valid water rights in order to conserve, enhance, recover, or otherwise protect any species that is affected by operations of the CVP or State Water Project. It also reallocates water for junior water rights holders in the Central Valley and ignores the needs of southern California and other water users while privatizing a public resource for a select few.

It does not—I repeat—does not create any new water to solve the drought. It completely eliminates the coequal goal of protecting the environment and allowing water deliveries. It eliminates that coequal code. It puts jobs at risk, not only for fishermen but also the economy. It would revert contract renewal terms to 40 years instead of the current 25.

Mr. Chairman, the severity of this legislation benefits a very small group. It does not benefit all of drought-impacted California. It needs the cooperation of a bipartisan solution for all of the State, including southern California.

Water bonds in the past have favored northern California. The levee funding favored the Bay Delta, and H.R. 3964 favors Central Valley farmers only.

Southern California wants and needs to be included in a dialogue and be part of the solution. We are currently in dialogue with the Senators on a drought bill.

Title XVI, which is recycled water, WaterSMART, Republicans have been stonewalling ideas. They are not allowing bills to be given the courtesy of a hearing in the subcommittee or full committee.

The Bureau of Reclamation is working with WaterSMART project funding of only \$27.5 million and water recycling project funding, Title XVI, of \$21.5 million, with a backlog of \$400 million in congressionally approved projects.

Mr. Chairman, I will submit letters in opposition: from the White House, a statement and a veto threat; from the Governor of California, Governor Brown; from the California Department of Natural Resources Secretary John Laird; from California Attorney General Kamala Harris; and from 34 diverse California environmental groups.

The Western States Water Council indicates their opposition has not changed to the provisions that preempt states' rights. The bill will just create more litigation over water and not solve anything. We need to work on a bipartisan basis on putting that forth. H.R. 3964 is not such an attempt. I urge all my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 3964.

I reserve the balance of my time.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,

February 3, 2014.

Re Opposition to H.R. 3964.

Hon. Doc HASTINGS,

Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,

Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN AND REPRESENTATIVE DEFAZIO: California is currently experiencing the worst water crisis in our modern history. We are in our third consecutive year of extremely dry weather, and our most recent snow survey found that the Sierra snowpack—a source of water supply for 25 million Californians—is 12 percent of the normal average, the lowest ever recorded. Since declaring a drought state of emergency on January 17th, state agencies have been working closely with federal, local, and municipal agencies and others, to respond quickly. We have taken unprecedented actions to deal with the crisis, including allocating zero water deliveries to water contractors from the State Water Project for the first time in the project's history. Last week, California also released a comprehensive plan for future water management, including storage, conservation, recycling, water transfers and other actions.

H.R. 3964 is an unwelcome and divisive intrusion into California's efforts to manage this severe crisis. It would override state laws and protections, and mandate that certain water interests come out ahead of others. It falsely suggests the promise of water relief when that is simply not possible given the scarcity of water supplies. H.R. 3964 would interfere with our ability to respond effectively and flexibly to the current emergency, and would re-open old water wounds undermining years of progress toward reaching a collaborative long-term solution to our water needs.

I urge you to oppose H.R. 3964.

Sincerely,

EDMUND G. BROWN, JR.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,

February 4, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,

House Minority Leader, Washington, DC.

DEAR HOUSE SPEAKER BOEHNER AND HOUSE MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: I am writing to express my opposition to H.R. 3964, the Sacramento San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act. Like its 2012 predecessor, H.R. 1873, H.R. 3964 would abrogate long-standing provisions of California law designed to protect the State's natural resources and violate settled constitutional principles of state sovereignty. Furthermore, the legislation would imperil the State's traditional authority to manage its natural resources without providing any meaningful emergency drought relief for the people of California.

After two dry years, Californians are facing potentially the driest year in the State's history. The Sierra Nevada snow pack is 12 percent of normal. Storage levels at Shasta, Folsom, and Oroville reservoirs are below the 1977 drought levels. The California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) have responded to this drought emergency by agreeing to relax certain water quality standards to ensure that the federal Central Valley Project (CVP) and the State Water Project (SWP) can meet health and human safety requirements and can reasonably protect all beneficial uses of water.

Notwithstanding the prompt and laudable efforts of California's natural resources agencies to address the drought emergency, H.R. 3964 would remove key water resources management powers from these agencies. The legislation would transgress the principles of state sovereignty in at least three important respects. First, the legislation would mandate that the CVP and the SWP operate to fixed water quality standards for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta developed almost twenty years ago, and would preclude state authorities from altering such standards. Second, the legislation would prohibit the SWRCB and the DFW from exercising their state law responsibilities to protect fishery resources and public trust values, not only as to CVP and SWP operations, but as to all holders of appropriative water rights in California. Third, the legislation would overturn settled principles of cooperative federalism by vacating the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act and banning the application of State fishery protections to the San Joaquin River operations of the Friant Unit of the CVP.

These proposed constraints on California's ability to manage its natural resources contravene long-standing principles of western water law. In *California v. United States* (1978) 438 U.S. 645, 653 the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed California's ability to impose state law terms and conditions on federal reclamation projects, and declared that, "[t]he history of the relationship between the Federal government and the States in the reclamation of the arid lands of the Western States is both long and involved, but though it runs the consistent thread of purposeful and continued deference to state water law by Congress."

California law grants the SWRCB the continuing authority to review and reconsider all water rights for the purpose of determining whether their exercise would violate the reasonable use requirement of Article X,

Section 2 of the California constitution and California's common law doctrine of the public trust. According to the California Supreme Court, "[t]he state has an affirmative duty to take the public trust into account in the planning and allocation of water resources, and to protect public trust uses whenever feasible." (*National Audubon Society v. Superior Court* (1983) 33 Cal.3d 419, 446.) The California Legislature has expressly adopted these principles as "the foundation of state water management policy." (Cal. Wat. Code, §85023.) By abrogating the State's ability to apply these principles to water users, H.R. 3964 contravenes the long-standing history of deference to state water law.

Moreover, H.R. 3964 takes these steps in violation of settled constitutional principles of state sovereignty. Relying upon separation of powers principles set forth in the Tenth Amendment and elsewhere in the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. Supreme Court in *New York v. United States* has held that "congress may not simply 'commandeer[r] the legislative processes of the States by directly compelling them to enact and enforce a federal regulatory program.'" (*New York v. United States* (1992) 505 U.S. 144, 161, citing *Hodel v. Virginia Surface Mining & Reclamation Assn., Inc.* (1981) 452 U.S. 263, 288.) In *Printz v. United States*, the U.S. Supreme Court expanded its ruling in *New York* and declared that "[t]oday we hold that Congress cannot circumvent that prohibition by conscripting the States' officers directly." (*Printz v. United States* (1997) 521 U.S. 898, 935.) According to the court, the constitutional system of dual sovereignty demands that "[t]he Federal Government may neither issue directives requiring the States to address particular problems, nor command the States' officers, or those of their political subdivisions, to administer or enforce a federal regulatory program." (Id.)

By compelling the SWP, a state funded and managed water project, to operate based upon congressionally mandated Delta water quality standards, rather than allowing California to develop standards that reflect the most recent scientific information regarding the Delta, H.R. 3964 violates the U.S. Supreme Court's state sovereignty principles. By prohibiting the SWRCB, the DFW or other state agencies from taking action to protect fishery and public trust values other than those mandated by Congress, the legislation further violates these state sovereignty principles. Congressional passage of H.R. 3964 would have, in effect, unconstitutionally "dragooned" state officers "into administering federal law." (Id at p. 928.)

I urge you to reject H.R. 3964. Consistent with the principles of state sovereignty, California's natural resource agencies have timely and responsibly taken measures to address the present drought emergency within the context of California law. It is important that the present legal framework of dual sovereignty for water resources issues be strengthened and preserved, rather than dismantled.

Sincerely,

KAMALA D. HARRIS,
Attorney General.

CALIFORNIA NATURAL
RESOURCES AGENCY,
January 30, 2014.

Re Opposition to H.R. 3964.

Hon. DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee,
Washington, DC.

Hon. PETER DEFAZIO,
Ranking Member, House Natural Resources
Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HASTINGS, RANKING MEMBER DEFAZIO AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: California is experiencing the worst water crisis in our modern history. We are in our third consecutive year of below normal precipitation and, this year's snowpack—on which 25 million Californians depend as the source of their water supply—currently is only 10 percent of what it should be. In Sacramento and Redding, we have broken all records for consecutive dry days in the middle of the rainy season. The California Department of Public Health reports that 17 communities across the state are at risk of running out of drinking water within 60–120 days. Just days ago, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife announced the closure of several fisheries and CAL FIRE has already responded to over 400 fires in the month of January, a startling fact when you consider they responded to zero during the same time last year. As you know, California's climate is such that it is generally dry for almost half the year—and we rely on rain and snow during the winter season to carry us through the year. Conditions—in terms of both water supply and water quality—are unprecedented and serious. Simply put, we face the driest year on record, after two dry years, which is why Governor Brown proclaimed a drought State of Emergency on January 17, 2014.

California is a huge state, in which its 38 million residents depend on a large and unique series of dams, canals, and waterways administered by hundreds of different water agencies. It is a complex system—and legislation that alters it in favor of some interests over others in a different part of the state, in the middle of this great water emergency when water managers have tried to plan and act on current realities—is not helpful.

I write today to express California's strong opposition to H.R. 3964, which seeks to undermine California's own ability to address serious water challenges and to erase years of progress toward a collaborative long-solution to address our long-term water needs. The bill falsely holds the promise of water relief that cannot be delivered because in this drought, the water simply does not exist. It would be much more prudent to help educate California residents and members of Congress how dire this situation is, and that we must work together on the limited items that might be helpful in such an emergency situation.

The state of California is also focused on finding long-term solutions that unite us during this challenging time. State law, enacted in 2009, requires us to achieve the co-equal goals of both water supply reliability and ecosystem restoration through the use of sound science. In fact, earlier this week the state finalized an action plan on storage, conservation, recycling, water transfers, and all actions that we can take to make California's water system more robust. We ask for your help in those constructive, long-term efforts—where we are trying to bring people together around solutions.

The choices we face in this drought are extraordinary. Rarely are we forced to simulta-

neously confront water allocations this critically low, Delta salinity conditions this uniquely challenging, and the difficulty of moving water around the state due to low reservoir levels.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 3964 and instead ask Congress to join us in supporting consensus-based water solutions that are truly responsive to California's drought and long-term water needs.

Sincerely,

JOHN LAIRD,
Secretary for Natural Resources.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT
AND BUDGET,

February 5, 2014, Washington, DC.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 3964—SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY
EMERGENCY WATER DELIVERY ACT
(Rep. Valadao, R-California, and 14
cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act, because it would not alleviate the effects of California's current drought and would disrupt decades of work that supports building consensus, solutions, and settlements that equitably address some of California's most complex water challenges. California is experiencing severe drought conditions and low reservoir storage. The urgency and seriousness of the situation requires a balanced approach that promotes water reliability and ecosystem restoration.

Specifically, H.R. 3964 would undermine years of collaboration between local, State, and Federal stakeholders to develop a sound water quality control plan for the Bay-Delta. And, contrary to current and past Federal reclamation law that defers to State water law, the bill would preempt California water law. Moreover, much of what the bill purports to do could be accomplished through flexibilities in existing law.

The bill also would reject the long-standing principle that beneficiaries should pay both the cost of developing water supplies and of mitigating resulting development impacts, and would exacerbate current water shortages by repealing water pricing reforms that provide incentives for contractors to conserve water supplies.

Finally, H.R. 3964 would repeal the San Joaquin River Settlement Agreement, which the Congress enacted to resolve 18 years of contentious litigation. Full repeal of the settlement agreement would likely result in the resumption of costly litigation, creating an uncertain future for river restoration and water delivery operations for water users on the San Joaquin River.

Californians are facing significant drought-related challenges. This is why the President has directed the Federal agencies to work together to help California and other impacted States prepare for and lessen the impact of the drought. Further, it is why the Administration strongly supports efforts to provide a more reliable water supply for California and to protect, restore, and enhance the overall quality of the Bay-Delta environment. The Administration has taken great strides toward achieving these goals through a coordinated Federal Action Plan, which has strengthened collaboration between Federal agencies and the State of California while achieving results. Unfortunately, H.R. 3964 would undermine these efforts and the progress that has been made.

The Administration looks forward to working with Congress on legislation to address

the drought in California and supports efforts that provide water supplies consistent with existing law in the most expeditious manner to address the conditions. These efforts would include reauthorization of the CALFED Bay-Delta Act, the Secure Water Act, and Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act.

For these reasons, if the President were presented with H.R. 3964, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

34 CALIFORNIAN ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS
AGAINST H.R. 3964—2-FEB-14

AquAlliance, Butte Environmental Council, CA Save Our Streams Council, California Coastkeeper Alliance, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, California Striped Bass Association, California Water Impact Network, Center for Biological Diversity, Citizens Water Watch of Northern California, Clean Water Action, Desal Response Group, Earth Law Center, Environmental Justice—Coalition For Water, Epic Wild California, Food & Water Watch, Foot-hill Conservancy, Friends of the River.

Greatest of the Karuk Tribe, Institute for Fisheries and Resources, Klamath Riverkeeper, Klower Sherman Island Duck Hunters Association, Northern California Council Federation of Fly Fishers, Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Associations, Planning and Conservation League, Restore the Delta, Sacramento River Preservation Trust, Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment, Sierra Club California, Sierra Nevada Alliance, Southern California Watershed Alliance, The Fish Sniffer, Tuolumne River Trust, Winnemem Wintu Tribe—Middle River People.

TESTIMONY OF ANTHONY WILLARDSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WESTERN STATES WATER COUNCIL, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON H.R. 1837—THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WATER RELIABILITY ACT, JUNE 13, 2010

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, my name is Tony Willardson and I am the Executive Director of the Western States Water Council (WSWC). Our members are appointed by the Governors of eighteen western states. We are a nonpartisan government entity serving as an advisory body on water policy issues, and are very closely affiliated with the Western Governors' Association (WGA). We appreciate the opportunity to testify.

Since H.R. 1837 was only recently introduced, the Council has not had an opportunity to adopt a specifically position on the legislation. However, I will address general principles related to federal-state relations that are useful in evaluating specific legislation—including H.R. 1837—and other actions addressing the serious water-related challenges facing the West and the Nation. During the Council's regular meetings next month, we will have an opportunity to more fully consider H.R. 1837 and will share any further comments thereafter.

My testimony today is based specifically on a July 2010 Council policy position entitled, "A Shared Vision for Water Planning and Policy," as well as a June 2006 WGA Water Report entitled, Water Needs and Strategies for a Sustainable Future, the 2008 WGA "Next Steps" Water Report, and ongoing policy discussions. Our 2010 position and the WGA Water Reports include a number of

policy statements and recommendations related to federal programs and projects under this Subcommittee's jurisdiction, and which we would hope would be carefully considered as you evaluate H.R. 1837.

With regard to provisions related to preemption of state law, the last paragraph of the Council's position related to A Shared Vision for Water Planning and Policy, states: ". . . Nothing in any act of Congress should be construed as affecting or intending to affect or in any way to interfere with the laws of the respective States relating to: (a) water or watershed planning; (b) the control, appropriation, use, or distribution of water used in irrigation or for municipal or any other purposes, or any vested right acquired therein; or (c) intending to affect or in any way to interfere with any interstate compact, decree or negotiated water rights agreement."

This language was intentionally patterned after Section 8 of the Reclamation Act of 1902 (and similar Congressional directives). Any weakening of the deference to state water law as now expressed in Section 8 is of concern to the Council—including Section 202 of H.R. 1837. Provisions of this nature are inconsistent with the policy of cooperative federalism that has guided Reclamation Law for over a century, and are a threat to water right and water right administration in all the Western States.

Recognizing that the "future growth and prosperity of the western states depend upon the availability of adequate quantities of water of suitable quality," western governors created the Council in 1965 to address the need for an accurate and unbiased appraisal of present and future [water] requirements . . . and the most equitable means of providing for . . . such requirements. . . ." On a west-wide regional level, the governors charged the Council ". . . to accomplish effective cooperation among western states in planning for programs leading to integrated development by state, federal and other agencies of their water resources." Since its creation, the Council has served as a unified voice on behalf of western governors on water policy issues.

Over the years, the Council has continually sought to develop a regional consensus on westwide water policy and planning issues, including many federal initiatives and legislation. The Council strives to collectively protect western states' interests in water, while at the same time serving to coordinate and facilitate efforts to improve western water management. With respect to the latter, the Council and eleven federal agencies have signed a Declaration of Cooperation creating what we call our Western Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST), to increase collaboration on water issues of mutual concern.

The Council has long recognized the importance of planning and policy in protecting and wisely managing our water resources for the benefit of our present and future generations, including our environment. The water development, management and protection challenges in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta System are not unique to California, but are reflected across the West and the Nation. Similarly, any solution to California's water and environmental needs (and compliance with state and federal mandates) affects the rest of the West to a greater or lesser extent. Perhaps this is best illustrated by California's physical dependence not only on the waters of northern and central California, but also the Colorado River Basin, shared by six other basin states.

In recent years there has been a growing debate over national water policy and the need to elevate water issues as a national priority. The Council has been and continues to be actively involved in those policy discussions.

The States are primarily responsible for allocating and administering rights to the use of water for myriad uses; and are in the best position to identify, evaluate and prioritize their needs. States and their political subdivisions share primary responsibility for planning and managing our Nation's water resources, both surface and ground water, both quantity and quality.

2006/2008 WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION WATER REPORTS

The WGA's 2006 Water Report declared: "States have the primary responsibility for water allocation and management. They have jurisdiction to sanction both new appropriations and transfers of existing uses. They also have the primary responsibility for integrating water quantity allocation and water quality protection. As a result, states can play a critical role relating to growth in the West where water is a scarce resource and competing demands vie for rights to its use." (p. 4)

The WGA's 2008 Next Steps Report reiterated: "States have the pivotal role in water planning, as well as allocating and protecting the resources. But in the West, where the federal government is a substantial landowner and has a significant regulatory presence, the federal role is also critical. Cooperation among the states and the federal government continues to be vital. To support the state leadership role, the federal government should help by providing a rational federal regulatory framework, together with technical and appropriate financial assistance. . . . Developing optimal solutions to the challenges . . . will require an integrated approach and greater partnerships among state, local and federal agencies. This approach should consider all needs together, develop effective solutions which are complementary rather than conflicting, and provide direction for selecting the most appropriate . . . solutions. (p. 1)

2011 WSWC SHARED WATER VISION POLICY POSITION

The following WSWC recommendations are presented as a guide for evaluating actions related to federal-state relations and water resources, including H.R. 1837.

Any vision for any water policy, water plan or planning process must recognize, defer to and support State, tribal and local government water plans and planning processes.

Federal legislation should explicitly recognize and provide support for ongoing watershed efforts in and between the states, tribes and local entities and closely consult with the states in the implementation of any new federal program(s).

Any federal legislation should avoid strategies that increase mandates on state, tribal and local governments.

Comprehensive plans developed under state or tribal leadership with federal assistance should: (a) reduce inefficiencies caused by project-specific responses to competing demands; (b) reduce contradictory actions by multiple state, local and federal agencies; and (c) minimize hastily conceived reactions to the latest real or perceived crisis.

Federal agencies should use state water plans: (a) to help determine water policy and planning priorities that best align federal agency support to states; (b) to inform deci-

sion making regarding regional water issues; and (c) to coordinate investment in water infrastructure.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), the author of this legislation, whose district has been heavily impacted by this manmade drought.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Chairman, the reason we are here today is we have heard talk for long enough. We have seen negotiation after negotiation, and the last one that we are asking to go back to happened in the mid-nineties. There was an agreement made that allowed water to go for the environment and for agriculture, and now we are not even getting that.

What we are asking for is for a little attention. Many of the viewers probably don't find this interesting. It is just a bunch of trees, but these trees are dead. They have been pulled out of the ground.

That probably doesn't mean a lot to the Chair or to a lot of other people in this room, but these are trees that grow crops. Those crops create jobs. The people that do those jobs are these people right here.

We hear so many people talk about unemployment insurance. These people want to work. They want to earn a paycheck. They want to go home at the end of the day with their money in their pocket and be able to buy food that is grown around them, natural, good, wholesome American food. These people do not like standing in line and do not like waiting for government handouts. They want to work and be productive members of today's society.

I know that a lot of people watching today will think, well, this is just a California problem, but this is the food grown in California: 99 percent of the almonds; 99 percent of the artichokes; 99 percent of the figs; 99 percent of the olives; 99 percent of the pistachios.

So when we talk about helping the people who need help and giving them the resources to feed their families, if we cut off water to California, it has a direct impact on the money that they do receive from the government. Because they aren't working because of the drought, it makes food more expensive. It limits what they can buy to feed their families.

Anybody that claims to be helpful to those who need our help the most and votes against this bill is literally saying, I want to raise the cost of food for everybody in the United States.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the ranking member of the committee.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, here we are, day two of the House Committee on Natural Resources' measures on the floor. Yesterday we spent the entire afternoon debating, among other

things, whether 435 Members of the House were better suited to make decisions about individual Forest Service ranger District Wildlife Management programs or units of the National Park Service's motorized recreation regulations, overturning local managers.

We were told that significant amendments, real amendments about real issues, like the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, they couldn't be offered because we need to respect the legislative process.

Are we respecting the legislative process here today? This bill was introduced last week. No hearings have been held in the committee. No action was taken by the committee. It was written, introduced, and brought directly to the floor of the House of Representatives. That is respect for the legislative process?

Now despite everyone here knowing that we are going to face the worst drought the American West has seen in a century, the committee of jurisdiction has failed to hold even one hearing on current conditions.

In case you have missed the news, here it is: California, driest conditions in over 500 years, extreme drought in 70 percent of the State. Nevada and Oregon, my home State, severe to extreme drought in 80 percent of the State. Idaho, severe to extreme drought in nearly half the State.

To be thinking about how we are going to mitigate this, how we are going to fight the fires, what are we going to do for disaster relief, shouldn't we be looking at reality as opposed to this piece of legislative theater? No.

A number of us on the committee have asked for a hearing, a comprehensive hearing on all the aspects of this drought, and the majority has yet to respond.

Now, this isn't a joke. It is not something we should be playing political games with. Seriously. We have empty reservoirs, unemployed people, yes, tinderbox forests, fallowed fields, and failing fisheries. That calls on us to be bigger and better than playing these stupid partisan games. That is what this is.

Just like the bill yesterday, this bill is not a serious effort to legislate. It is going nowhere. The Governor of California opposes it. Senator FEINSTEIN opposes it. Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Oregon are all opposed to the provisions overturning State water law. The party of states' rights overturning State water law? The nonpartisan 18 Governor-appointed Western States Water Council has opposed provisions in this bill overturning State water law.

This bill is a chimera, in the real sense of the word. It is a mythical beast that is part lion, goat, serpent, all in one with the breath of burning flames. Here it comes. It is ugly, it is

scary, but it is a fiction. It is not something real. In Greek mythology, the chimera was defeated by a guy named Bellerophon, a great hero—mythical, but a slayer of beasts. In this case, the U.S. Senate is going to replace Bellerophon.

This is going nowhere. We are fiddling while our forests are going to burn this summer.

The only way out of the current drought conditions is to make the skies open and rain. We aren't making rain today with this bill. We aren't even making law today with this bill. This is cynical. This is embarrassing. We should pull this bill from consideration and actually work on something that will help not only those in California but all of us impacted in the West by this drought.

Let's hold a hearing on this drought. Let's form a task force and come up with real bipartisan solutions.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), a member of the committee who has worked very hard on this legislation in the last Congress and in this Congress.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, California's drought is nature's fault, but our failure to prepare for it is our fault.

In California, the ruling Democrats have not only obstructed the construction of new dams for the past 35 years but they have also actively sought to tear down existing ones. They have substituted conservation for desperately needed storage, and now that we face drought, we find that our few reservoirs are empty, and our conservation options are already exhausted.

Worse, in the first years of this drought, 1.6 million acre-feet of water was dumped into the Pacific Ocean for the care and amusement of the delta smelt. Mr. Chairman, 800,000 acre-feet—enough for 4 million Californians—was deliberately drained from our now empty reservoirs just several months ago, knowing that that water was desperately needed to support the threatened human population. Part of that water was taken from Central Valley farmers, who now face economic extinction. This bill corrects these tragic policies.

It is true, we cannot make it rain, but we can take measures to stop this lunacy, increase storage capacity, reinforce existing water rights, and ensure that we never again must face a crisis of this magnitude.

This bill allows for the expansion of Lake McClure by 70,000 acre-feet. It gives local water agencies the ability to store additional water at New Melones. It sets deadlines for additional storage. It authorizes local water districts to partner with the Federal Government to expedite expansion of existing reservoirs and con-

struction of new ones, and it reverses the policies that put the delta smelt ahead of the needs of thousands of farmworkers and millions of consumers.

Now, the people responsible for these policies say that this steals water from northern California. It does not. This is only water that would otherwise be lost to the Pacific Ocean. This bill restores the bipartisan Bay Delta Accord that guarantees the delta the water that it needs and grants a portion of any excess to the Central Valley. This historic accord was broken when Central Valley water was expropriated for the delta smelt. This bill restores that accord while making provisions to increase the overall supply.

The other outlandish charge is that this measure overrides State water rights. It does exactly the opposite. It specifically protects State water rights against infringement by any bureaucracy—local, State, or Federal.

We have listened to the environmental left for 40 years, and this is where it has gotten us. It is time to reject these voices and return to the commonsense and proven policies of abundance that produced the prosperity that we once enjoyed.

□ 1515

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from northern California (Mr. COSTA).

Mr. COSTA. I want to thank the ranking member of the subcommittee for giving me an opportunity to speak on this measure.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of this bill despite my reservations about the bill's prospects in the Senate. Over the years, I have supported a number of the provisions and goals within this legislation, but many of them will not offer much, if any, immediate relief unless we see Biblical proportions of rainfall taking place in California during the next 6 weeks.

As California is in the midst of the worst drought on record, reservoirs are at record lows, and we have 13 percent of our average snow pack, people in my district deserve an effort that deals with the current realities that can offer help.

No one has done more over 30 years working in Sacramento and in Washington than I have to provide water not only for our valley but for the entire State, and to ensure that we have a long-term supply. Unfortunately, too many folks on both sides of the aisle have kicked this can down the road.

As much as I think a number of reforms in this bill are long overdue and some of the policy decisions have increased, frankly, the damage of the current drought conditions, we all have to recognize that in California and in Western States today, we are in a triage situation.

There are many things that we must do in the long term to increase our

water supply and fix our broken water system in California. But, immediately, we have to figure out how we can move water, the scarce resource where it is, if, in fact, we do get some additional rainfall.

This is not about political points. It is about mitigating the human impact of people—people—living in 17 water districts that in 30 to 60 days will no longer be able to provide drinking water for themselves. New ideas, new and immediate relief should be offered, not a rehashing of the old political battles.

Last week, we saw what can happen in California when the entire valley delegation, working together on a bipartisan basis with Senators FEINSTEIN and BOXER, asked the Bureau of Reclamation to honor the carryover water that had been provided by those farmers who saved it last year. In fact, we were able to maintain that water this year. It is a lifeline. The Bureau and the administration heard our united calls loud and clear, and they made a fair decision to allow farmers in the valley to keep water that otherwise would have been confiscated.

We need more of these kinds of efforts, which is why I offered an amendment yesterday to create a joint committee to bring us together to deal with these short and long-term challenges. This effort is important since right now we seem to be talking past one another and feuding in editorial pages across the State rather than finding the common ground that we need.

Although leadership chose not to bring my amendment up for a vote, I think we have to be open to getting down to brass tacks at some point in time, because it is the only way we are going to solve these problems—on a bipartisan basis. Solutions to our water problems are not and should not be partisan. Traditionally, they have been regional, and I can tell you where all the political fault lines lie. They are deep, and they are historic. It is time for cooler heads to prevail.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. COSTA. This is not about political points. It is about people who could lose their jobs in the drought. It is about the dairy producer who might soon have to consider selling the dairy their grandfather started. It is about farmworkers who might soon find themselves in food lines instead of helping produce some of the most productive crops in the world. It is about the children of migrant workers who might soon have to leave their school because their parents have to look for work elsewhere.

In the coming days, we will be introducing legislation. I hope we can engender some bipartisan support. At the

end of the day, that is what it is going to take to solve the water problems in California.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), another member of the Natural Resources Committee and a Californian.

Mr. LAMALFA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am pleased to be able to rise in support of Mr. VALADAO's bill, a bipartisan measure it appears, and I am glad for that. We are able to work together as neighbors, northern California and central California, to overcome the overreaching environmental restrictions that this bill seeks to do. It has diverted so much water away from San Joaquin Valley families for their farms, away from agriculture, away from productive use, in favor of a 3-inch fish.

Title IV of this measure ensures that northern California's cities and farmers maintain their first right to water from the area of origin, the river in its area, which runs through their communities.

I am open to working with anyone at any time who has a realistic plan to address our historic droughts. The minority has offered amendments that would do nothing to address this crisis. Indeed, their proposals would only put more roadblocks and more red tape between Californians and the water they need.

We see plenty of potential for projects that could happen, such as Sites Reservoir in my neighborhood in northern California; possibly the raising of Shasta Dam and other projects would be very viable. Indeed, if you look at the graph here, there is much potential that could be realized when 76 percent of the water that comes into the delta flows straight out the Pacific. Only 24 percent actually either stays in the delta or goes south of the massive amount of water that comes into the delta initially.

The potential there for storing more water to have more available for everybody, whether it is farms, cities or environmental use, can be realized by building projects and by removing the roadblocks that are unnecessarily put there by bureaucracy or politics. We need to have a much better atmosphere of cooperating in this time of drought and putting our efforts forward to truly help Californians.

Indeed, Mr. Chairman, we need to pass this bill today to take that step. Moses parted the Red Sea. I think we need to have somebody that can part the red tape that has held California up for so many years for building the water supply it needs.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California, Congressman THOMPSON.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to this bill, a bill that would destroy jobs, does nothing to address the real problem, the drought, and ignores more than 20 years of established science.

What does the bill do? Will this bill help alleviate the drought? No. Even if we pumped as much water as possible, Central Valley farmers still wouldn't have enough. There simply isn't enough water to go around.

We are in an extreme drought, the worst in the last century. You can look at these photographs and see the snow pack last year versus the snow pack this year. We are in bad straits, and it is a drought. It is not a manmade problem, it is a drought.

Will this bill kill jobs? Yes. The delta supports thousands of jobs in farming, fishing and tourism and has an economic output of more than \$4 billion a year. This bill puts those jobs in jeopardy. Will this bill harm drinking water that millions of people rely on? Yes. When clean water is pumped south, the level of saltwater in the delta increases. People can't drink seawater.

The entire State of California is in a drought. You saw it in today's USA Today. There are towns without water. There are more towns in line to lose all the water they have, and it is not due to a lack of pumping because of a "little fish." It is due to the lack of snow and the lack of rain.

Now, I know this is personal for many of my colleagues. It is personal for me, too. Many of the towns that I represent are running out of water. My home town is rationing water—65 gallons per person per day. It is a real, real serious problem.

I understand the concerns of the Central Valley farmers. Ag is big in my district, too, and this drought is hurting my constituents, as well. Because of these dry conditions, grapevines will experience an early bud this year, and without water to protect the early bud from the frost, we have no crops—out of business.

It is a drought that is causing the problem. Proponents of this bill say those who oppose it care more about fish than people. These comments cheapen the debate. They insult the intelligence of Californians and are not based on facts. As UC-Berkeley professor of agriculture and resource economics stated in the paper today, Michael Hanemann, he said that you can kill every fish in the delta and you still would have a real problem.

Simply put, this bill is nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to use this drought as an excuse to pump water from other users and to do so with zero regard for the people who depend on that water for their livelihoods. It would be more productive for

this body to join in a rain dance on the floor today than to pass this bill. Our people—our constituents—deserve better than this politically driven bill. They deserve solutions. I ask for a “no” vote on the bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to another gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), a former member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act.

Albert Einstein is quoted as saying:

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

That just about sums up California's water policy today. Time and time again, we have let Californians down by diverting water away from our communities because of Federal practices based on unfair priorities.

California is headed toward an economic calamity unless meaningful action is taken. Ongoing drought conditions combined with regulatory restrictions have placed a tremendous strain on California water supplies. Today, we are offering a first step to a solution to the devastating drought that California is facing.

This is not just a California problem. The Central Valley of California produces a significant amount of our Nation's crops. The devastation caused by this drought will reverberate through the country in the form of soaring food prices.

Water officials across the State are taking responsible steps to ramp up conservation efforts and stretch every drop of water that we do have. Unfortunately, Congress and our Federal regulatory agencies have failed to take a similar approach during these trying times. With our State facing an unprecedented water shortage, it is time for Congress to end the regulatory restrictions that are outdated and ineffective.

Like many Californians, I am tired of seeing millions and millions of gallons of water that could go to the people of California instead being dumped in the Pacific Ocean because of Federal regulations that punish families, farmers and the economy. It has been mentioned here just last year that 800,000 acre feet of water was flushed in the ocean during unprecedented rains. We should never be wasting that amount of water when people are suffering from a drought.

Today, the House can change that equation, restore balance between protecting the environment and provide water to the people who need it.

I want to thank and commend my colleague, DAVID VALADAO, for his passion and leadership on this issue. He has been here only a short time, but he

is already making a tremendous impact on the Central Valley.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. May I inquire the length of time remaining on both sides, please.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 15 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 16½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California, Congressman AMI BERA.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak against this bill, and here is why. This bill does nothing to create additional water supplies. The water that we have already lost, we can't get that back. What we need to do is look at ways to better manage the water we have and look at ways to better conserve that water.

We are ready to do this. We are ready to work with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle as Californians. This isn't about Democrats versus Republicans. We can't pit one community against another. You are talking about families.

This is a picture of Folsom Lake in my district; 500,000 residents in our community rely on water from Folsom Lake for drinking water.

It is not about a little fish. It is about when a child goes to turn on their tap they get clean water coming out of it.

This should be under water, and if you want to understand how bad it is, let's look at this picture. This is the wet side of Folsom dam. Where is the water? This bill takes water where it doesn't exist. You can't move water if it doesn't exist.

So we stand ready to work with our colleagues in both Houses and across the aisle to look at better ways for us to manage water, better ways for us to predict and forecast weather, if you are going to have a dry season, to protect that water, and better ways to serve all of California's communities.

It can't be northern California versus southern California versus central California. It has got to be Californians working together. Let's solve this. Let's work together, and let's create a brighter future for California by managing our water together.

□ 1530

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM), another former member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the bill to ensure again that the House takes the lead in taking action about this big crisis that we are having in California's Central Valley.

This measure puts a number of commonsense ideas on the table to allevi-

ate the severity of today's drought. There is need for a Federal response, because California has a crosscutting network of both State and Federal water projects. With the passage of this bill, I hope the Senate will finally come to the table. If you don't like our idea, come up with one of your own.

We have to have storage. We have to have conveyance. We need to plan for the future. There are times when we have wet years, but if we don't store the water, we don't have it for drought years. It is common sense, and it should be bipartisan and it should be bicameral.

What I am most proud about on this bill is that you actually have Members from different regions of the State that have come together and said the time is now to finally come together on a solution for what we have and what we are facing today in California's Central Valley.

I am thankful to Mr. VALADAO for not only bringing this bill up, but for also including my provisions which will create some more water storage, including Los Vaqueros and Exchequer and streamlining construction projects.

This bill also includes two of my bills: H.R. 2705, seeking to protect native salmon and steelhead on the Stanislaus River; and H.R. 2554, which would allow 100,000 new acre-feet of storage on New Melones reservoir.

We can do simple things to conserve more water. These two measures produce more water and alleviate pressure on supplies, and at no cost to the taxpayer.

Yesterday the Senate passed the farm bill, which we passed here last week. Without water, in California, having a farm bill doesn't matter a whole lot if you can't plant the crops that feed the rest of the Nation.

I urge my colleagues to pass this bill. The time is now to have a real water solution. Again, if you don't like this one, then come up with one of your own. Let's have some water storage. Let's actually have a dialogue, but let's not shut down residents of the Central Valley or drinking water across the State.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I now yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI).

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I don't know if it is proper to ask you a question, but is this February 2? I am reminded of the movie “Groundhog Day.” We continue to repeat what happened yesterday and the year before. This is a repetition of a bill that came to the floor 2 years ago. It was a bill that had a lot of different pieces to it but was very, very simple in what it accomplished, or attempted to accomplish, and that was to take water from someone—the environment, fish, and the delta, farmers, communities, Contra Costa County, the East Bay of

San Francisco—and deliver it to someone else. That would be the San Luis Unit of the Central Valley Project. That was 2 years ago. It must be February 2. It must be Groundhog Day because we are doing it all over again. Whatever little whistles and bells and bows you want to put on it, this is essentially a theft of water from someone to give to somebody else. Plain and simple, that is what it is about.

In this case, the water is going to be stolen—and I use that word because that is accurate—from the delta, from the environment, San Francisco Bay, from the salmon, which is a huge industry in California, all the way up the coast to Oregon, to be given to the largest single-water district in the Nation. A district that, by its contract with the Federal Government, is specifically set to take shortages in their water when there is a drought. If this bill becomes law, that won't be the case. They will get the water and someone else won't.

Okay. We have seen this show before. We also saw before that this type of legislation, as does this bill, overturns the California constitution, pushes it out of the way, and all this is done by folks who normally call themselves State righters.

Well, this is the biggest grab of power by the Federal Government on water anywhere in the history of reclamation law dating back to 1904. Never before has the Federal Government made such an attempt to grab the water rightfully belonging to a State and saying, in this case, California, you are going to use that water as seen fit by the farm bill.

Current water law and current law and practices for a century and more have been the opposite. This doesn't solve the problem. We have got a real problem. These have been seen before and they are going to have to be seen over and over, because that was a year ago. We turn it upside right. Whatever, it is a lot of snow; right? That was a year ago, snow in the Sierras. That is this year, no snow.

And by the way, the Central Valley looks pretty much like a desert—not just the San Joaquin Valley, but the whole valley.

We have got a problem. We have a very real problem. We really need a real solution. This bill isn't a solution. This bill is a call to arms. This bill is the clarion call of yet one more battle in the great California water war, and we are all veterans of that war. My colleagues over here on the Republican aisle, my colleagues over here on the Democratic aisle, we are veterans of the water war.

Unfortunately, this bill doesn't solve the problem of California. There are solutions available. We really need to get to them. We really need to sit down and work with a bill that passed the House and the Senate and was signed by the President less than 2 weeks ago, the omnibus bill.

In that omnibus bill there is a restoration, a reauthorization of the Federal drought emergency program that has some 16, 17 different provisions that provide for specific things that we should be funding. There's no money in this bill for funding. We are going to have to fund this. This is a Westwide problem, a problem that reaches across many, many States, and it is going to take all of us working together to help each individual State, each community, and every water district deal with a very real problem. It is a battle. It is a call to arms. Get to your barricades. Pull out the old weapons. We really need a sensible solution here, and, unfortunately, this bill simply doesn't do it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES), the author of the legislation that passed this House in a bipartisan way last time, which this bill emulates.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Chairman, this is about 40 years of policies that passed out of this body that took water from our region and sent it out to the ocean. That is what this debate is about. So the inconvenient truth for the folks on the left is that their 40 years of policies have resulted in people running out of water.

One of the times they stole water was in 1992. After that, we had what were called the Bay-Delta Accord, State-Federal partnership. That was the last time we were supposed to give up water. It codified into law that agreement.

So the gentleman was talking about stealing water, they are very good at stealing water. At the time they stole water last time, they said the accord was going to be the last time we were going to have water stolen from us. That was in 1994. But water continues to be stolen.

Now there seems to be this misunderstanding about how the system works. L.A., Hollywood, San Francisco, it is a desert. They don't have water. They conveniently get their water from the Colorado River or from the Yosemite Valley. They ignore all environmental rules, but they make our people who live in the San Joaquin Valley live by the rules that they don't want to live by. That is the reality.

So we have these projects that are built for 5 years of storage and movement of water. So you can see when we had a drought in 1997 and 1991 and 2009, these were the allotments at those times. Last year, we actually didn't have a real bad drought. Look at the allocation. So the system simply isn't being used. All the aqueducts and all the dams that were constructed—led by Democrats, of all people, Franklin Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy.

John F. Kennedy said this:

This is a fast trip, but if it had no other benefit than to permit us to look at this val-

ley and others like it across the country, where we can see the greenest and richest earth, producing the greatest and richest crops in the country, and then a mile away, see the same earth and see it brown and dusty and useless, and all because there is water in one place and there isn't in another.

President Kennedy had the foresight to construct these projects that now, after 40 years of bad policies by the left, they have run the State out of water. They have run the State out of water.

Meanwhile, they talk about killing the fish. Well, why are they killing the fish? Because all of these cities that most on the left represent dump their sewage into the delta. That kills the fish. So stop dumping the sewer water in the delta if you care about the fish. If you care about the fish, give up your water in Yosemite National Park and let that water go out to the delta to save the fish.

Mr. Chairman, the time for stealing water has ended, and that is what this bill does.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This debate, Mr. Chairman, is very interesting. And what we are presenting here today and what is being presented by my California colleagues is, from their point of view, a solution to a problem caused by a drought and caused by regulatory action in the State of California.

I have heard my colleagues on the other side of the aisle stand up—virtually everybody has said this. I know my colleague, Mr. GARAMENDI, said something that I will allude to in a moment. Mr. COSTA said something about that. The ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee said something about what I am going to say, and, I dare say, the gentlelady from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) said the same thing.

The thread of what they all said is that there are solutions, and we need to work together. We need to find these solutions, to which our side says fine, this is our solution. We recognize you may not like it. We recognize that. But we also have one other point that we need to recognize, and that is the genius of our Founding Fathers. They created two branches of the legislative branch, the Congress: the House, in which we have the privilege of serving, and the Senate.

I made the observation in my opening statement that the Senate has not acted on any water bill laws at all. Well, finally somebody in this area is catching that message, because the Fresno Bee in California, which is right in the epicenter, if you will, of the San Joaquin Valley, editorialized last week that Senator FEINSTEIN must step up and lead on the drought. What that means, of course, is step up and write a

piece of legislation. I have heard my colleagues say we are working on a piece of legislation, maybe by next week.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make this point. This is very specific. Introducing a piece of legislation is not legislating. Legislating is when you pass a piece of legislation out of your respective House, and I think that is what the Fresno Bee is saying right here when they tell Senator FEINSTEIN and others that they need to step up on this and pass some legislation.

Listen, I am sure that legislation will be different than this. We have heard from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. That is fine. I can take it, and, I dare say, my California colleagues can take it, too, and then we can work out the difference. But we don't know what your position is.

□ 1545

Mr. Chairman, I think this is a good piece of legislation. The last Congress acted on it, and it should act on it again.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining on both sides.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 8½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 9 minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise again to express my strong opposition to H.R. 3964. This legislation will do tremendous harm to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, an area that I am privileged to represent.

Let's start with the facts. California is in a drought and is experiencing its driest year on record. Snowpacks are at about 13 percent of what they should be. Regions have set new records for consecutive dry days during the rainy season. Seventeen communities are at risk of running out of drinking water within 60 days. The National Drought Mitigation Center upgraded about 9 percent of California to an "exceptional drought," the organization's most intense level of drought severity.

Yet, here we are again, spending time on a bill which, according to its authors, is only a short-term fix for a few communities and does nothing to help California in its water crisis. California's Natural Resources Secretary John Laird said that H.R. 3964 "falsely holds the promise of water relief that cannot be delivered because in this drought, the water simply does not exist." Let me repeat that: "the water simply does not exist."

I know that the other side is going to vote unanimously for this bill, so I ask them to look and see what is inside of

it. It is not in your interest. This takes away states' rights. This doesn't weigh a state's protections.

I ask people that live in the Great Lakes area and people that live in the Florida Everglades area: pay attention. This is a Federal precedent. It allows the Federal Government to come and take your water. Is that what you want? I don't think so.

So I ask the Members of the other side of the aisle, please consider what this bill contains, please vote the right way. We should be addressing water efficiency, storage, reuse and recycling, water management, innovative water projects, and a long-term approach to water shortages.

All H.R. 3964 ensures is that more water is shipped out of the delta, turning this precious estuary into a salty, stagnant marsh, devastating local economies, and costing the delta region thousands of jobs.

We should stand united in preventing this legislation from ever becoming law. I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 3964.

The CHAIR. Members are advised to address their comments to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to respond to remarks that the previous speaker from California made about the potential danger in this bill as they relate to water rights in other States.

What the gentleman was alluding to is absolutely incorrect because the language in this bill is very specific; it is very specific as it relates to California.

We went through this process in the last Congress when we went through hearings because other States—my State included—was very, very concerned that whatever preemption had to do with water here would affect other States. Last year in this bill, the language is very, very specific: it does not apply to other States; it is California-centric only.

So I want to make that point, Mr. Chairman.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, if I could inquire of my friend if she has any more speakers; and, if not, if she is prepared to close, her side is prepared to close, I am prepared to close.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. We have no more speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. In that case, I reserve the balance of my time so you can close, and we will have one final speaker.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, we have heard a lot of conversation about what is good and what is not good for my great State of California.

We continue to stress we need to work together. Mr. BERA said that. Mr. DENHAM says create your own.

Well, I thought this was the House of the people and that we are supposed to be working together. That is why we have such a low ranking in the view of the American public—we continually fight against each other.

We need to sit in dialogue and be able to converse—at least agree on things that are necessary—to be able to help our country back on its feet instead of fighting over what is not necessarily fightable about.

Mr. HASTINGS, the chairman, talked about the resolutions of past legislation. Like anything else, we don't get information about many of the bills until last minute. I cannot get any hearings on some of my bills, and neither can some of my members get hearings in the subcommittee or the full committee for being able to address some of these issues that have come up on water.

In summary, we have, of course, this bill that repeals historic California water rights; overturns 20 years of environmental and conservation protections; ignores best available science; repeals the court ordered San Joaquin Restoration Settlement Act; preempts California State law; and creates no new water.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to enter a Statement of Administration Policy:

The administration strongly opposes H.R. 3964, the Emergency Water Delivery Act, because it would not alleviate the effects of California's current drought and would disrupt decades of work that supports building consensus, solutions, and settlements that equitably address some of California's most complex water challenges. California is experiencing severe drought conditions and low reservoir storage. The urgency and seriousness of the situation requires a balanced approach that promotes water reliability and ecosystem restoration.

It ends with:

For these reasons, if the President were presented with H.R. 3964, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this very dangerous precedent for not only my State of California but for the rest of the Nation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority whip.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Congressman VALADAO, Congressman NUNES, and all of the delegation for their work when it comes to water.

The news from California is not bright. The current news: our drought

is the worst in a century. Governor Brown has declared a state of emergency because of the drought. Our water storage is at near empty. Farmland is going fallow. Drinking water is threatened. The State actually says in its latest report that 17 communities can go dry in 4 months. In the absence of God our options are limited to ease this pain. It didn't have to be this way. But why are we here today and why are we debating this bill?

Well, without action farms are going to go fallow. So what does that mean for the rest of the Nation? A lot of people don't look at what happens throughout California and the Central Valley. Most of the produce is produced there for the Nation and the world. If you just look at a few: 94 percent of all tomatoes, 93 percent of all broccoli, 89 percent of all carrots, 78 percent of all lettuce. So that means prices will go up.

It also means you are going to buy that produce somewhere else. You are going to buy it overseas: maybe China, maybe Mexico. What about the food safety? More importantly, what about those jobs? What about those workers?

Just a few short years ago, unemployment in some of these cities were 40 percent. It is already more than 10. The worst part of all this is it didn't have to be this way. We could plan for it.

I have heard colleagues talk about this, Mr. Chairman, that back in 1994 we actually had a bipartisan agreement: the Bay-Delta Accord. It was more than just Republicans and Democrats agreeing. It was environmentalists, farmers, water users. Everybody came to an agreement. But that bond was broken.

The reason we debate this is water is so precious. Most of the snowpack comes from the north and travels down to the south. We have a State water project that—which is a little ironic—Governor Brown, when his father was Governor built more than 50 years ago. There have always been allocations to send it down south. This year they made history. In the history of the water project, the allocation is zero—zero.

When you are growing up you study history. There are always those Aesop's Fables. Do you remember Aesop? He was that slave in ancient Greece that would tell these tales to teach about a moral lesson.

One of those fables talked about the ant and the grasshopper, where the ant during summertime, because he knew winter would come, would go out and work hard and store food for the winter. Not the grasshopper. He would be idle out there in the summer enjoying life, and hopefully nothing bad ever happened.

Well, over the years, government regulation has made it harder. Government regulation has changed the Bay-

Delta Accord. It is safe to say, environmentalists have sued. Environmentalists have decided that fish are more important than those who are unemployed; that maybe they come before the individual.

What does that mean? Since 2007, the State Water Project has lost 2.6 million acre feet because of these policies. Now, what does that mean, 2.6 million acre feet? That means that is enough for the annual water needs of every resident in Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago combined.

Where did that water go? Out to the ocean. Why would we send it out to the ocean when we could store it for the drought that we knew would happen?

There is nothing that illustrates this broken system more than just 3 years ago. You have all seen those photos that people have shown down here on TV of California when it had a snowpack and California today when it is all dry. Just 3 years ago, do you know what that snowpack was? More than 170 percent. Boy, that would be a good year to be an ant, that would be a good year to send it down, that would be a good year to store for today so those communities would not go dry or that land would not go fallow. That wasn't the case. Do you know what the allocation was when we had 170 percent of snowpack? Eighty percent.

Do you know what is unjust in all of this? This year when we get zero percent, or when we got 80 percent of allocation, the bill was always the same: you paid 100 percent, regardless of what allocation you got.

What about property rights? What about responsibility? What about a broken system?

So what does this bill actually do? Well, first and foremost, it puts families before fish. It goes back to an agreement that everybody agreed upon, and it moves us in a place where we can prepare.

Standing defenselessly in the face of future droughts is not a noble gesture. It is actually insanity.

Today, this House will act again, because we would not be in the dryer place that we are today had the Senate taken up the bill we acted on in the last Congress. Why? Because this House believes and understood and learned the lessons of the fables before—that we prepare. But the Senate, in the grasshopper style, stood idly by.

Our Senators—California is pretty powerful in the Senate. Mr. Chairman, I will say California has two Senators that are chairs of committees. There was an opportunity to act.

What is unique in this form of government and what we have, the greatest in the world, we have two Houses. It doesn't mean both Houses have to agree at the very beginning. It does mean that you take action and show where you stand, just like the House did 2 years ago. The Senate took no

stance, so how do we know where they stand?

Well, we will act again. The Senate needs to act, show us where they stand, go to conference, and stand up for the families of California. This has gone on too long. We do not have to be in the situation we stand in today. There are families that did not have to be unemployed had we acted in the Senate, based upon what we did. There are communities that would not have had to go dry had we acted before.

So enough of rhetoric, enough of the fights; the time is now. As the Sun sets today, a bill will be out of this House, but still nothing is even introduced in the Senate.

Mr. Chairman, I implore, don't make California hurt anymore.

Mr. HASTINGS OF Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3964, a bill that undermines long-standing local, state, and Federal agreements on the California water supply and creates a dangerous precedent for similar Congressional overreach in other states.

As the Governor of California said, this bill "falsely suggests the promise of water relief when that is simply not possible given the scarcity of water supplies." Instead, it picks winners and losers, prioritizing some interests above others and disrupting years of collaboration to balance water needs.

The President has directed his Administration to work with California and local jurisdictions to provide information, flexibility in federal law, and emergency grant assistance to respond to the drought. Congress should not act unilaterally to preempt the efforts the State has already undertaken to respond to this disaster.

□ 1600

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-34. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3964

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—*This Act may be cited as the "Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act".*

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—*The table of contents for this Act is as follows:*

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT WATER RELIABILITY

Sec. 101. Amendment to purposes.

- Sec. 102. Amendment to definition.
 Sec. 103. Contracts.
 Sec. 104. Water transfers, improved water management, and conservation.
 Sec. 105. Fish, wildlife, and habitat restoration.
 Sec. 106. Restoration fund.
 Sec. 107. Additional authorities.
 Sec. 108. Bay-Delta Accord.
 Sec. 109. Natural and artificially spawned species.
 Sec. 110. Authorized service area.
 Sec. 111. Regulatory streamlining.
 Sec. 112. Warren Act contracts.
 Sec. 113. Additional Warren Act contracts.
 Sec. 114. Pilot Program to Protect Native Anadromous Fish in the Stanislaus River.
 Sec. 115. San Luis Reservoir.

TITLE II—SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION

- Sec. 201. Repeal of the San Joaquin River settlement.
 Sec. 202. Purpose.
 Sec. 203. Definitions.
 Sec. 204. Implementation of restoration.
 Sec. 205. Disposal of property; title to facilities.
 Sec. 206. Compliance with applicable law.
 Sec. 207. Compliance with Central Valley Project Improvement Act.
 Sec. 208. No private right of action.
 Sec. 209. Implementation.
 Sec. 210. Repayment contracts and acceleration of repayment of construction costs.
 Sec. 211. Repeal.
 Sec. 212. Water supply mitigation.
 Sec. 213. Additional Authorities.

TITLE III—REPAYMENT CONTRACTS AND ACCELERATION OF REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS

- Sec. 301. Repayment contracts and acceleration of repayment of construction costs.

TITLE IV—BAY-DELTA WATERSHED WATER RIGHTS PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

- Sec. 401. Water rights and area-of-origin protections.
 Sec. 402. Sacramento River settlement contracts.
 Sec. 403. Sacramento River Watershed Water Service Contractors.
 Sec. 404. No redirected adverse impacts.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS

- Sec. 501. Precedent.
 Sec. 502. No effect on Proclamation of State of Emergency.
 Sec. 503. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

TITLE I—CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT WATER RELIABILITY

SEC. 101. AMENDMENT TO PURPOSES.

Section 3402 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4706) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f), by striking the period at the end; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(g) to ensure that water dedicated to fish and wildlife purposes by this title is replaced and provided to Central Valley Project water contractors by December 31, 2018, at the lowest cost reasonably achievable; and

“(h) to facilitate and expedite water transfers in accordance with this Act.”.

SEC. 102. AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION.

Section 3403 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4707) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) the term ‘anadromous fish’ means those native stocks of salmon (including steelhead) and sturgeon that, as of October 30, 1992, were present in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their tributaries and ascend those rivers

and their tributaries to reproduce after maturing in San Francisco Bay or the Pacific Ocean;”;

(2) in subsection (l), by striking “and,”

(3) in subsection (m), by striking the period and inserting “; and”, and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(n) the term ‘reasonable flows’ means water flows capable of being maintained taking into account competing consumptive uses of water and economic, environmental, and social factors.”.

SEC. 103. CONTRACTS.

Section 3404 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4708) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking “LIMITATION ON CONTRACTING AND CONTRACT REFORM” and inserting “CONTRACTS”; and

(2) by striking the language of the section and by adding:

“(a) RENEWAL OF EXISTING LONG-TERM CONTRACTS.—Upon request of the contractor, the Secretary shall renew any existing long-term repayment or water service contract that provides for the delivery of water from the Central Valley Project for a period of 40 years.

“(b) ADMINISTRATION OF CONTRACTS.—Except as expressly provided by this Act, any existing long-term repayment or water service contract for the delivery of water from the Central Valley Project shall be administered pursuant to the Act of July 2, 1956 (70 Stat. 483).

“(c) DELIVERY CHARGE.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, a contract entered into or renewed pursuant to this section shall include a provision that requires the Secretary to charge the other party to such contract only for water actually delivered by the Secretary.”.

SEC. 104. WATER TRANSFERS, IMPROVED WATER MANAGEMENT, AND CONSERVATION.

Section 3405 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4709) is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting before “Except as provided herein” the following: “The Secretary shall take all necessary actions to facilitate and expedite transfers of Central Valley Project water in accordance with this Act or any other provision of Federal reclamation law and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.”;

(B) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “to combination” and inserting “or combination”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(E) The contracting district from which the water is coming, the agency, or the Secretary shall determine if a written transfer proposal is complete within 45 days after the date of submission of such proposal. If such district or agency or the Secretary determines that such proposal is incomplete, such district or agency or the Secretary shall state with specificity what must be added to or revised in order for such proposal to be complete.

“(F) Except as provided in this section, the Secretary shall not impose mitigation or other requirements on a proposed transfer, but the contracting district from which the water is coming or the agency shall retain all authority under State law to approve or condition a proposed transfer.”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal reclamation law—

“(A) the authority to make transfers or exchanges of, or banking or recharge arrangements using, Central Valley Project water that could have been conducted before October 30, 1992, is valid, and such transfers, exchanges, or arrangements shall not be subject to, limited, or conditioned by this title; and

“(B) this title shall not supersede or revoke the authority to transfer, exchange, bank, or re-

charge Central Valley Project water that existed prior to October 30, 1992.”.

(2) In subsection (b)—

(A) in the heading, by striking “METERING” and inserting “MEASUREMENT”; and

(B) by inserting after the first sentence the following: “The contracting district or agency, not including contracting districts serving multiple agencies with separate governing boards, shall ensure that all contractor-owned water delivery systems within its boundaries measure surface water at the district or agency’s facilities up to the point the surface water is commingled with other water supplies.”.

(3) By striking subsection (d).

(4) By redesignating subsections (e) and (f) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively.

(5) By amending subsection (e)(as redesignated by paragraph (4))—

(A) by striking “as a result of the increased repayment” and inserting “that exceed the cost-of-service”;;

(B) by inserting “the delivery of” after “rates applicable to”; and

(C) by striking “, and all increased revenues received by the Secretary as a result of the increased water prices established under subsection 3405(d) of this section.”.

SEC. 105. FISH, WILDLIFE, AND HABITAT RESTORATION.

Section 3406 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4714) is amended as follows:

(1) In subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(i) by striking “is authorized and directed to” and inserting “may”;;

(ii) by inserting “reasonable water” after “to provide”;;

(iii) by striking “anadromous fish, except that such” and inserting “anadromous fish. Such”;;

(iv) by striking “Instream flow” and inserting “Reasonable instream flow”;;

(v) by inserting “and the National Marine Fisheries Service” after “United States Fish and Wildlife Service”; and

(vi) by striking “California Department of Fish and Game” and inserting “United States Geological Survey”;;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “primary purpose” and inserting “purposes”;;

(ii) by striking “but not limited to” before “additional obligations”; and

(iii) by adding after the period the following:

“All Central Valley Project water used for the purposes specified in this paragraph shall be credited to the quantity of Central Valley Project yield dedicated and managed under this paragraph by determining how the dedication and management of such water would affect the delivery capability of the Central Valley Project during the 1928 to 1934 drought period after fishery, water quality, and other flow and operational requirements imposed by terms and conditions existing in licenses, permits, and other agreements pertaining to the Central Valley Project under applicable State or Federal law existing on October 30, 1992, have been met. To the fullest extent possible and in accordance with section 3411, Central Valley Project water dedicated and managed pursuant to this paragraph shall be reused to fulfill the Secretary’s remaining contractual obligations to provide Central Valley Project water for agricultural or municipal and industrial purposes.”;

(C) by amending paragraph (2)(C) to read:

“(C) If by March 15th of any year the quantity of Central Valley Project water forecasted to be made available to water service or repayment contractors in the Delta Division of the Central Valley Project is below 75 percent of the total quantity of water to be made available under said contracts, the quantity of Central

Valley Project yield dedicated and managed for that year under this paragraph shall be reduced by 25 percent.”.

(2) By adding at the end the following:

“(i) **SATISFACTION OF PURPOSES.**—By pursuing the activities described in this section, the Secretary shall be deemed to have met the mitigation, protection, restoration, and enhancement purposes of this title.”.

SEC. 106. RESTORATION FUND.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3407(a) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4726) is amended as follows:

(1) By inserting “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—” before “There is hereby”.

(2) By striking “Not less than 67 percent” and all that follows through “Monies” and inserting “Monies”.

(3) By adding at the end the following:

“(2) **PROHIBITIONS.**—The Secretary may not directly or indirectly require a donation or other payment to the Restoration Fund—

“(A) or environmental restoration or mitigation fees not otherwise provided by law, as a condition to—

“(i) providing for the storage or conveyance of non-Central Valley Project water pursuant to Federal reclamation laws; or

“(ii) the delivery of water pursuant to section 215 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (Public Law 97–293; 96 Stat. 1270); or

“(B) for any water that is delivered with the sole intent of groundwater recharge.”.

(b) **CERTAIN PAYMENTS.**—Section 3407(c)(1) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act is amended—

(1) by striking “mitigation and restoration”;

(2) by striking “provided for or”; and

(3) by striking “of fish, wildlife” and all that follows through the period and inserting “of carrying out all activities described in this title.”.

(c) **ADJUSTMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF MITIGATION AND RESTORATION PAYMENTS.**—Section 3407(d)(2) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act is amended by inserting “, or after October 1, 2015, \$4 per megawatt-hour for Central Valley Project power sold to power contractors (October 2015 price levels)” after “\$12 per acre-foot (October 1992 price levels) for municipal and industrial water sold and delivered by the Central Valley Project”.

(d) **COMPLETION OF ACTIONS.**—Section 3407(d)(2)(A) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act is amended by inserting “no later than December 31, 2020,” after “That upon the completion of the fish, wildlife, and habitat mitigation and restoration actions mandated under section 3406 of this title.”.

(e) **REPORT; ADVISORY BOARD.**—Section 3407 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4714) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) **REPORT ON EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS.**—At the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary, in consultation with the Restoration Fund Advisory Board, shall submit to Congress a plan for the expenditure of all of the funds deposited into the Restoration Fund during the preceding fiscal year. Such plan shall contain a cost-effectiveness analysis of each expenditure.

“(h) **ADVISORY BOARD.**—

“(1) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is hereby established the Restoration Fund Advisory Board (hereinafter in this section referred to as the ‘Advisory Board’) composed of 12 members selected by the Secretary, each for four-year terms, one of whom shall be designated by the Secretary as Chairman. The members shall be selected so as to represent the various Central Valley Project stakeholders, four of whom shall be from CVP agricultural users, three from CVP municipal and industrial users, three from CVP power contractors, and two at the discretion of

the Secretary. The Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce may each designate a representative to act as an observer of the Advisory Board.

“(2) **DUTIES.**—The duties of the Advisory Board are as follows:

“(A) To meet at least semiannually to develop and make recommendations to the Secretary regarding priorities and spending levels on projects and programs carried out pursuant to the Central Valley Project Improvement Act.

“(B) To ensure that any advice or recommendation made by the Advisory Board to the Secretary reflect the independent judgment of the Advisory Board.

“(C) Not later than December 31, 2015, and annually thereafter, to transmit to the Secretary and Congress recommendations required under subparagraph (A).

“(D) Not later than December 31, 2015, and biennially thereafter, to transmit to Congress a report that details the progress made in achieving the actions mandated under section 3406 of this title.

“(3) **ADMINISTRATION.**—With the consent of the appropriate agency head, the Advisory Board may use the facilities and services of any Federal agency.”.

SEC. 107. ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES.

(a) **AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.**—Section 3408(c) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4728) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) **CONTRACTS FOR ADDITIONAL STORAGE AND DELIVERY OF WATER.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary is authorized to enter into contracts pursuant to Federal reclamation law and this title with any Federal agency, California water user or water agency, State agency, or private organization for the exchange, impoundment, storage, carriage, and delivery of nonproject water for domestic, municipal, industrial, fish and wildlife, and any other beneficial purpose.

“(2) **LIMITATION.**—Nothing in this subsection shall be deemed to supersede the provisions of section 103 of Public Law 99–546 (100 Stat. 3051).

“(3) **AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary shall use the authority granted by this subsection in connection with requests to exchange, impound, store, carry, or deliver nonproject water using Central Valley Project facilities for any beneficial purpose.

“(4) **RATES.**—The Secretary shall develop rates not to exceed the amount required to recover the reasonable costs incurred by the Secretary in connection with a beneficial purpose under this subsection. Such rates shall be charged to a party using Central Valley Project facilities for such purpose. Such costs shall not include any donation or other payment to the Restoration Fund.

“(5) **CONSTRUCTION.**—This subsection shall be construed and implemented to facilitate and encourage the use of Central Valley Project facilities to exchange, impound, store, carry, or deliver nonproject water for any beneficial purpose.”.

(b) **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—Section 3408(f) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4729) is amended—

(1) by striking “Interior and Insular Affairs and the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries” and inserting “Natural Resources”;

(2) in the second sentence, by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, including progress on the plan required by subsection (j)”;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “The filing and adequacy of such report shall be personally certified to the Committees referenced above by the Regional Director of the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation.”.

(c) **PROJECT YIELD INCREASE.**—Section 3408(j) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4730) is amended as follows:

(1) By redesignating paragraphs (1) through (7) as subparagraphs (A) through (G), respectively.

(2) By striking “In order to minimize adverse effects, if any, upon” and inserting “(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In order to minimize adverse effects upon”.

(3) By striking “needs, the Secretary,” and all that follows through “submit to the Congress, a” and inserting “needs, the Secretary, on a priority basis and not later than September 30, 2015, shall submit to Congress a”.

(4) By striking “increase,” and all that follows through “options:” and inserting “increase, as soon as possible but not later than September 30, 2018 (except for the construction of new facilities which shall not be limited by that deadline), the water of the Central Valley Project by the amount dedicated and managed for fish and wildlife purposes under this title and otherwise required to meet the purposes of the Central Valley Project including satisfying contractual obligations. The plan required by this subsection shall include recommendations on appropriate cost-sharing arrangements and authorizing legislation or other measures needed to implement the intent, purposes, and provisions of this subsection and a description of how the Secretary intends to use the following options—”.

(5) In subparagraph (A), by inserting “and construction of new water storage facilities” before the semicolon.

(6) In subparagraph (F), by striking “and” at the end.

(7) In subparagraph (G), by striking the period and all that follows through the end of the subsection and inserting “; and”.

(8) By inserting after subparagraph (G) the following:

“(H) Water banking and recharge.”.

(9) By adding at the end the following:

“(2) **IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN.**—The Secretary shall implement the plan required by paragraph (1) commencing on October 1, 2015. In order to carry out this subsection, the Secretary shall coordinate with the State of California in implementing measures for the long-term resolution of problems in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary.

“(3) **FAILURE OF THE PLAN.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal reclamation law, if by September 30, 2018, the plan required by paragraph (1) fails to increase the annual delivery capability of the Central Valley Project by 800,000 acre-feet, implementation of any non-mandatory action under section 3406(b)(2) shall be suspended until the plan achieves an increase in the annual delivery capability of the Central Valley Project by 800,000 acre-feet.”.

(d) **TECHNICAL CORRECTION.**—Section 3408(h) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4729) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “paragraph (h)(2)” and inserting “paragraph (2)”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “paragraph (h)(i)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”.

(e) **WATER STORAGE PROJECT CONSTRUCTION.**—The Secretary, acting through the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, may partner or enter into an agreement on the water storage projects identified in section 103(d)(1) of the Water Supply Reliability, and Environmental Improvement Act (Public Law 108–361) (and Acts supplemental and amendatory to the Act) with local joint powers authorities formed pursuant to State law by irrigation districts and other local water districts and local governments within the applicable hydrologic region, to advance these projects. No additional Federal funds are authorized for the activities authorized in sections 103(d)(1)(A)(i), 103(d)(1)(A)(ii), and 103(d)(1)(A)(iii) of Public Law 108–361. However, each water storage project under sections 103(d)(1)(A)(i), 103(d)(1)(A)(ii), and

103(d)(1)(A)(iii) of Public Law 108-361 is authorized for construction if non-Federal funds are used for financing and constructing the project.

SEC. 108. BAY-DELTA ACCORD.

(a) CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTION REGARDING CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT AND CALIFORNIA STATE WATER PROJECT OPERATIONS.—The Central Valley Project and the State Water Project shall be operated pursuant to the water quality standards and operational constraints described in the “Principles for Agreement on the Bay-Delta Standards Between the State of California and the Federal Government” dated December 15, 1994, and such operations shall proceed without regard to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or any other law pertaining to the operation of the Central Valley Project and the California State Water Project. Implementation of this section shall be in strict conformance with the “Principles for Agreement on the Bay-Delta Standards Between the State of California and the Federal Government” dated December 15, 1994.

(b) APPLICATION OF LAWS TO OTHERS.—Neither a Federal department nor the State of California, including any agency or board of the State of California, shall impose on any water right obtained pursuant to State law, including a pre-1914 appropriative right, any condition that restricts the exercise of that water right in order to conserve, enhance, recover or otherwise protect any species that is affected by operations of the Central Valley Project or California State Water Project. Nor shall the State of California, including any agency or board of the State of California, restrict the exercise of any water right obtained pursuant to State law, including a pre-1914 appropriative right, in order to protect, enhance, or restore under the Public Trust Doctrine any public trust value. Implementation of the “Principles for Agreement on the Bay-Delta Standards Between the State of California and the Federal Government” dated December 15, 1994, shall be in strict compliance with the water rights priority system and statutory protections for areas of origin.

(c) COSTS.—No cost associated with the implementation of this section shall be imposed directly or indirectly on any Central Valley Project contractor, or any other person or entity, unless such costs are incurred on a voluntary basis.

(d) NATIVE SPECIES PROTECTION.—California law is preempted with respect to any restriction on the quantity or size of nonnative fish taken or harvested that preys upon one or more native fish species that occupy the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their tributaries or the Sacramento-San Joaquin Rivers Delta.

SEC. 109. NATURAL AND ARTIFICIALLY SPAWNED SPECIES.

After the date of the enactment of this title, and regardless of the date of listing, the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce shall not distinguish between natural-spawned and hatchery-spawned or otherwise artificially propagated strains of a species in making any determination under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) that relates to any anadromous fish species present in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers or their tributaries and ascend those rivers and their tributaries to reproduce after maturing in San Francisco Bay or the Pacific Ocean.

SEC. 110. AUTHORIZED SERVICE AREA.

The authorized service area of the Central Valley Project shall include the area within the boundaries of the Kettleman City Community Services District, California, as those boundaries exist on the date of the enactment of this title. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Act of October 30, 1992 (Public Law 102-575, 106 Stat. 4600 et seq.), upon enactment of this title, the Secretary is authorized and directed to enter into a

long-term contract in accordance with the reclamation laws with the Kettleman City Community Services District, California, for the delivery of up to 900 acre-feet of Central Valley Project water for municipal and industrial use. The Secretary may temporarily reduce deliveries of the quantity of water made available pursuant to up to 25 percent of such total whenever reductions due to hydrologic circumstances are imposed upon agricultural deliveries of Central Valley Project water. If any additional infrastructure or related-costs are needed to implement this section, such costs shall be the responsibility of the non-Federal entity.

SEC. 111. REGULATORY STREAMLINING.

(a) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN LAWS.—Filing of a Notice of Determination or a Notice of Exemption for any project, including the issuance of a permit under State law, related to any project of the CVP or the delivery of water therefrom in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act shall be deemed to meet the requirements of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)) for that project or permit.

(b) CONTINUATION OF PROJECT.—The Bureau of Reclamation shall not be required to cease or modify any major Federal action or other activity related to any project of the CVP or the delivery of water there from pending completion of judicial review of any determination made under the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

(c) PROJECT DEFINED.—For the purposes of this section:

(1) CVP.—The term “CVP” means the Central Valley Project.

(2) PROJECT.—The term “project”—

(A) means an activity that—

(i) is undertaken by a public agency, funded by a public agency, or that requires an issuance of a permit by a public agency;

(ii) has a potential to result in physical change to the environment; and

(iii) may be subject to several discretionary approvals by governmental agencies;

(B) may include construction activities, clearing or grading of land, improvements to existing structures, and activities or equipment involving the issuance of a permit; or

(C) as defined under the California Environmental Quality Act in section 21065 of the California Public Resource Code.

SEC. 112. WARREN ACT CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall offer to the Oakdale Irrigation District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (hereafter in this section referred to as the “districts”) a contract enabling the districts to collectively impound and store up to 200,000 acre-feet of their Stanislaus River water rights in the New Melones Reservoir in accordance with the terms and conditions of sections 1 through 3 of the Act of February 21, 1911 (43 U.S.C. 523-525; commonly known as the “Warren Act”); provided that before offering any such contract, the Secretary has determined that the amount of water to be impounded and stored under the contract will not directly or indirectly result in any redirected adverse water supply or fiscal impacts to any Central Valley Project contractor related to the Secretary’s operation of the Central Valley Project to meet legal obligations imposed by or through any State or Federal agency, including but not limited to those legal obligations emanating from the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531, et seq.), the Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251, et seq., commonly known as the “Clean Water Act” pursuant to the 1977 amendments, Public Law 95-217), and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Cal. Water Code 13000, et seq.).

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The terms and conditions of any contract entered into under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be for a term of not less than 10 years; and

(2) expressly provide that—

(A) the districts may use any water impounded and stored in the New Melones Reservoir for any legal purpose under California law, including use within the boundaries of either district, transfer to and reasonable and beneficial use by a person or entity not located within the boundaries of either district, and for instream use in the Stanislaus River, the San Joaquin River, or the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta; and

(B) any water impounded and stored by either district shall not be released or withdrawn if the end of month September storage level for New Melones Reservoir is projected to be equal to or below 300,000 acre-feet, but in such event the impounded and stored water shall be retained in the New Melones Reservoir for use by the districts in the following year, subject to the same 300,000 acre-foot minimum storage requirement, and without additional payment being required.

(c) CONSERVATION ACCOUNT.—Any water impounded and stored in the New Melones Reservoir by either district under the contract shall not be considered or accounted as water placed in the districts’ conservation account, as that account is defined and explained in the August 30, 1988 Stipulation and Agreement entered into by and between the Bureau of Reclamation and the districts.

SEC. 113. ADDITIONAL WARREN ACT CONTRACTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall develop and offer to the Calaveras County Water District (hereafter in this section referred to as the “CCWD”) a contract enabling the CCWD to impound and store up to 100,000 acre-feet of their Stanislaus River water rights in the New Melones Reservoir in accordance with the terms and conditions of sections 1 through 3 of the Act of February 21, 1911 (43 U.S.C. 523-525; commonly known as the “Warren Act”). This stored water may be obtained for use by CCWD at a point, or points determined convenient to the District.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The terms and conditions of any contract entered into under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be for a term of not less than 10 years; and

(2) expressly provide that—

(A) the CCWD may use any water impounded and stored in the New Melones Reservoir for any legal purpose under California law, including use within the boundaries of the CCWD, transfer to and reasonable and beneficial use by a person or entity not located within the boundaries of CCWD, and for instream use in the Stanislaus River, the San Joaquin River, or the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta; and

(B) any water impounded and stored by either district shall not be released or withdrawn if the end of month September storage level for New Melones Reservoir is projected to be equal to or below 300,000 acre-feet, but in such event the impounded and stored water shall be retained in the New Melones Reservoir for use by the districts in the following year, subject to the same 300,000 acre-foot minimum storage requirement, and without additional payment being required.

SEC. 114. PILOT PROGRAM TO PROTECT NATIVE ANADROMOUS FISH IN THE STANISLAUS RIVER.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF NON-NATIVE PREDATOR FISH REMOVAL PROGRAM.—The Commissioner and districts, in consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, shall jointly develop and conduct a pilot non-native predator fish removal program to remove non-native striped

bass, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, black bass, and other non-native predator fishes from the Stanislaus River. The pilot program shall—

- (1) be scientifically based;
 - (2) include methods to quantify the number and size of predator fishes removed each year, the impact of such removal on the overall abundance of predator fishes, and the impact of such removal on the populations of juvenile anadromous fish found in the Stanislaus River by, among other things, evaluating the number of juvenile anadromous fish that migrate past the rotary screw trap located at Caswell;
 - (3) use wire fyke trapping, portable resistance board weirs, and boat electrofishing, which are the most effective predator collection techniques that minimize affects to native anadromous fish;
 - (4) be developed, including the application for all necessary scientific research and species enhancement permits under section 10(a)(1) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1539(a)(1)), for the performance of the pilot program, not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act;
 - (5) be implemented on the first business day of the calendar year following the issuance of all necessary scientific research and species enhancement permits needed to begin the pilot program; and
 - (6) be implemented for a period of seven consecutive calendar years.
- (b) **MANAGEMENT.**—The management of the pilot program shall be the joint responsibility of the Commissioner and the districts. Such parties shall work collaboratively to insure the performance of the pilot program, and shall discuss and agree upon, among other things, changes in the structure, management, personnel, techniques, strategy, data collection, reporting and conduct of the pilot program.

(c) **CONDUCT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—At the election of the districts, the pilot program may be conducted by their own personnel, qualified private contractors hired by the districts, personnel of, on loan to, or otherwise assigned to the Bureau of Reclamation, or a combination thereof.

(2) **PARTICIPATION BY THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION.**—In the event the districts elect to conduct the program using their own personnel or qualified private contractors hired by them, the Commissioner has the option to assign an employee of, on loan to, or otherwise assigned to the Bureau of Reclamation, to be present for all activities performed in the field. Such presence shall insure compliance with the agreed upon elements specified in subsection (b). The districts shall pay 100 percent of the cost of such participation as specified in subsection (d).

(3) **TIMING OF ELECTION.**—The districts shall notify the Commissioner of their election on or before October 15 of each calendar year of the pilot program, which election shall apply to the work performed in the subsequent calendar year.

(d) **FUNDING.**—

(1) **ANNUAL FUNDING.**—The districts shall be responsible for 100 percent of the cost of the pilot program. On or before December 1 of each year of the pilot program, the Commissioner shall submit to the districts an estimate of the cost to be incurred by the Bureau of Reclamation in the following calendar year, if any, including the cost of any data collection and posting under subsection (e). If an amount equal to the estimate is not provided to the reclamation fund identified in section 3 of the Act of February 21, 1911 (43 U.S.C. 525), or any other fund as directed by the Commissioner, by the districts on or before December 31 of each year, (a) the Bureau of Reclamation shall have no obligation to conduct the pilot program activities otherwise scheduled, and (b) the districts shall be prohibited from conducting any aspect of the pilot program,

until full payment is made by the districts.

(2) **ACCOUNTING.**—On or before September 1 of each calendar year, the Commissioner shall provide an accounting of the prior calendar year's expenses to the districts. If the estimate paid by the districts was less than the actual costs incurred by the Bureau of Reclamation, the districts shall have until September 30 of that calendar year to pay the difference to the reclamation fund. If the estimate paid by the districts was greater than the actual costs incurred by the Bureau of Reclamation, then a credit shall be provided to the districts, which shall be deducted from the estimate payment the districts must make for the work performed by the Bureau of Reclamation, if any, in the next calendar year.

(e) **REPORTING AND EVALUATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—On or before the 15th day of each month, the Commissioner shall post on the website of the Bureau of Reclamation a tabular summary of the raw data collected in the prior month. (2) **REPORT.**

(2) **REPORT.**—On or before June 30 of the calendar year following the completion of the program, the Commissioner and districts shall jointly publish a peer reviewed report that—

- (A) discusses the findings and conclusions of the pilot program;
- (B) synthesizes the data collected under paragraph (1); and
- (C) makes recommendations for further study and action.

(f) **PERMITS PROCESS.**—

(1) Not later than 180 days after filing of an application by the Commissioner and the districts, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, or both, as appropriate, shall issue all necessary scientific research and species enhancement permits under section 10(a)(1) of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1539(a)(1)), for the performance of the pilot program.

(2) Any permit application that is not approved by the Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Commerce, or both, as appropriate, for any reason, within 180 days after receiving the application, shall be deemed approved.

(3) All permits issued shall be in the name of the Bureau of Reclamation and the districts.

(4) Districts may delegate the authority to administer the permit authority to any qualified private contractor retained in accordance with subsection (c).

(5) The pilot program, including amendments thereto by the appropriate Federal and State agencies, shall constitute a conservation plan that complies with the requirements of section 10(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1539(a)(2)).

(g) **NEPA.**—Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)) shall not apply with respect to section 402 and the issuance of any permit under this subsection during the seven year period beginning on the date of the implementation of the pilot program.

(h) **RESTRICTIONS.**—Any restriction imposed under California law on the catch, take, or harvest of any non-native or introduced aquatic or terrestrial species that preys upon anadromous fish and that occupies or is found in the Stanislaus River is hereby void and is pre-empted.

(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—For the purposes of this section:

(1) **ANADROMOUS FISH.**—

(A) The term “anadromous fish” as applied to the Stanislaus River and the operation of New Melones—

(i) means those native stocks of salmon (including steelhead) that—

(I) as of October 30, 1992 were present in and had not been extirpated from the Stanislaus River, and

(II) which ascend the Stanislaus River to reproduce after maturing in San Francisco Bay or the Pacific Ocean; and

(ii) does not mean any stock, strain or member of American shad, sockeye salmon, or striped bass.

(B) The definition of anadromous fish provided in section 3403(a) of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (Public Law 102-575) shall not apply to the operation of New Melones Dam and Reservoir, or to any Federal action in the Stanislaus River.

(2) **COMMISSIONER.**—The term “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

(3) **DISTRICTS.**—The term “districts” means the Oakdale Irrigation District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District.

(4) **PILOT PROGRAM.**—The term “program” means the pilot non-native predator removal program established under this section.

(j) **SUNSET.**—The authorities provided under this section shall expire seven years after the implementation of the pilot program.

SEC. 115. SAN LUIS RESERVOIR.

In connection with operations of the Central Valley Project, California, if San Luis Reservoir does not fill by the last day of February, the Secretary of the Interior shall permit any entity with an agricultural water service or repayment contract for the delivery of water from the Delta Division or the San Luis Unit to reschedule into the immediately following contract year (March 1 through the last day of February) any unused Central Valley Project water previously allocated for irrigation purposes. If water remaining in federal storage in San Luis Reservoir on the last day of February is insufficient to meet all rescheduling requests, the Secretary shall apportion, based on contract quantity, among all such contractors that request to reschedule water all water remaining in San Luis Reservoir on the last day of February. The Secretary shall thereafter make all reasonable efforts to make available additional rescheduled water; provided that such efforts shall not interfere with the Central Valley Project operations in the contract year into which Central Valley Project has been rescheduled.

TITLE II—SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION

SEC. 201. REPEAL OF THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER SETTLEMENT.

As of the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall cease any action to implement the Stipulation of Settlement (Natural Resources Defense Council, et al. v. Kirk Rodgers, et al., Eastern District of California, No. Civ. S-88-1658 LKK/GGH).

SEC. 202. PURPOSE.

Section 10002 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111-11) is amended by striking “implementation of the Settlement” and inserting “restoration of the San Joaquin River”.

SEC. 203. DEFINITIONS.

Section 10003 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111-11) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) The term ‘Restoration Flows’ means the additional water released or bypassed from Friant Dam to insure that the target flow entering Mendota Pool, located approximately 62 river miles downstream from Friant Dam, does not fall below 50 cubic feet per second.”;

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) The term ‘Water Year’ means March 1 through the last day of February of the following Calendar Year, both dates inclusive.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) The term ‘Critical Water Year’ means when the total unimpaired runoff at Friant Dam is less than 400,000 acre-feet, as forecasted as of March 1 of that water year by the California Department of Water Resources.”.

SEC. 204. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESTORATION.

Section 10004 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “authorized and directed” and all that follows through “in the Settlement;” and inserting “authorized to carry out the following;”;

(B) by striking paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5);

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking “(3)” and inserting “(1)”; and

(ii) by striking “paragraph 13 of the Settlement” and inserting “this part”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(2) In each Water Year, commencing in the Water Year starting on March 1, 2015—

“(A) shall modify Friant Dam operations so as to release the Restoration Flows for that Water Year, except in any Critical Water Year;

“(B) shall ensure that the release of Restoration Flows are maintained at the level prescribed by this part, but that Restoration Flows do not reach downstream of Mendota Pool;

“(C) shall release the Restoration Flows in a manner that improves the fishery in the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam, but upstream of Gravelly Ford in existence as of the date of the enactment of this part, and the associated riparian habitat; and

“(D) may, without limiting the actions required under paragraphs (A) and (C) and subject to subsections 10004(a)(3) and 10004(l), use the Restoration Flows to enhance or restore a warm water fishery downstream of Gravelly Ford to and including Mendota Pool, if the Secretary determines that it is reasonable, prudent, and feasible to do so; and

“(3) Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall develop and implement, in cooperation with the State of California, a reasonable plan, to fully recirculate, recapture, reuse, exchange, or transfer all Restoration Flows and provide such recirculated, recaptured, reused, exchanged, or transferred flows to those contractors within the Friant Division, Hidden Unit, and Buchanan Unit of the Central Valley Project that relinquished the Restoration Flows so recirculated, recaptured, reused, exchanged, or transferred. Such a plan shall address any impact on ground water resources within the service area of the Friant Division, Hidden Unit, and Buchanan Unit of the Central Valley Project and mitigation may include ground water banking and recharge projects. Such a plan shall not impact the water supply or water rights of any entity outside the Friant Division, Hidden unit, and Buchanan Unit of the Central Valley Project. Such a plan shall be subject to applicable provisions of California water law and the Secretary’s use of Central Valley Project facilities to make Project water (other than water released from Friant Dam pursuant to this part) and water acquired through transfers available to existing south-of-Delta Central Valley Project contractors.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(3) in subsection (c), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(4) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

“(d) MITIGATION OF IMPACTS.—Prior to October 1, 2015, the Secretary shall identify—

“(1) the impacts associated with the release of Restoration Flows prescribed in this part;

“(2) the measures which shall be implemented to mitigate impacts on adjacent and downstream water users, landowners and agencies as a result of Restoration Flows prescribed in this part; and

“(3) prior to the implementation of decisions or agreements to construct, improve, operate, or maintain facilities that the Secretary determines are needed to implement this part, the Secretary shall implement all mitigations measures identified in subsection (d)(2) before Restoration Flows are commenced.”;

(5) in subsection (e), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(6) in subsection (f), by striking “the Settlement” and all that follows through “section 10011” and insert “this part”;

(7) in subsection (g)—

(A) by striking “the Settlement and” before this part; and

(B) by striking “or exchange contract” and inserting “exchange contract, or water rights settlement or holding contracts”;

(8) in subsection (h)—

(A) by striking “INTERIM” in the header;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “Interim Flows under the Settlement” and inserting “Restoration Flows under this part”;

(ii) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) in clause (i), by striking “Interim” and inserting “Restoration”; and

(II) in clause (ii), by inserting “and” after the semicolon;

(iii) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end; and

(iv) by striking subparagraph (E);

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “Interim” and inserting “Restoration”;

(ii) by striking subparagraph (A); and

(iii) by striking “(B) exceed” and inserting “exceed”;

(D) in paragraph (3), by striking “Interim” and inserting “Restoration”; and

(E) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) CLAIMS.—Within 60 days of enactment of this Act the Secretary shall promulgate a rule establishing a claims process to address current and future claims including, but not limited to, ground water seepage, flooding, or levee instability damages caused as a result of, arising out of, or related to implementation of subtitle A of title X of Public Law 111–11.”;

(9) in subsection (i)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “the Settlement and parts I and III” and inserting “this part”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and” after the semicolon;

(iii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) by striking “additional amounts authorized to be appropriated, including the”; and

(II) by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(iv) by striking subparagraph (C); and

(B) by striking paragraph (3); and

(10) by adding at the end the following new subsections:

“(k) NO IMPACTS ON OTHER INTERESTS.—No Central Valley Project or other water other than San Joaquin River water impounded by or bypassed from Friant Dam shall be used to implement subsection (a)(2) unless such use is on a voluntary basis. No cost associated with the implementation of this section shall be imposed directly or indirectly on any Central Valley

Project contractor, or any other person or entity, outside the Friant Division, the Hidden Unit, or the Buchanan Unit, unless such costs are incurred on a voluntary basis. The implementation of this part shall not result directly or indirectly in any reduction in water supplies or water reliability on any Central Valley Project contractor, any State Water Project contractor, or any other person or entity, outside the Friant Division, the Hidden Unit, or the Buchanan Unit, unless such reductions or costs are incurred on a voluntary basis.

“(l) PRIORITY.—All actions taken under this part shall be subordinate to the Secretary’s use of Central Valley Project facilities to make Project water available to Project contractors, other than water released from the Friant Dam pursuant to this part.

“(m) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 8 of the Reclamation Act of 1902, except as provided in this part, including title IV of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys Water Reliability Act, this part preempts and supersedes any State law, regulation, or requirement that imposes more restrictive requirements or regulations on the activities authorized under this part. Nothing in this part shall alter or modify the obligations, if any, of the Friant Division, Hidden Unit, and Buchanan Unit of the Central Valley Project, or other water users on the San Joaquin River or its tributaries, under orders issued by the State Water Resources Control Board pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (California Water Code sections 13000 et seq.). Any such order shall be consistent with the congressional authorization for any affected Federal facility as it pertains to the Central Valley Project.

“(n) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION.—Projects to implement this title shall be phased such that each project shall follow the sequencing identified below and include at least the—

“(1) project purpose and need;

“(2) identification of mitigation measures;

“(3) appropriate environmental review; and

“(4) prior to releasing Restoration Flows under this part, the Secretary shall—

“(A) complete the implementation of mitigation measures required; and

“(B) complete implementation of the project.”.

SEC. 205. DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY; TITLE TO FACILITIES.

Section 10005 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “the Settlement authorized by this part” and inserting “this part”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary” and inserting “The Secretary”; and

(ii) by striking “the Settlement authorized by this part” and inserting “this part”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2); and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “through the exercise of its eminent domain authority”; and

(ii) by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “section 10009(c)” and inserting “section 10009”.

SEC. 206. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAW.

Section 10006 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting “unless otherwise provided by this part” before the period at the end; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting “, unless otherwise provided by this part” before the period at the end;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “section 10004” and inserting “this part”; and

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”; and

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) by inserting “, including without limitation to sections 10004(d) and 10004(h)(4) of this part,” after “implementing this part”; and

(B) by striking “for implementation of the Settlement”.

SEC. 207. COMPLIANCE WITH CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT IMPROVEMENT ACT.

Section 10007 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),

(A) by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “enactment of this part”; and

(B) by inserting: “and the obligations of the Secretary and all other parties to protect and keep in good condition any fish that may be planted or exist below Friant Dam including any obligations under section 5937 of the California Fish and Game Code and the public trust doctrine, and those of the Secretary and all other parties under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.)” before “, provided”; and

(2) in paragraph (1), by striking “, as provided in the Settlement”.

SEC. 208. NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.

Section 10008(a) of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) by striking “not a party to the Settlement” after “person or entity”; and

(2) by striking “or the Settlement” before the period and inserting “unless otherwise provided by this part. Any Central Valley Project long-term water service or repayment contractor within the Friant Division, Hidden unit, or Buchanan Unit adversely affected by the Secretary’s failure to comply with section 10004(a)(3) of this part may bring an action against the Secretary for injunctive relief or damages, or both.”.

SEC. 209. IMPLEMENTATION.

Section 10009 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in the header by striking “; SETTLEMENT FUND”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “the Settlement” the first place it appears and inserting “this part”;

(ii) by striking “, estimated to total” and all that follows through “subsection (b)(1).”; and

(iii) by striking “provided however,” and all that follows through “\$110,000,000 of State funds”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary” and inserting “The Secretary”;

(ii) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(C) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking “Except as provided in the Settlement, to” and inserting “To”; and

(ii) by striking “this Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(3) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) by striking “In addition” through “however, that the” and inserting “The”;

(B) by striking “such additional appropriations only in amounts equal to”; and

(C) by striking “or the Settlement” before the period;

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by striking “from the sale of water pursuant to the Settlement, or”; and

(iii) in subparagraph (D), by striking “the Settlement” and inserting “this part”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “the Settlement and” before “this part”; and

(5) by striking subsections (d) through (f).

SEC. 210. REPAYMENT CONTRACTS AND ACCELERATION OF REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS.

Section 10010 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(D), by striking “the Settlement and” before “this part”; and

(B) in paragraph (4)(C), by striking “the Settlement and” before “this part”;

(2) in subsection (c), by striking paragraph (3);

(3) in subsection (d)(1), by striking “the Settlement” in both places it appears and inserting “this part”;

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “Interim Flows or Restoration Flows, pursuant to paragraphs 13 or 15 of the Settlement” and inserting “Restoration Flows, pursuant to this part”;

(ii) by striking “Interim Flows or” before “Restoration Flows”; and

(iii) by striking “the Interim Flows or Restoration Flows or is intended to otherwise facilitate the Water Management Goal, as described in the Settlement” and inserting “Restoration Flows”; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “except as provided in paragraph 16(b) of the Settlement” after “Friant Division long-term contractor”; and

(ii) by striking “the Interim Flows or Restoration Flows or to facilitate the Water Management Goal” and inserting “Restoration Flows”.

SEC. 211. REPEAL.

Section 10011 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is repealed.

SEC. 212. WATER SUPPLY MITIGATION.

Section 10202(b) of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “the Interim or Restoration Flows authorized in part I of this subtitle” and inserting “Restoration Flows authorized in this part”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “the Interim or Restoration Flows authorized in part I of this subtitle” and inserting “Restoration Flows authorized in this part”;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “meet the Restoration Goal as described in part I of this subtitle” and inserting “recover Restoration Flows as described in this part”;

(B) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by striking “the Interim or Restoration Flows authorized in part I of this subtitle” and inserting “Restoration Flows authorized in this part”; and

(ii) by striking “, and for ensuring appropriate adjustment in the recovered water account pursuant to section 10004(a)(5)”.

SEC. 213. ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES.

Section 10203 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (Public Law 111–11) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “section 10004(a)(4)” and inserting “section 10004(a)(3)”; and

(B) by striking “, provided” and all that follows through “section 10009(f)(2)”; and

(2) by striking subsection (c).

TITLE III—REPAYMENT CONTRACTS AND ACCELERATION OF REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS

SEC. 301. REPAYMENT CONTRACTS AND ACCELERATION OF REPAYMENT OF CONSTRUCTION COSTS.

(a) CONVERSION OF CONTRACTS.—

(1) Not later than 1 year after enactment, the Secretary of the Interior, upon request of the contractor, shall convert all existing long-term Central Valley Project contracts entered under subsection (e) of section 9 of the Act of August 4, 1939 (53 Stat. 1196), to a contract under subsection (d) of section 9 of said Act (53 Stat. 1195), under mutually agreeable terms and conditions.

(2) Upon request of the contractor, the Secretary is further authorized to convert, not later than 1 year after enactment, any Central Valley Project long-term contract entered under subsection (c)(2) of section 9 of the Act of August 4, 1939 (53 Stat. 1194), to a contract under subsection (c)(1) of section 9 of said Act, under mutually agreeable terms and conditions.

(3) All contracts entered into pursuant to paragraph (1) shall—

(A) require the repayment, either in lump sum or by accelerated prepayment, of the remaining amount of construction costs identified in the most current version of the Central Valley Project Schedule of Irrigation Capital Allocations by Contractor, as adjusted to reflect payments not reflected in such schedule, and properly assignable for ultimate return by the contractor, no later than January 31, 2015, or if made in approximately equal annual installments, no later than January 31, 2018; such amount to be discounted by the Treasury Rate. An estimate of the remaining amount of construction costs as of January 31, 2015, as adjusted, shall be provided by the Secretary of the Interior to each contractor no later than 180 days after enactment;

(B) require that, notwithstanding subsection (c)(2), construction costs or other capitalized costs incurred after the effective date of the converted contract or not reflected in the schedule referenced in subparagraph (A), and properly assignable to such contractor, shall be repaid in not more than 5 years after notification of the allocation if such amount is a result of a collective annual allocation of capital costs to the contractors exercising contract conversions under this subsection of less than \$5,000,000. If such amount is \$5,000,000 or greater, such cost shall be repaid as provided by applicable reclamation law, provided that the reference to the amount of \$5,000,000 shall not be a precedent in any other context; and

(C) provide that power revenues will not be available to aid in repayment of construction costs allocated to irrigation under the contract.

(4) All contracts entered into pursuant to paragraph (2) shall—

(A) require the repayment in lump sum of the remaining amount of construction costs identified in the most current version of the Central Valley Project Schedule of Municipal and Industrial Water Rates, as adjusted to reflect payments not reflected in such schedule, and properly assignable for ultimate return by the contractor, no later than January 31, 2018. An estimate of the remaining amount of construction costs as of January 31, 2018, as adjusted, shall be provided by the Secretary of the Interior to each contractor no later than 180 days after enactment; and

(B) require that, notwithstanding subsection (c)(2), construction costs or other capitalized costs incurred after the effective date of the contract or not reflected in the schedule referenced in subparagraph (A), and properly assignable to such contractor, shall be repaid in not more

than 5 years after notification of the allocation if such amount is a result of a collective annual allocation of capital costs to the contractors exercising contract conversions under this subsection of less than \$5,000,000. If such amount is \$5,000,000 or greater, such cost shall be repaid as provided by applicable reclamation law, provided that the reference to the amount of \$5,000,000 shall not be a precedent in any other context.

(b) **FINAL ADJUSTMENT.**—The amounts paid pursuant to subsection (a) shall be subject to adjustment following a final cost allocation by the Secretary of the Interior upon completion of the construction of the Central Valley Project. In the event that the final cost allocation indicates that the costs properly assignable to the contractor are greater than what has been paid by the contractor, the contractor shall be obligated to pay the remaining allocated costs. The term of such additional repayment contract shall be no less than 1 year and no more than 10 years, however, mutually agreeable provisions regarding the rate of repayment of such amount may be developed by the parties. In the event that the final cost allocation indicates that the costs properly assignable to the contractor are less than what the contractor has paid, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized and directed to credit such overpayment as an offset against any outstanding or future obligation of the contractor.

(c) **APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.**—

(1) Notwithstanding any repayment obligation under subsection (a)(3)(B) or subsection (b), upon a contractor's compliance with and discharge of the obligation of repayment of the construction costs as provided in subsection (a)(3)(A), the ownership and full-cost pricing limitations of any provision of Federal reclamation law shall not apply to lands in such district.

(2) Notwithstanding any repayment obligation under paragraph (3)(B) or paragraph (4)(B) of subsection (a), or subsection (b), upon a contractor's compliance with and discharge of the obligation of repayment of the construction costs as provided in paragraphs (3)(A) and (4)(A) of subsection (a), such contractor shall continue to pay applicable operation and maintenance costs and other charges applicable to such repayment contracts pursuant to the then-current rate-setting policy and applicable law.

(d) **CERTAIN REPAYMENT OBLIGATIONS NOT ALTERED.**—Implementation of the provisions of this section shall not alter the repayment obligation of any other long-term water service or repayment contractor receiving water from the Central Valley Project, or shift any costs that would otherwise have been properly assignable to any contractors absent this section, including operations and maintenance costs, construction costs, or other capitalized costs incurred after the date of enactment of this Act, to other such contractors.

(e) **STATUTORY INTERPRETATION.**—Nothing in this part shall be construed to affect the right of any long-term contractor to use a particular type of financing to make the payments required in paragraph (3)(A) or paragraph (4)(A) of subsection (a).

(f) **DEFINITION OF TREASURY RATE.**—For purposes of this section, "Treasury Rate" shall be defined as the 20-year Constant Maturity Treasury rate published by the United States Department of the Treasury as of October 1, 2014.

TITLE IV—BAY-DELTA WATERSHED WATER RIGHTS PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

SEC. 401. WATER RIGHTS AND AREA-OF-ORIGIN PROTECTIONS.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this Act, Federal reclamation law, or the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.)—

(1) the Secretary of the Interior ("Secretary") is directed, in the operation of the Central Valley Project, to strictly adhere to State water rights law governing water rights priorities by honoring water rights senior to those belonging to the Central Valley Project, regardless of the source of priority;

(2) the Secretary is directed, in the operation of the Central Valley Project, to strictly adhere to and honor water rights and other priorities that are obtained or exist pursuant to the provisions of California Water Code sections 10505, 10505.5, 11128, 11460, and 11463; and sections 12200 to 12220, inclusive; and

(3) any action that affects the diversion of water or involves the release of water from any Central Valley Project water storage facility taken by the Secretary or the Secretary of the Department of Commerce to conserve, enhance, recover, or otherwise protect any species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) shall be applied in a manner that is consistent with water right priorities established by State law.

SEC. 402. SACRAMENTO RIVER SETTLEMENT CONTRACTS.

In the implementation of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), in the Bay-Delta and on the Sacramento River, the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce are directed to apply any limitations on the operation of the Central Valley Project or to formulate any "reasonable prudent alternative" associated with the operation of the Central Valley Project in a manner that strictly adheres to and applies the water rights priorities for "Project Water" and "Base Supply" provided for in the Sacramento River Settlement Contracts. Article 3(i) of the Sacramento River Settlement Contracts shall not be utilized by the United States as means to provide shortages to the Sacramento River Settlement Contracts that are different than those provided for in Article 5(a) of those contracts.

SEC. 403. SACRAMENTO RIVER WATERSHED WATER SERVICE CONTRACTORS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subsection (b) and the absolute priority of the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors to Sacramento River supplies over Central Valley Project diversions and deliveries to other contractors, the Secretary is directed, in the operation of the Central Valley Project, to allocate water provided for irrigation purposes to existing Central Valley Project agricultural water service contractors within the Sacramento River Watershed in compliance with the following:

(1) Not less than 100% of their contract quantities in a "Wet" year.

(2) Not less than 100% of their contract quantities in an "Above Normal" year.

(3) Not less than 100% of their contract quantities in a "Below Normal" year.

(4) Not less than 75% of their contract quantities in a "Dry" year.

(5) Not less than 50% of their contract quantities in a "Critically Dry" year.

(b) **PROTECTION OF MUNICIPAL AND INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES.**—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be deemed to (i) modify any provision of a water service contract that addresses municipal and industrial water shortage policies of the Secretary, (ii) affect or limit the authority of the Secretary to adopt or modify municipal and industrial water shortage policies, (iii) affect or limit the authority of the Secretary to implement municipal and industrial water shortage policies, or (iv) affect allocations to Central Valley Project municipal and industrial contractors pursuant to such policies. Neither subsection (a) nor the Secretary's implementation of subsection (a) shall constrain, govern or affect, directly or indirectly, the operations of the Central Valley Project's American River Division or any deliveries from that Division, its units or its facilities.

(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) The term "existing Central Valley Project agricultural water service contractors within the Sacramento River Watershed" means water service contractors within the Shasta, Trinity, and Sacramento River Divisions of the Central Valley Project, that have a water service contract in effect, on the date of the enactment of this section, that provides water for irrigation.

(2) The year type terms used in subsection (a) have the meaning given those year types in the Sacramento Valley Water Year Type (40–30) Index.

SEC. 404. NO REDIRECTED ADVERSE IMPACTS.

The Secretary shall insure that there are no redirected adverse water supply or fiscal impacts to those within the Sacramento River or San Joaquin River watershed or to the State Water Project arising from the Secretary's operation of the Central Valley Project to meet legal obligations imposed by or through any State or Federal agency, including, but not limited to those legal obligations emanating from the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) or this Act, or actions or activities implemented to meet the twin goals of improving water supply or addressing environmental needs of the Bay Delta.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS

SEC. 501. PRECEDENT.

Congress finds and declares that—

(1) coordinated operations between the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project, previously requested and consented to by the State of California and the Federal Government, require assertion of Federal supremacy to protect existing water rights throughout the system; and

(2) these circumstances are unique to California.

Therefore, nothing in this Act shall serve as precedent in any other State.

SEC. 502. NO EFFECT ON PROCLAMATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY.

Nothing in this Act shall affect in any way the Proclamation of State of Emergency and associated Executive Order issued by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. on January 17, 2014, or the authorities granted thereby, including without limitation the authority of the California State Water Resources Control Board to modify any standards or operational constraints adopted to implement the "Principles for on the Bay-Delta Standards Between the State of California and the Federal Government", dated December 15, 1994, so as to make additional irrigation and municipal and industrial water supplies available in the Central Valley Project and State Water Project service areas during the state of emergency.

SEC. 503. WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT.

(a) **WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT.**—Section 3(a)(62)(B)(i) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)(62)(B)(i)) is amended—

(1) by striking "the normal maximum" the first place that it appears and all that follows through "April, 1990." and inserting the following: "the boundary of FERC Project No. 2179 as it existed on February 15, 2013, consisting of a point approximately 2,480 feet downstream of the confluence with the North Fork of the Merced River, consisting of approximately 7.4 miles."; and

(2) by striking "the normal maximum operating pool water surface level of Lake McClure" the second place that it appears and inserting "the boundary of FERC Project No. 2179 as it existed on February 15, 2013, consisting of a point approximately 2,480 feet downstream of the confluence with the North Fork of the Merced River".

(b) **EXCHEQUER PROJECT.**—Section 3 of Public Law 102–432 is amended by striking "Act" and

all that follows through the period and inserting "Act."

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 113-340. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS. NAPOLITANO

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 113-340.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment made in order by the rule.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 24, after the first period, insert the following: "Charges for all delivered water shall include interest, as determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, on the basis of average market yields on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States with the remaining periods of maturity comparable to the applicable reimbursement period of the project, adjusted to the nearest 1/8 of 1 percent on the underpaid balance of the allocable project cost."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, my amendment to H.R. 3964 is very, very simple. It is an inconvenient truth, however, that it creates a revenue stream to the Treasury by eliminating an irrigation subsidy which requires irrigators to pay project debt with interest—in other words, ending free taxpayer subsidy since 1902, which has been in place since reclamation was created. It requires that any new water contracts or renewed contracts must reflect the price of water with interest and repay the debt of the project to only the Treasury with interest. This will be of small assistance to balancing our national debt.

When reclamation was established in 1902, it was meant to deliver water to farms with approximately 160 acres. Subsequent congressional action has changed the acreage limitation along with the repayment contract for these projects. So, in 1982, acreage was increased to 960 acres. Congressional action has also made the repayment of project debt interest free for irrigators while municipalities, like my constituents—my water people—and power users pay the required appropriate in-

terest. I wish other State water users were as lucky as these folks.

H.R. 3964 removes the role of the Federal Government in protecting environment and public good. That is not good. If we are removing the role of the Federal Government, then we should also remove the Federal subsidy associated with renewed or new water contracts.

My constituents and anybody else's must fairly and equally repay additional interest on any project, and they have. For over a decade, southern California foresaw needed infrastructure, and many local entities stepped up to the plate and provided some relief. We paid for and constructed new storage facilities, like the Diamond Valley Lake Reservoir, entirely paid for by local groups and without one Federal cent, adding 1 million acres of new storage. This is on top of the investments we have made in title XVI—recycled water, which has only a 25 percent Federal match—which created 680,000 acre-feet in California alone.

Let's end this interest-free subsidy at our taxpayers' expense, at all of America's taxpayers' expense. Eliminating this unfair subsidy will help to cut our deficit, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment.

With regard to a statement that was just made on the Bay Delta, it seems that Secretary Babbitt and the Secretary of Natural Resources were the ones who actually passed the Bay Delta Accord, and 3 years were spent by Mr. GARAMENDI in trying to implement this.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment was rejected on a bipartisan vote of 174-250 when the gentlelady introduced it in 2012, and it deserves a similar fate on the floor today. Let's be clear about what it does.

It singles out Central Valley Project participants who pay their Federal loans off early to a punitive surtax that is imposed on no other Bureau of Reclamation project in the United States. Their surtaxes will be passed on to consumers through higher prices. Now, the Central Valley Project was already singled out for a punitive tax—about \$50 million annually—by Congress in 1992 to fund an array of environmental slush funds.

I believe that beneficiaries should pay the cost of water projects but that they should pay only the costs of those projects and no more. These are not cash cows for the Federal Government to milk until they are dry. When the left speaks of corporate farms, they leave out the fact that virtually every family farm is incorporated, and that

is who we would be singling out for this special tax. That tax is then paid in only one of two ways: by employees through lower wages or by consumers through higher prices.

I have a modest suggestion. Perhaps we should start putting people back to work rather than running them out of business.

I have often criticized the gentlelady and her colleagues for policies that have created the conditions that indirectly send water prices through the roof, but this proposal does so quite directly and dramatically. I think that is why so many of her colleagues on the Democratic side abandoned her 2 years ago and why they would be well advised to do so again.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. How much time is remaining, Mr. Chairman?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 2 minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, we can go on debating the issue, but everybody who takes a loan has to pay interest, and I don't see any reason why since 1902 our irrigators have been singled out for not having to pay that while the power marketing agencies and other water agencies do have to ante up that interest. They do pass it on to the consumer, but the consumer understands why.

We need to be transparent on the issue and be able to let people know really what we are paying for. Yes, we have the lowest priced crops in California, but we must be able to ensure that we let the rest of the Nation know why we need to move forward. The Central Valley Project, the CVP, was \$1.78 billion. Only \$236 million has been repaid, and \$1.45 billion has not been repaid.

Mr. Chairman, I think this is an amendment that is in order so as to begin trying to help balance our budget. We hope that we will get our colleagues to understand that all of us have to hurt a little bit, and I don't see why this does not have the merit that it should, so I urge a "yes" vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, it ought to be obvious to everyone that, once you have paid off a loan, you don't keep paying interest on that loan. Why? Because you have already paid it off. That is what every project managed by the Bureau of Reclamation does. When they are given permission to prepay the loan—to pay off the loan just the way you would pay off your home loan early—they no longer are charged interest for it.

The gentlelady would single out the Central Valley—and the Central Valley alone—for this punitive surtax. I have often wondered why the policy seemed to be aimed at the Central Valley. I don't know what it is that my friends in the opposition have against the

thousands of farmworkers whose livelihoods depend upon farming in that region, but they have been waging war on that hapless and helpless group for far too long. This is another example of singling them out for a special punitive tax paid by no one else in all of the Bureau of Reclamation experience.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. MATSUI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 113-340.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 18, line 24, strike "shall be" and all that follows through the first period on page 19, line 2, and insert the following: "shall not be suspended, but rather shall continue to be the responsibility of south of Delta CVP contractors."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise to offer an amendment to H.R. 3964 that would preserve senior water right holders in northern California. This bill grossly oversimplifies the issue of California water, and it tries to solve the problem by causing more harm to California's water system than good.

As I mentioned during our debates about California water, we should not jeopardize the health of one part of the State for another. In northern California, we have balanced our watershed between the urban areas, agriculture, the environment. We have been good stewards and care deeply about how our watershed is preserved and grows.

This legislation would take the problems of one part of the State and export them to the other. We cannot have a lasting solution to our water problems until we work on a comprehensive solution that includes all of the stakeholders. Specifically, this bill attempts to dissolve the responsibility for 800,000 acre-feet of water for the delta environ-

ment. That doesn't solve California's water problems. It only exacerbates them.

We all know that the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta needs to be restored, not driven into further decline. The delta is a hub of California's water system. California needs it to be healthy. My amendment to H.R. 3964 seeks to amend the language regarding the elimination of water for the delta environment. The amendment also preserves senior water rights in northern California.

The underlying legislation only creates discord at a time when we need alliances. We can and must do better for California as a whole. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment, more than any other, focuses on the central issue surrounding this bill: What comes first—families or fish?

In 1992, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act carved out 800,000 acre-feet to be dedicated for fish and wildlife purposes. That water came out of the allocations for the Central Valley that all sides had agreed to. At the time, it was promised that the water would be replaced. That promise is unfulfilled to this day.

Worse, the Federal Government began treating this allotment as a floor rather than as a ceiling. In the mid-1990s, a zealous official in the Department of the Interior preempted State water rights and ordered that more than 1 million acre-feet of water appropriated by the Central Valley Project be used for purposes not authorized under water rights permits issued by the State of California.

This bill reestablished the 800,000 acre-foot allotment agreed to by all sides when Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt promised: "A deal is a deal, and if it turns out there is a need for additional water, it will come at the expense of the Federal Government." This provision redeems the promise that was broken by Mr. Babbitt's deputy, and the provision that the gentlewoman is offering would have us delete that provision.

I might add that, also under this bill, the 800,000 acre-feet can be recycled by communities once it has met its environmental purpose rather than being lost to the ocean. To those who tell us they like recycling, this is the ultimate recycling bill. I might also point out that an amendment that had a very similar effect 2 years ago was rejected on a bipartisan vote of 178-247 in this House. I would recommend that we do so again today.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chairman, my friend on the other side is trying to distract the public on what their bill actually does.

H.R. 3964 would not provide any relief from the real drought, but it would instead permanently reallocate water for one interest.

□ 1615

Mr. Chairman, the 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act designated 800,000 acre-feet of water for environmental purposes. This water is important. It is used to balance our water needs between urban, agricultural, and environment.

This so-called "b2" water was dedicated to help stem the rapid decline of the delta ecosystem. H.R. 3964 repeals the "b2" water allocation in the CVPIA unless 800,000 acre-feet of additional capacity is found by 2018. Who is going to make up the 800,000 acre-feet by 2018?

As written, the bill would relieve the south delta CVP users of any responsibility for the environmental water. Instead, it would attempt to shift the responsibilities to northern California, putting into jeopardy senior water rights holders in northern California.

Mr. Chairman, my district, the city of Sacramento, and Sacramento County wrote letters stating what we all know. This is a backdoor attempt to undermine longstanding California water rights and let one interest jump to the head of the line.

In short, this bill is another blatant water grab from northern California.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment will protect senior water rights holders in northern California and assure we are all in this together in California. We should not pit one against another.

Again, this bill will not help alleviate the drought. Even if we pumped as much water south as possible, Central Valley farmers still wouldn't have enough. That is because a lack of pumping is not the problem. The problem is a lack of rain and snow. There is no more water to pump.

Northern California is in severe drought. This bill does not solve California's drought. It only further divides our State.

Mr. Chairman, again, I urge my colleagues to support my amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to my distinguished colleague from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment and in strong support of H.R. 3964.

Final passage of this bill, as we come to the floor, is a defining vote. It is a vote by which the public will be able to determine just whose side we are on. Do we favor animals—even fish—above the well-being of people?

A clique of environmental extremists with lots of money and no common

sense have fostered insane policies that are destroying one of the most vibrant and productive industries in California. These antihuman, pro-animal policies have resulted in the unemployment of tens of thousands of hardworking Americans who are struggling to make ends meet. Their lives and livelihood have been destroyed, all for the purpose of protecting a minnow that isn't even good enough to be baked.

Yes, by this vote, the public will be able to determine whether or not, at a time of drought and crushingly high unemployment, we will continue to dump hundreds of thousands of acre-feet of fresh water into the San Francisco Bay every year—enough water to grow 10 million tons of tomatoes, 200 million boxes of lettuce, or 20 million tons of grapes.

This is government regulation gone berserk. Instead of protecting us from environmental threats, people are being treated as expendable. The current policy is destructive not only to our farmers, who are probably affected the most, but it is increasing the cost of putting food on our families' tables.

All of this is being done for what? To protect the well-being of a fish.

Now we have an opportunity to reestablish our priorities. A vote against this bill is a vote for radical environmentalists' antihuman policies. A vote for this bill is a vote to reaffirm that we place a higher value on human beings and want to improve their condition.

Join me in opposing this amendment and supporting the bill.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 1¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 1 minute remaining.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chairman, I will just say this. I grew up in the Central Valley. My father was a farmer. So I understand clearly the challenges the farming community has.

I am not an individual who dismisses the farming community. I lived on a farm. My father was a small farmer. My grandfather was a farmer. My uncle was a farmer. So I understand these challenges.

I also understand we are together in California, and we must work together, and we should be using this time to find real solutions to California's water issues, including the drought. Unfortunately, we seem to be playing partisan games.

My amendment would simply protect water rights in northern California. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to my distinguished colleague from the Central Valley (Mr. VALADAO), the author of this measure.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Chairman, what we are asking for here is a little understanding of the situation we have got.

This graph here shows how much water was in storage at the end of 2013. There was quite a bit of water, but the allocation was this much.

What this amendment does is continue to waste all the water here that should have been used for families at their homes, because people need clean water to drink. They also need water to grow food. Farmers don't farm for fun, they farm for food, because people like to eat. It is a funny little concept we have got going on here. We cannot continue to waste water.

I have enjoyed seeing the pictures of all the dams and everybody referring to the drought as the only issue that we have got. We have got a waste of water. We have got to stop wasting that water. That is what our goal is, and that is why I oppose this amendment.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. BERA OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 113-340.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 504. PROTECTIONS FOR DELTA COUNTIES.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not have a harmful effect on the quality, quantity, or safety of drinking water supplies for residents of the five Delta Counties (Contra Costa County, Sacramento County, San Joaquin County, Solano County, and Yolo County, California).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is simple. Supporters of this bill argue that it won't negatively impact upstream users. My constituents are these upstream users.

My amendment protects upstream users, adding safeguards for the five California delta counties. It guarantees that this politically motivated water grab would not harm the quality, quan-

tity, or safety of drinking water supplies for these residents.

California is in the middle of a crisis. We need real solutions, not political solutions. Last year was our driest year on record. The snowpack where the State gets over a third of its water is at record lows.

We all agree there is a problem. So let's sit down, Democrats and Republicans, and work to find solutions together, not pit one community against another. In the meantime, let's not sacrifice one community. This amendment ensures that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, like Tennyson's rotting mackerel in the moonlight, this amendment shines and stinks.

It states the obvious: the bill will not harm delta drinking water supplies. Well, of course it won't. After all, the delta counties are senior to the Central Valley in their water rights and so they have first call on that water. Under this bill, no agency of the State or Federal Government can take that right away.

Furthermore, under this bill, the delta counties can also reuse environmental water that otherwise would have been lost to the ocean, making this the ultimate water recycling bill.

This bill in no way affects the quality of drinking water in the delta or anywhere else. The proof of that is the fact that in the years following adoption of the Bay Delta Accord, which H.R. 3964 merely restores, never was it suggested by any water agency that drinking water or agricultural water was adversely affected in any way, shape, or form.

By placing this provision in the bill, it immediately opens it up to litigation that could tie it up in the courts for years. The mere allegation by a single litigant, no matter how outlandish, no matter how contorted, could stall these vitally needed reforms. It would also give this administration the ability to claim a right to nullify this law based on such a fiction.

A few years ago, when Central Valley water was being diverted for the delta smelt, I confronted the Secretary of the Interior in the Natural Resources Committee. I pointed out that with thousands of farmworkers unemployed, with a quarter-million acres of prime farmland destroyed, with food lines in the agricultural capital of the West, with unemployment in some of these communities reaching 45 percent, he had the authority to suspend the diversions and restore that water to the Valley to stop this human tragedy. He acknowledged that he had that authority, but he wouldn't use it, he said, because doing so "would be like admitting failure."

The amendment before us would give the same administration the excuse to ignore reality and act on ideological whim.

When this amendment was offered 2 years ago, it was rejected on a bipartisan vote of 177–243 in this House.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from California (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment.

California is facing a severe statewide drought. It is having devastating impacts on families all across our State. This bill will only make things worse for many. It will jeopardize the drinking water for millions of Californians.

In my district, families from Contra Costa and Solano Counties get their drinking water from the delta. This supply is already limited due to the extreme drought. This bill wants to pump that limited drinking water south. Doing this would flood the delta with seawater—and people can't drink seawater.

That is why this amendment is so important. It simply says that this bill shall not harm the delta's very limited drinking water supply.

I urge a "yes" vote on the amendment, and I thank the gentleman from Sacramento for bringing it to the floor.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Chairman, in closing, from my perspective, this is stating the obvious. Let's protect the water rights of the users in my community in northern California. This just codifies that. It just makes sure that when folks in the five delta counties turn on their taps, they can get clean water, quality water.

So if it is in the bill, there is no reason not to vote "yes" on this and codify it and make sure we are protecting those families in northern California.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2¼ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES), who introduced the predecessor to this bill 2 years ago.

Mr. NUNES. I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment and the last amendment are about one thing. Let's not be fooled here. It is about sewer discharge from the communities in the delta that continue to dump their sewer water, runoff water, into the delta. They don't want to have to take responsibility for their actions.

So I hate to have to keep going back to this, but I am going to have to go back to it again.

You see a discharge there. Here are the communities all dumping sewage into the delta. That is all both of these amendments are about. That is why you should vote against them.

What is interesting about this is you have heard a lot of talk about the fish. This is what the true believers really want to protect. They want to protect this fish right here called the delta smelt. This is what this is about. It is about the Endangered Species Act. It is about the biggest water grab in history and running people out of water to protect this little fish.

But they just don't want to protect that fish, oh, no. That is not good enough, Mr. Chairman. They want to dump their sewer water, protect the smelt, and protect the striped bass.

The striped bass is not native to the delta, but they want to protect it. Do you know why they want to protect it? Because they say that fishermen want to fish. But, conveniently, it is not native to the delta. But guess what the striped bass eats? If you can see on this, it eats the smelt.

□ 1630

It eats the smelt, Mr. Chairman. Inconvenient little truth there. So they want to protect these and these. This one eats those. This is a problem that can't be fixed by people who want to protect little fish, Mr. Chairman.

So, as we started out today, this is a bill that passed the last Congress. Had the Senate acted on it, we would not be in the situation that we are today. We are out of water because we are not using the infrastructure that our State has built and added on to over the last century. We decided to throw all that infrastructure away, not use it, dump the water out to the ocean. Now we have no more water left.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. CAPPS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 113–340.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 504. STUDY ON WATER RESOURCES.

Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study and submit a report to the Congress on the resiliency and adaptability of all Bureau of Reclamation projects and facilities in

California to any ongoing or forecasted changes to the quality, quantity, or reliability of water resources. The study shall include recommendations on how to strengthen the resiliency and adaptability of the Bureau's projects and facilities in California.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment. As we know, California is in the middle of a severe drought, an emergency with no significant relief in sight. We must do all we can to responsibly manage this situation, working with State and local officials to ensure that our farmers, our businesses, and our constituents have the resources they need now and in the future.

While we work to address the current drought situation, the emergency, we know that severe droughts like this one will only become more frequent in the future due to climate change; and we must do all we can as we deal with this emergency to also prepare for the next one.

My amendment simply requires a study of the resiliency and adaptability of Bureau of Reclamation facilities and projects in California to predict changes to the quality, quantity, or reliability of water resources. Simply put, it will look at how well the Bureau is prepared for the expected impacts of climate change.

Like it or not, climate change is real, and it is already happening. We have seen the evidence all around us in more extreme storms, in wildfires, in sea level rising and severe drought.

Water is gold in California. Scientists have long warned that climate change will make droughts, shortages of water, particularly in the Western United States, longer, stronger, and more frequent. So rather than bury our heads in the sand denying the science, we should be doing all we can to make our infrastructure more resilient and adaptable.

At every point in our water infrastructure, from reservoirs to kitchen faucets, we need to find sustainable ways to lessen the impact of severe droughts like this one. That means more conservation, more efficiency, and more recycling, to be sure, but it also means increasing the resiliency and adaptability of existing infrastructure to maximize the limited resources we have.

That is what my amendment is all about—preparing for the future. Simply lurching from crisis to crisis, from drought to drought, is no way to govern, and that is exactly what we have been doing. According to a FEMA study, every dollar spent on predisaster mitigation reduces the cost of future damages by \$4.

The drought emergency may not be destroying structures and infrastructures, like some of our extreme storms do, but it is definitely causing serious damage to our crops, to our critical habitats, to our livelihoods. Yet the underlying bill does nothing to address these serious problems, and it does nothing to alleviate the drought emergency in California, and it does nothing to prevent any in the future. Instead, it uses the drought emergency as an excuse to repeal Federal environmental laws to preempt California law, and it would set a dangerous precedent that would have lasting implications on how water is managed throughout the West. That is why the bill is opposed by the State of California and numerous local government agencies, fishing and hunting organizations, editorial boards, and national environmental groups. Rarely has such a diverse coalition come together to oppose a piece of legislation.

Mr. Chairman, instead of wasting time on a divisive bill that is going nowhere, we should be working together to find comprehensive solutions that get our communities the resources they need.

I want to be clear, my amendment does not fix the serious problems with this underlying bill, and I will oppose the bill even if my amendment is adopted. But my amendment will at least move us one step closer to properly preparing for future drought emergencies, so I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment seeks to impose yet another environmental study that could lead to more water being diverted away from families and farmers and flushed out into the ocean. If you support throwing more stored water out to the ocean and making this crisis worse, then this amendment is another step toward that end.

Now, those who speak of “resiliency” and “adaptability” are using these terms to propose that dams evacuate more water storage earlier in the water year to account for faster snowmelt from the mountains and rain-based inflows. Now, just today, the East Bay Express reported that water managers deliberately dumped 800,000 acre-feet—as I said earlier, enough for 4 million Californians—into the Pacific Ocean that they knew was desperately needed as the drought continued to worsen.

Folsom Lake, the principal source of water storage for Sacramento and its suburbs, is nearly empty now because of those releases. We watched the Sacramento River at full flood all autumn and wondered what in the world were they thinking.

The fact is a hydrology consensus does not exist on this, and we should not be asking the GAO to investigate terms that are based on a lack of scientific consensus.

This amendment does nothing to restore water that continues to be lost to punitive Federal regulations and may, in fact, contribute to new regulatory overreach.

Californians are in a drought crisis now. It is time for action, not another bureaucratic study with no end in sight. This is why we must not impose studies in this bill or create steps to further erode water storage. We need to build more storage and capture more water, and that is precisely what this bill does. This bill is aimed at implementing a permanent solution to California’s water crises so we can put people back to work permanently and restore balance back to California’s water supply.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time remains?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 1 minute remaining. The gentleman from California has 3 minutes remaining.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI), my colleague.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, we continually hear about the 800,000 acre-feet. Indeed, there is 800,000 acre-feet. It is not out to the ocean; it is into the delta. That water is available for a variety of purposes, including Contra Costa, the entire East Bay, and Solano County that I represent. It is there as environmental water, but it has multiple purposes, so it is not wasted water at all.

The other thing is this allocation chart that keeps coming up. That is an allocation based upon a prediction of the amount of water that rain will fall that year. It is not the actual amount of water delivered. If you take a look at the actual amount of water delivered, it is substantially greater.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, we are ready to close when the gentlewoman is.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, this is a straightforward amendment. It simply requires a study of adaptability and resiliency of the Bureau of Reclamation’s water infrastructure in California.

Scientists are warning us that severe droughts like this one will only grow more severe and frequent in the future. We have a responsibility to our farmers, our businesses, and all of our constituents to do everything possible to prepare for these impacts. My amendment is a step in this direction, so I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from California

for making the point. I want people to look at the pictures of the empty reservoir at Folsom, the near-empty reservoir at Oroville and remember 800,000 acre-feet that could have been retained behind those dams was released by water officials for the environmental regulations that the gentleman defends. I think people need to reflect on that water that should right now be sitting behind those dams but for these regulations and realize what is exacerbating this terrible drought.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), my friend and neighbor.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Chairman, we hear a lot about, this particular amendment is going to start another study. We heard earlier about more task forces. This is why we have had 40 years’ worth of delay—or longer—on building new projects in California.

We hear about what the projected flows are going to be. Here is what the actual flows are, coming back to this chart once again. You see over here, on the left, 76 percent of the water that flows into the delta goes straight out to the ocean—three-quarters. A mere 6 percent stays in the delta for its use. Eighteen percent is split between Central Valley and southern California needs. So we are wasting a lot of water, a lot of opportunity that could be taken advantage of and still capturing water for environmental need as well as ag need and urban need.

This chart shows, this illustration, that we talk about water that needs to be delivered south of the delta, indeed, even to the central coast, which is running very quickly out of water as well. The central coast benefits from the pumps.

The pumps, when you talk about fish take, are approximately 2 percent. Maybe we can do better, but they are doing a pretty good job.

As was talked about earlier, predator fish in the delta are taking anywhere from 65 to 90 percent of the fish kill of the salmon and other protected fish that we are basing all of this fuss on.

So we need to get very real about what the problem is and that the solutions aren’t coming today from these amendments. But, indeed, Mr. VALADAO’s bill is a step in that direction, as well as establishing long-term, the type of storage, the type of reoperation that is in favor of the people that are productive in California being the breadbasket of the Nation and of the world.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. DEFAZIO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 113-340.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end of the bill, the following:

SEC. 504. FISHERIES DISASTER DECLARATION.

The Proclamation of State Emergency and associated Executive Order issued by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. on January 17, 2014, shall be considered a request by the Governor for purposes of section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1861a) to determine that a fishery resource disaster exists for fisheries that originate in the State of California.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3964.

Mr. Chair, the bill before us today, H.R. 3964, is a radical bill that is strongly opposed by the State of California as well as other Western states, fishing groups, and many other stakeholders.

H.R. 3964 would seriously undermine our ability to solve California's water problems, and it poses a serious threat to water management all across the Western United States.

And, to be clear, this is not a man-made drought. There is not enough water to meet all demands. In 2009, with the Endangered Species Act and other environmental laws in place, more water was exported than in other drought years.

This bill would effectively repeal the last hundred years of policymaking—unraveling legal settlements, defying settled Supreme Court precedent, and up-ending state and local efforts to find solutions.

H.R. 3964 would block or repeal numerous state and federal laws protecting California's Bay-Delta estuary and San Joaquin River, including:

The 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act;

The 2009 San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act;

The 2009 bipartisan compromise passed by the California State Legislature;

The state and federal endangered species acts; and

Several other provisions of state law and water rights.

What's worse, this bill explicitly overrides more than 100 years of federal law by exempting the federal Central Valley Project from Section 8 of the Reclamation Act of 1902, which requires deference to State authority over water resources.

Republicans have to understand that reverting back to the 1994 Bay-Delta Accord would severely damage the ecosystem. We can't negate 20 years of science and expect our ecosystem to survive.

This bill is opposed by a range of stakeholders from across California and around the country, including Trout Unlimited, the United Farm Workers, and every major national conservation and wildlife group.

Eighty California environmental, environmental justice, recreational and commercial fishing groups, and Indian tribes signed a letter of opposition that was sent to all House members.

Many water agencies, local governments, and business groups across California also oppose the bill.

And serious economic analysis shows that this bill would devastate our economy.

The Delta Protection Commission says that, "Delta agriculture supports nearly 23,000 jobs statewide, over \$1.9 billion in value added to the state, and over \$4.6 billion in economic output in the state of California."

Three different studies from UC Davis, University of the Pacific, and UC Berkeley estimated that the drought cost approximately 4,000 to 5,000 jobs in 2008/09.

Former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's Administration estimated that the two-year closure of the salmon fishery in 2008 and 2009 resulted in the loss of \$534 million and almost 5,000 jobs.

The Delta Protection Commission stated that Delta recreation and tourism generates approximately over 4,900 jobs and \$600 million in economic output in the state of California.

As California State Governor Brown wrote to California offices:

"H.R. 3964 is an unwelcome and divisive intrusion into California's efforts to manage this severe crisis. It would override state laws and protections, and mandate that certain water interests come out ahead of others;

It falsely suggests the promise of water relief when that is simply not possible given the scarcity of water supplies. H.R. 3964 would interfere with our ability to respond effectively and flexibly to the current emergency, and would re-open old water wounds undermining years of progress toward reaching a collaborative long-term solution to our water needs."

This bill is a radical attempt to put one special interest ahead of everyone else in California, and it would end all productive efforts to solve problems in California.

I strongly oppose H.R. 3964 and urge my colleagues to oppose this dangerous bill.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, on January 17, 2014, the Governor of California issued a proclamation, a state of emergency regarding the drought. My amendment simply states that the Secretary of Commerce should treat this emergency proclamation as requested by the Governor under Section 312 of the Magnuson-Stevens

Act to determine whether there is a commercial fishery failure for any fisheries that originate in the State of California.

Many charter and commercial boat fisheries on the west coast are dependent upon chinook and coho salmon stock that originate in Colorado's rivers and then migrate to the Pacific Ocean, where they are harvested.

Just one of these runs, the fall-run chinook from the Central Valley, turns north, and it makes up as much as 50 percent of the salmon production off Oregon and to areas to the north, and it is responsible for as much as 90 percent of California's salmon catch.

□ 1645

This run and others are in peril due to the drought. The reductions in river flows will impact incubating eggs, juvenile fish that are rearing in the upper regions of the river, and fry that are trying to out-migrate to the ocean.

While many fishing groups are working with Federal and State agencies to plan for the drought conditions and mitigate as much as possible against the potential impacts by facilitating out-migration, we cannot know how successful those efforts will be. While it is likely the drought will not have a large impact on commercial activities this year, many of these fisheries could see devastating impacts over the next several years, particularly in 2015 and 2016.

This amendment does not mandate a fisheries disaster declaration, but it will enable the Secretary to issue one should it be necessary. Such a declaration will enable the fishermen to qualify for disaster assistance. Many of us—whether we are from fisheries in the Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, or the gulf—have dealt with fisheries disasters in the past.

During the last drought in California, I had to literally stalk Secretary Gutierrez of the Bush administration to get a declaration. JOE BARTON graciously had him come in to testify and put him in a side room and said, Wait a minute. There are a few Members of Congress who want to talk to you, and it was myself and a number of other Members from California, Oregon, who got him to sign a disaster declaration, and we were successful. Well, this time, let's put it on the desk now and give the Secretary that capability to easily declare a disaster.

While it is clear this drought will have wide-ranging economic impacts, this amendment will put Commerce Secretary Pritzker on notice that we have the potential to face a major economic hardship in the fishing industry as well.

This amendment will ensure that our fisheries and our fishing industries that depend upon salmon stocks from California rivers will be given due consideration as these impacts unfold.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to claim time in opposition, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, as the ranking member stated, this amendment states that the California Governor's declared drought emergency is considered a request to the Federal Government to declare a fisheries disaster. Under longstanding law, the Governor can make such a request by sending a letter to the Commerce Secretary.

The amendment does not change underlying law that requires the Commerce Secretary to determine whether a fisheries disaster declaration is merited. This amendment simply serves as a request, but the Commerce Secretary still has discretion to make a decision on this request. As such, we do not have any objections to the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman for accepting the amendment, and I appreciate his sensitivity to the potential disaster for our fisheries.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. HUFFMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 113-340.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment made in order.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 504. STATE OF CALIFORNIA WATER REFORM LAWS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall interfere with the State of California's Delta and water management reform and funding bills of 2009, including SB7x-1, SB7x-2, SB7x-6, and SB7x-7.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot about 3-inch fish in this debate. In fact, to hear my colleagues in the Republican Party tell it, this is a story of a 3-inch fish that is taking water away in this critical drought that should be allocated to people.

Well, the truth is, Mr. Chairman, you would have to have the brain of a 3-inch fish to believe that narrative. There is no such thing happening in this critical drought year. What is happening, however, is some people are cynically trying to capitalize on the worst drought in California history in order to steal water from some parts of the State and from other water users and give it to a few. In fact, if this bill were accurately named, it would be called the "Massive Federal Preemption Overreach and Water Theft Act for the Elections of 2014," but it is, in fact, pretending to be something quite different.

We need to ask ourselves why the State of California is so passionately opposing this bill. Attorney General Kamala Harris wrote a letter just yesterday following the same position that prior attorneys general have always taken on this issue, including Republican attorneys general, that the Federal Government should abide by the 100-year precedent of deference, of cooperative Federalism, letting California administer its own water rights and allocate that water instead of the sweeping preemption that we see in this bill.

This bill would upset the most basic tenets of California water law. The fact that the California constitution provides the State the ability to allocate water, the ability to administer things like the public trust doctrine, all of that is repealed and swept away by the preemption provisions in this bill. It doesn't have to be that way.

In a crisis like this, it actually is possible for Republicans and Democrats and people from all parts of the State to come together and solve problems. I know that because I was part of something just like that that happened in our last multiyear critical drought. I chaired the Water Committee in the State Assembly in 2009 when there was a historic water package passed, a package that was supported by Republicans and Democrats, signed by a Republican Governor, supported by people from inland Central Valley California, southern California, urban areas. National media like The New York Times called it the most significant water reform in California in 60 years.

Well, unfortunately, all of that, too, is repealed, just swept away by the overreaching preemption in this bill.

The amendment I am offering, Mr. Chairman, would say, at least let's save what the national media and just about everybody else in the water world had called the most important thing, the best thing to happen in California water in the last 60 years. Let's save that from preemption as this bill goes forward if the amendment is made in order, and I would request that my colleagues vote "yes" on it.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, my objection to this amendment is similar to others of its ilk. It would allow litigation to block implementation of this bill indefinitely. There is, of course, nothing in this bill that would interfere with the State's water bond or its groundwater monitoring or groundwater conservation. Indeed, it will improve groundwater conservation since it brings balance back to surface water deliveries and restores the incentives for groundwater recharging.

The poison pill is not only the prospect of indefinite delay based upon the allegation of a single individual that can find the ear of a sympathetic judge. It is introducing the subjective standard of coequal goals for the delta.

The term "coequal goals" is something that is subjective. A term like this is subject to litigation not only at the State level but will be used as a means, if this amendment is adopted, to litigate this bill and delay the balance that it restores.

That balance was established by the bipartisan Bay Delta Accord that was hailed by all sides as a historic agreement to serve the coequal goals of human prosperity and environmental protection. When that agreement was signed, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt assured all parties that "a deal is a deal, and if it turns out there is a need for additional water, it will come at the expense of the Federal Government." The water diversions for the delta smelt, based upon the same opportunity to litigate that this amendment renews, shattered that promise. This bill redeems it. The amendment should be rejected.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, the public trust doctrine and the coequal goals articulated in that 2009 California legislation are the centerpieces of California water. Without those coequal goals codified in that State law, the entire Bay Delta conservation plan is over. It is done. It has zero chance of success.

Without the public trust doctrine and other State laws in critical years where a fully allocated and appropriated system like we have in California, where tough balancing decisions have to be made by the State water board, without those basic tools for how to do that job, they can't do their job. They can't allocate a diminishing resource, and the entire system of water and water rights allocation is thrown into chaos.

So to hear my friend talk about his concern for litigation, I have to say, this is the recipe for endless litigation, confusion, and uncertainty in California. This is essentially throwing a grenade into California water that would ignite a water war unlike anything we have ever seen.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, we are ready to close when the gentleman from California is.

Mr. HUFFMAN. With that, Mr. Chairman, I would simply request a "yes" vote. It doesn't have to be partisanship. It doesn't have to be taking water from one part of the State or from one set of users and giving it to the other, scapegoating the 3-inch fish.

There is actually a way to solve water problems, even in California where water is scarce. We did it in 2009. It was widely recognized as historic, important, and positive. Let's save those 2009 water reforms from being roadkill from this reckless piece of legislation and vote "yes" on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES).

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Chairman, I want to reiterate what Mr. McCLINTOCK said. This is designed to kill the bill. This is a sneaky little lawyer amendment designed for litigation. This amendment, Valadao amendment, stops all litigation and gives back the people of California their water, and it quits wasting water. That is what this does.

I can understand why my friends on the other side of the aisle don't like to talk about the little 3-inch fish, which, I guess it has a little brain now. Well, it is a bait fish; of course it has a little brain.

The folks you have to ask yourselves about are the ones who come down here and talk about State preemptions when they know the Endangered Species Act is a preemption. They know what passed in 1992 was a State preemption. They know what passed in 2009 was a State preemption. Sneaky little lawyers all over the place.

Money, Mr. Chairman, money. It is about money. It is about NRDC. NRDC has made millions of dollars that we still cannot get an accounting for. Mr. Chairman, I want to know, how much money has NRDC made off of bringing water lawsuits in the State of California? Millions. Millions and millions and millions. That is what this amendment is designed to do, is to create jobs for lawyers. That is what this is about.

So I would advise and ask my colleagues to kill this amendment by voting "no."

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further pro-

ceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. MCNERNEY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in part B of House Report 113-340.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 504. EFFECTIVE DATE CONDITIONS.

Nothing in this Act shall take effect until the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, determines that carrying out this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not have a harmful effect on water quality or water availability for agricultural producers in the five Delta Counties (Contra Costa County, Sacramento County, San Joaquin County, Solano County, and Yolo County, California).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment to H.R. 3964, which I urge all of my colleagues to support.

As my colleagues know, I am honored to represent the people of San Joaquin Delta. The delta is a precious resource that provides tremendous economic benefits to our entire State. Preserving the delta should be a priority for all of California.

Agriculture is the economic backbone of the delta region, generating about \$3 billion of economic activity a year in my district. Three billion dollars is a lot of money for us, and our producers rely on high quality water for their products.

As currently written, H.R. 3964 will ship more water out of the delta, even though current shipments have already threatened the water quality for our delta farmers.

During debate on this legislation in the previous Congress, we were told that the bill was a great deal for the delta, and yet delta counties opposed the legislation then, and we still strongly oppose the legislation now. That is because this bill, as Governor Brown says, will mandate that certain water interests come out ahead of others.

All of California is experiencing a drought that threatens nearly 82,000 farmers and ranchers in the State. We should not be pitting farmers against each other. Simply put, this bill will steal water from northern California and devastate water quality for delta farmers.

□ 1700

Farmers need freshwater, not saltwater, for their harvest. What my col-

leagues are saying is this: We have got the votes, we have got the money, let's go take the water; in other words, the doctrine of might makes right.

Mr. Chairman, we should follow established law and protect the rights of the delta farmers. That is why I am offering a simple amendment to make sure that the most harmful provisions of this bill do not take effect until the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture verify that water quality for agriculture in the delta region is not negatively affected.

Proponents of H.R. 3964 claim that the bill is pro-farmer, but this bill steals water from one part of California and gives it to another. If the authors of H.R. 3964 support farmers throughout the entire State, they should support my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, the gentleman has it exactly backwards. This prevents water from being stolen from northern California in violation of State water rights. It strengthens the water rights that exist in current law. It means that water cannot be stolen from northern California even by the State itself.

This amendment offered by my friend is a variation of the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) earlier. It gives the Secretary of the Interior the ability to suspend most provisions of this law until she certifies it will have no adverse effect on delta agricultural water. Well, the same points apply. Despite the fact that this bill strengthens water rights in which the delta is senior to the Central Valley, this bill would give the Secretary, on whom, the power to ignore this law even in wet years, an authority her predecessor has already emphatically proven can and will be abused.

I will challenge the gentleman to cite one example of a complaint that agricultural water in the delta was adversely affected during all the years the Bay Delta Accord was in effect. This bill merely restores the Bay Delta Accord while strengthening northern California water rights. If he cannot cite even one example, he must admit that this amendment is a hoax designed to nullify the law.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, our farmers are already experiencing saltwater intrusion. Saltwater levels are increasing. Shipping more water south of the delta is going to increase our saltwater concentration. This is a known, ongoing problem.

I ask my colleague, Mr. Chairman, that if he is confident that the bill will

benefit California farmers, including delta farmers, then he should support my amendment, because that is exactly what we are asking it to do—to allow the Secretary of Agriculture and allow the Secretary of the Interior to make an assessment before water is shipped, lowering our quality.

So, with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, we are ready to close if the gentleman is.

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, basically, I am asking my colleagues to give us a chance to make sure that our farmers are not damaged, our farmers are not hurt and that our \$3 billion of economic activity is not curtailed in favor of a bill of doubtful quality. I think it is going to make a difference if we can just work together, find a solution that all the stakeholders can abide by and not resort to what appears to be a water steal.

I think my farmers are going to ask me to defend their water quality, and that is exactly what I am doing. If my colleagues are supporting defending the farmers and the rights of the farmers throughout the State, then they should support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I remind the House that this same amendment was brought up 2 years ago and rejected, once again, on a bipartisan vote of 177–243.

I now yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), the author of this important legislation.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Chairman, as someone who farms myself, I understand the value of water, and when the State Water Resources Control Board issues a cease and desist order in the gentleman's district for illegally diverting water—that was something when I spent some time up in Sacramento, I actually got on a boat and went around the delta and noticed so many pumps out there with no meters pumping water and pumping above their right, taking more water than they were supposed to to the level of 77.7 cubic feet per second illegally. So when we talk about stealing water, there is a lot going on there that needs to be talked about.

More importantly, yes, water is an important resource, and we should respect that and appreciate the quality, but to insert more bureaucracy in the middle to prevent us from taking what is rightfully ours and then have the audacity to dump sewage in this water and then claim you are trying to protect it and keep it clean, we are talking sewage from these communities, 380 million gallons per day being dumped in the delta, and then they come and tell us they are trying to protect and keep this water clean.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. McNERNEY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. PETERS OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in part B of House Report 113–340.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 504. COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLIES AND WATER BUDGETS NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not adversely affect any community's water supply or water budget for future years, taking into account predicted dry years. For the purpose of this section, the term "water budget" means an accounting of the rates of water movement and the change in water storage in all or parts of the atmosphere, land surface, and subsurface of an area.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Chairman, California is experiencing its worst drought in decades, threatening local drinking water supplies, power generation and California's economy, and relief does not seem to be near at hand.

More than three-quarters of the State is in extreme or exceptional drought, and it affects every resident in my home State. It would be wrong to take action today that would help one part of the State but harm another.

In its current form, the bill is not clear on how reallocating thousands of acre-feet of water from the San Joaquin River restoration to the State's agricultural sector will affect future water supply. We must think about the long-term impacts of today's water decisions, and my amendment ensures that this bill will not adversely affect any community's water supply or water budget, especially during predicted dry years.

It is imperative that we figure out how to ensure sustainable water sup-

plies so that next year or in 5 years or in 20 years, Californians on the farms, in the suburbs or in our cities will still have enough water to drink to pursue their livelihoods.

Water is our most precious resource, and we must manage it carefully. The underlying bill does not create more water and will not make it rain. We must make sure that decisions made here in Washington won't hurt everyday Californians.

Water decisions in California affect every part of the State, including my district in southern California. Recently, the State Water Project announced a zero allocation for this year. This unprecedented move means that southern California communities, including San Diego, will get no water from the Bay Delta in the northern part of the State.

Reallocating and rerouting water will not solve that problem. The real solution is to become resilient in the face of future droughts through improved conservation, expanded storage and increased diversity in our water supplies.

San Diego was devastated by drought in the 1970s, and since then, southern California has made necessary investments to better prepare for, respond to and withstand drought. Over several decades, San Diego has reduced its long-term water demand and has invested in increased efficiency.

Per capita water use has decreased about 27 percent since 2007, and local cities and water districts are on pace to meet their State-mandated water-efficiency targets for 2020. Total regional consumption of potable water in 2013 was 24 percent lower than in 2007.

By raising the San Vicente Dam, the largest dam raise in the Western Hemisphere, and constructing the Olivenhain Dam, San Diego has dramatically increased its storage capability, which will supply adequate storage during dry years. The San Diego County Water Authority and the city of San Diego are national leaders in recycling wastewater and in desalination, turning ocean water into usable potable water.

So San Diego has done, and is continuing to do, its part because we have done a good job of conserving, preparing and investing as needed to minimize the coming hardships. A real drought solution should not put any community at risk of losing future water supplies to another region without addressing better measures to conserve and store water.

This certainly is not the last drought California will face. We will continue to have water supply challenges, and we need to be continuing to prepare for the future. All users must become more resilient, and any action now should have the foresight to maintain water supplies for dry years that are sure to come.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment to protect communities across California and to promote a long-term vision for protecting our scarce water resources. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, California has been plagued by litigation and regulation, delay and obfuscation on its water policy, and we are now living with the result of that.

The gentleman offers us an amendment that is more of the same—in fact, in this case, delaying the bill until the Federal Government measures the water content of clouds. Enough is enough. It is a time now for action, and this bill calls for action.

I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES).

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is another stall tactic. There have been several speakers who have talked about how this bill creates no water. Well, I hate to break it to people, but bills don't create water. It rains. That is why the founding fathers of our State, including Franklin Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy, two United States presidents, worked with the leadership of California to develop a system that could keep water for 5 years so we could withstand 5 years of drought.

I hate to have to use this, but this is how it works. Mr. Chairman, the sun melts the snow. The snow gets stored in the reservoirs, in this case this is Yosemite, where San Francisco gets all of its water. Then the water runs out. That is how it works. That is how the system was designed to work.

If you don't understand this chart, I have another chart. Once again, I apologize, Mr. Chairman, because this one is a little basic. But, sun—sun creates heat. Heat melts ice. Ice becomes water. Water we use to drink and irrigate our crops. That is how this works.

Government doesn't create water. Government can only help to create the infrastructure to hold the water in an area that is like California that is always in a drought.

So our friends from the coastal areas of California like to have it both ways. They like to drink their water from the Sierra Nevadas and pipe it over so it never has to go into the delta. At the same time, they dump their sewage into the delta that kills the fish.

So this bill was not designed to make it rain. Nobody can do that. We don't need to measure clouds. This bill is designed to get the water that we have in the wet years and hold it for the dry years.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I guess we have come to some agreement that the Government can't

create water, and that is productive. I guess what I would say is that we are at 12 percent of snow pack in the Sierra Nevada, which has functioned as our water storage, and it is not there.

What I would say is that over decades, the State, the Federal Government, the cities and agencies within California have worked to deal with a framework for addressing this kind of situation, and the bill, as it is constituted, would change that.

All my amendment does is give some assurance to communities that in the event that there are water transfers that their particular water budgets would not be affected.

I think it is a reasonable assurance to give. I think the author of the bill might suggest it is already there. If it is, let's codify it, and it will make the bill much better to provide that assurance to cities, counties, agencies and the State that has worked so hard for developing a framework for dealing with this very situation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), the author of the measure.

□ 1715

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Chairman, we are coming to an end here and this bill is about to get voted on. What we have got going on here, and we have all figured it out from all the colorful presentations and all the pictures on both sides, we are in a drought. We know that. We can't make it rain; we also know that. But we also know that over the years our forefathers invested to make sure that we can alleviate the pain of what we are going through today. We did not use that the way we were supposed to.

This is the third time this graph is coming up, and I think it is important. All the different years that we have gone through a drought, we have had decent allocations. The green here is the allocation for 2013, of 20 percent. Yet we had all this water in storage. What happened to this water? When everybody talks about how their communities are running out of water, this water should have been going to those districts, should have been going to those homes.

Kids, parents, families, farmers, this water should have been going to you to grow crops, to feed families. This is important. That is the most important part about this. We had a lot of water. We lost it all. It was dumped out into the ocean in the name of a fish.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VALADAO. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We are going back and forth with a lot of numbers here, and there's some-

thing we need to understand. The allocation is a number that is taken from the nature of the—that the water year is supposed to be. That is the early allocation.

Mr. VALADAO. Reclaiming my time, the most important thing I have noticed over time with the studies and the reports is that the food prices do not affect the people in this room. We all know from all the news articles, at least half of the people in this room, money is no issue to you. For the average person sitting at home watching today, this has a direct impact on you at home. It has a direct impact on you at your grocery store, on your grocery bill.

This is an important piece of legislation, and I would love to see some other ideas that could actually deliver some water, not more ideas to take water from the valley and send it out to the ocean. We have seen that. We have done that. We have survived on that. We need to come up with some actual ideas and help protect water for our futures, for our communities in southern California like the author would like to see.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part B of House Report 113-340 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mrs. NAPOLITANO of California.

Amendment No. 2 by Ms. MATSUI of California.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. BERA of California.

Amendment No. 4 by Mrs. CAPPS of California.

Amendment No. 6 by Mr. HUFFMAN of California.

Amendment No. 7 by Mr. MCNERNEY of California.

Amendment No. 8 by Mr. PETERS of California.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MRS.

NAPOLITANO

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded

vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 239, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 42]

AYES—179

Andrews, Bass, Beatty, Becerra, Bera (CA), Bishop (NY), Blumenauer, Bonamici, Brady (PA), Braley (IA), Brown (FL), Brownley (CA), Bustos, Butterfield, Capps, Capuano, Carney, Carson (IN), Cartwright, Castor (FL), Castro (TX), Chu, Cicilline, Clark (MA), Clarke (NY), Clay, Cleaver, Clyburn, Cohen, Connolly, Conyers, Cooper, Crowley, Cuellar, Cummings, Davis (CA), Davis, Danny, DeFazio, DeGette, Delaney, DeLauro, DelBene, Deutch, Dingell, Doggett, Doyle, Duckworth, Edwards, Engel, Enyart, Eshoo, Esty, Farr, Fattah, Foster, Frankel (FL), Fudge, Gabbard, Garamendi, Garcia, Grayson, Green, Al, Aderholt, Amash, Bachmann, Bachus, Barber, Barletta, Barr, Barrow (GA), Barton, Benishek, Bentivolio, Bilirakis, Bishop (GA), Bishop (UT), Black, Blackburn, Boustany, Brady (TX), Bridenstine, Brooks (AL), Brooks (IN), Nolan, O'Rourke, Owens, Pallone, Pascrell, Pastor (AZ), Payne, Pelosi, Perlmutter, Peters (CA), Peters (MI), Pingree (ME), Pocan, Polis, Price (NC), Quigley, Rahall, Rangel, Richmond, Roybal-Allard, Ruiz, Ruppersberger, Ryan (OH), Sánchez, Linda T., Sanchez, Loretta, Sarbanes, Schakowsky, Schiff, Schneider, Scott (VA), Scott, David, Serrano, Sewell (AL), Shea-Porter, Sherman, Sires, Slaughter, Smith (WA), Speier, Swalwell (CA), Takano, Thompson (CA), Thompson (MS), Tierney, Titus, Tonko, Tsongas, Van Hollen, Veasey, Vela, Velázquez, Visclosky, Wasserman Schultz, Waters, Waxman, Welch, Wilson (FL), Yarmuth

NOES—239

Broun (GA), Buchanan, Bucshon, Burgess, Byrne, Calvert, Camp, Campbell, Cantor, Capito, Cárdenas, Carter, Cassidy, Chabot, Coble, Coffman, Cole, Collins (GA), Collins (NY), Conaway, Cook, Costa, Cotton, Cramer, Crawford, Crenshaw, Culberson, Davis, Rodney, Denham, Dent, DeSantis, DesJarlais, Diaz-Balart, Duffy, Duncan (SC), Duncan (TN), Ellison, Ellmers, Farenthold, Fincher, Fitzpatrick, Fleischmann, Fleming, Flores, Forbes, Fortenberry, Foxx, Franks (AZ), Frelinghuysen, Gallego, Gardner, Garrett, Gerlach, Gibbs, Gibson, Gingrey (GA), Goodlatte, Gowdy, Granger, Graves (GA), Graves (MO), Griffin (AR), Griffin (VA), Grimm, Guthrie, Hall, Hanna, Harper, Harris, Hartzler, Hastings (WA), Heck (NV), Hensarling, Herrera Beutler, Holding, Hudson, Huelskamp, Huizenga (MI), Hultgren, Hunter, Hurt, Issa, Jenkins, Johnson (OH), Johnson, Sam, Jones, Jordan, Joyce, Kelly (PA), King (IA), King (NY), Kingston, Kinzinger (IL), Kirkpatrick, Kline, Labrador, LaMalfa, Lamborn, Lance, Lankford, Latham, Latta, LoBiondo, Long, Lucas, Luetkemeyer, Lummis, Marchant, Marino, Massie, Matheson, McAllister, McCarthy (CA), McCaul, McClintock, McHenry, McIntyre, McKeon, McKinley, McMorris, Rodgers, Meadows, Meehan, Messer, Mica, Miller (FL), Miller (MI), Mullin, Mulvaney, Murphy (PA), Neugebauer, Noem, Nofgren, Nunes, Nunnelee, Olson, Palazzo, Paulsen, Pearce, Perry, Peterson, Petri, Pittenger, Pitts, Poe (TX), Pompeo, Gosar, Himes, Larson (CT), McCarthy (NY), Miller, Gary, Rush, Schwartz, Vargas

NOT VOTING—13

□ 1744

Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Messrs. FARENTHOLD and MCHENRY changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed her vote from "no" to "aye."

So the amendment was rejected. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Posey, Price (GA), Reed, Reichert, Renacci, Ribble, Rice (SC), Rigell, Roby, Roe (TN), Rogers (AL), Rogers (KY), Rogers (MI), Rohrabacher, Rokita, Rooney, Ros-Lehtinen, Roskam, Ross, Rothfus, Royce, Runyan, Ryan (WI), Salmon, Sanford, Scalise, Schock, Schrader, Schweikert, Scott, Austin, Sensenbrenner, Sessions, Shimkus, Shuster, Simpson, Sinema, Smith (MO), Smith (NE), Smith (NJ), Smith (TX), Southerland, Stewart, Stivers, Stockman, Stutzman, Terry, Thompson (PA), Thornberry, Tiberi, Tipton, Turner, Upton, Valadao, Wagner, Walberg, Walden, Walorski, Walz, Weber (TX), Webster (FL), Westrup, Westmoreland, Whitfield, Williams, Wilson (SC), Wittman, Wittman, Wolf, Womack, Woodall, Yoder, Yoho, Young (AK), Young (IN)

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Chair, on February 5, 2014, I was unable to cast my vote for the amendment offered by Representative NAPOLITANO to H.R. 3964, rollcall vote No. 42. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. MATSUI

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 193, noes 228, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 43]

AYES—193

Andrews, Barrow (GA), Barton, Bass, Beatty, Becerra, Bera (CA), Bishop (NY), Blumenauer, Bonamici, Brady (PA), Braley (IA), Brown (FL), Brownley (CA), Bustos, Butterfield, Capps, Capuano, Carney, Carson (IN), Cartwright, Castor (FL), Castro (TX), Chu, Cicilline, Clark (MA), Clarke (NY), Clay, Cleaver, Clyburn, Cohen, Connolly, Conyers, Cooper, Courtney, Crowley, Cuellar, Cummings, Davis (CA), Davis, Danny, DeFazio, DeGette, Delaney, DeLauro, DelBene, Deutch, Dingell, Doggett, Doyle, Duckworth, Edwards, Ellison, Engel, Enyart, Eshoo, Esty, Farr, Fattah, Foster, Frankel (FL), Fudge, Gabbard, Gallego, Garamendi, Garcia, Grayson, Green, Al, Green, Gene, Grijalva, Gutierrez, Hahn, Hanabusa, Hastings (FL), Heck (WA), Higgins, Himes, Hinojosa, Holt, Honda, Horsford, Hoyer, Huffman, Israel, Jackson Lee, Jeffries, Johnson (GA), Johnson, E. B., Kaptur, Keating, Kelly (IL), Kennedy, Kildee, Kilmer, Kind, Kuster, Lujan Grisham (NM), Luján, Ben Ray (NM), Lynch, Maffei, Maloney, Carolyn, Matsui, McCollum, McDermott, McGovern, McNeerney, Meeks, Meng, Michaud, Miller, George, Moore, Moran, Murphy (FL), Nadler, Napolitano, Ryan (OH), Sánchez, Linda T., Sanchez, Loretta, Sarbanes, Schakowsky, Schiff, Schneider, Lofgren, Lowenthal, Lowey, Lujan Grisham (NM), Luján, Ben Ray (NM), Lynch, Maffei, Maloney, Carolyn, Maloney, Sean, Matsui, McCollum, McDermott, McGovern, McNeerney, Meeks, Meng, Michaud, Miller, George, Moore, Moran, Murphy (FL), Nadler, Napolitano, Ryan (OH), Sánchez, Linda T., Sanchez, Loretta, Sarbanes, Schakowsky, Schiff, Schneider, Lofgren, Lowenthal, Lowey, Lujan Grisham (NM), Luján, Ben Ray (NM), Lynch, Maffei, Maloney, Carolyn, Slaughter

Smith (WA) Tonko
Speier Tsongas
Swalwell (CA) Van Hollen
Takano Vargas
Thompson (CA) Veasey
Thompson (MS) Vela
Tierney Velázquez
Titus Visclosky

NOES—228

Aderholt Griffith (VA)
Amash Grimm
Bachmann Guthrie
Bachus Hall
Barletta Hanna
Barr Harper
Benishek Harris
Bentivolio Hartzler
Billirakis Hastings (WA)
Bishop (GA) Heck (NV)
Bishop (UT) Hensarling
Black Herrera Beutler
Blackburn Holding
Boustany Hudson
Brady (TX) Huelskamp
Bridenstine Huizenga (MI)
Brooks (AL) Hultgren
Brooks (IN) Hunter
Broun (GA) Hurt
Buchanan Issa
Bucshon Jenkins
Burgess Johnson (OH)
Byrne Johnson, Sam
Calvert Jones
Camp Jordan
Campbell Joyce
Cantor Kelly (PA)
Capito King (IA)
Carter King (NY)
Cassidy Kingston
Chabot Kinzinger (IL)
Coble Kirkpatrick
Coffman Kline
Cole Labrador
Collins (GA) LaMalfa
Collins (NY) Lamborn
Conaway Lance
Cook Lankford
Costa Latham
Cotton Latta
Cramer LoBiondo
Crawford Long
Crenshaw Lucas
Culberson Luetkemeyer
Davis, Rodney Lummis
Denham Marchant
Dent Marino
DeSantis Massie
DesJarlais Matheson
Diaz-Balart McAllister
Duffy McCarthy (CA)
Duncan (SC) McClintock
Duncan (TN) McHenry
Ellmers McKeon
Farenthold McKinley
Fincher McMorris
Fitzpatrick Rodgers
Fleischmann Meadows
Fleming Meehan
Flores Messer
Forbes Mica
Fortenberry Miller (FL)
Foxy Miller (MI)
Franks (AZ) Mullin
Frelinghuysen Mulvaney
Gardner Murphy (PA)
Garrett Neugebauer
Gerlach Noem
Gibbs Nugent
Gibson Nunes
Gingrey (GA) Nunnelee
Goodlatte Olson
Gowdy Palazzo
Granger Paulsen
Graves (GA) Pearce
Graves (MO) Perry
Griffin (AR) Peterson

NOT VOTING—10

Amodei Gosar
Chaffetz McCarthy (NY)
Daines McCaul
Gohmert Miller, Gary

Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Cleaver
Clyburn
Williams
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Deutch
Dingell

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1749

Mr. REED changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”
Mr. CÁRDENAS changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”
So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. BERA OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERA) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 194, noes 226, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 44]

AYES—194

Andrews
Barber
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Ciilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Galleo
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind

Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky

Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney

NOES—226

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Billirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf

Womack Yoder Young (AK) Owens Sánchez, Linda Thompson (CA) Westmoreland Wittman Yoder
Woodall Yoho Young (IN) Pallone T. Thompson (MS) Whitfield Wolf Yoho
Pascrell Sanchez, Loretta Tierney Womack Young (AK)
Pastor (AZ) Sarbanes Titus Woodall Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—11

Amodei Gosar Scalise
Chaffetz McCarthy (NY) Schwartz
Daines Miller, Gary Stivers
Gohmert Rush

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1753

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. CAPPS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentlewoman from California (Mrs.
CAPPS) on which further proceedings
were postponed and on which the noes
prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 194, noes 227,
not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 45]

AYES—194

Andrews DelBene Keating
Barber Deutch Kelly (IL)
Barrow (GA) Dingell Kennedy
Bass Doggett Kildee
Beatty Doyle Kilmer
Becerra Duckworth Kind
Bera (CA) Edwards Kirkpatrick
Bishop (GA) Ellison Kuster
Bishop (NY) Engel Langevin
Blumenauer Enyart Larsen (WA)
Bonamici Eshoo Larson (CT)
Brady (PA) Esty Lee (CA)
Braley (IA) Farr Levin
Brown (FL) Fattah Lewis
Brownley (CA) Foster Lipinski
Bustos Frankel (FL) Loebsack
Butterfield Fudge Lofgren
Capps Gabbard Lowenthal
Capuano Gallego Lowey
Cárdenas Garamendi Lujan Grisham
Carney Garcia (NM)
Carson (IN) Gibson Luján, Ben Ray
Cartwright Grayson (NM)
Castor (FL) Green, Al Lynch
Castro (TX) Green, Gene Maloney,
Chu Grijalva Carolyn
Cicilline Gutiérrez Maloney, Sean
Clark (MA) Hahn Matsui
Clarke (NY) Hanabusa McCollum
Clay Hanna McDermott
Cleaver Hastings (FL) McGovern
Clyburn Heck (WA) McIntyre
Cohen Higgins McNeerney
Connolly Himes Meeks
Conyers Hinojosa Meng
Cooper Holt Michaud
Courtney Honda Miller, George
Crowley Horsford Moore
Cuellar Hoyer Moran
Cummins Huffman Murphy (FL)
Davis (CA) Israel Nadler
Davis, Danny Jackson Lee Napolitano
DeFazio Jeffries Neal
DeGette Johnson (GA) Negrete McLeod
Delaney Johnson, E. B. Nolan
DeLauro Kaptur O'Rourke

Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Hunter
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Eilmlers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gowdy

NOES—227

Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Maffei
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem

Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Wilson (SC)

Amodei
Benishek
Chaffetz
Gohmert
Gosar
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Rogers (MI)

NOT VOTING—10

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1758

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. HUFFMAN

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from California (Mr.
HUFFMAN) on which further pro-
ceedings were postponed and on which
the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 189, noes 231,
not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 46]

AYES—189

Andrews DelBene Kelly (IL)
Barber Deutch Kennedy
Bass Dingell Kildee
Beatty Doggett Kilmer
Becerra Doyle Kind
Bera (CA) Duckworth Kirkpatrick
Bishop (NY) Edwards Kuster
Blumenauer Ellison Langevin
Bonamici Engel Larsen (WA)
Brady (PA) Enyart Larson (CT)
Braley (IA) Eshoo Lee (CA)
Brown (FL) Esty Levin
Brownley (CA) Farr Lewis
Bustos Fattah Lipinski
Butterfield Foster Loebsack
Capps Frankel (FL) Lofgren
Capuano Fudge Lowenthal
Cárdenas Gabbard Lowey
Carney Gallego Lujan Grisham
Carson (IN) Garamendi (NM)
Cartwright Garcia Luján, Ben Ray
Castor (FL) Grayson (NM)
Castro (TX) Green, Al Lynch
Chu Green, Gene Maffei
Cicilline Grijalva Maloney,
Clark (MA) Hahn Carolyn
Clarke (NY) Hanabusa Maloney, Sean
Clay Hastings (FL) Matsui
Cleaver Heck (WA) McCollum
Clyburn Higgins McDermott
Cohen Himes McGovern
Connolly Hinojosa McIntyre
Conyers Holt McNeerney
Cooper Honda Meeks
Courtney Horsford Meng
Crowley Hoyer Michaud
Cuellar Huffman Miller, George
Cummins Israel Moore
Davis (CA) Jackson Lee Moran
Davis, Danny Jeffries Murphy (FL)
DeFazio Johnson (GA) Nadler
DeGette Johnson, E. B. Napolitano
Delaney Kaptur Neal
DeLauro Keating Negrete McLeod

Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz

Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)

Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Westrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield

Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall

Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Ruiz
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley

Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppertsberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter

Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—11

Amodei
Chaffetz
Gohmert
Gosar
Gutiérrez
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Rush
Schwartz
Serrano
Velázquez

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1801

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. MCNERNEY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from California (Mr.
MCNERNEY) on which further pro-
ceedings were postponed and on which
the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 193, noes 230,
not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 47]

AYES—193

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs

Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rogers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin

Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Santorum
Scheidt
Schiff
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberius
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden

Andrews
Barber
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Bralley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Ciilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio

DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallo
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett

NOES—230

Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rogers
Meadows
Meehan

Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Johnson, Sam
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Rosen
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thornberry

Tiberi Walorski Wittman
 Tipton Weber (TX) Wolf
 Turner Webster (FL) Womack
 Upton Wenstrup Woodall
 Valadao Westmoreland Yoder
 Wagner Whitfield Yoho
 Walberg Williams Young (AK)
 Walden Wilson (SC) Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—8

Amodei Gosar Rush
 Chaffetz McCarthy (NY) Schwartz
 Gohmert Miller, Gary

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
 There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1805

So the amendment was rejected.
 The result of the vote was announced
 as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. PETERS OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 192, noes 231, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 48]

AYES—192

Andrews Davis, Danny Honda
 Barber DeFazio Horsford
 Bass DeGette Hoyer
 Beatty Delaney Huffman
 Becerra DeLauro Israel
 Bera (CA) DelBene Jackson Lee
 Bishop (GA) Deuth Jeffries
 Bishop (NY) Dingell Johnson (GA)
 Blumenauer Doggett Johnson, E. B.
 Bonamici Doyle Kaptur
 Brady (PA) Duckworth Keating
 Braley (IA) Edwards Kelly (IL)
 Brown (FL) Ellison Kennedy
 Brownley (CA) Engel Kildee
 Bustos Enyart Kilmer
 Butterfield Eshoo Kind
 Capps Esty Kuster
 Capuano Farr Langevin
 Cárdenas Fattah Larsen (WA)
 Carney Foster Larson (CT)
 Carson (IN) Frankel (FL) Lee (CA)
 Cartwright Fudge Levin
 Castor (FL) Gabbard Lewis
 Castro (TX) Gallego Lipinski
 Chu Garamendi Loeb sack
 Cicilline Garcia Lofgren
 Clark (MA) Gibson Lowenthal
 Clarke (NY) Grayson Loney
 Clay Green, Al Lujan Grisham
 Cleaver Green, Gene (NM)
 Clyburn Grijalva Luján, Ben Ray
 Cohen Gutiérrez (NM)
 Connolly Hahn Lynch
 Conyers Hanabusa Maloney
 Cooper Hastings (FL) Carolyn
 Courtney Heck (WA) Maloney, Sean
 Crowley Higgins Matsui
 Cuellar Himes McCollum
 Cummings Hinojosa McDermott
 Davis (CA) Holt McGovern

McIntyre Poliss Price (NC)
 McNeerney Quigley Speier
 Meeks Meng Rahall
 Meng Westmoreland Yoder
 Miller, George Richmond
 Moore Roybal-Allard
 Moran Ruiz
 Murphy (FL) Ruppertsberger
 Nadler Ryan (OH)
 Napolitano Sánchez, Linda
 Neal T.
 Negrete McLeod Sanchez, Loretta
 Nolan Sarbanes
 O'Rourke Schakowsky
 Owens Schiff
 Pallone Schneider
 Pascrell Schrader
 Pastor (AZ) Scott (VA)
 Payne Scott, David
 Pelosi Serrano
 Perlmutter Sewell (AL)
 Peters (CA) Shea-Porter
 Peters (MI) Sherman
 Pingree (ME) Sinema
 Pocan Sires

NOES—231

Aderholt Gardner McKinley
 Amash Garrett McMorris
 Bachmann Gerlach Rodgers
 Bachus Gibbs Meadows
 Barletta Gingrey (GA) Meehan
 Barr Goodlatte Messer
 Barrow (GA) Gowdy Mica
 Barton Granger Miller (FL)
 Benishek Graves (GA) Miller (MI)
 Bentivolio Graves (MO) Mullin
 Bilirakis Griffin (AR) Mulvaney
 Bishop (UT) Griffith (VA) Murphy (PA)
 Black Grimm Neugebauer
 Blackburn Guthrie Noem
 Boustany Hall Nugent
 Brady (TX) Hanna Nunes
 Bridenstine Harper Nunnelee
 Brooks (AL) Harris Olson
 Brooks (IN) Hartzler Palazzo
 Broun (GA) Hastings (WA) Paulsen
 Buchanan Heck (NV) Pearce
 Bucshon Hensarling Perry
 Burgess Herrera Beutler Peterson
 Byrne Holding Petri
 Calvert Hudson Pittenger
 Camp Huelskamp Pitts
 Campbell Huizenga (MI) Poe (TX)
 Cantor Hultgren Pompeo
 Capito Hunter Posey
 Carter Hurt Price (GA)
 Cassidy Issa Reed
 Chabot Jenkins Reichert
 Coble Johnson (OH) Renacci
 Coffman Johnson, Sam Ribble
 Cole Jones Rice (SC)
 Collins (GA) Jordan Rigell
 Collins (NY) Joyce Roby
 Conaway Kelly (PA) Roe (TN)
 Cook King (IA) Rogers (AL)
 Costa King (NY) Rogers (KY)
 Cotton Kingston Rogers (MI)
 Cramer Kinzinger (IL) Rohrabacher
 Crawford Kirkpatrick Rokita
 Crenshaw Kline Rooney
 Culberson Labrador Ros-Lehtinen
 Daines LaMalfa Roskam
 Davis, Rodney Lamborn Ross
 Denham Lance Rothfus
 Dent Lankford Royce
 DeSantis Latham Runyan
 DesJarlais Latta Ryan (WI)
 Diaz-Balart LoBiondo Salmon
 Duffy Long Sanford
 Duncan (SC) Lucas Scalise
 Duncan (TN) Luetkemeyer Schock
 Ellmers Lummis Schweikert
 Farenthold Maffei Scott, Austin
 Fincher Marchant Sensenbrenner
 Fitzpatrick Marino Sessions
 Fleischmann Massie Shimkus
 Fleming Matheson Shuster
 Flores McAllister Simpson
 Forbes McCarthy (CA) Smith (MO)
 Fortenberry McCaul Smith (NE)
 Foxx McClintock Smith (NJ)
 Franks (AZ) McHenry Smith (TX)
 Frelinghuysen McKeon Southerland

Stewart Valadao Wilson (SC)
 Stivers Wagner Wittman
 Stockman Walberg Wolf
 Stutzman Walden Womack
 Terry Walorski Woodall
 Thompson (CA) Weber (TX) Yoder
 Thompson (MS) Webster (FL) Yoho
 Thornberry Young (AK)
 Tiberi Wenstrup Young (IN)
 Tipton Westmoreland
 Turner Whitfield
 Upton Williams

NOT VOTING—8

Amodei Gosar Rush
 Chaffetz McCarthy (NY) Schwartz
 Gohmert Miller, Gary

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
 There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1809

So the amendment was rejected.
 The result of the vote was announced
 as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) having assumed the chair, Mr. YODER, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 472, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on the amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. GARAMENDI. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Garamendi moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3964 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Add at the end of the bill the following:

TITLE IX—PRESERVING LOCAL WATER SUPPLIES AND PROTECTING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

SEC. 901. PRESERVING LOCAL WATER SUPPLIES.

Nothing in this Act shall preempt or supersede State, county, or local law, including State water law, that prohibits the export of ground water to other areas.

SEC. 902. PROTECTING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY.

Nothing in this Act shall undermine Native American tribal sovereignty, or reduce the quantity or quality of the water available to affected Indian tribes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the reading be dispensed with.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which, unfortunately, will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Perhaps all of you have heard that there is a drought in the West. If you haven't, I am here to tell you there is a serious drought in the West—not just California, but throughout the West.

This particular piece of legislation is said to deal with the drought. It does not. This legislation does two things that every one of us ought to be concerned about.

First of all, it is a water grab. It takes water from somebody and gives it to somebody else.

□ 1815

Secondly, if you are interested in states' rights, if you are interested in the power of a community to decide its own future, you had better be paying attention to this bill. This bill is very, very much about the power of a community, a power of a State to decide what it wants to do with its water.

This is an issue of profound importance to every State in the West that has a reclamation project, because this bill sets out for the very first time the Federal Government overriding State constitution, in this case the constitution of the State of California, State water law, and contracts. This is serious stuff.

If this were to somehow solve the crisis in California, you may accept it. But it does not. It does not create 1 gallon of water. It simply steals what little water there is available from some and gives it to another.

I yield to my colleague from California (Mr. BERA).

Mr. BERA of California. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I speak in support of this motion because it will make this bill better. This is about protecting ex-

isting State law, and the current bill before us takes away State law.

It is about protecting our communities, our local rights, our county rights. This motion will make this bill much better.

It is incredibly important to the residents in the five delta counties and the folks that I represent, that they have water that they can drink. This motion allows us to honor those State, county, and local laws and makes this bill better. I urge my colleagues to support the motion.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for offering this motion to improve a deeply flawed bill.

California is home to over 100 federally recognized tribes, including over two dozen in my congressional district. Many tribes, including the Hoopa, the Yurok, and the Karuk in my district, depend on wild salmon as both a vital source of economic opportunity and a respected way of life.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from California yield for a parliamentary inquiry?

Mr. GARAMENDI. Will it take my time?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It will.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I am afraid I cannot yield. Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman does not yield.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Chair, some of the water impacted by this bill is critically needed by tribes in my district. This bill explicitly waives State and Federal law in a way that almost certainly would lead to additional diversions from the Trinity River, which would undermine tribal fishing and water rights.

The Yurok Tribe in my district has written about provisions in this bill that they would undermine the Federal Government's ability to meet its Federal trust obligation to protect, preserve, and enhance the trust resources of that tribe.

This House has an obligation to clarify that this cynical bill would not diminish any protected tribal water and fishing rights, and so I urge a "yes" on this motion to recommit, and I thank the gentleman.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I want to be very, very clear with my colleagues. California water issues go back to the very beginning of the State, the Gold Rush, and as they have said, whiskey's for drinking, water's for fighting.

Unfortunately, this bill does nothing to solve the current crisis in California. What it does, it sets in motion a series of pieces of legislation that

will unravel 150 years of California water law and set in place extraordinary chaos.

It does deliver water from one area to another area, literally stealing that water and giving it to others.

It does override the California State Constitution and what we call the Public Trust Doctrine, that is, the water of California belongs to all the people of California. It is allocated by law, by precedent, and by water rights that are allocated. This overrides that.

We don't want the Federal Government to go there if you care anything about your State, about the water in your State, and about your community. We need a long-term and short-term solution.

Fortunately, in the omnibus bill, we did reinstate the Federal drought protection drought response act. We have many of the tools in place to deal with the drought today. What we don't have is money.

I would ask the majority to put up a bill that delivers the money to carry out what is already in the law, which we did just 2 weeks ago.

Unfortunately, this bill puts in place a new water war which we do not and cannot have at a time when we need to come together to solve California water problems.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for any of you that were listening to the debate as we debated the amendment in the general debate on this, it is very, very evident that this bill is focused only on California—only on California. And the reason I make that point, because part of the reason that California is in this situation is because of Federal law and Federal regulations.

Now, one of the ironies here, there is a lot of ironies when you look at these motions to recommit, but my good friend, the sponsor of the motion to recommit, I believe, was in office, or overseeing, at some time when these water projects were passed for California. And here is the interesting point, because he makes the very, what is a valid point, one worries about preempting State law. But the Central Valley Project in California preempted California law when it was passed. Nobody heard anything about that then. The San Joaquin River project preempted State law.

I just want to make this point. No other State is affected. This is a California-centric piece of legislation.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield for a fact?

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I will not yield to the gentleman. He didn't

give me that courtesy earlier. I am not going to give him that courtesy.

Finally, this is the final point that I want to make, and this is important. This is important.

We heard the solution to the California water problems is embodied in this bill. It is similar to a bill that we passed last year—with bipartisan support, I might add. We heard, today, my friends on the other side debate over and over, there are solutions. There are solutions to this, there are solutions to that. You know something? Nobody offered a solution. Furthermore, the other body in our legislative process has yet to offer a solution.

Now, I can understand people not liking this solution. I understand that. But somebody has to give us something to negotiate with. That is what the issue is all about.

We think this is right. We will find out if it is right if the House votes to pass this, and then we will go to the next process. But, for goodness sakes, give California a chance to get a solution.

This MTR does nothing to advance that. Vote “no” on the MTR and vote for the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered, and the question of agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 191, noes 231, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 49]
 AYES—191

Andrews	Carney	Cummings
Barber	Carson (IN)	Davis (CA)
Bass	Cartwright	Davis, Danny
Beatty	Castor (FL)	DeFazio
Becerra	Castro (TX)	DeGette
Bera (CA)	Chu	Delaney
Bishop (GA)	Cicilline	DeLauro
Bishop (NY)	Clark (MA)	DeBene
Blumenauer	Clarke (NY)	Deutch
Bonamici	Clay	Dingell
Brady (PA)	Cleaver	Doggett
Braley (IA)	Clyburn	Doyle
Brown (FL)	Cohen	Duckworth
Brownley (CA)	Connolly	Edwards
Bustos	Conyers	Ellison
Butterfield	Cooper	Engel
Capps	Courtney	Enyart
Capuano	Crowley	Eshoo
Cárdenas	Cuellar	Esty

Farr	Loebsack
Fattah	Lofgren
Foster	Lowenthal
Frankel (FL)	Lowey
Fudge	Lujan Grisham
Gabbard	(NM)
Gallego	Lujan, Ben Ray
Garamendi	(NM)
Garcia	Lynch
Grayson	Maffei
Green, Al	Maloney,
Green, Gene	Carolyn
Grijalva	Maloney, Sean
Gutiérrez	Matsui
Hahn	McCollum
Hanabusa	McDermott
Hastings (FL)	McGovern
Heck (WA)	McNerney
Higgins	Meeks
Himes	Meng
Hinojosa	Michaud
Holt	Miller, George
Honda	Moore
Horsford	Moran
Hoyer	Murphy (FL)
Huffman	Nadler
Israel	Napolitano
Jackson Lee	Neal
Jeffries	Negrete McLeod
Johnson (GA)	Nolan
Johnson, E. B.	O'Rourke
Kaptur	Pascariu
Keating	Pallone
Kelly (IL)	Pascrell
Kennedy	Pastor (AZ)
Kildee	Payne
Kilmer	Pelosi
Kind	Perlmutter
Kirkpatrick	Peters (CA)
Kuster	Peters (MI)
Langevin	Pingree (ME)
Larsen (WA)	Pocan
Larson (CT)	Polis
Lee (CA)	Price (NC)
Levin	Quigley
Lewis	Rahall
Lipinski	Rangel

NOES—231

Aderholt	Davis, Rodney
Amash	Denham
Bachmann	Dent
Bachus	DeSantis
Barletta	DesJarlais
Barr	Diaz-Balart
Barrow (GA)	Duffy
Barton	Duncan (SC)
Benishek	Duncan (TN)
Bentivolio	Ellmers
Bilirakis	Farenthold
Bishop (UT)	Fincher
Black	Fitzpatrick
Blackburn	Fleischmann
Boustany	Fleming
Brady (TX)	Flores
Bridenstine	Forbes
Brooks (AL)	Fortenberry
Brooks (IN)	Foxx
Broun (GA)	Franks (AZ)
Buchanan	Frelinghuysen
Bucshon	Gardner
Burgess	Garrett
Byrne	Gerlach
Calvert	Gibbs
Camp	Gibson
Campbell	Gingrey (GA)
Cantor	Goodlatte
Capito	Gowdy
Carter	Granger
Cassidy	Graves (GA)
Chabot	Graves (MO)
Coble	Griffin (AR)
Coffman	Griffith (VA)
Cole	Grimm
Collins (GA)	Guthrie
Collins (NY)	Hall
Conaway	Hanna
Cook	Harper
Costa	Harris
Cotton	Hartzler
Cramer	Hastings (WA)
Crawford	Heck (NV)
Crenshaw	Hensarling
Culberson	Herrera Beutler
Daines	Holding

Richmond	Messer
Roybal-Allard	Mica
Ruiz	Miller (FL)
Ruppersberger	Miller (MI)
Ryan (OH)	Mullin
Sánchez, Linda	Mulvaney
T.	Murphy (PA)
Sanchez, Loretta	Neugebauer
Sarbanes	Noem
Schakowsky	Nugent
Schiff	Nunes
Schneider	Nunnelee
Scott (VA)	Olson
Scott, David	Palazzo
Serrano	Paulsen
Sewell (AL)	Pearce
Shea-Porter	Perry
Sherman	Peterson
Sinema	Petri
Sires	Pittenger
Slaughter	Pitts
Smith (WA)	Poe (TX)
Speier	Pompeo
Swalwell (CA)	Posey
Takano	Price (GA)
Thompson (CA)	Reed
Thompson (MS)	Reichert
Tierney	Renacci
Titus	Ribble
Tonko	Rice (SC)
Owens	Rigell
Van Hollen	Roby
Vargas	Amodei
Veasey	Chaffetz
Vela	Gohmert
Velázquez	Gosar
Visclosky	McCarthy (NY)
Walz	McIntyre
Wasserman Schultz	Miller, Gary
Waters	Rush
Waxman	Schwartz
Welch	
Wilson (FL)	
Yarmuth	

Roe (TN)	Stivers
Rogers (AL)	Stockman
Rogers (KY)	Stutzman
Rogers (MI)	Terry
Rohrabacher	Thompson (PA)
Rokita	Thornberry
Rooney	Tiberi
Ros-Lehtinen	Tipton
Roskam	Turner
Ross	Upton
Rothfus	Valadao
Royce	Wagner
Runyan	Walberg
Ryan (WI)	Walden
Salmon	Walorski
Sanford	Weber (TX)
Sealife	Webster (FL)
Schock	Wenstrup
Schrader	Westmoreland
Schweikert	Whitfield
Scott, Austin	Williams
Sensenbrenner	Wilson (SC)
Sessions	Wittman
Shimkus	Wolf
Shuster	Womack
Simpson	Woodall
Smith (MO)	Yoder
Smith (NE)	Yoho
Smith (NJ)	Young (AK)
Smith (TX)	Young (IN)
Southerland	
Stewart	

NOT VOTING—9

Amodei	Gosar	Miller, Gary
Chaffetz	McCarthy (NY)	Rush
Gohmert	McIntyre	Schwartz

□ 1829

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 191, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 50]

AYES—229

Aderholt	Cassidy	Fleischmann
Bachmann	Chabot	Fleming
Bachus	Coble	Flores
Barletta	Coffman	Forbes
Barr	Cole	Fortenberry
Barrow (GA)	Collins (GA)	Foxx
Barton	Collins (NY)	Franks (AZ)
Benishek	Conaway	Frelinghuysen
Bentivolio	Cook	Gardner
Bilirakis	Costa	Garrett
Bishop (UT)	Cotton	Gerlach
Black	Cramer	Gibbs
Blackburn	Crawford	Gibson
Boustany	Crenshaw	Gingrey (GA)
Brady (TX)	Culberson	Goodlatte
Bridenstine	Daines	Gowdy
Brooks (AL)	Davis, Rodney	Granger
Brooks (IN)	Denham	Graves (GA)
Broun (GA)	Dent	Graves (MO)
Buchanan	DeSantis	Griffin (AR)
Bucshon	DesJarlais	Griffith (VA)
Burgess	Diaz-Balart	Grimm
Byrne	Duffy	Guthrie
Calvert	Duncan (SC)	Hall
Camp	Duncan (TN)	Hanna
Campbell	Ellmers	Harper
Cantor	Farenthold	Harris
Capito	Fincher	Hartzler
Carter	Fitzpatrick	Hastings (WA)

Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers

Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan

Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)

Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano

Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)

But more than a businessman, Jeff is also a dedicated member of the El Dorado community. He is involved with Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, the Main Street El Dorado Music Festival, Union County 4-H, the Salvation Army, the South Arkansas Historical Foundation, and the Boys and Girls Club of El Dorado.

I want to offer Jeff and his family my congratulations on this honor and thank him for all he does for the community of El Dorado.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JOHN ROGERS, SR., AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Black History Month, I rise to honor a remarkable American, John Rogers, Sr., a man of unrivaled determination and intellect who led an extraordinary life.

Mr. Rogers moved to Chicago at the age of 12, following the death of his parents, and later earned his pilot's license and enlisted in the Army Air Forces, where he flew in 120 combat missions in World War II as a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen.

He went on to attend the University of Chicago's Law School on the GI Bill and served for 21 years as a Cook County juvenile court judge. He was known as much for his compassion as he was for his conviction, and believed as much in giving second chances as he did in doing things right the first time.

Mr. Rogers was a great leader and role model. He passed away last month at the age of 95, but he leaves behind a legacy of accomplishments that have made a greater America and are worthy of being celebrated in any month.

LET'S HELP AMERICAN WORKERS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, 4 years ago, the American people were told that the President's new health care law would create 4 million new jobs. Well, it turns out supporters of the law were only off by 6 million, because yesterday the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office revealed that over 2 million jobs will actually be lost under ObamaCare.

One problem is the law drastically changes the definition of full-time work to 30 hours per week. Because of this so-called "30-hour rule," millions of Americans working in education, small business, hospitality, retail, food service, and public safety are now having their hours and their wages cut by up to 25 percent. And this comes at a time when there are already 7.8 million

NOT VOTING—11

Amodiei
Chaffetz
Gohmert
Gosar

McCarthy (NY)
McIntyre
Miller, Gary
Rush

Schwartz
Turner
Whitfield

□ 1838

So the bill was passed. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

TEAGUE AUTO GROUP OF EL DORADO, ARKANSAS

(Mr. COTTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COTTON. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Jeff Teague, president of the Teague Auto Group in El Dorado, Arkansas, who was recently named Time magazine's Auto Dealer of the Year. Awarded annually, this award recognizes the auto dealer who demonstrates exceptional business performance and distinguished community service.

Jeff and his father opened their first dealership as partners 33 years ago in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. Through hard work and determination, they built their dealership into a thriving family business.

NOES—191

Amash
Andrews
Barber
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney

DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur

Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larsen (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
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Americans working part-time who want full-time work.

America's workers deserve better, and, thankfully, there is bipartisan support for the Save American Workers Act to restore a common understanding in America that full-time work is 40 hours. The bill passed the Ways and Means Committee and is headed for the floor.

Mr. Speaker, let's have some common sense and eliminate this onerous mandate so we can get people back to work.

□ 1845

LEGISLATION PROTECTING THE FOURTH AMENDMENT

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the Judiciary Committee, we had a very vigorous hearing and discussion on the questions of the National Security Agency and privacy for the American people. I have introduced H.R. 2434, the Civilian Contractors Engaged in Intelligence Activities Reduction Act, which has seen a large support from the White House and others about the importance of considering and looking at reduction of outsourcing of our intelligence activities and really bringing in-house the training and the expertise of those handling America's intelligence.

I introduced H.R. 2440, which is the FISA Court in the Sunshine Act, which I am very glad that part of it is in H.R. 3361, Uniting and Strengthening America by Fulfilling Rights and Ending Eavesdropping. This is the bill that deals with the mega trolling that has occurred under the NSA of business records.

What America wants is security but balanced with privacy and the respect for the Fourth Amendment, prohibiting unreasonable search and seizure. It is important for this Congress to come together in a bipartisan way to stand up and be on the American people's side so that we can secure them, secure the homeland, but we can also provide for their privacy.

CELEBRATING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF HENRY "HAMMERIN' HANK" AARON

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Henry "Hank" Aaron is one of the great athletes to ever set foot on any field, renowned for breaking home run records and racial barriers.

With grit and natural talent, he became the home run king of baseball while playing at a time of ugly segregation, having to sleep in separate

hotel rooms from his teammates and facing countless threats on his life.

On Saturday, a portrait of this extraordinary man I am proud to call my friend and neighbor will be unveiled at the National Portrait Gallery as friends and family join Hank and his wife, Billye, in celebration of his 80th birthday.

Cheers to you, Hammerin' Hank. Thank you for a lifetime of courage and inspiration.

THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in support and honor of the American Heart Association. Today, women, Democrats and Republicans, stood together in honor of the American Heart Association because we understand that cardiovascular disease is the number one killer for women.

The American Heart Association and Stroke Association asks us to wear red in support of educating and giving awareness to the American people. We asked all citizens this Friday, February 7, to wear red. Stand with us as we stand for educating and making our citizens aware of this killer disease.

HEROIN ABUSE

(Mr. FOSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the grave epidemic of heroin abuse. The media has shone a bright light on this issue this week, but for too many in my district, heroin abuse is all too common. The number of heroin deaths that we have seen in the counties I represent has been staggering.

In Kane County, Illinois, there were 20 heroin-related deaths in 2013. In Will County, there were 35. DuPage County reported 46 heroin-related deaths, including one period last summer when 15 overdose deaths were reported in just 17 days.

Heroin abuse affects people of every race, income and education level. These are mothers and fathers, friends and neighbors.

Community leaders are working to fight back, and, yet, at the Federal level we have not only failed to increase our efforts to combat drug abuse, we have reduced resources. Funding for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration was cut by over \$210 million in 2013. The DEA's budget was cut by nearly \$120 million.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we cannot ignore this epidemic which is ravaging our country.

BURDENSOME EPA REGULATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PITTINGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, today, back in Missouri, this frigid cold snap is really making life miserable for everyone. We have below-zero temperatures and wind chills and a lot of snow. In fact, a lot of children are home from school today, and it is on snowy days like this back in Missouri and across much of America that we really appreciate the ability to go to our thermostats and to turn up the temperature and be able to sit by a nice fire to keep warm. What we don't need is the government interfering in that. Safe, affordable and reliable energy is vital for all of us as Americans, and it is being threatened by the Environmental Protection Agency. They are increasing burdens and making our regulations more difficult and costly for hard-working taxpayers.

While I support commonsense regulations designed to protect my constituents and the environment, many of the EPA regulations have gone too far, threatening to raise electricity rates during these cold winter months and hurting markets designed to provide rural homes with proper heating systems.

County officials, farmers and city administrators, as well as moms and dads all across Missouri who have to pay the electric bill every month, are constantly coming up to me with stories of the burdens that the EPA regulations have placed on their families, their businesses and their communities.

It is time for this to stop. It is time for the EPA to begin working with my constituents, with local officials and with State governments to bring commonsense, consensus-driven changes to the regulations instead of the typical, heavy-handed Washington bureaucracy. Many of these regulations are stifling small businesses and local communities, leading to slow economic growth, stagnant jobs and less opportunities for the next generations of Americans.

So, today, my colleagues and I would like to outline some of the most egregious EPA regulations and offer commonsense solutions to fix, replace or eliminate previous EPA actions that are hurting the average American.

For example, the EPA's recently proposed rule on source performance standards for new power plants has raised serious concerns among ratepayers, utilities and small businesses in my district. My main concern with these proposed regulations remains focused on Missouri's need to provide affordable and reliable electricity. However, in a State like Missouri that derives over 80 percent of our power from coal, the EPA has proposed a rule that would create a de facto ban on building any new coal-fired power plants by requiring the use of something called carbon capture and storage technology.

This technology has not even been proven commercially viable anywhere, and the small pilot projects used as a basis of the EPA's analysis have been highly subsidized by the government and are not commercially available.

Congressional intent in the Clean Air Act is clear. The EPA is required to complete a cost-benefit analysis and base their regulations on the best commercially available technology. It is clear that these standards have not been met.

The good news is that there is a bipartisan solution for this regulation. Congressman WHITFIELD and Senator MANCHIN have introduced the Electricity Security and Affordability Act. They designed the bill to require that any greenhouse gas standard set by the EPA for new coal-fired plants are achievable by commercial power plants operating in the real world, including highly efficient plants that utilize the most modern, state-of-the-art standards that can be met by all States in a way that is not economically damaging to local ratepayers and small businesses.

All we ask is that the EPA work with us to find commonsense solutions for real world problems.

Another example of needless regulation is the EPA's proposed rule on future production of wood-burning stoves like the one in this picture right here. My constituents are concerned that this regulation could provide another de facto ban of the production and sale of 80 percent of America's current wood-burning stoves, which are the world's oldest heating system.

The EPA's stringent, one-size-fits-all policy goes against the will of the people, and it requires the same stringent standards in a cottage in the woods that it applies to a high-rise building in downtown New York. For the first 10 years of my marriage, my husband and I heated our home with a wood-burning stove like this. I am concerned for the many constituents who have used these stoves for years to heat their home, that they will have to turn in their old furnaces for scrap and make costly upgrades if they choose to remodel.

So, again, I implore the EPA to apply a little common sense to these onerous regulations and not finalize this burdensome rule.

These are just two examples of the many concerns of the EPA overreach that I hear on a regular basis.

I pause now to invite my colleagues to share experiences and issues that their constituents face dealing with this agency. So I would like to start with my dear friend from Colorado, DOUG LAMBORN.

Representative LAMBORN, what would you like to share?

Mr. LAMBORN. Well, I thank my friend and colleague, the gentelady from Missouri, for her leadership on this issue and for putting this time together. This is an important topic.

Mr. Speaker, I hear from Coloradans every day who are struggling just to make ends meet. Unemployment remains high, and Americans are striving to provide necessities for their families. Prices at the pump have doubled since President Obama took office. According to the Energy Information Administration, they are on a trajectory to rise even higher.

Sadly, as American families and small businesses continue to suffer from these high energy prices, the Obama administration's response has been to impose job-killing and expensive rules through the Environmental Protection Agency. These expenses are passed on to American consumers. These policies, such as attempting to regulate greenhouse gas emissions in the Clean Air Act, only end up hurting consumers.

As the chairman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources and a proponent for business-focused regulations, I have been vocal against many of these harmful regulations. The EPA's continued power grab ends up taking legislative authority out of the hands of those who are sent here in Washington to represent the American people and puts it in the hands of unelected bureaucrats carrying out the agenda and policies of the White House.

I have cosponsored numerous bills to repeal many of these regulations piece by piece to ensure Americans that they would have affordable energy. Coloradans and the rest of the country should not have to choose between heating their homes and feeding their families. I remain committed to seeing what I can do to stop this bureaucrat overreach.

Just for one example, and my friend and colleague alluded to this, the EPA wants to force American coal-fired power plants to use carbon capture and storage technology that does not even exist. Since it doesn't exist, this is an impossible mandate to obey.

The EPA is basing its regulations on wishful thinking, not sound science. They need to be brought under control. The ability of working Americans to pay their bills hangs in the balance.

I thank the gentelady for putting this important time together.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you, gentleman. Thank you for your leadership on this. You have been at the forefront of this, and this is so, so important. I love what you said about the EPA is basing this on wishful thinking and not sound science. I think most of us would appreciate if there was some science behind regulations. That seems to be common sense, but they clearly have gone beyond that, and it is hurting, as you say, people. It is hurting the bottom line. It is hurting when you pay your bills every month, and your electric bill is just going through the roof unnecessarily because of these onerous regulations.

So thank you, gentleman.

Now, I would like to turn to my friend and colleague from Utah, Representative CHRIS STEWART, to share his thoughts on this important topic.

Thank you, CHRIS.

□ 1900

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my friend from Missouri for allowing me to speak tonight. Thank you for organizing this. I think this is an important issue. In fact, I would say that this is a critical issue. It is a great example of why the American people don't trust the Federal Government. Let me say that again. The American people don't trust the Federal Government. So much of what they do doesn't make any sense, and so much of what the EPA does doesn't make any sense.

I was the chair of the Subcommittee on the Environment, and we had direct oversight over EPA. Again and again, I saw examples of the things that they did that illustrated that they were an agency that is, in many ways, out of control. At one point, they had proposed regulations over ozone that were virtually impossible for many Western States to comply with, Western States like my home State of Utah. Their regulations would have been so restrictive that there was more naturally occurring ozone than they would have allowed. It doesn't make any sense.

There are multiple studies that were sponsored by the EPA concerning supposed contamination of groundwater from fracking that were so sloppy and so obviously biased that even the EPA had to finally admit to them and withdraw their own studies. Once again, it doesn't make any sense.

Why would the EPA try to stop fracking, a technology that has led to cheaper energy, more efficient energy, jobs, and economic growth in many parts of our country? It doesn't make any sense.

There is the war on coal that I suppose many will be speaking about. As my friend, Mrs. HARTZLER, was saying, it drives up the cost of energy for every working family. It does nothing to reduce global carbon emissions.

I would like to take a minute and expand on, with a little more detail, what

I think is one of the most egregious and troubling examples of EPA overreach. I want to speak on behalf of the thousands of landowners in my district, to my home State of Utah, that face a new threat due to the heavy hand of the EPA. This will affect farmers, it will affect ranchers, and even homeowners as they come into the crosshairs of an agency that has an ever-expanding regulatory agenda. The new actions of EPA are nothing more than a power grab that will have significant impact on infrastructure, on energy and land development.

Back in September, the EPA published a drafted rule to more heavily regulate the Clean Water Act. Now, make no mistake, this rule is wholly in defiance of recent Supreme Court rulings that determined the Agency was out of step with current law. The drafted rule would allow the EPA to regulate virtually every body of water in the United States, including private lakes, small ponds, seasonal streams. Every depression, no matter how far away it was from a jurisdictional water, could fall under this regulation. It would require farmers to get approval from the EPA before they planted their crops. It would require permits from the EPA before you could build on your own property, and it would hand environmentalists another way to sue property owners. It would drastically increase the cost and the timeframe of building any piece of infrastructure, whether it is a highway or a power plant, all of the things that communities need in order to survive.

Everyone agrees that we should protect the environment. There is a reason that I chose to live in Utah. I love to rock climb. I love to hike. I love to ski. I grew up on a farm. I love the land. I want to protect the land. The presumption is that because I am a Republican I must hate the land, and I think it is absurd.

If you want to take a meaningful step towards restoring trust between the American people and the Federal Government, then rein in the power of the EPA. It appears that our President has exactly the opposite in mind, and that scares me to death. It, frankly, should scare every American. I hope that he doesn't. I hope we are able to control this Agency. I hope that this discussion tonight helps move us forward towards doing that.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, excellent points there. I think you are right; we need to make regulations that make sense. What the EPA is doing does not make sense. It does feed into the distrust of government bureaucracy by the American people, and well-deserved when they have some of the regulations coming out that they have been proposing that are harming Americans. That is why we are here tonight, to raise these concerns and to fight against them.

I am so glad today to get to pass the baton to my friend from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING).

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlelady for bringing us here today to talk about this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, excessive and burdensome regulations have become a pattern under this administration. It is harmful to business and prevents growth in our economy.

One area of concern, amongst many that I have and my constituents have in North Carolina, is the proposed Environmental Protection Agency rule which would make changes to the Clean Water Act. The proposed rule by EPA would grant them control over essentially all waters, not just navigable waters as any commonsense person understands navigable waters and which is clearly defined in the Clean Water Act of 1972 and has been upheld by the Supreme Court.

In North Carolina, farmers are a critical part of this economy and community. Earlier this week, I had the chance to meet with a group of farmers from Wayne County, which is a large population center in my district. One of their greatest concerns was not a traditional farmer concern that you hear. It wasn't a concern about feed prices or soil fertility or farm equipment maintenance. It had to do with a Federal agency attempting to regulate any ditch, puddle, or dry creekbed within their property lines. This proposed rule from the EPA would take control away from these farmers and place it in the hands of a Federal Government bureaucracy.

Now, the EPA claims that it needs the authority to do this, but in reality, this expansion of power would unnecessarily put local and State issues in the Federal Government's hands. The EPA wants to expand the jurisdiction to intrastate waters, which could include isolated streams or ditches. This is extremely consequential to private property owners who could now be subject to EPA regulations even if they merely have a small pond in their backyard.

If the EPA is given this authority, private property owners will be vulnerable to lawsuits from environmental groups for not complying with regulations. In some of these cases, these waters have nothing to do with Federal interests and the rule could override State prerogatives. The rule would allow EPA to regulate activities beyond the scope of interstate commerce, which is clearly not what was intended when the Clean Water Act was passed in 1972.

It is essential that we support policies that help farmers not only in North Carolina, not only in my district, but across the country to grow and produce their crops. They cannot afford to be laid low by overreaching government regulations. These are not

large corporations. We are talking about local farmers who are farming sweet potatoes or soybeans or tobacco, and for them, these new regulations can be complex and compliance can be time consuming and expensive.

The Small Business Office of Advocacy has reported that Federal rule-making has imposed a cumulative burden of \$1.75 trillion on our economy. We should not add more to the problem with the proposed EPA rule; but, rather, we should be doing all we can to alleviate the burden on our farmers, small businesses, and our Nation's economy.

Again, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for organizing this Special Order this afternoon.

Mrs. HARTZLER. I thank the gentleman very much, and I want to follow up on exactly your same story. I hear the same from my farmers in Missouri. And this picture on this poster, I hope everyone can see, because I want to show what Representative HOLDING was just talking about.

The Clean Water Act gave the EPA authority to regulate navigable waters, and those are the pictures here. They would be something that you would consider navigable waters, and they worked with the Corps of Engineers to develop regulations.

The pictures on the right are what I consider nonnavigable, and I think most people with common sense would. They are farm ponds, puddles, and ditches. This is what the EPA is trying to expand its reach to regulating. As Representative HOLDING said, this is going to impact every farmer and every property owner, and it is a violation of property rights.

The government should not have any control or say over how people manage their ponds, or if there is a puddle in the field, they shouldn't have to ask permission to be able to plant a crop there. And yet that is what you have, one of the things that EPA is doing. Thank you for bringing that up. And I wanted everybody to see how ridiculous this is and what an overreach of government it is. Thank you for showing that picture.

Now, I turn to ANDY BARR from Kentucky. He knows a little bit about coal and some of the other impacts of the EPA. Please share your thoughts on the topic.

Mr. BARR. I thank the gentlelady for organizing this Special Order and her leadership in highlighting a real problem in our country right now.

The President of the United States the other night in the State of the Union made an observation, and the President's observation was one where he described an economy in which inequality has deepened and upward mobility has stalled. Unfortunately, in many respects the President is right, but he is wrong about what has caused that problem to exist in our economy.

The truth is a major reason why upward mobility has stalled is because the Environmental Protection Agency, under his direction, has produced a deluge of red tape and regulations that are literally strangling the Nation's economy. The poor are worse off today than they were when President Obama took office. Seven million more Americans live in poverty today as compared to 2008. Median household income has fallen over \$2,000 in the last 4 years. Seventy-six percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, and the percentage of working-age people actually in the workforce has dropped to the lowest rate in 35 years in the Obama economy. The EPA is largely responsible for this.

The coal industry in my region in central and eastern Kentucky could be the poster child of this regulatory onslaught. According to the Commonwealth's recently released figures, more than 7,000 coal miners in the Appalachian coalfields have received pink slips since 2009; 2,232 of those jobs were lost last year alone, thanks in large part to the overreach of the EPA. The percentage of coal miners in our State is the lowest number of coal miners since 1927 in the coal labor market, and that is since they actually started keeping those statistics.

So whether it is deadlocking the permit process or trying to effectively ban coal-fired electricity through disastrous greenhouse gas regulations, EPA's arming of unelected bureaucrats has been very direct about their efforts to reshape entire sectors of our economy. In fact, the President's own climate adviser was reported as saying "a war on coal is exactly what we need."

So what bothers me about this is that there is a total disregard for the human cost to hardworking Americans, their families, who have lost these paychecks, who have been laid off with no other economic opportunity.

There is a problem with upward mobility in this country. There is income inequality, but it is because of this administration's policies that are devastating these coal-mining families. And make no mistake, these costs are generally borne by the Nation's most vulnerable who can least afford higher energy prices. A recent study analyzing government data found that, for the 180,000 families in Kentucky making less than \$10,000 per year, energy costs consume more than two-thirds of after-tax income.

□ 1915

That means for every \$100 they take home, about \$70 goes to covering the cost of energy. The EPA's ruinous policies will only drive those rates higher, adding to the burdens on those already struggling to make ends meet. Folks like our seniors on fixed incomes, they can't afford these higher utility bills.

The President likes to talk about the war on poverty. My friends on the

other side of the aisle like to talk about the war on poverty. Well, it is hard to win the war on poverty when you are waging a relentless war on jobs. That is exactly what is happening with the EPA.

EPA officials think that they know what is best for you, for your family, and for your community, whether you live in Kentucky or Texas or California, but when Congress has asked for some evidence to justify this one-size-fits-all approach, they fail to provide it.

While I am sure it was much easier for these bureaucrats to have listening sessions on greenhouse gas regulations in Washington, D.C., or San Francisco, California, the three States that produced the most coal—Kentucky, West Virginia, and Wyoming—they were not on the list where the EPA went to visit. I don't think the bureaucrats would have received such a warm welcome from the coal miners of my State whose jobs were lost, the small businesses that no longer have customers—many in my home district—the teachers whose schools have lost a major source of tax revenue. They no longer have those funds because of the war on coal and the loss of revenue.

As I have warned for some time, the impact of EPA regulations will not be limited to the coal fields of Appalachia. If the EPA has its way, rising electricity rates, like we have already seen this winter, will ripple through this economy, threatening the manufacturing renaissance; home heating bills will spike; goods and services will cost more, depressing consumer demand; businesses will have to devote money that could have gone to investment and hiring to cover higher energy costs at a time when they can least afford it; companies considering to locate here in the United States will leave because our energy advantage will instead go overseas, where labor and energy are cheaper and the regulatory environment is less suffocating. Americans are calling for more jobs, but the Federal bureaucracy is trying to make sure those jobs go elsewhere.

All of this is happening through agency rulemaking because that is the only way that the President's environmentalist wish list can come into being. Similar policies have repeatedly failed in the face of bipartisan opposition in Congress. The President and the EPA, deaf to the vehement refusals of the American people and their elected officials to go along with this extremist agenda, are resorting to the only means that they have left: legally questionable rulemaking and executive actions unilaterally administered by the executive branch.

The House has made its position loud and clear: these policies are at odds with the intent of Congress and not in the best interest of the American people. In fact, they are actually bankrupting many hardworking Americans.

Enough is enough, Mr. Speaker. I would encourage the President and the EPA to approach Congress with an open, transparent program that balances environmental protection with economic growth. It can be done if Congress has a willing negotiator in the White House, but continuing to impose these rules by executive proclamation unilaterally fails to benefit the environment and it serves only to harm our constituents and our democracy, if this President, if this Congress is serious about dealing with poverty, if we are serious about dealing with income inequality, if we are really genuinely interested in helping the poor in this country, let's not attack hardworking Americans. Let's focus on job creation and growth, and let's unleash the energy potential of the United States.

I thank the gentlelady for her leadership.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you very, very much. I don't think anyone could say it any better than that.

I appreciate as well your comments about coal because in my district, I have the only working coal mine in Missouri. In Missouri, 85 percent of our energy comes from coal. It is an extremist agenda that would raise the price of energy unnecessarily, especially on the hardest hit Americans whose hours are being cut back because of other policies from this country coming forth, and whose paychecks are shrinking.

Why would you artificially raise the cost of their electric bills due to regulations that aren't even scientifically based and shut off a major source of energy in this country that is affordable, reliable, safe, and clean—and that is coal.

Thank you very much for sharing that.

Now I would like to go to my friend from Oklahoma, JAMES LANKFORD, to hear his thoughts about EPA and how it is hurting Americans and how we can provide better solutions.

Mr. LANKFORD. There are a lot of things that we have done as a Nation that really have greatly benefited the health and economy of our Nation. We have engaged. There are some that would say to Republicans that Republicans just want dirty air and dirty water and they just assume we want unhealthy kids and all those things. I have people who have complained to me here while I have been in the House of Representatives and say: Don't you care about kids with asthma? And I look at them and say: Yeah, my daughter is one of them. So don't throw back in my face we don't care about our own kids and we don't care about the environment.

My youngest daughter, a couple of years ago we were sitting at an intersection and the car in front of us took off and black smoke came out of the back of it, and she said out loud: Is

that car on fire? As a kid who grew up in the 1970s like I did, I thought: No, that is what every car did in the 1970s, but we have made real changes, and it has affected our environment.

It is fascinating to me now that the EPA and the rules that were put in place to protect all Americans have moved from where they were in the 1970s to now trying to get to the most granular small level that is pushing beyond health and safety down to a level that is actually controlling business and the basic operation of our economy. This is no longer about health and safety of people anymore. Those rules have long been changed and been in place. This is something different.

The basic rules:

There is a rule that probably no one tracks. It is a 316(b) rule. No one has heard of the 316(b) rule, but what it does with power plants, most power plants, as people drive past all the time and see them, they have a lake around them. In that lake there are, typically, fish. Quite frankly, for many power plants that are there in many parts of the country, the power company actually built that lake and then stocked it. In Oklahoma, some of the best fishing lakes are right around power plants because the water is a little bit warmer and the fish multiply. The water that comes in through one side of that lake actually goes underneath the power plant to actually cool the power plant. It is not the steam that comes out of the top. It is just like a big radiator that comes in.

There is a grading screen that keeps all the fish out and everything else because they don't want them going underneath the plant as well and hurting the tubing and such. Occasionally, a fish gets what is called impinged on that screen. They are typically minnows, what we use in Oklahoma for fishing bait.

So the EPA is stepping in to power companies and making massive changes in their requirements to the screens around the outside of that to keep fish—minnows, bait fish—from being caught on that. Well, the offer has been made to say, if 100 bait fish are killed on this screen during this time, can we just buy 100 bait fish and put it in? We can go down to the local bait shop and get 100 fish and just restock it—and they say no. It requires millions of dollars of change to go around that screen to prevent that.

Who pays for that? Ratepayers pay for that. The President made a statement in his State of the Union address when he said: these things will be hard, but they are right for the environment. Do you know who it is hard on? The poorest in our society, elderly people that are on fixed incomes. That electricity bill matters to them, and you can't just flippantly say, Mr. President, this is going to be hard but we have got to do it, when the people that

it is going to be hardest on and are going to be affected the most are the people that this government should protect rather than just look at them and say: this is going to be hard, but you are going to pay a higher bill.

Simple things like regional haze. Rules were made years ago on regional haze. Regional haze is a rule dealing with aesthetics, what the air looks like. Not air quality, not what we breath, not health, just aesthetics. So the rule was made if this is just about aesthetics, not about health, the State should make those rules.

Then there was what's called a "sue and settle" agreement. This administration allowed a lawsuit, broke off separately from the normal judicial process, made an arrangement with these environmental groups, and then came back to States and said, a judge is imposing that. A judge is not imposing that. They made a deal with environmentalist groups around the people that it would affect and are now imposing it on States.

What is the result of that? Higher prices for electricity. Not because of health, but because of aesthetics. Again, the President's statement: this is going to be hard, we are aware. It is going to be hard on the people that should be protected by this Nation, not just someone stepping into their house and saying: sorry your electricity bill is higher, this is going to be hard. That doesn't help anyone. Families know that day-to-day life is hard. They don't need this government making it harder for them.

We need to stand up and protect them. It is important that we have clean air and clean water. It is also important that we protect our families and not bring them undue expense that matters nothing for basic human health and population.

I thank the gentlelady for hosting this time and for this conversation because these EPA issues are not just Washington issues; they are issues that matter to our families. They are issues that do change the price of our electricity and our energy. When people say all the time: Why doesn't my check go as far as it used to go, why does life seem to cost so much now, I say to them: Welcome to the regulation world that we live in, where someone from D.C. says: this is going to be hard and you pay more.

Mrs. HARTZLER. We have turned sadly into a regulation Nation, and it is wrong, but some of us—and the ones here tonight speaking—are not going to sit by and allow this and stand idly by. We are fighting against it, and that is why we are here.

I totally agree with my colleague that it is wrong to just tell people: well, this is going to be hard, but you are going to have to pay more on your electric bill basically because of this new regulation because we care more

for a minnow than we do about people. That is wrong. It is time to change things.

I appreciate my friend from Ohio, Representative ROBERT LATTA, being here tonight and welcome your comments on this issue.

Mr. LATTA. Thank you very much. I appreciate the gentlelady for organizing this Special Order tonight.

The issue about the EPA and what it is doing back home and across our Nation is an issue that we all have to really pay attention to. I serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and we look at this all the time in our subcommittee. We have hearings continually. People back home always ask: What's going on, why is this happening, as the gentlelady from Oklahoma just said.

My district is unique. I have 60,000 manufacturing jobs, and I also represent the largest number of farmers in the State of Ohio. When I am home, over the last 16 plus months I have probably done about 40 to 50 different meetings in my district visiting manufacturing plants, farmers, and small businesses. I also ask them: What is the issue that you are most concerned about? The number one issue I hear from them all the time on, the number one issue is regulations. Regulations are the number one thing that are holding back Americans from creating more jobs in this country. It is very important that I ask them: Well, who is it, what regulations? It is the EPA. That is the number one agency I hear about from my constituents all the time.

Earlier this session, I offered H.R. 724. H.R. 724 is a piece of legislation that received bipartisan support here in the House. Not only did it receive bipartisan support, it passed unanimously. What that bill does is it gets rid of a piece of regulation that is no longer necessary under the Clean Air Act.

There is a regulation on the books out there that requires small to large to medium auto dealers in this country that they would have to go out and give the buyer a piece of paper telling them that, yes, it met all the requirements. Well, it is no longer a piece of paper that needs to be given. It is something that should have been gotten rid of a long time ago because it is online, it is on the cars, it says right there that that car meets all the emission standards.

So what we need to do is just start paring back these types of regulations. That bill has gone over to the Senate. I hope our friends over there in the very near future take that up because, again, it is something that helps the communities. Again, when you talk about folks back home, the folks back home—it is like the auto dealers—they are the ones that sponsor Little League teams, they are the ones that are out

there making sure that they are donating. So let's give them more time to do things like helping their community and, by the way, selling more cars, putting more people to work. That is very, very important.

Also, as the speaker from Oklahoma also mentioned, there is nobody out there that doesn't say that we don't want clean air and clean water. We all want that, but in recent years the EPA has put forward broad-reaching regulatory proposals that are either unachievable or lack sufficient cost-benefit justifications. One of the most harmful proposals includes the greenhouse gas emission standards for new power plants that aim to stop the use of coal as an energy source.

We have all heard from folks tonight talking about how much coal is being used not only in their districts, but their States. In the State of Ohio, 78 percent of our electricity comes from coal-fired plants.

When you talk about what is going to happen if all these regulations go on, who is that going to affect?

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It is going to affect the very vulnerable citizens in our districts. For the senior citizens out there on fixed incomes, it is going to increase the costs for them. They are going to have to make the choice about heating their homes or about refilling those life-saving prescriptions that they might have to have.

So, when we look at the EPA and when it fails to consider what those real-life impacts are on all of these proposals that it is proposing out there; or the small business owner who struggles to make the payroll; or the newly hired employee facing the reduced hours; or, again, senior citizens who are on fixed incomes and trying to budget in these tough times, those are the things that have to be considered.

One of the things, I think, that was really staggering was that, in 2011, the SBA—the Small Business Administration—came out with a report stating that we have \$1.7 trillion of regulations in this country today. Unfortunately, that got up to \$1.8 trillion, and that is what we are dealing with in this country. People wonder why jobs aren't being created in this country. You just have to look at Washington. What are we doing to them here?

What we need to do, in my opinion, is invite the EPA to visit our districts. I have actually had some folks in my district say that they would be glad to have them come in to show the EPA. In one company, they had all of these different manuals and books and everything on the table that they showed me, and they said one thing—that they would love to have them come in because it doesn't even apply to their plants. That is what is going on. They are trying to take a round peg and

drive it through a square hole. We have got to do that in order to help our hardworking American taxpayers meet these goals and to create more jobs, to help their families, and to help the future.

With that, I thank the gentle lady again for hosting this tonight.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you so much, gentleman. Thank you for your leadership on that. That is a great bill, and we really need more of that to push back on these onerous regulations by the EPA, like you pointed out, that cost the taxpayers \$1.8 trillion a year overall just to comply with paperwork. That is wrong.

Now I would like to turn to my friend from Florida, Representative TED YOHO, to share his thoughts.

Mr. YOHO. I would like to thank the gentle lady from the great State of Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for the privilege of being able to address one of the greatest issues facing our Nation today—the unilateral imposition of regulations coming out of an administrative agency known as the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the strangulating effects those regulations have on business development and on our economy.

Mr. Speaker, my home State, the great State of Florida, is fortunate enough to play host to a myriad of beautiful animals, landscapes, waterways, and beaches, and I believe that we all play a role in being good stewards of our natural resources. We all want clean water. We all want clean air. As Mr. LANKFORD was talking about his child's having asthma, I have asthma, and I know the importance of this. So, yes, we do want a clean environment.

Many rural districts like mine often have unique needs, whether it is the farmer farming to put food on his table in order to keep his family fed or to feed a Nation or to keep the lights on at the storefront or bringing jobs back to our districts. Through projects like the dredging of the St. Johns waterway, which is a crucial infrastructure project in our district, it would create thousands of jobs, and yet we have to deal with EPA regulations.

Congress must ensure that efficient and effective policies are being implemented that both boost the economy and uphold environmentally friendly industry standards. However, the EPA has overstepped its authority time and time again by imposing unwarranted, costly Federal regulations on States and on individuals. Last year, the EPA issued 1,624 rules and notices. In this year alone, the EPA has issued 148 new rules and notices.

To sum this up, since the beginning of the 113th Congress alone, the EPA has issued 1,759 new rules and notices. In a little over 12 months, the EPA has issued, on average, just under 147 new rules and notices per month. That is

just under 34 a week, just under 11 new regulations a day. This is an incredible rate. Every industry is affected, and they are finding it harder and harder to keep up.

Take, for example, the highly debated cap-and-trade emissions standards the EPA and the current administration are pushing. This is going to affect every American.

The EPA Web site says:

Cap-and-trade is an environmental policy tool that delivers results with a mandatory cap on emissions while providing sources flexibility in how they comply. Successful cap-and-trade programs reward innovation, efficiency and early action, and provide strict environmental accountability without inhibiting economic growth.

This is simply not true. It strangles businesses; it costs money; and it stifles economic growth.

Overzealous regulations like cap-and-trade by the EPA, which is, again, an administrative agency, handcuff our economy and make America less competitive in the world because emerging markets like China and India will never adopt such destructive taxes; yet they put our manufacturers in a hold and make America less competitive, further restricting the opportunities in this country and lowering the job growth in this country.

I have just a few stories I would like to share with you. One of them is about a constituent of mine. We have talked about this, and you held up the navigable waterways:

He is a dairy farmer. He has been in battle with the EPA for over a couple of years. It has cost him over \$400,000—\$200,000 in fines. It is for a depression on his property that has been there for years. It is a depression that, when it rains, it fills up and it evaporates, yet he has fought the EPA on this for over 2 years at the cost of \$200,000 in fines—\$200,000 to fix it and in lawyer fees. This can't go on. It drives people out of business;

In our area, I visited a power plant. That power plant was tasked with meeting a new EPA standard for their emissions. It cost them over \$500 million, and they had 4 years to complete it. They got halfway through the project, and the EPA came out and said, Never mind. We changed the rule. They have already spent half the money, yet the EPA says, You don't have to comply.

We see this over and over again. According to the new EPA studies, by their own admission, they said that the new rules on the carbon capture standards would have an insignificant effect on human health and our environment, yet it is going to cripple every American in this country and cost him a lot more in money.

Our role in government is to legislate in order to make America safer and economically stronger, not to govern by an administrative agency which has little oversight and that winds up stifling business development and our

economic growth. It is high time Congress reminds the EPA of what its original purpose was, and that is to protect human health and the environment by writing and enforcing regulations based on the laws that we pass, not regulations that stifle America.

I would like to thank the gentlelady from Missouri for the opportunity and for organizing this. You did a great job and a great service to the American people.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Your comments were very, very helpful to what we are doing tonight, which is making people aware of how these EPA regulations hurt real people. I think your example of the 2-year fight and the \$200,000 fine just for a low area in your yard that fills with water is just too much.

Mr. YOHO. It wound up costing him over \$400,000 by the time he was done, and he just threw up his hands. This is happening all over America. So I thank you again.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you. That is why we are here fighting tonight.

I would like to turn it over now to my friend from Arkansas, which is just a little south of me, to Representative RICK CRAWFORD.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I thank the gentlelady and her staff for arranging this Special Order to discuss this issue that we have been talking about—the egregious overreach of the Environmental Protection Agency.

I want to talk about an issue that is very close to you and near and dear to you and that you have helped me on, and that is the spill prevention and containment countermeasures issue, which is facing farmers across the country.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken action on this. If you are like me and if your staff is like my staff, we have fielded countless phone calls from farmers who are concerned about these new rules that the EPA was attempting to roll out with respect to on-farm fuel storage at, really, an unmanageable level. 1,320 gallons was the threshold that would require that the farmers construct these spill prevention and containment countermeasures. For those who don't know what those are, those are berms, or protective dikes, around a storage facility that can cost tens of thousands of dollars to ag producers. Farmers may be land rich—capital rich—but they are not cash rich by any stretch of the imagination, so this adds cost to their operations.

Really, who pays for that?

We have talked about it with our power plants. The ratepayers pay. The American people pay for that because prices go up. Generally, while the farmer bears the burden initially, ultimately, those costs are passed on to the consumer, which is the case in nearly every one of these issues where we see the EPA engaging in overreach.

So we took to the floor to try to change this, and we were successful,

not once but twice, in passing by voice vote the FUELS Act. That would have changed the threshold from 1,320 gallons to 10,000 gallons. Between 10,000 and 42,000, you would be required to build the structure, but above 42,000, you would then be required to engage the services of a professional engineer for certification in order to meet that standard for EPA's compliance.

Now, the University of Arkansas did a study on the FUELS Act which addressed the spill prevention and containment countermeasures, and they estimated nationwide that this bill, which was passed successfully on the House floor, would save American farmers \$3.3 billion. I don't know about you, but I think this \$3.3 billion could do our economy a heck of a lot better service than chasing this problem that really doesn't exist.

Why do I say this problem doesn't exist?

A decade ago, the USDA did an analysis of the spill prevention and containment countermeasures, and they discovered there was little, if any, evidence of farms having any oil spills. In fact, 99 percent of farmers had never experienced an oil spill, and that means that the compliance cost of \$3.3 billion is essentially a solution in search of a problem. It really doesn't exist.

What we did was we took that 10,000-gallon threshold directly from the underlying law—the Clean Water Act—that regulates on-farm fuel storage, and they defined, in their own words, 10,000 gallons as being a proper definition of a family farm, of small farm fuel storage. The commodities at this scale are certainly storing more than 10,000 gallons on their farms. Being a farmer yourself, you know that you store in greater quantity than 10,000 gallons, particularly if you are engaged in a larger scale operation. So, number one, the evidence just isn't there to support the 1,320-gallon threshold.

Number two, we had over 30 commodity organizations and agricultural organizations that were in support of the bill. We passed it twice on the floor. The Senate will not move. The EPA continues to move forward, and we continue to be concerned about the EPA's drive to overregulate on-farm fuel storage.

Again, I want to thank the gentlelady for her leadership on this and for bringing this to the attention of the American people, because everything that we have heard tonight and everything that has been talked about has a direct impact on their bottom lines and on the quality of life for their farmers.

I would also like to echo what my colleagues have said. We certainly don't want to see poor air quality or poor water quality. I have kids at home. I love my kids. You love your kids. I know you have small ones at home, too. We are just as committed to

a clean environment as anybody is, but we are also committed to the quality of life, to the costs incurred in that quality of life and to a more responsible approach.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you for your leadership on this. That issue is just so important to farmers all across this country and to rural communities, which could certainly use that \$3.3 billion.

Now I would like to turn to my friend from Oklahoma, MARKWAYNE MULLIN, to share his thoughts on the EPA.

Mr. MULLIN. I would like to thank the gentlelady from Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, this is something that is very near and dear to my heart. The only reason I stand in front of you is that I realized one day that the biggest threat that I had to my family business was the Federal Government from its overregulation. I woke up one day and realized that I was literally spending 40 cents on every dollar that came into our company to simply comply with different mandates and regulations that came down from this area.

I never dreamed I would ever stand up here one day as a Congressman. It was never a thought. I never even owned a suit until after I won the election. My family is strongly rooted in entrepreneurs—from farming to plumbing, all the way to banking—and we understand regulation well, but the biggest threat we have to this economy is overreaching regulation.

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Let me share just a real quick story. My uncle, Darryle Mullin, is from Clearfork, Oklahoma, a big metropolitan area I am sure everybody around here has heard of. It is the same place he was born and raised, the same place my dad and his brothers and sisters were born and raised. He has been raising chickens there since 1971. For 42 years, he has raised chickens. He raised a family by raising chickens and farming.

The EPA came in and started fining people on little, silly stuff, including feathers. Fining poultry growers, chicken farmers, on feathers.

Now you are going to tell me that in a place where my Uncle Darryle grew up his entire life, he doesn't have pride on the land that he lives on? You are telling me people that never stepped foot in Oklahoma, and probably never on a farm, but they are up here in D.C., know how to manage our land better than we know how to manage our land?

I find it a joke. It is embarrassing, and they should be embarrassed. Because they are going to kill the entrepreneur spirit. They are going to run small farmers out of business.

2013 was the last batch of chickens my Uncle Darryle got. It wasn't because of his health. It wasn't because he didn't want to still manage it. He just got to the point where it wasn't

profitable for him to be able to do it anymore. Rather than doing what he loves, he was spending his time trying to comply with mandates that the EPA is putting down on small farmers all over the country.

What we are seeing is these small farmers have raised families, and they were raised on the same farm. Generations of farmers are starting to have to sell out. Large corporations that have more people to balance the pay, to balance the cost around, are having to come in and take the spot of these small farmers that started the same way my uncle did.

Now you tell me, what good are they doing? Are they helping America? No. They are killing the entrepreneur spirit of America. They are costing us jobs. They are taking away our life. They are ruining families.

This country was built on the backs of farmers. The work ethic that we have as Americans came from the farming community. We get up every day, we pull our boots on, we go to work, and we take pride because we accomplish something that no one else can accomplish—and we did it that day.

We overcome challenges every day. More and more challenges we overcome. It is something we take pride in. You can't tell us we can't do a job. We are the only one that can tell us we can't.

But one challenge we haven't been able to get over—and that is right here in Washington, D.C.—is bureaucrats that get up every day and try to tell us how to live our lives. Yet we survived all these years without them.

As I stand in front of the gentlelady from Missouri today, the EPA is the biggest threat we have to this country right now. They are the biggest threat we have to our way of life right now. They are doing nothing but costing us jobs by trying to say they are saving us from ourselves. It is embarrassing, but I am sure glad I am up here standing in front of you today to fight for our way of life.

I would like to thank the gentlelady from Missouri for giving me this time and the opportunity to stand in front of you. Thank you for exposing the EPA for what they are instead of what they hide behind.

Mrs. HARTZLER. I am glad you are here tonight. I am glad you are here representing the common person in this country who is fighting these regulations every day, who has had real-world experience dealing with the EPA, like many of us have.

You are exactly right. It is stifling jobs and hurting people, whether it is the families back in Missouri who are dealing with the big 10-inch snow that we got yesterday, and they are wanting to heat their home with a wood-burning stove or turn up the thermostat and worry about their electricity bills

at the end of the month, or whether it is the farmer out there who is trying to raise chickens and provide poultry and meat for this country, and then they have the government trying to regulate their feathers.

Last year, the EPA tried to regulate farm dust. Now they are trying to expand the definition of navigable waters to regulating farm ponds and ditches and little depressions in the fields, and asking for permission from Americans to be able to farm their land.

There are other regulations we haven't even talked about tonight dealing with permitting and being able to spray crop protection products on their crops. Farmers get this every day. So do manufacturers. So do businesses, and so does anyone who has to pay an electric bill every month, with the President's war on coal.

So that is why here in the House we are standing strong against the EPA. We are exposing what they are doing and how it is hurting Americans and why it is important for the Senate to move on our bills to rein in the EPA, to bring common sense back to Washington, and to return this government of the people, by the people, to start working for the people once again.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for February 3–6 on account of attending to family acute medical care and hospitalization.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 4, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 2860. To amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that the Inspector General of the Office of Personnel Management may use amounts in the revolving fund of the Office to fund audits, investigations, and oversight activities, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2642. To provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 6, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4670. A letter from the Chief, Planning & Regulatory Affairs Office, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Automated Data Processing and Information Retrieval System Requirements: System Testing (RIN: 0584-AD99) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4671. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Proposal Adequacy Checklist Revision (DFARS Case 2013-D033) (RIN: 0750-A115) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4672. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Community Reinvestment Act Regulations (RIN: 3064-AD90) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4673. A letter from the Chief, Planning and Regulatory Affairs Office (PRAO), FNS/USDA, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Certification of Compliance With Meal Requirements for the National School Lunch Program Under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 [FNS-2011-0025] (RIN: 0584-AE15) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4674. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's "Major" final rule — Payment of Premiums; Large-Plan Flat-Rate Premium (RIN: 1212-AB26) received January 17, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4675. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medical Devices; Pediatric Uses of Devices; Requirement for Submission of Information on Pediatric Subpopulations That Suffer From a Disease or Condition That a Device Is Intended to Treat, Diagnose, or Cure [Docket No.: FDA-2009-N-0458] (RIN: 0910-AG29) January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4676. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Ehrenberg, First Mesa, Kachina Village, Munds Park, Wickenburg, and Williams, Arizona); Application of Univision Radio License Corporation KHOV-FM, Wickenburg, Arizona [MD Docket No.: 11-207; RM-11517; RM-11518; RM-11669] (File No.: BPH-20080915AFP; Facility ID No.: 29021) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4677. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Protection System Maintenance Reliability Standard [Docket No.: RM13-7-000; Order No. 793] received January 22, 2014,

pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4678. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Collection by Offset From Indebted Government Employees (RIN: 3206-AM14) received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4679. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program: Election Opportunities for Pathways Participants (RIN: 3206-AM98) received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4680. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program: Election Opportunities for Pathways Participants (RIN: 3206-AM98) received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4681. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Collection by Offset From Indebted Government Employees (RIN: 3206-AM14) received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4682. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program: Eligibility for Pathways Programs Participants (RIN: 3206-AM97) received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4683. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program: Eligibility for Pathways Programs Participants (RIN: 3206-AM97) received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4684. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Species; Designation of Nonessential Experimental Population of Central Valley Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Below Friant Dam in the San Joaquin River, CA [Docket No.: 121210693-3985-01] (RIN: 0648-BC68) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4685. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska: Inseason Adjustment to the 2014 Gulf of Alaska Pollock and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts [Docket No.: 120918468-3111-02] (RIN: 0648-XD058) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4686. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0704; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-074-AD; Amendment 39-17695; AD 2013-24-13] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5

U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4687. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0724; Directorate Identifier 99-CE-013-AD; Amendment 39-17691; AD 99-26-19 R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4688. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Maule Aerospace Technology, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0725; Directorate Identifier 98-CE-01-AD; Amendment 39-17690; AD 98-15-18 R1] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4689. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0879; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-30-AD; Amendment 39-17694; AD 2013-24-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4690. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; EADS CASA (Type Certificate Previously Held By Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0688; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-221-AD; Amendment 39-17683; AD 2013-24-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4691. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Chatom, AL [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1186; Airspace Docket No.: 12-ASO-32] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4692. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Donlin Creek, AK [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0786; Airspace Docket No. 12-AAL-13] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4693. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Loup City, NE [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0607; Airspace Docket No. 13-ACE-13] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4694. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0524; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-084-AD; Amendment 39-17694; AD 2013-24-19] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4695. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, trans-

mitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH Gliders [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0661; Directorate Identifier 2013-CE-009-AD; Amendment 39-17693; AD 2013-24-16] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4696. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Agusta Westland S.p.A. (Type Certificate previously held by Agusta S.p.A) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0604; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-110-AD; Amendment 39-17705; AD 2013-25-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4697. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0416; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-144-AD; Amendment 39-17707; AD 2013-25-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4698. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30932; Amdt. No. 3567] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3683. A bill to amend the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 to improve United States-Israel energy cooperation, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-341, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3448. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks; with an amendment (Rept. 113-342). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. BARBER, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BERA of California, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. CARNNEY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLAYE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. DAVIS

of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. HOYER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JONES, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KIND, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MENG, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 20. A bill to reform the financing of Congressional elections by broadening participation by small dollar donors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SIMPSON (for himself and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 3992. A bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BENTIVOLIO (for himself and Mr. BENISHEK):

H.R. 3993. A bill to provide for a 15 percent reduction in the rates of pay of Members of Congress for pay periods occurring during a year if a Federal budget deficit existed during the most recent fiscal year; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be sub-

sequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mr. HORSFORD):

H.R. 3994. A bill to improve the control and management of invasive species that threaten and harm Federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 3995. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the deduction for mortgage insurance premiums; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas (for himself, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LONG, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. YODER, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. YOHO):

H.R. 3996. A bill to prohibit the closure or reduced operation of military commissary stores and exchange stores before January 1, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. HIGGINS (for himself, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee):

H.R. 3997. A bill to amend title VII of the Social Security Act to require the President to transmit the annual budget of the Social Security Administration without revisions to Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3998. A bill to authorize the Administrator of General Services to convey a parcel of real property in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Amy Biehl High School Foundation; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3999. A bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and title 5, United States Code, to allow employees to take, as additional leave, parental involvement leave to participate in or attend their children's and grandchildren's educational and extracurricular activities, and to clarify that leave may be taken for routine family medical needs and to assist elderly relatives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 4000. A bill to allow States to let Federal funds for the education of disadvantaged children follow low-income children to the accredited or otherwise State-approved public school, private school, or supplemental educational services program they attend; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Agriculture, Energy and Commerce, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:

H.R. 4001. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Army to carry out certain activities to prevent the interbasin transfer of aquatic invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MULLIN (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4002. A bill to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. EDWARDS):

H.R. 4003. A bill to designate the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park comprised of certain National Park System lands, and by affiliation and cooperative agreements other historically significant resources, located in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland, that were part of the Civil War defenses of Washington and related to the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, to study ways in which the Civil War history of both the North and South can be assembled, arrayed, and conveyed for the benefit of the public, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. WAXMAN (for himself, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. SCHIFF):

H.R. 4004. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. BASS, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. RANGEL):

H. Res. 474. A resolution honoring the 210th anniversary of Haiti's independence; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

172. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 18-04 requesting that all Americans be given the same consideration when it comes to compensation for exposure to radiation from U.S. nuclear testing; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. SARBANES:

H.R. 20.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution under the General Welfare Clause.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 3992.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

“The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).”

By Mr. BENTIVOLIO:

H.R. 3993.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section. 6.

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

27th Amendment

No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 3994.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 3995.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas:

H.R. 3996.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress “to provide for the common Defence”, “to raise and support Armies”, “to provide and maintain a Navy” and “to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces” as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HIGGINS:

H.R. 3997.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 3998.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3999.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. MESSER:

H.R. 4000.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, which states in part that “Congress shall have power to provide for the . . . general welfare of the United States” and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which empowers Congress “To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.”

By Mrs. MILLER of Michigan:

H.R. 4001.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution, specifically Clause 1 and Clause 3.

By Mr. MULLIN:

H.R. 4002.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4003.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. WAXMAN:

H.R. 4004.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The power granted to Congress under the Commerce Clause of Article I of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 139: Mr. FATTAH and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 147: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 184: Ms. CHU and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 207: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 233: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 426: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 447: Mrs. LUMMIS.

H.R. 455: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 494: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 508: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 522: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 523: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 562: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 637: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. POSEY, Mr. BARTON, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 647: Mr. POMPEO and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 721: Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 897: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1010: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1020: Mr. COLLINS of New York and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 1024: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1070: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 1091: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1094: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1154: Mr. MAFFEI.

H.R. 1249: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 1250: Mrs. LUMMIS.

H.R. 1321: Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 1343: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 1386: Mr. STEWART, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 1461: Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 1518: Mr. WILLIAMS and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1551: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. HALL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1652: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1755: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1767: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1814: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 1852: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 1907: Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 1918: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, and Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 2134: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 2203: Mr. HOLDING, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. GOHMETT, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. HUDSON, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. WELCH, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. UPTON, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 2283: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. PITTINGER, Mr. HARPER, and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 2413: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MAFFEI, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2468: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 2575: Mr. BRIDENSTINE and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 2591: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. GARCIA, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 2607: Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 2692: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 2807: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 2878: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 2928: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 2959: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MICA, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 2998: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 3022: Mrs. BUSTOS and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 3074: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 3116: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.

H.R. 3118: Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 3154: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 3179: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 3303: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 3322: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 3335: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 3361: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3370: Mr. FARR, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BARBER, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. MEHAN.

H.R. 3372: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3426: Ms. SCHWARTZ.

H.R. 3461: Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. FUDGE, and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 3465: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 3481: Mr. POSEY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. PITTINGER.

- H.R. 3505: Mr. WITTMAN.
- H.R. 3530: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. PITTINGER, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. POSEY, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. FLORES, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. SALMON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. HULTGREN.
- H.R. 3541: Mr. BUCSHON.
- H.R. 3571: Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. MARINO, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.R. 3616: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. COOK.
- H.R. 3634: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
- H.R. 3635: Mr. ROSS, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
- H.R. 3654: Mr. LANGEVIN.
- H.R. 3663: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
- H.R. 3673: Mrs. BLACKBURN.
- H.R. 3698: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. TIERNEY, and Mr. PETERSON.
- H.R. 3708: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. WILLIAMS.
- H.R. 3717: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
- H.R. 3725: Mr. YODER, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. FLEMING.
- H.R. 3728: Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. FINCHER, and Mr. TERRY.
- H.R. 3771: Mr. ROYCE, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Ms. MENG, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. CALVERT.
- H.R. 3776: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. POMPEO.
- H.R. 3824: Mr. GALLEGO.
- H.R. 3857: Mr. ROONEY.
- H.R. 3860: Mr. OWENS.
- H.R. 3865: Mr. CULBERSON, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
- H.R. 3867: Mr. ENGEL, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. HIMES, Mr. COLE, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
- H.R. 3921: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
- H.R. 3930: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. GERLACH, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.
- H.R. 3933: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. LANCE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
- H.R. 3973: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
- H.R. 3979: Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. DAINES, Mr. HURT, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MCCAUL, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. HARPER, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Ms. ESTY, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. KILMER, Mr. YODER, and Mr. GIBSON.
- H.R. 3982: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
- H.R. 3989: Mr. ROONEY, Mr. COLE, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mr. MCINTYRE.
- H.R. 3991: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
- H.J. Res. 20: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.J. Res. 21: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. TAKANO.
- H. Res. 112: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona and Mr. DOGGETT.
- H. Res. 227: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H. Res. 326: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
- H. Res. 359: Mr. RIBBLE.
- H. Res. 365: Mr. RAHALL and Mr. GALLEGO.
- H. Res. 428: Mr. STOCKMAN.
- H. Res. 431: Mrs. WAGNER.
- H. Res. 456: Mr. KING of New York.
- H. Res. 463: Mr. VEASEY.
- H. Res. 467: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SSGT. SKY MOTE

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 05, 2014

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Marine Staff Sergeant Sky Mote, a man who faithfully served and then made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. He was recently awarded the Navy's second highest commendation for valor, the Navy Cross.

Growing up in El Dorado, California, Sky enjoyed 4-H, Civil Air Patrol, and loved camping with his family. At Union Mine High School, he lettered in track and cross country. From an early age, Sky was motivated to join the military by a deep desire serve his country. Upon graduation, he promptly enlisted in the Marine Corps.

Sky spent nine years serving his country in the United States Marine Corps, including a deployment to Iraq and two deployments to Afghanistan. To those who knew him, it is no surprise that Sky not only served, but served with gallantry and meritorious distinction. Sky was awarded the Navy Cross, a Purple Heart, the Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal, a Navy-Marine Corps Achievement Medal, two Combat Action Ribbons and three Good Conduct Medals.

On August 10, 2012, Sky was serving with the prestigious 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion as an Explosive Ordnance expert in Helmand Province of Afghanistan. During an attack inside the base perimeter by a rogue Afghan policeman, SSgt. Mote rushed into action rather than escaping to safety. Sky's courage and initiative in engaging the gunman, while exposing himself to mortal gunfire, halted the enemy assault and undoubtedly saved lives that day.

Sky Mote will be deeply and sorely missed. He leaves behind his mother and father, as well as four brothers. The United States is blessed to have young men of character and heroism to defend our freedoms.

Mr. Speaker, SSgt. Sky Mote lived and died as an embodiment of the virtues that built and continue to preserve our country and it is my privilege to rise to honor his memory today.

HONORING ALEXANDER MILES BURNS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alexander Miles Burns. Alexander is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active

part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alexander has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alexander has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alexander has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alexander Miles Burns for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN NOAA AND THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SHARK CONSERVATION ACT OF 2010

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that NOAA has decided not to interfere with the progress California and other states have made in ending the cruel practice of shark finning. Federal preemption of state law should be extremely rare—the federal government should not stop states from raising the bar on environmental protection, and I'm glad NOAA has agreed to revise its position on our state's landmark shark fin law.

I submit an exchange of letters between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION, NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE,

Silver Spring, MD, February 3, 2014.

Mr. CHARLTON BONHAM,
Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Sacramento, CA.

DEAR MR. BONHAM: Thank you for your February 3, 2014, letter regarding your assessment of the relationship between the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Shark Finning Prohibition Act of 2000 and the Shark Conservation Act of 2010, and the California Shark Fin Prohibition and the impact of California's law on federal shark harvesters.

NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region confirms that revenue from the sale of sharks harvested in federal waters off California derives mostly from the sale of the meat of the shark, not from the sale of fins sold after the shark is legally harvested and landed with fins naturally attached. Further, you confirm that all federal fishers who land sharks

in California, including those who operate in federal waters pursuant to a federal license, are also required to hold state licenses and are therefore exempt from the ban on possession of shark fins. Based on the full information about the California law set forth in your letter, and the current facts specified there regarding the scale and nature of the federal shark fishery in California, we agree with your conclusion that California's Shark Fin Prohibition law will have minimal impact on federally licensed and permitted shark harvesters in California, and does not unlawfully burden their ability to achieve the benefits from federal fisheries provided under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended. Accordingly, it is our position, based on the information that you have provided, that California's Shark Fin Prohibition law is not preempted by the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended.

We agree that this has been a very productive process. Our consultations have addressed fully our initial concern, as expressed in the amicus brief of the United States Chinatown Neighborhood Association et al., v. Brown, et al., Ninth Circuit Case No. 13-15188, that California's Shark Fin Prohibition might conflict with or obstruct the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended. In light of our present conclusion that California law does not conflict with or obstruct the purposes, goals, or methods of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, we do not intend to seek authorization from the Department of Justice to further participate in the case of Chinatown Neighborhood Association, et al. v. Brown, et al., No. CV 12 3759 WHO (N.D. Cal.). We request that you contact us if there are significant changes to the facts described in your letter as this could necessitate further consultation.

We appreciate your willingness to work with us on this important matter and we hope this letter addresses your concerns.

Sincerely,

EILEEN SOBECK,
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY, DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE,

Sacramento, CA, February 3, 2014.

EILEEN SOBECK,
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Silver Spring, MD.

DEAR Ms. SOBECK: We write to memorialize a series of conversations between our respective offices and legal counsel beginning on September 6, 2013, regarding the relationship between California's Shark Fin Prohibition, Cal. Fish & Game Code §§2021 & 2021.5, and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. §§1801-1884, as amended by the Shark Finning Prohibition Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-557, 114 Stat. 2772 (2000), and the Shark Conservation Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-348, 124 Stat. 3668 (2010). We appreciate the opportunity to consult with you and believe that this process has been highly productive. This process was initiated after the United States filed an amicus brief in Chinatown Neighborhood Association et al., v. Brown, et al., Ninth Circuit

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Case No. 13-15188, and in that filing the United States observed that California's Shark Fin Prohibition may conflict with or obstruct federal law. However, in light of our discussions and the full information and analysis we have provided regarding the scope and effect of California's law, we now agree that California law and federal law are consistent and that there is no basis for finding California's Shark Fin Prohibition to be preempted by the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act governs the management of federal fisheries, including shark fisheries. As we have discussed, the Shark Fin Prohibition and the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended, share a goal of promoting conservation and ending the practice of shark finning. To this end, the California Shark Fin Prohibition proscribes the possession, sale, trade, and distribution of detached shark fins in California. See Cal. Fish & Game Code §§2021(a)&(b). Of particular significance here, and unlike federal law, the California Shark Fin Prohibition does not regulate the act of finning or the taking and landing of sharks within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Moreover, under California law, a federally-licensed fisher may land a shark in California with the fins attached, as required by the Shark Conservation Act of 2010. See id. §2021(a) (defining "shark fin" as the "raw, dried, or otherwise processed detached fin, or the raw, dried, or otherwise processed detached tail, of an elasmobranch.")

With respect to your concern regarding the ability of fishers to possess fins (from sharks caught in the EEZ), pursuant to California Fish and Game Code sections 2021(d) and 2021.5(a)(1), properly-licensed fishers are exempt from the ban on possession. Because all fishers, including those who operate in federal waters pursuant to a federal license, are required to hold state licenses in order to land sharks in California, see id. §§7850, 7881, this exemption applies equally to federal and state fishers.

Finally, California's Shark Fin Prohibition does not interfere with the management of federal fisheries. As you are aware, and as set forth in our reply to your amicus brief, we reject the notion that simply because a state ban might have an effect on fishing within federal waters and consequently on the attainment of "optimum yield," that it conflicts with and/or is preempted by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. While we may continue to disagree on this point, as a practical matter, the California Shark Fin Prohibition has no meaningful effect on fishing behavior or "optimum yield." Relatively few sharks are landed in California. The California-based drift gillnet fleet and the Hawaii-based pelagic longline fleet account for the majority of shark landings in California from federally-managed fisheries. Both of these fleets target swordfish and thus fishing behavior in these fleets is driven primarily by swordfish, and not by sharks. The relative importance of swordfish and sharks is apparent in both landings and revenue. For example, in 2012, according to PacFIN data, shark landings in California (from both federal and state waters) totaled 107.5 metric tons, and represented \$189,910 in revenue. By comparison, 402.5 metric tons of swordfish were landed in California in 2012, with an ex-vessel value of \$2,092,050. With respect to the relatively small number of sharks that are landed in California, state law permits the sale of all of the parts of a shark caught in federal waters and landed in California, excluding its detached fin and tail. Accordingly, we do

not expect an appreciable impact on income to federally-licensed shark harvesters in California as a result of California's law.

For these reasons, we believe that California's Shark Fin Prohibition is consistent with and does not conflict with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended by the Shark Finning Prohibition Act of 2000, and the Shark Conservation Act of 2010.

Please feel free to contact Thomas Gibson, General Counsel, if you have further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

CHARLTON H. BONHAM,
Director.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, January 27, 2014, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: "yes" on rollcall vote No. 24 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2166, as amended), and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 25 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3008, as amended).

RECOGNIZING KATIE PORTA

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Katie Porta. Katie has devoted her life to serving the Central Florida community. She is an amazing woman and a source of inspiration to us all.

Katie was born in Indiana as Mary Katherine Hartman. She spent much of her childhood shadowing her mom, a nurse who conducted in-home hearing tests for people with disabilities. The experience of visiting rural homes and serving her community remained with Katie into adulthood and drove her apply to Purdue University, where she eventually earned a degree in speech and hearing. Following graduation, Katie became a speech and hearing therapist initially serving the public school system, and later working with military families stationed in Japan through the Department of Defense. Katie's service was rewarded with a new position in Germany, where she supervised an initiative that assisted servicemen as they transitioned from the military back into society.

After her time in Germany, Katie accepted a job working with mentally disabled children at the Sunland Center in Tallahassee. She was shocked by the hospital conditions and immediately resolved herself to becoming a powerful advocate for the disabled. One of Katie's first opportunities to serve as that advocate came in form of legislation: a bill of rights for the developmentally disabled. Katie fought to secure these rights—rights that are now enshrined in Florida law. As Katie says, the developmentally disabled "have the same needs

you and I have . . . People don't want to be treated down; they want to be treated up."

Katie later took over Life Concepts, Inc. a non-profit organization that operated group homes, sheltered apartments and vocational training for adults with developmental disabilities (who had previously lived in large state institutions). She spent time visiting state institutions to personally meet the individuals who would be discharged into their assigned community homes. Katie said she wanted to make sure that the settings Life Concepts provided would meet their individual needs. The non-profit had few resources, so Katie worked hard to develop relationships with Florida legislators and stakeholders to ensure that her clients could count on quality care. Her quick wit, persistence, and passion for her clients earned her a reputation for getting things done.

Katie also served her community as Chairwoman of the Orlando Utilities Commission and in her capacity on other community boards, such as the City of Orlando's Nominating Board, the Orange County Membership Advisory Board, and the Heart of Florida United Way. Katie's love for her community is reflected in her two children, Michael and Stephanie. Stephanie is a community organizer in Central Florida and demonstrates the same commitment to equality and justice that her mother has shown.

Katie's work has earned her recognition in Central Florida. In 1996, she was presented with the Distinguished Leadership Award by the National Association of Community Leadership. In 2000 she was recognized as one of the "Top 10 Central Florida Women Who Mean Business." In 2003, our local public radio station, WMFE, called her the "Can-Do Woman of the Year." Last month, our local newspaper named Katie the "Central Floridian of the Year" for her lifetime commitment to serving our community.

I want to recognize Katie for creating a legacy of care and compassion for the voiceless—and as an inspiration to those of us who dream of serving our community.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I enter these remarks into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of history for my friend, and Central Florida's hero, Katie Porta.

HONORING KIDS ALIVE

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kids Alive, an organization that is working around the world to improve the lives of children.

America is the most generous nation in human history. When tragedy strikes and innocent people are suffering, Americans respond. Kids Alive is an organization that exemplifies that great American tradition by supporting girls and boys who are orphaned or struggling just to survive extreme poverty. For nearly 100 years, Kids Alive has helped thousands of children with their housing and medical needs, along with providing food, clothing and education assistance. Children from all over the

world have seen their lives improve thanks to this faith-based organization.

I am proud that this organization, based in Indiana, has received so much support from the 6th Congressional District. Churches and individuals from across the district have stepped up to help children in the most desperate situations. By donating their time and resources, these Hoosiers have helped give countless kids a better future.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional district to join me in recognizing the important work of Kids Alive and all those who contributed to their success.

HONORING ZACHARIAH
FRANKLYNN PIXLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachariah Franklynn Pixler. Zachariah is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachariah has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Zachariah has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zachariah has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zachariah Franklynn Pixler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING AMBASSADOR VICTOR
ASHE

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Ambassador Victor Ashe retired in 2009 as the longest-serving U.S. Ambassador to Poland.

Prior to his distinguished service abroad, Ambassador Ashe served 16 years as Knoxville's longest-serving Mayor.

Ambassador Ashe has held many other positions in service to Tennessee and our Nation, and he has had one of the most distinguished careers of anyone from my State.

Even following his retirement, Ambassador Ashe is being cited for his expertise and continued devotion to our Nation. I call the following article from the website BBG Watch, in which Ambassador Ashe is quoted many times and is reprinted in part below, to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD. I am glad to see my good friend is still working to protect the taxpayers of our Nation:

BBG Watch has learned that officials of the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) at a federal agency, Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), are alleged to have violated IRS tax rules by employing thousands of private contractors as full-time, long-term employees but failing to withhold taxes from their salaries as they were required to do, according to IRS and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). . . .

BBG Watch has also learned of allegations that some IBB officials suspected of these irregularities may be trying to cover up their alleged violations by refusing or delaying release of information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests from private individuals, including news reporters and NGO representatives. . . .

Allegations have been made that some of IBB officials responsible for employing thousands of poorly-paid full-time contractors who have been denied by these officials basic employment protections and benefits, such as vacations and health insurance, may have also been involved in an attempt to silence and remove from the BBG board a former member, Victor Ashe, and to undermine reputation of some of the still serving BBG members who have questioned their management practices.

Alleged retaliation against Ashe is strongly suspected because he was most active among BBG members in trying to expose and prevent waste of taxpayers' money at the agency, but at least two other BBG members who are still serving may have also been a target of a smear campaign. BBG Watch has learned that FOIA requests for documents that may show alleged efforts by IBB officials to silence BBG members and to undermine their reputation are the ones which are not being answered by IBB officials who have not yet produced any documents several months after these FOIA requests were submitted. BBG Watch also learned that there is still a pending FOIA request for additional information about an incident in which a senior Voice of America executive allegedly tried to get officials at the United Nations to revoke a press accreditation of an independent American journalist. BBG's mission is to support media freedom. Some of these officials are still employed by BBG.

One of BBG Watch volunteer-reporters contacted Victor Ashe by phone at his home at Knoxville, TN to get his perspective on the developing scandal over violations of IRS tax rules by agency officials where he was a board member until late last year. Ashe is a former U.S. Ambassador to Poland and former popular long-term mayor of Knoxville. He had served many U.S. administrations of both parties in various federal positions. This is how BBG Watch reporter summarized for BBG Watch the phone conversation with Ashe:

"After years of neglect from prior management, Broadcasting Board of Governors is now moving to remedy the mistreatment from a pay standpoint for 35% of BBG's employees who are on contract as opposed to being fulltime federal employees," former BBG member Victor Ashe said.

"Of course this is due to the heavy pressure from the Internal Revenue Service and the Office of Inspector General," Ashe added.

"One reason BBG has ranked so poorly in Office of Personnel Management (OPM) morale surveys is the way contract employees are treated, as well as the fallout from the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB) Radio and TV Marti lawsuit from former Cuban American employees in Miami who were illegally dismissed, according to findings by an im-

partial Federal Arbitrator and legal panels. This lawsuit, which management has lost at every step along the way, continues with costs exceeding \$3.5 million. While it may last two more years, cost may exceed \$5.3 million by the time it is over. No one seems bothered by this use of tax dollars," Ashe added.

"Morale at the three entities, which are Radio Free Asia (RFA), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and Middle East Broadcasting Networks (MBN), remains much higher," he added.

"International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) has a terrible history of mistreating contract employees," Ashe said.

"Congress needs to act swiftly to correct these problems and monitor carefully how BBG is handling the IRS audit and OIG findings. BBG owes the public an explanation on why this has occurred and how they plan on finding \$12 to \$18 million," he added.

"This is all about righting a wrong. IBB past management thought they could get away with this violation of federal practices and law. Now this seems to be at an end."

"Now the BBG board should review the Radio and TV Marti lawsuit by Cuban Americans laid off wrongly over 4 years ago and attempt to settle it. Otherwise, BBG may face \$5 million in legal expenses," Ashe added.

"I commend Jeff Shell, the new chair, for his efforts to correct the problems he inherited," Victor Ashe stated.

Jeff Shell and the renewed BBG board have already announced several key personnel and management changes at the IBB and further management reforms are expected. Former IBB director retired at the end of November 2013. But some remaining IBB officials are alleged to be engaged in an attempt to cover up their previous mistakes by unnecessarily prolonging the FOIA process, sources told BBG Watch.

Ashe and some of his colleagues on the BBG board have been vindicated in a number of cases where their initial concerns were first strongly resisted by agency officials and later turned out to be correct and their proposed solutions embraced by other BBG members.

Among three BBG members who seem to have most annoyed IBB senior staff with demands for accountability, Ashe is credited along with Susan McCue and Michael Meehan with saving Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) from a major management and journalistic crisis last year. Ashe received the Glasnost Award for these efforts from a Russian human rights organization. He is also believed to have helped new RFE/RL CEO Kevin Kloze rehire Radio Liberty journalists who had been fired by the previous management—an incident which produced a major public relations and public diplomacy crisis for the United States in Russia.

In a phone conversation about his previous difficult dealings with IBB officials, Ashe recalled discovering that flu shots were being denied to contract employees at the agency because of their status. IBB officials declined to correct the problem until he went public with the issue and shamed them into recognizing it was a health risk for the entire workforce, since contract employees and federal employees work daily side by side. "Today I am glad to say all can receive flu shots," Ashe was quoted as saying.

Alleged attempts to silence inconvenient BBG members and alleged attempts by IBB senior executives to remove Ashe from the BBG board with unfounded accusations to

the OIG were described in recent editorials published by the American Federation of Government Employees, AFGE Local 1812, a union representing BBG's federal workforce. One OIG team sided with IBB officials against Ashe and incredibly accused him of being too aggressive in pursuing his oversight responsibilities, although it did not mention him by name. That particular OIG team repeated assurances received from IBB executives and, also incredibly, did not discover any substantial waste or irregularities in the agency, which has a budget of over \$700 million. It took another, different OIG team to find widespread irregularities in the work of IBB officials, including nonpayment of IRS required taxes.

Ashe is widely admired by rank and file agency employees and contractors, as are Governors McCue and Meehan. Chairman Shell has also developed a good reputation among BBG employees for his energy, willingness to listen to critics and some of the initial reforms he has proposed.

Ashe's departure from the board was particularly mourned by BBG employees. Their union has arranged with the Knoxville, TN city administration to have a tree planted in one of its parks in honor of former BBG Governor and former U.S. Ambassador.

In a recent article in *Ambassador Perspectives*, a forum of commentary on current world issues by non-career U.S. Ambassadors who have served presidents of both parties, Ashe has proposed several solutions to management problems at the BBG, including appointing a single agency head, confirmable by the Senate, dissolving the current part-time nine-member board, or making it much smaller. The CEO proposal, but without Senate confirmation, is also being pursued by Chairman Shell and the current BBG board.

Ashe has also called for bringing Congress more closely into the process of reforming U.S. international media outreach to those countries where independent press is either severely restricted or completely repressed. Ashe told a reporter that "hopefully, Congress will start holding annual oversight hearings on U.S. international media outreach, which have not been held for six years."

The key questions, however, are whether anyone among IBB's current government executives who are still in their positions will answer for alleged violations of tax and other federal rules? Who will pay millions of dollars, which have not been appropriated by Congress, to correct alleged mistakes? Can IBB officials get away with not releasing FOIA documents that may expose their alleged attempts to cover up corruption and abuse of power?

BBG Watch has learned that at the urging of a least one NGO, a member of Congress known for his support of U.S. international broadcasting mission abroad plans to make inquiries to the BBG to find out why IBB officials are dragging their feet on answering FOIA requests for information that may expose their alleged misdeeds.

It's not the first time, and not the last, that we ask: who's in charge of this Agency?

As the new Broadcasting Board of Governors members get down to business, we recognize their role of being in charge of ensuring that the broadcasting arm of the United States government carries out its mission for the 21st century. However, we get the feeling that some in top and mid-level management take the position that the bureaucracy is still in charge, will remain in charge, and will make sure the BBG understands who is really in charge.

Why should there be any concern? Flash back to the arrival at the Agency several years ago of a former BBG Governor, the Honorable U.S. Ambassador Victor Ashe. A politician, in addition to a diplomat, with extensive managerial experience, he engaged in behavior any official on the BBG should feel comfortable engaging in: he met with the staff, listened to their concerns, opened a communication channel by providing his personal e-mail and started asking questions of management.

The backlash was swift and fierce. Ambassador Ashe was warned in private, then warned again more forcefully in public, against assuming his full role as Governor. Apparently he did not get the message. The General Counsel's office—whose main purpose sometimes seems to be not to assist management in respecting the law, but rather in how to circumvent it—drafted new rules that essentially tried to muzzle BBG members, trying to prevent them from freely discussing Agency business.

But that did not silence Ambassador Ashe. He had the courage to publicly deplore the diplomatic mess created by the firing of most of the staff at the Russian Service of Radio Liberty. Payback time came in many forms including a rather silly and spiteful incident, when Governor Ashe was refused entry to an event to which he was invited. Other blockades were erected by the resident bureaucracy to thwart any attempts by Governor Ashe to find out what was going on in the Agency including a scandalous contracting-out process. Even the OIG, in its January 2013 report, characterized Governor Ashe's actions as somewhat of a transgression when it wrote: "He visits widely throughout the agency, offering to bypass IBB management to assure Board attention to employee concerns."

And yet, Ambassador Ashe did not budge. He continued his fight. So, he was disposed of thanks to a blistering and factually-challenged OIG report that the Union described, and still does, as a 'hatchet job'. He could have stayed in his position as a Republican Governor on the BBG. There was no need to push out the only BBG member who had a perfect attendance record at all meetings and seemed to genuinely care, and was competent as well. The Agency would not stand for that and the White House somehow found time to name someone to replace him.

AFGE Local 1812 will always be grateful to former Governor Ashe for his intrepid efforts to try to find out what was wrong in the Agency and to fix it. We are also grateful that he did not look at the Union as a pariah. For its part, the Union has arranged with the Knoxville, TN, city administration to have a tree planted in one of its parks in honor of Governor Ashe where he served five terms as mayor. We are considering another project in his honor as well.

REMEMBERING GENERAL BLAZ

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember former U.S. Representative and Brigadier General Vicente T. "Ben" Blaz, who passed away on January 8, 2014 in Fairfax, Virginia at the age of 85.

Gen. Blaz was born on February 14, 1928, in Hagatna, the capital of Guam. At 13, he

was forced into a Japanese detention camp following the Japanese seizure of the island immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. While a detainee, Gen. Blaz witnessed the torture and murder of his fellow Chamorros—natives of Guam—until American Marines liberated the island in 1944.

Following the war, Blaz learned English and received a scholarship to study at the University of Notre Dame. Soon after graduation, he joined the Marine Corps, where he served in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, earning the Bronze Star. He then served in the Joint Staff for a number of years, including under General Lemeul Shephard, who liberated his home from the Japanese many years earlier.

Blaz was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in 1977. He was the first non-white soldier to attain this rank within the Marine Corps.

Gen. Blaz served three more years before retiring from the military and returning home to Guam. There he worked as a teacher and farmer until his election to the U.S. Congress in 1982. For eight years, he served as Guam's non-voting representative in the House, and held committee assignments on the Foreign Affairs Committee and Armed Forces Committee. During his time in Congress, he focused on veterans' education issues, as well as the reorganization of Guam's judicial system.

Following his retirement in 1992, Gen. Blaz published a memoir, as well as books and television documentaries about Guam's history and culture. He also spent time in Virginia's 10th District in Fairfax County, where he passed away last month. He is survived by his two sons, Tom and Mike Blaz, as well as two brothers, one sister and five grandchildren.

I submit the following obituary from the Washington Post on Gen. Blaz's amazing story.

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 27, 2014]

VICENTE T. 'BEN' BLAZ, MARINE GENERAL AND GUAM DELEGATE, DIES AT 85

(By Matt Schudel)

Vicente T. "Ben" Blaz, who survived a Japanese prison camp during World War II and later became a Marine Corps brigadier general and Guam's representative in Congress, died Jan. 8 at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital in Fairfax County. He was 85.

The cause was acute respiratory failure, his son Tom Blaz said.

Gen. Blaz was 13 when he was captured by Japanese forces who overran the U.S. territory of Guam on Dec. 8, 1941, one day after the Japanese attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He was one of many native Chamorros, as natives of Guam are often called, held in a detention camp and pressed into forced labor, building airfields for the Japanese.

He was later held in a Japanese prison camp, where he saw fellow inmates beheaded. "As a boy, I stood behind barbed wire," he told The Washington Post in 1977. "There was a pervasive sense of personal insecurity. That probably is more damaging to your feeling of wellbeing than hunger."

In 1944, he was freed when U.S. Marines reclaimed Guam from the Japanese. He asked a young Marine how he could go to the United States.

"The first thing you have to do is learn to speak English," he recalled the Marine saying. Gen. Blaz spoke primarily the local

Chamorro language at the time. "He taught me a few words and told me, of all things, to listen to the radio, and talk as they do."

After graduating in 1951 from the University of Notre Dame, in Indiana, Gen. Blaz joined the Marine Corps. He served during the Korean War and was an artillery officer in the Vietnam War, where he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

He held several jobs with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and once served under Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr., a Marine general who led the U.S. forces that recaptured Guam in 1944.

When he was promoted to brigadier general in 1977, Gen. Blaz became the first person from Guam and the first non-white Marine to reach the rank of general. At the time, he was director of information for the Marine Corps, in charge of rebuilding the image of the Marines after the Vietnam War.

After retiring from the military in 1980, Gen. Blaz returned to Guam to farm and to teach. He made an unsuccessful bid as a Republican for Guam's non-voting congressional seat in 1982.

Two years later he won a closely contested election, defeating Antonio B. Won Pat, who had served as Guam's delegate since 1973, when the territory first received representation in Congress.

Gen. Blaz, who was a member of the Armed Forces and Foreign Affairs committees, was the only retired general serving in Congress at the time. He had few legislative victories in his limited role in Congress, but he was instrumental in reorganizing the judicial system on Guam and was a strong advocate for improved educational benefits for veterans.

Gen. Blaz served four terms before losing a reelection bid in 1992 to Robert A. Underwood.

Vicente Tornas Blaz Garrido was born Feb. 14, 1928, in what is now Hagatna, the capital of Guam, and grew up in a farming community. Guam, which is about 30 miles long, has a population of about 140,000 and is the southernmost island in the Marianas chain. It became a U.S. territory after the Spanish-American War in 1898.

In 1947, Gen. Blaz received a scholarship to attend Notre Dame. After a 22-day boat trip, he arrived in San Francisco and told a cabdriver to take him to Notre Dame. He was dropped off at a Catholic girls' school with a similar name, where he presented his papers to the nuns. They put him on a train to Indiana.

While serving in the Marine Corps, he received a master's degree in public administration from George Washington University in 1963. He had a home in Fairfax County since 1969 and was a member of St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church in Fairfax.

His wife of 58 years, Ann Evers Blaz, died in May 2013. Survivors include two sons, Tom Blaz of Fairfax and Mike Blaz of Fairfax Station; two brothers; a sister; and five grandchildren.

After Congress, Gen. Blaz wrote a memoir and books about Guam and also made a series of historical and cultural television documentaries about his native island.

In Congress and later in life, Gen. Blaz became known for a rueful description of the people of Guam, U.S. citizens who serve in disproportionate numbers in the military but do not have full representation in Congress: "Equal in war, unequal in peace."

IN HONOR OF MILLIE MARSHALL
ON HER RECEIPT OF THE MANU-
FACTURING INSTITUTE'S WOMEN
IN MANUFACTURING STEP
AWARD

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Millie Marshall of Hurricane, West Virginia on the occasion of her selection to receive a STEP Award from The Manufacturing Institute. As an inspiration to young women interested in technical careers, I am pleased to recognize her contributions to Toyota, the automotive industry, the state of West Virginia, her community, and our country.

Manufacturing is revitalizing our economy and making America strong. Investments in manufacturing, particularly in automotive manufacturing, multiply across the economy, creating jobs and growth in other sectors. Manufacturing is the backbone of our nation's middle class. Today's manufacturers offer competitive wages in high-tech fields while working hard to encourage women into the field.

STEP Award Honorees, such as Ms. Marshall, help to attract more women to manufacturing careers by educating young workers that this is not your grandfather's manufacturing industry. By telling the real stories of these women, we can inspire the next generation to pursue careers in the industry and encourage women currently working for the manufacturing industry.

Ms. Marshall's 20-year career progression, beginning as a specialist all the way to her current position as president of Toyota's West Virginia engine plant, is a direct result of her technical knowledge and ability, her drive and determination, and her passionate commitment to her fellow team members and Toyota's customers. Her accomplishment of becoming the first female president in Toyota's history is tied to her many successes.

Ms. Marshall is a lifelong learner. She has always seen her career as a journey. Her desire to learn and try new things led to many different positions, functions, and locations. In every experience at Toyota so far, she has left her positive mark. She has always been a strong advocate for self-development, team development, and for the growth of Toyota as a whole.

Ms. Marshall is a role model and mentor for other women in business. She shares her talents with women internally and is also actively involved in SOAR, a program that assists in the professional development and career advancement of women in business. With the support of her family, she has learned balance, patience and the ability to see the big picture with a variety of perspectives.

We are thankful for the years of dedication and hard work by Millie Marshall. We congratulate her for setting an example of professional excellence and advocacy of women in manufacturing, as well as her commitment to the greater community.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND WAYNE
BRIDEGROOM

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Reverend Wayne Bridegroom for receiving the Martin Luther King Legacy Award. After 40 years of being a pastor, this is a well-deserved recognition.

In 1973, Rev. Bridegroom started at Central Baptist Church in West Modesto, where he still lives today. In 1981, he became the pastor and opened his doors to many ethnic groups. He began by ministering to Southeast Asian and Latino immigrants, but soon Central Baptist become home to the Laotian, Hmong, Cambodian and Hispanic populations as well. In 1980, he brought many of the Anglo churches from across town to form Modesto Outreach Ministry, which later became the Christian Challenge Ministries.

Pastor Bridegroom has a unique ability to develop networks and put his talent to work, becoming the co-founder of Harvest of Hope. Harvest of Hope is a collaboration of church, neighborhood and county government which focuses on providing goods for needy families. In 1989, he spearheaded a group called Love Inc., which paired people in need with agencies and volunteers in churches. He also helped in the founding of Weed and Seed, which led to First Tee, a golf mentoring program on the city's municipal course, and started Boy and Girl Scouting programs on the west side.

In the last 20 years, Rev. Bridegroom has worked with the West Modesto King Kennedy neighborhood collaborative and helped improve relationships between police and the community. In 2000, Pastor Bridegroom helped form Congregations Building Communities, the PICO affiliate in Modesto. In addition, he assisted in forming a street lighting district to add streetlights to an unincorporated area of Southwest Modesto in 2005.

More recently, he's been involved in calls for immigration reform. His church's congregation has been a mixing pot of Latino, Hmong, Cambodian and Laotian people sharing space and worshipping together. In June, he plans to officially retire as the Senior Pastor of his congregation, but plans to continue as an unpaid volunteer in that role.

Pastor Bridegroom has also served as interviewer for Stanislaus County Sheriff candidates and City of Modesto police captains. He has organized a baseball league in west Modesto and chaired block parties for the National Night Out.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in praising Pastor Wayne Bridegroom, for his significant contributions as a bridge between evangelicals and Catholics, U.S. citizens and immigrants, and his overall effort to provide a thriving foundation for our community.

HONORING JACKSON MOHR

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jackson Mohr. Jackson is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 360, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jackson has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jackson has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jackson has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jackson built a loafing shed to protect the horses at the Northland Therapeutic Riding Center, a local equine center for youth and adults with special needs.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jackson Mohr for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING JEFFREY D. ROUCH

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and accomplishments of Jeffrey D. Rouch, on the occasion of his passing from this life to the next.

Jeff was an avid political and government affairs professional, spending twenty-one years of his career with the Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. Jeff began his professional career in the Pennsylvania Senate in 1982 as the Director of Policy Development and Research, before becoming the Director of Government Affairs for the Insurance Federation of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in 1985. He later became an integral member of the Nationwide team, and he retired as the Senior Vice President of Corporate Relations and Public Affairs. His more than twenty-five years as an advocate for the insurance industry enhanced the industry's ability to see to the needs of countless individuals affected by unforeseen misfortune.

He was instrumental in providing Nationwide Insurance and its members a voice in Washington, DC by establishing an office in the nation's capital in 1997. I and my colleagues are fortunate to work with dedicated private citizens such as Jeff, who advocate for public policies that address the needs of millions of our friends and neighbors.

On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 12th Congressional District, I thank Jeffrey Rouch for his contributions and his unrelenting service to his industry. I offer my deepest sym-

pathies to his family. Their sense of loss at this time is shared by many who knew and loved Jeffrey Rouch, and he will be dearly missed.

CELEBRATING RUDY HANLEY'S
RETIREMENT**HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the retirement of Rudy Hanley. As a former State Senator and Congressman for the last 30 years, I have met many people along the way who are advocates for one cause or another, resources that I come to rely on for advice, supporters, and a few that become friends. But there are really very few, who become all of those things, and who are trusted confidants, respected advisors, and true friends. Rudy Hanley is all of those things to me.

I've known Rudy since my days as a California State Senator. I wasn't the Chair of any committees, I wasn't in leadership, but Rudy came to talk to me about something that he was passionate about—credit unions, and what they could do for their members, who were often low to middle income, and who sometimes needed a little extra help.

One of my favorite Rudy stories is that of his "Turkey Loan." One year, Rudy noticed that some of his members were having a hard time buying the groceries for their Thanksgiving dinner, because they didn't get paid until the following week. So, Rudy offered them a "Turkey Loan," where they could come into the credit union, sign a piece of paper, and walk out with a hundred dollars in cash to purchase their groceries. It wasn't a formal loan, but you know, Rudy told me that they never had anyone who didn't pay the loan back. And I think that was probably due in large part to the fact that they respected Rudy, and appreciated the fact that he respected them, and cared for them.

I also respect Rudy immensely. He is a man of great integrity, who works hard, studies hard, and who has been very successful in life. But despite that success, he has never forgotten who he works for—and that is his members. And he has continued to go above and beyond his job at the credit union, to advocate for them in Sacramento and in Washington, DC. He also has been my "go to guy" when it comes to policy questions that affect credit unions. Not only does he understand the issues better than anyone I know, he is honest and I know that he will always give it to me straight.

And so, I am really going to miss having Rudy at the helm of Schools First, and as an official advocate for credit unions in DC. But I also know that Rudy will always be fighting for credit unions, if even in an unofficial capacity.

And as a friend, I am happy for Rudy and for Catherine, who have earned this retirement. And I hope that it means that Marie and I will get to see more of them in the years to come.

God Bless you Rudy! And Congratulations!

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,263,040,455,036.20. We've added \$6,636,163,406,123.12 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING DAWSON MOHR

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Dawson Mohr. Dawson is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 360, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Dawson has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Dawson has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Dawson has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Dawson erected a playground at the Northland Therapeutic Riding Center, a local equine center for youth and adults with special needs.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Dawson Mohr for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on February 3, 2014, I missed two recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 32 and "yea" on rollcall No. 33.

HONORING THE LIFE OF
KIMBERLY SUZANNE RATHER

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a gifted educator and beloved member of the Rockwall community, Kimberly Suzanne Rather, who passed away on November 29, 2013 at the age of 45. Born and raised in Rockwall, Kimberly graduated from Rockwall High School and earned a scholarship to Tyler Junior College where she was selected to be a member of the renowned Apache Belles dance team. She then continued her education at Stephen F. Austin where she graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor's in education. She began her teaching career in the Hurst Euless Bedford School District and later taught in the Garland School District. She then became an Educational Consultant with the Cheryl Cox Consulting Firm, an organization which provides teachers with educational materials to assist their students with required state testing. In 2000, Kimberly retired to stay home with her three children.

We join Kimberly's family—husband Chris and children CJ, Abby and Jacob, parents Ron and Gale, brother, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins—in remembering her radiant smile and warm heart. Kimberly Rather was a lovely and intelligent young lady and successful at every crossroads she met all of her life. I ask the U.S. House of Representatives to close today's session in honor and remembrance of this talented and loved young lady.

ELEANOR GREMILLION'S 90TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. VANCE M. McALLISTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. McALLISTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pride and pleasure to commemorate Ms. Eleanor Gremillion on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

Eleanor was born and raised in Marksville Louisiana. She graduated from Marksville High School in 1940 and laid the groundwork for her career in the finance business with her first job in the office of an attorney. Ms. Gremillion worked as the manager of Gulfco Finance Company in Marksville for thirty-two years and served the company as vice president, operations manager and was on the board of directors. Until the age limit forced her to step down, she served as a director of the Cottonport Bank for fifteen years. As civil service director for the City of Marksville, Eleanor's focus was to secure the best possible employees for the town of Marksville.

A daughter of a World War I veteran, Eleanor has been a lifelong member of the American Legion Auxiliary and today, she continues to be actively involved with the organization at the state level. She served with great distinc-

tion as state president and subsequently served as a national officer for several years. Eleanor's devotion of time and effort to her community is second to none and since its inception in 1974, she served the Marksville Chamber of Commerce in various capacities and currently serves the Chamber with unwavering dedication as secretary-treasurer.

Eleanor also serves as a board member of the Avoyelles Society for the Developmentally Disabled, secretary of the Hypolite Bordelon Home Society and is on the board of directors of the Avoyelles Commission on Tourism. She served as chairwoman of Marksville's birthday celebrations in the years of 1959, 1969, 1979, 1989 and 1999, Marksville's year of celebration for the bicentennial in 2009 and the Marksville July Fourth parade and activities, which is the longest running event of its kind in the State of Louisiana. She was named Avoyellean of the year in 1969, Citizen of the Year in 1974 and 1989, Woman of Excellence by the Town Talk and the Rapides Foundation in 2005 and received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Louisiana Tourism Promotion Association Summit in 2009.

Ms. Gremillion has earned the respect and admiration of everyone she has met along her journey. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to her years of dedication and achievements.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD BRUNER,
PH.D.

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the career of a distinguished servant of Congress in the field of foreign affairs, defense and trade. Later this month, Edward Bruner, Ph.D., will retire from the Congressional Research Service after 23 years of outstanding service to the legislative branch.

Dr. Bruner joined CRS in 1991 after a 27-year career in the United States Army that was highlighted by service in Vietnam, teaching Geography at the United States Military Academy at West Point, and command of an armor battalion at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. From 1991–94, he was a specialist in national defense at CRS, where he advised on such topics as Army transformation and modernization, peacekeeping operations, and the appropriate size of the U.S. military. In 1994, in recognition of his leadership abilities, he was asked to head the Defense Policy and Arms Control Section of the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, where he supervised the day-to-day research activities of a team of senior CRS analysts and specialists. In 2004, he was asked to assume a greater leadership role and was named Deputy Assistant Director of the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, where he has served for the past ten years.

Dr. Bruner's tenure at CRS has been marked by his unparalleled dedication to the U.S. Congress and the men and women of CRS' Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division. Whether as a national defense specialist, Section Head, or, ultimately, as Deputy Assist-

ant Director, Dr. Bruner's high professional standards ensured that Congress received timely and authoritative policy analysis of the highest order. When he assumed a leadership role at CRS, he focused his efforts on helping to build a world-class team of managers, analysts, and support staff designed to support the rapidly evolving needs of Congress. No matter how demanding his day-to-day schedule, he always found time to be a mentor, counselor and friend to others, whether it was to CRS staff, new congressional staffers, or newly-elected Members of Congress. His ability to frame policy issues and organize research efforts for complex and multi-faceted policy challenges, combined with his deft personal touch, inspired the respect and loyalty of the entire Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division team.

Dr. Edward Bruner leaves behind him not only a distinguished public service career but a legacy of leadership and mentorship that will have a lasting impact on CRS. I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our deepest gratitude and appreciation to him for his 50 years of service to our nation.

IN CELEBRATION OF 20 YEARS OF
TRADE RELATIONS BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES AND VIETNAM

HON. ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, as a Vietnam veteran, I rise today to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Trade Relations between the United States and Vietnam.

On February 3, 1994, President Bill Clinton lifted the U.S. trade embargo against Vietnam and ushered in a new era of U.S.-Vietnam relations, which led to the establishment of full diplomatic relations in 1995. These achievements were made possible by the support of Senator JOHN MCCAIN, then Senator John Kerry, and many other distinguished Americans.

Today, U.S.-Vietnam relations are deeper and more diverse. In November 2000, President Clinton became the first U.S. President to visit Vietnam since President Nixon's 1969 trip to South Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

On July 25, 2013, President Truong Tan Sang's visit to the United States became only the second by a Vietnamese head of state since the "normalization" in 1995. I was honored to host President Sang on July 24, 2013 in Room S-115 of the U.S. Capitol at an event held one day prior to his visit with President Barack Obama at the White House.

U.S. Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID provided the venue for this historic meeting which included a select, bipartisan group of five U.S. Senators and five Members of the U.S. House of Representatives. In an open and frank conversation with President Sang, we discussed trade, security, the East Sea, human rights, religious freedom, Agent Orange, Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations, and many other topics of interest and concern. President Sang and U.S. lawmakers

expressed a deep commitment to strengthening our bilateral relations, and I was personally impressed by President Sang's extraordinary vision and leadership. President Sang serves Vietnam with distinction, and I thank him for all he has done to advance the U.S.-Vietnam relationship, a relationship which is based on mutual trust and understanding.

During my visit to Hanoi in December 2012, I also had the privilege of meeting with Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung and, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of trade relations between the U.S. and Vietnam, I wish to praise him for the remarkable service he renders. His leadership has led to improved relations between our two countries, and I acknowledge his significant contributions.

I also acknowledge the contributions of Madam Tong Thi Phong, Vice-Chair of the National Assembly, who I met again in December 2012 while in Hanoi. Madam Phong is an exceptional leader and one of only two female members of Vietnam's Politburo. I commend Madam Phong for the significant contributions she has made to her country and ours. Her work is of great consequence.

I also recognize Vietnam's Politburo which is comprised of 16 members who are actively engaged in promoting cooperation between the United States and Vietnam. The Politburo's past and present contributions to the bilateral relationship are the reason we are celebrating 20 years of trade relations between our two countries.

Having served in Vietnam during the War and having since visited Vietnam on several occasions in my official capacity both as Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, I have seen Vietnam in many ways. I stand as a witness to the beauty, progress, goodness and strength of the U.S.-Vietnam Comprehensive Partnership.

I have worked side-by-side with many of Vietnam's Ambassadors to the United States and have acknowledged their work accordingly. But, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of trade relations between our two countries, I pay special tribute to His Excellency Ambassador Nguyen Quoc Cuong who I consider to be a colleague, a friend, and a brother.

Ambassador Cuong represents the government and people of Vietnam with full integrity and unwavering commitment. In recognition of his tireless efforts in building a forward-looking relationship between our two countries and, in special consideration of our abiding friendship, I enter his name in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to stand as a testament of our work together.

I am thankful for the twists and turns of life that have led me back and forth to Vietnam. I returned to Vietnam after 40 years and, at a dinner hosted by the National Assembly of Vietnam, I had long discussions with my counterparts who had also served in the Vietnam War. Although we were once enemies, we embraced each other as friends who share the same hopes and dreams for our families, friends and nations. We recognized that the broken times of Friday are behind us. Sunday has come. Peace is here.

And so, I applaud former President Bill Clinton, President George W. Bush, President

Barack Obama, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Senator JOHN McCAIN, former Senator and now U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, members of the House and Senate and, on Vietnam's part, President Sang, Prime Minister Dung, the Politburo, and the National Assembly for building a path of peace and prosperity. I especially honor those who have gone before us, because nothing we accomplish is possible without the perseverance of those who went first. I also acknowledge the contributions of those unnamed who have contributed in small and great ways to make this day possible.

The U.S.-Vietnam partnership is stronger than it has ever been, and I would be remiss if I did not attribute much of the strength of our partnership to the veterans from both sides who have brought about change. While we should not rest until the United States fully addresses and rectifies the Agent Orange issue, I am pleased for now that both governments and our people are about the business of deepening U.S.-Vietnam ties. I am proud to be part of this historic undertaking. I am proud to be a friend of Vietnam and, without doubt, I believe the best is yet to come.

HONORING THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY MARCHING BAND

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of The Ohio State University Marching Band. Their outstanding innovation and halftime shows were recently featured in a national commercial for the Apple iPad that aired during the Super Bowl.

Since being founded in 1878, the all-brass and percussion Marching Band at Ohio State has led the way by creating new techniques and utilizing innovative technologies. Their iconic Script Ohio has in recent years been joined by animated formations that seem to float across the field.

Recently the Band gained more national prominence as their performances have garnered a lot of attention on YouTube. The Band's halftime show on October 6, 2012, celebrated many popular video games including Super Mario Bros., Tetris, and The Legend of Zelda, and has received over 16 million views.

For the 2013 season, the Band began using iPads to learn formations more quickly and more effectively, while saving money and paper. Seniors Ryan Barta and Charlie King deserve recognition for the idea, while the Band's director, Jon Waters, deserves credit for embracing it. The project would not have been possible without support from Ohio State's Digital First Impact Grant and its Office of Energy and the Environment. As a result, the 2013 season saw many halftime shows grab national headlines, with tributes to Hollywood and Michael Jackson receiving over 16 million and almost 10 million views respectively. Their use of cutting-edge technology while honoring the Band's traditions has made it a well-respected part of Buckeye Nation.

As an alumnus of the band, I am proud to extend heartfelt congratulations to all those who have helped The Ohio State University's Marching Band—The Best Damn Band in the Land—continue to be such a complete and resounding success!

IN RECOGNITION OF BRIDGEWATER INTERIORS ON ITS DESIGNATION AS THE 2013 MINORITY MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the executive team and employees of Bridgewater Interiors, LLC on their company's distinction as the 2013 Minority Manufacturer of the Year by the Minority Business Development Agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The Greater Detroit region has a rich history of innovation and is a community that is made strong through the diversity of its residents. Launched in 1998, as a joint venture between Detroit-based Epsilon Technologies, LLC and Johnson Controls, Inc., Bridgewater Interiors is a modern embodiment of these legacies. From its local beginnings, the management team and employees of Bridgewater Interiors embarked on a commitment to deliver high quality products that range from automotive seating systems to overhead systems and center consoles. As a testament to its success, Bridgewater Interiors has grown into a national Tier 1 supplier to the Big Three with over 1,500 employees at four sites across the country.

Bridgewater Interiors prides itself on being a goal-oriented organization that promotes and recognizes the dedication of its employees. To promote high morale amongst its employees, Bridgewater's leadership team has created a work environment that is responsive to employee concerns, creates an open-door policy for access to senior management and that strives to recognize employees for their contributions to their organization's success. In support of its commitment to the ongoing training of its workforce, Bridgewater Interiors provides its employees with a tuition reimbursement program for college studies. Given these commitments to product quality and its employees, it is little wonder that Bridgewater Interiors has been named one of Metropolitan Detroit's 101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work for by the 101 Best and Brightest organization.

As the leader of a certified Minority Business Enterprise, Bridgewater Interiors' President and CEO, Ron Hall, Sr. has been committed to supporting diversity both within his company and the manufacturing industry. As a result of his commitment to the principles of diversity, Mr. Hall effectively leveraged his leadership at Bridgewater Interiors to hone the organization and mission of the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council—now one of the premier minority business organizations in the country. In addition to his work

within the manufacturing industry, Mr. Hall serves as the Vice President of Minority Business Development at New Detroit, Inc., the nation's first urban coalition, as well as taking a leading role at other local organizations, including the American Diabetes Association of Michigan, Southeastern Michigan Junior Achievement and St. John's Hospital of Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent some of the brightest and most innovative individuals and companies in our nation—individuals like Ron Hall, Sr., his leadership team and the employees of Bridgewater Interiors. I congratulate Mr. Hall and the employees of Bridgewater Interiors on their recognition as the 2013 Minority Manufacturer of the Year and I look forward to their continued success as we build the future of the American manufacturing industry.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM
OVERSTREET, JR.

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and Representatives ROBERT HURT and MORGAN GRIFFITH, I submit these remarks in honor of the remarkable life of William Overstreet, Jr. and his dedicated service to the United States of America.

Mr. Overstreet, a native of Clifton Forge, VA and a longtime resident of Roanoke, VA, was a veteran of World War II. He served as a Captain in the U.S. Army Air Force with the 357th Fighter Group. He flew more than 100 missions in Europe. While on a mission in 1944, Mr. Overstreet's flight turned into a moment that will forever be captured in history. In pursuit of a German aircraft, Mr. Overstreet flew his plane beneath the arches of the Eiffel Tower in Nazi-occupied Paris, shooting down the enemy plane. His actions were a source of great encouragement and motivation for the French people and French Resistance troops on the ground.

Mr. Overstreet received numerous honors for his actions, including France's Legion of Honor in 2009 from the French ambassador to the United States at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, VA. When presenting the medal, the French ambassador lauded the actions of Mr. Overstreet and the role he played in the liberation of France.

Mr. Overstreet passed away on December 29, 2013 at the age of 92. To many in the Roanoke community, he was known as a selfless man who was dedicated to serving others. For those who knew Mr. Overstreet, it was certainly a well-deserved honor.

His heroic actions in the face of the enemy have inspired many and will live on in stories told of "The Greatest Generation" of Americans who fought to preserve the principles we hold dear. As we remember the life of Mr. Overstreet and his valiant flight, it is a reminder that we must always pay tribute to our veterans and active military who have made tremendous sacrifices to ensure that the

United States of America remains a country where liberty and freedom prevail.

RECOGNIZING THE SOUTH LAKE
PRESS ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF PUBLICATION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the South Lake Press on its 100th anniversary of publication.

The South Lake Press was founded in 1913 by Mr. W.E. Rorabaugh as the Clermont Clarion. In 1921, Mr. John Lochner purchased the Clarion and renamed it the South Lake Press to reflect its news coverage of South Lake County. Through changes in ownership and a quickly evolving community, the publication has remained an integral piece of life in Lake County.

George and Ann Dupee bought the paper in 1968, and, after George passed away in 1986, Ann continued to lead its publication until 1992. A passionate journalist and photographer, Ann actively reported on local government, businesses, and the community at large. Ann's dedication to the news is apparent in her extensive work throughout South Lake County. To this day, she continues to write a weekly column showcasing the South Lake Press's rich history in Central Florida.

It is with sincere appreciation that I thank my friend Ann Dupee for her commitment to our community and the South Lake Press for a century of service to South Lake County.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CIVIL
WAR DEFENSES OF WASHINGTON
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, my colleagues Representatives DONNA EDWARDS, JIM MORAN and FRANK WOLF join me to introduce a bill to recognize and preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington located in the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland. The defenses of Washington, including forts, unarmed batteries and rifle trenches, created a ring of protection for the nation's capital during the Civil War. This bill would redesignate the 22 Civil War Defenses of Washington currently under National Park Service jurisdiction as a national historical park, and allow other sites associated with the Civil War Defenses of Washington that are owned by a unit of local government in Maryland, Virginia, or the District of Columbia to be affiliated with the national historic park through cooperative agreements. This bill would also

require the Secretary of the Interior to facilitate the storied history of the Civil War for both the North and the South, including the history of the defenses of Washington and the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, being assembled, arrayed and conveyed for the benefit of the public for the knowledge, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

The Civil War Defenses of Washington were constructed at the beginning of the war, in 1861, as a ring of protection for the nation's capital and for President Abraham Lincoln. By the end of the war, these defenses included 68 forts, 93 unarmed batteries, 807 mounted cannons, 13 miles of rifle trenches, and 32 miles of military roads. The major test of the Civil War Defenses of Washington came with the Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864, when Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal Early, directed by General Robert E. Lee, sought to attack the nation's capital from the north, causing Union Forces threatening to attack Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, to be withdrawn. General Early was delayed by Union Major General Lew Wallace at the Battle of Monocacy on July 9, 1864, and was stopped at the northern edge of Washington at the Battle of Fort Stevens on July 11–12, 1864. The Shenandoah Valley Campaign ended when Union Lieutenant General Philip Sheridan defeated General Early at the Battle of Cedar Creek, Virginia, on October 19, 1864.

Nearly all the individual forts in the Civil Defenses of Washington—on both sides of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers—were involved in stopping General Early's attack, and the Battle of Fort Stevens was the second and last attempt by the Confederate Army to attack Washington.

Taken together, these battles were pivotal to the outcome of the war and the freedom and democracy that the war represented for this country. It is therefore fitting that we recognize these sites by redesignating them as a national historic park as we commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF GUY
EMANUELE, JR.

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life and legacy of Guy Emanuele, Jr., an exceptional educator and school administrator from Fremont, California. Guy passed away on January 5, 2014, at the age of 83.

Guy's long and distinguished career in education began in 1956 when he began teaching at Barnard Junior High School in Union City, California. In 1976, after 20 years of service as a teacher, school counselor, and administrator, he was hired as the superintendent of New Haven Unified School District—a position which he held until his retirement in 1998.

During his tenure as superintendent, Guy was known for bringing leadership and stability

to the school district. He also oversaw the expansion of the district, including the building of several new schools and an alternative school.

Guy's commitment to students can be seen in his quote from a 2006 interview, during which Guy stated his goal was "to educate the whole man, not just in science and language, but in music and athletics. That is part of developing a positive character, a good character."

His commitment to the arts and athletics, as well as many other extra-curricular activities that promote students' academic involvement, is illustrated by James Logan High School's marching band and forensic team earning national recognition and its sports programs winning numerous Mission Valley Athletic League titles.

After retiring in 1998, Guy was elected to two terms on the Fremont School Board. Because of his outstanding legacy of service, Union City named Guy Emanuele, Jr. Elementary School in his honor.

The communities of Union City and Fremont have lost an outstanding educator, but Guy leaves his school district and community better prepared to provide an excellent education to all students.

I want to express my deepest condolences to Guy's wife, Kay Emanuele, daughters Rosalyn Reasor and Lisa Lockyer, sons Guy Emanuele III and Pete Emanuele, as well as his eight grandchildren. Guy will be dearly missed.

INTRODUCTION OF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, far too often, families feel constant competing pressure between home and work life. Since being signed into law in 1993 by President Clinton, the Family and Medical Leave Act has been used 100 million times by men and women across the United States to meet these dual demands. These individuals and their families have benefited from up to 12 weeks of job protected unpaid work leave to care for new children or to help a loved one or the individual recover from a serious health condition.

Today, 21 years later, federal workplace policies have not kept pace with work and family life needs. As a result, many families must unfairly prioritize work and family duties. It is time to enhance this legislation so that more families can access leave to help loved ones who need their assistance. That is why I am introducing the Family and Medical Leave Enhancement Act. This legislation will expand the Family and Medical Leave Act so that it covers businesses with 25 or more employees, from the current threshold of 50 or more employees. It also provides up to 24 hours each year of unpaid Parental Involvement and Family Wellness. This new addition allows parents and grandparents to attend to

parent-teacher conferences and to take their children, grandchildren, or other family members to the doctor for regular medical or dental appointments.

We as a country must show we truly value families by investing in our workforce and implementing new policies that support working parents and grandparents. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 3 and Tuesday, February 4, 2014, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: "yes" on rollcall vote No. 32 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1791, as amended); "yes" on rollcall vote No. 33 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 357, as amended); "no" on rollcall vote No. 34 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 470); and "no" on rollcall vote No. 35 (on agreeing to the resolution H. Res. 470).

DELTA DAYS AT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the women of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated as they use their collective strength to engage in public advocacy during Delta Days in the Nation's Capital.

101 years ago, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated's 22 trailblazing Founders started an organization of college educated women devoted to sisterhood, scholarship and service.

Since 1989, women of Delta from across the country gather annually to hold their representatives accountable and stand up for the issues critical to their communities and our country. Delta Days in the Nation's Capital, a creation of the sorority's National Social Action Commission, ensures the members of the sorority are active participants in the public policy-making process.

I am proud of the legacy and expectation of activism that forms the backbone of this sorority.

I welcome my Sorors to the Nation's Capital as they work for change in their communities.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a sys-

tem for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 6, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 10

6 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Business meeting to consider S. 1856, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62.

TBA

FEBRUARY 11

9 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine certain nominations.

SD-226

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine current and future worldwide threats to the national security of the United States; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine prospects for Democratic reconciliation and workers' rights in Bangladesh.

SD-419

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Christopher P. Lu, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary, and Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, both of the Department of Labor.

SD-430

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine the budget and economic outlook for fiscal years 2014-2024.

SD-608

FEBRUARY 12

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight to examine the report of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board on Reforms to the

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Section 215 telephone records program and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

SD-226

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine bipartisan support for improving United States elections, focusing on an overview from

the Presidential Commission on Election Administration.

SR-301

Special Committee on Aging

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold a joint hearing to examine the challenges and advantages of senior entrepreneurship.

SD-562

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Indian Law and Order Commission Report, focusing on a roadmap for making Native America safer.

SD-628

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, February 6, 2014

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 6, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOC HASTINGS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Monsignor Stephen Rossetti, St. Luke Institute, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

O God, you are the Lord of Heaven and Earth, yet You are humble and it is Your delight to serve us, Your beloved children. We pray that we too might have that same spirit of humility and a deep desire to serve.

May we be especially mindful of those who are struggling, those who are suffering, and those who are poor. You have a special love for them; may we have that same love.

We thank You for being the humble, loving God that You are. May we become more like You: loving, humble, serving. We pray this in Your holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. NEAL led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

DRUG POLICIES—BE HONEST AND DIRECT

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Wednesday, in a congressional hearing, under oath, Michael Botticelli, the Deputy Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, could not answer my direct questions: What is more dangerous, methamphetamine or marijuana? How many people died from marijuana last year? He complained that people think marijuana is benign. Well, I don't think marijuana is benign, but I can understand how people can get confused when so-called "experts" cannot give straight answers. Federal law says that marijuana is more dangerous than cocaine and methamphetamine, which everybody knows is a lie.

Unlike marijuana, tobacco use is falling. Unlike marijuana, we don't arrest millions of people for using tobacco. Tobacco use has been cut almost two-thirds because we have been honest about the facts.

Maybe there's a lesson for our drug policy officials: if you want to discourage marijuana use, be honest and be direct.

INVEST IN U.S. ACT OF 2014

(Mr. NEAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a piece of legislation that I have introduced to boost our economy, invest in our crumbling infrastructure, and create jobs.

The economy is in need of a jolt, a proverbial shot in the arm to get it moving again. The need for this legislation is clear. Our unemployment rate is too high, the number of jobs created too low, and income inequality has made our recovery uneven, at best.

Eight million jobs were wiped out during the recession. We have to get them back. I have introduced the Invest in U.S. Act. My legislation will go a long way toward helping the economy take off again.

It makes strategic investments in infrastructure, bond measures, wildly successful Build America Bonds programs. It makes the R&D tax credit permanent, and many other tax credit initiatives.

The Invest in U.S. Act also takes full aim at rising income inequality. It increases the minimum wage. It provides tax relief for small businesses who hire new employees and those that buy new equipment.

The American people want one thing: an improved economy and more jobs. Join me in supporting this legislation that will finance critical infrastructure investment, fight income inequality, and grow our economy. The argument is about jobs.

REFOCUSING ON THE ENVIRONMENT

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, climate change, offshore drilling, wildfires, scarcity—these concerns are expressed over and over again from my constituents in my district.

People are anxious that the world that they are handing down to their children is not as pristine as the one they inherited. They plead with us to protect the environment. Yet time and time again, the House majority votes to undercut clean air and water laws, while blocking efforts to protect public lands. What a travesty when an allegiance to industry takes precedence over maintaining a healthy environment.

This week, we wasted precious floor time with needless bills, like the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act, which made a mockery of the serious drought in California. The House needs to stop bringing irresponsible bills to the floor, giving away our cherished lands, stripping away environmental protections, and doing nothing to solve real problems like the drought in California.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

We have heard their excuses. They say environmental regulations slow the economy, but let's be honest: putting the interest of appropriations above our environment is a dangerously expensive notion.

Let's stop being reactionary and get ahead of these real problems facing our planet.

JOBS BILL

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, long-term unemployment has not been this high in this great country since World War II.

It is time to look back in our history and see what the leaders did then. We can always learn from the past. In 1944, the President was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. His vision was to expand economic opportunity, jobs. To build the middle class, we must rebuild, and help them thrive, and fight inequality.

Mr. Speaker, how about beginning with women? Today, we have more than 50 million people—13 million of them are children—living below poverty in this country. We have the greatest economy in the world. This is absolutely shameful.

We must adopt and be committed to the concept of full employment. Take up the President's American Jobs Act of 2013. Rebuild this country's infrastructure, invest in education, in our first responders, and in medical researchers. It is time to put America first and Make It In America.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2954.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 472 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2954.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0913

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to

convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, with Mr. DENHAM in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the Public Access and Lands Improvement Act, H.R. 2954, is a bipartisan package of 10 bills to protect and promote public access to lands; to improve opportunities by removing red tape that stands in the way of responsible, local economic development and jobs; and to encourage transparent community center land management.

This small grouping of bills will advance important local projects that will have a direct impact on jobs and on economic growth in communities throughout the country.

□ 0915

The package includes several commonsense land conveyance bills to remove unnecessary bureaucratic strings attached to how land is used and how it is managed. It recognizes that locally elected leaders, not Federal bureaucrats, know how to best manage certain lands.

There are measures to prevent unreasonable Federal regulations or actions from destroying a historic lookout tower in my home State of Washington, blocking unreasonable public recreation access to the Cape Hatteras seashore in North Carolina, and preventing the use of hand-powered boats, such as kayaks, in several national parks in the West.

This bill will help family businesses and ranchers by implementing commonsense reforms to the process of renewing livestock grazing permits. Livestock grazing on Federal lands is an important part of the American ranching tradition. This bill will help our Nation's ranchers operate more efficiently and with greater certainty.

The package, Mr. Chairman, also includes legislation sponsored by the Public Lands Subcommittee chairman, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, requiring the BLM to establish an Internet database for all BLM lands that are available for sale to the public.

In the year 2014, if I may be parochial, when a Seahawks fan can purchase a championship hat on the Internet just moments after the Superbowl ends, the Federal Government can certainly get its act together and post its lands that are available for sale online.

This bill will expedite the planning and implementation of emergency salvage timber sales for Federal lands in California that were ravaged by the Rim Fire last summer. Without prompt emergency action, the impacts of this devastating wildfire could become even worse. Fire-damaged trees invite disease. They invite insect infestations. They increase the risk of future wildfires, and they are a threat to visitor safety. Emergency salvage and forest restoration efforts should not be delayed due to bureaucratic hurdles and lawsuits.

Finally, the bill provides for transparency and accountability in how Federal funds are spent in protecting the Chesapeake Bay.

This small package of bills is reasonable, responsible, and it reflects the will of local communities and their elected leaders. It deserves support, I believe, from my Democrat and Republican colleagues.

Before concluding my remarks on this piece of legislation and listening to the statement of the gentleman from Arizona, I would like to briefly address the legislative work of this committee as a whole. The committee, of course, I speak of is the Natural Resources Committee.

Just this week, the House will have considered three measures from the House Natural Resources Committee. Two of these packages were individual bills, which means a total of 18 different bills from this committee will have effectively been considered and debated and voted upon by the House this week.

Prior to this week, over the first 13 months of this Congress, the Natural Resources Committee has advanced nearly 60 individual bills through the House. Nearly 50 of those bills have passed on a broad bipartisan basis under the expedited suspension process. Ten bills under the jurisdiction of the committee, both Republican and Democrat, have been signed by the President, which represents a noticeable percentage of the public laws that have been enacted by this Congress. These totals do not include individual bills included in other measures, such as bills that were included in the Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. Chairman, this statement is not made as a pat on the back, but to make clear that the intent of this committee is to dutifully work and act on priorities for our Nation. They may be narrow bills to resolve a parochial problem or broad measures affecting the country as a whole. Of course, the nature of our committee is to deal with, in many cases, bills that deal on very parochial issues. That is one of the reasons why there are so many bills that come out of our committee.

In matters of broad policy, some are of great urgency, such as the importance of restoring responsible, active

forest management to both support economically struggling rural communities and to improve the health of Federal forests. We passed that bill earlier this year. Just yesterday, the House moved swiftly to provide a solution to the devastating drought in California.

We have also acted on multiple bipartisan measures to streamline red tape and boost America's ability to safely harness our vast energy resources to create jobs—because we know that energy jobs are good-paying jobs—to lower prices, and to strengthen our national security by reducing dependence on foreign energy from hostile nations.

On each of these measures, it is time for the Senate to act and to pass their own proposals so that we can then work to reach an agreement. Obviously, there will be differences between both Houses, but they need to pass their legislation so we can work on the differences so that these measures can become law. We have differences, but we have a responsibility to represent those we are elected to serve and put forward real solutions for the challenges facing the American people.

There are dozens of bills solving local problems, implementing locally supported solutions, and establishing protections for historic and special places that can be acted on by both the House and the Senate. I believe that this is possible on matters under the jurisdiction of the Natural Resources Committee, that we can find common ground with the Senate. Why do I say that? Because we have successfully done so repeatedly over this last year. That is why there are a noticeable number of public laws from our committees that have been acted on by the House and have gone to the President.

But, as always, this will require a willingness to recognize and respect differences in philosophy and procedure in both the House and in the Senate. It must be a two-way street where each Chamber acts on the other's priorities, but, again, has successfully been done in the past, and I know it can be done in the future. The Republican majority in the House has demonstrated our willingness to do so while maintaining our fundamental views on Federal land management, the importance of multiple use of public lands, and the ability of local communities to make better decisions for themselves than Federal bureaucracies.

So as we conclude this week's full slate of action on House Natural Resources Committee bills, I pledge to continue working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and on both sides of the Capitol to make progress in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me congratulate the chairman on the Seahawks, and also remind him that there was a long 16-game season. They won their division. They played San Francisco three times, two out of three, and then after that they went into the playoffs. Then after the playoffs, they went to the championship game and, finally, to the Superbowl, which they won. Congratulations. So it is great that you got that cap 1 minute after the game was over. I am pointing out that there was a long, deliberate process with rules, games to be won, that encompassed the whole season. Sometimes us rushing legislation is cutting corners that great championship teams like the Seahawks never do.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT), my colleague.

I will have more to say on the specifics of this legislation later.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 2954, the mistitled Public Access and Lands Improvement Act. Rather than improving our Nation's lands, this bill negatively affects our land management decisions. It conveys or disposes of Federal lands improperly. It rewrites grazing policy, and it waives numerous environmental laws like the Natural Environmental Policy Act, the Wilderness Act, and the Endangered Species Act.

Overall, H.R. 2954 contains a number of provisions that would undermine the responsible balance of interests and considerations in the stewardship of our Nation's lands and our Nation's resources.

Included in the myriad of poor land management provisions that this bill cobbles together is language that gives away thousands of acres of Federal land in Florida, Alaska, and Nevada, valued at millions of dollars, without a transparent public planning process. When the Federal Government gives away land, we do so with certain understandings of how it will be used. It is just wrong to change the rules without due consideration and without any compensation for the Federal Government—the taxpayers of this Nation—if others will now profit from this land.

Yet another ill-advised land management provision, H.R. 2954 also prevents the Bureau of Land Management from carrying out its mission to manage public lands for multiple use. Specifically, this bill requires that until the agency creates a public database of all lands identified for disposal, BLM would be barred from all land acquisitions. This is couched as a transparency measure when, in reality, it is nothing more than an attempt to prevent and delay BLM from doing its all-important work.

Further, provisions of the bill would disregard or reduce public engagement

on a range of community interests, including natural resource protections. In fact, H.R. 2954 would overturn a multiyear National Park Service process that has resulted in balanced provisions that protect threatened shorebirds and endangered nesting sea turtles while preserving the economic health of the community at the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The National Park Service should be allowed to continue their balanced and successful management of Cape Hatteras National Seashore in order to ensure these critical protections remain in place.

Along with these poor land management decisions and irresponsible consideration of our Nation's lands and natural resources, H.R. 2954 would eliminate or delay timely reviews of grazing leases necessary to ensure sound conservation principles.

In addition, H.R. 2954 includes a bill to expedite salvaged logging on the Rim Fire area of northern California, overriding NEPA and administrative and judicial review.

The end result after piecing together all these provisions is a piece of legislation that waives Federal law, including laws that require consultation with Federal, State, local, or tribal governments or with local residents in order, among other things, to expedite timber harvest on certain Federal lands in California; reverse course on the science-based National Park Service plan that provides an appropriate balance of off-road vehicle access and protection of sensitive seashore areas in North Carolina; and waive NEPA in multiple scenarios, weakening important public involvement and planning provisions.

Mr. Chairman, our public lands and natural resources would simply be mismanaged, unprotected, and undervalued as a result of this bill. I believe we have to put partisan politics aside and work together to protect and responsibly manage America's natural resources and to support and ensure that the Nation's spectacular landscapes, unique natural life, and cultural resources and icons endure for future generations. This bill is just a giant step in the wrong direction.

Mr. Chairman, for all these reasons, I urge my colleagues here in the House to vote "no" on H.R. 2954.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), who is the author of one of the titles of the bill.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and particularly want to thank him for his work on the Natural Resources Committee and for his invaluable assistance on this bill.

This summer, the biggest fire in the history of the Sierra Nevada mountains burned 400 square miles of

forestland. The fire left behind an unprecedented swath of environmental devastation that threatens the loss not only of the affected forestland for generations to come, but sets events in motion that could destroy the surrounding forest for many years to come.

The fire also left behind hundreds of millions of board feet of dead timber that is on Federal land that could be sold to raise millions of dollars, money that could then be used to replant and reforest our devastated lands. In addition, processing that timber would help to revive the economy of a stricken region.

But time is already running out. Within a year, the value of the timber declines rapidly as the wood is devoured by insects and rot. That is the problem. Cumbersome environmental reviews and litigation that inevitably follow will run up the clock of this valuable asset until it becomes absolutely worthless.

□ 0930

Indeed, it becomes worse than worthless—it becomes hazardous. Bark and wood-boring beetles are already moving in to feast on the dead and dying timber, and a population explosion of pestilence can be expected if those dead trees remain. The beetles won't confine themselves to the fire areas, posing a mortal threat to the adjacent forests.

By the time the normal bureaucratic reviews and lawsuits have run their course, what was once forestland will have already begun converting to brushland, and by the following year, reforestation will have become infinitely more difficult and expensive. Within just a few years, several feet of dry brush will have built up, and the smaller trees will have begun toppling on this tinder. It is not possible to build a more perfect fire stack than that. That means that intense second-generation fires will take advantage of this fuel, sterilizing the soil, eroding the landscape, fouling the watersheds, and jeopardizing surrounding forests.

Without timely salvage and reforestation, we know the fate of the Sierras because we have seen the result of neglect after previous fires. The trees don't come back for many, many generations. Instead, thick brush takes over the land that was once shaded by towering forests. It quickly overwhelms any seedlings struggling to make a start. It replaces the diverse ecosystems supported by the forests with scrub brush.

For this reason, I introduced H.R. 3188, which waives the time-consuming environmental review process and prevents the endless litigation that always follows. It authorizes Federal forest managers, following well-established environmental protocols for salvage, to sell the dead timber and to supervise its careful removal while there

is still time. The millions of dollars raised can then be directed toward replanting the region before layers of brush choke off any chance of forest regrowth in the foreseeable future.

It was modeled on legislation authored by Democratic Senator Tom Daschle for salvaging dead and dying trees in the Black Hills National Forest, a measure credited with speeding the preservation and recovery of that forest. Unfortunately, the bill spawned lurid tales from the activist left of uncontrolled logging in the Sierras. Nothing could be further from the truth. The legislation vests full control of the salvage plans with Federal forest managers, not the logging companies. It leaves Federal foresters in charge of enforcing salvage plans that fully protect the environment.

Because of the opposition—and we heard a little bit of it just a moment ago—in a few minutes, I will offer an amendment that was worked out in consultation with the U.S. Forest Service and with several Democratic offices, and I hope it will receive bipartisan support. It preserves the EIS process and the environmental and judicial reviews, but it expedites them and assures that salvage under the direction of the Forest Service can begin this spring.

There is plenty of room for compromise, but there is absolutely no excuse for inaction. The left wants a policy of benign neglect—to let a quarter of a million acres of destroyed timber rot in place, to surrender the ravaged land to beetles and to watch contentedly as the forest ecosystem is replaced by scrub brush. It is true that without human intervention the forests will eventually return in about a century from now but certainly not in the lifetimes of ourselves, of our children or of our children's children. If we want to stop the loss of this forestland and if we want to control the beetle infestation before it explodes out of control, the dead timber has to come out soon.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. If we take it up now, we can generate the funds necessary to suppress brush buildup, to plant new seedlings and to restore these forests for the use and enjoyment of our children. If we wait for the normal bureaucratic reviews and litigation and delays, we will have lost these forests for the next several generations.

The irony is that 16,000 acres of that same forest were destroyed but were on private land. The owner, Sierra Pacific Industries, is in the process of salvaging the timber on their lands. They will be done by this summer, and then they will begin reforesting from a portion of those proceeds. Meanwhile, the

public lands lay unattended. Let me tell you something. Within a couple of years, the difference is going to be dramatic. We will have fully salvaged and reforested private lands next to neglected, overgrown public lands that are dry with scrub brush and just waiting for the next fire.

The public management of our lands will be judged in comparison with the management of the private lands, and if we maintain current law, we will have been held in the balance and found wanting.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlelady from Washington (Ms. DELBENE).

Ms. DELBENE. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today with great frustration, and must oppose the Public Access and Lands Improvement Act in its current form.

This bill is a merger of 10 public lands and natural resource bills, all of which are unrelated to each other and many of which would ignore the best available science, would compromise the stewardship of our public lands and would completely disregard the bedrock environmental laws that have served to protect our environment and cherished open space for decades.

That being said, there is one part of this bill that I do support. Buried in title VI of this bill is the Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act, which I introduced with Congressman LARSEN and Senators MURRAY and CANTWELL.

Green Mountain Lookout, located in the Glacier Peak Wilderness, was built in 1933 as a Civilian Conservation Corps project to detect fires and spot enemy aircraft during World War II. The lookout is an important, historic and unique part of the Pacific Northwest. It is a popular destination for hikers, and it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Unfortunately, severe weather caused the Green Mountain Lookout to fall into disrepair in 2001, and the U.S. Forest Service began taking steps to preserve the historic structure for future generations. However, an out-of-State group filed a lawsuit against the Forest Service for using machinery to conduct these repairs, and a U.S. District Court ordered the Forest Service to remove the lookout.

My bill would allow critical and routine maintenance while keeping this iconic structure where it is meant to be—in its original home. Local governments in the area, my constituents, as well as a number of environmental and historic preservation groups support my bill to keep the Green Mountain Lookout where it is. The Natural Resources Committee agrees. They passed this bill unanimously last year, and why wouldn't they? This bill is common sense. It saves us money because it would actually cost more to remove the lookout than to keep it where it is.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that, if this bill had been brought up on its own, by its own merits, it would have passed with overwhelming bipartisan support. Unfortunately, that is not what is happening here today. Instead, this bill has gotten wrapped up in a series of very controversial and divisive bills. The Green Mountain Lookout represents a significant piece of the Pacific Northwest's history, and it deserves to be protected for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy for years to come. It does not deserve to be wrapped up in a package of bills that we all know will be dead on arrival in the Senate. The administration has also voiced its support for keeping the Green Mountain Lookout where it is while strongly opposing the rest of this bill.

Green Mountain deserves a vote on its own, and I am extremely disappointed that my amendment to separate my bill from the rest of this package was denied a chance to be considered today. The way this piece of legislation was handled is emblematic of the dysfunction that is so prevalent and so unnecessary in Congress today. The people of Washington State expect Congress to make progress, and they expect compromise, not partisan exercises that won't make it to the President's desk or achieve a meaningful result. I am deeply disappointed that that is where this bill is today, and I know that many of my constituents are as well.

It is my hope that I will be able to work with my colleagues from across the aisle to consider the Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act before it is too late. The need for immediate action is great because, if the lookout is moved once, there is no moving it back.

It is simple. Taking care of our environment is critical to protecting the quality of life we cherish. I cannot in good conscience support this overall bill due to the many other harmful measures that are included in this package.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR), who is an author of one of the titles of the bill.

Mr. LABRADOR. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of title VIII of H.R. 2954, which I originally introduced as H.R. 657, the Grazing Improvement Act. I thank Chairman HASTINGS for recognizing the importance of this issue and for including it in H.R. 2954 for consideration today.

Livestock grazing is an important part of the rich ranching tradition in Idaho and the United States. My home State of Idaho produces some of the world's finest lamb and beef. Food production is a major part of Idaho's history, and it is an integral part of our cultural fabric and our economic security. These traditions are under attack,

and we must preserve them for future generations.

The financial security of ranchers depends upon their responsible stewardship of the land. Unfortunately, the Federal process to review the permits which allows them to produce food has become severely backlogged due to lawsuits aimed at eliminating livestock from public lands. The local Federal land-managing offices cannot keep up with the pace of litigation and the endless environmental analysis. This diverts the already limited resources from these offices and leaves ranchers at risk of losing their grazing permits and jeopardizing their livelihoods.

Agriculture is a challenging way to make a living, but producers choose this path because it is their passion, and it is their way of life. Several ranchers in my State of Idaho have said, if they were to lose their grazing permits, they would have to subdivide their land and further reduce their grazing areas. My bill, the Grazing Improvement Act, would provide relief to these ranchers and to ranchers throughout the country.

It would, number one, extend livestock grazing permits from 10 to 20 years in order to give producers adequate longevity and production stability. It would codify existing appropriation language to put into statute annual riders. It would also encourage the respective Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to utilize categorical exclusions to expedite permit processing.

I believe that protecting our environment can be done in a manner that does not impede our economic growth. It is time that we improve our regulatory structure so that we continue to prosper as a Nation. We can no longer allow the Federal Government to maintain an enormous backlog in processing grazing permits.

I thank the cosponsors of this legislation, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on this issue.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 2954 is another attempt to weaken landmark environmental protections, to dictate land management decisions, to convey and dispose of Federal land, and to rewrite grazing policy.

This Chamber, once again, will spend a day debating bad policy put forth by the majority, which seems to work tirelessly to undermine the progress of the last century Americans have made in land conservation and environmental protection, undeterred by reality or a desire by the American people for bipartisan legislation and compromise. Furthermore, Republicans have long criticized omnibus bills as an affront to regular order, but they now attempt to force this bill of bad policy proposals through the House, which has no chance of passing in the Senate.

Let me quote a statement from the White House, which strongly opposes the bill. It reads:

Overall, H.R. 2954 contains a number of provisions that would undermine the responsible balance of interests and considerations and stewardship of the Nation's lands and natural resources . . . Provisions of the bill would disregard or reduce public engagement on a range of community interests, including natural resource protections, and would preclude agencies from considering less detrimental environmental alternatives . . . Provisions of the bill would waive all Federal laws and consultation requirements that would now initiate a timber sale without those, that would eliminate the balanced limitation on off-road vehicle use within the Cape Hatteras recreation area and that would waive environmental review requirements for grazing activities on Federal lands.

The White House said it could support provisions that would restore the Green Mountain Lookout in Washington State and that would modify conservation programs at the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Overall, this legislation is going nowhere. It has no chance of ever becoming law, but here we are. Furthermore, even though we could be working together on a variety of public land issues that need to be addressed, like the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we are, instead, debating a package of bills that fails to address significant issues that have bipartisan solutions. In fact, we can work together on some of the individual titles in this bill as stand-alones. We are not legislating. We are wasting valuable time. It is clear why the American people have such a negative view of Congress. Let me review quickly the substance of the package.

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Title I would extinguish the reversionary clause covering property on Santa Rosa Island in Florida. The reversionary clause requires that the property in question is used for public purposes, since Federal land is for the American public in its entirety.

What is the reason for rescinding the clause? So that the county of Escambia can dredge and build a harbor that would cut off access to the rest of the island, most of which is managed as part of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, a unit of the National Park Service.

Titles II and III are much of the same, Federal land grabs to be used for windfall profits at the expense of the American people. Title III goes further by waiving a number of laws, including the Endangered Species Act; the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act; the National Historic Preservation Act; and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Title IV would prevent the BLM from carrying out its mission to manage public lands for multiple use until the

agency creates a public database of all lands identified for disposal. BLM would be barred from all land acquisitions until such database is created.

BLM currently uses a public process developed and implemented locally through Resource Management Plans, and approved by Congress, to identify parcels for acquisition or disposal. This measure would just add another extreme layer of bureaucracy.

Title V would threaten endangered nesting shorebirds and sea turtles in the Cape Hatteras National Seashore recreational area. In 2007, the National Park Service placed modest limits on the use of off-highway vehicles on the beaches in order to limit the impacts on these species. The National Park Service was sued, and a judge determined the limits were inadequate protection for the endangered species.

In arbitration, the parties, including all stakeholders, agreed on a new plan that provided adequate protection for endangered species while allowing managed off-highway vehicle access. This measure would require the seashore be managed under the first rule rather than the agreed upon settlement.

Title VIII would change grazing tenure from 10 to 20 years and provide environmental waivers for grazing permit renewals, reissuance, or transfers. If we are going to reform grazing permit tenure, we should also talk about those ranchers who would like to get out of the business and retire their permits.

Also, we should address the low cost of grazing on Federal lands. Grazing fees have not changed since 1996 and are significantly lower than in the past, while State and private landowners generally seek market value for grazing. This measure is completely unbalanced and fails to address significant grazing issues.

Title IX, like many other natural resource measures proposed by the Republicans, waives NEPA, judicial review, and administrative review, completely disregarding the input of critical stakeholders such as the general public.

In conclusion, this so-called lands package should be called the "Federal Lands Giveaway, Destruction of Protected Species, and Lack of Accountability Act." This package undermines the management of our public lands, and I urge my colleagues to oppose the legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, the bill we are considering this morning includes a provision that would repeal excessive restrictions on public access to Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Even though the seashore is paid for by tax dollars, current regulations have

restricted access to the recreational area that is owned by the taxpayer. The elected officials of Dare County have verified that the regulations have damaged the economy in the area, which relies heavily on tourism. The last thing that we need in eastern North Carolina—and across the country—is governmental regulations stifling job creation and economic growth.

This bill would overturn the current rule, while restricting access to the seashore, and reinstitute the National Park Service's 2007 Interim Management Strategy to govern visitor access and species protection at Cape Hatteras. The Interim Management Strategy was backed by a 113-page Biological Opinion issued by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, which found that it would not jeopardize piping plover, sea turtles, or other species of concerns.

Please support this legislation. Let's protect the species that need to be protected, but let's also protect the rights of the taxpayer. This bill finds the balance between the two.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER), an author of one of the titles of the bill.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I thank the chairman for yielding to me.

Mr. Chair, I do want to say that this is a simple solution to a very important property rights issue in northwest Florida.

Pursuant to a 1947 Federal deed, Escambia County, Florida, was given authority to transfer property on Santa Rosa Island but could not issue title to that land. Instead, the county began leasing the property to individuals who would pay a lease fee instead of being charged a property tax.

In the years since 1947, Pensacola Beach and Navarre Beach have grown into bustling communities and fine tourist destinations.

Additionally, numerous pending cases in the judicial system seek to allow local authorities to levy taxes now on those properties that currently are being leased. As a result of these developments, local stakeholders, including the boards of commissioners of both Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties, asked me to introduce this piece of legislation.

Mr. Chairman, this is a fairness issue. It will allow leaseholders the option of attaining fee simple title to their property while also protecting current agreements governing conservation, public access, and recreation. Additionally, the bill would help ease management of the island by allowing conveyance of certain land currently owned by Escambia County to Santa Rosa County.

It is important to note that the bill does not address the issue of property taxes on those properties. It simply seeks to permit leaseholders the option to attain title to their property so that leaseholders and local governments can jointly address any local tax issues that may arise in the future.

Contrary to a statement released by the White House yesterday, this bill does not remove any protections from Santa Rosa Island. Rather, it restates those protections that are currently in place with Santa Rosa County and Escambia County that are critical to this barrier island.

I also want to take note that this bill in no way affects the right to public beach access, nor does it change the boundaries of the Gulf Islands National Seashore, nor does it impact the mission of the National Park Service. And contrary to what the ranking member said, Escambia County has absolutely no intention of dredging a bay. This is not going to happen.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Escambia County is protected on both sides of the land that they have currently now under lease by the National Park Service, the Gulf Islands National Seashore, so I urge all of my colleagues to support this commonsense bill.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It should be noted for the record that the National Park Service provided a series of recommendations to make this portion of the legislation workable, and those were not considered during the process.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GRIJALVA. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. If the National Park Service said Escambia County was doing this because they had an intent of doing some type of dredging project, they are absolutely incorrect.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Reclaiming my time, this land was to be used for public purposes. This is public land, not land to give away and, as stated before, over and over again, be dredged and used for a harbor for potential windfall profit. Not only that, this action completely disregards the conservation goals of the adjacent national seashore by hindering access. On one hand, we talk about limited access to public lands; on the other, we hinder access to those places we see fit.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Utah

(Mr. BISHOP), subcommittee chairman and also an author of one of the titles of the bill.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, let me begin by talking about some things that have been overstated on parts, especially the one that is my title.

My title does not stop the BLM or anybody in the Interior Department from doing multiple use on land. It has nothing to do with management. It simply says they can buy no new land until they first become transparent and provide a database that anyone can easily accomplish.

As with some of the other statements that have been made on the floor, some of them are somewhat exaggerated from what this bill intends to do.

Mr. Chairman, let me talk about this bill as an entity. There is a common thread that runs through this bill that deals with public lands and people from Florida to Alaska and all stations in between. What we simply have found is the Federal Government has large, centralized bureaucracies that do our land management process that no longer meet the needs of people, but, rather, they hide behind rules and policies and regulations which make them safe for them. But they don't actually help people, which requires sometimes people to be flexible and think outside the proverbial box.

The island in Florida that Mr. MILLER was just referring to was given by Florida to the government, and the government gave it back to Florida before I was born—and that has been a while. But the concept here is that the government does not own this land. They don't need it, they don't use it, but they still wish to control it—it doesn't matter why; they still do—and there is no purpose for that.

It is ludicrous that the Congressman from Alaska must come down here and write a law to transfer 3 acres of land in Anchorage back to the city of Anchorage so it can be used to benefit the people of Anchorage. Again, land the Federal Government does not own, they don't need, they don't use, but they still wish in some way to control it.

The grazers in Idaho who produce the stuff from which Big Macs and Whoppers are made—and I know that from personal experience, obviously—only wanted to be treated fairly and consistently and with consideration for the needs so they can be successful in their trade.

Kayakers in Wyoming simply want the ability to recreate on an area that was designed for recreation without being specifically prohibited by rules and regulations that were to insist and support a policy that we have found no longer is necessary and does not work.

If these 10 bills were to pass, unfortunately it doesn't solve all our problems. Because all these 10 bills do is

show a tip of the proverbial iceberg of the problems that we face in dealing with land management when it comes from a large, centralized bureaucracy and we no longer put our primary interest in helping people meet their needs.

Mr. Chairman, when the Berlin Wall fell down, the entire world realized that large, centralized bureaucracies of the communist world failed.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Eastern Europe learned that, entrepreneurs learned that. They found that lean, aggressive companies simply take market share from the lumbering corporate products of the past.

Everyone realized that a large, centralized bureaucratic program is ineffective, except here in Washington, D.C., where we still address every problem with an effort to try and build something that is going to be controlled here in the center of all wisdom that is large, that is centralized, and that is bureaucratic. It is mind-boggling that the Nation who defeated the Soviet Union with creativity and freedom still decides to solve all problems and all management issues by going back to a Soviet-styled agency program and concept.

This bill is needed because it affects people throughout the length and breadth of this country, and it is only the beginning of what we need to do to set it right and make sure that our highest priority is people, not rules and regulations.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We have heard our colleagues on the other side of the aisle make fun of the fact that the United States Congress has to be involved in such unimportant matters as the conveyance of Federal land, this great Nation defeated that the Soviet Union, and we allude to the fact that we have a Soviet-style centralized government with regard to land management in this country. I think that my colleagues need to take that up with the Framers of the Constitution.

Article IV of that document states:

The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

So I am sorry if the majority finds this burdensome, but the Framers apparently felt that Federal property was valuable and that Congress should play a role in determining what to do with it.

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Let's be clear: we are talking here about Federal property, that is, prop-

erty owned by all Americans. The land in question in Escambia County, Florida; Anchorage, Alaska; Fernley, Nevada; Cape Hatteras, North Carolina; Yellowstone and Grand Teton and the land on which Federal grazing occurs, the land impacted by this package is Federal land, owned by each and every American taxpayer.

In the case of these land transfers, the Federal Government gave the land, gave it to a local community as a means of Federal support, and the only requirement, in most cases, was that the land always be used for public purposes. As long as it is a park or a school or a fire station, it is yours, for free.

What these bills do is end those public purpose requirements. The communities want to use these lands for private profit. They want to close them to the public, in many cases.

This is not a land grab by Uncle Sam. This is not some silly scheme by the Feds to harm local communities and to use their power to hold down the taxpayers and keep the public out. This is a community asking to make money off land that was owned by all Americans, and it is the job of Congress to decide if that is a good idea or not.

Let's put one other misleading claim to rest. While Republicans claim the Federal Government owns too much land, the historic trend has been one of divestiture and fragmentation.

As recently as the late 1860s, the Federal Government owned 1.8 billion of the 2.3 billion acres in the contiguous United States. Grants to States, homesteaders, land-grant colleges, railroads and others settling in the Alaska and the West have reduced Federal land ownership by roughly 640 million acres to date.

We have been giving land away for centuries, not buying it up. Today we have a whole series of bills seeking more Federal land, and we owe it to the American people—the American people require that we consider this carefully, and the Constitution requires that Congress be empowered to consider these carefully.

These mischaracterizations are not helpful in the discussions. These bills are not in the best interest of the American people, on the merits alone, and using misinformation to claim otherwise is wrong.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, could I inquire how much time is on both sides?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona has 9½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I will advise my friend that, at this point, I have no more requests for time, and I am prepared to close if the gentleman is prepared to close.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of the time.

I want to respect the chairman. The chairman is correct. The Natural Resources Committee, of which I am a proud member, appears to be very busy passing bills.

But let's be clear: the Republican majority, time and time again, acts unilaterally, alone, without meaningful cooperation with the minority in this legislation, in the House, and with the Senate and with the administration.

On suspensions, the majority insists on ridiculous limitations that prevent consideration of many measures designed to conserve lands, and, of course, they insist on a more than 3:1 ratio of their legislation to the minority's legislation, to ours. No wonder the number of suspensions is lagging behind what we have done in the past.

As to the bills we have considered under a rule, most of them are almost identical repeats of the bills that were passed in the House last Congress, but because they were opposed by the Senate and the administration, they went nowhere.

To keep passing the same, dead-on-arrival bills over and over again to make the committee look busy should not be mistaken for legislating. The idea is to work on legislation that can bring bills of a bipartisan nature, that the Senate will deal with and, more importantly, that the administration will sign.

That is the legislation my side of the aisle looks forward to working on and, in a very serious manner, improving the operation of Interior, improving the operation of our public lands, and creating transparency at all levels.

We want to do that, and we look forward to working with the majority and with our esteemed chairman in that direction.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Chairman, I was very pleased when I heard my good friend from Arizona congratulate the work of the committee until I heard his explanation of what the committee did, and then I had to have a bit of a caution there.

I just want to point out that when the gentleman complains about the ratio of majority and minority, we are following precisely the same example when roles were reversed. In other words, when the Democrats were in the majority, when we were in the minority, we had the same ratio. So we are following that pretty much to the same, and that has been the tradition in this House for a long period of time.

The difference, however, I would say, Mr. Chairman, is that the committee has been much more productive when we have been in control, meaning that

there has been more legislation moving that the Democrats would like.

I want to make this point also. There are Democrat and Republican suspension bills that are both sitting in the Senate that haven't been acted on, and I think that the Senate needs to act on those pieces of legislation.

Mr. Chairman, this is an important piece of legislation. All of these titles have passed out of the committee and were amalgamated here, but they had all been acted on. They all had input in subcommittee in some way or the other within the committee.

So I wanted to make that point. This is not legislation that was pulled out of the air. It was legislation that was deliberated upon within the committee.

I also want to mention, even though the Statement of Administration Policy was negative in some parts of the bill, there is no veto threat by the administration on this piece of legislation. They expressed concerns, as is understandable, on certain parts of it. I understand that, but there is no veto threat at all whatsoever in what the administration has said.

Finally, let me make this observation, and we hear this over and over and over, especially as it relates to the NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act.

Now, I am going to acknowledge that NEPA certainly has its place within our statutes and how we conduct policy, particularly on public land, but here is where we part company, Mr. Chairman.

We part company because my friends on the other side of the aisle always advocate that, even before Congress acts, NEPA should be the judge of whatever that action is.

Now, I have to tell you, Mr. Chairman, I think that is contrary to what our role is here. Congress created NEPA, meaning that Congress is the one who decides what the law of the land is. Within these bills, we are deciding what the law of the land is, and NEPA should not get in front of our actions.

To hear my friends on the other side of the aisle argue, they are saying over and over and over again that NEPA should be between Congress acting on a law.

Wait a minute. We are putting regulations before Congress should be doing their constitutional duty and enacting statutes?

I am sorry, Mr. Chairman; I part company with that philosophy, yet that is exactly what we hear over and over and over from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

We are the ones that are given authority by the Constitution to make statutes. We believe that that should be the law, and then regulations follow, not the other way around. But that is what we hear over and over and over again.

So, Mr. Chairman, this is a good piece of legislation. As I mentioned, it addresses areas that are certain parochial and certain parts of the country, as my colleague from Utah said, all the way from Florida to Alaska.

I think it is responsible legislation, and I think it deserves our support.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2954, the so-called "Public Access and Lands Improvement Act." While there are some provisions in this bill that I think many of us could support, most of its titles include unacceptable waivers of environmental law and giveaways to private interests.

The bill bypasses carefully balanced processes for transferring federal lands while protecting access and value for taxpayers, reverses a scientifically-based land management decision, and waives environmental protections and local consultation for certain land for timber harvests and grazing.

As with many of the bills we've seen on the Floor this week, H.R. 2954 makes sweeping and unnecessary changes to existing law that disrupt the balance necessary to manage our public lands in the best interest of American taxpayers. By waiving scientific review and local consultation, this cobbled-together omnibus makes ill-considered decisions about the future of public resources. I urge a no vote.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-35. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2954

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Public Access and Lands Improvement Act".

TITLE I—SANTA ROSA ISLAND TITLE FAIRNESS AND LAND PRESERVATION ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Santa Rosa Island Title Fairness and Land Preservation Act".

SEC. 102. CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY.

(a) **CONVEYANCE FREE OF RESTRICTIONS.**—Notwithstanding the restrictions on conveyance of property located on Santa Rosa Island, Florida, contained in the Act of July 30, 1946 (chapter 699; 70 Stat. 712), and the deed to the property from the United States to Escambia County, Florida, dated January 15, 1947, Escambia County may, at its discretion, convey or otherwise dispose of all of its right, title, and interest (in whole or in part), in and to any portion of the property that was conveyed to it pursuant to that Act and deed, to any person or entity, free from any restriction on conveyance or reconveyance imposed by the United States in

that Act or deed. Any conveyance under this subsection shall be subject to the conditions set forth in subsection (c).

(b) **LEASEHOLD INTERESTS.**—No person or entity holding a leasehold interest in the property as of the date of the enactment of this Act shall be required to involuntarily accept a fee interest in lieu of their leasehold interest in the property.

(c) **CONDITIONS.**—Any conveyance under subsection (a) shall be subject to the following conditions:

(1) Not later than two calendar years after the date of the enactment of this Act, Escambia County shall convey to Santa Rosa County all right, title, and interest held in and to any portion of the property that was conveyed to Escambia County under the Act and deed that fall in the jurisdictional boundaries of Santa Rosa County, Florida. The conveyance by Escambia County to Santa Rosa County shall be absolute and shall terminate any subjugation of Santa Rosa County to Escambia County or any regulation of Santa Rosa County by Escambia County. Santa Rosa County shall not be required to pay any sum for the subject property other than actual costs associated with the conveyance.

(2) Santa Rosa County or any other person to which property is conveyed under this title may reconvey property, or any portion of property, conveyed to it under this section.

(3) For all properties defined under subsection (a) the leaseholders, or owners are free to pursue incorporation, annexation, or any other governmental status so long as all other legal conditions required for doing so are followed.

(4) Each property defined under subsection (a) is under the jurisdiction of the county and any other local government entity in which the property is located.

(5) Any proceeds from the conveyance of any property defined under subsection (a) by Escambia County or Santa Rosa County, other than direct and incidental costs associated with such conveyance, shall be considered windfall profits and shall revert to the United States.

(6) Escambia County and Santa Rosa County shall in perpetuity preserve those areas on Santa Rosa Island currently dedicated to conservation, preservation, public, recreation, access and public parking in accordance with resolutions heretofore adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of each respective county.

(d) **DETERMINATION OF COMPLIANCE.**—Escambia County and Santa Rosa County shall have no deadline or requirement to make any conveyance or reconveyance of any property defined under subsection (a) other than the conveyance required under subsection (c)(1). Each county may establish terms for conveyance or reconveyance, subject to the conditions set forth in this title and applicable State law.

TITLE II—ANCHORAGE LAND CONVEYANCE ACT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Anchorage Land Conveyance Act of 2014”.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **CITY.**—The term “City” means the city of Anchorage, Alaska.

(2) **NON-FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “non-Federal land” means certain parcels of land located in the City and owned by the City, which are more particularly described as follows:

(A) Block 42, Original Townsite of Anchorage, Anchorage Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska, consisting of approximately 1.93 acres, commonly known as the Egan Center, Petrovich Park, and Old City Hall.

(B) Lots 9, 10, and 11, Block 66, Original Townsite of Anchorage, Anchorage Recording

District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska, consisting of approximately 0.48 acres, commonly known as the parking lot at 7th Avenue and I Street.

(C) Lot 13, Block 15, Original Townsite of Anchorage, Anchorage Recording District, Third Judicial District, State of Alaska, consisting of approximately 0.24 acres, an unimproved vacant lot located at H Street and Christensen Drive.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 203. CONVEYANCE OF REVERSIONARY INTERESTS, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall convey to the City, without consideration, the reversionary interests of the United States in and to the non-Federal land for the purpose of unencumbering the title to the non-Federal land to enable economic development of the non-Federal land.

(b) **LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.**—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the exact legal descriptions of the non-Federal land shall be determined in a manner satisfactory to the Secretary.

(c) **ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.**—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions to the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

(d) **COSTS.**—The City shall pay all costs associated with the conveyance under subsection (a), including the costs of any surveys, recording costs, and other reasonable costs.

TITLE III—FERNLEY ECONOMIC SELF-DETERMINATION ACT

SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **CITY.**—The term “City” means the City of Fernley, Nevada.

(2) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “Federal land” means the approximately 9,407 acres of land located in the City of Fernley, Nevada, that is identified by the Secretary and the City for conveyance under this title.

(3) **MAP.**—The term “map” means the map entitled “Proposed Fernley, Nevada, Land Sales” and dated January 25, 2013.

SEC. 302. CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN FEDERAL LAND TO CITY OF FERNLEY, NEVADA.

(a) **CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.**—Subject to valid existing rights and not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary of the Interior receives an offer from the City to purchase the Federal land depicted on the map, the Secretary, acting through the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Reclamation, shall convey, notwithstanding the land use planning requirements of sections 202 and 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712, 1713), to the City in exchange for consideration in an amount equal to the fair market value of the Federal land, all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to such Federal land.

(b) **APPRAISAL TO DETERMINE FAIR MARKET VALUE.**—The Secretary shall determine the fair market value of the Federal land to be conveyed—

(1) in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

(2) based on an appraisal that is conducted in accordance with nationally recognized appraisal standards, including—

(A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition; and

(B) the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

(c) **AVAILABILITY OF MAP.**—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(d) **RESERVATION OF EASEMENTS AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY.**—The City and the Bureau of Reclamation may retain easements or rights-of-way on the Federal land to be conveyed, including easements or rights-of-way the Bureau of Reclamation determines are necessary to carry out—

(1) the operation and maintenance of the Truckee Canal; or

(2) the Newlands Project.

(e) **COSTS.**—The City shall, at closing for the conveyance authorized under subsection (a), pay or reimburse the Secretary, as appropriate, for the reasonable transaction and administrative personnel costs associated with the conveyance authorized under such subsection, including the costs of appraisal, title searches, maps, and boundary and cadastral surveys.

(f) **CONVEYANCE NOT A MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION.**—A conveyance or a combination of conveyances made under this section shall not be considered a major Federal action for purposes of section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)).

SEC. 303. RELEASE OF UNITED STATES.

Upon making the conveyance under section 302, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the United States is released from any and all liabilities or claims of any kind or nature arising from the presence, release, or threat of release of any hazardous substance, pollutant, contaminant, petroleum product (or derivative of a petroleum product of any kind), solid waste, mine materials or mining related features (including tailings, overburden, waste rock, mill remnants, pits, or other hazards resulting from the presence of mining related features) on the Federal land in existence on or before the date of the conveyance.

SEC. 304. WITHDRAWAL.

Subject to valid existing rights, the Federal land to be conveyed under section 302 of this title shall be withdrawn from all forms of—

(1) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(3) disposition under the mineral leasing, mineral materials, and geothermal leasing laws.

TITLE IV—LAND DISPOSAL TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY ACT

SEC. 401. PROHIBITION ON ACQUISITION OF LAND.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This title may be cited as the “Land Disposal Transparency and Efficiency Act”.

(b) **PROHIBITION ON ACQUISITION OF LAND.**—No land or interests in land may be added by acquisition, donation, transfer of administrative jurisdiction, or otherwise to the inventory of land and interests in land administered by the Bureau of Land Management until a centralized database of all lands identified as suitable for disposal by Resource Management Plans for lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau is easily accessible to the public on a website of the Bureau. The database required under this subsection shall be updated and maintained to reflect changes in the status of lands identified for disposal under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall provide to the Committee on Natural Resources in the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources in the Senate a report detailing the status and timing for completion of the database required by subsection (b).

TITLE V—PRESERVING ACCESS TO CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE RECREATIONAL AREA ACT

SEC. 501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Preserving Access to Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area Act”.

SEC. 502. REINSTATEMENT OF INTERIM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY.

(a) **MANAGEMENT.**—After the date of the enactment of this Act, Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area shall be managed in accordance with the Interim Protected Species Management Strategy/Environmental Assessment issued by the National Park Service on June 13, 2007, for the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area, North Carolina, unless the Secretary of the Interior (hereafter in this title referred to as the “Secretary”) issues a new final rule that meets the requirements set forth in section 503.

(b) **RESTRICTIONS.**—The Secretary shall not impose any additional restrictions on pedestrian or motorized vehicular access to any portion of Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area for species protection beyond those in the Interim Management Strategy, other than as specifically authorized pursuant to section 503 of this title.

SEC. 503. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO CAPE HATTERAS NATIONAL SEASHORE RECREATIONAL AREA FOR SPECIES PROTECTION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—If, based on peer-reviewed science and after public comment, the Secretary determines that additional restrictions on access to a portion of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area are necessary to protect species listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Secretary may only restrict, by limitation, closure, buffer, or otherwise, pedestrian and motorized vehicular access for recreational activities for the shortest possible time and on the smallest possible portions of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area.

(b) **LIMITATION ON RESTRICTIONS.**—Restrictions imposed under this section for protection of species listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) shall not be greater than the restrictions in effect for that species at any other National Seashore.

(c) **CORRIDORS AROUND CLOSURES.**—To the maximum extent possible, the Secretary shall designate pedestrian and vehicular corridors of minimal distance on the beach or interdunal area around closures implemented under this section to allow access to areas not closed.

SEC. 504. INAPPLICABILITY OF FINAL RULE AND CONSENT DECREE.

(a) **FINAL RULE.**—The final rule titled “Special Regulations, Areas of the National Park System, Cape Hatteras National Seashore—Off-Road Vehicle Management” (77 Fed. Reg. 3123–3144) shall have no force or effect after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **CONSENT DECREE.**—The April 30, 2008, consent decree filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina regarding off-road vehicle use at Cape Hatteras National Seashore in North Carolina shall not apply after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT HERITAGE PROTECTION ACT**SEC. 601. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the “Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act”.

SEC. 602. CLARIFICATION OF LEGAL AUTHORITY OF GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT.

(a) **LEGAL AUTHORITY OF LOOKOUT.**—Section 4(b) of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 (Public Law 98–339; 98 Stat. 300; 16 U.S.C. 1131 note) is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: “, and except that with respect to the lands described in section 3(5), the designation of such lands as a wilderness area shall not preclude the operation and maintenance of Green Mountain Lookout.”

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in

the enactment of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984.

SEC. 603. PRESERVATION OF GREEN MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT LOCATION.

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, may not move Green Mountain Lookout from its current location on Green Mountain in the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest unless the Secretary determines that moving Green Mountain Lookout is necessary to preserve the Lookout or to ensure the safety of individuals on or around Green Mountain. If the Secretary makes such a determination, the Secretary shall move the Green Mountain Lookout to a location outside of the lands described in section 3(5) of the Washington State Wilderness Act of 1984 and designated as a wilderness area in section 4(b) of such Act.

TITLE VII—RIVER PADDLING PROTECTION ACT**SEC. 701. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the “River Paddling Protection Act”.

SEC. 702. REGULATIONS SUPERSEDED.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The rivers and streams of Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park shall be open to hand-propelled vessels as determined by the director of the National Park Service within 3 years of the date of enactment of this Act. Beginning on the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the following regulations shall have no the force or effect regarding closing rivers and streams of Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park to hand-propelled vessels:

(1) Section 7.13(d)(4)(ii) of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, regarding vessels on streams and rivers in Yellowstone National Park.

(2) Section 7.22(e)(3) of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, regarding vessels on lakes and rivers in Grand Teton National Park.

(b) **COORDINATION OF RECREATIONAL USE.**—The Fish and Wildlife Service shall coordinate any recreational use of hand-propelled vessels on the Gros Ventre River within the National Elk Refuge with Grand Teton National Park to ensure such use is consistent with the requirements of the National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act.

TITLE VIII—GRAZING IMPROVEMENT ACT**SEC. 801. SHORT TITLE.**

This title may be cited as the “Grazing Improvement Act”.

SEC. 802. TERMS OF GRAZING PERMITS AND LEASES.

Section 402 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1752) is amended—

(1) by striking “ten years” each place it appears and inserting “20 years”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “or” at the end of each of paragraphs (1) and (2);

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

(C) by adding at the end the following: “(4) the initial environmental analysis under National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) regarding a grazing allotment, permit, or lease has not been completed.”;

and

(3) after subsection (h), insert the following new subsection:

“(i) Only applicants, permittees and lessees whose interest in grazing livestock is directly affected by a final grazing decision may appeal the decision to an administrative law judge.”

SEC. 803. RENEWAL, TRANSFER, AND REISSUANCE OF GRAZING PERMITS AND LEASES.

(a) **AMENDMENT.**—Title IV of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43

U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 405. RENEWAL, TRANSFER, AND REISSUANCE OF GRAZING PERMITS AND LEASES.

“(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) **CURRENT GRAZING MANAGEMENT.**—The term ‘current grazing management’ means grazing in accordance with the terms and conditions of an existing permit or lease and includes any modifications that are consistent with an applicable Department of Interior resource management plan or Department of Agriculture land use plan.

“(2) **SECRETARY CONCERNED.**—The term ‘Secretary concerned’ means—

“(A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System land; and

“(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.

“(b) **RENEWAL, TRANSFER, REISSUANCE, AND PENDING PROCESSING.**—A grazing permit or lease issued by the Secretary of the Interior, or a grazing permit issued by the Secretary of Agriculture regarding National Forest System land, that expires, is transferred, or is waived shall be renewed or reissued under, as appropriate—

“(1) section 402;

“(2) section 19 of the Act of April 24, 1950 (commonly known as the ‘Granger-Thye Act’; 16 U.S.C. 5801);

“(3) title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (7 U.S.C. 1010 et seq.); or

“(4) section 510 the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa–50).

“(c) **TERMS; CONDITIONS.**—The terms and conditions (except the termination date) contained in an expired, transferred, or waived permit or lease described in subsection (b) shall continue in effect under a renewed or reissued permit or lease until the date on which the Secretary concerned completes the processing of the renewed or reissued permit or lease that is the subject of the expired, transferred, or waived permit or lease, in compliance with each applicable law.

“(d) **CANCELLATION; SUSPENSION; MODIFICATION.**—Notwithstanding subsection (c), a permit or lease described in subsection (b) may be cancelled, suspended, or modified in accordance with applicable law.

“(e) **RENEWAL TRANSFER REISSUANCE AFTER PROCESSING.**—When the Secretary concerned has completed the processing of the renewed or reissued permit or lease that is the subject of the expired, transferred, or waived permit or lease, the Secretary concerned shall renew or reissue the permit or lease for a term of 20 years after completion of processing.

“(f) **COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT OF 1969.**—The renewal, reissuance, or transfer of a grazing permit or lease by the Secretary concerned shall be categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement if—

“(1) the decision continues to renew, reissue, or transfer the current grazing management of the allotment;

“(2) monitoring of the allotment has indicated that the current grazing management has met, or has satisfactorily progressed towards meeting, objectives contained in the land use and resource management plan of the allotment, as determined by the Secretary concerned; or

“(3) the decision is consistent with the policy of the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture, as appropriate, regarding extraordinary circumstances.

“(g) **PRIORITY AND TIMING FOR COMPLETING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES.**—The Secretary concerned, in the sole discretion of the Secretary concerned, shall determine the priority and timing for completing each required environmental

analysis regarding any grazing allotment, permit, or lease based on the environmental significance of the allotment, permit, or lease and available funding for that purpose.

“(h) NEPA EXEMPTIONS.—The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall not apply to the following:

“(1) Crossing and trailing authorizations of domestic livestock.

“(2) Transfer of grazing preference.

“(3) Range improvements as defined under 43 U.S.C. 315c and 16 U.S.C. 580h.”

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 is amended by adding after the item for section 404, the following:

“Sec. 405. Renewal, transfer, and reissuance of grazing permits and leases.”

TITLE IX—RIM FIRE EMERGENCY SALVAGE ACT

SEC. 901. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Rim Fire Emergency Salvage Act”.

SEC. 902. EXPEDITED SALVAGE TIMBER SALES IN RESPONSE TO THE CALIFORNIA RIM FIRE.

(a) SALVAGE TIMBER SALES REQUIRED.—As part of the restoration and rehabilitation activities undertaken on the lands within the Stanislaus National Forest and the Bureau of Land Management lands adversely impacted by the 2013 Rim Fire in California, the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to affected Stanislaus National Forest lands, and the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to affected Bureau of Land Management lands, shall promptly plan and implement salvage timber sales of dead, damaged, or downed timber resulting from that wildfire.

(b) EXPEDITED IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) LEGAL SUFFICIENCY.—Due to the extraordinary severity of the Rim Fire occurring on the Federal lands described in subsection (a), salvage timber sales conducted under such subsection shall proceed immediately and to completion notwithstanding any other provision of law, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a), the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Salvage timber sales conducted under subsection (a) shall not be subject to—

(A) administrative review, including, in the case of the Forest Service, the notice, comment, and appeal requirements of section 322 of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1993 (Public Law 102-381; 16 U.S.C. 1612 note); or

(B) judicial review in any court of the United States.

TITLE X—CHESAPEAKE BAY ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECOVERY ACT

SEC. 1001. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2014”.

SEC. 1002. CHESAPEAKE BAY CROSSCUT BUDGET.

(a) CROSSCUT BUDGET.—The Director, in consultation with the Chesapeake Executive Council, the chief executive of each Chesapeake Bay State, and the Chesapeake Bay Commission, shall submit to Congress a financial report containing—

(1) an interagency crosscut budget that displays—

(A) the proposed funding for any Federal restoration activity to be carried out in the succeeding fiscal year, including any planned interagency or intra-agency transfer, for each of

the Federal agencies that carry out restoration activities;

(B) to the extent that information is available, the estimated funding for any State restoration activity to be carried out in the succeeding fiscal year;

(C) all expenditures for Federal restoration activities from the preceding 2 fiscal years, the current fiscal year, and the succeeding fiscal year; and

(D) all expenditures, to the extent that information is available, for State restoration activities during the equivalent time period described in subparagraph (C);

(2) a detailed accounting of all funds received and obligated by all Federal agencies for restoration activities during the current and preceding fiscal years, including the identification of funds which were transferred to a Chesapeake Bay State for restoration activities;

(3) to the extent that information is available, a detailed accounting from each State of all funds received and obligated from a Federal agency for restoration activities during the current and preceding fiscal years; and

(4) a description of each of the proposed Federal and State restoration activities to be carried out in the succeeding fiscal year (corresponding to those activities listed in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1)), including the—

(A) project description;

(B) current status of the project;

(C) Federal or State statutory or regulatory authority, programs, or responsible agencies;

(D) authorization level for appropriations;

(E) project timeline, including benchmarks;

(F) references to project documents;

(G) descriptions of risks and uncertainties of project implementation;

(H) adaptive management actions or framework;

(I) coordinating entities;

(J) funding history;

(K) cost sharing; and

(L) alignment with existing Chesapeake Bay Agreement and Chesapeake Executive Council goals and priorities.

(b) MINIMUM FUNDING LEVELS.—The Director shall only describe restoration activities in the report required under subsection (a) that—

(1) for Federal restoration activities, have funding amounts greater than or equal to \$100,000; and

(2) for State restoration activities, have funding amounts greater than or equal to \$50,000.

(c) DEADLINE.—The Director shall submit to Congress the report required by subsection (a) not later than 30 days after the submission by the President of the President’s annual budget to Congress.

(d) REPORT.—Copies of the financial report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted to the Committees on Appropriations, Natural Resources, Energy and Commerce, and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Appropriations, Environment and Public Works, and Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply beginning with the first fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act for which the President submits a budget to Congress.

SEC. 1003. RESTORATION THROUGH ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with other Federal and State agencies, and with the participation of stakeholders, shall develop a plan to provide technical and financial assistance to Chesapeake Bay States to employ adaptive management in carrying out restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

(b) PLAN DEVELOPMENT.—The plan referred to in subsection (a) shall include—

(1) specific and measurable objectives to improve water quality, habitat, and fisheries identified by Chesapeake Bay States;

(2) a process for stakeholder participation;

(3) monitoring, modeling, experimentation, and other research and evaluation technical assistance requested by Chesapeake Bay States;

(4) identification of State restoration activities planned by Chesapeake Bay States to attain the State’s objectives under paragraph (1);

(5) identification of Federal restoration activities that could help a Chesapeake Bay State to attain the State’s objectives under paragraph (1);

(6) recommendations for a process for modification of State and Federal restoration activities that have not attained or will not attain the specific and measurable objectives set forth under paragraph (1); and

(7) recommendations for a process for integrating and prioritizing State and Federal restoration activities and programs to which adaptive management can be applied.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—In addition to carrying out Federal restoration activities under existing authorities and funding, the Administrator shall implement the plan developed under subsection (a) by providing technical and financial assistance to Chesapeake Bay States using resources available for such purposes that are identified by the Director under section 1002.

(d) UPDATES.—The Administrator shall update the plan developed under subsection (a) every 2 years.

(e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the end of a fiscal year, the Administrator shall transmit to Congress an annual report on the implementation of the plan required under this section for such fiscal year.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall contain information about the application of adaptive management to restoration activities and programs, including level changes implemented through the process of adaptive management.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall apply to the first fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment of this Act.

(f) INCLUSION OF PLAN IN ANNUAL ACTION PLAN AND ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT.—The Administrator shall ensure that the Annual Action Plan and Annual Progress Report required by section 205 of Executive Order 13508 includes the adaptive management plan outlined in subsection (a).

SEC. 1004. INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be an Independent Evaluator for restoration activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, who shall review and report on restoration activities and the use of adaptive management in restoration activities, including on such related topics as are suggested by the Chesapeake Executive Council.

(b) APPOINTMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Independent Evaluator shall be appointed by the Administrator from among nominees submitted by the Chesapeake Executive Council.

(2) NOMINATIONS.—The Chesapeake Executive Council may submit to the Administrator 4 nominees for appointment to any vacancy in the office of the Independent Evaluator.

(c) REPORTS.—The Independent Evaluator shall submit a report to the Congress every 2 years in the findings and recommendations of reviews under this section.

(d) CHESAPEAKE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.—In this section, the term “Chesapeake Executive Council” has the meaning given that term by section 307 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration Authorization Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-567; 15 U.S.C. 1511d).

SEC. 1005. DEFINITIONS.

In this title, the following definitions apply:

(1) **ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT.**—The term “adaptive management” means a type of natural resource management in which project and program decisions are made as part of an ongoing science-based process. Adaptive management involves testing, monitoring, and evaluating applied strategies and incorporating new knowledge into programs and restoration activities that are based on scientific findings and the needs of society. Results are used to modify management policy, strategies, practices, programs, and restoration activities.

(2) **ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(3) **CHESAPEAKE BAY STATE.**—The term “Chesapeake Bay State” or “State” means the States of Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, and New York, the Commonwealths of Virginia and Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia.

(4) **CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED.**—The term “Chesapeake Bay watershed” means the Chesapeake Bay and the geographic area, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, consisting of 36 tributary basins, within the Chesapeake Bay States, through which precipitation drains into the Chesapeake Bay.

(5) **CHIEF EXECUTIVE.**—The term “chief executive” means, in the case of a State or Commonwealth, the Governor of each such State or Commonwealth and, in the case of the District of Columbia, the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

(6) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(7) **STATE RESTORATION ACTIVITIES.**—The term “State restoration activities” means any State programs or projects carried out under State authority that directly or indirectly protect, conserve, or restore living resources, habitat, water resources, or water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including programs or projects that promote responsible land use, stewardship, and community engagement in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Restoration activities may be categorized as follows:

- (A) Physical restoration.
- (B) Planning.
- (C) Feasibility studies.
- (D) Scientific research.
- (E) Monitoring.
- (F) Education.
- (G) Infrastructure development.

(8) **FEDERAL RESTORATION ACTIVITIES.**—The term “Federal restoration activities” means any Federal programs or projects carried out under existing Federal authority that directly or indirectly protect, conserve, or restore living resources, habitat, water resources, or water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including programs or projects that provide financial and technical assistance to promote responsible land use, stewardship, and community engagement in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Restoration activities may be categorized as follows:

- (A) Physical restoration.
- (B) Planning.
- (C) Feasibility studies.
- (D) Scientific research.
- (E) Monitoring.
- (F) Education.
- (G) Infrastructure development.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 113-340. Each such amendment may be of-

ferred only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 113-340.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike title IV.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is straightforward. It strikes title IV of the bill. Title IV is the text of H.R. 2095, introduced by my friend from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), chairman of the Public Land Subcommittee.

The title would prohibit BLM from acquiring additional land until the agency creates a publicly accessible database that inventories current landholdings and identifies land suitable for disposal.

Much of the bill we are considering today seeks to undermine the public planning process and give away Federal land free of charge. This land belongs to the American people, and if we are going to be in the business of giving it away, we should at least not hinder our ability to acquire more land when it makes sense to do so.

Let me see if I understand this. I do not oppose the idea of creating a database that catalogs Federal landholdings. I do not oppose the idea of transparency at BLM, or any other government agency for that matter, but putting an arbitrary condition on land acquisition authority is just bad policy.

The true intent of the title is not to create a database. The intent is to limit land acquisition.

The majority has been clear about their agenda to limit expansion of the Federal estate, and the bill we are considering today is just another attempt to advance that priority. It is a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Through the public land use planning process, BLM keeps an inventory of its land. Land managers, from the folks down the street in the Department of the Interior building to the field staff all over the country, know how much land the Federal Government owns.

In fact, the Federal Land and Policy Management Act, also known as the

BLM's Organic Act, provides clear direction and authority for cataloging and the inventory of Federal lands. FLPMA also provides the agency with authority to dispose of lands deemed worthy for disposal through the public planning process.

Like I mentioned before, I don't see a problem with creating a database of information available in BLM's Resource Management Plans. The problem is with limiting authority for land acquisition.

Land acquisition authority makes the management of Federal lands more efficient. It is not the bogeyman that the sponsors of the bill claim. Federal land managers acquire land in order to clean up the checkerboard pattern of ownership, consolidating Federal holdings and making them easier to manage.

Limiting this authority will have the consequence of making the management of Federal lands more difficult and less efficient.

Land is also acquired when it makes sense for conservation and resource management purposes. The Federal Government is the steward of some of our Nation's most pristine and treasured resources. There are times when it makes sense to add to national parks or national monuments to make sure that they have the resources and the protection that they merit.

Popular programs like the Land and Water Conservation Fund have helped conserve millions of acres that provide all of our constituents with opportunities to hike, hunt, fish, and pursue other recreational activities.

If we want to ensure that efficient management of Federal land, limiting land acquisition authority is a step in the wrong direction. My amendment makes sure that this important tool is not jeopardized, and I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1015

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I appreciate very much the gentleman from Arizona. I do enjoy working with him on the subcommittee. And I have to admit, at this stage of the game, I am a little bit perplexed about the amendment.

The gentleman purports that the idea of transparency and keeping a database is not a bad idea. He just objects to the enforcement mechanism we put in there. If that were the case, I would wonder why he didn't just strike the enforcement mechanism out or come up with a substitute enforcement mechanism. I am not bound to this particular one. Had there been a date certain or some other ideas, I may even

have accepted that as a friendly approach to try to help this particular title. But, instead, the amendment strikes everything. It strikes the very essence of forcing them to actually come up with a database that is there.

During the Clinton administration—and that has been a while ago—the Interior Department did come up with a database of lands that were available for disposal, that were needless, that were useless for the government. We have the data. The only problem is it is almost impossible to get to the data. The data is found in books in over 150 different local offices. It would take a huge road trip to try to come up with just the information.

This is now 2014. The idea that the BLM cannot actually put this data on a Web site that is available to everybody is, quite frankly, not acceptable. That they are too busy to do this is simply not acceptable.

All this says is the data is there. Put the data on a Web site so it is transparent and it is viewable for everybody to see.

And then we said, since there has been a whole lot of dragging their feet since the Clinton administration in trying to do this, we will give you some incentive. You can't buy new land until you put on this Web site so people can see what land is available for disposal. It does not stop them from managing the land for multiple use or for non-multiple use or any other reason. It simply gives them an incentive to go ahead and do it.

Like I said, if your goal was to change the incentive, I would have been amenable to discussions on that. I will still be amenable to discussions on that. But this amendment strikes the entire thing, not just the enforcement provision. For that reason, I would oppose the amendment and urge my colleagues to vote "no."

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, in my amendment, we are also talking about the Federal Government having the authority to buy land from willing sellers. And when you bar the Federal Government from trying to buy land, then what happens? The seller still wants to sell. So who steps up? Developers, other high-intensity uses around areas that should be protected.

When you look at Uncle Sam as a buyer for political purposes, you empower developers and others that want the land for completely different uses; and before you know it, an area that you wanted to conserve and preserve is gone. This is bad policy. And to remove the authority from the Federal Government of being able to purchase land from willing sellers I think is a step too far.

And with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman

from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN) to show how this amendment would impact the Chesapeake Bay area.

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment and to speak in support of H.R. 2954, the Public Access and Lands Improvement Act.

I wish to extend my thanks to the gentleman from Washington, Chairman DOC HASTINGS, for his leadership in bringing this important package of bills from the Natural Resources Committee to the House floor.

Today, I want to highlight how this legislation will aid in the cleanup of one of our prized historic resources, the Chesapeake Bay. This body of water provides habitat for plants and animals, resources that drive local economies, recreation, and a way of life for many that live on and around its shores.

I am the proud author of title X of this bill, the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act. These provisions would implement and strengthen management techniques like crosscut budgeting and adaptive management to ensure we get more bang for our buck and continue to make progress in Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts.

These techniques will ensure that we are coordinating how restoration dollars are spent and making sure that everyone understands how individual projects fit into the bigger picture. That way, we are not duplicating efforts, spending money we don't need to, or worse, working at cross-purposes.

During the 112th Congress, the House passed similar legislation as part of H.R. 2578, the Conservation and Economic Growth Act. More recently, identical language was adopted by voice vote and included in the House version of the farm bill. These provisions would implement and strengthen management techniques to ensure, again, we get more bang for our buck and progress in the Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts continue and are measurable. Crosscut budgeting and adaptive management and an independent evaluator should be key components for the complex restoration efforts for our Chesapeake Bay.

I encourage my colleagues to join with me and support H.R. 2954.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MRS. LUMMIS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 113-340.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I have an amendment at the desk, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 17, strike lines 3 through 12.

Page 17, line 13, strike "(3)" and insert "(2)".

Page 17, line 14, strike "subsection" and insert "subsections".

Page 17, line 17, after "decision" insert "concerning renewal, transfer or reissuance of a grazing permit or lease".

Page 17, line 18, before the first period insert "or appeal officer as applicable".

Page 18, strike lines 7 through 10 and insert "existing permit or lease".

Page 20, line 15, after "the" insert "applicable".

Page 20, line 15, strike "and" and insert "or".

Page 20, strike line 22 through page 21, line 4, and insert the following:

"(g) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS.—

"(1) The Secretary concerned, in the sole discretion of the Secretary concerned, shall determine the priority and timing for completing required environmental reviews regarding any grazing allotment, permit, or lease based on the environmental significance of the allotment, permit, or lease and available funding for that purpose.

"(2) The Secretary concerned shall seek to conduct environmental reviews on an allotment or multiple allotment basis, to the extent practicable, for purposes of compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and other applicable laws.

Page 21, line 12, after the first period, insert the following

"(i) TEMPORARY TRAILING AND CROSSING.—

"(1) Any application for temporary trailing or crossing that has been submitted in a timely manner or not less than 30 days prior to the anticipated trailing or crossing shall be granted, modified or denied not less than fifteen days prior to the date of requested crossing or trailing. The minimum times specified in this subsection shall not preclude the approval of an application in a shorter time where an immediate need exists.

"(2) Temporary trailing or crossing authorizations across lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service system of lands shall not be subject to protest or appeal except by the applicant or an affected permittee or lessee.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am offering this amendment with Representative LABRADOR after discussions with our local agriculture producers and the Public Lands Council on some needed adjustments to the underlying bill.

This amendment includes some conforming language to the Senate version of the Grazing Improvement Act that was marked up in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee last November. This includes allowing the Secretary to consolidate environmental

reviews of allotments in order to reduce the backlog on permit and lease renewals.

The amendment clarifies the definition of current grazing management to the common sense wording of “the terms and conditions of an existing permit or lease.” It also clarifies that only those directly affected by the renewal, transfer, or reissuance of a permit or lease may appeal a final grazing decision.

Lastly, this amendment addresses some concerns with how the Federal land agencies treat temporary crossings and trailing. While the underlying bill exempts all crossing and trailing of domestic livestock from the National Environmental Policy Act, this amendment clarifies that temporary applications and those where an immediate need exists will receive a timely response from the agency. It also states that these authorizations are not subject to protest or appeal, except by affected parties.

Our producers’ normal business operations require the ability to cross and trail livestock. It is often necessary to remain in compliance with their grazing permits. Temporary trailing has a de minimis impact on the range, and approval should be an administrative action with a quick turnaround time.

Weather, changes in grazing patterns, and even requests by Federal land agencies can all require trailing unexpectedly. For example, a hailstorm could wipe out a stand of grass in an hour. A devastating grasshopper infestation can change the grazing conditions on the ground. Those kinds of things require quick response to get cattle or sheep to a different pasture to keep that grass stand healthy. We need to provide the flexibility for our Federal land agencies to approve temporary requests.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support the Lummis-Labrador amendment and the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. This amendment attempts to conform with the Senate language related to the Grazing Improvement Act, but two wrongs don’t necessarily make a right. The language is still problematic.

I thank the sponsors for this amendment and for this opportunity to talk a little bit more about public land grazing.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, title VIII attempts to address one issue related to public lands grazing, the backlog of permit renewals, but it fails to take on the larger issue of below-market grazing fees.

The Federal Government charges \$1.35 per month per animal unit on Federal lands. If we are going to con-

sider legislation that waives NEPA and extends the tenure of grazing permits, almost doubles the number of years, we also have to review the formula for grazing fees.

The State of Idaho charges \$12 to \$14 per month to graze on State lands. In Arizona, we charge \$8 to \$9 per month. Washington State charges \$12 per month; Nevada, \$12.50 per month; California, over \$16 per month.

We often hear from the majority that the States do a better job of managing their lands. In this case, I would agree. The States do a better job of making sure their taxpayers get a fair return on the use of their State lands, while Federal taxpayers are stuck subsidizing the practice of grazing on public lands.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), the chairman of our Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

I support this amendment. I think the brief part of this debate here points out the importance of having flexibility on the local level rather than having a one-size-fits-all; because there are conditions that can come up in grazing in various States, and those managers need that flexibility, which is, I think, a common thread that we talk about all the time when we talk about Federal land management. So I think this amendment adds very much to the Labrador title of the bill, and I intend to support it.

Mr. GRIJALVA. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, in closing, I would like to point out something about the difference between State lands and Federal lands. I ran my State’s Office of State Lands and Investments for a time, and the rights that are conveyed by States on lands to use their lands are very different than the rights that are conveyed by the Federal Government to users of Federal lands.

In the case of State lands, frequently, they have many more rights, including, in some States, the right to exclude others. They have the right to make improvements on the ground. They have the right to acquire water permits. They have no NEPA requirements that are specific to the State land and other opportunities to, in fact, even sublease their lands. And those vary from State to State. States that grant more rights can acquire more revenue because it gives more flexibility to the person who is grazing.

In the case of the Federal Government, there are burdensome regulations. There are third-party challenges. There are compliance issues. It is more of a command-and-control structure, so

it is just not worth as much financially because of the tremendous paperwork and burden involved. Therefore, there are reasons for those differences.

Mr. Chairman, the amendments we are proposing have nothing to do with that but offer commonsense solutions to the very important grazing issues.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. LABRADOR

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 113-340.

Mr. LABRADOR. I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 17, line 18, after the first period, insert the following:

“(j) LEGAL FEES.—

“(1) Any person, other than a directly affected party, challenging an action of the Secretary concerned regarding a final grazing decision in Federal court who is not a prevailing party shall pay to the prevailing parties (including a directly affected party who intervenes in such suit) fees and other expenses incurred by that party in connection with the challenge unless the Court finds that the position of the person was substantially justified.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, the term “directly affected party” means any applicant, permittee, or lessee (or any organization representing applicants, permittees or lessees) whose interest in grazing livestock is directly affected by the final grazing decision.”

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Idaho.

Mr. LABRADOR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment of title VIII of H.R. 2954, which I originally introduced as H.R. 657, the Grazing Improvement Act.

My amendment is a commonsense reform to require groups who are not substantially justified or directly affected by final Federal grazing decisions to pay for the legal expenses of the other party when they lose in court.

□ 1030

In short, this is a “loser pays” system to discourage frivolous legal challenges to Federal land management grazing decisions.

Current law gives grazing permittees the right to a hearing in connection with grazing decisions and gives the “interested public” the opportunity to participate in the way Federal land is managed. However, it is doubtful that Congress ever intended to elevate the “interested public” to a level of equal standing to that of grazing permittees.

In 1995, the Bureau of Land Management established grazing regulations that far surpassed the intent of Congress. Some were given the ability to participate in the administrative appeals process allowing them to sue if the nonpermittees disagreed with a final grazing decision. Since then, environmental groups have been increasingly effective at abusing the current appeals process, not to promote environmental health, but for the sole reason of removing livestock from Federal lands. Each year, hundreds of appeals are filed on grazing decisions by groups. The cost to ranchers can hardly be measured. In a recent case in Wyoming, for example, an appeal cost a small group of ranchers over \$125,000 in administrative appeal and attorneys' fees alone.

My amendment simply addresses this growing problem by clarifying the intent of Congress on who may appeal and litigate a final agency decision on a final grazing decision. It is time we ease the burden that environmental groups have placed on our ranchers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LABRADOR. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I think that the gentleman's amendment to this piece of legislation is an important policy step. In fact, I think in many cases a "loser pay" ought to apply to a much larger area.

I know that the gentleman's amendment only deals with grazing, but he cited an example in Wyoming where it cost somebody \$125,000, and with the volatility of the market, that is a big expense on individuals. I think this will help curb that in the future.

So I congratulate the gentleman for his amendment, and I intend to support it.

Mr. LABRADOR. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, this amendment, very simply, seeks to limit, if not eliminate, judicial review on those who have an interest in grazing on our public lands. This amendment attempts to, with incentives—negative incentives to the public—limit the public from challenging Federal action on grazing decisions by making them pay the prevailing party's legal fees.

Like I have mentioned before, all Federal taxpayers are on the hook for subsidizing grazing on Federal lands; therefore, all citizens of this country should have the opportunity to challenge the decisions made that have an effect on their public lands.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LABRADOR. Mr. Chairman, I agree that everyone should have a right to sue, but if you lose, I think you should pay. This amendment will allow Federal land managers to get back to managing lands, create greater certainty in the ranching community, and help strengthen rural economies in the West. This minor reform will save taxpayer dollars and countless hours and dollars spent by ranchers who are forced to defend against these nuisance suits.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, grazing has impacts on public lands like no other use, and it is important that we consider these impacts through the NEPA process and through judicial review, both that are being struck from that process today. Steamrolling and eliminating judicial review and the public process, as in a reference to East Germany, centralized government and thought control, once we begin to limit the public's and the individual's access to redress through the courts by action of this Congress, it is a dangerous not only precedent and a dangerous step in public transparency, but more importantly, in the public's right to know.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Idaho will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. MCCLINTOCK

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 113-340.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike title IX and insert the following new title:

TITLE IX—RIM FIRE EMERGENCY SALVAGE ACT

SEC. 901. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Rim Fire Emergency Salvage Act".

SEC. 902. EXPEDITED FOREST SERVICE TIMBER SALVAGE AND RESTORATION PILOT PROJECTS IN RESPONSE TO THE CALIFORNIA RIM FIRE.

(a) PILOT PROJECTS REQUIRED.—As part of the restoration and rehabilitation activities undertaken on the lands within the Stanislaus National Forest adversely impacted by the 2013 Rim Fire in California, the Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct a timber salvage and restoration pilot project on burned National Forest System land within the Rim Fire perimeter.

(b) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) USE OF EIS PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct the

pilot project required by subsection (a) in the manner provided in the proposed alternative contained in the draft environmental impact statement noticed in the Federal Register on December 6, 2013, for Rim Fire recovery.

(2) MODIFICATION.—During the course of the pilot project, the Secretary may adopt such modifications to the management plan as the Secretary considers appropriate in response to public comment and consultation with interested Federal, State, and tribal agencies.

(c) LEGAL SUFFICIENCY.—The pilot project required by subsection (a), and activities conducted under the pilot project, are deemed to be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a), the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.), the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(d) ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL REVIEW AND ACTION.—The pilot project required by subsection (a), and activities conducted under the pilot project, are not subject to—

(1) administrative review;

(2) judicial review by any court of the United States; or

(3) a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction based on environmental impacts in a case for which a final decision has not been issued.

SEC. 903. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING USE OF FUNDS GENERATED FROM SALVAGE SALES CONDUCTED AFTER CATASTROPHIC WILD FIRES ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND OR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT LANDS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to National Forest System lands, and the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to Bureau of Land Management land, should use existing authorities available to the Secretary to retain revenues (other than revenues required to be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury) generated by salvage sales conducted in response to catastrophic wild fires on such land to cover the cost of restoration projects on such land.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, last August, the Rim Fire destroyed 400 square miles of timber in the Sierra Nevada. It left behind hundreds of millions of board feet of dead timber that can still be salvaged, but, as I pointed out earlier, time is of the essence. Within a year, the fire-killed timber loses much of its value. Yet the current environmental review process takes a year to complete, and then litigation starts and runs out the clock on what remains of that perishable resource.

Sixteen thousand acres of the destroyed timber is on private land owned by Sierra Pacific Industries. It does not face the bureaucratic obstacles that we face on the public land. SPI is already halfway through its salvage. It will be completed by summer.

They will use a portion of those proceeds to replant their devastated acreage.

Meanwhile, the timber on the public land continues to rot and decay. The earliest the Forest Service can conclude its environmental review is August, and then the litigation process will start, and then it will be too late. The cost will be hundreds of jobs, millions of dollars of lost economic activity, and millions of dollars of lost salvage revenues that could otherwise have been used by the Federal Government for reforestation of the public lands.

Now, title IX of the bill in its current form was based on bipartisan language introduced by Senator Tom Daschle to expedite salvage in the Black Hills National Forest, but these provisions were opposed from the other side of the aisle. So I sat down with the Forest Service and opposition offices to work out a process that will assure that salvage can begin by spring, while maintaining both environmental and judicial review. And I particularly want to thank Chief Tom Tidwell for his technical assistance and that of his office. This amendment is the product of these talks.

It authorizes the Forest Service to select acreage for salvage where there is no wilderness, ESA, historic, or other legal restrictions. It authorizes them to implement the draft EIS that is expected to be completed by April and deems the draft is compliant with all applicable environmental reviews. This will allow salvage to begin under their direction in April.

It authorizes the Forest Service to modify the draft EIS in response to public comment and allows for judicial review of the final EIS based on ecological impacts. It merely bars litigation based on process, and it bars temporary restraining orders. This will allow the timely salvage of a portion of the public lands destroyed by the fire while the final EIS is prepared and while any judicial review proceeds. Finally, it authorizes the Forest Service to use the millions of dollars raised by the salvage for forest restoration in the devastated Sierra.

This compromise language assures compliance with all environmental laws and maintains judicial review while assuring that salvage can begin this spring. It is also important to the economy of the region that has been devastated by the fire and by increasingly stringent Federal restrictions and land acquisitions that have ravaged the timber, livestock, mineral, and tourist industries upon which these mountain communities depend. It means jobs for hundreds of lumberjacks, mill workers, truckers, and all those who support them.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I just want to say that I think this amendment adds to what he is attempting to do because the issue of salvage and the timeliness of that is something that is lost on a lot of people. So I congratulate the gentleman for not only the title in the bill but for the amendment. I intend to support it.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, since the Rim Fire burned over 200,000 acres in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains in August of last year, Mr. McCLINTOCK has expressed an interest in expediting salvage logging operations in the burned area. The language he has offered to achieve this goal keeps evolving, and, in my opinion, it keeps getting better. Unfortunately, I still cannot support this amendment, the latest version of H.R. 3188.

Since the fire, the Forest Service has engaged in an extensive planning effort that includes salvage operations where they are deemed appropriate. The planning effort is ongoing, and the amendment seeks to force a decision before it is complete. The amendment references a proposed action that predates the issuance of the draft Environmental Impact Statement. The draft EIS is due out in April. Until then, we should allow the public process to end before backing the Forest Service into a corner with a mandated decision. Otherwise, we take away the opportunity for public input and the ability for the Forest Service to examine the economic feasibility of salvage operations, potential damage to wildlife, and other consequences.

CEQ has already approved an expedited process for the EIS that includes a shortened timeline for the comment period and eliminates notification requirements. The Forest Service is committed to this expedited process and working diligently to advance appropriate restoration.

The amendment still mandates salvage logging in areas where it might not be appropriate while waiving Federal environmental standards. Taking NEPA out of the picture will not end up in more logging or less lawsuits. Supporters of this amendment understand that this is the case. That is why the amendment waives a bevy of other environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act.

The forests of Sierra Nevada provide Californians with clean water, fish, and wildlife habitat and recreation. Indiscriminate salvage logging threatens these treasured forests.

Additionally, the amendment limits judicial and administrative review.

This is still a huge sticking point. Salvage logging is extremely controversial, and we shouldn't take away any tools available for the public to be able to weigh in on these critical decisions. Supporters of this amendment argue that the objection process is overused and abused, but it is there to make sure that everybody has a voice in the process.

I oppose this amendment, and I urge my colleagues to oppose its adoption. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Chairman, if the opposition prevails, the Sierra, 400 square miles of it anyway, will be consigned to scrub brush and disease for generations to come. We have bent over backwards with the opposition to work out this compromise, and their continued opposition is quite disappointing.

I repeat that time is of the essence. I beg the Senate and the Democrats to take up these provisions without further delay. These provisions were developed with the full input of the administration and Democratic offices. But if they are still not acceptable, then tell us what is, but please don't just sit there and do nothing.

The Forest Service estimates that 2.2 million board feet can be processed per day. That means every day we dither and delay, \$250 million of Federal revenue is lost. That is enough to reforest more than 1,000 every day. But every day we delay, we lose that revenue, we lose those jobs, the salvage value deteriorates with the wood, and that window will start to close even before the litigation begins under current law.

The private lands destroyed by the fire will have been fully salvaged and replanted a few years from now. They are going to host a thriving, young forest. If we don't change current law now, the public lands will remain unsalvaged and the millions of dollars we could have raised for reforestation will have been forfeited. Dry brush and dead trees will be the legacy of the Sierra that we leave our children.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, the Forest Service, as we speak, is preparing to authorize salvage operations on 30,000 of the 154,000 burned acres, and a decision is due as early as August. As I said earlier, salvage logging is not without controversy, and the decisions to authorize these activities need to be fully analyzed and fully transparent. Many ecologists believe that post-fire landscapes are an essential component of forest lifecycles that provide critical habitat for wildlife and other essential ecological services. Rushing to allow indiscriminate salvage operations, as this bill intends, threatens the overall health of the forest. The planning process is ongoing under expedited emergency provisions set out by CEQ.

Our national forests are more than timber factories, and we have a public planning process that ensures all uses and benefits are considered. This bill ignores that process, and that is why I repeat opposition to it.

I yield back the balance of my time. The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1045

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF ALASKA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part A of House Report 113-340.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE XI—ALASKA NATIVE VETERAN ALLOTMENT

SEC. 1101. ALASKA NATIVE VETERAN ALLOTMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICATION.—The term “application” means the Alaska Native Veteran Allotment application numbered AA-084021-B.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—The term “Federal land” means the 80 acres of Federal land that is—

(A) described in the application; and

(B) depicted as Lot 2 in U.S. Survey No. 13957, Alaska, that was officially filed on October 9, 2009.

(3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) ISSUANCE OF PATENT.—Notwithstanding section 41 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g) and subject to subsection (c), the Secretary shall—

(1) approve the application; and

(2) issue a patent for the Federal land to the person that submitted the application.

(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The patent issued under subsection (b) shall—

(A) only be for the surface rights to the Federal land; and

(B) be subject to the terms and conditions of any certificate issued under section 41 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1629g), including terms and conditions providing that—

(i) the patent is subject to valid existing rights, including any right of the United States to income derived, directly or indirectly, from a lease, license, permit, right-of-way, or easement on the Federal land; and

(ii) the United States shall reserve an interest in deposits of oil, gas, and coal on the Federal land, including the right to explore, mine, and remove the minerals on portions of the Federal land that the Secretary determines to be prospectively valuable for development.

(2) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require any additional terms and conditions for the issuance of the patent under subsection (a) that the Secretary determines to be appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 472, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Chairman, the Alaska Native Allotment Act allowed Alaska Natives to acquire up to 160 acres of Federal land. Approximately 2,800 Alaska Natives served in the military during the Vietnam War, and because of their absence, they did not have an opportunity to apply for their Native allotment.

In 1998, Congress passed a law that provided certain Alaska Native Vietnam veterans an opportunity to obtain an allotment.

One of my constituents, Mr. William Alstrom, applied for an allotment in accordance with this law. During the war, he served honorably in the Air Force. Mr. Alstrom is a lifelong resident of St. Mary's, Alaska, a village of roughly 550 mostly Yup'ik Eskimo residents located on the Lower Yukon River in southwestern Alaska. His family has a long history in the region, helping to settle the area and operating the first general store. During World War II, Mr. Alstrom's father, Fred, was a member of the Alaska Territorial Guard, or the Eskimo Scouts, a military reserve component of the U.S. Army organized in 1942.

Following a TB outbreak in 1954, Mr. Alstrom was sent to a boarding school in southeast Alaska with many other children from Alaska villages. As the Vietnam War was escalating, he graduated from one of these boarding schools and promptly enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, serving his country. Soon thereafter, he left his wife and two children stateside and headed to southeast Asia. During the war, the newly minted Sergeant Alstrom served in Thailand, preparing aircraft on their way to strike North Vietnam.

On completion of his service, William and his family returned home to St. Mary's, where he invested himself in his village and continued to grow and raise his family. Today, William continues to serve—this time as mayor of his community and president of his village corporation.

In 2002, William applied for the Alaska Native veteran's allotment he was entitled to by law. Following an extensive application and vetting process, in 2009, the Bureau of Land Management, BLM, deeded him two 80-acre parcels located in the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

With his deed in hand, William transported lumber and other supplies to one of his parcels on his skiff, spent countless hours clearing trees and brush, and finally built a small cabin and fish camp for him and his family to enjoy.

Out of the blue a few years later, the Fish and Wildlife Service realized that errors had been made by the Fish and Wildlife Service and BLM personnel, both in the surveying and application approval process. Instead of being lo-

cated on general refuge lands, the two allotment parcels were located within the congressionally designated Andreafsky Wilderness Area. Conveying allotments in wilderness areas is prohibited by law. Similarly, making improvements to the land, such as constructing a cabin, cutting trees, or clearing bush, is also prohibited. As a result, the BLM canceled the deed to the two parcels, plunging this Alaska Native veteran and the status of his allotment and cabin into a state of limbo.

After this decision, William contacted me for assistance. To their credit, the BLM quickly admitted that both they and the Fish and Wildlife Service screwed up. Though, after looking into their options, they also admitted that they couldn't fix their mistakes administratively. In an attempt to resolve the issue, the BLM offered William two parcels of equal size elsewhere in the region. While he agreed to accept one of the replacement parcels, the second proposed parcel excluded his cabin.

My amendment today would approve his application for the second original parcel, subsequently saving his cabin and fish camp from demolition.

Though two Federal agencies are at fault, my Alaska Native constituent is the one being forced to bear the full cost of their errors. The purpose of my amendment is simply to allow a veteran to retain the 80-acre parcel with the cabin on it, at no cost to the taxpayer.

An identical version of this amendment was adopted by voice vote when the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held their markup of the Green Mountain Lookout Heritage Protection Act, of which the House version is included in today's package.

As you well know, I am no proponent of the fact that the Federal Government is the landlord of well over 60 percent of my State. Think about this: 60 percent. I generally oppose wilderness areas. I have often had an adversarial relationship with Federal land management agencies. All of that aside, this amendment is not meant to make a statement for or against wilderness designations, but rather to fix a unique issue for a truly deserving Vietnam veteran. At its core, fixing issues like this is what we do well when we are sent to Washington. Mr. Alstrom, like his father before him, served this country with honor and dignity, and he deserves similar treatment from this government in return.

I hope you will join me today in fixing this unfortunate mistake and allow this gentleman and his family to move on with their lives by supporting this simple amendment to H.R. 2954.

I yield back the balance of my time. The CHAIR. If no Member is seeking recognition in opposition, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG).

The amendment was agreed to. Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to. Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Alaska) having assumed the chair, Mr. DENHAM, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 11:15 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1115

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 11 o'clock and 15 minutes a.m.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 472 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2954.

Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) kindly take the chair.

□ 1116

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, with Mr. HOLDING (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, amendment No. 5 printed in part A of House Report 113-340, offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), had been disposed of.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will

now resume on those amendments printed in part A of House Report 113-340 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. GRIJALVA of Arizona.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. LABRADOR of Idaho.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GRIJALVA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 190, noes 224, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 51]

AYES—190

- Andrews Ellison Lofgren
Barber Engel Lowenthal
Barrow (GA) Enyart Lowey
Bass Eshoo Lujan Grisham
Beatty Esty (NM)
Becerra Farr Lujan, Ben Ray
Bera (CA) Foster (NM)
Bishop (GA) Frankel (FL) Lynch
Bishop (NY) Fudge Maloney,
Blumenauer Gabbard Carolyn
Bonamici Gallego Maloney, Sean
Brady (PA) Garamendi Matsui
Braley (IA) Garcia McCollum
Brown (FL) Gibson McDermott
Brownley (CA) Grayson McGovern
Bustos Green, Al McIntyre
Butterfield Green, Gene Meeks
Capps Grijalva Meng
Capuano Gutiérrez Michaud
Cárdenas Hahn Miller, George
Carney Hanabusa Moore
Carson (IN) Hastings (FL) Moran
Cartwright Heck (WA) Murphy (FL)
Castor (FL) Higgins Nadler
Castro (TX) Himes Napolitano
Chu Hinojosa Neal
Cicilline Holt Negrete McLeod
Clark (MA) Honda Nolan
Clarke (NY) Horsford O'Rourke
Clay Hoyer Owens
Cleaver Huffman Pallone
Clyburn Israel Pascrell
Cohen Jackson Lee Pastor (AZ)
Connolly Jeffries Payne
Conyers Johnson (GA) Pelosi
Cooper Johnson, E. B. Perlmutter
Costa Kaptur Peters (CA)
Courtney Keating Pingree (ME)
Crowley Kelly (IL) Pocan
Cuellar Kennedy Polis
Cummings Kildee Price (NC)
Davis (CA) Kilmer Quigley
Davis, Danny Kind Rahall
DeFazio Kirkpatrick Rangel
DeGette Kuster Richmond
Delaney Langevin Roybal-Allard
DeLauro Larsen (WA) Ruiz
DelBene Larson (CT) Ruppertsberger
Deutch Lee (CA) Ryan (OH)
Dingell Levin Sánchez, Linda
Doggett Lewis T.
Duckworth Lipinski Sanchez, Loretta
Edwards Loeb sack Sarbanes

- Schakowsky Smith (WA) Veasey
Schiff Speier Vela
Schneider Swallow (CA) Velázquez
Scott (VA) Takano Visclosky
Scott, David Thompson (CA) Walz
Serrano Thompson (MS) Wasserman
Sewell (AL) Tierney Schultz
Shea-Porter Titus Waters
Sherman Tonko Waxman
Sinema Tsongas Welch
Sires Van Hollen Wilson (FL)
Slaughter Vargas Yarmuth

NOES—224

- Aderholt Grimm Peters (MI)
Amash Guthrie Peterson
Bachmann Hall Petri
Bachus Hanna Pittenger
Barletta Harper Poe (TX)
Barr Harris Pompeo
Barton Hartzler Posey
Benishek Hastings (WA) Price (GA)
Bentivolio Heck (NV) Reed
Bilirakis Hensarling Reichert
Bishop (UT) Herrera Beutler Renacci
Black Holding Ribble
Blackburn Hudson Rice (SC)
Boustany Huelskamp Rigell
Brady (TX) Huizenga (MI) Roby
Bridenstine Hultgren Roe (TN)
Brooks (AL) Hunter Rogers (KY)
Brooks (IN) Hurt Rogers (MI)
Broun (GA) Issa Rohrabacher
Buchanan Jenkins Rokita
Buchson Johnson (OH) Rooney
Burgess Johnson, Sam Ros-Lehtinen
Byrne Jones Roskam
Calvert Jordan Rothfus
Camp Joyce Royce
Campbell King (IA) Runyan
Cantor King (NY) Ryan (WI)
Capito Kingston Salmon
Carter Kinzinger (IL) Sanford
Cassidy Kline Scalise
Chabot Labrador Schock
Chaffetz LaMalfa Schrader
Coffman Lamborn Schweikert
Cole Lance Scott, Austin
Collins (NY) Lankford Sensenbrenner
Conaway Latham Sessions
Cotton Latta Shimkus
Cramer LoBiondo Shuster
Crawford Long Simpson
Crenshaw Lucas Smith (MO)
Daines Luetkemeyer Smith (NE)
Davis, Rodney Lummis Smith (NJ)
Denham Maffei Smith (TX)
Dent Marchant Southerland
DeSantis Marino Stewart
DesJarlais Massie Stivers
Diaz-Balart Matheson Stockman
Duffy McAllister Stutzman
Duncan (SC) McCarthy (CA) Terry
Duncan (TN) McCaul Thompson (PA)
Ellmers McClintock Thornberry
Farenthold McHenry Tiberi
Fincher McKeon Tipton
Fitzpatrick McKinley Turner
Fleischmann McMorris Upton
Fleming Rodgers Valadao
Flores Meadows Wagner
Forbes Meehan Walberg
Fortenberry Messer Walden
Foxy Mica Walorski
Franks (AZ) Miller (FL) Weber (TX)
Frelinghuysen Miller (MI) Webster (FL)
Garrett Mullin Wenstrup
Gerlach Mulvaney Westmoreland
Gibbs Murphy (PA) Whitfield
Gingrey (GA) Neugebauer Williams
Gohmert Noem Wilson (SC)
Goodlatte Nugent Wittman
Gosar Nunes Wolf
Gowdy Nunnelee Womack
Granger Olson Woodall
Graves (GA) Palazzo Yoder
Graves (MO) Paulsen Yoho
Griffin (AR) Pearce Young (AK)
Griffith (VA) Pery Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—17

- Amodel Culberson Kelly (PA)
Coble Doyle McCarthy (NY)
Collins (GA) Fattah Mc Nerney
Cook Gardner

Miller, Gary
Pitts

□ 1142

Messrs. BUCHANAN, CONAWAY, TERRY, HALL, and JORDAN changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. DINGELL, HIGGINS, and CROWLEY changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:
Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 51, the Grijalva Amendment No. 1, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. LABRADOR
The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. LABRADOR) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.
The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 218, noes 198, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 52]
AYES—218

Aderholt	Denham	Hudson
Amash	Dent	Huelskamp
Bachmann	DeSantis	Huizenga (MI)
Bachus	DesJarlais	Hultgren
Barletta	Diaz-Balart	Hunter
Barr	Duffy	Hurt
Barton	Duncan (SC)	Issa
Benishek	Duncan (TN)	Jenkins
Bentivolio	Farenthold	Johnson (OH)
Bilirakis	Fincher	Johnson, Sam
Bishop (UT)	Fleischmann	Jones
Black	Fleming	Jordan
Blackburn	Flores	Joyce
Boustany	Forbes	Kelly (PA)
Brady (TX)	Fortenberry	King (IA)
Bridenstine	Fox	Kingston
Brooks (AL)	Franks (AZ)	Kinzinger (IL)
Brooks (IN)	Frelinghuysen	Kline
Buchanan	Garrett	Labrador
Buonshin	Gerlach	LaMalfa
Burgess	Gibbs	Lamborn
Byrne	Gibson	Lance
Calvert	Gingrey (GA)	Lankford
Camp	Gohmert	Latham
Campbell	Goodlatte	Latta
Cantor	Gosar	LoBiondo
Capito	Gowdy	Long
Carter	Granger	Lucas
Cassidy	Graves (GA)	Luetkemeyer
Chabot	Graves (MO)	Lummis
Chaffetz	Griffin (AR)	Marchant
Coffman	Grimm	Marino
Cole	Guthrie	Massie
Collins (NY)	Hall	Matheson
Conaway	Harper	McAllister
Costa	Harris	McCarthy (CA)
Cotton	Hartzler	McCauley
Cramer	Hastings (WA)	McClintock
Crawford	Heck (NV)	McHenry
Crenshaw	Hensarling	McIntyre
Daines	Herrera Beutler	McKeon
Davis, Rodney	Holding	McKinley

McMorris	Rogers (AL)	Rush	McMorris
Rodgers	Ross	Schwartz	Rodgers
Meadows			Meadows
Meehan			Meehan
Messer			Messer
Mica			Mica
Miller (FL)			Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)			Miller (MI)
Mullin			Mullin
Mulvaney			Mulvaney
Neugebauer			Neugebauer
Noem			Noem
Nugent			Nugent
Nunes			Nunes
Nunnelee			Nunnelee
Olson			Olson
Palazzo			Palazzo
Paulsen			Paulsen
Pearce			Pearce
Perry			Perry
Petri			Petri
Pittenger			Pittenger
Poe (TX)			Poe (TX)
Pompeo			Pompeo
Posey			Posey
Price (GA)			Price (GA)
Reed			Reed
Reichert			Reichert
Renacci			Renacci
Ribble			Ribble
Rice (SC)			Rice (SC)

NOES—198

Andrews	Frankel (FL)	McDermott
Barber	Fudge	McGovern
Barrow (GA)	Gabbard	Meeks
Bass	Gallego	Meng
Beatty	Garamendi	Michaud
Becerra	Garcia	Miller, George
Bera (CA)	Grayson	Moore
Bishop (GA)	Green, Al	Moran
Bishop (NY)	Green, Gene	Murphy (FL)
Blumenauer	Griffith (VA)	Murphy (PA)
Bonamici	Grijalva	Nadler
Brady (PA)	Gutiérrez	Napolitano
Bralley (IA)	Hahn	Neal
Broun (GA)	Hanabusa	Negrete McLeod
Brown (FL)	Hanna	Nolan
Brownley (CA)	Hastings (FL)	O'Rourke
Bustos	Heck (WA)	Owens
Butterfield	Higgins	Pallone
Capps	Himes	Pascrell
Capuano	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Cárdenas	Holt	Payne
Carney	Honda	Pelosi
Cartson (IN)	Horsford	Perlmutter
Cartwright	Hoyer	Peters (CA)
Castor (FL)	Huffman	Peters (MI)
Castro (TX)	Israel	Peterson
Chu	Jackson Lee	Pingree (ME)
Ciulline	Jeffries	Pocan
Clark (MA)	Johnson (GA)	Polis
Clarke (NY)	Johnson, E. B.	Price (NC)
Clay	Keating	Kaptur
Cleaver	Kelly (IL)	Rahall
Clyburn	Kennedy	Rangel
Cohen	Kildee	Richmond
Connolly	Kilmer	Roybal-Allard
Conyers	Kind	Ruiz
Cooper	King (NY)	Ruppersberger
Courtney	Kirkpatrick	Ryan (OH)
Crowley	Kuster	Sánchez, Linda
Cuellar	Langevin	T.
Cummings	Larsen (WA)	Sanchez, Loretta
Davis (CA)	Larsen (CT)	Sarbanes
Davis, Danny	Lee (CA)	Schakowsky
DeFazio	Levin	Schiff
DeGette	Lewis	Schneider
Delaney	Lipinski	Schrader
DeLauro	Loeb	Scott (VA)
DeBene	Loeb	Scott, David
Deutch	Lofgren	Serrano
Dingell	Lowenthal	Sewell (AL)
Doggett	Lowey	Shea-Porter
Duckworth	Lujan Grisham	Sherman
Edwards	(NM)	Sinema
Ellison	Lujan, Ben Ray	Sires
Elmiers	(NM)	Slaughter
Engel	Lynch	Smith (WA)
Enyart	Maffei	Speier
Eshoo	Maloney,	Swalwell (CA)
Esty	Carolyn	Takano
Farr	Maloney, Sean	Thompson (CA)
Fitzpatrick	Matsui	Thompson (MS)
Foster	McCollum	Tierney

Stewart	Titus	Vela	Waters
Stivers	Tonko	Velázquez	Waxman
Stockman	Tsongas	Visclosky	Welch
Stutzman	Van Hollen	Walz	Wilson (FL)
Terry	Vargas	Wasserman	Yarmuth
Thompson (PA)	Veasey	Schultz	
Thornberry			
Tiberi			
Tipton			
Turner			
Upton			
Valadao			
Wagner			
Walberg			
Walden			
Walorski			
Weber (TX)			
Webster (FL)			
Wenstrup			
Westmoreland			
Whitfield			
Williams			
Wilson (SC)			
Wittman			
Wolf			
Womack			
Woodall			
Yoder			
Yoho			
Young (AK)			
Young (IN)			

NOT VOTING—15

Amodei	Doyle	Miller, Gary
Coble	Fattah	Pitts
Collins (GA)	Gardner	Ross
Cook	McCarthy (NY)	Rush
Culberson	McNerney	Schwartz

□ 1149

Mr. CLEAVER changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the amendment was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to. The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDING, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2954) to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance, and, pursuant to House Resolution 472, reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to the bill in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Barber moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2954 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Add at the end of the bill the following:

TITLE XI—PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES**SEC. 1101. PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES.**

For fiscal years 2015 through 2020, there are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for payments to counties and other eligible units of government pursuant to section 6906 of Title 31, United States Code, also known as the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program.

TITLE XII—PROTECTING COMMUNITIES FROM WILDFIRE**SEC. 1201. PROTECTING COMMUNITIES FROM WILDFIRE.**

In addition to amounts previously made available, there are hereby authorized to be appropriated—

(1) \$50,000,000 to the FLAME Fund established under section 502(b) of the Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748(b)) for wildfire suppression on public lands; and

(2) \$50,000,000 for hazardous fuels reduction on public lands.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order is reserved.

The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill, or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

As my colleagues in this Chamber know well, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program, or PILT, is a source of revenue for counties across our country, especially in rural areas of the United States like Cochise County in southern Arizona, that have large areas of Federal land within their boundaries.

Without the PILT program, many counties would be forced to cut services, delay infrastructure maintenance and improvement, and local jobs would be lost.

While I joined many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support reauthorizing PILT for 1 year in the farm bill, this is but a short-term solution. My amendment would reauthorize the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program for 5 years.

By committing to reauthorize the program for 5 years today, we can give our communities who depend on these funds the long-term certainty they need. In fact, we should really be thinking about acting to authorize this fund as a mandatory fund.

In 2013, PILT meant \$5 million in funds for my southern Arizona district, in both Pima and Cochise Counties.

The Sierra Vista Herald in Cochise County reported on the critical need for PILT in my home district, calling the potential loss of \$1.98 million in PILT that the county received in 2013 “a significant blow to the county.”

This is an important issue to all of us, particularly those in rural parts of our country, and I appreciate your attention to the matter.

“A lack of PILT funding,” the County Board of Supervisors in Cochise County said, “places the large and unsustainable burden of providing services on Federal lands squarely on the backs of Cochise County taxpayers, while the presence of that land creates a barrier to economic opportunities.”

“Failure,” the Board said, “to provide PILT funding to Arizona counties in a timely manner will critically impact on the budget process and structural solvency of Cochise County, and substantially compromise the County’s ability to provide these essential services.”

Cochise County and counties like it all across this country are required to provide law enforcement, search-and-rescue missions, emergency services, road building and maintenance, and other community services on or associated with tax-exempt Federal land.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass this amendment so we can say to Cochise County, in my district, and the people I represent in southern Arizona, and so that you can say to the people of your State, particularly those in rural counties, that we won’t make them wait and worry about whether or not they will have the resources to provide these critical services in the future.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment also goes on to provide much-needed funding to fight wildfires across this Nation. Arizonans know all too well the terrific and horrific effects wildfires have on our communities.

□ 1200

Last summer, our State was devastated by the Yarnell Hill Fire. My colleagues, our State experienced a great loss when last year, a fire swept across 8,400 acres of land in 15 days, killing 19 brave firefighters from the Granite Mountain Hotshots, all of whom died in the line of duty.

These tragic fires are not unique to our beautiful State of Arizona. Every year, communities across our Nation face wildfires that destroy their land, their homes, and their livelihoods. And given the worst drought in California history just 1 month into this year, I know that this is an issue on the minds of all of my colleagues in the California delegation as well.

Two summers ago, my district in southeastern Arizona endured the Horseshoe Two Fire. On May 8, 2011, the Horseshoe Two Fire started on the east side of Chiricahua Mountains near the community of Portal. The fire continued to burn steadily, heading to the northwest, and on June 8, the fire reached Chiricahua National Monument, burning into the southeast corner of the park. In late June, the fire was finally extinguished and contained. By then, 223,000 acres were burned. We were lucky that summer in southeastern Arizona that there was no loss of life.

This amendment would authorize \$50 million to the Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act for wildfire suppression on our public lands and \$50 million for hazardous fuels reduction. This funding is key to fighting catastrophic fires, wildland fires, and for successful fire management strategies across our Nation.

I ask my colleagues again, on both sides of the aisle, to join with me in supporting both PILT and these critical wildfire programs for our local communities and the people we represent by passing this motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation on the point of order and rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, sometimes I have to wonder when I hear these motions to recommit what exactly my friends on the other side of the aisle are thinking. The first part of this motion to recommit talks about payment in lieu of taxes, or PILT. Those of us in the western part of the United States especially understand that.

Mr. Speaker, last week, we funded PILT in the farm bill. Where was everybody? I voted for it. Where was everybody? That was funded.

The second point, PILT is permanently authorized—permanently authorized. All we have to do now is to get the appropriators to fund it, and they will go through the deliberations. There is no reason for this motion to recommit, as it relates to PILT.

Also, with regards to fighting fires, if I remember correctly, last year, we passed the healthy forests bill, but a majority of the people on the other side of the aisle voted “no.” Now we come down here with crocodile tears, saying we have to pass funding to fight forest fires. If they had voted for healthy forests in the first place, they would have solved the problem.

This MTR is not worthy of passage. Vote “no” on the MTR and “yes” on final passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute

votes on passage of the bill, if ordered, and approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 194, nays 222, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 53]

YEAS—194

Andrews Green, Al Nolan
 Barber Green, Gene O'Rourke
 Barrow (GA) Grijalva Owens
 Bass Gutiérrez Pallone
 Beatty Hahn Pascarell
 Becerra Hanabusa Pastor (AZ)
 Bera (CA) Hastings (FL) Payne
 Bishop (GA) Heck (WA) Pelosi
 Bishop (NY) Higgins Perlmutter
 Blumenauer Himes Peters (CA)
 Bonamici Hinojosa Peters (MI)
 Brady (PA) Holt Peterson
 Braley (IA) Honda Pingree (ME)
 Brown (FL) Horsford Pocan
 Brownley (CA) Hoyer Polis
 Bustos Huffman Price (NC)
 Butterfield Israel Quigley
 Capps Jackson Lee
 Capuano Jeffries Rahall
 Cárdenas Johnson (GA) Hanna
 Carney Johnson, E. B. Richmond
 Carson (IN) Kaptur Roybal-Allard
 Cartwright Keating Ruiz
 Castor (FL) Kelly (IL) Ruppertsberger
 Castro (TX) Kennedy Ryan (OH)
 Chu Kildee Sánchez, Linda
 Cicilline Kilmer T.
 Clark (MA) Kind Sanchez, Loretta
 Clarke (NY) Kirkpatrick Sarbanes
 Clay Kuster Schakowsky
 Cleaver Langevin Schiff
 Clyburn Larsen (WA) Schneider
 Cohen Larson (CT) Schrader
 Connolly Lee (CA) Scott (VA)
 Conyers Levin Scott, David
 Cooper Lewis Serrano
 Costa Lipinski Sewell (AL)
 Courtney Loebsock Shea-Porter
 Crowley Lofgren Sherman
 Cuellar Lowenthal Sinema
 Cummings Lowey Sires
 Davis (CA) Lujan Grisham
 Davis, Danny (NM) Slaughter
 DeFazio Lujan, Ben Ray Smith (WA)
 DeGette (NM) Speier
 Delaney Lynch Swalwell (CA)
 DeLauro Takano Kline
 DelBene Maffei Labrador
 Deutch Maloney, Carolyn Thompson (CA)
 Dingell Maloney, Sean Thompson (MS)
 Doggett Matheson Tierney
 Duckworth Matsui Tonko
 Edwards McCollum Tsongas
 Ellison McDermott Van Hollen
 Engel McGovern Vargas
 Enyart McIntyre Veasey
 Eshoo Meeks Vela
 Esty Meng Velázquez
 Farr Michaud Visclosky
 Foster Miller, George Walz
 Frankel (FL) Moore Wasserman
 Fudge Moran Schultz
 Gabbard Murphy (FL) Waters
 Gallego Nadler Waxman
 Garamendi Napolitano Welch
 Garcia Neal Wilson (FL)
 Grayson Negrete McLeod Yarmuth

NAYS—222

Aderholt Brooks (IN) Conaway
 Amash Broun (GA) Cotton
 Bachmann Buchanan Cramer
 Bachus Buchson Crawford
 Barletta Burgess Crenshaw
 Barr Byrne Daines
 Barton Calvert Davis, Rodney
 Benishek Campbell Denham
 Bentivolio Cantor Dent
 Bilirakis Capito DeSantis
 Bishop (UT) Carter DesJarlais
 Black Cassidy Diaz-Balart
 Blackburn Chabot Duffy
 Boustany Chaffetz Duncan (SC)
 Brady (TX) Coffman Duncan (TN)
 Bridenstine Cole Ellmers
 Brooks (AL) Collins (NY) Farenthold

Fincher Lamborn Rohrabacher
 Fitzpatrick Lance Rokita
 Fleischmann Lankford Rooney
 Fleming Latham Ros-Lehtinen
 Flores Latta Roskam
 Forbes LoBiondo Rothfus
 Fortenberry Long Royce
 Foxx Lucas Runyan
 Franks (AZ) Luetkemeyer Ryan (WI)
 Frelinghuysen Lummis Salmon
 Gardner Marchant Sanford
 Garrett Marino Scalise
 Gerlach Massie Schock
 Gibbs McAllister Schweikert
 Gibson McCarthy (CA) Scott, Austin
 Gingrey (GA) McCaul Sensenbrenner
 Gohmert McClintock Sessions
 Goodlatte McHenry Shimkus
 Gosar McKeon Shuster
 Gowdy McKinley Simpson
 Granger McMorris Smith (MO)
 Graves (GA) Rodgers Smith (NE)
 Graves (MO) Meadows Smith (NJ)
 Griffith (AR) Meehan Smith (TX)
 Griffith (VA) Messer Southernland
 Grimm Mica Stewart
 Guthrie Miller (FL) Stivers
 Hall Miller (MI) Stockman
 Hanna Mullin Stutzman
 Harper Mulvaney Terry
 Harris Murphy (PA) Thompson (PA)
 Hartzler Neugebauer Thornberry
 Hastings (WA) Noem Tipton
 Heck (NV) Nugent Turner
 Herrarling Nunes
 Herrera Beutler Nunnelee
 Holding Olson
 Hudson Palazzo
 Huelskamp Paulsen
 Huizenga (MI) Pearce
 Hultgren Perry
 Hunter Petri
 Hurt Pittenger
 Issa Poe (TX)
 Jenkins Pompo
 Johnson (OH) Posey
 Johnson, Sam Price (GA)
 Jones Reed
 Jordan Reichert
 Joyce Renacci
 Kelly (PA) Ribble
 King (IA) Rice (SC)
 King (NY) Rigell
 Kingston Roby
 Kinzinger (IL) Roe (TN)
 Kline Rogers (AL)
 Labrador Rogers (KY)
 LaMalfa Rogers (MI)

NOT VOTING—15

Amodei Culberson Miller, Gary
 Camp Doyle Pitts
 Coble Fattah Ross
 Collins (GA) McCarthy (NY) Rush
 Cook McNeary Schwartz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1211

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 220, noes 194, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 54]

AYES—220

Grimm Pittenger
 Guthrie Poe (TX)
 Hall Pompeo
 Hanna Posey
 Harper Price (GA)
 Harris Reed
 Hartzler Reichert
 Hastings (WA) Renacci
 Bishop (GA) Heck (NV)
 Bishop (UT) Ribble
 Hensarling Rice (SC)
 Black Herrera Beutler Rigell
 Blackburn Holding Roby
 Boustany Hudson Roe (TN)
 Brady (TX) Huelskamp Rogers (AL)
 Bridenstine Huizenga (MI) Rogers (KY)
 Brooks (AL) Hultgren Rogers (MI)
 Brooks (IN) Hunter Rohrabacher
 Broun (GA) Hurt Rokita
 Buchanan Issa Rooney
 Buchson Jenkins Ros-Lehtinen
 Burgess Johnson (OH) Roskam
 Byrne Johnson, Sam Rothfus
 Calvert Jones Royce
 Campbell Jordan Runyan
 Cantor Joyce Ryan (WI)
 Capito Kelly (PA) Salmon
 Carter King (IA) Sanford
 Cassidy Kingston Scalise
 Chabot Kinzinger (IL) Schock
 Chaffetz Kline Schrader
 Coffman Labrador Schweikert
 Cole LaMalfa Scott, Austin
 Collins (NY) Lamborn Sensenbrenner
 Conaway Lance Sessions
 Costa Lankford Shimkus
 Cotton Latham Shuster
 Cramer Latta Simpson
 Crawford Long Smith (MO)
 Crenshaw Lucas Smith (NE)
 Daines Luetkemeyer Smith (NJ)
 Davis, Rodney Lummis Smith (TX)
 Denham Marchant Southernland
 Dent Marino Stewart
 DeSantis Massie Stivers
 DesJarlais Matheson Stockman
 Diaz-Balart McAllister Stutzman
 Duffy McCarthy (CA) Terry
 Duncan (SC) McCaul Thompson (PA)
 Duncan (TN) McClintock Thornberry
 Ellmers McHenry Tipton
 Farenthold McIntyre Turner
 Fincher McKeon Upton
 Fleischmann McKinley Valadao
 Fleming McMorris Wagner
 Flores Rodgers Walberg
 Forbes Fortenberry Walden
 Fortenberry Foeux Walorski
 Foxx Franks (AZ) Weber (TX)
 Franks (AZ) Frelinghuysen Webber (FL)
 Gardner Miller (MI) Wenstrup
 Garrett Mullin Westmoreland
 Gerlach Mulvaney Whitfield
 Gibbs Murphy (PA) Williams
 Gingrey (GA) Neugebauer Wilson (SC)
 Gohmert Noem Wittman
 Goodlatte Nugent Wittman
 Gosar Nunes Wolf
 Gowdy Nunnelee Womack
 Granger Olson Woodall
 Graves (GA) Palazzo Yoder
 Graves (MO) Pearce Yoho
 Griffin (AR) Perry Young (AK)
 Griffith (VA) Peterson Young (IN)

NOES—194

Amash Butterfield Cohen
 Andrews Capps Connolly
 Barber Capuano Conyers
 Barrow (GA) Cárdenas Cooper
 Bass Carney Courtney
 Beatty Carson (IN) Crowley
 Becerra Cartwright Cuellar
 Bera (CA) Castor (FL) Cummings
 Bishop (NY) Castro (TX) Davis (CA)
 Blumenauer Blumenuer Davis, Danny
 Bonamici Chabot DeFazio
 Brady (PA) Braley (IA) DeGette
 Braley (IA) Brown (FL) Delaney
 Brown (FL) Brownley (CA) DeLauro
 Brownley (CA) Bustos DeBene
 Bustos Clyburn Deutch

Dingell	Langevin	Price (NC)
Doggett	Larsen (WA)	Quigley
Duckworth	Larson (CT)	Rahall
Edwards	Lee (CA)	Rangel
Ellison	Levin	Richmond
Engel	Lewis	Roybal-Allard
Enyart	Lipinski	Ruiz
Eshoo	LoBiondo	Ruppersberger
Esty	Loeb	Ryan (OH)
Farr	Lofgren	Sánchez, Linda T.
Fitzpatrick	Lowenthal	Sánchez, Loretta
Foster	Lowe	Sarbanes
Frankel (FL)	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Schakowsky
Fudge	Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)	Schiff
Gabbard	Lynch	Schneider
Gallego	Maffei	Scott (VA)
Garamendi	Maloney	Scott, David
Garcia	Maloney, Carolyn	Serrano
Gibson	Maloney, Sean	Sewell (AL)
Grayson	Matsui	Shea-Porter
Green, Al	McCollum	Sherman
Green, Gene	McDermott	Sinema
Grijalva	McGovern	Sires
Gutiérrez	Meeks	Slaughter
Hahn	Meng	Smith (WA)
Hanabusa	Michaud	Speier
Hastings (FL)	Miller, George	Swalwell (CA)
Heck (WA)	Moore	Takano
Higgins	Moran	Thompson (CA)
Himes	Murphy (FL)	Thompson (MS)
Hinojosa	Nadler	Tierney
Holt	Napolitano	Titus
Honda	Neal	Tonko
Horsford	Negrete McLeod	Tsongas
Hoyer	Nolan	Van Hollen
Huffman	O'Rourke	Vargas
Israel	Owens	Veasey
Jackson Lee	Pallone	Vela
Jeffries	Pascrell	Velázquez
Johnson (GA)	Pastor (AZ)	Visclosky
Johnson, E. B.	Paulsen	Walz
Kaptur	Payne	Wasserman
Keating	Pelosi	Schultz
Kelly (IL)	Perlmutter	Waters
Kennedy	Peters (CA)	Waxman
Kildee	Peters (MI)	Welch
Kilmer	Pingree (ME)	Wilson (FL)
Kind	Pocan	Yarmuth
King (NY)	Polis	
Kirkpatrick		
Kuster		

NOT VOTING—17

Amodei	Culberson	Petri
Bachmann	Doyle	Pitts
Camp	Fattah	Ross
Coble	McCarthy (NY)	Rush
Collins (GA)	McNerney	Schwartz
Cook	Miller, Gary	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1217

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, during roll-call vote 54, on the vote on Passage of H.R. 2954—The Public Access and Lands Improvement Act, I was away from the House floor and intended to vote “aye.”

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 2954, THE PUBLIC ACCESS AND LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of H.R. 2954, the Clerk may make technical and conforming changes, and that the amendment to page 17, line 17 refer to the first usage of “decision” on that line.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to Mr. CANTOR, the majority leader, for the recitation of the schedule.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic Whip, for yielding.

On Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Tuesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business. On Wednesday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than noon to accommodate the Democrat Members’ issues retreat. On Thursday and Friday, no votes are expected in the House.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by close of business tomorrow.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the House will consider H.R. 3193, the Consumer Financial Protection and Soundness Improvement Act, authored by Representative SEAN DUFFY. This bill reforms the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to make the Bureau accountable to hardworking American taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the debt limit borrowing authority runs out as early as the end of this month; therefore, I expect action to avoid default as soon as possible.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

The gentleman ends with the observation that you expect action to avoid default as soon as possible. As you know, Mr. Leader, very well—as we all know—beginning tomorrow, the Treasury Department will have to start using extraordinary measures because the authorization for the debt limit to be extended will end on the 7th. Secretary Lew has written to all of us and warned us that, on Monday, stating that:

Time is short. Inaction could cause harm to our economy, rattle financial markets, and hurt taxpayers.

I know that my friend has made similar comments, as I have made similar comments. We agree on this proposition. But I am concerned that we only have 7 legislative days scheduled for the rest of the month.

Does the gentleman expect that we will take an up-or-down vote on a clean debt limit extension next week or before the end of this month?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my remarks just prior, I would say to the gentleman that I am confident that the United States is not going to default on its debt and that we will resolve the need to increase the borrowing authority of this country prior to any deadline that the Treasury issues.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate that information. I want to say that the debt limit extension will have—Mr. Leader, I want to give you the information—in my view, well over 180 votes on our side of the aisle if that is a clean debt limit so that America can pay its bills and default is not a risk. As the gentleman indicates, we don’t want it to be.

The Speaker has indicated that it would be solved long before we would come to any deadline precipitating another crisis and undermining confidence.

□ 1230

I want to tell the gentleman, the majority leader, that I will assure him that if we get a clean debt limit extension on the floor, that Democrats will work with him and his party to pass that in a way that we have a significant majority for that bill.

Mr. Leader, I was encouraged to see last week at your retreat that the House Republicans put forward a set of principles for immigration reform and have now expressed a readiness to discuss how to fix our broken immigration system. I am sure you have seen the response from my side of the aisle, not only from the President, but myself and Leader PELOSI, has been positive. We see the steps that have been taken as positive steps. We do look forward to working together on these principles.

We were just somewhat disappointed, however, that one of your Members, RAÚL LABRADOR of Idaho, was quoted yesterday as saying there was:

Overwhelming support for the idea of doing nothing this year. It is a mistake to have an internal battle this year about immigration.

I would hope that Mr. LABRADOR’s remarks do not lead us to a place where we will either not proceed or to pass immigration reform on this floor.

The majority leader has indicated in some of our colloquies that he believes the immigration system is broken. Again, we share that view, and I think almost all Members share the view that the immigration system is not working as intended. There have been

four bills passed out of Judiciary and another out of Homeland Security. Homeland Security was essentially unanimous in terms of dealing with security. We have introduced, as the majority leader knows, H.R. 15, which is a compilation of the bipartisanly passed Senate provisions, dropping the border security provision and inserting the border security passed out of the Republican-led Homeland Security Committee, I think by unanimous vote, but maybe it was by voice vote.

I would hope that we could, therefore, move forward and that Mr. LABRADOR's observation that there was "overwhelming support for the idea of doing nothing this year" would not be the prevalent view. We will again be ready to discuss this, and I can tell you that the overwhelming majority of my party, as I think the gentleman knows, would vote for the Senate bill. We don't think that the Senate bill is perfect. We would like to see a House bill. We have introduced a House bill, and we would like to consider it on the floor.

I will close with this observation with reference to immigration. I am sure the gentleman read the comments of former Speaker Dennis Hastert:

The House will act in its own way, as it should; but it should act soon. Immigration reform is necessary for our economic recovery.

Again, this is former Speaker Dennis Hastert of Illinois. He goes on to say:

First, securing our borders, so we know who is entering our country and for what purpose.

I think there is unanimous consensus that needs to be addressed.

He continues:

Second, a legalization of those folks who are already here.

Again, I think there is consensus on that.

He goes on to say we should provide them with:

A path to citizenship, much like any other immigrant would have.

Apparently, there is not necessarily consensus on that, but we do have consensus on the first proposition. He goes on to say:

These two things being satisfied, I believe immigration reform can move forward. It will make us economically stronger. It is politically smart, and morally right.

That was quoted in Politico on February 2. Those are words of former Speaker Hastert. I would hope and I know the gentleman has been very constructive in his comments that we can move forward together in reaching some agreement so we can see comprehensive immigration legislation on the floor consistent with the principles of both parties, and we can come together and pass some legislation.

I yield to the gentleman as to the prospects of doing so.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman knows, we have been on

this floor before and I have said that we believe in the majority that the immigration system in this country is broken. There needs to be reform. I think I have also said to the gentleman, as I have said publicly this week, we have to go about a rebuilding of the trust here. I think the fundamental issue right now is there is doubt cast on this White House, this President, this administration's willingness to implement the laws given the track record that we have seen on laws like ObamaCare and others.

I have said to the gentleman I believe that reform is badly needed. I believe that we have got a situation at the border and the interior that needs to be fixed. The gentleman knows I have been very outspoken on the issue of kids and the fact that so many are here, unbeknownst to themselves, brought here, and know no other place as home and then are stuck without any sense of the fact that they will be accepted in the country that they know.

But before we can even get there, there needs to be some trust. There needs to be some trust built by this President with this Congress because it seems that the track record is full of examples of the White House and the administration picking and choosing in terms of the regulations, the laws, and the provisions that it wants to implement. If it doesn't like to implement one, then it will just seemingly ignore that.

I don't think that the gentleman agrees that that is the way this system was designed or our Framers had in mind in terms of equal branches of power, one that makes the laws and one that fully and faithfully executes the law, and obviously a judiciary that provides that extra check and balance.

So again I would say to the gentleman, I would ask, if he is talking with the White House, please ask them to begin to work with us on any number of things to demonstrate that they are willing to actually drive toward the same result and not just work around us in terms of a unilateral result that they may seek.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, Mr. LABRADOR, and I will quote again, said there was:

Overwhelming support for the idea of doing nothing this year.

Now in light of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the observation is that the system is broken, and in light of Speaker Hastert's observation that it is morally the right thing to do, I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, I don't place much stock in this what I would call a rationalization of trust.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind this House that George Bush, President George Bush, couldn't get the support of his party for immigration reform. His party rejected President Bush on this issue, this issue of trust. There are

less illegal immigrants having come over the border in the last 5 years than there were during the Bush administration. There have been more people deported, in many cases with tragic results of separating families, over the last 5 years than there were in the Bush administration.

This is a question of what is morally right to do.

This is a question of what is morally right to do, to fix a broken system that is breaking apart families, undermining our economy, and abandoning what so many say is the right thing to do.

So with all due respect to, frankly, trying to distract us on this trust issue, this is not a trust issue. This is an issue of law and the administration's performance both on border security and enforcing the law in this respect, a bad law and a law that ought to be changed, a law that is causing families to be torn apart.

Mr. Speaker, I have stood on this floor as chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe with my colleague, FRANK WOLF, and I believe Mr. CANTOR, perhaps, has been in some of these discussions himself when we have been dealing with the Soviet Union about keeping families together. So I will tell my friend, Mr. Speaker, this is not a matter of trust. This is a matter of whether the House of Representatives is going to do what Speaker Hastert has urged us to do, what President Bush urged us to do, and for which I think there are the votes to do on this floor if a bill is brought to the floor that accomplishes the principles that both parties have articulated.

Are there differences? There are some. Do we need to resolve them? We do. But we need to act. I say with all due respect to my friend, the majority leader, that I hope that those principles do not fall by the wayside as Mr. LABRADOR projects there is a consensus in your party to allow to happen.

So I would urge us to move and urge us to work together on the principles that Mr. BOEHNER and yourself have put forward and which we have responded to in a positive way.

Mr. Leader, there is also other business that needs to be done. We continue to be concerned, we were concerned when there were 1.2 million people who had fallen through the cracks and had no help. Now there are 1.7 million Americans who have lost their emergency unemployment insurance since December 28. An additional 72,000 will lose their insurance next week. We believe that needs to be addressed and reinstated, as we have done every time that we were in a similar place as we are today in terms of the availability of jobs and the seekers of jobs.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the majority leader if he can give us some view of the sustainable growth

rate reimbursement for doctors who give our senior citizens medical care? That was extended with a temporary patch to March 31, Mr. Speaker, and that needs to be addressed permanently. There is a consensus, I understand, among the committees for a fix on that, but there is no pay-for on that. That is always the problem. It is easy to say we are going to fix; it is very difficult to pay for those fixes. On both of those issues, I would ask the gentleman on unemployment insurance and the SGR, whether the gentleman has any view on either one of those coming to the floor any time soon?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, on both of those issues, there is a lot of work. On the SGR, he is exactly right; it is always the pay-for. We saw the struggle that surrounded the recent budget agreement, and coming up with \$23 billion in cost reductions and savings over 10 years was very difficult. It is hard for folks outside of Washington to imagine why that is the case when you are dealing with trillions of dollars being spent.

I share the gentleman's frustration. I would like to see, as well as, I think, the seniors of this country would like to see, an end to a formula that doesn't work in terms of reimbursements to providers, and one that will allow for a better way and a more quality health care future for our seniors.

So I do share the goal that we should replace the SGR and at the same time ensure that seniors are not going to see a diminution in the quality of their care. The gentleman knows that these discussions are ongoing in committee as we speak.

As far as the UI situation, as the gentleman knows, there are currently 6 months of unemployment benefits available to folks who have, unfortunately, found themselves out of work. We care about those folks and want to do all we can to do what they really want, which is to get back to work. This goes back towards the administration's willingness to work with us.

Our leadership, Mr. Speaker, sent a letter to the President last week outlining four things, just four of the many things he spoke about in the State of the Union address, where there is pretty much agreement on what we need to do together. We have not heard back from the administration. One of those things was the SKILLS Act. If we don't want to accept the new norm of chronic unemployment, we ought to be going full-time overspeed to try to grow the economy, to increase the competitiveness of the American economy so people can get back to work, and so they can take care of their families. We know that the chronically unemployed have a real problem because if they are without either a high school diploma or a college degree, they are at a great disadvantage for today's job opportunities.

□ 1245

The SKILLS Act can address that. All we have heard is the President wants to, once again, create another commission to review all the studies that have been combed through before and that have resulted in our bill, Ms. Foxx of North Carolina's bill, the SKILLS Act.

Again, if the administration is so concerned about trying to address the plight of the chronically unemployed, let's go for jobs, not just accepting the new norm.

So again, discussions, building trust with one another, driving towards resolve could actually help the situation so that we can address this serious problem that plagues the communities of this country.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I might say the SKILLS Act, of course, was considered on this floor. We could have had a bipartisan bill, and I would like to see a bipartisan bill.

As the majority leader knows, I have been a strong proponent of an agenda that we call Make It In America, which wants to expand manufacturing in America. We believe that when we expand manufacturing, grow jobs in America, Americans are going to be more likely to Make It In America, succeed, get a job, be able to support their families.

So there is, I think, not disagreement on that. There was disagreement on the SKILLS Act. We believe the SKILLS Act essentially retreated in investments with skills.

Mr. CANTOR. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I will certainly yield.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, my point is that the President, rather than going and acting unilaterally and appointing another commission, could easily have picked up the phone and said, "Hey, I want to come up there," or, "You all come here, and let's talk about getting the job done," rather than doing what is always done, which is kicking the can and creating another commission to go over the studies and outcomes of other commissions. That is my point.

If you have differences with the SKILLS Act, if the gentleman doesn't speak, we understand that. But the bottom line is we both agree we have to improve the outlook for skills for the chronically unemployed.

Why aren't we doing something on that? Why isn't there any response from the White House? That is my point. We could do this. We could work together and achieve results. And so again, I understand the gentleman's disagreement with the SKILLS Act, but let's work through it. The White House doesn't seem to want to do any of that.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I don't think anybody in America believes the

White House doesn't want to do something about that. The President of the United States has talked about it. In every one of his State of the Unions he talked about it. In this State of the Union, he talked about expanding manufacturing and training. So the President has talked about it, all the time about wanting to invest in giving the skills to American workers that they need to either stay employed or get the kind of skilled jobs that are available in our economy, that pay well.

There are a number of bills, I will tell the majority leader, in the Make It In America agenda that I would love to work with the majority leader on that deal exactly with that. I have a bill myself—actually, I think somebody else introduced it—called the Jobs bill, which is job opportunities between our shores, which is exactly on point of dealing with advanced manufacturers, community colleges, and other organizations in cooperation with work investment boards to identify what skills are needed, to invest in training.

The gentleman is correct, we all want to do that, and we certainly ought to be able to work towards that. He is incorrect in that the President has not only not focused on that, he has worked on that. The Secretary of Labor, Tom Perez, has worked on it; Penny Pritzker, the Secretary of Commerce, is very committed to that end; as is Arne Duncan, the Secretary of Education, and they have all talked about that. So let us work on it.

What the gentleman talked about, he cares a lot about, and I think he does. Mr. Speaker, I absolutely take him at his word. He cares about those people who have—through no fault of their own—lost their job, work wasn't available, they downsized, whatever, they lost their job.

He said he is concerned about those people, as he should be, as I am, as we all are. But one of the real tragedies is, particularly with those folks who are 45 or 50 and above, once they have lost a job, they have a terrible time in this economy finding a job. There are three people looking for every one job that is available. And a lot of those people, as the gentleman has observed, don't have the skills.

So the issue is not just about giving them skills; it is, in the interim, do we let them and their families fall through the cracks, fall through a safety net, fall out of the insurance that they paid into, their employer paid into, in the event they lost their job they would not lose the ability to support themselves to put some food on their table? That is why we are so adamant that unemployment insurance be extended.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, it has been extended under every administration when the facts were as they are today—Republican administration, Democratic administration—for the reasons that the majority leader pointed out.

We care about those people. We are worried about those people. So I would hope that that would be on the floor.

On the SGR, let me close by suggesting that there is, as the gentleman knows, an Overseas Contingency Operations account. The CBO scores that significantly.

The good news is that we are not spending as much money as we were. We spent over a trillion dollars in the last decade in Afghanistan and Iraq. Better to spend that money in this instance here at home. I would suggest, respectfully, that that is one alternative to doing what the gentleman says we all want to do, and that is fix the sustainable growth rate on a permanent basis so that doctors and Medicare patients are not worried about whether their medical services are going to be available to them. I would hope we would look at that alternative, and I would be glad to discuss with the majority leader other alternatives as well.

Unless the majority leader has anything further to say, thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT FROM THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014, TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2014

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday next, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RICE of South Carolina). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

(Mr. SHUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, for more than 5 years, the Obama administration has played politics with the Keystone XL pipeline, a project that is essential to reducing our dependence on foreign oil and creating jobs.

Progress has been blocked at every turn by the President more concerned with his popularity with environmental extremists than supplying our Nation with OPEC-free energy.

House Republicans have joined with members of the labor movement to move this project forward. Just last year, I worked through my committee to advance H.R. 3 to approve the Keystone pipeline with Congressman LEE TERRY. The House passed the bill back in May of 2003, but once again we were ignored by the Senate and the President.

The State Department just released its final Environmental Impact State-

ment, which estimates that Keystone XL will produce 42,000 jobs and will be safe.

President Obama often talks about wanting to create jobs, improving our economy, and strengthening our energy independence. He claims to support an all-of-the-above energy strategy. But with his stopping the Keystone pipeline and his war on coal, we are losing jobs, we are not strengthening the economy, and we are decreasing our ability to become energy independent.

Mr. President, stop dragging your feet and approve the Keystone pipeline.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

SERGEANT BRIAN LALOU

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the family of Sergeant Brian LaLou from Chester County, Pennsylvania. Tragically, in the summer of 2012, Sergeant LaLou took his own life while he was at his duty station at the U.S. Embassy in Greece. What happened next was unconscionable.

During the course of an autopsy performed by Greek authorities, his heart was removed and not returned to his body before it was sent home to his family for a proper burial. When the Greek Government finally sent the family a heart, it was not their son's. The DNA testing revealed that it belonged to someone else.

Mr. Speaker, I wrote to the Commandant of the Marine Corps in December seeking answers for this young man's family. The response from the Pentagon so far has been silence.

The LaLou family deserves answers. They deserve peace of mind. It is time for the Greek authorities and the Pentagon to tell Sergeant LaLou's parents what happened to their son's heart, because we know what happened to his family's.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, if I told you we could create tens of thousands of truly shovel-ready jobs, increase the prospects of American energy independence, and avoid undue environmental harm, how long would it take you to sign on the dotted line? For the President, it would take over 5 years. That is how long the application for the Keystone XL pipeline has been languishing on his desk.

In his State of the Union address, the President talked about the need to grow jobs and pursue an all-of-the-above energy strategy, yet he has

failed to take action on a project that does just that. Even after the release of a report from his own State Department last week clearly stating there would be little to no negative effect environmentally, the President still will not take the lead.

This project has support from Members of both parties, as well as the support of both business groups and labor groups.

The President said he has a pen. Now is the time to use it. Approve the Keystone XL pipeline, get Americans to work, and truly support a plan for an all-of-the-above energy strategy that sends a message to the rest of the world.

TRIBUTE TO THE BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH MONASTERY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the Benedictine Sisters of St. Joseph Monastery in St. Marys, which is located in Elk County, Pennsylvania, and is the oldest Benedictine convent in the United States.

The Benedictine Sisters, in concert with their federation, will close St. Joseph Monastery with the remaining 17 sisters moving on in the coming year.

For more than a century and a half, the monastery has grown and flourished. Through roles as teachers and school administrators, religious education teachers, hospital administrators, nurses, technicians, and dietitians, instructors and promoters of the arts, spiritual providers, citizens, and friends, the sisters have greatly impacted the community of St. Marys.

On February 23, 2014, St. Marys is hosting a communitywide celebration to honor and thank the Benedictine Sisters—both living and deceased—for nearly 162 years of service to the community and the region.

Today, I join with the community of St. Marys as we celebrate Honoring the Benedictine Sisters of St. Joseph Monastery Day, and offer thanks and appreciation to the sisters for their faithful and dedicated service to the Lord.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of account of illness.

Mr. ROSS (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of attending a funeral.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until, Monday, February 10, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4699. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Limitation on Use of Cost-reimbursement Line Items (DFARS Case 2013-D016) (RIN: 0750-A116) received January 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4700. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2013 Revisions to the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule and Final Confidentiality Determinations for New or Substantially Revised Data Elements [EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0028; FRL-9905-71-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR52) received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4701. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Carolina: Non-interference Demonstration for Removal of Federal Low-Reid Vapor Pressure Requirement for the Greensboro/Winston-Salem/High Point Area [EPA-R04-OAR-2013-0562; FRL-9905-70-Region-4] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4702. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Kansas: Annual Emissions Fee and Annual Emissions Inventory [EPA-R07-OAR-2013-0765; FRL-9905-66-Region-7] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4703. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Quality Implementation Plan; Alabama; Attainment Plan for the Troy Area 2008 Lead Nonattainment Area [EPA-R04-OAR-2013-0173; FRL-9904-91-Region 4] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4704. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Indaziflam; Pesticide Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0014; FRL-9903-88] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4705. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Hazardous Waste Management System; Modification of the Hazardous Waste Manifest System; Electronic Manifests [EPA-HQ-RCRA-2001-0032; FRL-9828-9] (RIN: 2050-AG20) received January 22, 2014,

pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4706. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Decommissioning Financial Assurance Instrument Security Program [DT-13-31], pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4707. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Enforcement Guidance Memorandum 11-003, Revision 2, Dispositioning Boiling Water Reactor Licensee Noncompliance with Technical Specifications Containment Requirement During Operation with a Potential for Draining the Reactor Vessel received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4708. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — TSTF-523, "Generic Letter 2008-01, Managing Gas Accumulation", Using the Consolidated Line Item Improvement Process [Project No. 753; NRC-2013-0173] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4709. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30934; Amdt. No. 3569] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4710. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 30935; Amdt. No. 3570] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4711. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment of Class E Airspace; Leesburg, VA [Docket No. FAA-2013-0033; Airspace Docket No. 13-AEA-1] received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4712. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Guidance for Determining Stock Ownership [TD 9654] (RIN: 1545-BL01) received January 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 3578. A bill to ensure that any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder is adopted pursuant to a rulemaking proceeding, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 113-

343). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2571. A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to require the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to notify and obtain permission from consumers before collecting nonpublic personal information about such consumers, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-344). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2446. A bill to replace the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection with a five person Commission; with an amendment (Rept. 113-345). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3193. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-346). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 3519. A bill to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to make the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection an independent agency; with an amendment (Rept. 113-347). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 2431. A bill to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System; with an amendment (Rept. 113-348). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. RAHALL):

H.R. 4005. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2015 and 2016, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. POSEY, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H.R. 4006. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require households that receive supplemental nutrition assistance benefits to present photographic verification at the time food is purchased with such benefits; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. ROGERS of Alabama):

H.R. 4007. A bill to recodify and reauthorize the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of

such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia:

H.R. 4008. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to prohibit Federal mandates, direction, or control of specific instructional content, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROSKAM (for himself and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 4009. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to prohibit an institution that participates in a boycott of Israeli academic institutions or scholars from being eligible for certain funds under that Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4010. A bill to provide for enhanced treatment, support, services, and research for individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4011. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of mail service within the State of Alaska; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. HALL, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. BUCHSON, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. SALMON, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H.R. 4012. A bill to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. CAMPBELL (for himself, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, and Mr. HUNTER):

H.R. 4013. A bill to direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to establish a program allowing low volume motor vehicle manufacturers to produce a limited number of vehicles annually within a regulatory system that addresses the unique safety and financial issues associated with limited production, and to direct the Environmental Protection Agency to allow low volume motor vehicle manufacturers to install engines from vehicles that have been issued certificates of conformity; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 4014. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit former Members of Congress from engaging in lobbying contacts; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself, Mr. UPTON, Mr. CAMP, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. BOUSTANY):

H.R. 4015. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. COLE, Ms. BASS, and Mr. BUTTERFIELD):

H.R. 4016. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a standard definition of therapeutic foster care services in Medicaid; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 4017. A bill to designate a peak located in Nevada as "Mount Reagan"; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (for herself, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. SCHWEIKERT):

H.R. 4018. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land located in Pinal County, Arizona, into trust for the benefit of the Gila River Indian Community, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. TIPPON, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. OWENS):

H.R. 4019. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the expensing of certain depreciable business assets; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. PINGREE of Maine:

H.R. 4020. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow certain discharged student loan debt to be included in gross income ratably over 15 years and to disregard such income in determining eligibility for Federal means-tested programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 4005.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4006.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. MEEHAN:

H.R. 4007.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 1; and Article I, section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia:

H.R. 4008.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment X of the Constitution, that states, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4009.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 9, Clause 7.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4010.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I; Section 8; Clause 1 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . .

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4011.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sec. 8
To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT:

H.R. 4012.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3:
The Congress shall have power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

and
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18:

The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

H.R. 4013.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 4014.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4015.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 4016.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. HECK of Nevada:

H.R. 4017.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution: The Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. KIRKPATRICK:

H.R. 4018.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I. Section 8—18 To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4019.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article 1 Section 8 Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, which states that the Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

By Ms. PINGREE of Maine:

H.R. 4020.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, of Section 8, of Article I of the Constitution

Amendment XVI to the Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 184: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
 H.R. 351: Mr. MCALLISTER.
 H.R. 375: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 409: Mr. COLE.
 H.R. 455: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. NADLER and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 498: Mr. TONKO.
 H.R. 508: Ms. CHU.
 H.R. 522: Mr. COTTON.
 H.R. 543: Mr. FORBES.
 H.R. 647: Ms. MATSUI.
 H.R. 831: Mr. MAFFEI and Mrs. ELLMERS.
 H.R. 920: Mr. SCHOCK.
 H.R. 1010: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 1089: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
 H.R. 1090: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
 H.R. 1094: Ms. HANABUSA.
 H.R. 1173: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. SCHOCK.
 H.R. 1250: Mr. MCALLISTER.
 H.R. 1281: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 1332: Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 1386: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
 H.R. 1507: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Mr. BOUSTANY.
 H.R. 1528: Mr. LATTA and Mr. HALL.
 H.R. 1563: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. YODER, Mr. RIGELL, and Mr. CLAY.
 H.R. 1690: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 1726: Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. SALMON, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 1750: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 1779: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 1814: Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 1852: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1921: Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 2173: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 2468: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H.R. 2502: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 2536: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2672: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 2737: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 2745: Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 2785: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 2831: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2841: Mr. VEASEY and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2847: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 2901: Mr. LEVIN, Mr. HOLT, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JENKINS, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2909: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2945: Mr. DOYLE and Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 2955: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 2996: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3086: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3155: Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. FINCHER, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 3327: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 3370: Mr. FLEMING, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3395: Ms. CHU.

H.R. 3453: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 3461: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3467: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 3544: Mr. SCHNEIDER and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 3549: Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 3578: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 3658: Mr. SIRES, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 3662: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 3707: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. MARINO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 3710: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 3712: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HOLT, Mr. TONKO, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

H.R. 3726: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3732: Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 3747: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 3757: Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 3850: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 3855: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 3873: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 3899: Mr. UPTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. PETERS of California.

H.R. 3913: Mr. FINCHER.

H.R. 3921: Mr. VEASEY and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 3969: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 3972: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 3973: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 3976: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 3979: Mr. CARNEY, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. BENISHEK, and Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 3991: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 3992: Mr. DEFazio and Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 4000: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.J. Res. 41: Mr. MULVANEY.

H.J. Res. 68: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.J. Res. 108: Mr. HANNA, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. CHABOT.

H. Res. 169: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LONG, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H. Res. 356: Mr. NOLAN.

H. Res. 425: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H. Res. 464: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H. Res. 468: Ms. CHU, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. RUSH, and Ms. SHEAPORTER.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XV, the following discharge petition was filed:

Petition 6, February 4, 2014, by Mr. MICHAEL HONDA on House Resolution 459, was signed by the following Members: Michael M. Honda, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Juan Vargas, Rush Holt, Karen Bass, Peter Welch, Colleen W. Hanabusa, Chris Van Hollen, Sheila Jackson Lee, Barbara Lee, Robert A. Brady, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Danny K. Davis, David N. Cicilline, Alcee L. Hastings, Frederica S. Wilson, John Conyers Jr., Bill Pascrell Jr., Tony Cardenas, Robin L. Kelly, Jackie Speier, Gerald E. Connolly, John B. Larson, Al Green, Jim McDermott, Steve Israel, Eric Swalwell, Pete P. Gallego, and Filemon Vela.

SENATE—Thursday, February 6, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Immortal, invisible God, in whose patient hands the mighty seasons move with quiet beauty, hallowed be Your Name.

As our lawmakers face the complexities of their work, enlighten them with Your wisdom, lest the darkness prevent them from seeing the paths of Your providence. Lord, empower them to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint, keeping them always in Your care. May they find peace in the knowledge that You know and accept them as they are.

God bless America. Drive back the forces of evil and release the powers of goodness throughout our land.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter.

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, February 6, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHATZ thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1845, which is the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act. The filing deadline for first-degree amendments to that is 9:45 a.m. today, just a few minutes from now. The deadline for second-degree amendments to the Reed amendment and to the bill is 10:45 a.m.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent the cloture vote on the Reed substitute, which is now scheduled for 11 a.m., be at 2 p.m. There will be two votes at that time, and there could be another one. We will see what happens on the cloture vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. As I said, Mr. President, there will be two rollcall votes. The first vote is on cloture of the Reed amendment. If cloture is not invoked, there will be a second cloture on the underlying bill.

We hope to be able to work something out for Senator BAUCUS's nomination to be ambassador to China this afternoon.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1996

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told that there is a bill, S. 1996, due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1996) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with regard to this matter.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

TRIBUTE TO MAX BAUCUS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have had the good fortune of serving in Congress for more than three decades with a good man, the senior Senator from Montana MAX BAUCUS. We hope to schedule a vote sometime this afternoon on his confirmation to be our Nation's Ambassador to China.

Senator BAUCUS has served in the Senate for a long time. At the end of this year, he will have served 36 years. Prior to that, he served in the House of Representatives for 4 years. Prior to that, he served a term in the Montana State legislature.

He has his undergraduate and law degree from Stanford. He is an extremely smart person and is certainly versed on what goes on in the Congress.

After he received his law degree from Stanford, he worked as an attorney at the Securities and Exchange Commission and entered private practice in Missoula after that.

His mentor, and the person who got him interested in politics, was Mike Mansfield. I didn't know him—I shouldn't say I didn't know him. He attended the prayer breakfast, and I met him on a number of occasions at our Wednesday prayer breakfast. He was a very quiet man, and that is what everybody says about him. He was the worst guest in the world to interview on a Sunday show because he wouldn't say anything. He would just answer yes or no. He was well respected in the Senate by Democrats and Republicans.

I heard Senator BAUCUS tell the story many times about how Mike Mansfield suggested that he go into politics. Well, he did do that.

Senator BAUCUS served 2 years in the Montana State legislature before he was elected in 1974 to the House of Representatives. He served, as I indicated earlier, 4 years in the House before coming to the Senate. He has been elected and reelected to the Senate 5 times. As I said, at the end of this year, he will have served for 36 years in the Senate.

He has been chairman of the Finance Committee. He has been chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. He has been a member of the Agriculture Committee for a long time. By the way, he was appointed to that committee on a temporary basis many decades ago and never left.

As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, he was instrumental in developing lots of landmark legislation, but the most significant law he helped

to pass in this body was the landmark health care reform bill, the Affordable Care Act, which is saving lives and a lot of money for American taxpayers.

He has been a long-time advocate for the Children's Health Insurance Program. He worked on that with a number of people—not the least of which is Senator ORRIN HATCH of Utah.

While Senator BAUCUS is well-known nationally for his tireless work on health care, tax reform, and as a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, he was also involved in public works projects.

I think the most important thing that Montanans will remember about him is that he always put Montanans first. He is an avid hunter. He authored one of the largest public land grant bills in American history which preserved 310,000 acres of forest land in northwestern Montana.

It is a testament to his love of the outdoors that MAX BAUCUS walked almost 1,000 miles across Montana in 1995 and 1996.

MAX and I have an ongoing dialogue about running. I have run a number of marathons, but MAX BAUCUS is a better runner than I am. He is faster, and he has run—I ran one 31-mile race, but MAX has run 50-mile races, and he has trained for 100-mile races. During one of those, he fell and hurt himself quite significantly. He hit his head because of a fall.

We have exchanged news articles and stories about runners. We enjoy focusing on our athletic skills. It was just the two of us, so we could say whatever we wanted because there was no one there to listen.

He is someone who loves running. He is still an avid runner, and I have admired him for his athletic skills in addition to his legislative skills.

Senator BAUCUS's independent spirit has made him a powerful advocate for Montana and for the issues he cares about. He is a respected member of the Democratic caucus and has great respect from the Republican caucus.

During the time that Senator GRASSLEY was the ranking member—I can't vouch for this, but I think I am right—and Senator BAUCUS was chairman of the Finance Committee, they met every week for lunch. Every week we were in session, they had lunch together.

His passion is well known to all of us. He has decades of experience in Congress. President Obama made an excellent choice in appointing Senator BAUCUS to represent America's interests in China, a growing power in our global economy.

He has never shied away from difficult issues of the day, and I have no doubt that his fearlessness will serve him well in his new role as a representative for our country in China.

Although Senator BAUCUS will be missed by the entire Democratic cau-

cus and the Senate family, our loss will be the Nation's gain.

I wish the senior Senator from Montana the very best.

I hope we will vote this afternoon on Senator BAUCUS's nomination to be Ambassador to China. We have not locked that in yet.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

We will also vote at 2 p.m. to advance a 3-month extension of emergency unemployment insurance that will not add a penny to the deficit. We originally said 3 months and that it should not be paid for, but the Republicans said it had to be paid for.

We have had two, I thought, really uncontroversial issues that paid for it. The first one didn't work. I think that is wrong, but it didn't work. No one complained about the second one, so certainly any "no" vote on extending unemployment benefits is a "no" vote because they don't want to extend unemployment benefits.

For a number of years the junior Senator from Oklahoma has talked about how millionaires should not draw unemployment benefits. I agree with him. That is in JACK REED's amendment, which we are going to vote on later today. Under this legislation, we have accepted the suggestion of the junior Senator from Oklahoma that millionaires should not draw unemployment benefits.

We have virtually done everything that the Republicans asked. They will come up with excuses about why we can't do this and how they want amendments, but that is just a loss leader. We offered them 20 amendments before, but it wasn't good enough.

I hope that we could have a few valiant Republicans vote to help the people who are in desperate need of help. I am sorry to say that it appears Senate Republicans appear ready to filibuster this important legislation a second time despite the fact that we have compromised on every one of their demands. Republicans complained that the bill wasn't paid for, so we found an offset that was minimal to just about everything—at least certainly for those people who were originally on the bill—HELLER, MURKOWSKI, COLLINS. It is my understanding they accepted that. I hope more do. We need five Republican votes.

The Republicans have complained after the first vote that they wouldn't vote on an extension of unemployment insurance without reforms to the program, so we did that also.

I am beginning to believe there is nothing that will get Republicans to yes. With the exception of a few Republicans who have taken the human toll of obstruction into consideration, Republicans simply don't want to extend these benefits.

Their obstruction has already cost the Nation \$2.2 billion in economic activity—a body blow to small businesses

around the country. Every week they delay, another 73,000 Americans lose these crucial benefits, benefits that help them keep food on the table and a roof over their heads while they search for a job.

I shared the story about a 57-year-old Nevada woman who is couch surfing—I had never heard that term before, but I understand it—who is sleeping on friends' couches because she doesn't have a home anymore. She sold all her belongings so she could put gas in her car if she gets a job interview. This woman has worked all her life. She doesn't want a handout; she wants a job.

So I have had some good conversations with Republican Senators. I hope they will go ahead and let this important piece of legislation pass. We are going to move as quickly as we can to some bills that have been reported on a bipartisan basis out of committees. We are looking closely at the HELP Committee, the Energy Committee, and there are other committees we are going to look at to see if we can bring a bipartisan bill here to the floor, have an agreement on amendments, and try to move forward on that basis.

So as we vote today, I hope my Republican colleagues will keep in mind that we need to move forward—it is so important—to help people who are desperately in need of help such as this 57-year-old woman from Nevada. I hope they will work with us to advance this bill and legislation in the future more expeditiously than we have in the past.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

THE IRS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, just last year, IRS officials and an inspector general report confirmed what we have been hearing from constituents for quite a while: The IRS was being used to target Americans for daring to exercise their first amendment rights, for daring to think differently, for daring to hold opinions contrary to high-ranking government officials. They confirmed that civic groups the administration opposed, including at least one in my home State of Kentucky, were harassed and bullied by the IRS. They confirmed that individuals who supported these groups were intimidated and attacked, and they confirmed something else too—that this happened in the runup to a national election.

So Americans were rightly outraged—outraged—when the worst fears of citizen organizations came to light. The American people rightly expected the Obama administration to take concrete steps to end this harassment once and for all—to put safeguards in place

that would ensure the same kind of abuse never, ever happens again.

But that is not what happened. No, in fact, basically, the opposite of that happened. The Obama administration now seems to be trying to legitimize the harassment after the fact, to enact regulations that would essentially allow the IRS to bully and intimidate Americans who exercise their right of free speech. It is something they were originally planning actually to slip by while the harassment was actually still going on.

But here is the thing. The administration knew it could never get anything like that through Congress the democratic way, so it is trying to quietly impose these new regulations through the back door—through the back door—by executive fiat. Administration officials insist the rules change is just a minor bureaucratic adjustment. Nothing to it, they say. They claim it is just a “good government” idea from the IRS—a response to the inspector general report that brought these terrible abuses to light.

Of course, we know that is not true. We know the administration had been working on this proposed rule for at least 2 years—2 years—before the inspector general report came out, and from the looks of things there is nothing “good government” about this at all. As with so much of what we have seen with the Obama administration, it is almost purely political—transparently political.

Under the administration’s proposed regulations, many citizen groups could be prohibited—prohibited—from participating in some of the most basic civic engagement activities—things such as voter registration, issue advocacy, and educating citizens about candidates before an election. This is just plain wrong. Grassroots groups shouldn’t be persecuted for doing what Americans expect them to do. They shouldn’t be forced to shut up or shut down or for engaging in the very kinds of educational activities that the 501(c)(4) designation was designed to support.

The idea is to shut up and shut down the voices that oppose the administration’s priorities, and it comes on the heels of a long-running pet project of this administration to expose conservative donors to harassment in order to try to dry up their funding.

Americans who care about the First Amendment need to stand up to this regulation before the administration has a chance to finalize it. The American people need to stand up to this regulation before the administration has a chance to finalize it. And they actually are. More than 20,000 citizens have already submitted comments on this proposed rule at regulations.gov. Nearly all the ones I saw were opposed.

In the House, Representative DAVE CAMP has introduced legislation that

would prevent the IRS from implementing any such regulation, and next week, I, along with Senator FLAKE, Senator ROBERTS, and others, will introduce companion legislation that would do the same in the Senate.

But I hope it doesn’t have to come to that. There is a much easier fix available. There is a way out of this dilemma. The new commissioner of the IRS, John Koskinen, can put a stop to the rule right now if he chooses. He can stop this right now if he chooses. If he means what he said when the Senate confirmed him—the comments we heard about restoring integrity to the IRS—then he will do just that. The Speaker and I, along with top Senate and House leadership and the leadership of the relevant authorizing and appropriating committees, have just sent a letter to Mr. Koskinen on this topic, and we look forward to his response.

Back in the 1970s, Richard Nixon famously tried to influence the IRS into helping him punish his political opponents. The IRS has been in this spot before. Back then, the IRS commissioner stood up to President Nixon and said, essentially: No, that is not what this agency is supposed to do. So the history is that when a previous IRS commissioner had a President of the United States try to use him to target his political enemies, the Commissioner of the IRS stood up to the President and said no. He said no to the President. The President cannot use the IRS to target the President’s political enemies. That act of courage and independence became the defining act of an already distinguished career, and it was something for which the American taxpayer should be forever grateful.

So, today, Commissioner Koskinen has a similar choice. He can either be remembered as the man who reformed this IRS at a time when Americans were deeply distrustful of it or he can be remembered as the man who allowed himself to be used by the administration for its own political ends. That is the choice.

The bottom line is this. Americans need to be able to trust the IRS again, and that means getting our Nation’s tax agency back into the mission it was designed to perform such as processing tax returns, not regulating free speech. The Obama administration’s proposed rule has almost nothing to do with actual tax policy. It is more about making harassment of its political opponents the official policy of the IRS. That is completely unacceptable. Remember, this is an agency that has access to some of America’s most sensitive personal information: the power to audit, to penalize, to harass—power that is pretty wide-ranging.

So it is not surprising that groups all across the political spectrum, from the ACLU to the Chamber of Commerce, have expressed concerns about this rule.

Let’s be clear. Let’s be perfectly clear. Commissioner Koskinen knows the IRS has no business regulating free speech. He knows that. The eyes of America are on the IRS commissioner. They are counting on him to do the right thing.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1845, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1845) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Reed) amendment No. 2714, of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2715 (to amendment No. 2714), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 2716, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 2717 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 2716), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 2718 (to amendment No. 2717), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that the time until 2 p.m. be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees and that all quorum calls during that time also be equally divided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, in a few hours this Chamber will have the opportunity to restore benefits for 1.7 million American job seekers and help reduce the national deficit by \$1.2 billion. I believe my colleagues understand that this is a fiscally responsible way to help job seekers who are still struggling in the aftermath of the great recession.

Unemployment insurance helps people to look for work while at the same time bolstering consumer demand and supporting the economy, which is why the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that renewing unemployment insurance for 1 year will save 200,000 jobs.

This is an imperative. We must do it. On behalf of the families who are struggling, on behalf of our economy that

needs the support, this is something which must be done.

Now the question is whether we can move this critical bill forward and send help to those who are struggling through no fault of their own. Everyone understands that to qualify for unemployment insurance, they have to be working and they have to lose their job through no fault of their own, and they have to continue to search for work.

The reality in this market is that there are, in many cases, three applicants for every job. We have all heard the stories when we have gone home to our States.

There is a software engineer who worked for 20 years who has put out 300 resumes and who has followed people around to give them resumes. This individual was so persistent in trying to get a job in financial services that he would show up early in the morning and put his resume in the local newspaper for the head of the bank where he was interviewing. That eventually got him a callback, I am told, but not yet a job. It is very difficult.

We can do what we have always done—help these struggling Americans and help our economy.

At every point in this process, I believe we have responded to the issues raised by our colleagues to try to get this done. Instead of a full year of extended unemployment benefits—which I proposed, which we usually do—we compromised on a short-term extension just to get it done because since December 28 people have lost their benefits. They went off a cliff. Every week an estimated 70,000 more Americans lose their benefits. It is up to 1.7 million now, and it will be several million before this year has run out. So instead of a typical 1-year extension, we are asking for 3 months. Most of it or a large part of it is retroactive to make up to those people who lost their benefits beginning on December 28.

I was joined—and I must thank him for his tremendous leadership—by Senator DEAN HELLER of Nevada. This is a bipartisan effort because this unemployment problem—particularly this long-term unemployment problem—knows no political dimension or geographic dimension or ethnic or gender dimension. It is an American problem, and Senator HELLER and I are responding in a bipartisan way. We put what we thought was a pathway to provide immediate aid to these job seekers and to give us enough time to work through these complex issues many of my colleagues have raised, issues such as, can we make the program, overall, more effective? Can we incentivize individuals to seek employment more efficiently? Can we integrate training? All of those are important issues, but in the context of a 3-month emergency extension, the first thing to do is to get the relief to the people and then sit down and conscientiously and deliberately work on the details.

When this concession on the short term extension wasn't enough to break the filibuster, Democrats put forth another proposal, again after consultation with our Republican colleagues. I thank Senator HELLER, Senator COLLINS, Senator PORTMAN, Senator COATS, and many others who conscientiously and conscientiously provided thoughts, provided input, et cetera. So this process was not "my way or the highway." This was trying to find a bipartisan pathway, and we are still searching.

Based on those comments, we proposed a fully paid-for extension of unemployment insurance. We started off with 11½ months fully paid for. We used the pay-for that would have been an extension of the mandatory savings agreed to in the bipartisan budget agreement, which had been endorsed by House Budget Committee chairman PAUL RYAN. We also included in that proposal, the long-term proposal, a major policy change proposed by Senator PORTMAN addressing overlapping unemployment and disability insurance payments. None of these were easy to accept on our side.

The tradition has been unpaid-for unemployment extensions. Very few times have we paid for these benefits because they are considered emergency spending. This is an emergency. People are struggling out there. But we accepted the premise which our Republican colleagues suggested that this has to be paid for. Then we also accepted the premise that we couldn't pay for it with tax revenues. It would have to be paid for with something else. So we took a proposal that was embedded in the budget and we tried to use that together with a proposal that was first presented by Senator PORTMAN. But we had a vote, a cloture vote, and none of our Republican colleagues supported it.

Then we had a vote on the underlying measure, the short-term extension, the 3-month extension unpaid-for offered by Senator HELLER and me—Senator HELLER joined us on that vote, and I thank him for that—but we still did not have the significant number of Republican colleagues necessary not only to move this measure forward but also to do the right thing.

We are here today and we have had another round of extensive discussions, consultations, and we are now about to pay for a 3-month extension of unemployment benefits. Some of it is retroactive, all of it is fully paid for. I will point out that it is February and this extension will go forward until March. We are reaching the point, ironically, where we might have more retroactive payments than prospective payments. That is why we have to move and we have to move today.

It is not everything we wanted, certainly. As I said initially, we would have preferred a full year to give people certainty for the year. We would have, as we have done more times than

not, declared it emergency spending. But in order to conscientiously and thoughtfully and cooperatively and collaboratively work with our colleagues, we have continually agreed to make concessions. I used to think that was the nature of political compromise, principled political compromise, and we have tried.

Now we have a 3-month bill that is paid for by a technique called pension smoothing, which we have enacted on a bipartisan basis. In fact, the vote was 79 to 19 in the 2012 Transportation bill, MAP-21. So this is not a controversial pay-for. This is something we have embraced before. It is something that does not involve raising revenues, which is one of the benchmarks our colleagues laid down. So we have a short-term, fully paid-for UI benefit which can go out immediately to people who are suffering and which is paid for by a non-controversial mechanism.

Essentially, it will do what I think we have been requested to do by our colleagues on the other side. Our request is simply, support us in this effort so that we can get this legislation accomplished.

One of the interesting things about this pay-for is that not only is it in the Transportation bill—due to expire, and we will extend it—but also it has been used on numerous occasions by colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pay for a various assembly of different legislative proposals. So this is not a controversial mechanism. I don't think unemployment insurance is controversial. I think people hopefully recognize that it is necessary in this situation.

We have also included a provision in this proposal that has been championed aggressively and thoughtfully by Senator COBURN that will bar individuals with income of over \$1 million from receiving Federal unemployment insurance benefits. It has passed this Chamber by a vote of 100 to 0.

The other factor which I would argue to my colleagues is that as we pay for this extension, we are also able to approve \$1.2 billion over 10 years to reduce the deficit.

If my colleagues are looking for proposals that are fully paid for, reduce the deficit, and provide needed assistance to Americans who have worked, are looking for work, and desperately want a job, we need their vote this afternoon. I hope we can move forward on this bill and help unemployed Americans who are searching for work, help employers—this pension-smoothing mechanism helps employers—and also reduce the deficit. That is a very good trifecta, something I think we should support.

The other point I want to make is that the notion that unemployment insurance, Federal long-term benefits, should be a political issue is in stark contrast to its history. Congress has renewed UI on a bipartisan basis in the

past on numerous occasions. We did it three times under President Ronald Reagan. We did it five times under President George W. Bush. That is the precedent to get it done today. That is a pretty good precedent on a bipartisan basis under two Republican Presidents.

One of the questions that comes up is does the Republican leadership—not some of the Members whom we have collaborated with very closely—want this to pass or will they say: No, no, forget the substance, it is so compelling. Let's talk about process. This is about how many amendments we have. This is about whether we can reform and reauthorize an entire legislative program based on a 3-month extension—most of which is rapidly becoming more retroactive, than prospective, than going forward.

I think the American people see through this. The substance is clear. This program has been repeatedly reauthorized to deal with long-term unemployment under Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents on a bipartisan basis. It is fully paid for. It is paid for by a noncontroversial technique that does not include raising revenues. In fact, the pay-for is something the corporate world supports.

There are others who might say we are disappointed because there is another major issue out there, and there is; that is, the COLA cuts for military retirees. This is an issue that has to be dealt with, and it will be dealt with. But, I wish to point out that COLA does not become effective—those reductions—until December of 2015. People receiving UI lost their benefits December of last year. They are already suffering. There is no more time for them, in terms of our fixing it, before it takes effect. We need to act today.

Indeed, it has been estimated there are 20,000 veterans who have been denied long-term unemployment benefits because of our failure to extend this. So for those 20,000 veterans, I don't think it would be sufficient to tell them they are not going to get their unemployment insurance because we are worried about what is going to happen in December of 2015 to other veterans. If we want to help veterans right away, today, we can help 20,000 of them by voting for this provision going forward.

Let us help both the unemployed and our veterans and not try to use one group against the other, for a legislative advantage in terms of any one particular measure. The emergency for unemployment insurance that encompasses at least 20,000 veterans is today, not a year or more from now.

We can't turn our back on 1.7 million Americans, with that number growing each week. We have to help them. It has been 40 days since unemployment insurance benefits expired for millions of Americans. That is 40 days too long for those who were downsized with the

recession and now find their unemployment insurance benefits being downsized again by Congress—downsized practically to zero.

I also wish to remind my colleagues about some of the reforms we already accomplished in 2012, because many of my colleagues have some very good ideas and they have talked about, well, if we are going to deal with unemployment insurance, let us deal with it in a way we can also make some structural reforms. In 2012, I was part of the conference committee between the House and the Senate where legislation was formally considered in this body, in the other body, and brought to a conference in regular order and we had a very vigorous debate about the structure of unemployment compensation, and significant structural reforms were made to the program.

This is not a situation where we have neglected to look at the unemployment compensation program for years and years and years. It was 2 years ago we made these changes. We strengthened the job search requirement. We have indeed allowed States, if they choose to, to drug screen applicants, which is an extremely controversial provision. That was included because we were responding to particularly many Members of the House of Representatives who said this had to be something the States can do. Well, this is something the States can do. I don't think most States have taken up the option, but this is something they can do.

Indeed, after the House passed this agreement, Representative CAMP issued a statement noting—in his words—the historic reforms of the Federal unemployment programs are an important part of this agreement. These reforms will now help the unemployed get the training and resources they need to move from an unemployment check to a paycheck. The package overturns arcane 1960s-era regulations and allows States to drug screen and test those most at risk.

I am always willing to listen to proposals to make changes, but we have to recognize we made significant changes to this program, in Mr. CAMP's words—revising provisions that had been there since the 1960s, and that was about 2 years ago. So we have made these changes. But we are willing to work in good faith if additional changes are necessary. However, they shouldn't block a 3-month extension, much of it retroactive, that is pending before the Senate today.

Let me make one other point. In the context of this debate, there has been the suggestion that unemployment insurance is in some way inappropriate, immoral. It encourages people to avoid work. It makes us, as Americans, lazy and dependent. That is not what I see when I go back home. What I see are people who say—even recognizing my efforts to try to get this bill passed—

that is fine, but what I truly want is a job. I want to work. I want to work for many reasons. One, the \$350 a week I get, that barely keeps my family whole. It is a little help for gasoline, a little help with the rent, but I can't live on that. I have to have a job.

By the way, I think most Americans want to work because work defines us. Work gives us not just a place to go but gives meaning to all of us, just as family does. So this notion this is just this program that indulges those who don't want to work is profoundly wrong. Indeed, it is an insult to millions of Americans who desperately want a job.

By definition, unemployment insurance is based on an individual's work history. This is not a program you qualify for by showing up. You have to be let go, basically. You have to be told: We can't keep you anymore. We are sorry. You are a good worker, but we can't keep you. You have to go. In fact, if you are not a good worker, if you are fired for cause, you don't get these benefits. And then they actively have to keep looking for work. As I said, in the 2012 legislative provisions, we gave the States more authority to make that active search much more active, much more real—not perfunctory but an active search.

Because of the obstructions we have seen, most Americans now are just simply eligible for 26 weeks of assistance—the standard program administered by the States. But the Washington Post notes it takes an average job seeker about 32 weeks to get hired, and in some cases even longer because of high unemployment. In my State it is 9.1 percent. There are some States where it is remarkably low because of the particular economic conditions there. But as the Post points out, for the average worker, it is 32 weeks. Those 26 weeks will not cover their unemployment period as they desperately search for work.

The other cruel fact is the longer one is unemployed, the harder it is to get a job. That is what we know from research. That is what we know from our own sense of the economy. So the notion that someone, such as a chemical engineer who has been out of work for 7 months, who has a great work record—the first time he or she has ever lost their job—should take the first thing available to him or her at the lowest cost, the lowest wage, No. 1, I think devalues their lifetime effort; and No. 2, it potentially denies us of their productivity. I would rather see a chemical engineer work at a job related to chemical engineering than stocking shelves because his productivity, his or her contribution to society, would be much greater doing the job they were trained for and they have the experience to do.

Our Nation is at its best when everyone has the opportunity to put their

talents, their skills, and their experience to work. We need to get our country back to full employment. We all know that is the answer. This is an emergency provision, a bridge, if you will, to a job. We have to do more not only to put people back to work but to make the wages they receive allow them to live not just paycheck to paycheck but to live with the sense they are building some security for themselves and their family.

We have the resources to achieve this. We are paying for this provision. We are not putting it on the shoulders of the next generation. We are limiting it to a very short period of time so there is an opportunity to work and look at what we did in 2012 and see if we can do more. The question before us is, Does this Senate have the will to make it happen?

Renewing unemployment insurance isn't the end of our efforts. Our efforts are to get more jobs out there so people don't need unemployment insurance; that it is not 32 weeks to get a new job but is several days, we hope. This is the building block we need to put in place to move forward.

This process, this expiration, has caused Rhode Islanders in my home State great hardship. It is time to end that hardship. So I urge my colleagues to renew this program. This is one of those issues where it simply comes down, in my view, to this: This is the right thing to do. I honestly believe there are many more than 60 of my colleagues who fundamentally believe this is the right thing to do and the right way to do it. The question is, Will they vote that way in a few hours? I hope they do.

With that, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. RUBIO. I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN SANCTIONS

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I have been receiving a lot of phone calls and emails this week about the issue of Iran. Just last night, almost all of my colleagues on the Republican side and I, led by Senator KIRK, among others, sent a letter to the majority leader asking him to have a vote on additional sanctions on Iran. Of course, these sanctions would be conditioned on failure of the additional negotiations which the administration has announced will begin next week.

I wish to take a moment to explain to people back home, who are—rightfully so—writing and calling us about this issue, what is at stake and what is happening. So I will break it down to the most basic elements.

Iran is a country which, as we all know, beginning in 1979 was overtaken by a radical Islamic revolution which took control of the country and has been a sworn enemy of the United States ever since. In fact, until very recently—and perhaps they still do—after Friday prayers, they used to end them with the chant “Death to America.”

It is one thing to say those things. It is another to actually do something about it. In fact, Iran has. They have been one of the most active sponsors of terrorism all over this planet but particularly in the Middle East.

We know they are actively engaged in undermining our interests all over the world. They have been linked to terrorist attacks against dignitaries from other countries in other countries abroad. About 2 years ago, a report emerged of the potential that they were trying to plot the assassination of a foreign ambassador here in Washington, DC.

In addition, they participate in things such as cyber attacks against the country, they destabilize their neighbors, and they continue to develop their weapons capability.

In addition to all that which I have just outlined, over the last few years Iran has begun to pursue a nuclear program. In order to have a nuclear weapon, you have to be able to process plutonium. This takes infrastructure, and while people know how to do that per se, it takes a lot of investment of time, energy, and expertise to actually build the facilities to enrich.

You can enrich for peaceful purposes. If you want to have nuclear reactors to power your cities, this requires enrichment up to a certain level. But Iran has gone well beyond that.

This is important for two reasons. The first is that there are plenty of countries in the world who have nuclear energy but don't enrich and don't reprocess. They import that material to use in their reactors. In fact, that is what most countries who have nuclear reactors do.

But the second is that Iran's program has always had strong elements of secrecy. They have had all these secret facilities they hide from the world—and the world is rightfully concerned.

The United Nations Security Council—which is lately usually a pretty useless body, but the United Nations Security Council came up with a resolution demanding that Iran stop the enrichment process. But they kept going. In fact, not so long ago they discovered more secret facilities where Iran was enriching uranium and reprocessing plutonium.

So the administration has made it a high priority, as has its predecessor, to stop that from happening, and they have made clear statements: We are not seeking to contain a nuclear Iran; we want to prevent it. That is the right approach. Now, here is the problem.

We recently entered into these negotiations with Iran to get them to stop, to back away from this. If you want nuclear power, if you want nuclear energy, you can have it without the need to reprocess—like most countries do, like many of our allies do.

The only reason why they even came to the table for those negotiations is because the United States, to be frank—despite the resistance of this administration, which each and every time sanctions and sanctions bills have come before the Congress have threatened to veto them and have blocked them and have been against them—despite all of that, these sanctions have been in place. They have been applied at a global level, and they have created a tremendous amount of pressure on the Iranian economy. As a result, they have come to the table to negotiate—not because the new president, Rouhani, is a reformer, as some like to call him, but because they have so much internal pressure and their economy is under so much duress that they are afraid of what their people may do about it in the long term.

The administration is pretty optimistic about these negotiations which were reached: An interim agreement—a temporary agreement, as they call it. A joint plan of action is the right terminology.

We had Secretary Sherman, who was in charge of those talks, here the other day before the Foreign Relations Committee. Her point is, we accomplished something. We got Iran to stop processing at a certain level and suspend it. That is her point. Now we are going to go into the second phase of negotiating a longer term solution, and we have to give diplomacy a chance.

The problem is that something is lost in translation. Perhaps before the Internet we didn't catch these things, but now we can see these things happening in real-time.

For some reason Iran does not have the same interpretation that the United States does of this joint plan of action.

For example, the head of Iran's atomic energy organization on November 24 said as follows:

Work at the Arak reactor will continue. . . . Research and development will continue. All our exploration and extraction activities will continue. There are no activities that won't continue.

Their foreign minister on November 27 said:

Iran will pursue construction at the Arak heavy-water reactor.

This is the same one I was just talking about.

Iran's top nuclear negotiator said—and this is really concerning:

We can return again to 20-percent enrichment in less than one day, and we can convert the nuclear material again. . . . Therefore, the structure of our nuclear program is preserved . . . we . . . will in no way, never, dismantle our centrifuges.

These are concerning statements. Their foreign minister said something else on CNN on January 22:

We did not agree to dismantle anything. . . . The White House version both underplays the concessions and overplays Iran's commitments . . . we are not dismantling any centrifuges, we're not dismantling any equipment, we're simply not producing, not enriching over 5%.

The problem is that maybe they are not enriching right now. Or, quite frankly, it would be tough to tell because they have always had secret capabilities we keep finding out about long after they have started. But more complicated is that they are keeping all the process and the equipment in place. If they wanted to—as they accurately said—they could return to enriching at whatever level they wanted in less than 1 day.

Now, we may ask ourselves: Why has Iran agreed to do these sorts of things? Here is what I said at the beginning and I know now to be true more than ever. Here is Iran's strategy. It is the same one employed by North Korea a few years ago:

Let's get into a negotiation. Let's see how many of these sanctions we can get lifted off of our shoulders. But let's not agree to anything that is irreversible.

Here is what they are gambling on. They are gambling that the world's attention will turn to something else; that the sanctions will erode and people will lose the discipline or the willingness to continue; that countries who are export driven want to sell things to Iran or get gasoline and petroleum products from them and will therefore agree to not continue with the sanctions.

Then eventually one day, in 1, 2, 3, 4 years or whenever, they can decide to restart this stuff and suddenly announce: We want to be a nuclear weapons power after all.

Do you know why I know—I don't think, I don't suspect—that Iran wants nuclear weapons? There are two reasons.

The first is because they believe this is the ultimate insurance policy. If they have a nuclear weapon, people can't interfere with their internal politics because they are a nuclear power.

The other reason why I know is because they are developing ballistic missiles. Ballistic missiles are rockets that travel at long distances, and they cost a lot of money to develop and a lot of time. The only reason why you develop that capability is to deliver a nuclear payload, to be able to deliver a nuclear weapon against somebody else far away.

The administration's argument is this is all for domestic consumption. This is all political posturing. This is what the administration is saying in reaction to Iran's top diplomat, who once again yesterday dismissed the Obama administration's demands on its nuclear program.

He said they have no value. The best part of this joint plan of action, he said, is that it is so clear that research and development has no constraint; we can continue research and development and increasing our capabilities; that all stays in place.

What he is really saying is this. Once the world is distracted and America moves to another topic or some other crisis happens somewhere else in the world, then we will do what we want to do.

That is what is happening here, and this is extremely dangerous for the future. Having a nuclear Iran is bad enough, but it isn't going to stop there. If Iran develops a nuclear capability and a nuclear weapon, every other country around them is going to want one as well. Saudi Arabia is going to want one. Potentially, Turkey is going to want one. Eventually, one day Egypt could want one. Could you imagine four or five nuclear weapons powers in the most unstable, dangerous region in the world? This is where we are headed.

What about these countries who don't enrich right now? South Korea is an example. We ask them not to enrich. We tell them: You don't need to enrich. We provide this stuff. How are we going to argue to them not to enrich now? How are we going to tell Jordan and Saudi Arabia and other countries: You shouldn't enrich but we have agreed to allow Iran to keep enriching? So we are going to tell our friends and allies: You can't have this capability; you shouldn't have this capability; but we are going to tell an enemy of this country and of world peace that they can?

This is why we want a vote on these sanctions. We don't have room for error here. We do not have the space to be wrong. We can't afford to be wrong.

There is no guarantee sanctions will prevent Iran from going nuclear, but it will make it extremely painful. It will influence their cost benefit analysis.

Failure to put these sanctions in place is already having an impact. Every day we see news reports of businessmen in Europe and around the world flooding to Iran on the idea sanctions might be eroding. How are we going to pull that back? We won't be able to.

I don't completely dismiss the notions the administration is saying. It is ideal to reach a negotiated solution with Iran. But we have to be wise. We have to learn the lessons of history, and we have to understand human nature. Iran's regime wants a nuclear

weapon because it gives them supremacy in the region and they believe it makes them immune to outside pressure and interference in their internal affairs. They are headed for a weapon, and they are using these negotiations to buy time.

There are 59 Members of this Senate who have signed on to a sanctions bill and one Senator is preventing a vote on it, and that is wrong. We should have a vote on a matter of this importance. The use of procedural motions and the power of the majority leader to prevent a vote on something of this importance has extraordinary long-term implications on our national security.

Let me just close by making one more point in this regard. I recently read statements that those of us who want more sanctions are banging the war drum. That is false. On the contrary. We believe that a failure to put sanctions in place increases the likelihood of an armed conflict with Iran. Are we prepared to allow Iran to become a nuclear weapons power?

We are going into these negotiations with one arm tied behind our back. They are saying: Under no circumstances will we ever agree not to enrich, and we are saying we are open to that.

I am saying this on the floor so that it is recorded and so people know where I stood on this before it happened. If Iran is allowed to maintain any sort of enrichment capability within our lifetime—in fact, I believe before the end of this decade, God forbid—Iran will have a nuclear weapon and one day we will wake up to the news that they have tested a device or proven the capability of having one. When that day comes, God help us all.

I hope we can have a vote on the Senate floor on this issue. Let's have a debate on it. Let's have a frank and open discussion about it. Why are we preventing that from happening? Why is the majority leader preventing that from happening? It is inexcusable. It is unacceptable.

I hope we will have a vote on it sooner rather than later.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday the Congressional Budget Office reported—and it continues to be the buzz about town—the latest report known as the long-term outlook. Of course, we know from the news that its report on the Affordable Care Act is absolutely devastating.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, ObamaCare will reduce full-time employment by 2 million workers in the year 2017 and 2.5 million by the year 2024. The reason for that is pretty clear. With the employer mandate and the additional cost associated with ObamaCare, many employers will simply put people from full-time work

onto part-time work in order to avoid the employer mandate and those penalties and additional costs.

We human beings are enormously sensitive to incentives—both positive and negative—and this is predictable, and it is tragic. The Congressional Budget Office says: The reduction will almost entirely be a reduction in labor force participation and in the number of hours worked.

In other words, this was a piece of legislation that we were told would enormously benefit, not only individual Americans by getting them access to care, but the President said it would benefit the economy as a whole. The sad truth is it is hurting the economy and hurting the very people whom I presume the President wanted to help.

I heard Representative RYAN on the news talk about this as a poverty trap. Of course, many of the folks who supported the Affordable Care Act—and I am thinking about organized labor—have petitioned the President and his allies and said: This is turning into a nightmare for us. This is one of the things they mentioned—people are being moved from full-time work to part-time work.

I might just add, the answer is not to say: We are just going to order an increase of 40 percent in the minimum wage. In other words, you can see that moving people from 40 hours a week to 30 hours a week—perhaps there will be some people who say we will compensate for that. We will order businesses to pay at least \$10.10 an hour, when simple common sense tells us that many of the people, again, whom we are trying to help, are the ones who will be hurt the most with high unemployment among minorities and teenagers.

What is a small business going to do when the government orders them to pay \$10.10 an hour without regard to the markets or economics? They are going to hire fewer people or perhaps go out of business. This sort of micromanagement and attempts to compensate for the effects of ObamaCare will make things worse, not better.

Needless to say, if the advocates of the Affordable Care Act had understood back in 2009 and 2010 what the facts would turn out to be today, then ObamaCare never would have passed. Millions of Americans said they liked the coverage they already had.

I think the poll numbers I have seen showed between 88 percent to 90 percent of the people said: We like what we have. We would like it to be more affordable, but we like the coverage we have. If these people knew they were going to have their coverage canceled because it failed to meet the mandates of ObamaCare, ObamaCare never would have passed.

The people who liked the coverage they had would still be paying lower

premiums than they are being charged in the exchanges under ObamaCare, not to mention the huge deductibles. Families are now being asked to essentially self-insure up to \$5,000 for their deductible. They can say you get the tax subsidy and you have better coverage beyond that, but you still have a \$5,000 deductible, and those are the first dollars that come out of consumers' pockets. You might as well be self-insured but for catastrophic health care needs. Of course, there is a much cheaper way for people to buy that kind of coverage.

We also know an untold number of Americans would have access to at least 40 hours of work, which is not the case, sadly. Under ObamaCare—and we now know because of the projections of the Congressional Budget Office—things will continue to get worse.

The President's health care law has become a genuine public policy disaster. By the way, even the Congressional Budget Office said at least 30 million people will still be uninsured even if ObamaCare was implemented exactly as advertised. So not even that addresses what I always thought was the main reason for ObamaCare; that is, to cover more people.

ObamaCare is reducing full-time employment at a time when the percentage of people participating in job seeking—the workforce—is at a historic low. Many people have given up. They just quit looking, and they get dropped out of the unemployment statistic. So when the number comes down—and we actually think maybe we are doing better and maybe the economy is stronger. We found out, for example, in December alone that 345,000 people quit looking for jobs. They quit. They got worn out. They gave up because they have been looking for so long and the jobs just are not there.

To be clear, the question in 2009 and 2010 was not whether we would expand health coverage but how we would do it. ObamaCare represented one option, and it is obviously the one our Democratic colleagues chose to adopt on a party-line vote. Despite what the President suggested, yet again, in his State of the Union Message, there are a lot of options out there, so it is not ObamaCare or nothing, which is what is so often mentioned.

I hear some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say: We have to have ObamaCare because only then can we cover people with preexisting conditions. That is poppycock. It is not true. We can do it cheaper and more effectively by other alternatives.

We hear people say: The only way young people can be covered up to age 26 is under their family's health care with ObamaCare. That is poppycock too. It is just not true. To suggest that you have to basically have the whole enchilada—you have to buy all of ObamaCare, which is trillions of dollars, along with all of its negative con-

sequences—in order to address these health care concerns is false. It is not true.

If I heard the President say this one time, I heard him say it 1,000 times. He said: If critics of ObamaCare have a better idea, just bring it to me.

I would like to respectfully suggest that the President has a tin ear when it comes to alternatives and he is not listening.

One of the latest proposals came out of three of our best experts on the Republican side on the health care issue: Senator ORRIN HATCH, the ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senator RICHARD BURR, and Senator Dr. TOM COBURN. They released a comprehensive blueprint for what our alternative might look like.

At some point there has to be a resolution because policies are being canceled. The costs for people with coverage are going up, and it is hurting the economy. It is turning full-time work into part-time work. At some point—I don't know when it is. Maybe it will be sometime after the November election. I am just guessing. At some point we will have to confront this reality and deal with it in order to protect our constituents, the people we are privileged to represent.

The alternative to the government's takeover and the President's command and control—one-sixth of our economy—under ObamaCare is that the government gets to choose, and under our alternative you get to choose.

I wish to highlight a few more of the findings in the Congressional Budget Office report. Last March the President told ABC News that "for the next 10 years [America's national debt] is going to be in a sustainable place." I am afraid the President is falling in a trap because we are living in a surreal time when interest rates are so low because of what the Federal Reserve is doing that, yes, the interest we have to pay on our debt is not as much as it would be if it went back up to historical norms—4 or 5 percent.

By the way, somebody is going to have to pay that back someday. These young people who are sitting here and listening will be the ones left holding the bag, as well as people such as my two daughters who are working in Austin, TX. Somebody is going to have to pay that money back.

For the President to say our debt is sustainable for the next 10 years ignores the fact that we have a moral obligation to deal with it today so as not to dampen the aspiration of these young people by saddling them with a bunch of debt they didn't charge up.

The fact is our debt is highly contingent on three factors: the economic growth of our economy—how fast our economy is growing; inflation is the second one; and interest rates, which I alluded to.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, if America's real economic

growth rate were just one-tenth of a percentage lower than it projects currently each year over the next decade, our cumulative debt—the annual difference between what we collect in taxes and what the Federal Government spends over the next 10 years—would go up by \$311 billion. That is with a “b.”

Likewise, if annual inflation was 1 percentage point above what the Congressional Budget Office projects, our cumulative deficit—in other words, the difference between what we bring in, in tax dollars and what the Federal Government spends projected over 10 years—would be \$762 billion higher. That is just inflation. Just minor changes in the growth rate or in inflation can have dramatic consequences in terms of the debt. Yes, you don't have to just pay the principle back, you have to pay the interest on that debt.

As I said, interest rates are at historic lows because of the quantitative so-called easing that the Federal Reserve is doing—churning out dollars. Of course it has been a boon to the stock market and the top 1 percent of our economy. Working people are finding their wages have been stagnant for the last 5 years. If interest rates were to rise 1 percentage point above the current Congressional Budget Office baseline each year, our cumulative deficits or our debt would go up \$1.5 trillion—that is with a “t”, not a “b”—\$1.5 trillion.

So these numbers confirm that despite the short-term deficit reduction produced by the Budget Control Act—we have seen some bending of the spending curve under the Budget Control Act; and, of course, those caps have been lifted as a result of the budget negotiations between Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN—America is still dangerously vulnerable to a fiscal shock. We experienced one of those back in 2008, and we are still vulnerable to a fiscal shock, if things change in terms of growth, inflation, and interest rates. Any one of those could have a dramatic impact, making things much more difficult and much worse.

To quote the Congressional Budget Office once again: Over the next decade, debt held by the public will be significantly greater relative to GDP than at any time since just after World War II.

Coming out of a world war, we can understand why the debt was high, but debt held by the public will be significantly greater relative to the economy than at any time since that time, and we haven't had a comparable world war that would justify this huge runup of debt.

They went on to say:

With debt so large, Federal spending on interest payments alone will increase substantially as interest rates rise to more typical levels.

I mentioned that.

Going on, they say:

Moreover, because Federal borrowing generally reduces national savings, the capital stock and wages will be smaller than if the debt was lower.

That is what they call the “crowding out effect.” So if the Federal Government is borrowing all of this money, it makes it harder and more expensive for the private sector to do the borrowing they need, and there is a crowding-out effect and a depressing effect on economic growth.

America's massive debt is already hurting our economy. It is exacerbating the already difficult situation that people are experiencing when they are looking for work and they can't find work, and the problem will get worse, not better, as time goes by because we have seen the difference inflation, growth, and interest rates can have, which can allow this to spiral out of control. That doesn't even address the other concerns many of us have about the unsustainability of Medicare and Social Security. These are sacred promises we made to our seniors; that those programs would be there for them once they reach a qualifying age, and they will not be, on the current track. These young people, I doubt any of them believe Social Security or Medicare will be there for them. We have a way to deal with that today if we will simply take advantage of that opportunity.

I wish to note that every single Member of the Republican caucus has cosponsored a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I hear it from Members of my own party who have said: You guys weren't all that great when you were in charge; you guys spent money we didn't have, and that is true. We were pikers by comparison, because back in 1997, the debt was \$5.3 trillion—\$5.3 trillion in 1997. That was the last time we had a vote in the Senate on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, and we came within one vote of passing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. But today the debt is \$17 trillion-plus—\$17.2 trillion. The President says our debt is on a sustainable path. It is not true. It is whistling past the graveyard and it is endangering our prosperity and our opportunity, not only for the younger generation but for people today who want to find work and want to provide for their families and pursue their version of the American dream.

We can't defy the laws of fiscal gravity forever, and we can't expect to keep piling up debt without damaging our economy.

I expect next week Senator SANDERS of Vermont will bring a bill to the floor ostensibly to help our veterans—something we all support—but which is unpaid for and would add roughly \$25 billion—at least \$25 billion—to the na-

tional debt. We just can't keep doing this day after day after day without enormous risk.

I see my colleague from New Hampshire on the floor, so I will close with this thought: Here are the sad facts since President Obama took office in January of 2009—admittedly coming off of a fiscal crisis at a very bad place for our economy. This is his record over the last 5 years: The number of long-term unemployed has increased by close to 1.2 million people—increased—and the labor force participation rate I mentioned a moment ago has fallen by 2.9 percent. There are 2.9 percent fewer Americans actually looking for work today than there were in January of 2009.

Here is another sad statistic: Since January 2009, the average amount of time the unemployed have been without a job has nearly doubled. People have doubled the time they have been out of work, looking for work, since January 2009, rising from 19.8 weeks to 37 weeks.

The number of people on food stamps has increased by 48.3 percent, reaching 37.4 million people in October. In 2008, the total cost of the Food Stamp Program—something we all support as a safety net program for the most vulnerable—but we spent \$37 billion in 2008, and now it has more than doubled to almost \$80 billion. This is under President Obama's 5 years in office.

The number of people receiving Social Security disability has increased from 7.4 million people to 8.9 million. Meanwhile, the total number of Social Security disability beneficiaries, including spouses and children of disabled workers receiving benefits, has increased from 9.3 million to roughly 11 million.

This is not the way it is supposed to be. I know everyone who is out of a job wants a job and the dignity and the self-respect that comes with it. Certainly we need to protect people who are at risk of falling through the safety net, but more than anything we need to give them the opportunity to get back to work and to provide for their family, put food on the table. We can't be content with the status quo, with huge amounts of money being spent on disability, huge amounts of money being spent on food stamps, and huge amounts of money being paid to people who can't even find a job.

We have to get our economy growing again so these folks can lift themselves up and get back in the workforce and provide for their families and pursue their dreams.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I came to the floor because later today the Senate will vote on a short-term extension of emergency unemployment benefits for thousands of citizens in

New Hampshire—hundreds of thousands; really over 1 million throughout the country—who are being hurt right now by our failure to act to extend unemployment benefits.

I have heard from a number of New Hampshire constituents since the unemployment insurance extension expired back in December. They make the case much more eloquently than I can about why we need to extend these unemployment benefits. I will read some excerpts from some of those letters.

One of my constituents is a 62-year-old woman from Windham, and she explained that despite her best efforts she will be one of the many long-term unemployed without any unemployment benefits if she doesn't find a job by March. She began working at age 8 delivering papers with her brother. She put herself through college and earned a master's degree with the help of her employer. She wrote:

I am not too proud to do any honest job. I am losing my house and can't afford to pay my mortgage any longer. There are so many of us out there.

Another woman from Windham wrote to me. She is 55 years old. She has held a job since she was 16. Last August, she was laid off in a merger. She has been actively seeking a job in her field, which is health care. She explained that her unemployment check has helped her pay for her essential living expenses. She and her sister take care of their 90-year-old parents in their home, and this income is critical not just to her livelihood but to the care of her parents.

Then we heard from a 58-year-old woman from Merrimack who learned she lost her job in May of 2013 and has had nine interviews but no offers. Without unemployment assistance, she will not be able to afford her car payment, her mortgage, food or utilities.

A constituent wrote to me explaining that after 29 years as a teacher, that teaching job has been eliminated. She has been on unemployment since June. She has applied for nearly 100 jobs. Think about just getting up every day, trying to figure out where you can apply to just have a shot at getting back to work. Her savings are exhausted. She is on the verge of losing her house since her unemployment benefits—her only source of income—have expired. She wrote:

This seems unfair to me. Having worked hard and been a taxpayer into the system all my working life, I fail to see how not extending benefits will be beneficial to me and the 1.3 million other Americans, especially in light of an already fragile economy. Please do your best to remember those of us who never planned to have to depend on unemployment for this long, but who have fallen victims to these times.

Then I did a tele-townhall conference on Monday night. I heard from thousands of people across New Hampshire. One of the people I heard from was a

woman named Kathy from Danbury. She told me she had worked since she was 14 and she is now out of a job. Her unemployment benefits have expired and she doesn't know what she is going to do.

We need to think about Kathy and all of the people whom we are hearing from in our offices. We are supposed to represent the people who need help across this country. My constituents are exactly right. We are threatening the fragile economic recovery by failing to extend unemployment insurance.

The Economic Policy Institute estimates that the expiration of unemployment insurance is going to cost the economy an additional 310,000 jobs. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that each dollar we spend on extending unemployment insurance generates about \$1.50 in economic growth. We learned this week that failing to act has already drained more \$2.2 billion from the economy, including \$1.8 million from New Hampshire, not to mention all of the people whose personal stories are tragic because they want to work, they are out of a job through no fault of their own, and we need to provide them some assistance while they try and get back on their feet, so they do not lose their homes, so they do not lose their cars, so they can put food on their tables.

I urge my colleagues to come together today. It is time for us to act, to support an extension of unemployment insurance. I certainly hope we are going to do that.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Pennsylvania and I be permitted to engage in a colloquy as in morning business.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SMALL BUSINESS TAX CERTAINTY AND GROWTH ACT

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, the ongoing debate on unemployment compensation shines a spotlight on the underlying problem; that is, extremely sluggish job growth in our still-lagging economy. Putting people to work is my number one goal.

As American families continue to struggle to get the jobs they need at the wages they deserve, it is more important than ever for Members on both sides of the aisle to come together on legislation to promote economic growth and job creation. Today, I am pleased to join my good friend and colleague Mr. CASEY to discuss our legislation to do exactly that: the Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act, which we introduced last year. Our bipartisan legislation focuses on areas of consensus that both parties can embrace to rekindle opportunity

by helping small employers start up or grow and create or add good-paying jobs.

It is often said that small businesses are our Nation's job creators, and the data bear that out. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, small businesses generated 65 percent of the net new jobs that were created between 1993 and 2009. Together, America's small businesses employ nearly half of our Nation's workers and generate half of our Nation's GDP.

Even the smallest employers have a huge impact on our economy; 18 percent of all private-sector employees work for businesses with fewer than 20 workers.

Senator CASEY and I recognize that employers cannot grow and add jobs unless they have the money to invest in building and expanding their businesses. That is why our bill focuses on making it easier for them to plan their capital investments and aims to reduce the burden and uncertainty of taxation, all in the name of creating jobs.

Let me explain a few of the provisions of our bill.

First, let me start by stating the obvious: Starting a new business that can hire workers costs money. Our bill eases the tax burden on new employers by permanently doubling the deduction for start-up expenses from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

There are two other provisions in our bill that affect employers both large and small that we propose to extend: first, the so-called bonus depreciation, and second, the 15-year depreciation for improvements to restaurants and retail facilities. Unfortunately, these important provisions were allowed to expire at the end of last year, causing great uncertainty and thus discouraging investment and the creation of jobs.

Just think about this: The law has reverted to a provision that says that a restaurant has to depreciate its renovations over 39 years. Can you imagine a restaurant waiting to renovate only once every 39 years because it is going to take that long to write off, to depreciate the cost? The 15-year depreciation schedule for improvements is far more realistic.

Our bill also provides certainty for small employers who use section 179 of the tax code. That is the small business expensing provision. Recent studies by the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, which has endorsed our bill, show that the constant changes in the tax code are among the top concerns of small business owners. Indeed, I think the Senator from Pennsylvania and I have both found in talking to smaller employers in our States that they are yearning for some certainty in tax policy. They simply cannot deal with a tax code where one year the deduction is at one level, and the very next year it is uncertain whether Congress is going to renew the provision or let it expire.

The level of expensing allowed under section 179 has been unpredictable from year to year, and has changed four times in the past 7 years. This uncertainty makes it difficult or even impossible for small employers to take full advantage of this tax incentive in their long-term investment planning. Our bill would fix this problem by making the maximum expensing allowable under this section permanent at \$250,000 and indexing it for inflation. We also expand the ability of small employers to use simplified methods of accounting.

Let me give a real-life example of what the small business expensing and the bonus depreciation provisions can mean. Last year I spoke with Rob Tod, the founder of Allagash Brewing Company, which is based in Portland, ME. Allagash makes some of the best craft beer in the country. In fact, Maine is known for its craft beers. Well, Rob's operation started out as a one-man show in 1995. In the 19 years since, it has grown into a firm that employs approximately 65 people and distributes craft beer throughout the United States.

Rob noted to me that his company's ability to expand was fueled in part by bonus depreciation and section 179 expensing. New to the craft beer business, Rob had difficulty obtaining financing on favorable terms, but these cost recovery provisions allowed him to pay less in taxes in the years he acquired the equipment needed to expand his business. Those tax savings were then reinvested in his business, thus creating jobs.

Just think about that. What a difference these provisions made to this company, which has gone from a one-man operation to employing 65 people. This economic benefit is multiplied when you consider the effect of Allagash's investment on the equipment manufacturers, the transportation companies needed to haul new equipment to his brewery, the increased inventory, and the suppliers of the materials needed to brew additional beer.

We are all too familiar with the litany of polls showing how little faith the American people have in their elected leaders and how much they want us to work together to solve our Nation's problems.

I have been privileged to work with Senator CASEY to do exactly that. The legislation that we have introduced is neither a Republican nor a Democratic proposal. It is, instead, a bipartisan plan to help spur America's economy, to assist our small employers, and, most of all, to create good-paying jobs. I urge my colleagues to support our bipartisan bill. I would ask our leadership to bring this legislation to restore economic growth and job opportunity to the Senate floor for action as soon as possible.

I yield to my colleague from Pennsylvania for his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I first want to commend and salute the work that has been done already on this legislation by the senior Senator from Maine and for her leadership. Senator COLLINS appropriately focused on the issue of jobs and jobs creation.

I know in our State at present we are finally below the half million unemployed number. We went many months where the unemployment rates went as high as 550,000 people. It went down, but it hovered around half a million people for far too many months. We are below that. Now we are at about 443,000. That is still a big number—below 7 percent but just by a little bit.

So job creation has to be job one for me and for most of us if not all of us in the Senate. If that is the reality, that our No. 1 obligation is job creation, we have to be able to show the people we represent that we are doing something about it. We cannot do much of anything unless we can get bipartisan cooperation. That is why I am so grateful Senator COLLINS has been willing to work with me on this legislation and to move it forward and to come together as a team to say to both of our leaders that we want to have legislative action on this bill this year.

The reasons are pretty fundamental. If you have run a small business, you know what we are talking about. But even if you have not, even if you have not had that experience, you have encountered the challenges that small business owners face. In some cases it is not just challenges; it is real anxiety and worry that is compounded by uncertainty.

There is uncertainty created by what does not happen in Washington or what does happen. When you shut the government down, that creates not just uncertainty but more than that. But there is also uncertainty when they do not see action here to bring the sides together. I am sure the Presiding Officer, who served as mayor of a big city, knows what it is like to talk to small business owners and to hear about their struggles, which have been especially acute in this very tough economy.

One part of their struggle is that even if they can identify the problem and even maybe the solution to rectify the problem, they cannot hire a team of accountants or lawyers or tax professionals or consultants to help them. They often have to do these things on their own. Giving them some measure of certainty as it relates to tax policy would help enormously.

So that is why we came together on the bill, the Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act. Senator COLLINS outlined some of the provisions. Let me just go through a couple of

them by way of either reiteration or reemphasis.

One she mentioned is the 15-year depreciation, what is sometimes referred to as the 15-year straight line depreciation schedule for restaurants. Why would we go back to the old policy which was that you had to get your increment—or piece of benefit I would call it—of depreciation in little slices over 39 years.

Why not keep it at 15 years so that business owners know in each of those 15 years they are going to have a negative depreciation. It is a more realistic reflection of the useful economic life of the qualifying asset. It makes all the sense in the world to have that in place.

Senator COLLINS also mentioned faster cost recovery that is reflected directly in a company's bottom line. It frees up cash that can be used to expand business operations and hire new workers. These tax provisions can actually allow folks to have the capacity to hire new workers. This is especially important in the restaurant industry which supports—get this number—535,000 jobs in Pennsylvania alone. That number is 13.5 million jobs nationwide in the restaurant industry.

A study by the National Restaurant Association found that uncertainty about depreciation—the very thing we are talking about—and other tax provisions forced restaurants to forego improvement projects that would have produced around 200,000 jobs nationwide. So just one provision about one type of uncertainty could unleash substantial job creation.

Secondly, the maximum allowable deduction, the so-called 179 expensing. Again, why should a business that is already under tremendous pressure to meet a bottom line, to be able to deliver a product or a service, and has all of those pressures—why should that business not have the certainty to know that this year and next year and for as long as they are in business, they can depend upon, rely upon a deduction level that is set at \$250,000 instead of fluctuating as that number has fluctuated.

So making that deduction permanent is critically important. This section, this so-called section 179, allows taxpayers to fully deduct certain capital asset purchases in the year that they make the purchase. This type of extension provides an important incentive for businesses to make capital investments. We want them to make those investments. But we cannot just say to them: Go ahead and make that investment, and we hope we can help you in some uncertain way.

We need to tell them that the rules of the road are going to be much more certain. That is the one provision that we believe should be made permanent.

The deduction under this section 179 has changed three times in the past 6

years. This unpredictably makes it difficult for businesses to plan, for obvious reasons, and neutralizes much of the impact. It is not worth much if you are not sure it is going to be in place the next year. So by making it permanent and indexing it to inflation is a very important point.

By indexing it, the bill provides the kind of certainty that businesses need to take full advantage so that they can hire more workers—just what we are hoping they will do and just what we hope we can help them do.

A third provision, the so-called bonus depreciation, would help small businesses in much the same way as the expensing rules I just talked about. The bonus depreciation allows companies to expense half the cost. Imagine that—half the cost of qualifying assets that they buy and put into service in the same year. It provides an added incentive. Again, that word is important because we try to put Tax Code provisions in place that incentivize the kinds of actions that lead to job growth.

Here are two studies I will cite quickly. In a 2013 report the U.S. Treasury Office of Tax Analysis concluded that this particular provision, the 50-percent bonus depreciation policy, increased small business investment by 31.2 percent between 2008 and 2009. Whether you count that as 2 or 3 years, it is a rather short time period. That provision alone, that bonus depreciation, increased small business investment by more than 31 percent.

A separate report from the same department, the Treasury Department, said that this provision lowered the cost of capital by 44.1 percent. So no matter how you measure it, this bonus depreciation policy works. It creates jobs, and it will keep working if we put it in place and provide added incentive.

Two more provisions on deductions for start-up expenses are very important. In the accounting rules—we have heard this for years—just by doubling that threshold level for one particular type of accounting and allowing firms to have more leeway with those accounting rules, they will have much more certainty and a much better policy.

In 2010, another study by the Kauffman Foundation found that start-ups and young firms were responsible for most of the job growth in our economy, creating 3 million jobs per year on average.

So when you add up all of this, it is really about common sense. I do not say that in a theoretical way. We know these provisions work. We are certain of that. There is no dispute that each of those policies is directly responsible for substantial job growth. So that is the first thing we know. Second, we know they are supported across the board by both parties.

Every Member of the Senate, even the newest Members, at one time or an-

other has either voted for one of these provisions or supported it. So it makes sense in terms of the dynamic of how to get bipartisan legislation done here. We should put ourselves as best we can to stand, so-called, in the shoes of others. We should try to stand in the shoes of small business owners, try to understand what they are up against, and try to understand some of the pressures they face.

One of the most difficult problems they face is something as simple as uncertainty. Putting these provisions in place would remove a substantial degree of uncertainty. If we can do that, they can unleash job creation the likes of which we probably have not seen in the last couple of years.

I am grateful that Senator COLLINS was willing to work with me to move forward with this bipartisan legislation which will be an effective and a proven creator of jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I want to commend the Senator from Pennsylvania for his remarks. I think it is obvious that both of us have reached out to employers in our States and asked them what would make a difference. What would allow you to create new jobs, preserve the ones you have, and pay your workers more?

To a person, they identified provisions in the Tax Code, the uncertainty that occurs when they expire, the difficulty to plan and to hire new workers when you do not know what the Tax Code is going to be. That formed the basis for our bipartisan bill. We listened to what employers were telling us. I hope more of our colleagues will help us bring this bill to the Senate floor.

Every day that I am talking to an employer in Maine, I am asked: Are the provisions that expired at the end of last year going to be renewed? Will they be retroactive? Can we count on them?

They put their hiring plans on hold until we give them the certainty that they deserve. So, again, it has been a great honor to work with my colleague. I do urge our leaders to bring this important bill to the Senate floor.

Madam President, I do have another statement that I would like to give seeing no one seeking the Senate floor. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO RUSSELL CURRIER

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, the world's best athletes have come together in Sochi, Russia, for the 22nd Winter Olympic Games. Among them is Russell Currier, from the small northern Maine town of Stockholm. It is in Aroostook County. It is very near Car-

ibou where I grew up. I rise today to celebrate the determination, hard work, and community spirit that enables Russell Currier to represent our great country in the Olympic Games.

Russell competes in the biathlon, the demanding and increasingly popular sport that combines cross-country skiing with sharpshooting. He secured his place on America's team by winning three out of four qualifying races in January at the U.S. biathlon Olympic trials.

But Russell's snow-covered trail to Russia began long before that. Fourteen years ago, as a seventh grader, he joined the local Nordic skiing program. A former coach described him as a quiet youngster with no particular interest in the sport.

That quickly changed. The next year, Russell won a county-wide middle school championship. The year after that, he won third place at the junior nationals. Caring coaches and encouraging teammates lit a fire in him that burns so brightly today.

On Russell's personal profile on the U.S. Olympic Team Web site, he wrote that his favorite quote is, "Less talking, more doing." He has embraced that motto with all of his strength, and his perseverance has turned his Olympic dream into a goal he has achieved.

I have a particular rooting interest in Russell's success. He and his parents, Debbie and Chris, are graduates of Caribou High School, as am I. Debbie and I grew up spending summers at Madawaska Lake at camps that were very near each other, and we spent endless summers playing together. I have known this wonderful family for many years, and I am thrilled for them. While the world watches the Winter Olympics, the entire population of Aroostook County and indeed of all of Maine will be riveted to the biathlon competition.

As the name suggests, the town of Stockholm, ME, was settled by Swedish immigrants. When the first 21 families came to Aroostook County in the 1870s, they brought with them an unsurpassed work ethic, a strong sense of community, and a love of skiing. In fact, the entire ski industry of Maine, both Nordic and alpine, can be traced to these hardy, outdoors-loving newcomers.

Nearly a century and a half later, the work ethic and the love of skiing remains strong, and the sense of community is more powerful than ever. When Russell won his place on the U.S. team, friends and neighbors held a fundraiser, a spaghetti dinner at Caribou High School, serving up more than 300 spaghetti dinners so Russell's parents, Debbie and Chris, could make the long and expensive trip to Russia to cheer on their son.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article the

local newspaper, the Aroostook Republican, published on the community's support behind the Currier family.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Aroostook Republican]

BENEFIT SUPPER SENDS CARRIERS TO SOCHI
(By Theron Larkins)

CARIBOU.—By now, Russell Currier is a household name for residents all over Aroostook County and Sunday night was a time to congratulate and support his family, as many County residents attended a benefit supper held at the Caribou High School.

The goal of the event was to raise enough money through donations to send Russell's parents to Sochi, Russia, where they will soon be able to watch their son compete for Olympic gold. Thanks to hundreds, who came from all over Aroostook County to attend the benefit, well over \$6,000 was raised to send Debbie and Chris Currier to the Sochi Winter Games.

There were a number of students, teachers and community members who volunteered at the event. Whether volunteers were serving food, taking donations, or playing piano in the background, the towns of greater Caribou were well represented, as citizens came to show their support and appreciation for the pride Russell has brought to the region.

One Stockholm resident, who came out to show his support was Russell's former coach and director of competitive programs for Maine Winter Sports Center, Will Sweetser, Sweetser coached Russell since junior high, but he certainly recognized Russell's success was aided by much more than just his coaches.

"They say it takes a community to raise an athlete, and I think you can really see that in this room today," said Sweetser.

Currier, who is already training for the Winter Games, in Italy, could not be in attendance at the supper, due to the rigorous schedule typical of any Olympic athlete. However, that didn't hinder the community's reminiscing. Friends and family stayed well beyond the supper's two-hour allotted time to eat and share their stories about a young Russell, as they watched a slideshow of photos capturing the native son not only on the slopes, but in a number of candid moments, as well.

"A lot of people I've seen here tonight, throughout Russell's entire career, have given pretty selflessly and everyone is really excited to see him reach this point," said Sweetser.

As Sweetser pointed out, a large number came out to back the Currier family during this hectic time. The last few weeks have been overwhelming for all of us, as Debbie Currier, told many attendees, but the community coming together in such a way has undoubtedly helped cope with the stress.

"It's wonderful, it really is," said Debbie. "I see all the faces who have come out to support us, a lot of the parents who had children that grew up playing sports with either my daughter or Russell, they've all just been so supportive over the years. Since this whole thing started we've been able to go to all the venues in different towns and meet all the people who are part of the skiing community, and it's really awesome that so many came," she added.

When asked how special it would be for Russell to have his parents able to attend such a major event, Debbie's reply may not have been what would expect.

"Well, in the beginning he didn't really want us to come, That's why, originally, we

didn't have plans to go," she said. "But, I wanted to go so badly. I think he's kind of worried. We are not travelers. We've never been to any of his races outside of Maine and New Brunswick, so our very first event to go to in Europe will be the Olympics, and it's in Russia at a time when things are so unsettled."

The concern over the last few weeks in relation to continuous terrorist threats, in Russia, may be worrisome for many, but 10,000 Americans are still expected to make their way to snowy Sochi for the event. A spate of suicide bombings and jihadist threats during the last months have left potential travelers wary of attending the Winter Games but Russian and American security forces are vehemently working to put minds at ease.

Many precautions are being taken, not only by Vladimir Putin's specially assigned task forces, but the U.S. will also deploy two Navy ships to the Black Sea to evacuate Americans should an incident occur.

The concerns regarding safety at the upcoming Winter Games is certainly something that neither Russell, nor his parents are overlooking, but for the most part the Carriers have faith in the joint effort, between the Russians and Americans, to keep athletes and spectators safe. Security within the Olympic circle remains extremely tight, yet there's still concern pertaining to transit points and scanning areas leading into the venue. If nothing else, the terrorist threats have succeeded in creating an atmosphere of paranoia that is tainting what has always been a jovial celebration of sport and country.

Andrew Kuchins of the Center for Strategic & International Studies in Washington told journalists recently that Russian authorities want to handle security alone, even though the country "has no experience with an event of this magnitude."

Thousands of tickets have yet to be sold for numerous events in Sochi and there is a growing concern that the increase in security will disturb the very nature of the Games. While no country has yet withdrawn from the Games, many are taking extra precautions, including the U.S. Olympic Committee, which will be providing its own set of protective agents and has advised American athletes against wearing any clothing that may identify them as part of the team.

"I think it worries him, but it worries us that he's there too," said Debbie Currier.

Despite the negative publicity and numerous threats surrounding the Games there is a sense that authorities are doing everything possible to keep the event a celebration rather than a tragedy, and Debbie and the rest of the Currier family are confident that everything will go according to plan.

The U.S. Biathlon Association sent out some information to help guide us and they seem to think it's safe enough. They believe that Russian and American authorities are doing everything they can to keep us all safe."

The Carriers are planning to leave Caribou on Feb. 5th and hope to be landing in Moscow sometime late the next day.

Ms. COLLINS. Russell's dedication and his community spirit have a strong ally in this remarkable story, the Maine Winter Sports Center. The center was founded in 1999, with the purpose of rekindling Aroostook County's skiing heritage, spurring economic development in that rural region, bringing families together in wholesome

recreation, and countering the sedentary lifestyle that leads to so many health problems among our greater population. The Center's world-class facilities in Fort Kent and Presque Isle, ME, have hosted national and international cross-country and biathlon competitions. For the 2006 and 2010 Olympics, 13 Members of the U.S. biathlon team trained at the Maine Winter Sports Center, but Russell is the first homegrown Olympian to come up entirely through the center's program.

Russell Currier demonstrates that growing up in a community that works hard and works together can be such a great advantage when combined with individual desire, determination, and skill. The success Russell has achieved in realizing his Olympic dream and the support along the way that he has received are truly inspiring.

I am so proud of Russell and all who helped him achieve his dream. I wish him and his teammates all the best.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE "FIRST TVA CITY"

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise today to commemorate a special occasion for the Tennessee Valley Authority and the city of Tupelo, MS.

Eighty years ago, on February 7, 1934, Tupelo, MS, became the first city to receive electricity from the Tennessee Valley Authority. If you visit today, you will see the sign at the intersection of Gloster and Main Streets proclaiming Tupelo as the "First T-V-A City."

Tupelo's connection to TVA power has had a tremendous impact, improving the quality of life and economic well-being for residents of Tupelo, the State of Mississippi, and across the South. The success helped Northeast Mississippi become a pioneer of rural electrification. As a resident of Tupelo myself, I am proud of the partnership Mississippi has built with TVA over the past eight decades.

Anyone who has experienced a power outage can attest to our reliance on electricity today. It touches almost every aspect of our lives. But imagine a time when access to electricity was confined to major cities and densely populated areas. Luxuries such as the radio, the washing machine, and the refrigerator were known only to those who lived in cities because it was not profitable for energy companies to provide electricity to rural areas.

In those days, the difference between life with electricity and life without it was so great that a large migration

was taking place from rural to urban areas. Already impoverished regions of the country were at risk of lagging even further behind.

Like much of the rural South, Mississippi struggled with restricted access to electricity and the economic limitations it perpetuated. It became clear that improving rural life depended on access to electricity.

By 1930 nearly 85 percent of homes in large urban areas had electrical service, but barely 10 percent of rural homes had the same access. In Mississippi, only 1.5 percent of farm homes had electricity—the lowest in the country.

The creation of the TVA was a game changer. As America spiraled into a devastating depression, Mississippi Congressman John Rankin worked with Nebraska Senator George William Norris to improve and expand rural electrification. The result of their efforts was the TVA Act, passed by Congress on May 18, 1933. TVA began serving Mississippians in 1933 and powering Tupelo in 1934. The goal was simple: to improve the living and economic conditions of seven Southeastern States. By providing affordable electricity to rural communities, TVA was an important economic boost, delivering a needed commodity to one of the country's poorest regions.

Tupelo's proximity to the Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River enabled it to become the first TVA city in 1934, allowing its residents to purchase electricity at some of the most affordable rates in the country. This completely revolutionized life for the citizens of Tupelo and even more Mississippians as TVA expanded.

About 50 miles north of Tupelo, the town of Corinth, MS, was also at the forefront of rural electrification, proving that an electric power cooperative could work. In McPeters Furniture Store, "The Corinth Experiment" led to the creation of the Alcorn County Electric Power Association—the first electric power cooperative in the United States.

In November of 1934 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to Northeast Mississippi, stopping in Corinth and Tupelo. We still talk about that visit today.

The effort and dedication of the communities in Northeast Mississippi paid off. From 1930 to 1940 the number of farm homes in the State with electricity skyrocketed from 4,792 to 27,670. Today TVA provides reliable, clean, low-cost energy to more than 332,000 households in Mississippi.

The TVA of 1934 is much different from the Tennessee Valley Authority of 2014. Eighty years ago hydroelectric dams provided TVA's power. Since then, TVA has developed coal, nuclear, natural gas, and renewable energy—all of the above serving approximately 9 million customers in seven States.

I look forward to TVA's continued success, and I congratulate the many Mississippians who have contributed to the legacy of TVA over the past 80 years.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I rise today to join my colleagues in calling on the Senate to pass an extension of emergency unemployment insurance. I am deeply disappointed and frustrated that millions of hard-working Americans are now wondering how they will put food on their family's table and a roof over their heads because Washington has been unable to extend critical unemployment insurance.

A few weeks ago we had a bipartisan vote to move forward with debate on the extension of what is called emergency unemployment compensation. I hope we can build on that vote and move forward as quickly as possible to restore this vital lifeline before more Americans who have worked hard and followed the rules their entire lives slip from middle class into poverty.

The expiration of emergency unemployment insurance is an urgent problem for tens of thousands of Minnesotans and for millions of Americans. At the end of this past year, unemployment insurance expired for 1.3 million Americans, including 8,500 Minnesotans. If we don't renew that unemployment insurance over the next year, this lifeline will run out for another 3.6 million Americans, including 65,500 Minnesotans. These are real people. These are fathers and mothers. They are people whose families and local communities are struggling.

As I have traveled around Minnesota, I have had the chance to speak with many of the Minnesotans who are affected by the expiration of unemployment insurance. It is not the fault of these people or these workers who have lost their jobs.

Very often, these workers were just unlucky enough to be working in the wrong sector of the economy at the wrong time. Sometimes they were from communities that lost a large employer.

A few weeks ago I held a roundtable with unemployed workers who have been helped by unemployment insurance. These are long-term unemployed. There were also some workforce professionals who are helping these folks and others find jobs in today's recovering economy. The unemployed women I spoke with—Ann, Amy, and Robin—had

been working and paying taxes for unemployment insurance for decades. One of them is in her forties, a mom with two kids, one a 3-year-old. The other two women are older workers, one in her fifties, the other in her early sixties. The one in her fifties was a meeting planner. When the recession hit, businesses cut costs by holding fewer meetings, and she couldn't find a job in her field but is trying to find a job in any field. These women had all been skilling up, getting the skills they could to try to get an office job and be more conversant in Excel or some computer program.

All the Minnesotans I have spoken with have been working hard to find jobs, but they face a tough situation in our economy. In November the Labor Department reported that for every job opening there are almost three people seeking jobs. That doesn't mean you will get a job if you apply for three jobs. A few weeks ago a job counselor in Minnesota told me that there are often hundreds of applicants for every good job posting and that these jobs are often filled internally. I am glad businesses are hiring from within or promoting from within, but it is stories such as these that highlight why we need emergency unemployment—to help those workers who were working in a sector that has experienced a major downturn or live in a community where it is particularly hard to find a job and particularly if they are of a certain age.

One of the women I met at the roundtable, Ann from Eden Prairie, had also written me. What she told me really illustrates the situation so many Minnesotans are facing. Ann wrote:

I have been extremely active in my job search, but have regrettably not found new employment. My Minnesota Unemployment Insurance ran out last week and I applied for Federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation just this past week . . . I ask you to please ask yourself what you would do to provide for your family. I have a 9 year old daughter . . . and a 3 year old son. I am the sole provider for my family . . . I am not looking for a handout, nor do I believe that staying on unemployment insurance is in my best interest. But the \$483 a week it provides will at least allow me to make my mortgage payment.

Ann is remarkably articulate. She volunteers at her son's school, partly because she wants to be involved in her son's life but also to network. One of the counselors there said: The hardest job there is is looking for a job.

Minnesotans such as Ann and the millions of Americans around the country in the same situation have worked for decades. Every one of these women had worked and been paying into unemployment insurance for decades. They don't deserve to be punished or to lose their homes because they are unable to find a job within 26 weeks. Often, they need unemployment insurance so they can put gas in the car to

look for a job or so they can keep their phone.

The economy is recovering, but things are still tough for many people. Now is not the time to cut off unemployment insurance. Not only is unemployment still above average, but the long-term unemployed—workers who have been looking for work for at least 6 months—make up 37 percent of today's unemployed. Congress has never allowed extended unemployment insurance to expire when the long-term unemployment rate is as high as it is today. Today the 2.5-percent long-term unemployment rate is nearly double the level it was when previous emergency benefits were allowed to expire, and the current unemployment rate of 6.7 percent is 1.1 percentage points higher than when George W. Bush signed the current round of emergency unemployment compensation into law.

We know the unemployment crisis is not over. It remains a significant issue for workers, especially older workers, who experience longer periods of unemployment than younger workers when they lose their jobs.

Extending unemployment insurance also makes economic sense. In 2011 the Congressional Budget Office stated that aid to the unemployed is among the policies with “the largest effects on output and employment per dollar of budgetary costs.” CBO estimates that extending benefits through 2014 would help expand the economy and contribute to the creation of an additional 200,000 jobs. The Council of Economic Advisers estimates that without a full-year extension, the economy will generate 240,000 fewer jobs by the end of 2014.

Unemployment insurance has been shown to help people stay in the workforce, allowing them to contribute to our economic recovery rather than slip into poverty. The Census Bureau estimates that unemployment benefits have kept 2.5 million people who are trying to stay in the workforce out of poverty in 2012 alone and have kept 11 million unemployed workers out of poverty since 2008.

Extending unemployment insurance for those who need it is far from the only thing we should be doing to help people get back to work. I have spoken many times about one of my highest priorities in this area—addressing the skills gap by supporting workforce training partnerships between businesses and community and technical colleges. There are other things we should be doing, such as rebuilding our infrastructure. But it would be a tremendous mistake to fail to renew the unemployment insurance that has lapsed.

People such as Ann and Robin and all those I meet around the State of Minnesota, and the millions of others around the country, when they are looking really hard for work, are

spending hours a day looking for work, almost 24 hours a day because they keep their phones on. They are thinking about it constantly. Let's not pull the rug out from under them now. They are trying to catch up in an economy that is recovering but still has a long way to go. We shouldn't be jeopardizing their families' economic security and we shouldn't be jeopardizing our Nation's economic recovery with a shortsighted decision like letting this critical safety net expire.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR MAX BAUCUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I rise to speak of my colleague, our friend Senator BAUCUS, who hopefully will be confirmed by the Senate to his new post in a few hours.

I have, of course, known Senator BAUCUS since I came to the Senate, but even before, one of my first impressions of him was a picture of Senator BAUCUS in his white cowboy hat on his ranch in Montana. To me, a kid from New York City, he looked like the Marlboro Man. He was handsome and he was in the cowboy hat. So I said: Wow.

When I met Senator BAUCUS, I found his heart, his brain, and his soul were every bit as good as the outside. He was a great leader of the Finance Committee. First, he had great intellect. MAX BAUCUS would see an issue, understand the issue, and get to the heart of the issue quicker than almost anybody else. He understood the vagaries of legislation, and he knew how to try to get things done. He always worked in a bipartisan way. He reached out to Republicans, and many criticized him sometimes for doing it, but given the gridlock in this body, in retrospect, everybody would think: Wow, that is what we should be doing. And he tried and tried.

Of course, his crowning legislative achievement was health care. I know there are some—particularly on the other side of the aisle—who criticize it, but I have no doubt that MAX BAUCUS will be regarded as a giant in what he did in coming up with the health care reform bill. I have no doubt that as the kinks are worked out and as the effort moves forward, it will be regarded as one of the pieces of landmark legislation of this decade and this century, and it wouldn't have happened without MAX BAUCUS.

There are 37 million Americans who now have access to health insurance, a whole generation of young adults who will be insured through the age of 26, and protection of all Americans with

preexisting conditions because of the diligence, the never-give-up attitude Senator BAUCUS had. On so many other things in the bill—getting after the private insurance companies; now community health centers are providing health care for the poorest among us in a better way—this is one of many issues on which MAX BAUCUS took the lead.

As I say, he was a premier legislator, worked long and hard, figured out what he thought the right thing to do was, tried to get colleagues from the other side of the aisle as well as on our side of the aisle to support it, and then got it done. The list of his accomplishments is long. He took the bull by the horns, never backing off.

I know Senator BAUCUS will be an outstanding ambassador to China. It is one of the most important foreign policy positions our country has to offer, and having someone with MAX BAUCUS's acute mind, great persistence, good heart, and good soul will mean a lot.

Not only are we going to miss MAX, we are going to very much miss his wife Mel. She is terrific. They met not too long ago, and I know how happy they make each other. I think it makes all of us feel happy as well.

MAX, you are truly the best of the “Last Best Place,” and we will all miss you.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I rise to talk about the impact of the Affordable Care Act on the workplace. A report by the Congressional Budget Office came out yesterday stating that the number of jobs affected by the Affordable Care Act was triple what they estimated in 2009. At that time they estimated this would cost us up to 800,000 jobs. Yesterday they said it would cost us up to 2.3 million jobs. I guess those who voted for it didn't have an impartial observer tell them that there would be substantial workplace costs. Now that same group, after looking at the application and how the law is going to affect people, says there will be three times as many jobs lost because of people moving from full-time work to part-time work.

This is another strong indication that the Affordable Care Act has not been good for the workplace, and I think we are seeing more and more that the Affordable Care Act is not good for most people. I am sure that out there somewhere—just the law of

averages—there are people who benefit. I think there are other ways we could have reached out to those people and included them.

I have some emails and letters that were addressed to my office that I will read into the RECORD. We verified all of the correspondence with the people involved. We wanted to make sure we could use their first names so I could talk about this, and I believe the people who wrote us—some stories are beyond belief—were well intentioned.

John, from Farmington, MO, said he is one of the founding shareholders for his company and has been since 1975. They provided insurance for their employees and their families, but this year their insurance person came to them and said there will be a 50-percent increase when they renew their coverage later this year. In this small company, they are currently paying \$12,000 a month and will be paying \$18,000 a month. John says: We are a profitable business, but we are not so profitable that \$6,000 a month doesn't make a big difference to us when our insurance premiums go up 50 percent.

Lisa, in Baldwin, MO, said she is an insurance broker. She contacted us to talk about the examples many of her clients have had and the way they were affected by the health care bill. This is one of her letters:

I have a family of five people—a husband, wife, and three children—who were paying \$437/month for a Health Savings Account plan. Their rate for a comparable plan under ACA was \$805/month.

So that \$437 this family was paying—if they replace that, along with everything else they are doing in a given month—is now \$805.

She says:

I have quoted plans for numerous people over the last few months. All have lesser benefits than what they currently have and are far more expensive.

She doesn't say "some," she says "most." And this is coming from someone who does this for a living. She said that in every case she has quoted, there have been higher costs and fewer benefits.

William, from Desloge, MO, said that his wife had a pacemaker installed 3 years ago. He goes on to say:

Recently, she called to set up a follow-up checkup on the pacemaker with her hospital. She was told that due to the budget constraints placed on the hospital due to the Affordable Care Act they no longer provide those services.

According to William, instead of driving 10 miles for these services, they have to drive 60 miles one way. They have to drive 120 to 150 miles to go to one of the places located in St. Louis when they used to drive just 10 miles. The reason the hospital gave is that the Affordable Care Act has created that.

This is a letter from a broker:

I have a client in her late 50s who makes \$20,000 and qualifies for the subsidy. Even

with the subsidy, her premium was around \$300 a month for the lowest possible level in the plan.

I think that level is called the bronze plan. For the lowest level plan, her subsidy is \$300 a month, and that was about 50 percent more than she had been paying for comparable coverage.

Mark and Janet, from Platte City, MO, were informed in September 2013 that as of January 1, 2014, their premiums would double. Here is what they say in their letter:

While we do not think ObamaCare, as it now stands, is good for this nation, at least it was an attempt to do something—

These are people who were hopeful about this and were still not critical of people who were trying to do something—

about out-of-control medical costs. It needs serious revisions and parts of it should be repealed. People in their 60s do not need maternity coverage! And mental health/substance abuse coverage should not be mandatory either.

That is the view of Mark and Janet.

Mary Ann, in Scott City, MO, said she has had continuous health care coverage for 36 years without ever having a day without health insurance coverage. After being diagnosed with cancer, her insurance was canceled and she was forced to get insurance somewhere else. Why was her insurance canceled? She had been in the high-risk pool that the State runs.

In 2009 I proposed other ways to do this and expand those high-risk pools. I think by the time the high-risk pool went out of existence on December 31, there were slightly more than 1,000 people still in it. I think we are eventually going to get 4,000 letters. What were they paying? They were paying 135 percent of the premium everybody else was paying. They had a high risk already, and they were generally able to go to the doctors they wanted. According to the letters we get, they are no longer able to go to the doctors they want. Doctors are important, but, frankly, doctors are even more important if you have been sick. If a doctor has been your doctor through an illness, that is something Mary Ann and others would like to have finished.

Let me read one other:

As of December 23rd, I was finally able to enroll. It's costing me more and I'm getting less. Unbelievably, healthcare.gov wouldn't allow me to enroll my healthy 18-year-old son. I thought he was the healthy young person they needed in order to make this program work.

That may have been a Web site problem. The Web site will be solved. The President said the Web site is working exactly the way it is supposed to, so maybe that has been solved.

I don't think the appeals process is working yet. I am told there are a lot of people appealing information that somehow wrongly got into the Web site. They can't get that solved.

Mary continues to say that the ACA has been a disaster for her and her fam-

ily. She says: Shame on us for letting this happen. I want my old insurance back. I don't appreciate being mandated at the last minute to buy something that has inferior health coverage. It is administratively inept and costs more. Please resolve this disaster before it gets worse.

Myron, from Hannibal, MO, says:

My company told me last November to go to my wife's group health insurance plan because they didn't know how ObamaCare was going to work out.

On advice from an insurance broker, my company got me off their group policy. As a result, my health insurance premiums went from \$198 a month to \$549 a month.

Natalie, from Meadville, says:

My health insurance costs for my family of four have doubled and my benefits have decreased. I no longer have office visit benefits and my deductible has gone from \$3,500 to \$10,000.

She said that she raised her deductible to try to lower her insurance premiums.

She goes on to say:

At the end of 2014, when we are forced to sign up for an Obamacare plan, we will probably cancel our insurance if it is cheaper to pay the penalty.

I can't tell you how many letters we have that say: My premium has gone up and my benefits have gone down. There has been a huge number of people who have contacted us about that.

Pat from Kansas City is worried about her kids, her oldest daughter, and her family. Her premium went from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year.

Scott from Lee's Summit says his premium went up 27 percent for himself and his son. He was told it would have gone up 7 percent anyway, but 20 percent of that 27 percent—or actually more than 20 percent—that 20 percent of the increase was because of the change in health care policies.

I think the more we know, the more we know the kinds of things we could do to make the health care system work better. I would like to see us get back to doing that. Until we do, these letters are going to continue to come in, and we are going to continue to try to help these people find a better answer. But the government involvement here may mean there is not a better answer until the government figures out how to create a bigger marketplace and more choices and let people have the health care they think meets their family's needs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, what is the order of business right now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is considering the unemployment compensation bill.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I rise to talk about the absolute necessity to pass this unemployment compensation bill. We should do it because it is the morally right thing to do, it is

the economically right thing to do. We have listened to our Republican friends, and even though they always said in the past: Do not worry about paying for it—they passed it almost five times under George Bush without paying for it—now all of a sudden they say: Pay for it. We do pay for it in this bill. So I do not know what it is they exactly want.

They claim they are empathetic to people unemployed, the long-term unemployed, and we know that rate is very high—long-term unemployment—even though we have seen in the last, I guess, how many months, 8 million jobs—in about 46 months—but not everybody is fortunate to get those jobs. Clearly, we came out of the worst recession since the Great Depression, brought about by Wall Street. It happened under George W. Bush. We were bleeding jobs—bleeding jobs—700,000, 800,000 jobs a month. It was frightening. The GDP was contracting.

President Obama turned it around. I predict he will go down in history as one of the great Presidents because we were almost flat on our backs, and yet he acted. Luckily, we had a few Republicans who helped us pass that stimulus, which in my State made a huge difference and all over the country. It got us on our feet. We have made reforms that are very important.

I also have to say, the “Bad News Bears” on the other side—every day, negative stories and negative stories and negative stories about ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act. I daresay, they ignore the millions and millions and millions of Americans who for the first time are able to get affordable health insurance. It is private health insurance, not a government-run system, except for the Medicaid part, which we expanded. The exchanges are private insurance.

They are able to afford it because the way we wrote the bill there are subsidies for the middle class on those exchanges, which is making it affordable for people. You should see the letters I get. I have read many of them and put them in the RECORD. People who had a preexisting condition, who never could get health care before, they write me they are thanking God—thanking God—that we passed that bill. Their kids, who were going to be thrown off their health care, are now on that health insurance until they are 26 years old. Being a woman is no longer an excuse to have your rates doubled and tripled. It is not a preexisting condition to be a woman anymore. If you have diabetes or you have had cancer, you still get your insurance. The insurance company cannot walk out on you just when you need it the most. Come on.

I say to my Republican friends, step up to the plate. Yes, we have kinks in the system. We knew that when we said: If you love your insurance, you

could keep it—I admit, I should have said: If it meets the basic standards because we do not want people having junk policies. But we fixed that. The President has stepped up to the plate and fixed that.

So all they do is focus on the negative, while people are on their knees thanking God they have health care, many for the first time.

I am kind of stunned at it, really. I really am. We are ready, willing, and able to fix whatever glitches there are, and the President has been totally honest about the disastrous rollout. We understand that. Despite that, we have millions and millions of people with new, affordable health care for the first time.

Now we look at extending emergency Federal unemployment insurance for the long-term unemployed.

We did not act in December. That was a moral outrage. We did not have the votes. The Republicans are filibustering. We need to get 60. So 1.7 million Americans have lost their extended benefits since the end of December. In my home State, 276,000 people have lost their extended unemployment benefits. Think about it: 276,000 Californians. Some of our States have populations of 600,000, 700,000—276,000 people just in California.

What does that mean? It means they are suffering. It means their families are suffering. It means they are faced with disaster. It also means they cannot go down to the corner store, they cannot go fill their car with gas. They have all these problems and it trickles down through the community and the community is hurting. That is why we know our bill is so important, because it not only helps the individual, it helps the communities.

We know—we know—that GDP is, in fact, affected if we do not act. Last month my colleagues on the other side blocked a one-year extension of unemployment benefits, even after we offered to pay for it. We gave them votes on the amendments of their choice. We gave them everything they asked for. It is never enough. We had one Republican Senator, and I thank Mr. HELLER, who voted for cloture last month.

I just hope my colleagues will listen to the people and support this extension. I would like to, for my remaining time, read to you some of the letters I am getting and emails I am getting from real people—real people.

This is Kristen from Chatsworth:

I am writing you to please continue to help get an extension on unemployment.

After working over ten years in the clerical field, I was let go and was on unemployment. I have been constantly searching for jobs and after rejection after rejection I have not given up. It is scary to hear that my claim will be up after 26 weeks of unemployment. I do not know how I will make ends meet if they do not extend unemployment.

I know I am not alone on this subject and millions are as scared as I am. I have never

been on welfare or any assistance even being a teenage mother.

My friends on the other side are always talking about how if a teenager gets pregnant, she should have the child. Here is someone who did that. We should help this woman. We should help this woman.

Here is another one, Jay from Albany:

Please keep pushing for the unemployment extension. I am one of those who were cut off in December. I'm 61, have 3 college degrees and am a Vietnam-era veteran.

This is a man who is a Vietnam-era veteran. He has three college degrees. This is what he says:

I am not a number or a lazy or stupid individual as some Republicans would like you to believe. Those checks are our only lifeline.

With several lay-offs in the last twelve years, the Dot.com crash, and the worst economy of my life, I have sadly had to run through my life savings and 401Ks.

Think about it, having to run through your life savings and your 401(k). Think about it, a veteran who put his life on the line for his country. He is insulted that the Republicans are intimating that he is lazy or stupid—his words. This is what this man writes—and then I am going to yield my time so my friend from Montana can add his eloquence to this—this is what he writes:

I have worked since I was 15 and fear I may be homeless soon if I don't get those federal unemployment checks.

Listen to what he says:

I eat one meal a day . . . and I'm starting to feel quite desperate. Please convince . . . your colleagues that this is something we all paid into and desperately need now and not in a month or two.

We are not receiving welfare checks, but checks we worked for and earned. I know you have always stood up for your constituents and those in times of need. I pray—

He writes:

I pray you are successful along with your fellow senators and representatives.

This is Jay in Albany.

Jay, there are a lot of us here who are not giving up on this. Your voice is heard.

I have to close with this one thing because it is so important. Sylvia from Pasadena—this is how she talks about this:

I want to be a normal person again and talk with friends and family about my day at work and what I achieved for my company or the recognition I received from my boss. I am not a lazy woman; I want and need to be a normal woman with a fair chance at finding a job.

I want my government to be patient . . . and show some compassion. Instead, I get Members of Congress calling me names and making me feel ashamed for losing my job through no fault of my own, and making me feel desperate because I don't know how I will be paying my bills.

Sylvia writes to me:

Please don't give up on me Mrs. Boxer. I ask you to continue to fight as I can still

provide value to this great country. . . . I believe I'm worthy of a little compassion and not name calling.

These letters move me to tears, and I am not afraid to say it. I am not afraid to say it. Our friends wanted a short-term bill. That is what they have before them. Our friends wanted a pay-for. This is a pay-for they have agreed with. If they do not help us today—when I say “help us,” I mean help those who have written to all of us with their stories—they are turning their backs on the backbone of this Nation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I wish to very quickly thank the Senator from California for her remarks before I get into my prepared remarks.

We have just come through the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Unemployment is still at 7 percent. We need to get it lower. The bottom line is there are still some folks out there who need some help, and as the economy continues to improve—we are not where we need to be yet—we ought to give those folks the help they need to get back on their feet, to give them the hope they need to reenter the workforce and become valuable parts of our economy again.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR MAX BAUCUS

Madam President, there is a beautiful small town in the farthest corner of northwest Montana. The town is called Libby, and it sits in the heart of the Kootenai Valley, surrounded by majestic snow-capped mountains. It is a beautiful place. But despite Libby's postcard-worthy views, the town has a troubled history.

Starting in 1919, mining companies began pulling vermiculite from the mountains outside of town. Vermiculite was used to bake, to build soil in gardens, and to insulate buildings. It was not long before the families of Libby began to pay the price for keeping their fellow Americans warm.

Mining vermiculite exposed Libby's miners and residents to asbestos dust. That asbestos got into their homes, their schools, and—eventually—their lungs. Over the decades, hundreds of folks in Libby died from asbestos exposure, and thousands more continue to suffer today.

When the W.R. Grace company bought the mines in 1963, the company denied that asbestos caused the illnesses plaguing the town's residents. Instead of sounding the alarm, they kept quiet while building corporate profits on the backs of Libby's suffering families and workers.

Word about Libby's fate finally made it to national news in 1999. The plight of Libby's families caught the attention of one man in particular, Montana's senior Senator MAX BAUCUS.

MAX soon began his crusade to get the EPA and the Department of Health

and Human Services to take action. Despite MAX bringing countless government officials to northwest Montana to see what asbestos had done to the men, women, and children of Libby, it took 10 years for the government to declare this region a public health emergency, the first of its kind. Thanks to MAX, Libby today is home to a state-of-the-art medical clinic that screens and treats residents for asbestosis.

Thanks to MAX, the Affordable Care Act extended Medicare coverage to everyone in the emergency zone. Thanks to MAX, funds are flowing into Libby to remove asbestos from homes, schools, and playgrounds. Due to MAX's hard work and the determination of the people of Libby, the town is slowly putting the sordid legacy of W.R. Grace in its rearview mirror. MAX's hard work for the people of Libby is the MAX BAUCUS that Montanans have come to know.

But MAX's work for the people of Montana started many years before he led the fight to help the people of Libby. In the early 1970s when MAX started in public service, he traveled to Butte to meet a fellow by the name of Harp Cote. Harp knew the lay of the land in Butte, but he did not know MAX. MAX did not know Butte. Harp was instantly impressed with MAX's willingness to work or, as Harp said it, MAX's “fire in the belly.” MAX asked Harp to introduce him to Butte's leaders and voters. Unlike other candidates, MAX did not want Harp to lobby the folks of Butte on his behalf. Instead, MAX went door to door himself to win their support.

That kind of work ethic, where you put your own shoe leather into the fight, is the reason for MAX's many achievements in Congress, achievements that include saving Social Security from privatization, leading the charge to modernize the Clean Air Act, passing six farm bills and three highway bills to strengthen Montana's and America's economy.

Folks in Washington do not always recognize MAX's hard work. In a town where too many people race for the nearest TV cameras, MAX's preference for hard work does not always do him any favors. That is practically a mortal sin around here. But not for MAX. MAX has represented Montana in Congress since 1975.

His long record of service proves that Montanans do not want a showman. They do not want someone who yells across the aisle. They want someone who will reach across that aisle and find a way to say yes even when saying no is easier to do. It is like the folks in Libby. Montana wants someone who will work hard for them, who will get results and fight to improve our quality of life. Montanans have a soul mate in MAX BAUCUS.

I first met MAX in 1998 at an economic development meeting in Havre,

MT. MAX is famous for his economic development summits in Butte. So it was no surprise that we first crossed paths when MAX was working to improve Montana's economy. At that point in his career MAX's record was already impressive.

In 1972, as Director of Montana's constitutional convention, MAX helped pass one of the most progressive state constitutions to date, enshrining protections for clean air, for clean water, and for the right to a quality education into law. He then walked the entire length of our State to introduce himself to Montanans and win a seat in Congress, meeting more men and women along the way like Harp Cote.

As MAX gained experience in the Senate, he became Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee. Soon thereafter, well into his 50s, MAX hiked 820 miles, from one corner of our State to the other, to earn the support of Montanans during his 1996 reelection. So MAX, in your new role as Ambassador, take my advice and do not try to walk from one end of China to the other.

MAX next rose to become Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. As chairman, MAX did not have the luxury of not getting the job done. The Finance Committee has been home to some of our Nation's hardest-working Senators and greatest examples of bipartisanship because failing to support critical programs like Social Security and Medicare is simply not an option.

On the Finance Committee, you cannot sit back and throw stones. You have to roll up your sleeves, you have to find common ground, and you have to get the job done. That is what MAX did. He passed legislation to reduce Americans' tax burdens, improve children's health, and, most recently, to reform our Nation's broken health care system.

MAX's penchant for hard work and thoughtful, independent-minded leadership stems from another great Montanan that he and I both admire, former Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield. MAX met Mike as a teenager, and for many Montanans of today, myself included, MAX connects us to Mike's legacy as a champion for the greater good, as the champion for putting service and sacrifice well before self, and a champion for Montana.

Montana's leaders always put Montana first, and MAX is no exception. Just as Montana has shaped MAX, MAX has shaped Montana. MAX's dedication to our public lands is legendary. Montana is known as the Treasure State because of our incredible natural resources and unrivaled public spaces. From Yellowstone to Glacier, Montana is a place like no other. Throughout his career, MAX has set out to preserve our treasured lands for future generations to enjoy. In 2008, the same year he won reelection and became the first person

to win all 56 counties in Montana, MAX helped set aside 320,000 acres of prime hunting and fishing lands across our State.

This land, which will forever be open to the public, is part of MAX's brainchild called the Montana Legacy Project. MAX's love of our outdoors extends to those who share his love. In March of 2000, he came to the Senate floor to remember a young Montanan, Sean-Michael Miles, who had tragically died in a car accident just over a year before.

MAX dedicated a scholarship in Sean's name. MAX repeated Sean's words:

I know this land may pay a price for being beautiful, as change advances, carrying with it the prospect of loss. It is a land I desperately love. It is a part of me. It hurts so much to care so much. Yet as a westerner, I am invited to breathe it all in deeply each day.

MAX, Sean would be proud of your hard work to preserve our treasured places. I pledge to carry on your efforts so Montanans can continue to cherish our special places and pass our traditions down to our kids and our grandkids.

But it is not a stretch to say that I would not be here if it were not for MAX BAUCUS. MAX has brought world leaders to Butte for his economic development summit. He brought camera crews onto construction sites and small businesses as part of his famous Montana workdays. He operated forklifts in warehouses, made bread in Montana's bakeries, and dug ditches—all to get a better feel for hard-working Montanans each and every day.

He fought for Montana farmers and ranchers who feed our Nation. But he also helped bring a dry-land farmer from Big Sandy, MT, to the Senate. MAX, I cannot tell you how much you have meant to me as a friend, as a partner, as a mentor. I have lost track of how many meetings and rallies we have attended together across our State. But I do know that at each one you have had my back.

So when I arrived in the Senate in 2007, it was because of you that a guy with seven fingers and a flat-top haircut quickly figured how to get from his office to the Senate floor. It is because of you that I had a model for working across the aisle to pass thoughtful, responsible legislation. It is because of you that I always know that I have a friend to turn to when I need advice; that is, because along with your tremendous staff, you have always put Montana first. You have built the Montana Democratic Party into a beacon of common sense, freedom, and opportunity in the West. Our party is stronger because of you and your dedication to our State.

After retiring from the Senate in 1976, Mike Mansfield became the Ambassador to Japan. Now you are posed

to continue following in Senator Mansfield's footsteps as Ambassador to China. I know that you will continue to serve Montana, even as you serve our Nation's interests overseas. I wish you the best. While you are gone, I will keep up your fight for Montana, particular the Montanans who need someone to fight for them. Montanans like Les Skramstad. Les was a long-time Libby resident. For years, he saw politicians come to Libby with a promise to help. That help never arrived.

When MAX came to Libby, Les told him he would be watching. Les passed away in 2007 before Libby began getting its help. But MAX keeps Les's photo close because in Montana a promise to help is a promise to keep. That is the Montana way. That is the MAX BAUCUS way.

MAX, it has been an honor to serve with you. It is an honor to call you friend. The Senate will be a lesser body without you. I wish you God's speed and good luck. This is an incredibly important job. I know you are more than up to that task. Thank you for your service to this Senate and to Montana and to this country.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I know we are shortly going to be voting on, among other issues, the nomination of Senator MAX BAUCUS to be the next U.S. Ambassador to China. I would expect that he would have a unanimous, if not nearly unanimous, vote in the Senate.

I said in the Foreign Relations Committee this week that clearly one of the biggest challenges and the biggest opportunities before U.S. foreign policy today is getting the relationship between the United States and China—in the context of our rebalance to the Asia-Pacific—right. I can think of few more able or qualified at this important moment in history than our friend and colleague, the Senator from Montana, to help provide advice and guidance to the President and to Congress about how to get that relationship right.

He is an expert on trade issues. He understands what we face in the coming years as China's economy continues to grow. He is fully aware of the facts that we have had U.S. exports to China that have increased by almost \$40 billion in the past 4 years alone, creating and sustaining millions of sustaining U.S. jobs in sectors across the board—automobiles, power generation, machinery, aircraft, and other vital industrial sectors. His trade missions to

China, since he has been the chairman of the Finance Committee, have given him the perspective he needs to deal with the realities of our policy options.

From the hearing he clearly understands that through the rest of the 21st century and beyond, much of the strategic, political, and economic future of the world is likely to be shaped by decisions made by Washington, Beijing, and the capitals of Asia over the next 4 to 5 years. How we get that rebalance right is incredibly important, and the Ambassador to China is incredibly important in that regard.

Finally, trade is not the only issue as it relates to China. Our collective security, having China pursue a rules-based system, is incredibly important, as well as what happens in the South China Sea—all of the issues Senator BAUCUS addressed in his nomination hearing with great ability, insight, and a willingness to take them on.

As the very final point, human rights is an incredibly important issue as it relates to China. I want to read briefly from the transcript where he was asked about the question of human rights. He described a moment as a Senator in which he raised the issue with then-President Jiang Zemin.

Senator BAUCUS said:

He said [the President of China] I did not know what I was are talking about, basically. But then I went to Tibet, went to Lhasa and raised the same point there. And sure enough, within about 2 or 3 weeks, this person was released. . . .

Protection of human rights is the bedrock. It is the underpinning of American and world society. . . . People look to America, look to America to lead on so many issues, including the protection of human rights, religious freedoms, freedom of the press, all the rights that are enumerated in the universal declaration. It is what most progress springs from.

And the answer is yes, Senator [Cardin]. You have my commitment [on human rights].

I think the totality of trade, currency manipulation, security, human rights, and the answers that he gave in his hearing, clearly show manifestly that he is very capable of being the next Ambassador.

I urge a unanimous vote in the Senate, and I yield the floor.

Mr. REED. First let me add my accolades to those of the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about Senator BAUCUS. He is superbly prepared to be our next ambassador to China. He is a friend and colleague. The President chose wisely, and I anticipate his confirmation.

In a few minutes we will have the opportunity to provide relief to 1.74 million job seekers, to help local business, to get people back to work, and to do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

Some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have thoughtfully engaged with us to find a path forward. Many of their ideas are incorporated into this principled compromise. It has

been 40 days since these Americans have had their unemployment insurance cut. Now is the time to act and help our economy grow.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of providing aid to 1.7 million Americans—growing each week by an estimated 70,000. This is the right thing to do. At this moment, this is the right way to do it, and the only question before the Senate is will we do the right thing for the American people.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, it has been over a month since Congress allowed the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program to expire. That means that more than 1.5 million out-of-work Americans—including more than 6,000 Rhode Islanders—have by now lost a critical lifeline. While Republicans obstruct here in Washington, families in Providence and Bristol and Westerly are scrambling to pay the mortgage or keep the heat on in the dead of winter. Over the coming months, thousands more Rhode Islanders will not be eligible to receive extended weeks of unemployment benefits as their regular unemployment benefits expire.

Congress passed—and President Bush signed—the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program in response to the epidemic of joblessness brought on by the great recession, just as we have done during previous economic crises. The program has been extended several times as our Nation continues to struggle under stubbornly high rates of unemployment. Yet Senate Republicans would not agree to extend this lifeline to families before the holidays, and just this week, they voted to prevent us from restoring the emergency assistance.

Even with the worst of the recession behind us, too many Rhode Islanders are still unable to find work. The unemployment rate in my State—9.1 percent in December—remains well above the national average. The sheer depth and duration of this jobs crisis have plunged unprecedented numbers of Americans into long-term unemployment. The share of workers unemployed longer than 6 months is still greater than the previous record set in the early 1980s. Now is not the time to pull the plug on our fellow Americans.

Nationwide, there are three unemployed workers for every available job opening. For some, the jobs just aren't there, and a strategy to make people desperate creates nothing but cruelty.

My Republican colleagues who think this assistance doesn't make a real difference should talk to the 74 year-old woman from Westerly, RI, who contacted my office. She was laid off in July after 11 years with the same company and is still unable to find work. She has moved in with a neighbor to cut costs. She says emergency unemployment assistance helped her keep her head above water.

Those who think extended unemployment discourages people from seeking work should talk to the forty-five-year-old husband and father from Warwick, who finds himself unemployed for the first time in his life. Since losing his job 5 months ago, he has applied to nearly 100 jobs with no success. With only his wife's wages coming in the door, his emergency unemployment helped this family to barely make ends meet.

Unemployment benefits spent on rent, groceries, and other basics contribute directly to economic activity. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the country could lose 200,000 jobs if unemployment benefits aren't extended.

My senior Senator JACK REED has led the fight to maintain this basic support for Americans still struggling to get back to work. He has worked tirelessly across the aisle to find a thoughtful compromise. Rhode Islanders are grateful for his leadership and he has my full support in the effort to restore emergency unemployment assistance to American workers. The Senate must not turn its back on those struggling the longest to find work.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent to yield back all remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Reed (RI) amendment No. 2714 to S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Brian Schatz, Barbara Boxer, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Jeff Merkley, Angus S. King, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on amendment No. 2714 to S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 58, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 23 Leg.]

YEAS—58

Ayotte	Hagan	Murphy
Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Baucus	Heinrich	Nelson
Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Heller	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rockefeller
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Boxer	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Levin	Udall (CO)
Collins	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Franken	Mikulski	
Gillibrand	Murkowski	

NAYS—40

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Barrasso	Flake	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Reid
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeben	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Moran
Roberts

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP).

On this vote, the yeas are 58 and the nays are 40. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I enter a motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the Reed of Rhode Island amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to reconsider is entered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, for the benefit of all Members, we are going to have another vote right now on the other cloture motion that has been scheduled. Then the Republican leader has said we can move forward on the Baucus nomination at that time.

I ask unanimous consent that the next two votes be 10 minutes in duration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Jack Reed, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Sheldon Whitehouse, Barbara

Boxer, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Sherrod Brown, Jeff Merkley, Angus S. King, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Bill Nelson, Christopher A. Coons.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum called has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent; the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 24 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Baucus	Heinrich	Nelson
Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Heller	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rockefeller
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Boxer	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Franken	Merkley	Wyden
Gillibrand	Mikulski	
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—43

Alexander	Enzi	Murkowski
Ayotte	Fischer	Paul
Barrasso	Flake	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Reid
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeben	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Corker	Kirk	Vitter
Cornyn	Lee	Wicker
Crapo	McCain	
Cruz	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Moran	Roberts
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 43. Three-fifths of the Senate duly chosen and sworn having not voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to offer a motion to reconsider the previous vote by which cloture was not invoked on S. 1845.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

Mr. REID. I know everyone is in a hurry to leave, and I will be very brief.

I wish to make sure I am clear where we stand. We are one Republican vote away from restoring unemployment insurance for 1.7 million Americans, including 20,000 veterans who have lost their benefits during the last 5 weeks. We all support this on this side of the aisle.

Right now there is one Republican vote standing between 1.7 million Americans and the lifeline they need to make ends meet. I ask my Republican colleagues to think about the woman from Nevada who is 57 years old. She is couch-surfing. Younger people know a little bit about that term, but I hadn't heard the term before. She has because she has been forced to understand what it is—going around to friends' homes, apartments, and sleeping on their couches. She is 57 years old, worked from the time she was 18 years old. She lost her job and can't find a job. She is long-term unemployed. If she had just lost her job last week or a couple of months ago, she could go get unemployment, but she has been out of work for too long to be able to get it. She has sold everything she has except a clunker of a car, sold all of her personal things so she can buy gas in case she gets an interview.

People are in the same position as she in every State. Our job is to do right by them. All we need is one more Republican vote, one more Republican to step up and do the right thing. We are going to bring this vote up again sometime. I have spoken to my colleague Senator HELLER. I said: DEAN, let's get this done. Tell me what is needed to get this done.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MAX SIEBEN BAUCUS TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. REID. Madam President, after having consulted with the Republican leader, I now ask unanimous consent to move to executive session to consider Calendar No. 629, the nomination of our friend MAX BAUCUS to be Ambassador to China; further, I ask that all time be yielded back, with all of the provisions under the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of MAX SIEBEN BAUCUS, of Montana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of MAX SIEBEN BAUCUS, of Montana, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China?

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second. There is a sufficient second. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BAUCUS (when his name was called). "Present."

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 25 Ex.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Franken	Mikulski
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Hoeben	Rockefeller
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Cantwell	Isakson	Sanders
Cardin	Johanns	Schatz
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Chambliss	Kaine	Sessions
Coats	King	Shaheen
Cochran	Kirk	Shelby
Collins	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Landrieu	Tester
Corker	Leahy	Thune
Cornyn	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cruz	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Vitter
Durbin	McCain	Warner
Enzi	McCaskill	Warren
Feinstein	McConnell	Whitehouse
Fischer	Menendez	Wicker
Flake	Merkley	Wyden

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Baucus

NOT VOTING—3

Coburn	Moran	Roberts
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The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Utah.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR MAX BAUCUS

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I am pleased that my colleague and very dear friend MAX BAUCUS was confirmed by this body the way he was. He will make a fine ambassador to China. We all know what an honorable, decent man he is. We all know of his abilities. We all know he has run a very tough committee, a very important committee, and has done a terrific job in doing so.

All I can say is I rise to wish my good friend Senator MAX BAUCUS good luck as he departs to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to China.

We are going to miss MAX. I do not think it is fair to this body, but, nevertheless, I think it is fair to our country because MAX will make a great ambassador. Senator BAUCUS first came to the Senate in 1978 and has the distinction of being Montana's longest serving Senator. So, as you can see, I have served with Senator BAUCUS for a long time—longer than the two of us would like to admit sometimes. Over the years I have come to respect his commitment both to his constituents and to his principles. Having worked side by side with him on the Senate Finance Committee, I know a lot about his constituents and his principles. He raises his constituents constantly and his principles I do not think he ever wavered.

If you want to understand my friend MAX BAUCUS's priorities, take a look at the sign on his Senate office desk. Like MAX, it is to the point and unequivocal. The sign says: "Montana comes first." Plain and simple, not much nuance, the language is pretty declarative.

That is MAX BAUCUS. In his long and distinguished Senate career, he always put the people of Montana first.

Both Senator BAUCUS and I are westerners, and westerners expect a certain amount of independence in their Senators. They expect us to work across the aisle and attempt to solve problems and work together.

Of course, we Republicans tend to view that problem-solving as less government and Democrats tend to view that problem-solving as more government. That is not universal, but that is where the two sides usually come down. That being the case, MAX and I have often found ourselves on different sides of some of these issues. However, we share the desire to solve problems and, as MAX's sign says it, to put our constituents' interests first. Senator BAUCUS has always understood that notion very well, and I am here to declare that to everybody who listens.

As a result, his disposition—particularly as chairman of the Finance Committee—has been to try to find a way to a bipartisan yes rather than a partisan no. I have always respected him for that.

Over the last few years, as I have served along side MAX as the ranking member of the Finance Committee, I have greatly appreciated his willingness to put partisan differences aside for the greater good of all.

One adjective you could use to describe Senator BAUCUS is one that was used by his predecessor as chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The term I am thinking of is "indefatigable."

Whether it was preparing for and running a marathon, walking across the wide expanse of his home State, or working at one of the many jobs he regularly undertook back home on recess visits, MAX has been indefatigable.

He has been a tireless legislator. Just ask his staff. They will affirm that fact. As a Senator, he was always working. I have no doubt he will do the same as our Nation's Ambassador to China, arguably the most important diplomatic post in the world today.

As we saw today, the vote on his confirmation was not even close. That is because all of his colleagues know that MAX BAUCUS is a committed public servant who will serve the American people with competence, dignity, and a tireless commitment to our Nation and its interests.

I have to say I feel personally about this nominee and about this nomination. I like MAX very much. Having served with him on the Senate Finance Committee, he has always tried to be fair. He has always tried to consider the other's point of view. He has always tried to consider different ways of solving problems, and he has worked to do so. That is about all we can ask from our colleagues on the other side—either Democrats or Republicans.

I just want to at this time wish Senator BAUCUS and his lovely wife Melodee and, of course, his family the best of luck in this and all future endeavors.

As MAX departs the Senate, Senator BAUCUS leaves behind a great legacy and very big shoes to fill. So at this particular point, I hesitate to say farewell to my friend MAX BAUCUS, but I only say farewell knowing that he is going to go on to a very important job for our country, where I think he will do a very good job.

He will have my support as he serves over there, and let's just hope that we on the Finance Committee can do a better job or at least an equivalent job to what MAX has done to keep these very important issues on the most important committee of the Congress moving along.

I have nothing but respect for MAX. I appreciate him very much. I am his friend, and I intend to continue this friendship as long as we both live.

With that, I congratulate Senator BAUCUS. I am proud of the Senator, and I intend to support him while he is there as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, the Chinese New Year began, as you probably know, just a couple days ago. I do not know a lot of words in Chinese, but among the words I have learned is how to say "Happy New Year." It is a new year in China. It is a new year for Chinese Americans in this country as well. I think the way we say "Happy New Year" is "Gong Xi Fa Cai." So I say that to my friend.

When word came out that MAX had been nominated by the President for this role, I say to our friend from Utah, I ran into MAX. He was about to go into an elevator, I think in the Hart Building, and I said: I know the President has nominated you for this, but you can't leave. We need your leadership on tax reform. We need your leadership on an SGR fix and doctors and all these other issues—trade policy. You can't leave now.

He said: Well, the President has nominated me.

I said: Well, I am going to put a hold on your nomination.

He was about to get in the elevator and go away, and he put his head back out and said: Oh no, you are not.

I was tempted. I was tempted because there is a lot he leaves. Actually, I think he leaves at a time when this place is working better. I am encouraged by that. Frankly, I am encouraged by the relationship the Senator has kindled with Senator HATCH. I am encouraged by the relationship the Senator has kindled with our friend DAVE CAMP from Michigan over in the House as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. MAX has set an example for the rest of us.

It is ironic the chairman of the committee and the ranking member are sitting here across the aisle from each other, but the two of them, in terms of providing personal examples—the kind of leadership we need; do as I do, not as I say—both of them are terrific at reaching across the aisle, doing what the people sent us to do: find principled compromises, get things done.

I wish to mention—let me just ask, and he can maybe nod his head—my recollection is, when we took up the issue of whether there should be a Medicare prescription drug program that was supported initially by Senator Kennedy and by President George W. Bush, I think in the end the version that prevailed was the version preferred by President Bush.

My recollection is that Senator BAUCUS may have gone across the aisle and supported that version of the bill and took me and probably another 10 or so Democrats with him—not an easy thing to do.

I remember going back to Delaware—I have told him this story before—I went back to Delaware and held a number of townhall meetings, if you will,

on that issue and got excoriated, eviscerated by mostly Democrats. They would come and say: How could you do this? How could you support that prescription drug program, the Medicare Part D Program.

I explained I thought it was a principled compromise. I thought it would work. A year later, it has an 85-percent approval rating by the people who use it. For 6 or 7 straight years—it still has an 85-percent approval rating, a little higher than ours. If you look at how we are doing in terms of anticipated costs, it is 7 years under budget—under budget.

When the time came to try to find a compromise on comprehensive health care reform, I remember the Senator did not just work with 3 or 4 Republican colleagues on the Finance Committee—Senator GRASSLEY, Senator SNOWE, Senator ENZI. The Senator did not work with them for a couple of days to try to find a principled compromise, Senator BAUCUS worked with them for weeks—I think months—to try to do that. Ultimately, the Senator was unsuccessful. But the Senator led us through a difficult mark-up in committee and on the floor. I know there are reservations in that law that we should tweak and change and make it better. But I think in the end, the Senator's leadership will be vindicated by a lot of Americans, just like we did with the Medicare prescription drug program. Obviously, that was the right thing to do. Thank you for the leadership you provided.

On a personal level, I would say, as Senator HATCH has said, this is a personal loss to me, and I know to many Democrats and Republicans. But the Senator leaves behind a wonderful legacy. You leave behind a whole lot of people, and they all have their resumes—no, not really. One or two of them may have. But you have a reputation as surrounding yourself with really good people. I sought to do that. I kind of learned from you and Senator HATCH, but I have always sought to surround myself by people smarter than me. My wife always says that it is not hard to find them.

You have done a great job surrounding yourself with terrific people. They are here today sitting behind you, over in the Republican side, up in the galleries—a lot of love here. I hope you feel it from all of us.

In the Navy when people pull up their anchor and prepare to sail off into the sunset or the sunrise, whatever the case may be, we always like to say: Fair winds and a following sea. Fair winds and a following sea. That is what I wish to you and to Mel. We are going to miss you here, but we are really going to miss her. We hope we will have an opportunity to see you again and to work with you again.

We hope the same, that we will have an opportunity to see Mel. We think

the world of her. Good luck to both of you. May God bless you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I just want to make a brief statement before Senator BAUCUS speaks and thank him for his service in the Senate, thank him for representing Montana, and accepting some of the toughest assignments in the Senate. We have a similarity in our background. We were both inspired to this position by Senators who served before us; in his case, Senator Mansfield, who was an extraordinary leader in the Senate and an extraordinary man when you consider his contribution to our country. He served in two world wars, if I am not mistaken, perhaps in three different branches of the military. It was just an exceptional life of public service which ended with his ambassadorship to Japan.

Now, Senator BAUCUS, who was inspired to public life by Senator Mansfield and followed in his footsteps in representing the State of Montana, serving in one of the highest leadership spots in the Senate, is now off to an ambassadorship, which, when you consider the ebb and flow of history, is singularly the most important ambassadorial assignment which the United States of America can make.

Today, this overwhelming bipartisan vote in the Senate is a fitting tribute to Senator MAX BAUCUS for his service, his friendship, and his continued dedication to be a servant of our Nation. I wish you and Mel the very best in this new assignment. We hope to get a chance to come to see you, and also, more importantly, to work with you, to make sure that our relationship with China remains strong for decades to come.

Thank you, MAX, for being such a great colleague and a friend.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to my colleague, MAX BAUCUS. Senator BAUCUS has been a leader in the areas of tax, trade, health, agriculture and the environment. I have served with him on the Finance Committee and the Agriculture Committee and have enjoyed working with him and learning from him. On the Finance Committee, Senator BAUCUS worked to improve the health care of all Americans, most notably with the passage of the Affordable Care Act. It should also be noted, one of his last acts as a Senator today was to introduce a bipartisan and bicameral agreement on Medicare physician payment reform. On the Agriculture Committee, he was a passionate advocate for farmers. MAX leaves a legacy he should be proud of. I wish him well in China and thank him for his continued service.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate Senator MAX BAUCUS for his confirmation as

Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve with him for several years in the Senate and on the Finance Committee, which he chairs.

MAX's entire life has been dedicated to public service. He was a member of the Montana House early in his career, before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and then the Senate in 1978. Few people have served as long in the Senate as MAX and led such an illustrious career here. MAX has been behind many landmark pieces of legislation that will benefit people's lives and the country for years to come. As chairman of the Finance Committee, he has influenced so many issues that have an impact on American families every day, from tax policy to pensions, health care, and education.

What is more, I have seen firsthand MAX's unique desire to work with people across the political spectrum. MAX's commonsense approach and collegial nature, learned from growing up on a ranch in Montana, has played a significant role in his ability to get things done. I hope that all Senators will learn from his example. In fact, I believe it is what we must do to best serve the people who elected us.

On behalf of all Floridians, I want to thank MAX for serving his country in the Senate for more than 3 decades. And I wish him well as he follows in the footsteps of his mentor, Senator Mike Mansfield, in becoming Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, MAX BAUCUS has never been afraid of the long haul. As the son of Montana ranchers, he knows the meaning of a long day's work. Before his 1996 election, he walked the length of Montana, more than 800 miles. In 2003, well past his 60th birthday, he ran a 50-mile ultra-marathon.

For the last three decades, I have had the privilege of running a different sort of marathon with MAX. We entered the Senate together after the election of 1978, and have served together since then. Today we mark the end of that marathon, as Senator BAUCUS prepares to become Ambassador Baucus and assume one of our Nation's most important diplomatic posts as ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, MAX BAUCUS has played a central role in some of the most important legislative accomplishments of recent decades. He has helped bring health care coverage to millions of Americans by working toward establishment of the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Affordable Care Act. At the same time, he was worked tirelessly on issues of major importance to Montana, fighting to support his State's agriculture, and to support important educational and economic development initiatives.

He moves from this important role to another. Our relationship with China is more important than ever. Decisions made today will affect that relationship for decades to come. We are seeking to cement a positive relationship, one in which China joins with our friends and allies in the Asia-Pacific Region to support collective security and economic growth, and fosters stability through adhering to international norms. As the representative of the American people in Beijing, MAX will be instrumental in getting and keeping the U.S.-China relationship on a positive footing. He will be in a crucial position to help open Chinese markets to American goods.

I will miss MAX as a friend and a colleague, but I am grateful for his willingness to take on this job, to continue serving his Nation in a new and challenging capacity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Let me begin by thanking so many of my friends here: Senators DURBIN, CARPER, HATCH, and so many others. I must say to you, you have expressed your remarks, and they mean a lot to me. But they probably mean more to me than I think you know. They mean so much to me. Thank you for what you have said.

I would also like to begin by thanking the people of Montana. The people of Montana have given me the honor of representing them in the Congress for nearly 40 years. It is 39 now, and actually at the end of this year it will be 40 years. I want to thank President Obama very much for the opportunity to serve the American people as Ambassador to China.

I also want to recognize one of the best teammates and friends anyone could ever ask for, Senator JON TESTER. Thank you, JON. There is nothing greater in life than the love of family. I have been an incredibly lucky man. I would like to thank my wife Mel, my son Zeno, his wife Stephanie. I would also like to thank our children, Katie and Joey.

Mel, Zeno, Stephanie, Katie, and Joey, you inspire me daily. I am so grateful for each of you. I am so blessed to have Mel in my life. Her energy, her zest for life, her positive outlook, and her love have transformed me. I am the luckiest guy in the world because of Mel. Katie and Joey are clearly inspired by their mother. They are great kids, great achievers. I think the last grades I saw—one is in law school and the other is in college—they had all As. Why? Because they are inspired by their mother. That is why they do so well, in the best sense of the term.

My son Zeno is one of the best kids parents could ever wish for. I am so proud of him. He is so smart, intelligent, and decent. He is currently an

assistant U.S. attorney, living in Helena with his wife Stephanie. I am proud of him. You may have read about that case where a lady pushed her husband off a cliff in Glacier Park, MT. He is the prosecutor in that case.

I am very proud of him. Again, an indication of how proud I am of him, I learned more about that case reading the papers than I did from him. He keeps his cards close to his vest and is such a decent, smart, effective guy.

Stephanie, his wife, has jumped right into life in Montana. She is so talented and special, and the Helena community is very lucky to have her.

Thanks so much to my parents Jean and John Baucus. I wish they were here today.

Growing up on a ranch in Montana, you learn the simple lessons, the measure of life. You learn to cherish the land. It gets in your blood. You work hard. It is humbling. There is so much you cannot control working on a ranch. You cannot control the weather, whether it rains or it does not rain. You cannot control the prices. It gives you a little perspective to feel philosophical about life.

On the ranch you are charged also with nurturing life, nurturing livestock, producing a small part of nature's bounty. You have an obligation to learn as a rancher.

It is also the Montana way to love the outdoors. We are outdoors people in Montana. We hunt, we fish, we backpack, we hike, we grow crops, we raise livestock, we mine coal, and we cut timber. I think Montanans are more outdoor people than any other people in the country. We love it. It becomes part of our soul. Montana writer Bud Guthrie said: "Somehow I am part of it, a mortal partner to eternity."

I grew up this way, and it shored up my belief that we all have a moral obligation to our kids and grandkids when we leave this place, to leave it in as good a shape or in better shape than we found it. That internal compass is also a lasting gift from my parents and their love of the land. My mom is one of the most special persons one could have the privilege to know. She had the class of Grace Kelly and the spunk and grit of Katherine Hepburn. She was a combination of them both—an intelligent, classy lady, always positive, always upbeat. She was so intelligent and so well read. She even read more books than I did. I would come home at night and say: Mom, what are you reading?

She would tell me all about the book. One she was reading was President Obama's second book, which he wrote when he was a Senator. What do you think about that, mom?

Oh, it is a pretty good book. It has something to say. It is a little long, though.

Anyway, she wrote a note to the President and told him that she liked

it. He wrote back, and they became pen pals. It was very nice.

Someone asked me last week what my mother would have thought of all this. She would have been incredibly excited and fascinated with the adventure ahead. Although I miss her every day—in fact, I talked to her every day at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. That hour goes by daily, but I keep thinking of her. She is always on my mind, as is my father. He loaded bombs on airplanes in Europe during World War II. A product of the Great Depression, he instilled in me the values of hard work, humility, and good faith. He worked me hard on the ranch, stacked a lot of hay, a lot of fencing. I know why he did it—for the right reasons. I did not complain because I knew that he was trying to raise me in the way that he hoped would help me later in life.

He was also such a decent person. No one ever spoke an ill word of my father—ever—such a rock solid character. The Republican Party in Montana asked him to run for Governor. He would not have anything to do with it. He did not care about that politics stuff. He was a rancher and liked what he was doing—ranching. I was so blessed to have such great parents.

Now 52 years ago, I was full of youthful idealism and curiosity about life beyond the ranch. I am sure it was caused somewhat by my parents. As a college student at Stanford, I decided to take a year off from my studies between my junior and senior year. I grabbed a knapsack and I hitchhiked around the world for 1 year. It was June-August 1962 to about August-September 1963.

I set out to visit countries I had only imagined—India, Japan, and China, to name a few. Before I departed, I had never thought about a life in public service. But that trip opened my eyes. It charted my course. I realized how people across the globe were interconnected. We are all in this together.

I saw the indispensable role that America plays as a leader on the world stage. It was so obvious. I knew right where I was, in the middle of the then-Belgian Congo, and I had an epiphany. All this realization hit me that we are so connected, that our natural resources are diminishing. Somehow we have to work better together if we are going to have better lives, not only for ourselves but for everyone on the globe. We are so connected.

The world is getting smaller. Our natural resources, in fact, are diminishing. We have to find a way to work better together. I returned home with a commitment to a career where I could improve the lives of my fellow Montanans and of all Americans. I would not be standing here today had it not been for that trip where I hitchhiked around the world, probably the most defining era of my life.

It was by far the most influential, and that 1 year set into motion a series

of opportunities to serve that I would never have dreamed would take me back to China to represent the United States 50 years later. When I first ran for statewide office in 1973, no one knew me from Adam. I had been away from the State for many years.

I needed some advice. I had met Mike Mansfield when I was in high school. Instantly there was a man I totally respected and honored. He planted the seed, I know, for later interest in public service. It was not a defining moment, but I could tell at the time. He told me I should run; I should go back home and serve. I was then working at the SEC, just a short distance from here.

If I wanted to run for Congress, he said, it would take a lot of hard work, a lot of shoe leather, and a little bit of luck. I took his advice literally. I wore out as much shoe leather as I knew how. I walked the entire length of the State of Montana from Gardiner in the south—Gardiner is next to Yellowstone Park—up to the Yaak, a remote part of Montana near the Canadian border.

I got to know so many great people who later put me to work for them in the House. It was right in the middle of the Watergate political scandal. I joined a congressional class determined to restore good faith and trust in government, a terrific bunch of folks. They were just great, the “Watergate class.”

I think of my friends Chris Dodd, TOM HARKIN, Paul Simon, HENRY WAXMAN, and GEORGE MILLER, to name a few. It was a great class. They were running for office and serving for the right reasons.

When I hitchhiked around the globe as a young man, I also realized that no country has a monopoly on religion, culture or virtue. We are all together. We are all in this together. All people basically have the same dreams for their families—to put food on the table, to make ends meet, to take care of the kids, health care they could afford, and a clean environment for their families to explore and enjoy.

The Senate can make people's dreams a reality. We are so lucky as Americans to have this institution under our Constitution written by our very perceptive forefathers. It offers what few institutions in the world can boast—the opportunity to make a difference when history calls.

One of the greatest privileges I have had in this job is having one of the best staffs on the Hill. They are sitting behind me—some of them. They are terrific. They have always been ready with big ideas and dedication to answer history's call. If there is a vanguard of vision, my staff has been in it.

I might say, parenthetically, I am very proud of my staff for another reason. My office has spawned about six marriages. A woman or a man working in my office who didn't know each

other until they started working in my office got together and got married—six times—and they have all worked but for one. I don't know, but maybe I worked them too hard or maybe not hard enough. Whatever the reason, over the years after they were married, to see their kids, it has been terrific. It meant so much to me.

How many people have served since the time I have been here? The answer is 1,423 folks have worked on behalf of Montanans and on behalf of Americans, each person making a positive difference to the lives of others.

I thank them all very much.

In the years I have been in the Senate, we voted to send our sons and daughters to fight wars overseas, to protect our national security. I think the strongest human instinct is self-preservation. When you come from a beautiful place such as Montana, and from the wonderful people of our State, you will stop at nothing to defend them.

Montana has a tradition of answering the call to serve. As a matter of fact, more Montanans have volunteered for service per capita than nearly any state in the Nation.

My own nephew Phillip left college to enlist in the Marines. Before long he was far away in Anbar province serving our country. I loved Phillip as a father. His fellow marines looked to him for support, counsel, advice, and leadership as they faced many firefights. He made lance corporal in record time. He gave his life to our Nation and then returned to the family ranch for the very last time.

Phillip, like each one of the fallen heroes who bore our battles, left behind big dreams undone and countless broken hearts. Dust to dust—we still shudder.

President Lincoln concluded his second inaugural address with a call for the Nation to “care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan.” Lincoln's commitment remains our sacred duty today.

In the Senate we have made progress. We enacted tax credits for businesses that hire veterans and enacted a new GI bill. In the past 10 years Congress has doubled support for the VA. That is an investment of which we should be proud. Someone once wrote: “In war, there are no unwounded soldiers.” It is important we remember that. We make the tough votes to authorize war, and we must also find the courage to band together so that our troops return to a nation that honors their service.

Of all the bills that I have worked on, there are two that stand out. In 2010 we took the Montana National Guard's model of improved PTSD screening and expanded it nationwide. That concept of very meaningful PTSD screening began in Montana with the Montana National Guard. It worked so well I got it in the defense bill, and it is now

being enacted nationwide to make sure we do the very best to protect our kids who are coming home.

The new screenings have resulted in more than 800,000 servicemembers who have received personal and private one-on-one attention from a trained health care provider—both before and after deployment. Make no mistake; these screenings are saving lives.

I am also proud of another life-saving bill, the Affordable Care Act. It has been almost 4 years since President Obama signed that act into law, and in that time the law has done more than any other in the past half century to expand access to health coverage. It has provided 71 million Americans free preventive service. More than 6 million seniors have received discounts on vital prescription drugs.

More than 3 million young people have peace of mind knowing they will be allowed to stay on their parents' health plans. I am especially proud that now no child will ever be denied health care coverage because they had been sick or had a preexisting condition.

It has been a tough road. It has been a challenge I am proud to have taken on. While the debate over the law continues, I am proud to stand for it because it is helping millions of Americans.

Take Julie from Helena. Julie wrote to me that she is self-employed and finally able to get access to affordable, quality health care coverage because of the ACA.

John, from Missoula, has a daughter who survived ovarian cancer. Thanks to the ACA, she was able to stay on her parents' insurance and win her battle against cancer.

I am very proud of the role I played in helping to make health care more accessible and more affordable to many Americans.

In this Chamber there are brilliant men and women. With great respect to my colleagues, I insist that, in the most important respect, Senators are just ordinary people—big, not-so-big, tall, short, men and women. We are just people.

It is only through the extraordinary institution of the Senate that the ordinary people have the power to make life better for all Americans. We belong to something bigger than ourselves. When I first came to the Senate, Senators from opposing parties actually had lunch together in the private Senate dining room on the floor below the Chamber. It was called the inner sanctum.

In those daily rituals we learned about each other's families, home States, and developed real friendships. Senators dined together—no spouses, no staff, only Senators from both sides of the aisle. We compared notes, talked about our kids, and talked about our family. We talked about legislation,

and we got to know each other. It was wonderful getting to know each other, to build trust, confidence, and understanding. It was the backbone of respect that we all relied upon.

Those friendships provided a refuge from the political firestorms and common ground to turn to after the wrangling over the disagreements of the day.

Now schedules are packed with caucus meetings and political fundraisers. The Senate is losing the spirit of friendship and forgiveness that, in the words of Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, "is the final oil of harmony in all human relations and which rests upon the contrite recognition that our actions and attitudes are inevitably interpreted in a different light by our friends as well as foes than we interpret them."

Friendship and forgiveness, that is the oil of human relations that brings us together. That private Senate dining room now carries only the echoes of the friendships once forged at its tables, and we are poorer for it. Yet there is nothing inevitable about this trend. The hope of this body lies in individual Senators. The heart set upon solutions to problems will win over the heart devising traps for political gain.

It is my honor to have friendships that formed the basis for solving some of the Nation's most difficult problems. I will never forget working together with the late Senator John Chafee on the Environment and Public Works Committee.

I worked with John for years before finding out he was an amazing war hero, decorated for his service in Korea. He didn't tell us that. It took years before I learned what a hero he was, a self-effacing kind of guy. Few people knew about his war record because he didn't brag about it or use it for political gain. He served because he believed in it, not because he thought he could benefit from it. Without a doubt, we need more John Chafees in the world.

Between 1989 and 1990, we sat together in a small room off the Senate floor, facing wave after wave of unhappy Senators—sometimes until 1 or 2 in the morning. He was the ranking Republican member of the EPW Committee. I became chairman of the Environmental Protection Subcommittee.

Together we met with our colleagues ironing out the compromises on acid rain, ozone depletion, air quality permits, and scores of other issues. Senator Chafee later became chairman of the full committee. We had our disagreements, but by-and-large under Senator Chafee's chairmanship I recall an oasis of civility.

That friendship helped us to pass the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. I am very proud of that effort. I was chairman of the committee at that time, and we finally got it.

It is a small point, but I always respected that he never raised his voice. He was always civil, always decent, always positive, upbeat, and trying to find a solution. John never lost his temper. He listened carefully to the other person's point of view.

He was a paragon of the Senate—as is my good friend from Iowa CHUCK GRASSLEY.

CHUCK and I began our friendship by deciding to meet weekly face-to-face in his office or my office. It turned out to be 5:30 p.m. every Tuesday. We would bring our staffs together. Pretty soon our staffs were talking to each other. The health care staff after a while started talking to each other and our trade staff started talking to each other.

Heck, we were basically one office. If you were a fly on the wall, you would think this was one office where people were trying to get together to solve problems.

CHUCK is a Republican; I am a Democrat. We have differences, but our goal is to solve the problems and find solutions while adhering to our principles.

Our friendship led to a culture of respect and honesty in the Senate Finance Committee that helped us pass important agreements of other bills to expand trading opportunities with the rest of the world. I am especially proud of our work together to successfully shepherd the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003. Senator CARPER referred to it just a short while ago.

I thank my good friend DAVE CAMP. DAVE is chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. We have worked together a lot over the past couple of years on tax reform. We have bridged the partisan divide to help pass the most recent highway bill and the payroll tax cut. DAVE is a super, super American and a wonderful man. I am very lucky to have him as a friend.

It has also been a terrific honor working with my good friend Senator ORRIN HATCH.

ORRIN, DAVE, and I recently worked together to introduce Trade Promotion Authority legislation to make Congress a full partner in trade negotiations. In trade, as in so many important areas, working together is the only way to get the job done. The Senator is a real American—ORRIN HATCH. He is the salt of Utah and cares about his State and his country. The Senator is a wonderful person to work with. I can't thank him enough.

Thank you, Senator HATCH.

In 1961, President-elect John F. Kennedy said: "Our governments, in every branch, at every level, national, State, and local, must be as a city on a hill—constructed and inhabited by men aware of their great trust and their great responsibilities.

If we are indeed a city on the Hill, it rests firmly on the bridges that Senators built when they faced even the

deepest of divides. I mention my closest friendships across the aisle because it is those bridges that we lack the most today.

The epiphany I had as a young man hitchhiking around the world 52 years ago I believe is even more relevant today. Advances in technologies and communications have made us more interconnected as people than ever before.

The challenges of globalization bind us even more. Climate change—we are all in this together—terrorism, economic development, and education can all be addressed with good faith and a commitment to finding common ground.

I am committed in my next chapter to meet these challenges. The United States-China relationship I believe is one of the most important bilateral relationships in the world that will shape global affairs for generations. We must get it right.

Thirty-eight years ago, Mike Mansfield said farewell to this institution by simply declaring: "There is a time to stay and a time to go."

Now, as I face my own crossroads, I am humbled to have the opportunity to follow in his footsteps.

As America's ambassador to Japan, Mansfield worked hard to strengthen and improve America's relationship throughout history. I will try to do the same.

Many of you know I love to run. I actually have my eye on the Beijing Marathon—but, to be more honest, maybe I will scale it down to a half-marathon, something a little shorter. When I think about my next endeavor, I am reminded of something a professional runner, Paul Tergat, once said:

Ask yourself: "Can I give more?" The answer is usually: Yes.

I can give more; we all can. I thank President Obama for asking me. I am indeed energized to serve America in this new role and to look at this as my sprint to the finish.

I trust Montanans to choose wisely as they have so well with my friend, the great Senator from Montana JON TESTER.

My final message is not for my esteemed peers but for the young people chasing their dreams across the Montana Hi-Line, searching for meaning through the Yellowstone River Valley or climbing toward their future along the Rocky Mountain Front.

The headlines paint the picture that there is no honor in public service. I disagree. I think the greatest noble human endeavor is service—service to friends, service to family, to church, to synagogue. Public service. The most noble human endeavor is service. So I urge you young folks to take up that challenge that politics is not an honorable profession. It is more than honorable. It is an obligation to serve. And I urge you to follow and serve. Choose to

serve others. For me, it has been the honor of a lifetime. I am so lucky. And be ready—because history is calling.

It is with deep gratitude and respect that I say for the last time, with full faith in the highest forms of the Senate, I yield the floor. But before doing so, I just have to say I am not going anywhere. I am just taking a trip, maybe for a year or two, across the Pacific—just a trip. I will be coming back because we all are together on different journeys that we take.

I thank all of you, my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I would like to make a few comments about Senator BAUCUS.

Our part of the world has sent to the Senate some of our most distinguished and thoughtful Members. The great Pacific Northwest sent Wayne Morse from my home State to the Senate and Warren Magnuson and Scoop Jackson of Washington State. I note that Senator CANTWELL is here. Frank Church of Idaho was sent to Washington, and, of course, Mike Mansfield, Senator BAUCUS's mentor and pioneer in terms of promoting closer relations between our country and Asia. It is very fitting that this afternoon MAX BAUCUS joins that very special group of Senators from our part of the United States.

Second, I wish to caution Senators on one point, and the distinguished Senator from Utah and I have had a little bit of a laugh about this. MAX is exceptionally friendly, and he always tells Senators: Our paths are going to cross again. I look forward to working with you in the days ahead. And Senator HATCH and I just want everyone here in the Senate: However close you are to Senator BAUCUS, that doesn't mean every Senator can insist that MAX come back from China to talk about the latest twist in the debate about currency manipulation or some other issue.

The last point I want to mention is a personal one. When you are here in the Senate for more than three decades, you deal with scores of bills and amendments, and you talk about coalitions that were built to pass measures that needed to be passed, and from time to time you have to build a coalition to stop something that shouldn't be passed. But what I want to do—out of those thousands of bills and thousands of amendments—is talk about a special Baucus commitment that was especially important to me; that is, the needs of senior citizens.

MAX BAUCUS had some particularly celebrated wins in the fight for seniors—something in which the Presiding Officer of the Senate is very involved. The reality is that the person who did more to stop the privatization of Social Security here on the floor of the Sen-

ate was MAX BAUCUS. He was the one who led the coalition. He reached out to Senators on both sides and said: Look, of course we need to save more for private retirement savings, but we are going to do that on top of Social Security, not as a replacement for Social Security. So Senator BAUCUS was there building that coalition, making the case for why this special program, this intergenerational program has been so important for our country.

What I remember best about Senator BAUCUS and seniors, though, is when the Finance Committee blew the whistle on some of these ripoffs in supplements sold to older people, and eventually these supplements really became the delivery system for Medicare as we know it in much of the country. Senator CANTWELL and I, of course, know of the Medicare Advantage Program.

We would have hearings in the Finance Committee where we would hear about efforts in the private sector to sell health insurance to seniors that was not worth the paper on which it was written. I remember—kind of bringing my Gray Panther roots into the cause—talking to MAX about this change and that change, and it would get pretty dense pretty quickly. MAX just said: This is wrong. This is wrong, to rip senior citizens off this way. And we were able to get those changes. The consumer protections MAX BAUCUS locked into the law for the Nation's vulnerable seniors essentially remain the protections of today that are used as the model for senior rights.

Senator CANTWELL and I, since we are both on the committee, also know that in the budget discussions, when it came time for hard choices, MAX always made it a priority to stand up for what are known as the dual eligibles—the seniors who are the most vulnerable, the seniors who don't have political action committees and don't have clout and can't participate in all of what we normally think of as today's politics, from fundraising to all of the grass-roots work.

I will close by saying that when you see somebody week in and week out stand for the most vulnerable people in society, such as those dual eligibles, you learn a lot about what a person feels strongly about, what values are important to them. So I want to close by saying that when we talk about the Senators from our part of the world—and Senator CANTWELL remembers so well the legendary Warren Magnuson and Scoop Jackson and Frank Church, who, by the way, was chair of the Senate Select Committee on Aging. I met him for the first time when I was director of the Gray Panthers and had a full head of hair and good looks. MAX was always on those issues, year after year after year.

I hope today, as we reflect on his contributions and certainly all the bills and amendments he offered in the Sen-

ate Finance Committee, people will also remember that there is a reason MAX belongs with those distinguished Senators I mentioned from the Pacific Northwest. It is because he had a heart for people, he had a heart for seniors, and he had the values that represent the best in public service.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I too come to the floor to say goodbye to our colleague from Montana and wish him well in his new endeavor as Ambassador to China—something the Pacific Northwest cares dearly about. So I know we will be working with him in his new capacity, but it really is a very historic moment for all of us and certainly for those of us in the Pacific Northwest.

I will never forget MAX and I riding back to our offices on the subway once and talking about the Inland Empire. I think people thought we were making something up, but that is how we refer to our part of the country and the interior, which is this huge economy that is built on agriculture, built on trade, built on natural resources that we hold so dear and for which we fight.

To come to the Senate and to sit in the seat Scoop Jackson once held and think about how you will have the wherewithal and ability to remember all of what Scoop and Maggie and everybody fought for and to know the incarnation of that is right there in MAX BAUCUS, the person who worked with them, who saw them, and who then carried that torch on these important policy issues, to me, is so important to recognize today because he really is a legislator in the mold of Magnuson and Jackson.

I thank MAX for one thing in particular; that is, doing deals. Around here people sometimes criticize doing deals. But you know what. The art of compromise and moving our country forward requires that, and MAX became a model dealmaker in the context of these important policies on which we have worked, whether the modernization of the trade legislation for dislocated workers and expanding that program and making it more robust because it needed to be modernized or whether some of the changes we have made to CHIP, because I can tell you he certainly helped us in Washington State in making sure we had our fair share as regards the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Just speaking about CHIP in general, I can't say enough about CHIP as a program. When you get discouraged around here about what we are actually getting done or what problems we are solving, if you think of nothing else but CHIP—just the Children's Health Insurance Program—and literally giving health insurance to millions of

children across America who wouldn't automatically get health insurance, this job is worth it right here and now. So I thank MAX for that.

Certainly on the Affordable Care Act I have often said that MAX applied his marathon skills to the patience of Job in actually crafting that legislation. I think we probably worked every day for 2 years in committee to make that legislation a reality, and it took a lot of patience. Many times late at night I would have lost my patience with the process and our colleagues, but MAX didn't, and the end result is that this country is moving forward on a major health care policy that I know 30 or 40 years from now will be in the same category as our other key programs such as Social Security and Medicare, as a foundation and as a base of what we are doing to make sure people have affordable health care in this country.

MAX, I thank you for the staff you hired as well because in the Finance Committee, while we didn't always agree on every single policy, they also came to the table ready to make things happen, and I certainly appreciate that.

To my colleagues, I feel as though we really are losing a piece of our institution today and somebody who really understood the issues that I care about in the Pacific Northwest and somebody who really knew how to make things happen. I know our path forward is a new course on the Finance Committee, but I hope we will continue in the way that MAX brought forth issues because in the end it is about improving the lives of the people we represent, and that means we are not always going to agree, but we are going to have to put ideas on the table and we are going to have to get them passed into law.

So, MAX, as you go across the big Pacific, I know you will remember us, but we will be looking to you too because there is a lot we have to get done. I know that as you are running around Beijing, you will have that little app they now have that shows the level of pollution in Beijing that comes right off the U.S. Embassy, and you will be talking to the Chinese about how we have to work together on a clean energy strategy, and we will applaud you for that. But don't forget all of us here because there is a lot of work to be done. We are very proud to call you a former colleague and a key leader in the history of the Inland Empire. Thank you very much, MAX.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, this past Sunday before the Super Bowl, President Obama sat down for an interview.

The President was asked about the failure of his healthcare.gov Web site. He talked about how there are always glitches with technology. But then he said this about the Web site:

It got fixed within a month and a half. It was up and running and now it's working the way it's supposed to.

According to the President of the United States, healthcare.gov is now "working the way it's supposed to." The President of the United States is in denial.

This is an incredible statement that he has made. I find it especially hard to believe, when I looked at the Washington Post the next morning—on Monday, the day after the President's interview where he said "it's working the way it's supposed to."

Then look at the headline on the front page of the Washington Post on Monday, "Health site can't handle appeals." Thousands of requests for fixes were filed but unprocessed.

Is this what the President of the United States means when he says now "it's working the way it's supposed to?" Is the President oblivious to what is happening in this country with his signature piece of legislation? According to this article:

Tens of thousands of people who discovered that HealthCare.gov made mistakes as they were signing up for a health care plan are confronting a new roadblock: The government cannot yet fix the errors.

The President may think it is perfect, but there are a lot of errors with his Web site. To say it is working the way it is supposed to, to me, cites Presidential denial.

"About 22,000 Americans," the article says. Is this what President Obama means when he says the Web site is working "the way it's supposed to"? I am talking about the front page of the Washington Post, above the fold. One woman quoted in the article says that because of a mistake by the Web site, she is paying \$100 a month more than she should and her deductible is \$4,000 too high. She said she needed the insurance, and now she is stuck.

Is this what President Obama thought the Web site was supposed to do? Was it supposed to overcharge this woman \$100 a month and set her deductible too high by \$4,000? Was it supposed to prevent her from appealing that mistake?

You are stuck with it. The mistake was made by the Web site. You are stuck. This is what the President seems to think.

Here is another headline which ran on Monday, the day after the President's interview. This was in the Anchorage Daily News in Alaska. It says, "Enroll Alaska mistakenly releases hundreds of e-mail addresses."

Alaska is one of the States which doesn't use their own exchange. They are part of the Federal exchange which uses healthcare.gov.

The article says:

Enroll Alaska mistakenly released about 300 email addresses Monday afternoon when an employee sent out a mass message about a healthcare.gov glitch without masking its recipients.

So, No. 1, there was a glitch. Remember, the President says now "it's working the way it's supposed to." So there was a glitch; they sent out an email explaining the glitch, and they end up releasing all of the people's personal email addresses when they are trying to point out to the incompetence of the Web site in the first place. Is this the way President Obama thinks things are supposed to work with his Web site?

This is the kind of security issue many of us have been worried about from the beginning. People have to provide a lot of their personal information in this Web site—financial information, health information, Social Security number, demographic information. There is not enough assurance the information is being properly protected.

So this time they sent out people's email addresses. Maybe next time they will send out people's Social Security numbers, their health information, their financial information or other personal information.

That is not even talking about the lack of security on the Web site and whether hackers can break in and steal information. This is just human error, carelessness, and what people connected to the site are sending out by mistake. It is a very real concern.

For the President to not take this seriously—and I believe he doesn't take it seriously. I believe he has his head in the sand on all of this, and he has dug in on this law. For the President to not take this seriously and say that everything is going "the way it's supposed to" is a very real problem with the man in the White House.

That is just the Web site. That is what the President was talking about in the interview. What else about the health care law is working the way it is supposed to, I ask the Presiding Officer.

Is it the millions of people who will be dropping out of the labor force because of the law? On Tuesday morning, the Congressional Budget Office said that is exactly what is going to happen.

Here is how the papers reported it:

The New York Times, "Health Care Law Projected to Cut the Labor Force."

The Wall Street Journal, "Health Law to Cut Into Labor Force."

Here is how The Hill put it, "ObamaCare will cost 2.5M workers by 2024."

Is this the way the Obama administration thinks its health care law is

supposed to work? They are actually saying, yes, it is. Jason Furman, the President's top economist, said the health care law "is helping labor markets, is helping businesses, and is helping jobs."

Helping labor markets?

Because of the failed policies of the Obama administration, we have the lowest labor force participation rate in 35 years. People have given up looking for work. The administration should be doing all it can to increase the labor force participation, not celebrating that its health care law is going to push that number even lower.

Middle-class Americans all across this country have seen their insurance premiums go up significantly because of the health care law's costly mandates. They have seen their deductibles go up. Millions of hard-working Americans have had their insurance policies canceled. Why? Because of the law.

Now we are seeing people's personal information put at risk and we are seeing the damage the law is doing to the labor force.

President Obama says, "It's working just the way it's supposed to." The President is wrong. The Web site is not working and his health care law isn't working. It is not working for the American people.

The Web site is just the tip of the iceberg. People are finding they can't keep their insurance even if they like it. The front page story today of the Wall Street Journal: It is harder to keep your doctor, even if you want to keep your doctor, in spite of the President's promise.

We have millions who have had their policies canceled, others losing their doctors. We have seen premium costs go up, we have seen deductibles and out-of-pocket expenses go up and the issue of security fraud.

The Web site is a problem. The Web site failure is just a tip of the iceberg. It is time to get rid of this terrible health care law and replace it with real reform before it does additional damage to America's labor force and to the American people.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak about one of our greatest national security challenges, which is a nuclear-armed Iran. I have long thought of it as a bipartisan national security issue, not a partisan political issue. At the end of the day, it is a national security issue we must ap-

proach in the spirit of bipartisanship and unity, which has been the spirit for which we have worked together on this matter. I hope we will not find ourselves in a partisan process trying to force a vote on a national security matter before its appropriate time.

Let me say at the outset that I support the administration's diplomatic efforts. I have always supported a two-track policy of diplomacy and sanctions. At the same time, I am convinced that we should only relieve pressure on Iran in exchange for verifiable concessions that will dismantle Iran's nuclear program. Our success should be measured in years, not months, and that it be done in such a way that alarm bells will sound from Vienna to Washington should Iran restart its program anytime in the next 20 to 30 years.

I am here to unequivocally state my intention as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee to make absolutely certain that any deal we may reach with Iran is verifiable, effective, and prevents them from ever developing even one nuclear weapon.

Let's remember that while we in the Senate are not at the negotiating table, we have a tremendous stake in the outcome and an obligation, as a separate coequal branch of government representing the American people, to provide oversight and an expression of what we expect as to what the end result would be. But it is the administration that is at the negotiating table with the Iranians, not us. The administration is ultimately responsible for negotiating a deal to conclusively end Iran's illicit nuclear program. It is the administration that will have to come back to Congress and tell us whether Iran will continue to be a nuclear threshold state.

My sincere desire is for the administration to succeed. No one has worked harder for a peaceful outcome or to get Iran to comply with sanctions than I have. But based on the parameters described in the Joint Plan of Action and Iranian comments in the days that have followed, I am very concerned. This is not a "nothing ventured, nothing gained" enterprise. We have placed our incredibly effective international sanctions regime on the line without clearly defining the parameters of what we expect in a final agreement.

Ali Akbar Salehi, head of Iran's nuclear agency, spoke last month about the agreement on Iranian state television and said:

The iceberg of sanctions is melting while our centrifuges are also still working. This is our greatest achievement.

Well, it is my greatest fear.

Any final deal must require Iran to dismantle large portions of its illicit nuclear program. Any final deal must require Iran to halt its advanced centrifuge and research and development activities, reduce the vast majority of

its 20,000 centrifuges, close the Fordo facility, stop the heavy-water reactor at Arak from ever possibly coming online, and it should require Iran's full disclosure of its nuclear activities, including its weaponization activities. For the good of the region and the world, Iran cannot remain a nuclear weapon threshold state, period.

A final agreement should move back the timeline for a nuclear breakout capability to beyond a year and insist on a long-term, 20-year-plus monitoring and verification agreement. That is the only way to force Iran to abandon its nuclear weapons aspirations. Anything else will leave Iran on the cusp of becoming a nuclear state while it rebuilds its economy and improves its ability to break out at a future day.

David Albright, a respected former International Atomic Energy Agency inspector, said that for Iran to move from an interim to a final agreement, it would have to close the Fordo facility and remove between 15,000 and 16,000 of its 20,000 centrifuges. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he had a long list of elements that he thinks are critical toward a final agreement.

However, even after such dramatic steps, we are looking at a breakout time of between 6 and 8 months—depending on whether Iran has access to just 3.5 percent enriched uranium or access to 20 percent enriched uranium. DENNIS ROSS, one of America's preeminent diplomats and foreign policy analysts who has served Republican and Democratic Presidents alike, has said Iran should retain no more than 10 percent of its centrifuges, which is, in essence, no more than 2,000.

These estimates are crucial because at the end of the day we in this body will have to decide whether this is enough to merit terminating sanctions. Is a 6-month delay in Iran's breakout ability enough, even when combined with a robust 20-year inspection and verification regime—understanding that in allowing Iran to retain its enrichment capabilities, there will always be a risk of breakout. It may be that this is the only deal we can get. The real question is whether it is a good enough deal to merit terminating sanctions.

My concern is that the Joint Plan of Action does not speak to these recommended centrifuge limitations DENNIS ROSS or Dr. Albright suggests. In fact, Iran has already made its views about the limitations of the agreement quite clear. What the Joint Plan of Action does concede is that Iran will not only retain its ability to enrich but will be allowed a mutually agreed upon enrichment program.

Here is what Iran's Foreign Minister Zarif said about the interim agreement:

The White House tries to portray it as basically a dismantling of Iran's nuclear program . . . we are not dismantling any centrifuges, we are not dismantling any equipment, we're simply not producing, not enriching over 5 percent.

That is a quote from their Foreign Minister.

What does President Rouhani of Iran say? He was adamant in an interview on CNN in saying that Iran will not be dismantling its centrifuges. He said:

We are determined to provide for the nuclear fuel of such plants inside the country, at the hands of local Iranian scientists. We are going to follow on this path.

On that program, Fareed Zakaria asked him:

So there will be no destruction of centrifuges, of existing centrifuges.

President Rouhani said:

No. No, not at all.

In fact, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said that Iran would comply with the interim agreement by removing the connections between networks of centrifuges that have been used to enrich uranium to 20 percent so they can enrich only to 5 percent. Then he said:

These interconnections can be removed in a day and connected again in a day.

That is not the type of safeguard we need. Clearly, their intention—at least in these negotiations—is to retain their capability notwithstanding the agreement. That is pretty clear to me.

In January President Rouhani tweeted:

Our relationship with the world is based on Iranian nation's interest. In Geneva agreement world powers surrendered to Iranian nation's will.

When this tweet was broadly reported on, President Rouhani took it down. In a speech when Rouhani was leaving his post as Iran's chief negotiator in 2005, he said:

While we were talking with the Europeans in Tehran, we were installing equipment in parts of the facility in Isfahan—which is a uranium conversion facility—

which is a uranium conversion facility—

but we still had a long way to go to complete the project. In fact, by creating a calm environment, we were able to complete the work on Isfahan.

In essence, they were able to complete the work of the uranium conversion.

Now, sometimes I think it is worthy to listen to the words of these individuals now in leadership positions to understand the mindset of the negotiations that are taking place. Basically, what President Rouhani was saying is that he was able to get the West to not pursue sanctions and ultimately to not take any other action, as Iran continued to march forward with its nuclear program. I find comments such as that deeply troubling. I find troubling the fact that even after an agreement was reached in November, the Iranians re-

portedly fired a rocket into space to improve their ability to develop a long-range ballistic missile system.

In an interview with Reuters, U.S. missile defense expert Rikki Ellison said of the report:

If it's true, they continue to expand and grow their long range missile capabilities regardless of their overture to the West with self-reduction of their nuclear capabilities . . .

These realities—these statements, these actions—are just as much about the spirit of the interim deal as it is about the letter of the deal, and it places in question the political will of the Iranians and our ability to reach a verifiable agreement with those who have been willing to so deceive.

In terms of both Iran's political will and its ballistic missile capability, James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, said the following:

Tehran has made technical progress in a number of areas—including uranium enrichment, nuclear reactors, and ballistic missiles—from which it could draw if it decided to build missile-deliverable nuclear weapons. These technical advancements strengthen our assessment that Iran has the scientific, technical, and industrial capacity to eventually produce nuclear weapons. This makes the central issue its political will to do so.

So what the analysis reveals is that years of obfuscation, delay, and endless negotiation has brought the Iranians to the point of having, according to the Director of National Intelligence, the scientific, technical, and industrial capacity to eventually produce nuclear weapons. As to their will to do so, I would say that if they are—I would say that what they are hiding at the Parchin Military Industrial Complex, if revealed, would clearly show their will to build a nuclear bomb. The only thing that has thwarted that will is crippling sanctions. The Iranians have fought back every step of the way with the international community getting access to Parchin, and the world largely views Parchin as the place in which their militarization of nuclear energy—therefore nuclear weapons—was taking place. In my view, the Iranians are negotiating in bad faith, as we have seen them do in the past. They say one thing behind closed doors in Geneva and say another thing publicly. I know the administration will say this is what President Rouhani needs to do for his domestic audience.

But his deeds need to go beyond his words, and they need to be verifiable. In fact, in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee, David Albright, of the Institute of Science and International Security and an expert on the proliferation of atomic weapons, said that under the interim agreement:

The breakout times, if Iran used its currently installed centrifuges, would lengthen from at least 1 to 1.6 months to at least 1.9 to 2.2 months.

That effectively means that without dismantling currently installed centrifuges, Iran has a breakout time of 6 to 8 weeks, unless we demand real consequences in a final agreement—6 to 8 weeks. That figure is going to be very important, as I will get to later, because 6 to 8 weeks is a lot shorter than the time frame to invoke and make sanctions effective.

Another major concern is the Arak heavy water reactor—a facility that DENNIS ROSS has described as “grossly inefficient for producing electricity, but not for generating plutonium for nuclear weapons.”

The Senate was told that this facility would be taken care of in the final agreement, which most of us understood to mean that it would be dismantled. Now, the Joint Plan of Action and the implementing agreement suggest something less than dismantlement. The implementing agreement says that Iran has to “take steps to agree with the IAEA on the conclusion of a safeguards approach to Arak.” Iran has not provided required design information for Arak, as we thought was going to happen, and in the final agreement it seems possible that either Iran will be allowed to complete the reactor and operate it under IAEA safeguards or the reactor will simply be mothballed—not dismantled but mothballed—or perhaps converted to a light-water facility that carries its own risks.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister has said that the Arak reactor is the fastest way to get the material for a nuclear weapon. So while I understand the agreement also does not permit Iran to construct a related reprocessing facility at this time, the implication of the agreement's language is that the final agreement will not actually require the dismantling of the Arak reactor, meaning that Arak could, at a future date, give Iran a relatively quick path to a weapon, and I find that simply unacceptable.

In my view, Iran's strategy, consistent with their past approaches that have brought them to a nuclear threshold state, is to use these negotiations to mothball its nuclear infrastructure program just long enough to undo the international sanctions regime.

Iran is insisting on keeping core elements of its programs—enrichment, the Arak heavy-water reactor, the underground Fordow facility, and the Parchin military complex. While they may be subject to safeguards so they can satisfy the international community in the short run, if they are allowed to retain their core infrastructure, they could quickly revive their program sometime in the future. At the same time, Iran is seeking to reverse the harsh international sanctions regime against them.

The bottom line is this. If they get their way, if they dismantle nothing,

we gut the sanctions, and troubling signs have already appeared.

Since the interim deal was signed, there was an immediate effort by many nations—including many European nations—to revive trade and resume business with Iran. There have been recent headlines that the Russians may be seeking a barter deal that could increase Iran's oil exports by 50 percent; that Iran and Russia are negotiating an oil-for-goods deal worth \$1.5 billion a month—\$18 billion a year—which would significantly boost Iran's oil exports by 500,000 barrels a day in exchange for Russian goods.

To the administration's credit, when we have raised this issue, they have said they are aware of those concerns and have told the Russians that, in fact, if they were to pursue that, it would be actionable, meaning it would be subject to sanctions. But I am not sure that Vladimir Putin really is going to be thwarted by such warnings.

A coalition of France's largest companies is already visiting Tehran. Iran welcomed more than 100 executives from France's biggest firms on Monday, the most senior French trade mission in years. Since November there have been 20-plus trade delegations from Turkey, Georgia, Ireland, Tunisia, Kazakhstan, China, Italy, India, Austria, and Sweden. What is the result? Iran's economy is recovering. The Iranian rial, which is in essence their dollar, had plummeted from an official rate of 10,440 rials to the dollar to a staggering 41,000 to a dollar in October of 2012. But it has begun to recover. As of January 29, that rate has gone from 41,000 to a single dollar to 25,000 rials to the dollar.

International Monetary Fund figures also show Iran's negative growth turning around, with Iran having a projected growth rate of 1.28 percent to almost 2 percent in 2014 and 2015.

As Mark Dubowitz, the executive director of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee this week, the \$7 billion in actual relief Iran will definitively receive under the Joint Plan of Action is very significant—comprising approximately 35 percent of Iran's fully accessible cash reserves, which are estimated to be \$20 billion.

So while the Iranian economy is described as being much larger, the assessment that this is a drop in the bucket is simply not accurate. Moreover, that relief fails to consider the \$4 billion to \$5 billion in revenue that Iran would have lost if we had not suspended sanctions on Iran's crude oil exports as required under existing law. Sanctions relief, combined with the "open for business" sign that Iran is posting, is paying returns. It seems to me the sanctions regime we have worked so hard to build is starting to unravel before we ever get a chance to conclude a final agreement with Iran.

The fact is that any final deal as inadequate as the one I have outlined will end any pressure on Iran for the foreseeable future. Put simply, we need a policy that guarantees Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons capability, period.

To understand how to proceed, we must also understand the facts. We need to put the negotiating into context. First, Iran has a history of duplicity with respect to its nuclear program, using past negotiations to cover up advances in its nuclear program, and, most startling, at the undeclared Fordow enrichment site, buried very deep in a mountain to prevent its discovery and protect against destruction. That begs the question: Why would they bury a facility so deep so that it could not be discovered if it was solely for the peaceful purposes they claim? It seems unlikely, as Iran's leaders have made clear in recent days, that Iran will make any concessions that fundamentally dismantle its nuclear program.

The fact is Iran is simply agreeing to lock the door on its nuclear weapons program, as is, and walk away. Should they later walk away from the deal as they have in the past, they can simply unlock the door and continue their nuclear weapons program from where they are today. It sounds a lot like North Korea.

Let's not forget that President Rouhani, as the former negotiator for Iran, boasted:

The day that we invited the three European ministers to the talks, only 10 centrifuges were spinning at Natanz. We could not produce one gram of U4 or U6. We did not have the heavy water production. We could not produce yellow cake . . . Our total production of centrifuges inside the country was 150 . . . We wanted to complete all of these—we needed time. We did not stop. We completed the program.

So 150 then; 20,000 today. The simple truth is he admitted to deceiving the West.

Given President Rouhani's own words on his country's nuclear weapons ambition, it seems to me a good deal is not one that equates dismantling with mothballing. A good deal would prevent Iran from being able to get back to work on its nuclear weapons program from where it left off.

Second, despite diplomatic entreaties to the Iranians in recent years where hands were extended and secret talks were pursued, Iran has grown its support and advocacy for terror.

The history of Iranian terror against U.S. citizens and interests is lengthy and robust, grounded in the view that the United States is the great Satan, and with its funding and support of Hezbollah that has carried out attacks against American interests. Colleagues will recall that 241 American servicemen died in the 1983 Marine Corps barracks in Lebanon and 19 in the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia. In re-

cent years, we have traced responsibility for lethal actions against American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan to Iran, as well as the fortunately thwarted attack on the Saudi ambassador at a Washington restaurant in 2011.

Today Iran is actively sponsoring a proxy war in Syria, sending money, weapons, and fighters on a weekly basis.

Simultaneously, it is sponsoring attacks against Sunnis in Iraq and promoting regional sectarian violence that could easily result in a broader regional conflict. So while smiling at our negotiators across the table, they are simultaneously plotting in the backroom.

With all this in mind, I believe in the wisdom of the prospective sanctions I proposed. I believe in the lessons of history that tell us Iran cannot be trusted to live up to its word without external pressure, and I believe an insurance policy that guards against Iranian obfuscation and deception is the best way forward.

I know there is a difference of view, but I truly believe that what got Iran to the negotiating table is the only element of peaceful diplomacy that can keep it there and ultimately drive a successful negotiation.

My legislation, cosponsored by 59 Senators, would simply require that Iran act in good faith, adhering to the implementing agreement, not engaging in new acts of terror against American citizens or U.S. property, and not conducting new ballistic missile tests with a range beyond 500 kilometers.

The legislation is not the problem and Congress is not the problem. Iran is the problem. We need to worry more about Iran than we need to worry about the Congress. We need to focus on Iran's long history of deceptions surrounding its nuclear program and how this should inform our approach to reaching a comprehensive deal.

To those who believe if negotiations do not result in a deal or if Iran breaks the deal we can always impose new sanctions, then let me be clear: If negotiations fail or if Iran breaks the deal, we will not have time to pass new sanctions that would have a real consequence.

New sanctions are not a spigot that can be turned off and on, as has been suggested. Even if Congress were to take up and pass new sanctions at the moment of Iran's first breach of the Joint Plan of Action or if they do not reach an ultimate agreement that is acceptable, there is a lag time of at least 6 months to bring those sanctions online and at least 1 year for real impact to be felt.

That has been our history here. I authored most of these, and they need a lead time. You need to give countries and companies the time to be noticed as to what is going to be sanctioned so they can rearrange their engagements.

Then you have to have the regulations to go through and then you have to have the enforcement take place.

This would bring us beyond the very short time Iran would need to build a nuclear bomb, especially since the interim agreement does not require them either to dismantle anything and basically freezes their capability as it stands today. So let everyone understand, if there is no deal, I do not think we are going to have the time to impose new sanctions before Iran can produce a nuclear weapon.

Everyone agrees the comprehensive sanctions policy against Iran—which was led by Congress and originally opposed by the administration—has been an unquestionable success. Iran's oil exports fell to 1.1 million barrels a day in the first 9 months of 2013, down from 1.5 million barrels in 2012. The fall in exports was costing Iran between \$4 billion and \$8 billion a month in 2013, and the loss of oil revenue had caused the rial to lose two-thirds of its value against the dollar and caused inflation to rise to more than 40 percent.

There is no dispute or disagreement that it was the economic impact of sanctions that has brought Iran to the negotiating table in the first place. But passing those sanctions and having them in place long enough to be effective took time—time that I am concerned we no longer have.

The question now is whether our goals align. Has the ideology of the regime altered so substantially in the last 6 months that they are ready to forswear a 20-year effort—a 20-year effort—to develop nuclear weapons or are they, as the Supreme Leader has stated, seeking to beat us at the game of diplomacy—“to negotiate with the Devil to eliminate its evil”—and retain their nuclear threshold and enriching abilities while degrading the sanctions regime?

Let's not forget it is the Ayatollah—I know we are placing a lot of faith in President Rouhani and the Iranian Foreign Minister—but it is the Ayatollah who holds the nuclear portfolio, and his main goal is what. Preservation of the regime. It is the Ayatollah who gave the green light to Rouhani to negotiate. Why? Because the sanctions were causing the Ayatollah to be concerned about regime change taking place within Iranian society due to the consequences of sanctions on the Iranian economy.

Interestingly enough, who benefits from the sanctions relief? The Ayatollah. In a Reuters story with the title “Khamenei's business empire gains from Iran sanctions relief,” it goes on to talk about that:

Khamenei controls a massive business empire known as Setad that has invested in Iran's petrochemical industry, which is now permitted to resume [its] exports.

It also states:

In an interview with Reuters this week, a Treasury Department official estimated that

Iran would generate at most \$1 billion in revenue—

Mr. President, \$1 billion in revenue—from petrochemical exports over the next six months.

Who is the one who has a great deal of interest in the petrochemical section? The Ayatollah, by his control of Setad.

I have worked on Iran's nuclear issues for 20 years, starting when I was a Member of the House, pressing for sanctions to prevent Iran from building the Bushehr nuclear powerplant and to halt IAEA support for their uranium mining and enrichment programs.

For a decade I was told my concerns had no legitimate basis; that Iran would never be able to bring the Bushehr plant online; and that Iran's activities were not the most major concern.

History has shown us that those assessments about Iran's abilities and intentions were simply wrong. The fact is Iran's nuclear aspirations did not materialize overnight. Iran has been slowly, methodically working up to this moment for decades, and now—if its capability is mothballed rather than dismantled—they will remain at the cusp of being a declared nuclear state should they choose to start again because nothing will have changed if nothing is significantly dismantled.

Make no mistake. Iran views developing a nuclear capability as fundamental to its existence. It sees the development of nuclear weapons as part of a regional hegemonic strategy to make Tehran the center of power throughout the region.

That is why our allies and partners in the region—and not just Israelis, but Emiratis and Saudis, among others—are so skeptical and so concerned. Quite simply, our allies and partners do not trust Iranian leaders, nor do they believe Iran has any intention of verifiably ending its nuclear weapons program.

So while I welcome the diplomatic efforts, and I share the hope that the administration can achieve a final comprehensive agreement that eliminates this threat to global peace and security, I am deeply—deeply—skeptical based upon these 20 years—based upon these 20 years—of experience.

The simple and deeply troubling fact is Iran is literally weeks to months from a breakout, and the parameters of the final agreement laid out in the Joint Plan of Action do not appear to set Iran's development capacity back by more than a few weeks.

The Joint Plan of Action conceded, even before negotiations had begun, Iran's right to some level of enrichment, despite a U.N. resolution calling for Iran to suspend enrichment.

It provides no guarantees that we will resolve our concerns about Iranian weaponization activities, that Iran will cease advanced centrifuge research.

Why is that important? Because we heard testimony that the more advanced the centrifuge, the less centrifuges you need, the quicker you can produce enriched uranium to be able to acquire that bomb and the increasingly less verifiable it is. So Iran should have to cease its advanced centrifuge research. It also provides no guarantees that we will resolve our concerns that the IAEA will gain access to the Parchin military base, that Iran will dismantle thousands of centrifuges or that the Iranians will disclose the scope of their activities.

It suggests that the resolution for the Arak heavy-water reactors, which can provide a quicker plutonium pathway to nuclear weapons, may be to put it under IAEA safeguards rather than require its dismantlement. It seems to me we do not have time, under the testimony taken before the committee, for Iran to hedge and obfuscate. They have done a pretty good job of that, and that is what has brought them to the cusp of being a nuclear state. There should be no chance for Iran to buy more time, which, in effect, leaves us exactly where we are—just hitting a pause button—with the state of play unchanged and Iran weeks from breakout. To me that is a bad agreement, and in my view we should be negotiating from a position of strength.

Last Tuesday night in the State of the Union, the President said:

If John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan could negotiate with the Soviet Union, then surely a strong and confident America can negotiate with less powerful adversaries today.

I agree. But I would point out to my colleagues that they did so from a position of strength. President Kennedy sent U.S. warships to face down the Soviets in Cuba, and Ronald Reagan dramatically built up U.S. military might to an extent that what was the former Soviet Union could not keep up the pace. We need to negotiate with Iran from a position of strength, and then, yes—then we should have no fear about any such negotiation.

The concerns I have raised are legitimate. They are not, as the President's Press Secretary has said, “warmongering.” This is not saber rattling. It is not Congress wanting to “march to war,” as another White House spokesman said, but exactly the opposite.

I find it interesting—as someone who was then in the House of Representatives and was in a small minority voting against the war in Iraq, when an overwhelming number of my colleagues and many Members of this body were voting for the war—to somehow be portrayed as a warmonger. It is my mind that the use of sanctions—which is a limited part of an arsenal of peaceful diplomacy tools—can get us to the successful negotiations we want.

At the end of the day, trying to keep the pressure on Iran to completely satisfy the United Nations' and the international community's demands for Iran to halt and reverse its illicit nuclear activities is the best way to avoid war in the first place—to avoid war in the first place.

Iran has proven in the past it will not negotiate in good faith except when it has no other choice—as the tough sanctions we passed have proven, by getting Iran to the table.

Iran says it will not negotiate with a gun to its head. I would suggest it is Iran that has put the potential of a nuclear gun to the world's head.

At the end of the day, name-calling is not an argument, nor is it a sound policy. It is a false choice to say a vote for sanctions is equivalent to war-mongering. More pressure on Iran does not in any way suggest that Congress wants war or that the Iranians feel backed into a corner and will themselves choose war over reason.

So let's stop talking about war-mongering. Let's instead fixate on the final deal which, in my view, cannot and should not rely simply on trust but on real, honest, verifiable dismantlement of Iran's capability to produce even one nuclear bomb.

The ball is in the administration's court, not in Congress's. In fact, the agreement specifically states—there has been a lot of talk about how we should not consider any new sanctions, even if they are prospective, which the legislation says nothing would happen until up to 1 year, unless Iran violates the interim agreement or fails to conclude an agreement in 1 year. But if we read the Joint Plan of Action, what does it say? It says:

The U.S. Administration, acting consistent with the respective roles of the President and the Congress, will refrain from imposing new nuclear-related sanctions.

It does not say the United States of America. It does not say the Congress. It says the "Administration, acting consistent with the respective roles of the President and the Congress, will refrain from imposing new nuclear-related sanctions."

That is because the agreement acknowledges that the administration, not Congress, will refrain from imposing new sanctions. The administration knew it could not bind Congress to refrain from imposing new sanctions because Congress is a separate coequal branch of government.

So let's focus on what was agreed to by those at the table rather than attributing blame to those who were not. We will not be the scapegoats for a bad deal if it does not take the nuclear weapons option off the table by insisting on dismantling existing capability, not simply mothballing it.

So let me say I want diplomacy to work. That is why we worked so hard to get to the opportunity. I wanted to

produce the results we all hoped for and have worked for.

But at a minimum, we need to send a message to Iran that our patience is not unlimited and that we are skeptical of their intentions and a message to the international community that the sanctions regime has not weakened, that this is not an opportunity to reengage with Tehran. I would urge everyone to look at the legislation I have drafted with my colleague from Illinois and Members of both caucuses as a win for the administration. They succeeded in convincing us—the administration succeeded in convincing us to provide up to a 1-year window to negotiate.

That is not the way the legislation was originally intended. But they convinced us they needed an opportunity to negotiate and, hence, the legislation was worked in such a way to create that opportunity. I believe that is significant and generous, given Iran's history of treachery and deceit. If Iran steps away from the negotiations or does not live up to its agreement, it will be because they are not serious about reaching a comprehensive deal.

I have heard the concerns of the administration. I know we share the same goals. We have taken steps in the Foreign Relations Committee in pursuit of those goals. We have worked with the administration to pass legislation to help reform the Organization of American States. We have moved 129—more now with the last week of nominees—that the administration has put forward. We worked through Labor Day in a bipartisan effort to quickly pass a resolution authorizing the use of military force in Syria, which gave the President—there are those who are critical of that as well—but that authorization gave the President the ability to go to Russia and get a deal to end the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

We passed and the President signed PEPFAR into law, the President's emergency plan for AIDS relief. We have worked with the administration on embassy security after Benghazi. We have worked with countless administration officials and held two hearings on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In all of those actions and much more, I have worked closely with the administration. My intention now is to assist the administration again in its negotiations by keeping the pressure on Iran, which has always proven an unreliable negotiating partner at best.

In my view, it is time to put Iranian rhetoric to the test. If we are to take President Rouhani at his word, when he said in Davos last week that Iran does not seek nuclear weapons, if that is true, then the Iranian Government should not have any problems with the obvious followup to that claim, starting with the verifiable dismantling of its illicit nuclear infrastructure. That

is all the sanctions legislation does. I do not think we should settle for anything less.

So let's be clear. I do not come to this floor in opposition, I come in comity and in the spirit of unity that has always dictated our foreign policy. But the Senate has an obligation to challenge assumptions in a free and open debate. That is what is most extraordinary about our government, and it echoes in the many debates we have held in this Chamber on war and peace, on justice and freedom and civil rights.

At the end of the day, we have an obligation to speak our minds on what we believe is in the best interests of this Nation. It is in that spirit that I come to the floor today. As GEN George Marshall said, "Go right straight down the road, to do what is best, and do it frankly without evasion." Today I am advocating for what I believe is in our national interests and to do so as frankly and comprehensively as I can.

As John Kennedy said about having differences of opinion, "Let us not be blind to [them], but let us also direct our attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved." The administration and the Senate have a common interest to prevent a nuclear weapons-capable Iran. We have differences as to how to achieve it. We have an obligation to debate those differences and concerns.

But I will not yield on a principled difference. It is our obligation to debate the issues, express our differences and outcomes, and come to the floor to work together to resolve them. At the end of the day, my hope, as someone who has been working on this for 20 years, can see the fruition of a successful negotiation by the President and the administration so Iran will never have a nuclear weapons capability.

But by the same token, I think we need to be poised to ensure that we use the last elements of peaceful diplomacy, which is to ensure there are sanctions that create consequences to the regime so they can put that in their equation as to it is better to strike a deal and end our illicit nuclear program than it is to pursue a course that creates nuclear weapons. Because, if not, I fear, if we continue down this path and our sanctions erode and all we do is limit and have safeguard notices, warning signs, we will get the warning signs, but the sanctions will be gone and the only options left to a future American President will be do you accept a nuclear-armed Iran or do you have a military option. Those are not desirable options.

It is our effort to avoid that being the ultimate question. That is what we embody in the sanctions legislation that has passed this Chamber and has been signed by the President and that we believe, prospectively, can increase the pressure on Iran to come to that

peaceful conclusion, so that option of either accepting a nuclear-armed Iran or having to have a military option to prevent it from doing so is not the option for our country and for any future American President.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RUSSIAN RELATIONS

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I come today because tomorrow is the formal start of the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. We certainly wish all of our athletes well. We have a few from Florida. Believe it or not, the Sunshine State has contributed a number of athletes to the Winter Olympic efforts of our country. We wish them all the best.

We pray for their safety. We have all read media reports of the potential for attacks. We pray that does not happen. Of course, our government has tried to be as cooperative as possible with the Russian Government in providing some level of security assistance. They have been less than open about that. So we hope and pray things will go well there. Let me just say at the outset, Olympics should never be politicized. I hope these are not either. So my comments are not about the Olympics per se, but I do think it is an important time, given where they are occurring, to take a moment to reflect on the nature of and our Nation's relationship with the host country, with Russia, because they are going to be in the news a lot over the next few days.

We have all heard the debates about some of the more extreme examples of intolerance that exist within Russia, particularly as a result of President Vladimir Putin and his government.

I want to take a moment to describe where I think the relations between Russia and the United States stand and particularly how Russia views itself—the government, I should say—in the world.

At the outset let me begin by saying that when I talk about governments, when I talk about countries such as Russia or China, for instance, we are talking about the government leaders, not the people. In fact, we know that in both of those countries—especially in Russia, in China, as well as in many other countries—there are people who do not like the direction their political leadership is taking them.

In fact, I would say that in countries such as China and Russia it might be

the majority of people who strongly disagree with the direction that its so-called leaders are taking. What we talk about is our relationship with their governments—and in this case our relationship with Vladimir Putin and the decisions that he has made.

The best way to understand the situation with Russia is that there is primarily a president who has nationalistic tendencies in Putin, and he wants Russia to somehow reclaim what he views as its glory days of world prominence. He believes and has concluded that the best way to do that is to be antagonistic and outright hostile to the United States. Part of that plan is an effort to create among his neighbors—particularly those republics that used to be part of the Soviet Union—to bring them under Russia's sphere of influence.

We have two stunning examples of that over the past few years. The first is the Republic of Georgia, which they invaded a few years ago, and even now they occupy territory within it.

In fact, as part of these Olympics, one of the things Russia has done is it has sealed off portions of Georgian territory they claim they need for a security buffer. That is completely outrageous, but that is happening with very little attention on the international stage.

The other is to see what is happening in Ukraine and to see how they used the threat of noncooperation economically, and even subterfuge economically, to try to force Ukraine to reject a deal to integrate with the European Union and instead seek to be part of this new thing that the Russian government is trying to create.

As part of that agenda as well, they have viewed themselves with the need to be antagonistic toward the United States. But in the process of doing that, not only have they been antagonistic toward the United States, they have been antagonistic toward the cause of human rights and of world peace.

There are some stunning examples.

Certainly within Russia we have seen the targeting and the oppression of everything from a rock band to journalists. We know the story of Sergei Magnitsky, who was doing nothing more than investigating rampant official corruption. We saw how what happened with him.

We have seen it line up on the international stage. For example, they are—perhaps other than Iran, and perhaps equal with Iran—the most important supporter of Assad and of what he is doing in Syria—the slaughter of innocent civilians. There are over 100,000 people dead and hundreds of thousands of others now living in refugee camps, displaced from their homes. This is who the Russian President and the Russian government have lined up with.

Beyond that, we should see the attitude they have taken toward Iran. They have not been, despite the administration's assertions, productive in dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions. On the contrary, they have been supportive or at a minimum have been a roadblock to progress being made with regard to preventing a nuclear Iran.

On issue after issue we see this Russian government lining itself up diametrically opposed not only to the interests of the United States but to the interests of the cause of world peace. I understand that the situation in Syria is complicated, but how could one possibly find himself to be such a strong and blind ally of a killer, a murderer, a criminal like Assad?

There are problems in those rebel groups too. There are some terrorists involved in that. Unfortunately, it appears they have grown in prominence among the rebellion. It is not an easy issue to confront, but at a minimum one would expect that a country that believes in human rights and the dignity of all the people would at a minimum add their voice in condemnation of what is happening in Syria, and to the conduct of the Assad government.

Instead, they have been involved in trying to pursue ridiculous conspiracy theories, such as the notion that somehow the chemical attacks that occurred there were not conducted by Assad and his regime.

Beyond those things and what they have done at home and abroad, what have they done directly toward the United States? Let's talk about what they have done toward their neighbors and the constant threats to their neighbors—and in some instances a willingness to carry it out by invading the Republic of Georgia.

Then, of course, we turn to their relationship with us. What have they done? A couple of actions bear watching.

The first is what they have done with their weapons systems. They continue to invest an extraordinary amount of money—for a country that is going through the economic challenges that they are confronting—to build up their conventional weapons capabilities. They are again sending naval forces to different parts of the world, trying to flex some muscle.

It is not as powerful as the Soviet Union, but they are trying to project power in that way. Usually they find places to project power that they know would somehow challenge the strategic interests of the United States. Last week we read in the New York Times that there is evidence they may be in violation of an arms control agreement.

In the face of all of this, the initial attitude of this administration was that we need to reset policy toward Russia and understand what was behind that idea. What was behind that

idea was the notion that the reason we didn't have a good relationship with Putin and with Russia and the Russian government was because the U.S.—the previous President, George W. Bush—was too abrasive. This is not only for Russia, but this is a theory they applied all over the world. If we could only reset that relationship, if we could just be more cooperative with them, and if we could show them that we were more willing to talk and be open-minded, somehow that would affect their behavior.

What did Putin and their government do? They did what any good former KGB agent would do. They took what we offered them and kept doing what they wanted. They took whatever concessions we were putting on the table, and they kept doing whatever they wanted.

What is stunning to me is not only the administration's unwillingness to acknowledge that the reset policy has not worked, but in some instances their desire to double down on us. The President continues to talk about additional reductions in strategic weapons vis-a-vis the Russians.

Yet last week we heard, as I said a moment ago, that they are probably already in violation of an existing agreement. We have allowed them to convince us not to pursue anti-missile technologies or advanced and additional anti-missile technologies and defense systems in Eastern Europe.

Our allies, by the way, look at us and say: What is going on? It adds to this air of instability. It adds to the questions that now exist, and it adds to the notion that we have now become an unreliable ally in the world. Other countries are watching this as well, and they are taking note. This is the situation that we face. Because the Olympics are in Russia, the whole world is about to see it.

For example, we can't say for sure that this had anything to do with the government, but last night—I read a report today in the Wall Street Journal that said that for one of its reporters, in the middle of the night someone opened the door to their room and tried to walk in for a moment.

Again, do we know if that was the Russian government? No, we don't know that for sure, but that seems to be a recurring issue there—the sort of surveillance state where opposition is oppressed and the people are watched, where political opponents could be arrested, jailed or exiled.

The Russian government is starting to look more and more every day, in its attitude, like the former Soviet Union—and in its behavior. I think we have the right to be concerned about it.

When I come to the floor and talk about these issues, and other colleagues do, this is not because we want confrontation. On the contrary. We hope to avoid all of these things.

We have plenty of issues to focus on in this country, but we cannot be naive. We must never forget the lessons of history that teach us that when behavior such as this and attitudes like this go unaddressed, when your potential adversary shows weakness, insecurity, and indecisiveness, it invites them to be even more aggressive, and it invites them to miscalculate.

While I do believe that the Olympics are an issue that should not be politicized, our relationship with Russia is one that deserves serious attention in this body. This idea that somehow this is a relic of Cold War issues and that we shouldn't be focused on it in the same way is naive.

They still have an enormous nuclear arsenal. They still have a significant conventional military capability, and they have someone running their government who is not an ally or a friend of the United States.

On the contrary. He has come to believe that what is bad for the United States is good for Russia. We should not be naive about that in our dealings, and we should not, under any circumstances, betray, undermine or abandon our commitment to our allies in the region and to the countries that are Russia's neighbors for the sake of seeking to improve the relationship with the Russian government because they will continue to do what they have already done. They will take our concessions, and they will keep doing whatever they want.

I hope that as a part of this week and the next couple of weeks in these Olympics we—as policymakers, with all of the issues happening in our country, and all of the challenges we face around the world—will take more time to truly examine the nature of this government in Russia and what our relationship should be toward them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

ENSURING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Mr. COONS. I come to the floor once again to talk about manufacturing jobs and their importance for rebuilding the American middle class, their importance for our economy, and their importance for our future.

Last week President Obama delivered his State of the Union Address before a joint session of this Congress, and he talked about what we can and should do together to invest in America's workers, to spur job creation, and to expand economic opportunity. He said:

What I believe unites the people of this nation . . . is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can and should get ahead. . . . Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that trust.

I couldn't agree more. At a basic level, one thing we need to do is to put up a floor under the struggling workers

in America who are continuing to seek work and to come together to extend emergency unemployment insurance for these long-term job seekers.

While jobs remain, sadly, more scarce than they should be in our economy and as we continue in recovery, we can't let Americans fall through the cracks as they continue to seek work.

But since the extended unemployment insurance benefits expired last December, 1.7 million Americans, including more than 4,000 Delawareans, have lost the unemployment insurance that is critical to their families, to keeping food on the table and a roof over their heads.

Emergency unemployment insurance, which this body once again today failed to extend, is a critical lifeline to Americans out of work through no fault of their own and who are doing everything they can to get back to work. While they are searching for jobs, we should make sure they can put food on their tables and keep their families sound.

One Delawarean I have heard from who relies on this lifeline is Raymond from Newark. Raymond was laid off last April from his job at the EVRAZ steel mill in Claymont. He is not sitting at home based on these unemployment benefits. He is not showing dependency, as some have suggested here. He has averaged more than 30 job applications each and every week. He has four children depending on him—one in college with tuition payments.

He wrote to me saying: "My job search is more than finding a job; it is searching to make an honest living."

Raymond, to you, and to the more than the 1 million Americans who rely on decent work to give meaning to their lives, to give support to their families, and to give purpose and opportunity to their children and their future, we can and should do more—not only by extending the unemployment insurance, not only by increasing the minimum wage, but by building the middle class of this country to work together.

Folks such as Raymond have worked hard and paid their taxes. They have earned the opportunity when they really need it to get unemployment insurance. That is why they paid into it for so many years. But we need to do more beyond just extending unemployment insurance.

We need to invest in Raymond's future. We need to invest in the skills that will help Americans like him transition from his job in a steel mill to a plant that is open and has a job that needs to be filled.

Throughout our history broad-based job growth and job creation have ensured economic opportunity that was there for millions of millions of Americans across several generations. Anyone who was able and willing to work in this country for a long time was able

to find a decent job and a ladder into the middle class. By investing in our Nation's workforce, our people, through public education, through the GI bill, and through access to higher education, we have been a country where anyone who was willing to work could make it if they combined their work ethic and talents with the skills they needed.

During World War II, in the postwar boom, manufacturing was an economic backbone. Our country was the pathway to the middle class that made all of this possible. American manufacturing was the sturdy manifestation of that central American idea that if you work hard and play by the rules, you can provide for your family today so your children can get access to higher education, a brighter future, and you can have a secure retirement tomorrow. That is the essence of the American middle class.

The basic opportunity that manufacturing provided—those strong and stable rungs by which Americans could pull themselves up the ladder of opportunity—was the heart of America's economic engine, it was the glue that held communities together, but over the past few decades it has changed dramatically. As the world has changed, as billions of competitors have entered global markets, from China to India to Russia, so has the nature of manufacturing, as technology has advanced and the playing field on which we compete globally has changed fundamentally. The critical impact of low wages abroad and of trade deals that were not effectively enforced has been well documented. But too often people draw the wrong conclusion about the future of manufacturing based on its recent past. I have heard many arguing that manufacturing is no longer an industry, a sector where America can compete because this global playing field is tilted and there will always be workers in some country who will work for less, and so we are relegated to inevitably lose what is left of our manufacturing in a race to the bottom. The suggestion has been made in some sectors that we should thrive with service and high-skilled research and development and financial services but not manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth.

In my view, only if we continue to be a country where we invent things, grow things, and make things will we continue to be a leading economy where there is real opportunity for all Americans. Why? Because manufacturing jobs are high-quality jobs both for those who work in them, who get higher wages and higher benefits, but also for the local economy, where manufacturing jobs provide more of a compounding benefit than any other sector.

Some suggest we just can't compete because our labor standards, our envi-

ronmental protections, and our wages are too high. But look to Germany and Europe, and you can see this isn't true. They have higher labor standards and higher environmental protections than we do, and yet more than double the percentage of their economy, the percentage of their GDP is manufacturing because their government, their education sector, and their private sector work in close harmony to do what we need to do.

Since manufacturers invest the most in private sector R&D, where there is manufacturing, there is also a wealth of high-skilled research work. That is one of the other benefits of manufacturing. Tech development works the best when research centers are close to where products are made. Over the long term it is hard to have one without the other. So as our manufacturing base has moved offshore, we have been at risk of losing our research base. But just in the last few years there has been a dynamic that is encouraging of jobs coming back to this country. As our productivity continues to grow, as our energy costs go down, and as that wage gap closes, we have actually been regaining ground in manufacturing.

I am convinced that if we want to rebuild an economy that is dynamic and that grows, one that provides opportunities to the middle class, manufacturing must be at the center—in fact, must be the foundation.

What is true is that because the global economy has shifted so dramatically, we need to shift our strategy and our approach. The manufacturing that America excels at today is more advanced and requires higher skilled workers than ever before. Rather than repeating the same tasks over and over, workers today in manufacturing have to be able to carry out complex and varying tasks; to be able to see what is not going right and fix it as a collaborative team; to understand the manufacturing process and to innovate continuously. They have to have critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The sorts of things workers weren't expected to do 30 years ago are a minimum requirement today. They need to understand manufacturing, and they need to be able to program and to improve the caliber and productivity of the machines that do most of the repetitive simple labor of manufacturing today.

We can train Americans for these jobs, but our schools and our institutions of higher learning, our community colleges and universities have to be tightly integrated into a skill-training system that is demand-driven rather than giving people training and praying that somehow they will find their way to an appropriate employer.

That is why I was so encouraged when President Obama placed such an emphasis on workplace skills training and manufacturing in his State of the

Union speech. By modernizing our education system and building real and enduring partnerships between schools and businesses, we can ensure our workers have the skills that employers actually need today and tomorrow; so when a guy like Raymond from a steel mill in Claymont is laid off, he can have the opportunity to improve his skills, to retool his abilities, and to move right into an open and available manufacturing job. A recent study showed there were more than 600,000 manufacturing jobs—high-skilled, high-wage, high-benefit jobs—in America today unfilled because of this skills gap.

While I understand and even appreciate President Obama's commitment to making some progress in the coming year through Executive orders, he should not give up on working with Congress. It is just February. It is too early in this year for us to give up on the possibility of passing bipartisan legislation together.

I think more than ever, because of the message it sends domestically and internationally, we have to find a way to work together to make progress on the critical issue of manufacturing skills and to do what we can together to grow our economy and rebuild our middle class. That is why I have been working so hard with my colleagues on the Manufacturing Jobs for America campaign here in the Senate. Manufacturing Jobs for America is a campaign to build support for good manufacturing legislation on which Democrats and Republicans can agree. So far we have had 26 Democratic Senators introduce 32 bills. Almost half of them have Republican cosponsors already, and we are seeking more each and every week.

Our bills focus on four areas that, if we were to enact them, could have a real and substantial impact on manufacturing and opportunity in our country: strengthening America's modern workforce skills, as I have spoken to; fighting for a more level global playing field and opening export markets to America's manufacturers of all sizes. Medium and small businesses have been growing their exports, but we could grow so much more, and that would sustain the growth in manufacturing; third, making it easier for manufacturers to access capital and invest in the R&D I spoke to a moment ago; and fourth, ensuring a coordinated government-wide effort in support of a national manufacturing strategy. All of our competitors have them. We alone don't, and we need a national manufacturing strategy to make sure that skills, access to exports, and access to capital all happen.

Madam President, adapting our economy to the realities of a new era is a challenge we have struggled with for more than a generation. Yet figuring out how to realize an economy where

growth is both strong and more equitable—one that is dynamic and creative and globally competitive and also has a broad middle class, provides security for working families, and leaves no one behind; an economy that invests in the dreams and aspirations of our children—building that economy is the central challenge we face. Manufacturing can and should be the foundation of that economy.

If we want America to be as strong in the 21st century as it was in the 20th, we need American manufacturing. Let's work together and get this done.

I thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle for their partnership, their interest, and their work. I so much look forward to working together in the weeks ahead to prove to the American people that we can make bipartisan progress on manufacturing.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, it was fascinating to watch the headlines change over the course of the day after the CBO report on the status of the implementation of health care was released. At first, the headlines flashed that the CBO report said the health care reform law was going to cost 2½ million jobs, and Republicans ran to the cable networks to trumpet that number. In fact, many mainstream newspapers actually ran initial headlines suggesting the same. But then, as people actually started to read the CBO report, they discovered the truth. They discovered the fact that the CBO report actually says the economy is going to grow because of the health care law. And to the extent there are reductions in the hours people work, it is going to be because individuals are now no longer required to work simply because they need to get health care. They can now make decisions about what they want to do with their life, the kind of work they want to do and the amount of time they want to devote to it, not simply because they are job-locked due to health care insecurity.

So I wanted to come to the floor today, as some of my colleagues have, to set the record straight on what the implementation of the health care law really means for the economy and to specifically focus on this issue of what it means to individuals who for decades have been forced to make decisions about their labor connected only to the kind of job that would provide for health care for them and their families.

I think back to a day not long after we passed the bill, a day that I was taking my little then-2-year-old son to our community pool in Cheshire, CT. I was in the pool splashing around with my son, and a guy not more than a few years older than I came across the pool and tapped me on the shoulder.

He said: I am really sorry to interrupt, but I just wanted to say thank you.

I said: That is nice. "Thank you" for what?

He said: I wanted to say thank you for passing the health care reform law because I have a little son too, and he has a congenital heart defect. We spend a lot of money trying to take care of his illness. First, the health care bill is going to save us a lot of money, but that is not really why I am so thankful for what you did. What I am truly thankful for is the fact that I can rest easily at night now knowing that my son's life and that his career won't be dictated by his illness; that my son can now live out his dreams, do whatever he wants to do with his life rather than spending his life searching for a job that will cover his illness and worrying about whether a small gap in employment will forever take him off the rolls of the insured forever.

That has been the reality in our country for too long. If you had a chronic illness or a genetic illness or a condition that was on the list of pre-existing illnesses at America's insurance companies, A, you had a hard time finding a job because a lot of people didn't want to hire somebody who came with those high insurance costs, and then once you found the job, you could never leave because you couldn't risk losing the insurance that was paying your bills.

The health care reform law unlocks economic possibilities for millions of people all across this country who haven't gone out and started that business they knew could grow, they knew could result in dozens of employees being hired, because they couldn't leave their existing job and the insurance it provided for them and for their families.

That is what the CBO report says. The CBO report says that to the extent there are going to be less hours worked, it is because individuals will no longer be tied to their jobs because of their need to get health care benefits. That is the real story of the CBO report. In fact, the CBO report says this: Expanded Federal subsidies for health insurance will stimulate demand for goods and services, and that effect will mostly occur over the next few years. That increase in demand will induce some employers to hire more workers or to increase their employees' hours during that period.

That is economic growth. That is not economic contraction.

Now, this is a really simple chart. I am not going to claim that the numbers in it are a reflection simply of the legislation we passed. But for all my Republican colleagues who rushed down to either the floor or to the cable news networks to decry the CBO report and who in general have continued to make the case that the health care law

is hurting the economy, this is about as simple a chart as you need.

In the decades before we passed the Affordable Care Act this economy lost 3.8 million jobs, and in the 45 months since we passed the Affordable Care Act this economy has created 8.1 million jobs.

Nobody is satisfied with the pace of job growth, but nobody can say the passage of the Affordable Care Act has hurt jobs. Anecdotally, anybody can bring one or two stories to the floor suggesting an individual businessperson decided to not hire someone because of the Affordable Care Act. But the CBO report also says this: In CBO's judgment, there is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA. That is a specific talking point that opponent of the ACA after opponent of the ACA brings out into the public debate, that what is going to happen is that because there is a requirement to provide insurance for full-time employees and not part-time employees, we are going to see millions of full-time jobs eliminated and put into part-time employment. CBO says, in CBO's judgment, there is no compelling evidence that part-time employment has increased as a result of the ACA. They say the effect of the Affordable Care Act will increase demand and induce some employers to hire more workers or to increase their employees' hours during that period.

But the news is even better because we are also getting definitive results on the amount of money we are spending as taxpayers when it comes to our health care budget.

Here is a simple chart that tells us what the current law projection was with respect to health care spending in this country. This builds out the trendline all the way to 2085. I will concede it is probably not worthwhile to necessarily predict what health care expenditures will be in 2085, but we don't even have to go there to see that pretty quickly the actual average of annual growth rate of health care is going to come in way lower than what the current law projection is. In fact, it is going to come in at such a lower rate because of the passage of the Affordable Care Act, we are going to be saving on average \$250 billion a year. Not wholly because of the health care law but in large part because of the implementation of the health care law, we are going to be saving \$250 billion a year just in Medicare spending because we are starting to build a health care system which focuses on prevention—every Medicare participant now gets free wellness visits—and a system which rewards outcomes rather than volume, which rewards quality health care rather than just lots of health care.

So it is time that we start talking about the true economic impact of the

Affordable Care Act. For all of the political and rhetorical bluster, CBO tells us that the economy will grow because of the act and that full-time employment will not turn into part-time employment.

To the extent there are less hours worked in this country, as the CBO report clearly says, it is because individuals are finally going to be empowered to make decisions for themselves about what the proper work schedule for them and their family is, not based on whether they can get health care.

I will share one story that illustrates the decisions being made out there right now today when it comes to the economic benefit that can accrue from the Affordable Care Act.

A small business owner in Enfield, CT, just wrote this:

I am a small business owner in Enfield who struggled for the last 26 years with finding affordable, quality health insurance coverage. For the last three years, I've been paying our current carrier . . . \$1,552.00 a month to cover myself and my 17-year-old son. My son was injured in the fall while playing high school football and required surgery on his shoulder. My deductible for the surgery was \$3,000.

Paying for health insurance and medical bills has been a constant struggle. That's why I decided a week ago to check out Access Health CT to see if I could get help going forward. After I entered my information on the website, I discovered that my son and I could stay with [that same carrier] with a better package including eye exams and glasses coverage for only \$328 a month and a \$500 deductible. I signed up the same day. My new insurance starts March 1st.

This is far better than I ever thought it would be. I was worried that health insurance would put me out of business after all those years, but now I feel I can keep my business going. I may even hire a new employee. I want to say thank you to everyone from the state to the federal level that has made Access Health CT a reality. Don't believe the rumors—check it out yourself. I am so glad I did.

Don't believe the quick snap headlines that get written when a complicated economic report comes out, as it did yesterday, because if we read beyond the headlines, we will find that the economic evidence—the budget evidence is saying over and over that the Affordable Care Act is going to create jobs; that the Affordable Care Act is creating jobs; that the Affordable Care Act will save taxpayers billions of dollars; that the Affordable Care Act is saving taxpayers billions of dollars.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LUGER NOMINATION

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise again today to urge a vote in the

Senate to confirm Andrew Luger to be Minnesota's U.S. attorney.

For 2½ years—or 890 days—Minnesota has not had a full-time U.S. attorney. During those years, from August 2011 to August 2013, Todd Jones was responsible for doing two jobs—as the Minnesota U.S. attorney and then also as Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Over the summer, the Senate confirmed Todd Jones as Director of the ATF, leaving the Minnesota U.S. attorney's position open.

Even before the confirmation of Todd Jones this summer, Senator FRANKEN and I—upon the recommendation of our bipartisan U.S. attorney advisory committee—had already recommended Andrew Luger, a respected litigator and former assistant U.S. attorney, to fill the position. This was 199 days ago. In November President Obama nominated Andrew Luger to become the new U.S. attorney, and the Judiciary Committee approved his nomination unanimously on January 9.

It is time we do what is right by quickly confirming Andrew Luger to make sure Minnesota has its highest law enforcement officer in place.

I also note that there is an opening in the Iowa U.S. Attorney's Office. The Judiciary Committee also unanimously approved the President's nomination for that position, and that person is also awaiting confirmation. In fact, I learned today he is in one city and his family is in another city in Iowa, and they would like to be united. That nomination is also pending.

I thank Senator GRASSLEY, who has supported our nominee, as I have supported his in Iowa. I think Senator GRASSLEY is also aware of some of the issues with the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office due to the fact that we have not had a full-time attorney for 888 days. He has been supportive of our efforts to quickly move Mr. Luger's nomination.

The position of U.S. attorney is a law enforcement post that the Founders regarded as so vital that they created it during the very first Congress in the Judiciary Act of 1789. This is the same act which created the Attorney General and the structure of the Supreme Court and lower courts.

According to the act, each judicial district would be provided with "a person learned in the law to act as attorney for the United States . . . whose duty it shall be to prosecute in each district all delinquents for crimes and offenses cognizable under the authority of the United States, and all civil actions in which the United States shall be concerned."

The U.S. attorney is a position so necessary that President Zachary Taylor appointed Henry Moss—a name somewhat lost in history—to the post within 2 days of Minnesota becoming a State. Now Minnesota has been waiting

for a full-time U.S. attorney for 2½ years.

I know my colleagues understand the importance of their own U.S. attorneys. Some of my esteemed colleagues have a very deep understanding of the position, having served as U.S. attorneys prior to joining the Senate. Senator SESSIONS was appointed by President Reagan and served as U.S. attorney in Alabama for 12 years. Senator WHITEHOUSE was U.S. attorney for Rhode Island, appointed by President Bill Clinton. And Senator BLUMENTHAL was appointed to be U.S. attorney for Connecticut by President Carter.

Other colleagues have been assistant U.S. attorneys, and my guess is that when they were assistant U.S. attorneys, they had a full-time U.S. attorney in their office. Assistant U.S. attorneys included in the Senate are Senator LEE of Utah and Senator TOM UDALL of New Mexico. They know firsthand how crucial it is for these offices to have a U.S. attorney and other top leadership in place. I think they would agree with me that 890 days without a full time U.S. attorney in Minnesota is far too long.

Since 1849 the District of Minnesota's 31 U.S. attorneys have upheld the rule of law, the Constitution, and the rights of our State's citizens, and tirelessly pursued justice on their behalf.

Over the past 48 years, for the past half century, more than half of the U.S. attorneys for Minnesota, appointed by Republican and Democrats alike, were confirmed within a day of when they passed out of the Judiciary Committee. One-fourth were confirmed the very same day. During this timeframe, they were confirmed within an average of 28 days of being passed out of committee.

It has now been 28 days since Mr. Luger was approved by the Judiciary Committee. Compare that to Thomas Heffelfinger, who was nominated by President George W. Bush to be U.S. attorney for Minnesota on September 4, 2001; he was confirmed on September 13. His entire confirmation process took only 11 days. Mr. Luger was nominated 77 days ago; that is seven times longer. In 1998 the Senate confirmed Todd Jones within 2 weeks of his nomination by President Clinton.

The Senate has a history of filling this important position quickly. Nominees have not been used as pawns in some kind of a disagreement over issues. They have simply been confirmed. We have simply gotten it done.

The quick action by President Taylor and the speed with which the Senate has confirmed the past U.S. attorneys for Minnesota show how much our government has historically valued this position, how much we have wanted to keep politics out of the way of this position.

The over 100 employees who work for the U.S. attorney in Minnesota don't

run as Democrats or Republicans. We don't even know what their political parties are. They deserve a boss in their office to take this position, which has been historically filled almost immediately after it gets through the Judiciary Committee. They deserve a boss in their office.

With each day that passes we are doing an injustice not only to the Founding Fathers who emphasized the position's importance and the Presidents who have acted quickly to fill it but also to the more than 100 people who work in that office.

The men and women in the Minnesota U.S. Attorneys Office exemplify the professionalism, high ethical standards, and unwavering commitment to the rule of law and public safety that we expect of prosecutors. They work to protect the public safety by focusing on offenders who harm our community—terrorists, the worst of the worst, violent criminals, drug traffickers, and major financial fraudsters.

They also work closely with local law enforcement to ensure that local and Federal resources are used efficiently and effectively to prevent crime and lock up criminals. For example, the office recently won a conviction in a \$3.65 billion Ponzi case—the second biggest Ponzi scheme in U.S. history. The biggest was the Madoff case. The second came out of the District of Minnesota, \$3.65 billion. Of course, that case was initiated when we had a full-time U.S. attorney. That case was prosecuted mainly when we had a full-time U.S. attorney.

What else does the office have? It has an ongoing terrorist investigation that has led to charges against 18 people for aiding the terrorist organization al-Shabaab. If you asked anyone over at the FBI—including the FBI Director who was recently quoted in a story in the Los Angeles Times about the importance of this investigation—they would tell you it would be pretty nice to have a full-time U.S. attorney in that office. Eight of the people who have already been charged have been convicted. Some received sentences up to 20 years in prison.

Other major work from the office includes Operation Highlife, a major drug trafficking investigation involving more than 100 local, State, and Federal law enforcement officers, resulting in 26 indictments, 25 guilty pleas, and sentences up to 200 months in prison.

I would note that right now we are experiencing—as they are in many places around the country—a heroin epidemic in Minnesota. Over 50 people in Hennepin County died last year from heroin overdoses. That is what we are talking about.

We have a heroin epidemic, and then we have to go home and tell the people of our State that the Senate has not yet confirmed a U.S. attorney.

He went through the committee unanimously—take one objection. The

committee he was voted out of includes a very diverse group of Senators, including Senator CRUZ, Senator GRASSLEY, Senator CORNYN, and Senator WHITEHOUSE.

I recommended Andrew Luger to the President, and he was nominated. He has the support of our Republican Congressmen near the Twin Cities. Andrew Luger went through that committee without objection and deserves to be voted on by this Senate.

Operation Brother's Keeper is another example of a successful investigation and prosecution of a RICO case involving a regional 200-member gang which took 22 dangerous criminals off the street.

Operation Malverde received national attention and had a prosecution of 27 defendants associated with the Mexican drug cartel—including the apprehension of the cartel's regional leader—with sentences as high as 20 years in prison.

The office also recently prosecuted a case involving a major synthetic drug seller in Duluth, MN. This head shop was a huge problem and a scourge in the community. They went after it, prosecuted the owner, and found \$700,000 in plastic bags hidden in his bathroom, and they won that case.

These are just a few of the major cases this office has worked on over the last few years. It has been 890 days since we had a full-time boss, which was due, in part, to the delay in filling the position of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. It took nearly 1 year for this body to act on that nomination because this body had not confirmed anyone for that full-time job for 7 years.

After Operation Fast and Furious, and the disaster with that case, it was finally decided that we need a full-time, confirmed Director at the ATF. Our U.S. attorney agreed to work at both jobs for 2 years and was finally confirmed. We finally have a nominee, and that person is now waiting. That is how we get to 890 days without a full-time boss.

The Senate has always served the people of Minnesota well in making sure that our State has a U.S. attorney. I think we need to continue that tradition and honor the value our Founding Fathers entrusted in this position.

It is time we vote on Mr. Luger's nomination. He is a dedicated public servant whose breadth of experience and strength of character and commitment to justice makes him a well-qualified candidate.

No one has questioned or shed any doubt on his qualifications; that is not the issue. Oftentimes that is an issue with nominees, but that is not the issue in this case. The issue is that we simply—as we have in the past—allowed a voice vote on these nominations. It has taken an average of 8 days

after coming out of the committee for the District of Minnesota. The first U.S. attorney for Minnesota took 2 days. We have now waited 890 days.

It is time to get this done.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER).

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask for regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 1963 is now pending.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

Harry Reid, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Kay R. Hagan, Jeanne Shaheen, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Christopher A. Coons, Angus S. King, Jr., Bill Nelson, Richard J. Durbin, Tim Kaine, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jeff Merkley, Debbie Stabenow, Barbara Boxer, Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived and the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to this matter occur at 5:30 p.m., Monday, February 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO DR. FRANK
CHEATHAM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an accomplished educator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Dr. Frank Cheatham is the senior vice president for academic affairs and professor of math and computer science at Campbellsville University. His impending retirement in December will conclude a career of over 40 years devoted to Christian higher education. Campbellsville University is an acclaimed university in central Kentucky with more than 3,600 students that prepares them as Christian servant leaders for lifelong learning, continued scholarship, and active participation in a diverse, global society.

No more than 20 miles of country road separates Frank's birthplace of Merrimac, KY, from the campus on which he has spent the majority of his life as both a student and a professor. Dr. Cheatham was born on February 3, 1943, to Gladys and the late Jeff Cheatham. Of his eight siblings, four went on to become teachers, including his brother, Don, who also teaches at Campbellsville.

Dr. Cheatham wields an impressive arsenal of post-secondary degrees. After completing his undergraduate studies at Campbellsville in 1965, he continued to earn a master of science from Tennessee Technological University, his Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Kentucky, and a second master of science in computer science education from the University of Evansville.

Dr. Cheatham began his career teaching math and biology at Taylor County High School in 1965. He then served as a teaching assistant at Tennessee Tech and the University of Kentucky and as an assistant professor at Campbell College in North Carolina before landing at Campbellsville University in August of 1973. Ever since then, save for a single year of leave during which he taught at Western Kentucky University, Dr. Cheatham has taught math and computer science at Campbellsville. In 1999, he was offered and accepted the position of senior vice president for academic affairs. The university's president, Dr. Michael V. Carter, recalls that it was "the very first decision I made after becoming president."

Dr. Cheatham's excellence as an educator needs no validation aside from the many successes and accomplishments of his students. Nevertheless, he has been honored for his service at Campbellsville University time and time again. He has twice been named Campbellsville/Taylor County Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year, in 1992 and 2000. He was awarded the Sears-Roebuck Foundation Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award in 1989 and the Campbellsville University Student Government Asso-

ciation Challenger Award a year later. In 1996, he received the Board of Advisors Academic Excellence Distinguished Professor award, and in 2002, he became a Campbellsville University Distinguished Alumnus.

Despite his tireless devotion to teaching, Dr. Cheatham has also found time to pursue his passions outside the classroom. Among his many extra-curricular pursuits, he led the discussion on bringing the internet to Campbellsville University in 1994, and served as president for the Consortium for Computing in Small Colleges. He also served as the national president of Sigma Zeta, the science and math honor society, and is on the board of directors at Taylor Regional Hospital.

Those who have crossed paths with Dr. Cheatham—whether as one of his students, as a colleague, as a fellow member of Frank's Campbellsville Baptist Church, or as a friend—know just how much he will be missed at Campbellsville University. His lifelong commitment to education and his devotion to bettering the lives of his students deserve the praise of this body.

Thus, I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in commending Dr. Cheatham for an exemplary career and wishing him nothing but the best as he enjoys retirement with his wife, Shirley, his daughter, Tammy, and his grandson—a junior at Campbellsville University—Drew.

THE AGRICULTURAL ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, after more than a year of debate, negotiation and compromise, the farm bill has finally been approved. This legislation is a win for the family farmers and rural economy that is at the heart of Upstate New York. While the final product does not include everything that we fought for, the farm bill's passage was of the utmost importance to New York. It maintains or grows scores of programs for our dairies, fruit and vegetable farmers, maple syrup producers, rural development projects and iconic New York companies like Hickey Freeman in Rochester, NY.

The farm bill is unique in that it touches the lives of all Americans by ensuring the health of our nation's food supply. It does that by supporting our hard working farmers. The bill supports innovative agricultural research that helps make our farms some of the most productive on the planet. I am proud that this will include the Acer Access and Development Program or Maple Tap Act, which will provide grants to promote maple tapping and research across New York. This bill makes common sense reforms like eliminating direct payments and expanding opportunities for crop insurance and even linking crop insurance with conservation compliance. This bill does this all while providing a safe-

ty net for our farms that often face unpredictable natural disasters.

However, this bill is more than just an agriculture bill; it is the bedrock of our food and agriculture policy for the next 5 years. The Farm Bill will drive our rural economy into the 21st Century by making investments not only in our farms, but in water, broadband, and energy infrastructure. This bill provides opportunities to grow small business in rural communities, such as helping a rural entrepreneur turn grandma's award winning jam into a commercial product ready to be sold on store shelves across the great state of New York and across the country. This farm bill pulls our rural and urban communities ever closer, as it expands opportunities for farmers markets and food hubs to communities that for so long have lacked access to local fresh food.

Another very important provision in this bill that I would like to highlight is extension of the Wool Trust Fund. For more than a decade we have had in place this successful program to protect the workers at American manufacturers of men's suits from an unfair trade anomaly. While we allow finished suits to be imported into this country duty-free from many countries, we impose a 25% duty on the fabrics that our domestic suit manufacturers must import. This anomaly has acted as a huge tax on companies that wanted to stay and manufacture here in the United States. Therefore, more than a decade ago, we enacted the Wool Trust Fund program to provide both duty refunds and licenses to import limited quantities of suiting fabrics at reduced duties. The combination of these steps helped to level the playing field and keep manufacturing jobs from moving abroad.

The Farm Bill will extend and modify this program. For example, it will consolidate the duty refunds and duty reductions with the intention of maintaining the same amount of benefits for the same manufacturers as would have been achieved under the current program. While the program has been modified it continues its central purpose—providing a mechanism to reduce the tariff burden of companies that stay in the United States to manufacture apparel without harming the domestic textile industry.

I am proud to say that one company that benefits from this program today, and that will continue benefiting, is Hickey Freeman and its 410 employees in Rochester, New York. I am proud to be a customer of this iconic brand. I am also proud to have stood up for these workers by helping establish this program more than a decade ago and extending it through the years. I am certain that the provisions of this bill will be implemented as intended so that Hickey Freeman and its employees—along with many other companies

in New York and across the country—will continue to benefit fully from this program in the same way that it has benefited for more than a decade.

From suit manufacturing in Rochester to maple taps in the Adirondacks, from dairies in the Central part of my state, to apple, pear, cherry and berry growers in the Hudson valley, from the wineries at end of Long Island to those near Niagara Falls, the industries that bring life to our rural communities will be better because we passed this Farm Bill. Their crops will grow fuller and stronger, and so will our economy.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Farm bill policies touch the lives of all Americans, not just those who work in the agricultural sector. In addition to reauthorizing farm programs, this legislation deals with domestic and international food aid, conservation and the environment, trade, rural development, renewable energy, forestry, and financial markets, among other issues. This year's reauthorization presented an opportunity to enact significant reforms in these areas. While some progress was made, I believe the bill falls short of its potential, and ultimately I could not support it.

The farm bill takes an important step toward reform by ending the longstanding practice of giving direct payments to farmers of certain commodity crops regardless of whether they experienced losses or even planted a crop. It also tightens limits on the amount of farm payments an individual can receive, expands crop insurance opportunities for specialty and organic crops, establishes conservation compliance as a requirement for receiving premium insurance subsidies, and invests in rural broadband.

In spite of these successes, however, the farm bill does not do enough for Rhode Island families.

Of greatest concern to me, it cuts \$8.6 billion over 10 years from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, also known as food stamps. These cuts could reduce food stamp benefits for as many as 850,000 households across the country, including tens of thousands in Rhode Island. SNAP is our Nation's most important antihunger program. In this challenging economic climate, it is wrong to cut critical food-assistance funding.

In addition, this farm bill, like its predecessors, fails to provide adequate support for our fishermen in Rhode Island and nationwide. Farm bill programs provide billions of dollars in subsidies and technical assistance to farmers every year. In comparison, fishermen have little access to similar kinds of Federal assistance. Despite attempts to correct this inequity, fishermen remain second-class citizens when it comes to Federal support.

Finally, American agriculture springs from the richness of our land and natural resources, and the farm bill has long supported programs to conserve and protect those resources. As the harmful effects of climate change become more prevalent, our agricultural policy should reflect the threat posed to farming and food production by these changes. In this farm bill, "climate change" and "extreme weather" are hardly mentioned. Congress can start by opening the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to climate change adaptation and mitigation projects.

The farm bill is important and wide-ranging legislation. Unfortunately, the conference report leaves out essential protections for low-income Americans, hard-hit fisheries, and precious natural resources.

THE USS "FORRESTAL"

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today marks the last voyage of the Ex-USS *Forrestal*, the world's first supercarrier. On this occasion, I believe it is fitting to recognize the ship and all who sailed on her in service to a grateful nation. Launched almost 60 years ago in Newport News, VA, she was named after former Navy Secretary and first Secretary of Defense James Forrestal.

Forrestal represented American ingenuity and shipbuilding excellence, integrating operational needs, and engineering insight that created the first steam catapult, angled flight deck, and use of optical landing systems.

During her 38 years of active service, *Forrestal* and its attached air wings were involved in missions around the globe. At the beginning of her sea life, she was sent to the eastern Mediterranean during the Suez and Lebanon Crises and over the course of her service life was involved in dozens of NATO operations, overseas deployments, patrol missions, and strategic port visits around the Atlantic and Sixth Fleets. She was "home" to thousands of the Nation's finest sailors and aviators this country has ever known.

Forrestal's contributions to the war effort in Vietnam are well documented. Unfortunately, so is the terrible fire that engulfed the flight deck on July 29, 1967, killing 134 shipmates, injuring 161 more, and destroying more than 20 aircraft. I will never forget when that Zuni rocket hit my A-4 Skyhawk after it was accidentally fired from across the flight deck, rupturing the fuel tank and setting that horrific, costly fire.

I will always remember and honor my brave comrades who died in the *Forrestal* fire. Although the ship is being towed to Brownsville, TX, to be physically dismembered, her legacy, the bonds forged, and memories created among shipmates will live forever. I bid her a final "fair winds and following seas."

HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, earlier this week I spoke to the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my remarks be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A few weeks ago, the National Conference of State Legislators gave me an award—for defending the 10th Amendment. It's the first time in ten years they were able to give that award. There hasn't been much protection of the 10th Amendment going on in Washington. As grateful as I am for both awards, the award that I am working even harder to earn is one for deregulating and simplifying the federal role in higher education.

If I were to earn that, it would be the first time in American history that honor had been bestowed. Truth is, for a long time it wasn't needed.

The federal government didn't begin to focus on colleges and universities—almost all of them private at the time—until 1862 when President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act. That Act provided each state with 30,000 acres of federal land for each member in their congressional delegation. States were then required to sell the land and use the proceeds to fund public colleges that focused on agriculture, engineering, and military science. States were expected to contribute to the maintenance of its land-grant institution as well as to provide its buildings. But Congress was otherwise sparse on advice for how to establish these institutions and there was little federal intervention.

The federal government didn't focus much more on higher education again until 1944, when Congress passed the G.I. Bill. This included federal financial assistance to help any veteran who served at least 90 days between December 1941 and 1946 pay for college or vocational training programs at the public or private institution of their choice. This even included high schools. The big news here was not just the new federal money, but the way it was spent. Instead of establishing a Washington program for colleges serving the needs of veterans, the federal money followed veterans to the college of their choice.

Not all of the independent private colleges thought this was such a good idea. The president of the University of Chicago said the G.I. Bill would turn universities into an "educational hobo jungle."

The only limitation on choice of institution for those using the G.I. Bill was that it had to be approved by the appropriate state educational agency or by the Administrator of the Veterans Administration.

So you see, the dreaded "voucher," which raises the hackles of the K-12 establishment, was the very foundation of federal funding for colleges and universities for seventy years.

Last week I introduced a bill to give federal money to elementary and secondary students in the same way we do with the G.I. Bill, Pell Grants and student loans—let the money follow students to the schools they choose. If you just take 41 percent of the federal dollars we are already spending on K-12 education, you can turn that into \$2,100 scholarships for 21 million low-income children.

But as you can imagine, these Pell Grants for Kids created an uproar from the K-12 establishment. My response was, if vouchers helped create the best system of colleges in the world, why don't we try it for our schools?

But back to the history of federal involvement in higher education.

After the G.I. Bill, the number of Americans enrolled in college more than doubled in just six years between 1943 and 1949.

Then came the Korean G.I. Bill in 1952.

And this brought more federal regulation. The Korean G.I. Bill specified that institutions of higher education needed to be accredited by a federally recognized accreditor in order for a veteran student to use their benefits.

Still it was not much regulation. Only a single page of paper.

By the way, in 1952, roughly 35 percent of students were graduating from high school and only 6 percent were completing college.

Now move ahead to Sputnik in the late 1950s. Congress passed the National Defense Education Act that created the first federal loan program in order for students to attend college. Between 1952 and 1965, college enrollment increased from more than 2.1 million to nearly 6 million (almost 30 percent of the 18-24-year-old population).

Still, after 100 years of federal involvement, there were not many rules and regulations.

This brings us to 1965 and the passage of the Higher Education Act.

Now here is the problem. Congress has reauthorized the Higher Education Act eight times since 1965. With each reauthorization came many well-intentioned good ideas and another stack of additional regulations. The laws and regulations have piled so high since 1965 that I voted against the 2008 reauthorization because the stack of regulations was as tall as I was then and I believed that a new bill would eventually double that stack.

Here is a concrete example of unnecessary complication in the higher education system: the application for federal aid.

It is a ten-page document that asks more than 100 questions and is accompanied by a 72-page instruction booklet.

This is considered a victory in Washington. I know that when I came here 11 years ago, I was determined to simplify this application form. So were many other senators. And this is the result.

Despite well-meaning intentions over the years, our system has become too complicated and burdensome. It wastes time and dollars that ought to be spent helping students.

So today, I am here to ask for your help. I want to reverse this trend of piling on layer after layer.

To begin with, I have asked my staff to consider drafting a new Higher Education Act from scratch. Start all over. Include everything that needs to be included and consider new regulations that need to be written. This is not an ideological exercise. It is an effort to clean out the clutter. Call it a long-delayed spring cleaning.

The Senate education committee has begun to hold hearings on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

Chairman HARKIN and I have worked closely together on these hearings and the chairman has been very thoughtful in how we are approaching them.

At a recent financial aid hearing, here is what the witnesses told us and they all told us the same thing:

o The application for a Pell Grant could be reduced to a post-card by collecting only income and family size

o The federal aid system should consist of one grant, one loan, and one tax credit

o Students should know how much the federal government will invest in them in their junior year of high school

o We can use social media to reach those in middle school about potential aid opportunities

We were told that these four big ideas would:

o Save money
o Reduce regulation
o Increase access for low-income, disadvantaged students

To take these ideas and others and put them into law, I have created a Task Force on Government Regulation of Higher Education.

I am joined in this by Senator Mikulski, Senator Burr, and Senator Bennet; Brit Kirwan of the University of Maryland System and Nick Zeppos of Vanderbilt University have agreed to co-chair this task force. And 14 other college presidents, university system heads, and other leaders representing all sectors in higher education will work with the American Council on Education to:

o Identify duplicative or unnecessary regulations
o Determine the cost of complying with federal regulation
o And offer suggestions for improving the current structure of regulating.

Other members of NAICU serving on this panel include:

o Hartwick College (which has done tremendous work in this area already)
o Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association
o Colorado Christian University
o American University
o Hiram College.

In addition, Congress has provided \$1 million to the National Research Council to conduct a study on overregulation of higher education funding for which I have fought since the last reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 2008.

So we have a bipartisan group of senators and a task force which has its first meeting next week and a National Research Council \$1 million study to help us do our job.

But we need one more thing: your help.

Ronald Reagan once said that the eight most dangerous words were: "I'm from Washington and I'm here to help."

Well, I'm from Tennessee. So, while I may be here in Washington, I am here instead to ask for YOUR help.

The task force needs to hear specific examples of rules and regulations that are no longer needed, overly burdensome, costly, and confusing.

I would suggest that you do it in the easiest, most specific and practical way. Start with the easiest thing that will make the most difference and save the most money and time that would be better spent on students, and make that first. And the next one, second. In every case, make it as specific as possible. You're the experts. You know what's happening at your institutions.

Send your specific recommendations to this organization (NAICU), my staff, and directly to Chancellor Zeppos.

But I would also like to recommend that you share these with your home state senators and representatives.

Now sometimes I've said that you don't need to come to Washington, and sometimes I get in trouble for saying that, but it's true. In fact, it's better if you see them at home. Think about it. Here they've all flown to

Washington, they think the plane flight somehow made them smarter, they're away from their grounding, and they're busy. They have lots to do here.

Now, you all have flown up here and spent a lot of money to get here, and you're doing the right thing—that's a good thing, it's helpful, it's appreciated, it's important.

But let me tell you something that's more important. Take ten people from your congressional district and ask to see your congressman or congresswoman at his or her district office. Or go see your senator in his state office. You'll have more to say, it will cost you a lot less to travel, they'll have more time to hear you, and it will make a much bigger difference.

Visit them at home!

Tell them that you are forwarding a list of duplicative, unnecessary rules and regulations affecting higher education that you have identified for elimination.

Explain to them the importance on institutional autonomy, the accreditation process and the marketplace that produces competition allowing students to choose schools and why this has helped to create the best system of higher education in the world.

They will have questions, and they are entitled to have questions. Last year Congress appropriated \$33 billion in taxpayer dollars for Pell Grants, more than \$100 billion in loans and \$38 billion for university-sponsored research.

We'll need allies to make progress, and if you tell your elected representatives what you are doing and exactly how to deregulate higher education, I bet they will listen.

Let me give you an example of why this is worth your time, the story behind the America COMPETES legislation.

In 2005, I was sitting at a Senate Budget Committee hearing and I was worried about how all the Medicaid and Medicare spending was going to squeeze out investments in education. So, that afternoon, I walked over to the National Academy of Sciences and said, "I believe if you'll tell Congress 10 things in priority order that Congress would need to do in order to help make us more competitive in the world, I believe Congress would do it."

The Academy created a very good group led by Norm Augustine of Lockheed Martin and produced a report called "Rising Above the Gathering Storm." It had 20 specific suggestions in priority order—Congress enacted about 2/3 of them, and within 4 to 5 years, funded most of them.

In other words, the point I'm trying to get across here is that most ideas in Washington fail for lack of the specific idea.

You'll be surprised that the more specific you are, the more likely things are to get done.

Now, I am among the converted.

I believe we have the best system of colleges and universities in the world.

Despite that, you will hear me urging you to focus on worker training, to stop this business of shutting down such valuable assets during the summer, and to confront disturbing political correctness.

In the history of the world, universities have changed less than any other institution. But in the Internet age, they will need to change more. You need to learn from the same lesson that applied to the American automobile companies in the 1960s and 1970s which nearly led to their demise.

So my mission today is to deregulate and simplify the federal role in higher education. To do this, I need your help. First, to suggest concrete examples of overregulation. Second,

to remind your elected representatives of the importance of autonomy and the marketplace that has created the best higher education system in the world.

And if all of that effort earns the award for deregulation and simplification of higher education, I will gladly share it with each of you.

RECOGNIZING JEANNE HULIT

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jeanne Hulit, who is leaving her position as Acting Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration tomorrow. Ms. Hulit is returning to the private sector after more than 4 years of service to her country at SBA. She stepped up last year when former Administrator Karen Mills stepped down, staying on for longer than anticipated to ensure that the government agency responsible for helping America's nearly 28 million small businesses had the leadership it needed. We should thank her for honoring her commitment to America's entrepreneurs.

Prior to assuming the role of Acting Administrator, Ms. Hulit served as Associate Administrator for SBA's Office of Capital Access since February 2012, where she was responsible for advising SBA Administrator Karen Mills and overseeing the agency's loan programs. During her tenure at SBA, the agency saw its two highest years of small business lending on record.

Ms. Hulit's service at SBA began in 2009 when she was appointed to serve as SBA's New England Regional Administrator. As Regional Administrator, she was responsible for carrying out SBA's core mission of assisting small businesses with the "three C's"—capital, contracting and counseling—in six New England States.

Prior to joining SBA, Ms. Hulit spent 18 years in banking, serving as senior vice president for commercial lending at Citizens Bank, vice president and middle market lender at KeyBank, and manager of KeyBank's International Banking Division. Prior to that, she served as deputy director of the International Division at the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. Ms. Hulit has also held a number of civic and economic leadership roles, including her tenure as a founder and chair of the Maine International Trade Center and her service as chair for the University of Southern Maine Board of Visitors.

Ms. Hulit's experience in both the public and private sector and her expertise in lending gave her unique insight into the importance of getting capital into the hands of entrepreneurs. This came across clearly in her success at SBA. During her time at SBA, the agency supported more than \$126 billion in lending to more than 260,000 small businesses and entrepreneurs. This includes two record

years of delivering more than \$30 billion annually in loans in fiscal year 2011 and fiscal year 2012 and more than \$29 billion in 2013.

Later this month, Ms. Hulit will be moving back home to Maine and taking a job at Northeast Bank. While it is tough to see the SBA lose such a talented and loyal public servant and America's small businesses lose a tireless advocate, I am happy to see her get to return home to pursue this great opportunity. I wish her all the best in this and future endeavors, and I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking her for her loyal and dedicated service at SBA.

HONORING MAINE VETERANS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the men and women who have defended America with their service and to bring to the attention of my colleagues some of the many outstanding ways in which citizens of Maine are honoring those who served and, in some cases, gave their lives for our country.

U.S. Marine Corps Maj. David Cote, a Maine native, recently established the Summit Project, a living tribute to remember and memorialize each Maine servicemember who has been killed in the line of duty since September 11, 2001.

As part of this living memorial, Major Cote has traveled across Maine to visit with the families of the fallen. He has asked each family to search for a stone to represent their loved one who gave his or her life so we could live in peace. From backyards and fishing holes to national forests and lakeside camps, these stones have been hand-picked from across Maine to represent each fallen hero.

Beginning this Memorial Day and annually thereafter, Major Cote will lead commemorative tribute hikes, in which volunteers will each carry a stone in honor of a specific fallen servicemember. During these hiking expeditions, the memories of the fallen, recounted by widows, mothers, fathers, and friends, will be shared with the hikers embarking on their journey to the summit of mountains in Maine. The Summit Project was launched to help the families who have suffered such painful losses truly heal, and to ensure that the experiences of these heroes inspire a new generation of patriots. It will honor the heroism and patriotism of those who gave all for our country since 9/11 and will ensure that their stories and sacrifices are added to Maine's proud history of duty to country.

In another unique effort, which started 23 years ago in Maine and which has now spread to include the entire United States and beyond, thousands of volunteers each year have the opportunity to recognize the ultimate sacrifice

made by our brave servicemembers by participating in Wreaths Across America. This annual effort, which provides holiday wreaths to mark the graves of fallen servicemembers, was begun by Morrill and Karen Worcester of Harrington, ME.

On December 14, 2013, approximately one dozen tractor-trailer trucks laden with 143,000 "remembrance wreaths," all proudly made in Maine, were escorted to Arlington National Cemetery by the Maine State Police and Patriot Guard Riders. Numerous volunteers spent the morning placing the wreaths on the headstones of deceased veterans and reflecting on their courage, selflessness, and sacrifice. All told, Wreaths Across America shipped more than 470,000 wreaths to adorn veterans' graves in all 50 States and around the world.

The mission of Wreaths Across America is to "Remember, Honor, Teach." In addition to honoring America's fallen, the group seeks to promote awareness of the sacrifices made by servicemembers through various veterans' events and wreath laying ceremonies at State Houses and the U.S. Capitol. These solemn ceremonies allow us the opportunity to pause and remember the many men and women who have died to preserve our freedoms, and they encourage us to instruct younger generations so that those sacrifices are never forgotten.

For those veterans who have returned home from war, our Nation must ensure that we facilitate their transition to life as civilians. In many cases, these veterans have suffered severe injuries and need further assistance. The third effort I highlight today focuses on one veteran's effort to encourage other veterans.

U.S. Army SSG Travis Mills was on his third tour of duty in Afghanistan when he was critically injured by an improvised explosive device while on patrol. As a result, Travis lost portions of both legs and both arms. He is one of just five quadruple-amputees from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to survive their injuries.

While Travis recovered at Walter Reed Medical Center, he dreamed of providing a camp in Maine as a recreation center for disabled veterans and their families—an affordable place which would provide much-needed quality time for families to spend together. Through the assistance of Dean Lachance, executive director of the Bread of Life Ministries, Travis was connected with Joel and Crista Lavenson, co-owners of Kennebec Camp's Maine Golf & Tennis Academy. Together, they transformed their vision into a reality, creating the National Veterans Family Center, where wounded veterans and their families can enjoy much needed rest and relaxation while participating in outdoor activities that include fishing, boating, and archery.

We must never forget the sacrifices that have been made by all generations of veterans, as well as those who still serve. I am proud that Maine has a long history of great patriots who have died in the service of their country. Low on ammunition and men, Joshua Chamberlain courageously led the charge at Little Round Top at the Battle of Gettysburg. MSG Gary Gordon demonstrated great bravery during the Battle of Mogadishu in 1992, which led to his receiving the Medal of Honor. The brave Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom are no longer with us, but through efforts like The Summit Project, Wreaths Across America, and the National Veterans Family Center, we can honor their sacrifice and ensure that their legacies live on.

2014 OLYMPIANS

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the Vermonters who will be representing the United States in the Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Vermont has a long tradition of excellence in winter sports that we owe partly to our State's cold climate and mountainous terrain, but also to an outdoor spirit that dates back generations. I would like to acknowledge these athletes individually and wish them the best of luck in pursuing the gold.

Sophie Caldwell, from Peru, VT, will be competing for the United States in cross-country skiing. Sophie was a five-time All-American at Dartmouth College, and received a degree in psychology and plans to go back to school to pursue a career in either psychology or education.

Hannah Dreissigacker, from Morrisville, VT, is a member of the Craftsbury Green Racing Project, a group of elite athletes who are committed to pursuing an environmentally conscious lifestyle. Hannah will be competing in the biathlon in Sochi.

Kelly Clark, from West Dover, VT, is one of the most successful snowboarders to ever compete. She won a gold medal in the halfpipe event at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, and a bronze medal at the 2010 games in Vancouver. In addition to her success on the slopes, Kelly has given back to her community by starting a foundation that provides scholarships to athletes from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Susan Dunklee, from Craftsbury, VT, will be competing for the United States in the biathlon. Susan placed fifth in the World Championship's Individual race in Ruhpolding, Germany, and tied for the best score of those U.S. female biathletes competing. Susan, like Ms. Dreissigacker, is also a member of the Craftsbury Green Racing Project, which promotes sustainability and endurance sports.

Lindsey Jacobellis, from Stratton, VT, started competing in snowboard cross competitions when she was 11 and has risen to become a dominant force in the sport. Lindsay won a silver medal at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, and is an eight-time champion in snowboardcross at the Winter X Games.

Hannah Kearney, from Norwich, VT, is one of the top freestyle mogul competitors in the world, having won a gold medal at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. I wish her the best of luck in defending her Olympic title.

Devin Logan, from West Dover, VT, is a freeskiier who will be competing in the slopestyle and halfpipe events. During her rookie season, she finished second in the halfpipe event at the U.S. Championships and earned her first U.S. halfpipe skiing title at the age of 15.

Andy Newell, from Shaftsbury, VT, is a cross-country skier who has been racing since the age of five. He placed 16th in freestyle sprint during the 2006 Winter Olympics and finished off the 2012–2013 season ranked as the fifth fastest sprinter in the world. Outside of training for this year's Winter Olympics, Andy works with kids at the New England Nordic Ski Association to introduce the sport to a new audience.

Hannah Teter, from Belmont, VT, won a gold medal in the halfpipe event at the 2006 Winter Olympics and a silver medal in 2010 in Vancouver. In true Vermont fashion, Hannah is very active in her community and charitable causes, combining her prize money with proceeds from maple syrup sales to start a charity called "Hannah's Gold" which builds schools and fresh water infrastructure in a village in rural Kenya.

Ida Sargent, from Barton, VT, is a cross-country skier who is also a member of the Craftsbury Green Racing Project. After finishing her cross-country skiing career, Ida hopes to become a physical therapist.

Liz Stephen, from East Montpelier, VT, switched from alpine to cross-country skiing midway through her tenure at Burke Mountain Academy. Liz took first place in two events at the 2008 U.S. National Championships. Since her last trip to the Winter Olympics in 2010, she finished atop the podium at the Swiss National Championship in 2012 and finished fifth in the 10k freestyle at the 2013 World Ski Championships. Liz enjoys mountain biking and takes classes at Westminster College.

Mikaela Shiffrin, from East Burke, VT, will compete for the United States in alpine skiing. Mikaela is an eight-time World Cup slalom medalist. Mikaela is the first non-European to win four World Cup slalom races in one season. When she isn't competing, she also enjoys playing tennis and soccer.

Ty Walker, from Stowe, VT, has made a significant impact on women's

slopestyle snowboarding. Ty has won the Burton European Open Junior Jam three times in a row from 2009–2011. In 2013, when she was just 16, she finished fifth at the FIS World Snowboarding Championship. Off the snow, Ty is a straight-A student and loves to jump on trampolines.

Alex Deibold, from Manchester, VT, will compete in his first Olympics as a snowboardcross competitor. Alex finished second in the 2013 World Cup championship in Sochi, Russia. Alex also made finals at four out of five World Cup starts in 2013. When he is off the slopes, Alex enjoys rock climbing, surfing, and mountain biking.

Jacqueline Hernandez, from Londonderry, VT will compete for the United States in snowboardcross. Jacqueline is a seven-time World Cup top-10 finisher. In her spare time, she enjoys riding motorcycles, swimming, and boating.

Nolan Kasper, from Warren, VT, will compete for the United States in alpine skiing. Nolan competed in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games and placed 24th in men's slalom. In addition, Nolan enjoys ice skating and playing soccer.

Mr. President, Vermont is very proud of the athletes who will be competing in Sochi, and I would like to join the citizens of my state to wish them the best of luck at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games. Bring home the gold!

OLYMPIANS

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I join with citizens across the Granite State in saying "good luck" to the outstanding New Hampshire athletes who will be among those representing the United States in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, which begin this week. It is an impressive group that brings great pride to our State.

Nick Alexander of Lebanon is competing in ski jumping. After his impressive performance at the Continental Cup Competitions, we look forward to seeing him soar through the air in Sochi.

At age 18, Center Conway native Sean Doherty is the youngest member of the 2014 U.S. Olympic biathlon team.

Nick Fairall of New London grew up enjoying skiing, lacrosse, soccer and many other sports, but his true passion is ski jumping. This year we will get to watch him jump for the gold in Sochi.

Andover's Kris Freeman is a veteran Olympian having competed in the 2002, 2006 and 2010 Winter Olympics. This year, we will cheer him on again as he competes in the cross-country skiing event.

Competing in slopestyle snowboarding is 2012 world champion Chas Guldmond from Laconia. This will be his first time competing on the Olympic stage.

Sixteen-year-old Hanover native Julia Krass grew up skiing at the recently reopened Whaleback Mountain

in Enfield. We wish her the best of luck as she competes in Sochi's inaugural slopestyle skiing event, the newest kind of freestyle skiing.

World renowned alpine skier Bode Miller of Franconia will be competing in his fifth Winter Olympic Games the sixth American athlete to do so. This year, the decorated Olympian will go for his sixth alpine skiing Olympic medal.

North Conway resident Leanne Smith, who competed in the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, is returning to the Olympics to compete in several alpine skiing events, including downhill, slalom, giant slalom, super G, and super combined.

The University of New Hampshire's head hockey coach, Katey Stone, will make history in Sochi as the first woman to lead a U.S. Olympic hockey team. We will be rooting for her to lead her players to victory.

D.J. Montigny, who grew up in Dover, will coach three U.S. athletes in women's slopestyle skiing. Good luck to D.J. as he advises members of Team USA before they head down the slopes to compete.

Additionally, several athletes from around the U.S. who have been educated and trained in New Hampshire have been selected to compete for Team USA in various events. Congratulations to hockey players Gillian Apps, Kacey Bellamy and James Van Riemsdyk; alpine skiers David Chodounsky, Julia Ford, Nolan Kasper, Mikaela Shiffrin and Andrew Weibrecht; cross country skiers Ida Sargent and Sophie Caldwell; freestyle skier Hannah Kearney; and Hannah Dreissigacker, Susan Dunklee and Sara Studebaker, who will compete in the biathlon.

Each of these world-class athletes and coaches has made it to Sochi as a result of hours of dedication, perseverance and hard work. They have put in long hours at the gym, on the slopes or the ice, hoping that one day their Olympic dreams come true.

I know all Granite Staters are so incredibly proud of this talented group of athletes and I look forward to cheering them on as they go for the gold in Sochi.

REMEMBERING STEPHEN MACHCINSKI AND JAMES DICKMAN

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the service and the memory of two Ohio firefighters, Private Stephen A. Machcinski and Private James Dickman of the Toledo Fire Department. Like so many of the men and women who serve as first responders in our country, these two men knew that every day, they were putting their lives on the line to keep their community—their friends and neighbors—safe. When things were at their worst, they were at their best. When

others needed help, they were there to give it. When others ran out, they ran in.

Tragically, Private Machcinski and Private Dickman gave their lives in the line of duty, doing the job they loved, the one they were trained and prepared to do, while fighting an apartment complex fire in Toledo, OH, on January 26, 2014. But although they are gone, we will not forget them. Today, we honor their sacrifice and remember these fallen heroes who put themselves in harm's way for the good of their family, their friends, their neighbors, and the entire Toledo community.

Mr. President, for their commitment to saving lives, protecting the public, and willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice, I would like to recognize Private Stephen A. Machcinski and Private James Dickman. We will continue to keep these two men and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING ARTHUR "ART" ORTENBERG

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of a dear friend of mine, and Montana's, Art Ortenberg.

Art grew up in Newark, NJ, the son of a Russian upholsterer father and a Polish seamstress mother. As a boy, Art lived across the street from a public library, where he spent countless hours devouring its offerings. The local library was a second home to Art. It gave him the chance to expand his horizons and dream of opportunities and lives that he had never before imagined.

Art, with his wife of almost 50 years, Liz Claiborne, built a Fortune 500 fashion empire—the first to be headed by a woman. Art was utterly devoted to Liz. They were deeply in love and they were inseparable. Together, they made high fashion affordable and revolutionized the fashion industry. While Art and Liz may be known for their exploits in the fashion world, Montanans know, and love, them for their unassuming generosity and deep sense of community.

Art and Liz first came to Montana seeking a respite from the rigors of the business world in Montana's wide-open spaces. Once there, they made Montana their home.

Art and Liz loved Montana as deeply as any Montanan. And, as John Steinbeck famously recognized, it's difficult to analyze love when you are in it. To Art, the slow, switchbacking country highway on the way to his Triple 8 Ranch was "a glorious, intoxicating drive," the road "traversing [the] landscape in serpentine coils."

I don't think anyone has so lovingly described Route 279's slow crawl over the Continental Divide, and it shows

the depth of Art's affection for Montana.

But Art's deep love for Montana didn't stop at mere admiration for our outdoors—it spawned action. Indeed, Art and Liz were philanthropists in the true sense of the word: They loved the people and communities of Montana. They adopted Montana as their home, and they gave generously of their time, their energy, and their resources.

Art and Liz wanted to open doors for young Montanans in the way that the local library did for Art. Together, they started preschools and music programs in small mountain towns, saved local libraries from closure, and loaned money to a local timber mill so that it could make downpayments on new equipment. They encouraged our young people to take pride in their hometowns through the Montana Heritage Project, fostering a sense of community in a generation of students.

Art and Liz recognized the importance of providing our young people with an opportunity to dream and grow, just like that Newark library had done for Art.

Art and Liz also cared deeply about conservation, funding projects to restore the Blackfoot River, reintroduce endangered species, and conserve valuable habitat and public lands. They recognized that Montana's public lands are our greatest assets and the importance of preserving our outdoor heritage for future generations.

As Art once said, "What we do here matters." He knew that few are as fortunate as he and Liz had been. Art and Liz gave to Montana's communities generously and quietly. They sought to leave the world a better place than they found it, and they pursued this goal without pretension. In fact, Art and Liz could often be found down at the Windbag Saloon in Helena, quietly eating cheeseburgers in an old frontier brothel.

Liz is buried at the Triple 8 Ranch in Montana, in an unmarked gravesite in a "Liz Red" urn. Art planned to be buried next to her, returning to rest in the State where they both gave so much to so many. I know he will be missed. •

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Arthur "Art" Ortenberg, an apparel manufacturer and conservationist, who passed away yesterday in New York City.

Art and his late wife, designer Liz Claiborne, founded Liz Claiborne in 1976. After incredible early success, the company went public and soon appeared on the Fortune 500 list of America's biggest industrial firms.

Fourteen years after the creation of Liz Claiborne, Art and Liz retired from day-to-day management of their fashion company and chose to start a foundation dedicated to conservation. The Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation supports projects in the United

States, Europe, and Central and South America, but their main focus is on Africa. To this day, the foundation continues to support efforts to save the jaguar, the tiger, and the African elephant.

Art also had a particular passion for the American West, spending much of his time over the past 25 years on his ranch in Condon, MT. Art and Liz provided assistance to the Seeley Lake Elementary School, helped Pyramid Lumber in Seeley Lake convert to a more efficient mill operation, and supported public radio, Humanities Montana, the Canyon Creek Fire Department, the Helena Public Library, and the Montana Wildlife Federation.

As we bid farewell to Art, we recognize that he was a true pioneer for the fashion industry and a leader in the conservation community.

My thoughts and prayers are with Art's partner, Cathy Horyn; his son, Neil; daughter, Nancy; stepson, Alexander Schultz; and all of his family and many friends.●

TRIBUTE TO JEFF NELSON

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Jeff Nelson on his well-earned retirement after nearly 40 years of service at East River Electric Cooperative in Madison, SD, including 23 years as General Manager.

Jeff's wealth of knowledge and friendly demeanor have helped him develop close relationships with his colleagues and with community leaders throughout our State. He has been a tireless advocate for the population served by East River, and deeply engaged in discussions of energy and economic development policy for decades. As he has worked with me and my staff over the years, his input has always been appreciated and valued. He leaves behind an undeniable legacy of thoughtful and progressive leadership.

Jeff's work has left a mark on many facets of energy policy. Under his tenure as General Manager, East River has received national recognition, being named the 2013 Wind Energy Cooperative of the Year by the Energy Department. He undertook the daunting task of establishing a load-management system, the largest in the world at the time of its implementation. He also looked out for the unique interests of rural South Dakota in discussions of hydropower access and in helping the ethanol industry gain a foothold.

It is also important to note the vital economic development work Jeff has been involved in through the Rural Electric Economic Development, REED, Fund. The REED Fund has been crucial for the establishment or expansion of many South Dakota businesses and his work in this area has facilitated an improved rural economy.

He has been active in public service in his personal time, as well, using his

expertise to make continued contributions to his community and our state. This service includes serving as Chair of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Power and Water Resources Committee and Board President of the South Dakota Wind Energy Association, among other commitments.

Beyond his commendable career, I also take this opportunity to thank Jeff, and his wife Trudi for their years of friendship to me and Barbara. It was also a pleasure having Jeff and Trudi's son, Erik, serve as a valuable member of my staff for many years.

Though he will be missed at East River, I know that Jeff will continue to be engaged in policymaking and service projects. Once again, I am pleased to recognize Jeff for his many years of service to the people of South Dakota and applaud him for his exemplary career.●

AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN STUDY

● Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues an important accomplishment achieved by the American Institute For Foreign Study, AIFS, based in Stamford, CT. In 2014, AIFS will be celebrating its 50th year of providing unique cultural and educational opportunities to young people around the globe through its mission—"we bring the world together". Through its study and travel abroad, high school exchange, camp counselor, au pair, and gifted education programs, young people from diverse backgrounds have interacted with others from different cultures, gaining a better understanding of their values and ideas.

Since its inception, AIFS has provided this educational opportunity to over 1.5 million people. In fact, over 800,000 American high school or college-aged students have broadened their horizons by traveling abroad in structured educational programs. Whether it is through faculty-led educational travel programs or college semester/summer study abroad programs, young Americans have gained unique insights into a world that is rapidly shrinking.

Mr. President, I congratulate the leadership of AIFS for its tireless pursuit of its goal of achieving a greater global understanding. Working closely with the U.S. Department of State, AIFS' programs have positively changed the way their participants view the world as well as their place within it.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:42 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3590. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3964. An act to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1996. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 3590. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3964. An act to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4560. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to competitions initiated or conducted in fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4561. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012 (IPERIA); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4562. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4563. A communication from the Acting Director, National Science Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Foundation's fiscal year 2013 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4564. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2009," "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2010," "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2011," and "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2012"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4565. A communication from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Railroad Retirement Board's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013, including the Office of Inspector General's Auditor's Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4566. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-266, "Closing of a Portion of the Public Alley in Square 5452, S.O. 12-03541, Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4567. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-267, "Microstamping Implementation Temporary Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4568. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-272, "Public Charter School Historic Preservation Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4569. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-265, "Minimum Wage Amendment Act of 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4570. A communication from the Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Defense Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4571. A communication from the Director, Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Sunshine Act Report for 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4572. A communication from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Railroad Retirement Board's Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2013, including the Office of Inspector General's Auditor's Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4573. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Performance and Accountability Report Fiscal Year 2013"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4574. A communication from the Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4575. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department of Justice's activities regarding pre-1970 racially motivated homicides, as required by the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crimes Act of 2007; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4576. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Annual Privacy Report for the period January 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4577. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2013 Status of the Nation's Highways, Bridges and Transit: Conditions and Performance"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4578. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Export Administration Regulations: Editorial Clean-up of References to Foreign Trade Regulations" (RIN0694-AF97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4579. A communication from the General Counsel, National Science Foundation, transmitting draft legislation entitled "Antarctic Nongovernmental Activity Preparedness Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4580. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 31, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4581. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2014 Gulf of Alaska Pollock and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts" (RIN0648-XD058) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4582. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area; Amendment 99" (RIN0648-BC73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4583. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant

to law, the report of a rule entitled "Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Operation of Offshore Oil and Gas Facilities in the U.S. Beaufort Sea" (RIN0648-AY63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4584. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2014 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pollock, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts" (RIN0648-XD060) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4585. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" (RIN0648-XC811) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4586. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Chelsea River, Boston Inner Harbor, Boston, MA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2012-1069)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 24, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4587. A communication from the Chair of the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Panel's annual report for 2013; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4588. A communication from the Assistant Chief Counsel for Hazardous Materials Safety, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Hazardous Materials: Adoption of American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Code Section XII and the National Board Inspection Code" (RIN2137-AE58) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4589. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations (Ehrenberg, First Mesa, Kachina Village, Munds Park, Wickenburg, and Williams, Arizona)" (MB Docket No. 11-207) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4590. A communication from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Rural Call Completion" ((RIN3060-AJ89) (FCC 13-135)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 15, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS, from the Committee on Finance:

Report to accompany S. 1870, An original bill to reauthorize and restructure adoption incentive payments, to better enable State child welfare agencies to prevent sex trafficking of children and serve the needs of children who are victims of sex trafficking, to increase the reliability of child support for children, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113-137).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, for the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

*Arun Madhavan Kumar, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service.

*Katherine M. O'Regan, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

*Wanda Felton, of New York, to be First Vice President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2017.

By Mrs. BOXER for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife.

*Roy K. J. Williams, of Ohio, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development.

*Richard J. Engler, of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

*Thomas A. Burke, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Kenneth J. Kopocis, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Karen Dynan, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Indira Talwani, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

James D. Peterson, of Wisconsin, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Wisconsin.

Nancy J. Rosenstengel, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois.

John P. Carlin, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BAUCUS:

S. 1997. A bill to authorize the Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority System; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 1998. A bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to reserve funds for American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Tribal College or University adult education and literacy; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. REED):

S. 1999. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2000. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 2001. A bill to require that textile and apparel articles acquired for use by executive agencies be manufactured from articles, materials, or supplies entirely grown, produced, or manufactured in the United States; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 2002. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to conduct a motor and motor-driven systems market assessment and public awareness program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2003. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the energy credit for certain property under construction; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2004. A bill to ensure the safety of all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities, as they travel on and across federally funded streets and highways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself and Mr. MCCASKILL):

S. 2005. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the reporting of certain hospital payment data under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2006. A bill to provide for the establishment of a National Rare Earth Refinery Cooperative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. ENZI):

S. Res. 345. A resolution strongly supporting the restoration and protection of State authority and flexibility in establishing and defining challenging student academic standards and assessments, and strongly denouncing the President's coercion of States into adopting the Common Core State Standards by conferring preferences in Federal grants and flexibility waivers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. Res. 346. A resolution congratulating the athletes from the State of Washington and across the United States who are set to participate in the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Res. 347. A resolution providing for completion of the accelerated transition of United States combat and military and security operations to the Government of Afghanistan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. Res. 348. A resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 349. A resolution celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. Res. 350. A resolution designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BARASSO):

S. Res. 351. A resolution requiring that legislation considered by the Senate be confined to a single issue; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 352. A resolution commemorating the success of Team USA in the past 22 Olympic Winter Games and supporting Team USA in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games and Paralympic Winter Games; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 257

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 257, a bill to amend title 38,

United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.

S. 279

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 279, a bill to promote the development of renewable energy on public land, and for other purposes.

S. 409

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 409, a bill to add Vietnam Veterans Day as a patriotic and national observance.

S. 946

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 946, a bill to prohibit taxpayer funded abortions, and for other purposes.

S. 1061

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1061, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to designate certain medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs as health professional shortage areas, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1362

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1362, a bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a permanent background check system.

S. 1369

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) were added as cosponsors of S. 1369, a bill to provide additional flexibility to the Board of Governors of the Federal Re-

serve System to establish capital standards that are properly tailored to the unique characteristics of the business of insurance, and for other purposes.

S. 1391

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1391, a bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and other laws to clarify appropriate standards for Federal employment discrimination and retaliation claims, and for other purposes.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1507

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1587

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1587, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal to each of Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 1645

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1645, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 1688

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1688, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), collectively, in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

S. 1702

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1702, a bill to empower States with authority for most taxing and spending for highway programs and mass transit programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1737

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1826

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1826, a bill to provide predictability and certainty in the tax law, create jobs, and encourage investment.

S. 1845

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 1856

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1856, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62.

S. 1895

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1895, a bill to establish a commission to examine the United States monetary policy, evaluate alternative monetary regimes, and recommend a course for monetary policy going forward.

S. 1902

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1902, a bill to require notification of individuals of breaches of personally identifiable information through Exchanges under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1925

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1925, a bill to limit the retrieval of data from vehicle event data recorders.

S. 1933

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1933, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for

gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, and for other purposes.

S. 1963

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

S. 1966

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1966, a bill to provide for the restoration of the economic and ecological health of National Forest System land and rural communities, and for other purposes.

S. 1979

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1979, a bill to provide for USA Retirement Funds, to reform the pension system, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1984

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1984, a bill to enhance penalties for computer crimes, and for other purposes.

S. 1991

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1991, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow individuals a deduction for amounts contributed to disaster savings accounts to help defray the cost of preparing their homes to withstand a disaster and to repair or replace property damaged or destroyed in a disaster.

S. RES. 270

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 270, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio.

S. RES. 333

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from

Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNIS) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 333, a resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 333, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 2603

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2603 intended to be proposed to S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2712

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2712 intended to be proposed to S. 1845, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. REED):

S. 1999. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, our Nation has a strong tradition of ensuring that our servicemembers are protected while they serve To keep us safe. As the challenges facing our servicemembers change, we must work to ensure that our laws continue to keep pace. In this regard, I have worked with my colleagues over the years to strengthen the protections for servicemembers and their families under the Servicemember Civil Relief Act, SCRA.

One such effort, the Servicemember Housing Protection Act, which I authored and was recently reported out of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, would enhance protections relating to the housing needs of our servicemembers. I am pleased that these provisions have also been included in legislation the Senate will hopefully soon take up, Senator SANDERS's Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act, which I have cosponsored. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

Today, I am joining Senator GRAHAM in introducing on a bipartisan basis legislation to further enhance SCRA protections. The SCRA Rights Protection Act seeks to protect servicemembers from being forced to accept mandatory arbitration clauses as part of everyday transactions, such as those relating to mortgage origination, automobile leases, and student loans. Often servicemembers sign contracts that include arbitration clauses buried in the fine print, and this eliminates their access to the courts, which can limit their ability to assert their rights and reach a fair resolution. In disputes involving SCRA rights, this bill would make arbitration clauses unenforceable unless all parties consent to arbitration after the dispute arises, and would also ensure that servicemembers retain their right to join with other servicemembers to file a case together as a class.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting these improvements to the SCRA that will better protect our military families while the men and women of our Armed Forces protect our Nation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 345—STRONGLY SUPPORTING THE RESTORATION AND PROTECTION OF STATE AUTHORITY AND FLEXIBILITY IN ESTABLISHING AND DEFINING CHALLENGING STUDENT ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS, AND STRONGLY DENOUNCING THE PRESIDENT'S COERCION OF STATES INTO ADOPTING THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS BY CONFERRING PREFERENCES IN FEDERAL GRANTS AND FLEXIBILITY WAIVERS

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. ENZI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 345

Whereas education belongs in the hands of our parents, local officials, local educational agencies, and States;

Whereas the development of the common education standards known as the Common Core State Standards was originally led by national organizations, but has transformed into an incentives-based mandate from the Federal Government;

Whereas, in 2009, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), both of which are private trade associations, began developing common education standards for kindergarten through grade 12 (referred to in this preamble as the "Common Core State Standards");

Whereas, sections 9527, 9529, 9530, and 9531 of the Elementary and Secondary Education

Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7907, 7909, 7910, and 7911) prohibit the establishment of a national curriculum, national testing, mandatory national teacher certification, and a national student database;

Whereas Federal law makes clear that the Department of Education may not be involved in setting specific content standards or determining the content of State assessments in elementary and secondary education;

Whereas President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced competitive grants through the Race to the Top program under sections 14005 and 14006 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 123 Stat. 282) (referred to in this preamble as the "Race to the Top program") in July 2009;

Whereas, on July 24, 2009, Secretary Duncan stated, "The \$4,350,000,000 Race to the Top program that we are unveiling today is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Federal Government to create incentives for far-reaching improvement in our Nation's schools.";

Whereas, on July 24, 2009, Secretary Duncan also stated, "But I want to be clear that Race to the Top is also a reform competition, one where States can increase or decrease their odds of winning Federal support.";

Whereas, under the Race to the Top program guidelines, States seeking funds were pressed to implement 4 core, interconnected reforms, and the first of these reforms was to adopt "internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace";

Whereas, on July 24, 2009, President Obama outlined the connection between common education standards and Race to the Top program funds, stating, "I am issuing a challenge to our [N]ation's governors and school boards, principals and teachers, businesses and non-profits, parents and students: if you set and enforce rigorous and challenging standards and assessments; if you put outstanding teachers at the front of the classroom; if you turn around failing schools—your State can win a Race to the Top grant that will not only help students outcompete workers around the world, but let them fulfill their God-given potential.";

Whereas the selection criteria designed by the Department of Education for the Race to the Top program provided that for a State to have any chance to compete for funding, it must commit to adopting a "common set of K-12 standards";

Whereas Common Core State Standards establish a single set of education standards for kindergarten through grade 12 in English language arts and mathematics that States adopt;

Whereas Common Core State Standards were, during the initial application period for the Race to the Top program, and remain, as of the date of the adoption of this resolution, the only common set of kindergarten through grade 12 standards in the United States;

Whereas, on July 24, 2009, Secretary Duncan stated, "To speed this process, the Race to the Top program is going to set aside \$350,000,000 to competitively fund the development of rigorous, common State assessments.";

Whereas, since the Race to the Top program's inception, States have been incentivized by Federal money to adopt common education standards;

Whereas States began adopting Common Core State Standards in 2010;

Whereas States that adopted Common Core State Standards before August 2, 2010, were awarded 40 additional points out of 500 points for their Race to the Top program applications;

Whereas 45 States have adopted Common Core State Standards;

Whereas 31 States, of the 45 total, adopted Common Core State Standards before August 2, 2010;

Whereas States that have adopted Common Core State Standards are given preference in the application process for the waivers issued under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861) that provide flexibility with respect to certain requirements of such Act;

Whereas States that have adopted Common Core State Standards are currently collaborating to develop common assessments that will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards and replace existing end-of-the-year State assessments;

Whereas these assessments will be available in the 2014-2015 school year;

Whereas 2 consortia of States are developing common assessments: the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC);

Whereas national standards lead to national assessments and national assessments lead to a national curriculum;

Whereas education standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning;

Whereas challenging academic standards are vital to ensuring students are college and career ready;

Whereas blanket education standards should not be a prerequisite for Federal funding;

Whereas States are incentivized to adopt Common Core State Standards by the explicit correlation between the adoption of the Common Core State Standards by the State and the preference provided to such States through the Race to the Top program and the flexibility waivers issued under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861);

Whereas the Secretary of Education has created a system of grants and waivers that influence, incentivize, and coerce State educational agencies, commissions, and boards into implementing common elementary and secondary school standards and assessments endorsed by the Secretary;

Whereas when Federal funds are linked to the adoption of common education standards, the end result is increased Federal control over education and a decreased ability of schools to meet the individual needs of the students in their schools;

Whereas the implementation of Common Core State Standards will eventually impact home school and private school students when institutions of higher education are pressured to align their admission and readiness standards with curricula based on the Common Core State Standards;

Whereas the 10th amendment of the Constitution of the United States reads, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people"; and

Whereas, throughout the course of United States history, States have maintained the responsibility of education based on the 10th amendment because the explicit power of

educating children was not delegated to the United States by the Constitution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) States and local educational agencies should maintain the right and responsibility of determining educational curricula, programs of instruction, and assessments for elementary and secondary education;

(2) the Federal Government should not incentivize the adoption of common education standards or the creation of a national assessment to align with such standards; and

(3) no application process for any Federal grant funds, or for waivers issued by the Secretary under the authority of section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861), that occurs after the date of adoption of this resolution should award any additional points, or provide any preference, for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards or any other national common education standards.

SENATE RESOLUTION 346—CONGRATULATING THE ATHLETES FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON AND ACROSS THE UNITED STATES WHO ARE SET TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2014 WINTER OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES IN SOCHI, RUSSIA

Mrs. MURRAY (for herself and Ms. CANTWELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 346

Whereas the 2014 United States Olympic and Paralympic Team, also known as Team USA, is the largest delegation ever sent to a Winter Olympic Games by the United States;

Whereas the 230 members of Team USA represent the diversity of their Nation and will perform, with skill and grace, to the best of their ability;

Whereas diversity among national Olympic teams fosters greater understanding and peace among nations by upholding the values of the Olympic movement;

Whereas the members of Team USA will represent the spirit of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and fulfill the principles of modern Olympism as outlined in the Olympic Charter as modified by the International Olympic Committee on September 9, 2013;

Whereas on February 11, 2014, women will compete in ski jumping for the first time in Olympic history;

Whereas members of Team USA will compete in all 15 disciplines in the 2014 Winter Olympic Games across 7 sports, and in 94 of 98 medal events;

Whereas Team USA features 106 returning Olympians, including 13 Olympic gold medalists;

Whereas the members of Team USA from the great State of Washington who will proudly represent their Nation are—

(1) Erik Bjornsen of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(2) Sadie Bjornsen of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(3) J.R. Celski of Federal Way, Washington, who will compete in the 500 meter, 1,000 meter, 1,500 meter, and 5,000 meter relay events in short track speedskating;

(4) Patrick Deneen of Cle Elum, Washington, who will compete in the moguls event in freestyle skiing;

(5) Brian Gregg of Winthrop, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(6) Torin Koos of Leavenworth, Washington, who will compete in cross-country skiing;

(7) Christian Niccum of Woodinville, Washington, who will compete in luge; and

(8) Angeli VanLaanen of Bellingham, Washington, who will compete in the halfpipe event in freestyle skiing; and

Whereas all of the athletes of Team USA should be commended and honored for their contributions to sport, our country, and the Olympic movement: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges the dedication of the United States Olympic Committee, the national governing bodies of each sport that is an event at the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the administrators, coaches, families, and all others who support the athletes participating in the Olympic and Paralympic Games; and

(2) congratulates the members of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams and wishes them success at the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 347—PROVIDING FOR COMPLETION OF THE ACCELERATED TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES COMBAT AND MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 347

Whereas, in June 2013, the Government of Afghanistan assumed the lead for combat operations in all regions of Afghanistan consistent with the schedule agreed to by President Barack Obama and President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. COMPLETION OF ACCELERATED TRANSITION OF UNITED STATES COMBAT AND MILITARY AND SECURITY OPERATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States—

(1) that, in coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member countries, and other allies in Afghanistan, the President shall complete the accelerated transition of United States military and security operations to the Government of Afghanistan and redeploy United States Armed Forces from Afghanistan (including operations involving military and security-related contractors) by not later than December 31, 2014; and

(2) to pursue diplomatic efforts leading to a political settlement and reconciliation of the internal conflict in Afghanistan.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that, should the President determine the necessity to maintain United States troops in Afghanistan to carry out missions after December 31, 2014, any such

presence and missions should be authorized by a separate vote of Congress not later than June 1, 2014.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting or prohibiting any authority of the President to—

(1) modify the military strategy, tactics, and operations of United States Armed Forces as such Armed Forces redeploy from Afghanistan;

(2) attack al Qaeda forces wherever such forces are located;

(3) provide financial support and equipment to the Government of Afghanistan for the training and supply of Afghanistan military and security forces;

(4) gather, provide, and share intelligence with United States allies operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan; or

(5) provide security after December 31, 2014, to United States facilities or diplomatic personnel located in Afghanistan.

SENATE RESOLUTION 348—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNAL REBUILDING, RESETTLEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION WITHIN SRI LANKA THAT ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE A LASTING PEACE

Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 348

Whereas May 19, 2013, marks the four-year anniversary of the end of the 26-year conflict between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka;

Whereas the people of Sri Lanka suffered greatly as a result of this conflict, the impact and aftermath of which has been felt especially by women, children, and families;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka established a “Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission” (LLRC) to report whether any person, group, or institution directly or indirectly bears responsibility for incidents that occurred between February 2002 and May 2009 and to recommend measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future and promote further national unity and reconciliation among all communities;

Whereas the LLRC report was presented to the Sri Lankan Parliament on December 16, 2011, and officially translated into Sinhala and Tamil on August 16, 2012;

Whereas the LLRC report acknowledges important events and grievances that have contributed to decades of political violence and war in Sri Lanka and makes constructive recommendations on a wide range of issues, including the need to credibly investigate widespread allegations of extrajudicial killings; enforced disappearances; intentional targeting of civilians and noncombatants; demilitarizing the north and the country as a whole; reaching a political settlement with minority communities on the meaningful decentralization of power; and promoting and protecting the right to freedom of expression for all through the enactment of a right to information law and additional rule of law reforms;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka developed the National Plan of Action to im-

plement just 82 of the 285 recommendations of the LLRC in August 2011, and although the Government of Sri Lanka has made some progress on rehabilitation, resettlement of displaced persons, and improvements of infrastructure in the North and East, there are still many issues of major concern;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka has yet to reasonably address issues of reconciliation and accountability through internal processes;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2012 Human Rights Report on Sri Lanka outlines ongoing concerns regarding landownership and property restitution, particularly in the Jaffna Peninsula, where large numbers of persons have not received restitution for land that remains part of government high security zones, and while citizens generally were able to travel almost anywhere in the island, there continues to be police and military checkpoints in the north, and defacto high-security zones and other areas remained off limits to citizens;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka has not taken tangible steps toward demilitarization of civilian functions, particularly in the North and East, and continued military presence on private lands in the North is preventing the resettlement of internally displaced persons who desire a return to peaceful life;

Whereas the Department of State’s 2012 Human Rights Report on Sri Lanka also includes reports of serious human rights violations such as unlawful killings by security forces and government-allied paramilitary groups, often in predominantly Tamil areas; torture and abuse of detainees by police and security forces; and arbitrary arrest and detention by authorities;

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution supported by the United States and adopted by the UNHRC on March 21, 2013, expresses concern at the continuing reports of violations of human rights in Sri Lanka, including enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, torture, and violations of the rights to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, as well as intimidation of and reprisals against human rights defenders, members of civil society and journalists, threats to judicial independence and the rule of law, and discrimination on the basis of religion or belief;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka expressed its commitment to addressing the needs of all ethnic groups and has recognized, in the past, the necessity of a political settlement and reconciliation for a peaceful and just society; and

Whereas tangible progress on domestic and international investigations into reports of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other human rights violations during and after the conflict and promoting reconciliation would facilitate enhanced United States engagement and investment in Sri Lanka: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the representatives of the United States on their leadership on United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution (UNHRC) 22/1, adopted by the UNHRC on March 21, 2013, which promotes reconciliation and accountability in Sri Lanka;

(2) calls on the United States and the international community to establish an independent international accountability mechanism to evaluate reports of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other human rights violations committed by both sides during and after the war in Sri Lanka;

(3) urges the Government of Sri Lanka to allow unimpeded access for media, international aid agencies, and human rights groups into all regions of the country, as well as to detention sites that may hold political and war prisoners;

(4) urges the Government of Sri Lanka to end its media restrictions, including the obstacles to the flow of information in the North and East, and bring to justice those responsible for attacks on journalists and newspaper offices; and

(5) calls upon the President to develop a comprehensive policy towards Sri Lanka that reflects United States interests, including respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law, economic interests, and security interests.

SENATE RESOLUTION 349—CELEBRATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WALLA WALLA VALLEY AMERICAN VITICULTURAL AREA

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 349

Whereas the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area was designated an American Viticultural Area on February 6, 1984;

Whereas the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area is considered one of the most awarded and recognized of the American Viticultural Areas in the United States;

Whereas in 2013, 4 Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area wines were selected by 3 leading wine publications as among the top 100 wines in the world;

Whereas the wine industry contributes over \$500 million annually to the economy of Walla Walla County;

Whereas jobs in the wine industry are steadily growing in Walla Walla County and are expected to account for 20 percent of jobs in Walla Walla County by 2020;

Whereas the number of wineries in the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area has grown from 4 in 1984 to approximately 130 today;

Whereas agricultural land devoted to growing wine grapes in the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area has grown from 30 acres in 1984 to 1,800 acres in 2013; and

Whereas Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area wines are consistently rated highly by critics and enjoyed by wine connoisseurs around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commends the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area on the occasion of its 30 year anniversary;

(2) recognizes the Walla Walla Valley American Viticultural Area as a pioneer in the wine industry of Washington; and

(3) requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution for appropriate display to the Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance.

SENATE RESOLUTION 350—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 14, 2014, AS NATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY FOR COMPASSIONATE PATIENT CARE

Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 350

Whereas National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care promotes national awareness of the importance of compassionate and respectful relationships between health care professionals and their patients as reflected in attitudes that are sensitive to the values, autonomy, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds of patients and their families;

Whereas on February 14 of each year, medical professionals and students stand in solidarity to support compassion in health care as expressed by Dr. Randall Friese, triage physician at the University of Arizona Medical Center, who stated that the most important treatment he provided to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords after she was shot on January 8, 2011, was to hold her hand and reassure her that she was in the hospital and would be cared for;

Whereas physicians, nurses, and all other health care professionals are charged with practicing medicine as both an art and a science;

Whereas an awareness of the importance of compassion in health care encourages health care professionals to be mindful of the need to treat the patient rather than the disease;

Whereas scientific research reveals that when health care professionals practice humanistically and demonstrate the qualities of integrity, compassion, altruism, respect, empathy, and service, their patients have better medical outcomes; and

Whereas February 14th would be an appropriate day to designate as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care and for health care students and professionals to celebrate by performing humanistic acts of compassion and kindness toward patients, families of patients, and health care colleagues: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care;

(2) recognizes the importance and value of a respectful relationship between health care professionals and their patients as a means of promoting better health outcomes; and

(3) encourages all health care professionals to be mindful of the important roles in medicine of humanism and compassion, as well as technical expertise.

SENATE RESOLUTION 351—REQUIRING THAT LEGISLATION CONSIDERED BY THE SENATE BE CONFINED TO A SINGLE ISSUE

Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. BARASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 351

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SINGLE-ISSUE REQUIREMENT.

(a) POINT OF ORDER.—It shall not be in order in the Senate to consider a bill or resolution that is not confined to a single subject.

(b) SUPERMAJORITY WAIVER AND APPEALS.—

(1) WAIVER.—This section may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Members, duly chosen and sworn.

(2) APPEALS.—Appeals in the Senate from the decisions of the Chair relating to any provision of this section shall be limited to 30 minutes, to be equally divided between, and controlled by, the appellant and the

manager of the bill or joint resolution. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.

SENATE RESOLUTION 352—COMMEMORATING THE SUCCESS OF TEAM USA IN THE PAST 22 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES AND SUPPORTING TEAM USA IN THE 2014 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES AND PARALYMPIC WINTER GAMES

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BENNET, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 352

Whereas for over 100 years, the Olympic Movement has built a more peaceful and better world by educating young people through amateur athletics, bringing together athletes from many countries in friendly competition, and forging new relationships bound by friendship, solidarity, and fair play;

Whereas the 2014 Olympic Winter Games will take place in Sochi, Russia from February 7, 2014, to February 23, 2014, and the 2014 Paralympic Winter Games will take place in Sochi, Russia from March 7, 2014, to March 16, 2014;

Whereas at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games, more than 85 nations will compete in 15 sports disciplines, and Team USA will compete in all 15 sports disciplines;

Whereas at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games, more than 85 nations will compete in 7 sports, and Team USA will compete in all 7 sports;

Whereas 230 Olympians and more than 75 Paralympians will compete on behalf of Team USA in Sochi, Russia;

Whereas Team USA has won 87 gold medals, 95 silver medals, and 72 bronze medals, totaling 254 medals in the past 22 Olympic Winter Games;

Whereas the people of the United States stand united in respect and admiration for the members of the United States Winter Olympic and Winter Paralympic teams and the athletic accomplishments, sportsmanship, and dedication to excellence of the teams;

Whereas the many accomplishments of the United States Winter Olympic and Winter Paralympic teams would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of many individuals, including individuals on the United States Olympic Committee and the many administrators, coaches, and family members who provided critical support to the athletes;

Whereas the United States takes great pride in the qualities of commitment to excellence, grace under pressure, and good will toward other competitors that the athletes of Team USA exhibit; and

Whereas the Olympic Movement celebrates competition, fair play, and the pursuit of dreams: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) applauds all athletes and coaches of Team USA and the families of such athletes and coaches who support them;

(2) supports the athletes of Team USA in their endeavors at the 2014 Olympic Winter and Paralympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia;

(3) thanks all members of the United States Olympic Committee for their unwavering support of the athletes of Team USA; and

(4) supports the goals and ideals of the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2719. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2720. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2721. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2722. Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. VITTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2723. Mr. COATS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2724. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2725. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2726. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2727. Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HOEVEN, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2728. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2729. Mr. REID (for Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BENNET)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 289, expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams.

SA 2730. Mr. REID (for Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BENNET)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 289, supra.

SA 2731. Mr. REID (for Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BENNET)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 289, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2719. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment

benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PERMANENT REPATRIATION OF FOREIGN EARNINGS TO THE UNITED STATES.

(a) REPATRIATION SUBJECT TO 5 PERCENT TAX RATE.—Subsection (a)(1) of section 965 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “85 percent” and inserting “85.7 percent”.

(b) PERMANENT EXTENSION TO ELECT REPATRIATION.—Subsection (f) of section 965 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(f) ELECTION.—The taxpayer may elect to apply this section to any taxable year only if made on or before the due date (including extensions) for filing the return of tax for such taxable year.”

(c) REPATRIATION INCLUDES CURRENT AND ACCUMULATED FOREIGN EARNINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 965(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of dividends taken into account under subsection (a) shall not exceed the sum of the current and accumulated earnings and profits described in section 959(c)(3) for the year a deduction is claimed under subsection (a), without diminution by reason of any distributions made during the election year, for all controlled foreign corporations of the United States shareholder.”

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 965(b) of such Code is amended by striking paragraphs (2) and (4) and by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (2).

(B) Section 965(c) of such Code is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), respectively.

(C) Paragraph (3) of section 965(c) of such Code, as redesignated by subparagraph (B), is amended to read as follows:

“(3) CONTROLLED GROUPS.—All United States shareholders which are members of an affiliated group filing a consolidated return under section 1501 shall be treated as one United States shareholder.”

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading for section 965 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “TEMPORARY”.

(2) The table of sections for subpart F of part III of subchapter N of chapter 1 of such Code is amended by striking “Temporary dividends” and inserting “Dividends”.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years ending after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2720. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 13 of the amendment, add after line 6 the following:

SEC. 9. REPEAL OF ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RETIRED PAY AND RETAINER PAY AMOUNTS FOR RETIRED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES UNDER AGE 62.

(a) REPEALS.—

(1) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013

is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO TAXPAYER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any taxpayer for any taxable year unless the taxpayer includes the taxpayer’s Social Security number on the return of tax for such taxable year.

“(B) JOINT RETURNS.—In the case of a joint return, the requirement of subparagraph (A) shall be treated as met if the Social Security number of either spouse is included on such return.

“(C) LIMITATION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the extent the tentative minimum tax (as defined in section 55(b)(1)(A)) exceeds the credit allowed under section 32.”

(2) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of such Code is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct Social Security number required under section 24(d)(5) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), or a correct TIN under section 24(e) (relating to child tax credit), to be included on a return.”

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of such Code is amended by inserting “WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN” after “IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT” in the heading thereof.

(4) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2721. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end add the following:

SEC. ____ . ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING FEDERAL DISABILITY PAYMENTS.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments of unemployment compensation (including such compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970 and the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008) for a week to an individual who is receiving disability payments for such week under section 223 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 423).

(b) COMPLIANCE.—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify that the individual is not receiving disability payments under such section 223.

(c) AUDITS.—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the Social Security Administration, the U.S. Department of Labor, or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) STATUS OF APPLICANTS.—It is the duty of the states to verify the residency, employment, legal, and disability payment status of

applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining an individual's eligibility under this Act.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2722. Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. VITTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH ELECTRONIC VERIFICATION.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Accountability Through Electronic Verification Act”.

(b) **PERMANENT REAUTHORIZATION.**—Section 401(b) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (division C of Public Law 104-208; 8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended by striking “Unless the Congress otherwise provides, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall terminate a pilot program on September 30, 2015.”

(c) **MANDATORY USE OF E-VERIFY.**—Section 402 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

“(A) **EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.**—Each department and agency of the Federal Government shall participate in E-Verify by complying with the terms and conditions set forth in this section.”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “, that conducts hiring in a State” and all that follows and inserting “shall participate in E-Verify by complying with the terms and conditions set forth in this section.”;

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) **UNITED STATES CONTRACTORS.**—Any person, employer, or other entity that enters into a contract with the Federal Government shall participate in E-Verify by complying with the terms and conditions set forth in this section.

“(3) **DESIGNATION OF CRITICAL EMPLOYERS.**—Not later than 7 days after the date of the enactment of the Accountability Through Electronic Verification Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

“(A) conduct an assessment of employers that are critical to the homeland security or national security needs of the United States;

“(B) designate and publish a list of employers and classes of employers that are deemed to be critical pursuant to the assessment conducted under subparagraph (A); and

“(C) require that critical employers designated pursuant to subparagraph (B) participate in E-Verify by complying with the terms and conditions set forth in this section not later than 30 days after the Secretary makes such designation.”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

“(f) **MANDATORY PARTICIPATION IN E-VERIFY.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), all employers in the United States shall participate in E-Verify, with respect to all employees recruited, referred, or hired by such employer on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Accountability Through Electronic Verification Act.

“(2) **USE OF CONTRACT LABOR.**—Any employer who uses a contract, subcontract, or exchange to obtain the labor of an individual in the United States shall certify in such contract, subcontract, or exchange that the employer uses E-Verify. If such certification is not included in a contract, subcontract, or exchange, the employer shall be deemed to have violated paragraph (1).

“(3) **INTERIM MANDATORY PARTICIPATION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Before the date set forth in paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall require any employer or class of employers to participate in E-Verify, with respect to all employees recruited, referred, or hired by such employer if the Secretary has reasonable cause to believe that the employer is or has been engaged in a material violation of section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324a).

“(B) **NOTIFICATION.**—Not later than 14 days before an employer or class of employers is required to begin participating in E-Verify pursuant to subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall provide such employer or class of employers with—

“(i) written notification of such requirement; and

“(ii) appropriate training materials to facilitate compliance with such requirement.”.

(d) **CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 402(e)(5) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note), as redesignated by subsection (c)(1)(B), is amended to read as follows:

“(5) **CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE TO PARTICIPATE.**—If a person or other entity that is required to participate in E-Verify fails to comply with the requirements under this title with respect to an individual—

“(A) such failure shall be treated as a violation of section 274A(a)(1)(B) with respect to such individual; and

“(B) a rebuttable presumption is created that the person or entity has violated section 274A(a)(1)(A).”.

(2) **PENALTIES.**—Section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324a) is amended—

(A) in subsection (e)—

(i) in paragraph (4)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “, subject to paragraph (10),” after “in an amount”;

(II) in subparagraph (A)(i), by striking “not less than \$250 and not more than \$2,000” and inserting “not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$5,000”;

(III) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by striking “not less than \$2,000 and not more than \$5,000” and inserting “not less than \$5,000 and not more than \$10,000”;

(IV) in subparagraph (A)(iii), by striking “not less than \$3,000 and not more than \$10,000” and inserting “not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$25,000”; and

(V) by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:

“(B) may require the person or entity to take such other remedial action as is appropriate.”;

(ii) in paragraph (5)—

(I) by inserting “, subject to paragraphs (10) through (12),” after “in an amount”;

(II) by striking “\$100” and inserting “\$1,000”;

(III) by striking “\$1,000” and inserting “\$25,000”;

(IV) by striking “the size of the business of the employer being charged, the good faith of the employer” and inserting “the good faith of the employer being charged”; and

(V) by adding at the end the following: “Failure by a person or entity to utilize the employment eligibility verification system as required by law, or providing information to the system that the person or entity knows or reasonably believes to be false, shall be treated as a violation of subsection (a)(1)(A).”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(10) **EXEMPTION FROM PENALTY.**—In the case of imposition of a civil penalty under paragraph (4)(A) with respect to a violation of subsection (a)(1)(A) or (a)(2) for hiring or continuation of employment or recruitment or referral by person or entity and in the case of imposition of a civil penalty under paragraph (5) for a violation of subsection (a)(1)(B) for hiring or recruitment or referral by a person or entity, the penalty otherwise imposed may be waived or reduced if the violator establishes that the violator acted in good faith.

“(11) **AUTHORITY TO DEBAR EMPLOYERS FOR CERTAIN VIOLATIONS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—If a person or entity is determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security to be a repeat violator of paragraph (1)(A) or (2) of subsection (a), or is convicted of a crime under this section, such person or entity may be considered for debarment from the receipt of Federal contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements in accordance with the debarment standards and pursuant to the debarment procedures set forth in the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

“(B) **DOES NOT HAVE CONTRACT, GRANT, AGREEMENT.**—If the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Attorney General wishes to have a person or entity considered for debarment in accordance with this paragraph, and such a person or entity does not hold a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement, the Secretary or Attorney General shall refer the matter to the Administrator of General Services to determine whether to list the person or entity on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement, and if so, for what duration and under what scope.

“(C) **HAS CONTRACT, GRANT, AGREEMENT.**—If the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Attorney General wishes to have a person or entity considered for debarment in accordance with this paragraph, and such person or entity holds a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement, the Secretary or Attorney General shall advise all agencies or departments holding a contract, grant, or cooperative agreement with the person or entity of the Government's interest in having the person or entity considered for debarment, and after soliciting and considering the views of all such agencies and departments, the Secretary or Attorney General may waive the operation of this paragraph or refer the matter to any appropriate lead agency to determine whether to list the person or entity on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement, and if so, for what duration and under what scope.

“(D) **REVIEW.**—Any decision to debar a person or entity under in accordance with this paragraph shall be reviewable pursuant to part 9.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.”; and

(B) in subsection (f)—

(i) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

“(1) **CRIMINAL PENALTY.**—Any person or entity which engages in a pattern or practice of violations of subsection (a)(1) or (2) shall be fined not more than \$15,000 for each unauthorized alien with respect to which such a violation occurs, imprisoned for not less than 1 year and not more than 10 years, or both, notwithstanding the provisions of any other Federal law relating to fine levels.”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking “Attorney General” each place it appears and inserting “Secretary of Homeland Security”.

(e) **PREEMPTION; LIABILITY.**—Section 402 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note), as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) **LIMITATION ON STATE AUTHORITY.**—

“(1) **PREEMPTION.**—A State or local government may not prohibit a person or other entity from verifying the employment authorization of new hires or current employees through E-Verify.

“(2) **LIABILITY.**—A person or other entity that participates in E-Verify may not be held liable under any Federal, State, or local law for any employment-related action taken with respect to the wrongful termination of an individual in good faith reliance on information provided through E-Verify.”.

(f) **EXPANDED USE OF E-VERIFY.**—Section 403(a)(3)(A) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended to read as follows:

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—

“(i) **BEFORE HIRING.**—The person or other entity may verify the employment eligibility of an individual through E-Verify before the individual is hired, recruited, or referred if the individual consents to such verification. If an employer receives a tentative nonconfirmation for an individual, the employer shall comply with procedures prescribed by the Secretary, including—

“(I) providing the individual employees with private, written notification of the finding and written referral instructions;

“(II) allowing the individual to contest the finding; and

“(III) not taking adverse action against the individual if the individual chooses to contest the finding.

“(ii) **AFTER EMPLOYMENT OFFER.**—The person or other entity shall verify the employment eligibility of an individual through E-Verify not later than 3 days after the date of the hiring, recruitment, or referral, as the case may be.

“(iii) **EXISTING EMPLOYEES.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of the Accountability Through Electronic Verification Act, the Secretary shall require all employers to use E-Verify to verify the identity and employment eligibility of any individual who has not been previously verified by the employer through E-Verify.”.

(g) **REVERIFICATION.**—Section 403(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) **REVERIFICATION.**—Each person or other entity participating in E-Verify shall use the E-Verify confirmation system to reverify the work authorization of any individual not later than 3 days after the date on which such individual’s employment authorization is scheduled to expire (as indicated by the Secretary or the documents provided to the

employer pursuant to section 274A(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324a(b))), in accordance with the procedures set forth in this subsection and section 402.”.

(h) **HOLDING EMPLOYERS ACCOUNTABLE.**—

(1) **CONSEQUENCES OF NONCONFIRMATION.**—Section 403(a)(4)(C) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended to read as follows:

“(C) **CONSEQUENCES OF NONCONFIRMATION.**—

“(i) **TERMINATION AND NOTIFICATION.**—If the person or other entity receives a final nonconfirmation regarding an individual, the employer shall immediately—

“(I) terminate the employment, recruitment, or referral of the individual; and

“(II) submit to the Secretary any information relating to the individual that the Secretary determines would assist the Secretary in enforcing or administering United States immigration laws.

“(ii) **CONSEQUENCE OF CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT.**—If the person or other entity continues to employ, recruit, or refer the individual after receiving final nonconfirmation, a rebuttable presumption is created that the employer has violated section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324a).”.

(2) **INTERAGENCY NONCONFIRMATION REPORT.**—Section 405 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **INTERAGENCY NONCONFIRMATION REPORT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services shall submit a weekly report to the Assistant Secretary of Immigration and Customs Enforcement that includes, for each individual who receives final nonconfirmation through E-Verify—

“(A) the name of such individual;

“(B) his or her Social Security number or alien file number;

“(C) the name and contact information for his or her current employer; and

“(D) any other critical information that the Assistant Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(2) **USE OF WEEKLY REPORT.**—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall use information provided under paragraph (1) to enforce compliance of the United States immigration laws.”.

(i) **INFORMATION SHARING.**—The Commissioner of Social Security, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of the Treasury shall jointly establish a program to share information among such agencies that may or could lead to the identification of unauthorized aliens (as defined in section 274A(h)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act), including any no-match letter and any information in the earnings suspense file.

(j) **FORM I-9 PROCESS.**—Not later than 9 months after date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a report to Congress that contains recommendations for—

(1) modifying and simplifying the process by which employers are required to complete and retain a Form I-9 for each employee pursuant to section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324a); and

(2) eliminating the process described in paragraph (1).

(k) **ALGORITHM.**—Section 404(d) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) **DESIGN AND OPERATION OF SYSTEM.**—E-Verify shall be designed and operated—

“(1) to maximize its reliability and ease of use by employers;

“(2) to insulate and protect the privacy and security of the underlying information;

“(3) to maintain appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to prevent unauthorized disclosure of personal information;

“(4) to respond accurately to all inquiries made by employers on whether individuals are authorized to be employed;

“(5) to register any times when E-Verify is unable to receive inquiries;

“(6) to allow for auditing use of the system to detect fraud and identify theft;

“(7) to preserve the security of the information in all of the system by—

“(A) developing and using algorithms to detect potential identity theft, such as multiple uses of the same identifying information or documents;

“(B) developing and using algorithms to detect misuse of the system by employers and employees;

“(C) developing capabilities to detect anomalies in the use of the system that may indicate potential fraud or misuse of the system; and

“(D) auditing documents and information submitted by potential employees to employers, including authority to conduct interviews with employers and employees;

“(8) to confirm identity and work authorization through verification of records maintained by the Secretary, other Federal departments, States, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or an outlying possession of the United States, as determined necessary by the Secretary, including—

“(A) records maintained by the Social Security Administration;

“(B) birth and death records maintained by vital statistics agencies of any State or other jurisdiction in the United States;

“(C) passport and visa records (including photographs) maintained by the Department of State; and

“(D) State driver’s license or identity card information (including photographs) maintained by State department of motor vehicles;

“(9) to electronically confirm the issuance of the employment authorization or identity document; and

“(10) to display the digital photograph that the issuer placed on the document so that the employer can compare the photograph displayed to the photograph on the document presented by the employee or, in exceptional cases, if a photograph is not available from the issuer, to provide for a temporary alternative procedure, specified by the Secretary, for confirming the authenticity of the document.”.

(1) **IDENTITY THEFT.**—Section 1028 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(7), by striking “of another person” and inserting “that is not his or her own”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(3)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by adding “or” at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) to facilitate or assist in harboring or hiring unauthorized workers in violation of section 274, 274A, or 274C of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324, 1324a, and 1324c).”.

(m) SMALL BUSINESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Section 403 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) SMALL BUSINESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.—Not later than 9 months after the date of the enactment of the Accountability Through Electronic Verification Act, the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services shall establish a demonstration program that assists small businesses in rural areas or areas without internet capabilities to verify the employment eligibility of newly hired employees solely through the use of publicly accessible internet terminals.”.

SA 2723. Mr. COATS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REQUIREMENT THAT INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN A SYSTEMATIC AND SUSTAINED EFFORT TO OBTAIN SUITABLE WORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (h) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(h) ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (b)(4), payment of emergency unemployment compensation shall not be made to any individual for any week of unemployment—

“(A) during which the individual fails to accept any offer of suitable work (as defined in paragraph (3)) or fails to apply for any suitable work to which the individual was referred by the State agency; or

“(B) during which the individual fails to actively engage in seeking work, unless such individual is not actively engaged in seeking work because such individual is, as determined in accordance with State law—

“(i) before any court of the United States or any State pursuant to a lawfully issued summons to appear for jury duty (as such term may be defined by the Secretary); or

“(ii) hospitalized for treatment of an emergency or a life-threatening condition (as such term may be defined by the Secretary), if such exemptions in clauses (i) and (ii) apply to recipients of regular benefits, and the State chooses to apply such exemptions for recipients of emergency unemployment benefits.

“(2) PERIOD OF INELIGIBILITY.—If any individual is ineligible for emergency unemployment compensation for any week by reason of a failure described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1), the individual shall be ineligible to receive emergency unemployment compensation for any week which begins during a period which—

“(A) begins with the week following the week in which such failure occurs; and

“(B) does not end until such individual has been employed during at least 4 weeks which begin after such failure and the total of the remuneration earned by the individual for

being so employed is not less than the product of 4 multiplied by the individual's average weekly benefit amount for the individual's benefit year.

“(3) SUITABLE WORK.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘suitable work’ means, with respect to any individual, any work which is within such individual's capabilities, except that, if the individual furnishes evidence satisfactory to the State agency that such individual's prospects for obtaining work in his customary occupation within a reasonably short period are good, the determination of whether any work is suitable work with respect to such individual shall be made in accordance with the applicable State law.

“(4) EXCEPTION.—Extended compensation shall not be denied under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) to any individual for any week by reason of a failure to accept an offer of, or apply for, suitable work—

“(A) if the gross average weekly remuneration payable to such individual for the position does not exceed the sum of—

“(i) the individual's average weekly benefit amount for his benefit year, plus

“(ii) the amount (if any) of supplemental unemployment compensation benefits (as defined in section 501(c)(17)(D) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) payable to such individual for such week;

“(B) if the position was not offered to such individual in writing and was not listed with the State employment service;

“(C) if such failure would not result in a denial of compensation under the provisions of the applicable State law to the extent that such provisions are not inconsistent with the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (5); or

“(D) if the position pays wages less than the higher of—

“(i) the minimum wage provided by section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, without regard to any exemption; or

“(ii) any applicable State or local minimum wage.

“(5) ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SEEKING WORK.—For purposes of this subsection, an individual shall be treated as actively engaged in seeking work during any week if—

“(A) the individual has engaged in a systematic and sustained effort to obtain work during such week, and

“(B) the individual provides tangible evidence to the State agency that he has engaged in such an effort during such week.

“(6) REFERRAL.—The State agency shall provide for referring applicants for emergency unemployment benefits to any suitable work to which paragraph (4) would not apply.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2724. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) REPEALS.—

(1) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(e) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), no credit shall be allowed under this section to a taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and taxpayer identification number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.

“(2) REFUNDABLE PORTION.—Subsection (d)(1) shall not apply to any taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and social security number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.”.

(2) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct TIN under section 24(e)(1) (relating to child tax credit) or a correct Social Security number required under section 24(e)(2) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), to be included on a return.”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2725. Ms. AYOTTE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in the amendment, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) REPEALS.—

(1) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(e) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), no credit shall be allowed under this section to a taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and taxpayer identification number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.

“(2) REFUNDABLE PORTION.—Subsection (d)(1) shall not apply to any taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and social security number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.”.

(2) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct TIN under section 24(e)(1) (relating to child tax credit) or a correct Social Security number required under section 24(e)(2) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), to be included on a return.”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2726. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . PROHIBITING FEDERAL PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION WITH RESPECT TO COSTS FOR OFFICE FURNISHINGS AND MURALS, PORTRAITS, AND OTHER ARTWORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 302 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 501) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) No portion of the cost of office furnishings or murals, portraits, or other artwork shall be treated as being a cost for the proper and efficient administration of the State unemployment compensation law.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to costs incurred on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2727. Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. HOEVEN, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Extension and modification of emergency unemployment compensation program.
- Sec. 3. Temporary extension of extended benefit provisions.
- Sec. 4. Extension of funding for reemployment services and eligibility assessment activities.
- Sec. 5. Additional extended unemployment benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.
- Sec. 6. Flexibility for unemployment program agreements.
- Sec. 7. Repeal of reductions made by Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.
- Sec. 8. Reduction in benefits based on receipt of unemployment compensation.

Sec. 9. Reduction of non-Medicare, non-defense direct spending.

SEC. 2. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “January 1, 2014” and inserting “April 1, 2014”.

(b) MODIFICATIONS RELATING TO WEEKS OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.—

(1) NUMBER OF WEEKS IN FIRST TIER BEGINNING AFTER DECEMBER 28, 2013.—Section 4002(b) of such Act is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in the heading, by inserting “, AND WEEKS ENDING BEFORE DECEMBER 30, 2013” after “2012”; and

(ii) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “, and before December 30, 2013” after “2012”; and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO AMOUNTS ESTABLISHED IN AN ACCOUNT AS OF A WEEK ENDING AFTER DECEMBER 29, 2013.—Notwithstanding any provision of paragraph (1), in the case of any account established as of a week ending after December 29, 2013—

“(A) paragraph (1)(A) shall be applied by substituting ‘24 percent’ for ‘80 percent’; and

“(B) paragraph (1)(B) shall be applied by substituting ‘6 times’ for ‘20 times’.”.

(2) NUMBER OF WEEKS IN SECOND TIER BEGINNING AFTER DECEMBER 28, 2013.—Section 4002(c) of such Act is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(5) SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO AMOUNTS ADDED TO AN ACCOUNT AS OF A WEEK ENDING AFTER DECEMBER 29, 2013.—Notwithstanding any provision of paragraph (1), if augmentation under this subsection occurs as of a week ending after December 29, 2013—

“(A) paragraph (1)(A) shall be applied by substituting ‘24 percent’ for ‘54 percent’; and

“(B) paragraph (1)(B) shall be applied by substituting ‘6 times’ for ‘14 times’.”.

(c) FUNDING.—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting “and” at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

“(K) the amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) of section 2 of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act;”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 3. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111-5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking “December 31, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “March 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2014”.

(b) EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.—Section 5 of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2014”.

(c) EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “March 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “March 31, 2014”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 4. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “through fiscal year 2014” and inserting “through the first quarter of fiscal year 2015”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking “June 30, 2013” and inserting “September 30, 2013”; and

(2) by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “March 31, 2014”.

(b) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board \$62,500 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. 6. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) FLEXIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before December 1, 2013, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after December 29, 2013.

(b) PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.—Nothing in title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall preclude a State whose agreement under such title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this Act if the

State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

SEC. 7. REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-67) is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

SEC. 8. REDUCTION IN BENEFITS BASED ON RECEIPT OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 224 the following new section:

“REDUCTION IN BENEFITS BASED ON RECEIPT OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

“SEC. 224A (a)(1) If for any month prior to the month in which an individual attains retirement age (as defined in section 216(1)(1))—

“(A) such individual is entitled to benefits under section 223, and

“(B) such individual is entitled for such month to unemployment compensation,

the total of the individual’s benefits under section 223 for such month and of any benefits under section 202 for such month based on the individual’s wages and self-employment income shall be reduced (but not below zero) by the total amount of unemployment compensation received by such individual for such month.

“(2) The reduction of benefits under paragraph (1) shall also apply to any past-due benefits under section 223 for any month in which the individual was entitled to—

“(A) benefits under such section, and

“(B) unemployment compensation.

“(3) The reduction of benefits under paragraph (1) shall not apply to any benefits under section 223 for any month, or any benefits under section 202 for such month based on the individual’s wages and self-employment income for such month, if the individual is entitled for such month to unemployment compensation following a period of trial work (as described in section 222(c)(1), participation in the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program established under section 1148, or participation in any other program that is designed to encourage an individual entitled to benefits under section 223 or 202 to work.

“(b) If any unemployment compensation is payable to an individual on other than a monthly basis (including a benefit payable as a lump sum to the extent that it is a commutation of, or a substitute for, such periodic compensation), the reduction under this section shall be made at such time or times and in such amounts as the Commissioner of Social Security (referred to in this section as the ‘Commissioner’) determines will approximate as nearly as practicable the reduction prescribed by subsection (a).

“(c) Reduction of benefits under this section shall be made after any applicable reductions under section 203(a) and section 224, but before any other applicable deductions under section 203.

“(d)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), if the Commissioner determines that an individual may be eligible for unemployment compensation which would give rise to a reduction of benefits under this section, the Commissioner may require, as a condition of certification for payment of any benefits under section 223 to any individual for any month and of any benefits under section 202 for such month based on such individual’s wages and self-employment income, that such individual certify—

“(A) whether the individual has filed or intends to file any claim for unemployment compensation, and

“(B) if the individual has filed a claim, whether there has been a decision on such claim.

“(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the Commissioner may, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, rely upon a certification by the individual that the individual has not filed and does not intend to file such a claim, or that the individual has so filed and no final decision thereon has been made, in certifying benefits for payment pursuant to section 205(i).

“(e) Whenever a reduction in total benefits based on an individual’s wages and self-employment income is made under this section for any month, each benefit, except the disability insurance benefit, shall first be proportionately decreased, and any excess of such reduction over the sum of all such benefits other than the disability insurance benefit shall then be applied to such disability insurance benefit.

“(f)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the head of any Federal agency shall provide such information within its possession as the Commissioner may require for purposes of making a timely determination of the amount of the reduction, if any, required by this section in benefits payable under this title, or verifying other information necessary in carrying out the provisions of this section.

“(2) The Commissioner is authorized to enter into agreements with States, political subdivisions, and other organizations that administer unemployment compensation, in order to obtain such information as the Commissioner may require to carry out the provisions of this section.

“(g) For purposes of this section, the term ‘unemployment compensation’ has the meaning given that term in section 85(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the total amount of unemployment compensation to which an individual is entitled shall be determined prior to any applicable reduction under State law based on the receipt of benefits under section 202 or 223.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 224(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 424(a)) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “the age of 65” and inserting “retirement age (as defined in section 216(1)(1))”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall apply to benefits payable for months beginning on or after the date that is 12 months after the date of enactment of this section.

SEC. 9. REDUCTION OF NONMEDICARE, NON-DEFENSE DIRECT SPENDING.

Section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(11) ADDITIONAL REDUCTION OF NONMEDICARE, NONDEFENSE DIRECT SPENDING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2015 through 2023, in addition to the reduction in direct spending under paragraph (6), on the date specified in paragraph (2), OMB shall prepare and the President shall order a sequestration, effective upon issuance, reducing the spending described in subparagraph (B) by the uniform percentage necessary to reduce such spending for the fiscal year by \$1,333,000,000.

“(B) SPENDING COVERED.—The spending described in this subparagraph is spending that is—

“(i) nonexempt direct spending;

“(ii) not spending for the Medicare programs specified in section 256(d); and

“(iii) within the revised nonsecurity category.”

SA 2728. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2714 proposed by Mr. REID (for Mr. REED) to the bill S. 1845, to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, add the following:

SEC. 7. REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

SEC. 8. TREATMENT OF FOREIGN CORPORATIONS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED IN THE UNITED STATES AS DOMESTIC CORPORATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7701 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (p) as subsection (q) and by inserting after subsection (o) the following new subsection:

“(p) CERTAIN CORPORATIONS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED IN THE UNITED STATES TREATED AS DOMESTIC FOR INCOME TAX.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (a)(4), in the case of a corporation described in paragraph (2) if—

“(A) the corporation would not otherwise be treated as a domestic corporation for purposes of this title, but

“(B) the management and control of the corporation occurs, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States,

then, solely for purposes of chapter 1 (and any other provision of this title relating to chapter 1), the corporation shall be treated as a domestic corporation.

“(2) CORPORATION DESCRIBED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A corporation is described in this paragraph if—

“(i) the stock of such corporation is regularly traded on an established securities market, or

“(ii) the aggregate gross assets of such corporation (or any predecessor thereof), including assets under management for investors, whether held directly or indirectly, at any time during the taxable year or any preceding taxable year is \$50,000,000 or more.

“(B) GENERAL EXCEPTION.—A corporation shall not be treated as described in this paragraph if—

“(i) such corporation was treated as a corporation described in this paragraph in a preceding taxable year,

“(ii) such corporation—

“(I) is not regularly traded on an established securities market, and

“(II) has, and is reasonably expected to continue to have, aggregate gross assets (including assets under management for investors, whether held directly or indirectly) of less than \$50,000,000, and

“(iii) the Secretary grants a waiver to such corporation under this subparagraph.

“(3) MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations for purposes of determining cases in which the management and control of a corporation is to be treated as occurring primarily within the United States.

“(B) EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—Such regulations shall provide that—

“(i) the management and control of a corporation shall be treated as occurring primarily within the United States if substantially all of the executive officers and senior management of the corporation who exercise day-to-day responsibility for making decisions involving strategic, financial, and operational policies of the corporation are located primarily within the United States, and

“(ii) individuals who are not executive officers and senior management of the corporation (including individuals who are officers or employees of other corporations in the same chain of corporations as the corporation) shall be treated as executive officers and senior management if such individuals exercise the day-to-day responsibilities of the corporation described in clause (i).

“(C) CORPORATIONS PRIMARILY HOLDING INVESTMENT ASSETS.—Such regulations shall also provide that the management and control of a corporation shall be treated as occurring primarily within the United States if—

“(i) the assets of such corporation (directly or indirectly) consist primarily of assets being managed on behalf of investors, and

“(ii) decisions about how to invest the assets are made in the United States.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning on or after the date which is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, whether or not regulations are issued under section 7701(p)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section.

SA 2729. Mr. REID (for Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BENNET)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 289, expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams; as follows:

Strike paragraphs (1) and (2) of the resolving clause and insert the following:

(1) official sponsor support is critical to the success of Team USA at all international competitions; and

(2) ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams and their ability to attract and retain corporate sponsorships.

SA 2730. Mr. REID (for Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BENNET)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 289, expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams; as follows:

In the fifth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “assure that the United States has the best Olympic teams” and insert “ensure that the United States has the best Olympic and Paralympic teams”.

In the sixth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “in ambush marketing as a marketing strategy, affiliating themselves with the Olympic and Paralympic Games without becoming sponsors of Team USA” and insert “in marketing strategies that appear to affiliate themselves with the Olympic and Paralympic Games without becoming official sponsors of Team USA”.

In the seventh whereas clause of the preamble, strike “ambush marketing harms the United States Olympic and Paralympic

teams, undermines sponsorship activities, and gives ambush marketers an unfair and unethical advantage over entities that officially sponsor and provide funding for the elite athletes of the United States” and insert “any ambush marketing in violation of the Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. 1051 et seq.) undermines sponsorship activities and creates consumer confusion around official Olympic and Paralympic sponsors”.

In the eighth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “efforts to prevent ambush marketing have enjoyed limited success as the strategies used by ambush marketers continue to multiply” and insert “ambush marketing impedes the goals of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (36 U.S.C. 220501 et seq.) to fund the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams through official sponsorships”.

SA 2731. Mr. REID (for Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. BENNET)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 289, expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams; as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: “Expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams.”.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Energy of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this oversight hearing is to consider lessons for federal policy from state efficiency and renewable programs.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-6150, or by e-mail to Danielle_Deraney@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Kevin Rennert at (202) 224-7826 or Danielle Deraney at (202) 224-1219.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Oversight of Financial Stability and Data Security.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Supporting Children and Families through Investments in High-Quality Early Education.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 6, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that two legislative fellows on my staff, Errol Robinson and Brandon Elsner, be granted the privilege of the floor during the remainder of this Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD POLIO DAY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 302, S. Res. 270.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 270) supporting the goals and ideals of World Polio Day and commending the international community and others for their efforts to prevent and eradicate polio.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 270) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 270

Whereas October 24th of each year is recognized internationally as World Polio Day;

Whereas polio is a highly infectious disease that primarily affects children and for which there is no known cure;

Whereas polio can leave survivors permanently disabled from muscle paralysis of the limbs and occasionally leads to a particularly difficult death through paralysis of respiratory muscles;

Whereas polio was once one of the most dreaded diseases in the United States, killing thousands of people annually in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and leaving thousands more with permanent disabilities, including the 32nd President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt;

Whereas severe polio outbreaks in the 1940s and 1950s caused panic in the United States, as parents kept children indoors, public health officials quarantined infected individuals, and the Federal Government restricted commerce and travel;

Whereas 1952 was the peak of the polio epidemic in the United States, with more than 57,000 people affected, 21,000 of whom were paralyzed and 3,000 of whom died;

Whereas safe and effective polio vaccines, including the inactivated polio vaccine (commonly known as "IPV"), developed in 1952 by Jonas Salk, and the oral polio vaccine (commonly known as "OPV"), developed in 1957 by Albert Sabin, rendered polio preventable and contributed to the rapid decline of the incidence of polio in the United States;

Whereas, although the United States has been free from polio since 1979, this preventable disease still needlessly lays victim to children and adults in several countries where challenges, such as active conflict and lack of infrastructure, impede access to vaccines;

Whereas the Federal Government is the leading public sector donor to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and provides technical and operational leadership to this global effort through the work of the Centers for Disease Control and the United States Agency for International Development;

Whereas the eradication of polio is the highest priority of Rotary International, a global association founded in 1905 in Chicago, Illinois, that is now headquartered in Evanston, Illinois, and has more than 1,200,000 members in more than 170 countries;

Whereas Rotary International and its members (commonly known as "Rotarians") have contributed more than \$1,000,000,000 to, and volunteered countless hours in, the global fight against polio;

Whereas Rotary International, the World Health Organization, the United States Government, the United Nations Children's Fund (commonly known as "UNICEF"), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the United Nations Foundation have joined together with national governments to successfully reduce cases of polio by more than 99 percent since 1988, from more than 350,000 reported cases in 1988 to 223 reported cases in 2012;

Whereas polio was recently eliminated in India and is now endemic only in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan;

Whereas terrorist and militant groups continue to target and murder health care workers who seek to save the lives of children;

Whereas the sanctity and neutrality of health care workers must be respected, as these workers deliver the most basic of life-saving interventions to children and communities;

Whereas the recent polio outbreak in the Horn of Africa, comprising Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, continues to result in new cases of the disease, exacerbating the protracted humanitarian crisis in the region and highlighting the urgent need to finally eradicate polio before progress is lost;

Whereas countries around the world are placing an unprecedented emphasis on polio eradication, including by implementing Emergency Action Plans to boost vaccination coverage in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Afghanistan;

Whereas the Global Polio Eradication Initiative has developed the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan 2013-2018 (referred to in this preamble as the "Endgame Strategy") to capitalize on the opportunity to eradicate all polio disease;

Whereas the Endgame Strategy also outlines a legacy planning process to ensure that lessons learned in the effort to eradicate polio, as well as the assets and infrastructure built in support of that effort, are transitioned to benefit other development

goals and global health priorities, including the continued delivery of health services to the most vulnerable children in the world;

Whereas the global effort to eradicate polio is the largest internationally coordinated public health effort in history, with a network of over 20,000,000 volunteers worldwide; and

Whereas the eradication of polio is imminently achievable and will be a victory shared by all of humanity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of World Polio Day;

(2) commends the international community and others for their efforts in vaccinating children around the world against polio and for the tremendous strides made toward eradicating the disease;

(3) encourages and supports the international community of governments and nongovernmental organizations in remaining committed to the eradication of polio;

(4) condemns the deplorable actions of terrorist and militant groups that murder innocent health care workers who are striving to save the lives of children around the world;

(5) urges the international community of governments to strengthen the support and security protection of health care workers who risk their lives to provide polio vaccinations; and

(6) encourages continued commitment and funding by the United States Government and international donors to the global effort to rid the world of polio.

AMBUSH MARKETING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the commerce committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 289.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 289) expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams and should be discouraged.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Rockefeller amendment to the resolution, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the Rockefeller amendment to the preamble, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the Rockefeller title amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2729) was agreed to, as follows:

Strike paragraphs (1) and (2) of the resolving clause and insert the following:

(1) official sponsor support is critical to the success of Team USA at all international competitions; and

(2) ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams and their ability to attract and retain corporate sponsorships.

The resolution (S. Res. 289), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2730) was agreed to, as follows:

In the fifth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “assure that the United States has the best Olympic teams” and insert “ensure that the United States has the best Olympic and Paralympic teams”.

In the sixth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “in ambush marketing as a marketing strategy, affiliating themselves with the Olympic and Paralympic Games without becoming sponsors of Team USA” and insert “in marketing strategies that appear to affiliate themselves with the Olympic and Paralympic Games without becoming official sponsors of Team USA”.

In the seventh whereas clause of the preamble, strike “ambush marketing harms the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams, undermines sponsorship activities, and gives ambush marketers an unfair and unethical advantage over entities that officially sponsor and provide funding for the elite athletes of the United States” and insert “any ambush marketing in violation of the Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. 1051 et seq.) undermines sponsorship activities and creates consumer confusion around official Olympic and Paralympic sponsors”.

In the eighth whereas clause of the preamble, strike “efforts to prevent ambush marketing have enjoyed limited success as the strategies used by ambush marketers continue to multiply” and insert “ambush marketing impedes the goals of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (36 U.S.C. 220501 et seq.) to fund the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams through official sponsorships”.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2731) was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: “Expressing the sense of the Senate that ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams.”

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, with its title as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 289

Whereas the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Games will occur on February 7 through February 23, 2014, and March 7 through March 16, 2014, respectively, in Sochi, Russia;

Whereas more than 5,500 athletes from 80 nations will compete in 7 Olympic sports and 1,350 Paralympic athletes will compete in 5 sports;

Whereas American athletes have spent countless days, months, and years training to earn a spot on the United States Olympic or Paralympic teams;

Whereas the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (36 U.S.C. 220501 et seq.)—

(1) established the United States Olympic Committee as the coordinating body for all Olympic and Paralympic athletic activity in the United States;

(2) gave the United States Olympic Committee the exclusive right in the United States to use the words “Olympic”, “Olympiad”, “Paralympic”, and “Paralympiad”, the emblem of the United States Olympic Committee, and the symbols of the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee; and

(3) empowered the United States Olympic Committee to authorize sponsors that con-

tribute to the United States Olympic or Paralympic teams to use any trademark, symbol, insignia, or emblem of the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee, the Pan-American Sports Organization, or the United States Olympic Committee;

Whereas Team USA is significantly funded by 31 sponsors who ensure that the United States has the best Olympic and Paralympic teams possible;

Whereas in recent years, a number of entities in the United States have engaged in marketing strategies that appear to affiliate themselves with the Olympic and Paralympic Games without becoming official sponsors of Team USA;

Whereas any ambush marketing in violation of the Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. 1051 et seq.) undermines sponsorship activities and creates consumer confusion around official Olympic and Paralympic sponsors; and

Whereas ambush marketing impedes the goals of the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (36 U.S.C. 220501 et seq.) to fund the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams through official sponsorships: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) official sponsor support is critical to the success of Team USA at all international competitions; and

(2) ambush marketing adversely affects the United States Olympic and Paralympic teams and their ability to attract and retain corporate sponsorships.

RECOMMENDING RETURN OF THE IRAQI JEWISH ARCHIVE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 303, S. Res. 333.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 333) strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 333) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of Thursday, January 16, 2014 under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

COMMEMORATING THE SUCCESS OF TEAM USA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 352 submitted by Senators KLOBUCHAR, HATCH, and others today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 352) commemorating the success of Team USA in the past 22 Olympic Winter Games and supporting Team USA in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games and Paralympic Winter Games.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 352) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3590 AND H.R. 3964

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am told that there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I now ask for a second reading en bloc, but I object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, February 10, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1963, the military retirement pay restoration bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the next rollcall vote will be at 5:30 p.m. on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 1963.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 10, 2014, AT 2 P.M.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:49 p.m. adjourned until Monday, February 10, 2014, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

CHERYL ANN KRAUSE, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT, VICE DOLORES KORMAN SLOVITER, RETIRED.

BETH BLOOM, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE DONALD L. GRAHAM, RETIRED.

PAUL G. BYRON, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE JAMES S. MOODY, JR., RETIRING.

DARRIN P. GAYLES, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE PATRICIA A. SEITZ, RETIRED.

CARLOS EDUARDO MENDOZA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE JOHN ANTOON II, RETIRED.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS OF THE COAST GUARD PERMANENT COMMISSIONED TEACHING STAFF FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTIONS 189 AND 276:

To be captain

KEVIN J. LOPES

To be commander

JOSEPH D. BROWN
THOMAS W. DENUCCI
MICHAEL J. PLUMLEY
KELLY C. SEALS

To be lieutenant commander

MARIETTE C. OGG

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. PAUL J. SELVA

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. WILLIAM P. ROBERTSON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL E. WILLIAMSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUAL FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

WILLIAM T. MONACCI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUAL FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

GLENNIE Z. KERTES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

CHARLES A. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

ROGER J. BELBEL

To be major

NATHANIEL S. CHARTER
YVES P. LEBLANC

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be commander

GREGORY D. SUTTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

CHAD C. SCHUMACHER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be commander

JACK D. HAGAN
RICHARD S. MONTGOMERY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

REINEL CASTRO
MICHAEL G. HILLEGASS III
SUEZIE KIM
DUSTIN R. WARD

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 6, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MAX SIEBEN BAUCUS, OF MONTANA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING BOY SCOUT TROOP 140 AS IT CELEBRATES MORE THAN 50 YEARS OF SCOUTING

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Boy Scout Troop 140 of Buffalo Grove in the northern Illinois district that I represent. These passionate young Scouts and their Scout Masters are celebrating more than 50 years of high adventure and activities.

Drawing from Buffalo Grove, Arlington Heights, Long Grove, Wheeling and more, Troop 140 is one of the largest and most active in all of the Northwest Suburban Council. These Scouts have climbed mountains, explored caves and hiked all terrain imaginable.

Under the direction of their Scout Leadership (Scout Master Tim Meinholz and Committee Chair Kathy Dalioia), these young Scouts have experienced outdoor adventures far beyond the average suburban childhood. In addition to their adventures, the Scouts also have a commitment to excellence second to none.

The goal of every first-year Scout is to achieve First Class rank by the end of year one. Older Scouts focus on merit badges, and the Troop has honored more than 150 Eagle Scouts in total.

All the while, Troop 140 upholds Scout values, builds character, develops good citizens and teaches valuable, lifelong skills. Troop 140 is certainly a standout among excellence, and I am impressed and inspired by its achievements. To see so many young Scouts taking part gives me great hope for the future. Congratulations to Boy Scout Troop 140 of Buffalo Grove on more than 50 years of excellence.

H.R. 357, THE GI TUITION FAIRNESS ACT OF 2013

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 3, 2014, I was unavoidably detained due to weather and missed votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on House Vote No. 33, on passage of H.R. 357, the GI Tuition Fairness Act of 2013.

For over 50 years, Congress has recognized that one of the greatest sacrifices by our service members is that their military service often prevents them from attending school and attaining higher levels of education. To address this sacrifice, our country has made

educational benefits a cornerstone of military service.

The GI Tuition Fairness Act of 2013 establishes in-state tuition rates for all veterans attending college on the Post 9/11 GI bill and would ensure that they are not punished for faithfully fulfilling their military service obligations away from their original state of residency. Due to the nature of military service, our veterans often have a hard time establishing residency for purposes of obtaining in-state tuition. This bill takes a stand to guarantee in-state tuition for student veterans regardless of residency status. These men and women should not be forced into more expensive college programs just because public universities do not offer the flexibility in their residency requirements. Our veterans have made incomparable sacrifices, and they deserve all the backlines of support we can give them.

Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support the passage of H.R. 357, and would like to set the record straight that if I were able to cast my vote, it would have been a proud "yea."

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF REV. PAMELA CAHOON

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my great privilege to rise today and honor the Rev. Pamela Cahoon on the occasion of her retirement. The Rev. Cahoon has led for more than 30 years Christians Reaching Out to Society (C.R.O.S.) Ministries, as its executive director.

Her passion to end hunger began many years ago, when, as a child she noticed that some of her classmates did not have the benefit of a simple brown bag lunch. She persuaded her own mother to start packing extra lunches to share with classmates who had none of their own.

Today, her family and many others have joined her efforts to ensure that no one goes hungry. In one year alone, C.R.O.S. Ministries, under the Rev. Cahoon's leadership, provided emergency food to more than 40,000 individuals, more than 40 percent of whom were children; served 85,000 meals to hungry families in the ministries' kitchens; distributed 28,000 afterschool snacks to hungry kids; and sent home 16,000 brown bag lunches to ward off hunger for families during the long weekends.

C.R.O.S. Ministries also led efforts to gather food, salvaging more than 218,000 pounds of fresh produce from harvested fields, and then distributed the food to 100 nonprofit agencies across the county.

Although the Rev. Cahoon is retiring, I am sure that she will continue to be involved in local efforts to help people in need for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, the Rev. Pamela Cahoon is someone with whom we can all admire and respect. I commend her for her selfless efforts to end hunger, and wish her the very best on her retirement.

HONORING ROBERT BOOKER

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Robert Booker is a former Tennessee State Legislator and longtime columnist for the Knoxville News Sentinel. He is a man for whom I have very great respect.

His weekly column is usually devoted to the history of the African-American community in and around my hometown of Knoxville. Because I love history, and especially that about East Tennessee, I almost always enjoy his columns. They are interesting, informative and well-written and thoroughly researched.

His column of February 4th was one I particularly enjoyed. He wrote about three activist ministers in Knoxville, all of whom I have known and respected: Rev. Harold Middlebrook, Rev. William T. Crutcher, and Rev. Frank Gordon.

I was very proud of my late father for many reasons, but near the top to me was his leadership while Mayor of Knoxville to help peacefully integrate our City. He was good friends and worked closely with Rev. Crutcher and Rev. Gordon and in later years with Rev. Middlebrook.

When I practiced law in Knoxville, I represented Rev. Crutcher's church, Mount Olive Baptist. He was a great man, and his widow is still a wonderful, sweet woman.

Rev. Middlebrook stayed in our family home in Alexandria, Virginia, when he came to be my guest at the joint session of Congress honoring Nelson Mandela.

I am thankful that Knoxville has a man like Robert Booker who does so much to honor forgotten leaders from our past.

I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD Mr. Booker's recent column about activist preachers.

[From the Knoxville News Sentinel, Feb. 4, 2014]

MIDDLEBROOK IN LINE OF ACTIVIST PREACHERS

(By Robert Booker)

When my friend the Rev. Harold Middlebrook retired as senior pastor of Canaan Baptist Church of Christ, I reflected on his civic activities and compared them to those of other pastors who made a difference during the past 149 years. He has shouted for justice in a sea of silence. He has stood for equality while others just sat by. He has preached against street violence as others

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

gave lip service. He has led the battle many times to help save Knoxville College as others failed to rally their troops.

Indeed, Middlebrook is a rare breed who talks the talk, walks the walk and gets things done. He knows how to put on a good show, but it is not just an act. He can preach up a storm, but the fallout is to irrigate, fertilize and cultivate minds and hearts to bring about man's humanity to man.

We have a number of excellent preachers today who can stir up their congregations with great messages. Some of them successfully push pet projects, but it has not been easy for them to capture a mass following across the city as has Middlebrook.

Perhaps the first one to have that kind of influence and reverence was the Rev. George Washington LeVere, who came here as pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church on Feb. 9, 1866. He had been a chaplain in the 29th Regiment of the United States Colored Infantry. Having been born and educated in Brooklyn, N.Y., he came here ready to practice what he would preach.

In 1869 he organized the Shieldstown (LeVere) School on Linden Avenue, which provided the initial education for William H. Franklin, the first black graduate of Maryville College in 1880. LeVere was a charter member of the Meridian Lodge No. 4 of the Free and Accepted Masons. He served as their Grand Master. He helped organize the Colored Mechanics Association in 1871. He was pastor of Shiloh for 22 years.

Another giant in the fight for human dignity was the Rev. William T. Crutcher, who served as pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church for 54 years. He arrived there in 1935 and served until his death in 1989. He attended the Baptist World Alliance in London, England, in 1955 and went on a month-long preaching mission to Africa in 1973.

He was a true fighter for justice here in Knoxville. In 1948 he took the lead in getting the city of Knoxville to make Chilhowee Park available to blacks one day a week instead of one day a year. He also led the effort to allow blacks to play golf at the city-owned Whittle Springs Golf Course. In the early 1960s Crutcher was a co-chair of the Associated Council for Full Citizenship, which led to the desegregation of lunch counters and movie theaters. Numerous threats were made on his life.

The Rev. Frank Gordon became pastor of Shiloh Presbyterian Church in 1952 and he, too, was a trailblazer in many activities outside his church. He taught Bible and religious history at Knoxville College from 1953 to 1956 and was a candidate for the Knoxville Board of Education on two occasions. He was a member of the Mayor's Commission on Race Relations and a member of Gov. Frank Clement's State Commission on Race.

Gordon was president of the Knoxville branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the state president of that organization, which helped integrate the school systems of all 95 Tennessee counties.

Middlebrook was not the first activist preacher in this city, but he has been one of the most successful ones in his undertakings. He has left a real legacy for those who choose to follow his lead.

H.R. 357, H.R. 3590, AND H.R. 3964

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize passage this week of three important pieces of legislation: H.R. 357, the G.I. Bill Tuition Fairness Act; H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act; and H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act. Unfortunately, I was not able to vote on final passage of these important bills because of a death in my family and my attendance at the subsequent funeral.

The G.I. Bill Tuition Fairness Act is commonsense legislation for our veterans that will lead to more affordable education opportunities when our men and women in uniform return from service.

The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act is a bipartisan package of eight individual bills that will strengthen and preserve important outdoor traditions and some of our pristine natural treasures for American sportsmen, recreational enthusiasts and future generations. I am proud to have been a cosponsor of this bill.

H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act seeks to address the crisis that is taking place in California that has resulted from extreme drought and other challenges. I am supportive of measures that provide much needed relief to our farmers. Having said that, as I am a strong supporter of state water rights, I could not have supported this legislation without the inclusion of provision 501 which states these dire circumstances are unique to California and should not serve as a precedent for other states.

Finally, I want to address three quick items that came up during debate on H.R. 3590. The first is H. Amdt. 541, offered by Mr. HOLT, which would have allowed the Secretary to prevent hunting and fishing on public lands based on speculative climate change studies. Any proposals to limit hunting and fishing should be made by state fish and game agencies and local communities, not Washington bureaucrats. The second item is H. Amdt. 537 offered by Mr. DEFAZIO that would have undermined the bill, lead to frivolous lawsuits and the eventual closing of public lands for hunting and fishing. Clearly, this amendment is contradictory to the intent of the bill and would have had negative consequences. The third and final issue that came up during debate on H.R. 3590 was in relation to condors and lead ammo. I would encourage legislators who opposed the bill based on this premise to visit my home state of Arizona where they have put forth a voluntary program that is having fantastic results and could serve as a model for the country on how to address this issue.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted in support of these three important bills with a "yea" vote on rollcall Numbers 33, 41 and 50. I would have opposed the two dangerous amendments and voted "nay" on rollcall numbers 38 and 39.

HONORING AND SUPPORTING
TEAM USA AT THE XXII OLYMPIC
WINTER GAMES

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Team USA, the United States Olympic Committee, and all of our Olympic and Paralympic athletes. Today, the 22nd Olympic Winter Games will begin in Sochi, Russia. They will be followed shortly afterwards by the 11th Paralympic Winter Games. Over 200 American athletes will be representing our nation at the Olympics, participating in 15 events.

Many of these athletes have worked all their lives for the honor of representing their nation at the highest level. All of them will captivate and inspire us all through friendly competition, sportsmanship, solidarity, and fair play. From the thrill of downhill skiing to the quiet Zen of curling, Olympians from across the globe will kindle the Olympic Spirit as they compete alongside other world-class athletes.

I am especially pleased that my home state of Rhode Island is represented in Pairs Figure Skating by Marissa Castelli of Cranston. It has been over a quarter century since Team USA was on the medal platform for Pairs Skating, but we have a great chance of returning this year. We are all immensely proud of her accomplishments and we look forward to cheering on Marissa, her partner Simon Shnafir, and all the other members of Team USA.

In addition to our Olympic athletes, I would like to take a moment to commend America's Paralympians. Although they might not get the same television coverage as the Olympics, the Paralympics showcases some of the finest talent this country has to offer. Some of these world-class athletes are also wounded warriors who served in our military and fought for our country with honor and distinction. I have been pleased to work with the U.S. Olympic Committee and my Congressional colleagues to provide adaptive sports programs to injured service members, helping to speed their recovery time, bolster their self-confidence, and vastly improve their quality of life.

I would also like to recognize the courage of all the LGBT athletes participating in these Olympics. While I strongly oppose Russia's anti-gay legislation, I have every confidence that our athletes will display the same grace and dignity under pressure that has served them well in their quest for Olympic glory.

The Olympic movement is a testament to the power of international competition to unite us in common spirit and a reminder to all that we can achieve our dreams with courage and determination. I wish our Athletes well in the upcoming games, and thank the U.S. Olympic Committee for their continued dedication to achieving a better world through athletics.

IN HONOR OF 'THE BLUEGRASS STORYTELLER'—MR. JAMES KING

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in honor of 'The Bluegrass Storyteller'—Mr. James King, who was born in Martinsville, Virginia and grew up immersed in the rich musical tradition of Southwest Virginia's Carroll County. After 20 years of playing bluegrass music, Mr. King's album "Three Chords and the Truth" was nominated for the 2013 Grammy Awards in the category of Best Bluegrass Album.

Surrounded by talented musicians including his father Jim and his uncle Joe Edd, Mr. King first picked up a guitar when he was eight years old. Though he began by playing rock and roll, Mr. King returned to bluegrass as he entered his teen years.

Mr. King served our country in the Marines before moving to Delaware. He has said that the Stanley Brothers (of Dickenson County, Virginia), Dudley Connell, Jimmy Martin, and Ted Lundy (of Galax, Virginia) have been major influences in his career.

He has released numerous group and solo albums throughout the years, and his band was recognized in 1997 as Emerging Artist of the Year by the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA), Recorded Event of the Year by the IBMA for its self-titled 1997 debut, and was also nominated for IBMA's 1999 Song of the Year for "Bed by the Window."

On "Three Chords and the Truth," released in late September, Mr. King interprets classic country western songs like George Jones' "He Stopped Loving Her Today" into the bluegrass format so characteristic of Mr. King. I commend Mr. James King for his hard work on this fine album and congratulate him for the recognition it has received. "Three Chords and the Truth" may not have been awarded a Grammy Award, but it has won the hearts of many music fans. I am optimistic that the talented Bluegrass Storyteller and his band will one day have their day in the sun.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on rollcall No. 50. If my vote had been counted, I would have voted "yea" on passage of H.R. 3964.

HONORING JOHN WOOD, CEO OF SALLY CORP.

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize John Wood, CEO of Sally Corp.,

who was recently honored for his life work in the creation of amusement rides by being inducted into the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Hall of Fame.

Sally Corp., based in Jacksonville, is a prime example of the American dream come true. Started in a garage in 1977, the Sally Corp. creates dark ride attractions, bringing to life interactive experiences that go beyond the imagination. Ron Gustafson, chairman of the Hall of Fame and Archives Committee, said that John "revolutionized the attractions industry." He was able to take the staccato rides of old and create a story that leaves riders clamoring for more.

Thanks to John's devotion, Sally Corp. has continued to grow and profit, and their reach has extended across the globe. Sally Corp. is currently working on an animated musical attraction called the "White Tiger Show" in China and they have completed projects in both India and Australia.

It is truly an honor to have John Wood and Sally Corp. in the 4th Congressional District of Florida. Small business owners are the backbone of our nation and it gives me great pleasure to commend John for his outstanding achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and Member's of this very special congressional salute to John Wood.

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF RODNEY LEE KENDIG

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and dedicated service of Mr. Rodney Lee "Rod" Kendig. Mr. Kendig was a committed public servant and a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. All of Northwest Florida mourns his passing.

Rod Kendig was born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and graduated from Newton High School in Newton, New Jersey. After finishing his high school studies, he received a degree from the College of Wooster and a graduate degree from the University of Maryland. In 1978, while working for the National Association of Counties in Washington, DC, Mr. Kendig was hired as Escambia County Administrator, and he moved with his family to Pensacola, Florida.

After several successful years as Escambia County Administrator, Mr. Kendig continued his public service to the Northwest Florida community as City Manager for the City of Pensacola. The position of Pensacola City Manager was a particularly important position that helped set the agenda for the Pensacola City Council. During his nine years on the job, he oversaw a number of important local projects, including: the construction of a new airport terminal and control tower at Pensacola Airport, a large expansion of Pensacola's city limits, construction of the Vickery Community

Center, and acquisition of the T.T. Wentworth Jr. Florida State Museum, amongst many other accomplishments. Mr. Kendig continued his success in the private sector, joining the local firm Baskerville-Donovan, where he was instrumental in facilitating plans to move the city's wastewater treatment plant out of downtown Pensacola.

Mr. Kendig was also committed to serving the community away from the job. Along with his wife Paula, he volunteered with the Children's Home Society, and they served as a foster family for dozens of local children. The Kendigs fell in love and adopted one of the foster babies with special needs. Mr. Kendig became a community leader and advocate for children's health and education issues, serving on the Arc Gateway Board of Directors, the State Partnership for School Readiness, and the Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County. Mr. Kendig was also an avid reader and supporter of literacy and local libraries, and he was elected to serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the West Florida Public Library System.

Mr. Speaker, Rod Kendig was an exceptional public servant, loving family man, and a great community leader. His impact on Northwest Florida will never be forgotten. My wife Vicki and I send our prayers and deepest condolences to his wife, Paula; mother, Jane; children, Kathy, Andrea, Adam, Christy, Chelsey, and Jacob; grandchildren; Jennifer, Melissa, Billy, Nina, Paul and AJ; great grandson, Grady; sister, Brenda; and the entire Kendig family.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained yesterday and missed roll Nos. 40 and 41. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on roll No. 40 and "nay" on roll No. 41.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 41 I was unable to be present for the vote on H.R. 3590.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

HONORING GEORGE W. KOCH

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of George W. Koch,

who passed away on January 26, 2014, at the age of 87.

Mr. Koch spent more than 50 years in Washington, DC. After 6 years as manager of the Washington, DC office of Sears, Roebuck & Co., he took over as President and CEO of the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) in 1966. During his 24 years with the GMA, he transformed the organization into a leading industry advocacy group. Major efforts during his tenure included the adoption of the Universal Product Code in 1974 and the development of tamper-resistant packaging in 1982. Mr. Koch became known for his passion, his work ethic and his strong sense of morality. In the late 1970s, the Washington Afro-American honored Mr. Koch for his personal efforts to combat wage-skimming at the Congressional Country Club from its minority wait staff.

After his retirement from the GMA, he became a partner at K&L Gates. He served on the Board of Directors for Borden Chemicals and Plastics, McCormick & Company, and the Watchdogs of the Treasury; the Advisory Council of the International Executive Service Corps; and the Board of Trustees for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation. He also served as North American Counsel for the International Center for Companies of the Food Industry and as Congressional Advisor to the Transatlantic Policy Network.

In May of 2013, the Grocery Manufacturers Association chose to honor Mr. Koch with the first-ever George W. Koch Leadership in Public Policy Award, for his decades of service to the organization. This award is now given out annually to exemplary individuals.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor and thank George W. Koch for his years of service, his tireless advocacy, and his exceptional moral character.

IN HONOR OF SOUTHWESTERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S EL SOL
MAGAZINE

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Southwestern Community College student journalism publications. Southwestern College, in Chula Vista, California, is one of our region's premier journalism programs whereby students publish a newspaper and a magazine for the students and surrounding community members. With the journalism students' dedication, Southwestern College has asserted itself as one of the top college newspapers in the nation with their newspaper, The Sun. Additionally, these dedicated journalism students devoted off-time hours to design, create and publish a magazine, El Sol. They were also instrumental in finding the funding in order to publish their student magazine. Southwestern College has reason to be proud of their Journalism Department's accomplishments and the hard work and dedication of student advisor Max Branscomb, Ed.D., should also be recognized. As the recipient of the Society of Professional Journalists National Journalism Teacher of the Year award,

Dr. Branscomb's dedication to the field of journalism is creating an environment whereby the results of his instruction are motivating students toward careers in journalism. In honor of Dr. Branscomb and the Southwestern College students in the Journalism Department, I do hereby recognize February 6, 2014, as the "Southwestern College Journalism Students Day" in the City of Chula Vista.

HONORING ALEXIS "LEXIE"
KAMERMAN

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Alexis "Lexie" Kamerman, a courageous and talented young woman who tragically lost her life in an Afghan terrorist attack on January 17th. Lexie was killed in a Kabul restaurant that was specifically targeted by the Taliban because of its popularity with westerners.

A 27-year-old Chicago native, Lexie was committed to rebuilding Afghanistan through education, particularly for young women and girls who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go to school. In her role as a Student Development Specialist at the American University of Afghanistan, Lexie worked to help the next generation of Afghan women take their place as leaders in society. Friends and family of Lexie point to her strength, fearlessness, and passion as key to her decision to serve.

Lexie grew up in Chicago, and graduated from the Latin School in 2004. She attended Knox College, where she was a fierce competitor on the water polo team. Lexie received her M.A. in Higher Education from the University of Arizona.

Sadly, the American University of Afghanistan community lost another member during the January 17th attack: political science professor Alexandros Petersen from Washington, DC. He was only 29. While both Lexie and Alexandros were far too young to be taken from us, their talent and passion for serving others, regardless of the potential dangers, are examples to which we should all aspire.

My deepest condolences go to the friends and family of Lexie Kamerman, particularly her parents, Jack and Alison.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRIS STEWART

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 5th on rollcall 38 for H.R. 3590 I inadvertently voted "yea" for the amendment instead of "nay." My intention was to vote against the measure.

RECOGNIZING MAJOR GENERAL
CATHY LUTZ

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of Major General Cathy Lutz, the first female Major General of the Mississippi Air National Guard, who went to be with the Lord on January 18, 2014.

With over 30 years of military service, Major General Lutz broke "glass ceiling" barriers, while maintaining civility and humility. She lived her life in service to friends, family, and country and professed "military and nursing" the means in which she served God and man.

Called "one of our nation's premier advocates for better health care for . . . soldiers and servicemen," Major General Lutz coordinated retrieval efforts of wounded servicemen following the terrorist attack against the USS *Cole* and led a medical squadron based out of Saudi Arabia.

In all, Major General Lutz commanded three squadrons in the National Guard and received eight military awards, including the Legion of Merit for "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements."

While serving the Mississippi Air National Guard, Major General Lutz involved herself in the Mississippi art community. She showed her work with the Mississippi Art Colony and established an art farm in Flora, MS, along with her husband, retired Major General William Lutz.

Mississippi lost a dear daughter with the death of Major General Cathy Lutz. On behalf of the United States Congress and the people of Mississippi, we recognize her life and service.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. ROBERT
GEORGE'S ADVOCACY FOR RELI-
GIOUS FREEDOM

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit an excerpt from remarks made by my friend Dr. Robert George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University and chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, upon receiving the John Leland Award from the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in December. In his statement, Dr. George succinctly spells out the different ways in which countries around the world undermine religious freedom, whether through hostility toward religions, sponsorship of radicalism, enforcement of unjust laws or failure to protect citizens against religious violence.

Today, religious freedom is in peril around the world. In his remarks, Dr. George admirably shows Americans what they can do to secure greater liberty for people of faith, and of no faith, who are in harm's way because of

what they believe. We are privileged to live in a country where freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed—may we strive to secure this right for citizens of all countries.

ROBERT P. GEORGE, JOHN LELAND AWARD, SOUTHERN BAPTIST ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION, RAYBURN GOLD ROOM, WASHINGTON, DC, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2013 [EXCERPTS]

. . . So why *does* religious freedom matter? Why should promoting and defending it abroad, no less than honoring it at home, be a high priority for our country?

The way some people see it, the reason for respecting religious freedom is purely instrumental and self-interested. If you and I disagree in matters of religion, I should tolerate your beliefs and religious practices so that you will tolerate mine. Religious freedom, on this view, is not so much a moral or human right as it is a kind of mutual non-aggression pact.

It's not difficult to see the attraction of this view or to explain why some people hold it. A world in which each community lives in fear that another will seize power and oppress its practitioners is hardly an ideal state of affairs for any of them—except, of course, the group that happens to come out on top. But that is exactly what happens where there is little or no religious freedom protection. Everyone fears what will happen to their own group. And so the answer to the problem is clear. Each group tolerates the other groups so that it, too, will be tolerated.

But there's a problem with this view. The problem is not that it's in any way inaccurate or untrue. Instead, the problem is that it doesn't go far enough. It ignores the fact that at its core, religious freedom means something far deeper and more profound than people grudgingly tolerating each another in a kind of *modus vivendi*.

It means the right to be who we truly are as human beings. The fact is that as human beings, we are drawn to ponder life's deepest questions and seek meaningful, truthful answers. Where do we come from? What is our destiny? Is there a transcendent source of meaning and value? Is there a "higher law" that pulls us above personal interest in order to "do unto others as we would have them do unto us?"

No matter how these questions are answered, one thing is indisputable: Human beings can't stop asking them, and would be diminished precisely as human beings if they were to try to do so. And that suggests that the religious quest is a constitutive part of our humanity—an aspect of our flourishing as the kind of creatures we are, namely, rational, intelligent, and free actors.

And this, in turn, suggests that we must cherish and honor, preserve and protect, the right of persons to ask and answer these questions as best they can, and, within the broadest limits, to lead their lives with authenticity and integrity in line with their best judgments of conscience.

And so, both as individuals and together with others in community, religious freedom means the right to ponder life's origins, meaning and purpose; to explore the deepest questions about human nature, dignity, and destiny; to decide what is to be believed and not to be believed; and, within the limits of justice for all, to comply with what one conscientiously judges to be one's religious obligations—openly, peacefully, and without fear.

John Henry Newman once observed that "conscience has rights because it has du-

ties." We honor the rights of conscience in matters of faith because people must be free to lead lives of authenticity and integrity by fulfilling what they believe to be their solemn duties.

But authenticity and integrity are directly threatened whenever there is coercion or compulsion in matters of faith or belief. Indeed, coercion does not produce genuine conviction, but pretense and lack of authenticity. Clearly, a coerced faith is no faith at all. Compulsion may cause a person to manifest the outward signs of belief or unbelief, but it cannot produce the interior acts of intellect and will that constitute genuine faith.

Therefore, it is essential that freedom of religion or belief include the right to hold any belief or none at all, to change one's beliefs and religious affiliation, to bear witness to these beliefs in public as well as private, and corporately as well as individually, and to act on one's religiously inspired convictions about justice and the common good in carrying out the duties of citizenship. And it is vital that religious liberty's full protections be extended to those whose answers to life's deepest questions reject belief in the transcendent.

Because the right to freedom of religion or belief is so central to human personhood, we would expect that in places where it is dishonored, societies would be less happy and secure. And according to a growing number of studies, that is precisely the case across the world.

These studies show that countries that protect religious liberty are more secure and stable than those that do not, and nations that trample on this freedom provide fertile ground for war and poverty, terror and radical movements.

In other words, not only do religious freedom abuses violate the core of our humanity, they do grave harm to the well-being of societies.

They do so politically—as religious freedom abuses are highly correlated with the absence of democracy and the presence of other human rights abuses.

They do so economically—as religious persecution destabilizes communities and marginalizes the persecuted, causing their talents and abilities to go unrealized, robbing a nation of added productivity, and reducing that nation's ability to fight poverty and create abundance for its citizens.

They do so morally—since wherever religious freedom is dishonored, the benefit of religion in molding character is diminished, and with it, the self-discipline necessary to handle the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

And finally, they do so socially—since wherever religious freedom is abused, peace and security become ever more elusive.

For the United States, all of this has a direct bearing on our own security.

For example, of the four countries that hosted Osama bin Laden during his notorious life—Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Pakistan—each is an incubator of terrorism in the form of violent religious extremism, and all have perpetrated or tolerated repeated religious freedom violations.

And as we all know, the 9/11 attacks on our country were plotted in Afghanistan, which was run by the Taliban which originated in Pakistan, with 15 of the 19 attackers coming from Saudi Arabia.

In December of last year, the Institute for Economics and Peace, an Australian think tank, released a ranking of nations based on the number of terrorist attacks launched be-

tween 2002 and 2011. At the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, we consider seven of these countries—Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Somalia, Nigeria, and Russia—to be serious violators of religious liberty. . . .

Clearly, religious freedom matters greatly. And sadly, according to a recent Pew study, 75 percent of the world's people—more than 5 billion human beings—live in countries with governments that significantly restrict this fundamental right. Such restrictions range from burdensome rules and regulations on building houses of worship to detention and imprisonment, torture and murder.

. . . All of these abuses violate not just American standards of religious freedom, but international human rights standards and covenants as well.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, in Article 18, that:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

Since 1966, the governments of 167 countries have signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a binding treaty with protections similar to Article 18.

Nations around the world also affirmed the 1981 Declaration on Religious Intolerance, and other regional bodies, such as the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, also confirm religious freedom as a fundamental liberty. . . .

As an independent, bipartisan, U.S. federal government advisory body, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom is firmly committed to the human rights standards found in these documents.

As a key part of its mandate, USCIRF monitors religious freedom worldwide and makes policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and to Congress.

Based on our monitoring of religious freedom conditions, we have seen a number of discernible patterns to religious persecution.

First, we have seen the following categories of religious freedom violations engaged in or tolerated by governments: state hostility; state sponsorship; state enforcement; and state failure.

The second pattern we have seen is that in every one of these categories, Christians are among the persecuted.

And a third pattern we've noted is the stubborn persistence of anti-Semitism worldwide, including in the nations of Western Europe, where it again appears to be on the rise.

As to the categories of religious freedom abuses I just mentioned, state hostility involves the government actively persecuting people or groups on account of their beliefs.

State sponsorship refers to the government actively promoting—and sometimes even exporting—ideas and propaganda, often of a violent, extremist nature, that include hostility to the religious freedom of others.

State enforcement refers to the government applying laws and statutes such as anti-blasphemy codes to individuals, often members of religious minorities, thus violating freedom of expression as well as freedom of religion or belief.

And state failure means that the government is neglecting to take action to protect those whom others are targeting due to their beliefs, creating a climate of impunity in which religious minorities or dissenters are

threatened, intimidated, or even attacked and killed.

When it comes to state hostility toward religions, one of the worst persecutors is Iran's theocratic regime. The Iranian government has executed people for "waging war against God," while relentlessly targeting reformers among the Shi'a Muslim majority, as well as religious minorities, including Sunni and Sufi Muslims, Bahai's, and Christians. The Iranian regime has also stirred up anti-Semitism and promoted Holocaust denial.

Regarding state sponsorship of radical ideology which targets the religious freedom of others, Saudi Arabia continues to export its own extremist interpretation of Sunni Islam through textbooks and other literature which teach hatred and even violence toward other religious groups.

Regarding state enforcement of laws and statutes that repress freedom of expression and religion, Egypt and Pakistan enforce anti-blasphemy or anti-defamation codes, with religious minorities bearing the brunt of the enforcement.

Regarding state failure to protect religious freedom, the actions of the governments of Egypt and Pakistan exemplify those of nations which do not protect their citizens against religion-related violence. Ironically, both nations' enforcement of blasphemy codes fuels some of the worst violence by encouraging vigilantes to target perceived transgressors.

. . . In Egypt, since the fall of Hosni Mubarak, including the periods of time before, during, and after President Morsi's rule, the government has tolerated widespread abuses against religious minorities, including Coptic Orthodox and other Christians, and Bahai's, Shi'a Muslims, and dissident Sunni Muslims.

It has failed to make serious efforts to bring the perpetrators of violence to justice or to respond to virulent anti-Semitism in state-controlled media.

In Pakistan, the government's longtime failure to protect religious freedom was on brutal display in 2011 with the assassinations of Salmaan Taseer, a Muslim who was Governor of Punjab province, and Shahbaz Bhatti, a Christian who was Pakistan's Minister for Minority Affairs and a valiant religious freedom advocate.

Both officials were killed for opposing Pakistan's blasphemy law, which is used as a weapon of repression against Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

This year was clearly one of the worst for both Shi'a Muslims and for Christians in Pakistan, as attacks by extremists on these communities accelerated with impunity.

Clearly, impunity remains one of the world's most serious and growing religious freedom concerns and challenges. Across much of the world, there have been incidents of religiously-related violence which are not being addressed by investigations, trials, or punishments.

. . . And so, let me conclude by saying that for those of us who care about religious freedom, we have a job to do.

First and foremost, each of us as citizens needs to make the case to our fellow Americans on behalf of supporting religious freedom abroad. We need to explain why this matters for our country and for our world.

We must tell others the story about what is happening to victims of religious persecution around the world. We must not let them be forgotten or let their plight be ignored.

And then, as we increase our numbers on the ground, we can move Washington to do the right thing by supporting religious free-

dom. We must make it clear to those in public office that we expect them to honor religious freedom both at home and abroad, and that we intend to hold them electorally accountable if they fail to do that. We must insist that religious freedom be given the priority it is due under the International Religious Freedom Act in the conduct of our international diplomacy and foreign policy. Trade considerations are important; geopolitical strategic considerations are important; but religious freedom is important, too. It is not a second-class concern—at least not since IRFA became the law of the land. . . .

I have not spoken much today about domestic religious freedom issues. I do not want to close, however, without saying this: The first and most important way in which the President of the United States can promote religious freedom abroad is by honoring religious freedom here at home. Again, speaking for myself, and not on this occasion as Chairman of USCIRF, I call on President Obama to withdraw the HHS mandates that threaten religious freedom in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act—and to do so before being compelled to withdraw those mandates by the Supreme Court in the lawsuits now pending. Indeed, the administration should—across the board, at home and abroad—embrace a robust view of religious liberty, one going beyond the mere "freedom of worship"—one that respects the right of religious believers and religious institutions to honor the requirements of their consciences without governmental interference, except in those circumstances—mercifully rare in our own country—where restrictions on religious freedom are necessary to protect the religious freedom of others or to prevent violence or other intolerable harms. . . .

HONORING BEURT SERVAAS

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Beurt SerVaas, a dedicated community leader and former president of the Indianapolis City-County Council.

Beurt SerVaas was an accomplished businessman and a devoted public servant who spent the better part of his life serving the people of Indianapolis. Dr. SerVaas was first elected to the Marion County Council in the early 1960s and became a chief architect of the Uni-Gov changes that consolidated parts of city and county government. Dr. SerVaas' distinguished business career included bringing the Saturday Evening Post to Indiana and rescuing several struggling businesses ranging from engine rebuilders to makers of cleaning products.

The state of Indiana and the city of Indianapolis have lost one of their most distinguished citizens and a dedicated civic leader. On a personal note, Dr. SerVaas was a friend and a supporter of mine, who could always be counted on for his gentle wisdom and smile.

Beurt SerVaas set an example to which we can all aspire. He was a visionary leader who dedicated his life to serving others and making his country and community better places to live. This included service in the United States Navy and the Central Intelligence Agency. His commitment to Indiana will be forever appre-

ciated. I ask the residents of the 6th Congressional District to join me in keeping his wife Dr. Cory Jane SerVaas, daughters Joan, Amy, and Kristin, and his sons Eric and Paul, in their thoughts and prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote number 38, the DeFazio Amendment No. 6 to H.R. 3590, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Acts of 2013, I was recorded as an "aye." It was my intention to vote "no" on the amendment.

As an avid sportsman, I strongly oppose legislation that would threaten opportunities for recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting on our Nation's public lands.

IN RECOGNITION OF MERRILL BLUM

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Merrill Blum upon his retirement from the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Cape and Islands.

Following his service in the United States Army, Mr. Blum found his true calling working for numerous veterans' services programs throughout Massachusetts, and his remarkable efforts were recognized by the Department of Labor as a model for the nation. His commitment to serving veterans brought him to work with the Vietnam Veterans Association of the Cape and Islands, focusing on projects such as the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project, Homelessness Prevention Council, and on my Advisory Commission on Veteran Services. Throughout his career Mr. Blum has demonstrated his true commitment to helping soldiers improve their lives once they return home. In finding his calling in life, Mr. Blum made a lasting impact on countless American heroes within our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Merrill Blum upon his retirement. I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking Mr. Blum for his service and commitment to our nation's veterans.

CONGRATULATING FLIR SYSTEMS, INC.

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate FLIR Systems, Inc. on the launch of FLIR ONE, the first consumer-oriented thermal imaging system. Introduced on January 7, 2014, FLIR ONE is the

first product of its kind that provides thermal imaging technology to consumers using a unique smart phone accessory case. This is a tremendous step toward making infrared technology accessible and affordable to the general public.

FLIR Systems, Inc. is a global leader in the design, manufacture, and marketing of sensor systems that enhance perception and awareness. Their technological innovations have a wide range of utility including aerial and ground surveillance, environmental monitoring, navigation and transportation safety.

The work of FLIR Systems, Inc. is not only positively impacting Central Florida by providing our community with jobs; their innovations are resonating around the world. With the global debut of FLIR ONE scheduled for Spring 2014, I wish FLIR Systems, Inc. continued success.

RECOGNIZING GO TO 2040 FOR RECEIVING THE EPA SMART GROWTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 6, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, this week the Environmental Protection Agency recognized seven organizations from across the country that are working to ensure sustainable urban growth with the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. I am proud to recognize the Chicago Metropolitan Agency

for Planning's GO TO 2040 initiative for receiving this honor.

GO TO 2040 focuses on sustainable prosperity—working within Chicago and around the world to cement the city's place as an economic and cultural center. By 2040 Chicago will need to accommodate up to 25 percent more residents. The plan addresses public transportation, community planning, government cooperation, and resource management to ensure that Chicago remains a vibrant and diverse city, with room for our communities to grow.

GO TO 2040 has four challenges for city and state government to consider—creating livable communities, maximizing the potential of human capital, ensuring efficient government, and promoting regional mobility. Those issues impact all major metropolitan communities, and this roadmap is an important step as we look to build a sustainable future for our cities.

GO TO 2040 is a leading example of the type of work that will preserve and improve our urban centers for generations to come. I am proud to recognize the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's work to keep our city great.

HONORING MR. TOM KAISER

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 6, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tom Kaiser, a veteran

and member of America's Greatest Generation. Tom is a resident of Delray Beach, Florida, and has helped more than 500 South Florida veterans receive government awards and medals for their military service.

Thanks to Tom's dedication, veterans who helped to liberate France in WWII regularly are presented the Legion of Honor in special ceremonies by France's Consuls General from Miami. One of the men receiving this prestigious award is a Holocaust survivor who, after making it out of France, moved to the United States and served America in the Korean War.

Aside from helping veterans, Tom has also been instrumental in getting 22 war monuments placed at Boynton Beach's Veteran's Park. There are monuments dedicated to the Tuskegee Airmen, Korean War and other famous veterans and battles. Tom chairs the Boynton Beach Veteran's Council. Together with Ray Carter, the city's Fire Chief, he recently unveiled a memorial to the victims of 9/11 at the park. Tom noted at the ceremony that, "it makes the park a history lesson, so that anytime of the year people can come and reflect."

A humble man, Tom would be reluctant to accept the title of hero, but that is what he is to all the veterans who have gotten the recognition they deserve due to his efforts.

Mr. Speaker, the term Greatest Generation was created to describe Tom and others like him, who served our country so bravely. I am very pleased to honor him on this day.

SENATE—Monday, February 10, 2014

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of grace and glory, hear our prayer and answer us when we call. Lord, You forgive our sins and heal our sickness, for Your mercy is great toward those who esteem Your Name. Thank You for Your promises to never forsake us and to render ineffectual the weapons we face.

Strengthen our Senators in their efforts to do good, sustaining them in their labors. Give them more than human wisdom to solve the problems of these momentous times. Keep them calm in the quiet center of their lives so that they may be serene in the swirling stresses of their work.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 298.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at 5:30 p.m. there will be a rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 1963.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 3590 AND H.R. 3964

Mr. REID. I am told there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3590) to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 3964) to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to these two bills.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

RESTORING RETIREMENT PAY TO U.S. ARMED FORCES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate will consider new legislation that would restore earned retirement pay to the men and women of our Armed Forces. The measure restores cost-of-living adjustments for all military retirees regardless of age, disability or employment status. Congress should protect veterans who put their lives on the line to protect our country.

I appreciate very much Senators PRYOR, SHAHEEN, HAGAN, and BEGICH for their leadership on this issue. Although the provision reversed by this measure doesn't take effect until the end of next year, there is no reason to delay, and we should move forward with it. I hope Republicans will join Democrats to pass this bill without their usual partisan games.

Unfortunately, the type of obstruction and delay I just referred to was on full display here last week. On Thursday, the Senate fell one vote short of restoring unemployment insurance for 1.7 million Americans who lost their jobs through absolutely no fault of their own. Every single Democratic Senator voted for this bill. A few reasonable Republicans—four, to be exact—voted with us to restore benefits that would boost our economy and provide a lifeline for out-of-work Americans. But we are still one Republican vote shy before we are able to do this for these people.

It is so unfair. If someone loses their job today, they can apply for unemployment benefits and get them immediately. But if a person has been out of work for a long time at 57 years old and can't find a job, that person needs this, but they can't because of what the Republicans have done.

When 1.7 million struggling Americans fall short of the rent, skip meals to save cash or turn down the thermostat on freezing days, they will know who to blame—41 Republican Senators. We only need one more Republican—a total of 5 out of 45—to step up and do what is right for these desperate people.

We are not going to stop pushing to restore emergency unemployment insurance. In the weeks to come, we will vote again on this important issue and again if we need to. In the meantime I hope my colleagues across the aisle will think long and hard about their unsustainable position on this issue, a position that hurts middle-class families.

MINIMUM WAGE

In the weeks ahead the Senate will also consider legislation to give 17 million minimum wage workers a much needed raise and our economy a much needed boost. No American working full time should live below the poverty line, but many of them do. So we are going to push to make the minimum wage a living wage and raise it to \$10.10 an hour.

To ensure this country's economic success, it is crucial that every American has an opportunity to succeed as well. When some people have to work two or three full-time jobs just to pay the rent and put food on the table, something is wrong.

Minimum wage workers spend their paychecks in local stores, gas stations, and restaurants. That is why an increase in the minimum wage would create 85,000 new jobs.

This increase is also key to ensuring every full-time worker has a shot at entering the middle class. Contrary to the common belief, raising the minimum wage isn't just about helping teenagers earn a little extra cash. Two-thirds of the people working for minimum wage are women. It is also about helping any woman, such as a 35-year-old woman earning half of her family's income and more than one-quarter of the workers who would benefit from a raise are supporting children.

Last week Republicans voted against the interests of middle-class Americans doing their best to survive unemployment. When it comes time to consider Democrats' minimum wage proposal, I hope the Republicans will choose the right way, not the wrong way, as they have done so often. They should stand for middle-class families rather than resort to obstruction.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

I ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Under the previous order leadership time is reserved.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1963.

The Senator from Vermont.

NSA SECURITY BREACH

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the National Security Agency continues its indiscriminate collection of a massive number of phone records about Americans under section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act. I have said over and over again that as a nation we have long needed to have the national conversation about bulk collection that is now underway, and the section 215 program should have been declassified long before it was.

I wish to make very clear, as I have said before, I do not condone the way this or other highly classified programs were disclosed. I am deeply concerned about the potential damage to our intelligence-gathering capabilities, our foreign relationships, and national security.

I am also deeply concerned that one person with a security clearance can wreak this much havoc. According to the New York Times, Edward Snowden accomplished his heist of extraordinarily sensitive information about NSA activities with “inexpensive and widely available software”; in other words, software that any one of us could get. He didn’t even execute a particularly sophisticated breach. He did not, apparently, face a particularly complex technological challenge while removing these sensitive documents from the NSA trove. Yet he pulled off what the Director of National Intelligence James Clapper recently called “the most massive and most damaging theft of intelligence in our history.”

I continually ask the leaders of our intelligence community: What are you doing to stop this from happening again? I have learned that the NSA has devoted substantial resources to fixing the faults that allowed this to happen, has taken some steps to address them, and has identified a range of other actions that need to be taken. But one has to ask, especially in the wake of the Private Manning leaks, how could the NSA have allowed this to happen in the first place.

I say this not to beat up on the NSA. I know we have highly dedicated, patriotic men and women working there, and I applaud them for their service to their country. But when I hear their leadership ask us to trust that they will keep our information safe and that we should have faith in its internal policies and procedures, one has to ask: Is this accurate?

This is the same NSA that first told us that the section 215 program was essential to national security. They talked in speeches around the country that it thwarted dozens of plots. But then when they were asked questions in a congressional hearing specifically about it, that number went from in the fifties down to possibly one. The primary defense of the NSA’s bulk collection program now appears to be the program is more of an insurance policy

than anything else. But now even that new defense of the program has been called into question.

The Washington Post has reported that under this program the NSA collects less than 30 percent of domestic phone records. The Wall Street Journal says the number is less than 20 percent. These estimates are consistent with the public copy of the President’s Review Group report, which cautioned against placing too much value on this program as a tool to rule out a domestic connection to a terrorist plot; thus, the so-called insurance policy. The Review Group report tells us it is precisely because—although the program is unprecedented in scope—it still covers only a percentage of the total phone metadata held by service providers.

It appears to this Senator that the intelligence community has defended its unprecedented, massive, and indiscriminate bulk collection by arguing that it needs the entire “haystack” in order for it to have an effective counterterrorism tool—and yet the American public now finds out they only have 20 to 30 percent of that so-called haystack.

These revelations call even further into question the effectiveness of this program.

Although the program is ongoing, some preliminary and positive changes are underway. Just last week, the Director of National Intelligence announced that the FISA Court has approved procedures under which the government will seek approval by a FISA Court judge before querying these phone records—absent a true, almost instantaneous kind of an emergency. The President has directed the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence to develop alternatives to the section 215 phone records program and report back to him at the end of next month. That is progress but only some progress. It is not enough. It is not going to be enough to just reform the government’s bulk phone records collection program.

The program, as expensive and extensive as it is, has not proven effective. But beyond that, it is not worth the massive intrusion on the privacy of the American people—of the good, law-abiding men and women in what is supposed to be the greatest democracy on Earth.

Congress should shut it down. We should enact the bipartisan, bicameral USA FREEDOM Act. Then Congress has to examine carefully—and to the extent possible publicly—the security breach that led to these revelations in the first place.

The Senate Judiciary Committee has had a number of hearings on this issue. We are going to continue working on these issues at a hearing this week with the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board—yet another voice

concluding that the section 215 program should not continue. If the NSA is to regain the trust of the American people, it has to spend less time collecting data on innocent Americans and more time keeping our Nation’s secrets safe.

I yield the floor.

I will suggest the absence of a quorum. Is time being divided?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time is not currently being divided.

Mr. LEAHY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RETIREMENT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I want to talk today about a subject that has immense implications for America’s future. In fact, I often talk about it as being perhaps the darkest cloud hanging over the future economic well-being of our country that no one ever talks about. It has been hugely ignored; that is, the issue of retirement income and what people are going to do when they retire in the future.

I have been focused on this for several years. My HELP Committee has, over the last 2 or 3 years, had 10 hearings on this issue. We have met with a lot of the investment community and retirement benefits community to take a look at what is happening and to see whether we can have a better system for retirement than we have.

Right now young people who are working to pay off student loan debt, maybe buy a new home, put a little money away for their own kids’ education later on or people who are close to retirement, a nurse who has been working all her life, someone maybe worked in a small business and they are 60 years old, are wondering what are they going to do when they retire. They are worried they will not have enough money to live on.

Quite frankly, they are very right to be worried. If you looked at the future work force of America today and you said: What is it this group of people will need to live on when they retire and what they have saved for retirement, there is a deficit. They do not have enough saved on which to retire.

How big is that deficit? Calculations in our hearings show it is about \$6.6 trillion. That is a big chunk of change. That is a huge hole. So when you look at what is happening, half of Americans—half of Americans—have less than \$10,000 in savings.

As I talk and as we look at this, we have to remember that retirement has always been thought of as a three-legged stool. One leg is a pension; one

leg is savings; the other leg is Social Security. So what is happening now is that on the retirement pension system, the savings systems are falling down. Social Security is still strong. I will have more to say about that. But what we have to do is look at how much people have in savings. Half of all Americans who are working today have less than \$10,000 in savings—less than \$10,000 in savings.

When I came to the Congress in the 1970s, one out of every two workers had a pension. That means they had a pension that would pay them a monthly income until the day they died. And if they died, their spouse would get it. One out of every two. Today it is one in every five and it is getting worse. Only one in five.

By the way, this has fallen by 30 percent in just two decades. Again, 75 million people have no retirement plan at all. Seventy-five million people—that is about half of the workforce in America—have no workplace retirement plan at all—nothing, no 401(k), no IRAs, no defined benefit program. Nothing. Half, one out of every two, have nothing whatsoever.

Unfortunately, instead of trying to improve the pension system and lift up everyone, there are too many people out there trying to score political points by scapegoating public servants for State and local budget shortfalls. Pensions are not the cause of State fiscal problems, and retired public servants are not living high on the hog on the taxpayer's dime. These are simply malicious myths being spread by people who I think have two objectives: one, to discredit public sector unions; secondly, to dismantle the pension system.

Pensions are one of the best ways to ensure that middle-class people can have a secure retirement because they provide a guaranteed source of income that a person can count on for as long as he or she lives.

Can the current pension system be improved? I believe so. But there is no reason to abandon a system that has worked for millions of people.

The sad truth is that these days the vast majority of employees with any retirement plan at all have a 401(k). Again, I am not here to bad-mouth 401(k)s. They can be a very good way to help people put some money aside to supplement their pension. But 401(k)s were never intended to replace pensions. It was to be that other leg of the stool, the savings part.

Again, we know that savings rates are too low. As I said, most people have less than \$10,000. There is no simple way for people to convert their savings into a stream of retirement income that they cannot outlive. The promise people made about 401(k)s was that more businesses would start them, more people would participate.

Well, I was here when 401(k)s started. It sounded like a good idea, an easy

way for people to save. But decades after the start of 401(k)s, the number of workers participating in these plans has stayed flat. According to Monique Morrissey of the Economic Policy Institute, in 1989, participation in 401(k)s was at 46 percent of the workforce. In 2010, it was 45 percent. So it has stayed flat.

We have seen some modest increases in savings the last few years. That is what people told me at our hearings. We have seen some modest increases. I said: Really? Okay, let's take a look at that. This kind of surprised me, that we had an uptick in savings. But then we looked at the data. What does it show? It shows who is saving what. The top 10-percent income earners, the top 10 percent of income earners in America have 100 times more saved for retirement than the median household. So we charted it out. You see back here in 1989, well, they were not too far apart. Here is the top 10 percent. The top 10 percent now has nearly \$239,000 set aside for retirement; the median household, \$2,500. You say savings have gone up. Yes, look who has saved—the top 10 percent, those of us who work here. So \$239,000 as opposed to \$2,500 for the average family.

I might also add that buried in this, buried in this chart, is an unacceptable amount of racial and gender inequality in this system. The National Institute on Retirement Security recently found that Black, Asian, and Latino workers have significantly less access to retirement plans on the job than White Americans, especially in the private sector. As a result, the vast majority of working-age households headed by people of color have little or no retirement savings. For those with a retirement plan, the average account balances for Black and Latino households are less than one-fifth that of White households. So if I am not mistaken, one-fifth of \$2,500 would be about 500 bucks. So buried in this—keep in mind—is unequal gender and racial inequality.

Addressing the issue of retirement security again would be particularly beneficial to women. We all know about the income gap between men and women. But what a lot of people do not realize is the gap worsens after retirement. When you think about it, you can understand that. In 2011, the median annual income of older women; that is, over retirement age—keep this in mind, the median annual income was \$14,225. The median annual income of that same core of older men was \$24,794.

Why is that? Think about it. Unequal pay during their working years. That means women have less opportunity to save. They may take some time off during their working years to start a family. They have less time to save. Additionally, women tend to be concentrated in jobs that do not traditionally offer retirement plans. It has been

said many times that women save more money than men. Well, yes, they have higher rates, but they are starting from a very low point. So women still lag behind men when it comes to total retirement savings.

That sort of sets the stage for our committee and for me to introduce the USA Retirement Funds Act, S. 1979—if anybody wants to write down the number of the bill. It is a new retirement program, and I am going to explain, basically, how it operates.

The USA retirement means it is universal, it is secure, and it is adaptable. That is what the USA stands for. It would tackle the retirement crisis head-on by ensuring that the 75 million people—remember my earlier chart—without a workplace retirement plan would have the opportunity to earn a safe and secure pension—universal, secure, and adaptable.

The concept is very simple. Employers who don't offer a pension or a well-designed 401(k) would automatically enroll their employees in this retirement fund. If an employee wanted to opt out, he or she could. No one would be forced to participate. But by making the system opt out instead of opt in, we get millions more people participating.

Employer and employee contributions would go into a fund that would be managed by a board of trustees. When a participant retires, the fund would provide the retiree with a monthly benefit as long as he or she lives, and if that person died it would go on to their spouse.

Over time, as people contribute, they would earn a real retirement benefit that will be a better bang for their buck than what they could have gotten on their own. That is because these funds would spread retirement risk over large groups of participants.

A recent report by David Madland at the Center for American Progress found that the USA Retirement Fund, with risk pooling and professional management, would make retirement much more affordable for working families. In fact, it would cut in half the amount people would need to save over the present system of defined contribution 401(k)s.

So it is basically universal access; everybody is in. You could work for an employer—with three employees, four employees, two employees—or you could be self-employed and have universal access.

You would get monthly benefits for life. You wouldn't be borrowing against it. You wouldn't be taking out a lump sum. It would be there, and you would get a monthly benefit for life with a spousal survival.

"Professionally managed" means that it would be managed by a board of trustees who would have a fiduciary responsibility to this pool to invest it wisely—fiduciary responsibility. That

relieves the individual from trying to figure out what is the best place to put my little, meager amount of savings.

You wouldn't have to consider whether or not you should follow Uncle Fred's advice about this stock that he has that is going to make you a lot of money in the future or Mr. Ponzi's—what was the Ponzi guy's name again—where all you had to do was give him a lot of money or maybe Bernie Madoff in later years. You wouldn't have to worry about that. This would be a professional board that would have a fiduciary responsibility. As I said, it would have lower costs—about 50 percent.

In other words, what this means is if you were 35 years old and working, and you figured under your 401(k) you would need \$2 million by the time you retired in order to live out your life and have a decent retirement income, if you were involved in this program, you would only need \$1 million because the costs would be that much less.

A big portion of that \$2 million goes into fees during the life of that 401(k). So that is the big savings. USA retirement, that is for the personnel.

Let's take a look at what it means for the business, the business community itself. These are the benefits to the business. It is easy to offer. They don't have to set up a plan. For a small mom-and-pop business, if they are filling out FICA taxes anyway, they just have a separate line for this, send it off, and they haven't anything else to do. They don't have to manage it—no risks and no fiduciary responsibility as an employer, none whatsoever—and they get quality benefits.

This is what this means. A lot of employers want to make sure their employees have a good retirement benefit because as they get older they earn more. Let's face it, you would like to have people retire so you could bring younger people into the workforce.

If you have people now who can't retire because they don't have enough money, they stay working. If you have a good, quality benefit, when people get to the age of retirement, basically they can retire now; they have their retirement set up. It means for an employer, for a business, they get the kind of turnover they need to bring in new, younger workers.

As I said earlier, it is professionally run. The company has no fiduciary responsibility whatsoever such as they do under a defined benefit program. They don't have to manage it, don't have to do anything and, as I said, no risk to the business whatsoever.

I would add also that under the bill employers could voluntarily contribute to the program. They don't have to, but they could voluntarily contribute.

If you are signing up one of your workers at 6 percent, the employer could say: I want to have a good workforce; I want to hire really good people.

I have good people, and I want to keep them, but I will tell you what, I will kick in 2 percent, 3 percent or 2.5 percent.

They can kick in whatever they want as a management tool, maybe even as a recruitment tool to recruit very good workers. Again, it is a good recruitment and management tool for businesses.

For the economy in general, this would be good. This is what a lot of people don't consider. By bringing more people into this retirement system, there are going to be more savings, and there are going to be savings that are long-term type savings.

It is what we call patient capital. In other words, with the capital that comes into these big retirement pools, they don't need to earn and think about the quarterly bottom line, but they do think about the long term.

Haven't we spent a lot of time in this body and around the country talking about the need for infrastructure, long-term projects for this country, energy systems, electrical systems, roads, bridges, sewers, all of these. Plus, we need long-term capital for the new entrepreneurs starting these new businesses that may take a long time for them to return some capital, but they need that access to that long-term patient capital that something like this could provide for them.

As I said, it creates a lot of jobs. Again, because of this ability to invest over the long term, they are going to be able to start creating more jobs in our country.

I want to emphasize two more key points before I yield the floor.

First, USA Retirement Funds would not replace pensions or 401(k)s. Employers could and should continue to offer these plans at the workplace. But what this would do is give people without access to a quality employer-provided plan the opportunity to earn a retirement benefit.

The second point I want to make is that USA Retirement Funds isn't a new government program. There have already been some stories written about this in the paper.

Someone said: HARKIN has come up with a new government program.

No, I haven't. This is not a government program. This is a 21st century retirement plan run entirely by the private sector, just like pensions and 401(k)s.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't talk about that third leg of the stool, and that is Social Security. We have to improve the most efficient, most effective retirement program we have, and that is Social Security. Last year, I, along with others, introduced a bill, S. 567—a nice, easy number to remember—to expand the benefits by \$65 a month. That means that if you are at the lower end of the income scale when you retire, your replacement rate will

be a little bit better. You get \$65 a month.

For some at the higher end, \$65 a month is not that big of a deal, but it sure helps those at the bottom end. So it would increase that by \$65, and it would index the living adjustment so you would have improved cost-of-living adjustment in the future because it would look at the CPI—the cost-of-living for elderly. I look at that and adjust it for that.

Secondly, it would strengthen the trust fund by lifting the cap on the payroll tax. If we do all of that, we strengthen Social Security, we actually increase the benefit a little bit, and it extends the life to 2050. So it makes Social Security stronger for future beneficiaries.

By improving the private retirement system, bolstering Social Security, we can do a lot to take away that dark cloud. We can tell people, assure people, that they will be able to save and have a retirement benefit, an annuity, every month, as long as they live.

Secondly, we make it easier for businesses to set it up. Third, it creates jobs in our economy by long-term types of investment. During this time of economic insecurity, it is more important than ever that working people have the opportunity to prepare for retirement.

I urge my colleagues to help rebuild the pension system in this country by supporting the USA Retirement Funds Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

(The remarks of Mrs. FISCHER and Mr. KING pertaining to the introduction of S. 2007 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we find ourselves today considering legislation to fix a problem that Congress and the President created only 2 short months ago. We knew from the Ryan-Murray spending deal that it cut military pensions. Yet this Senate passed the bill anyway, over my objections and those of many of my Republican colleagues. Congressional Democrats insisted on keeping the military pension cuts in the Ryan-Murray deal. They would not accept change. Almost every Democrat supported Majority Leader REID and rejected amendments to stop the cuts and voted for the final passage. So they ignored the warnings I and others issued, and virtually every Senate Democrat voted to keep these cuts rather than close clear Federal tax loopholes that allow illegal aliens to gain money improperly.

So what happens? Constituents back home were outraged. Senate Democrats are trying to claim credit for fixing the

very problem they created—which, in itself, is not bad, but unfortunately, instead of doing this in a good-faith way consistent with our spending priorities and limitations under the Murray-Ryan bill, the Pryor bill before us now authorizes more spending, unpaid for, in direct violation of the spending limits set out in the Ryan-Murray legislation passed just a few weeks ago.

So we passed legislation, we set limits on spending, and here we are blithely walking in again. I am at a loss to see why my colleagues continue to resist replacing these cuts—cuts to veterans who have earned it, who have been drawing these benefits, and not replacing them by closing the tax credit loophole for illegal immigrants.

Closing of this loophole was recommended by the inspector general of President Obama's own Treasury Department. So why are there those determined to protect billions of dollars in tax fraud and allow it to continue? Would it not be in our national interest to close this loophole, restore these pensions for our veterans, and maintain the savings we promised to the American people? Indeed, the savings would more than pay for the replacement of the veteran retirement provision, and it would help reduce our huge deficits.

Let's review how we got here.

In August of 2011, as we approached the statutory borrowing limit—the debt ceiling—Congress passed a Budget Control Act, which Congress agreed to immediately increase the debt limit by \$2.1 trillion, but Congress promised to reduce the projected growth of spending from \$10 trillion over the next 10 years to \$8 trillion over the next 10 years. This was said to be a spending cut but was really a reduction in the growth of spending.

So this 2011 legislation, passed into law and signed by the President, promised to reduce the growth of spending by \$2.1 trillion. I did not support this act. I thought we could have done more, and hoped to do more. Of course, I recognized it applied to our military in a disproportionate way—although we hoped it would ultimately be avoided, but it was not.

Once this legislation was passed, I felt—and I think most of us in Congress believed—we should honor the agreement we made to the American people. But almost immediately, many of our colleagues began saying even those spending reductions were too much. At every turn, the Senate passed or attempted to pass legislation which broke the spending caps.

I raised a number of budget objections. I am the ranking member on the Senate Budget Committee, and when spending violates the spending limits we have, I have on a number of occasions raised objections, or budget points of order. It takes 60 votes to spend more than the budget allows us

to spend, so it gives us a check on spending.

Many of my objections were sustained, almost entirely with Republican votes, but in plain fact our colleagues were unwilling to save the money they promised the American people. We agreed to save a certain amount of money—we promised to do so. But when things get tight and their political groups want more, we tend to spend more, make excuses, and violate the budget. That, of course, is why we are in this deep, adverse financial situation.

Chairman MURRAY and Chairman RYAN entered into a negotiation to ease the Budget Control Act spending cuts—the sequester. They unveiled a plan which increased spending above the BCA level in exchange for increased revenues and some spending cuts. They said the new increases in spending were paid for. The increases in spending happened in 2 years, promised cuts were over a long period of time in the future, but it did in fact balance as they described it at the time.

However, immediately my staff alerted me to a provision in the bill which proposed cutting military retirement benefits by \$6 billion—not for future recipients but for current soldiers and retirees. Some servicemembers would see a lifetime reduction of \$120,000 or more, some \$72,000. This is a cost-of-living reduction of more than 60 percent for some people. I felt this was unacceptable. There are a lot of other things we ought to be cutting before we cut the promised earned retirement benefits to our veterans who serve 20 years. Only those who have a 20-year service record qualify for this. I thought this was unacceptable and pointed it out.

Of course, no one seems to know where this provision came from. The Department of Defense said they weren't consulted. This is not surprising, since the legislation was produced by a secret few behind closed doors—something I do not think is a good process. The traditional legislative conference committee process was abandoned.

The good news is it was caught before it came to the floor, and when the bill came up, some of us offered proposals to fix this problem while staying within the spending caps. So as to not cut veterans \$6 billion we needed to find some other place to cut \$6 billion. This would at least have kept the promises of the bill sponsors of Ryan-Murray.

Military retirement cuts were a significant part of pay for this new spending. In that spirit, I proposed what I thought was a reasonable alternative. For over 2 years now, I have been trying to close a massive tax loophole.

In July of 2011, the U.S. Treasury Department, part of President Obama's administration, reported that illegal aliens received more than \$4 billion in

free child tax credits in just 2010 alone. In some cases, households received tens of thousands of dollars year after year, in many cases claiming as dependents people who don't even live in the United States. A number of these filers had no tax liability—that is, they were paying no tax at all—but they were getting tax credit checks from the Federal Government. The inspector general of the Treasury Department asked Congress to act and close this clear abuse. And it is dramatic, really.

What we found, in 2005, is credits claimed under this provision amounted to \$924 million. But the inspector general reported by 2010, it was \$4.2 billion—it has gone up four times in 5 year or 6 years—surging, as word got out that all you had to do was make these claims, nobody checks that the children were in the United States or if there were children at all. There is no way to check.

The inspector general of the Treasury Department has made at least three reports on this subject, and in its 2009 report pointed out the problems we face.

And it is not accurate to say that we somehow want to abuse children and deny them support. We are talking about plain fraud and abuse in this system.

This is what the inspector general said in March of 2009:

Legislation should be considered to require a Social Security Number in order to be eligible for the Additional Child Tax Credit—

That is basically the amendment I offered, and what the amendment Senator AYOTTE is now offering and I co-sponsored with her would do—just require you to have a Social Security number before you claim a big check from the U.S. Treasury. This would be consistent with the requirements, the IG said, for the earned income tax credit. Americans who file an earned income tax credit have to have a Social Security number. This is for people who work and receive a low income.

The Inspector General goes on:

[A]s it now stands, the payment of Federal funds through this tax benefit appears to provide an additional incentive for aliens to enter, reside, and work in the U.S. without authorization . . .

By the way, he said, this would appear to be an additional incentive for people to illegally enter the country, because you can come in unlawfully here and claim credit for children who may not even exist. And, if they do, they might be in a foreign country. It is now running at the rate of \$4 billion-plus a year.

Remember, over 10 years the cost of the cuts to veterans is \$6 billion. Closing this loophole would more than pay for this.

The inspector general goes on to say:

As far back as 2007, [IRS] employees responsible for resolving errors on tax returns, including those filed by individuals with an

ITIN, raised concerns to IRS management about its policies for handling errors in ITIN tax returns. These employees stated that management did not take any subsequent action to address their concerns. A formal complaint was subsequently filed with the TIGTA.

In its 2009 report in December, some 6 or 9 months later, it goes on to say:

The volumes of ITINs is growing, increasing the risk that fraudulent tax returns using ITINs could be submitted.

ITINs were issued without sufficient support documentation. A statistical sample of 658 forms . . . selected from 1.5 million application[s] . . . submitted from January 1 through November 1, 2008, showed that . . . 78 percent contained errors.

The inspector general goes on to say:

There are . . . no controls to prevent an ITIN from being used by more than one taxpayer on multiple tax returns.

Nobody is checking if the ITIN number is used again, so they just file multiple returns.

It goes on to say:

More than 60,000 ITINs were assigned and used on multiple tax returns, processed in Calendar Year 2008.

So more than 60,000 of these numbers issued to individuals were used on more than one tax return. They shouldn't be using them but on one.

It goes on to say:

In addition, more than 55,000 ITINs were used multiple times on approximately 102,000 tax returns with refunds totaling more than \$202 million. These are just the ones which used the number on more than one return.

The report goes on:

97 percent [of] supporting identification documents . . . were missing or illegible . . . 23 percent [of] signatures were missing . . . [and] 5 percent [had incorrect] birth dates.

And it goes on and on.

Something of interest is the news media has dug into this a bit. NBC's affiliate in Indianapolis in April of 2012 reported this:

An undocumented worker in southern Indiana told Channel 13-Investigates just how easy it truly is.

He said four other illegal immigrants file tax returns using his address, even though none of them actually lives there. And he said this year, those four workers filed tax returns claiming 20 children live inside his small trailer home. As a result, the IRS sent the illegal immigrants tax refunds totaling more than \$29,000. But none of the 20 children listed as dependents on the tax returns lives in Indiana or even in the United States. "No, they don't live here," admitted the undocumented worker. "The other kids are in their country of origin, which is Mexico."

On July 2012, they further reported about an IRS officer with a complaint in South Carolina. They reported that Howard, the IRS officer, received a stack of ITIN applications for dozens of children attending the same school in South Carolina. When he researched that school, he discovered it didn't even exist. When Howard reported the scam to his bosses, he claims his managers ordered him to approve the applications anyway. The inspector general also looked into that complaint.

This is not good. The taxpayers don't need to be subjected to this kind of fraud and abuse, and we absolutely should not cut veterans' earned retirement benefits while refusing to take action against such fraud and abuse as identified by our Treasury Department.

I offered the amendment to save the soldiers' pensions and pay for it by closing this tax loophole, but the majority leader—supported by his caucus, including the authors of this legislation—blocked the effort, not once but twice.

Let me make it clear that this bill before us—because our colleagues are refusing to utilize this possible fraud-closing mechanism to save enough money to more than pay for it—will be asking us to violate the fundamental principle of the Ryan-Murray Act. The Ryan-Murray Act promised we would spend more but that new spending would be paid for by taxes and spending cuts, and one of the spending cuts were the cuts to the veterans. If we take out the cuts to the veterans, where are we going to get the money to make sure the bill is paid for as promised? That is the question. We have offered a perfectly reasonable and essential loophole-closing mechanism to pay for that and pay even more than that. Let me make it clear: The bill before us is placing us in a position to choose from allowing an illegality to continue or cutting benefits earned by our veterans.

What we are seeing—in an astonishingly cynical move, if you think about it—is that we would restore the pensions to veterans without paying for it, without admitting that a mistake was made and not living up to the plain promises made in the Ryan-Murray bill, which reinforced and repassed spending limitations.

Congress passed spending caps in 2011. Ryan-Murray spent more but also established higher and clearer spending caps. It reestablished spending cuts. The Pryor legislation busts the in law Ryan-Murray caps. This is not acceptable. Are we blithely ignoring plain spending limits passed into law just a few weeks ago? Is there no shame, no embarrassment at such a dramatic breach of legal and budgetary spending limits?

Closing the ITIN tax credit loophole is a no-brainer. Let's stop this abuse and not cut current retirement of our veterans.

I hope we can move forward with the legislation today. I am uneasy and worried, but let's move forward. Let's bring the bill to the floor and maybe a compromise that is acceptable can be reached. I certainly believe that Senator AYOTTE's proposal—the one I am supporting—is a perfectly reasonable compromise that ought to have overwhelming support in this body.

If such an amendment of this nature is not accepted to pay for this change,

I think the legislation is not going to pass in its current form. It would be a plain violation of the promises we made to limit spending just a few weeks ago. It is the kind of erosion of integrity that will lead this country to financial disaster. We are running up too much debt.

The Congressional Budget Office Director will testify before the Budget Committee tomorrow, and I trust the Presiding Officer will be there. He is an excellent member of that committee.

The Congressional Budget Office Director is going to tell us that interest on the debt of the United States—which will increase every year for the next 10 years and begin to surge upward in the outer years—in the 10th year alone will be \$890 billion. That is stunning. The Department of Defense is just at \$500 billion.

Right now interest on the debt is \$250 billion. It is going to \$900 billion in 10 years. The first money this government will have to pay is the money we pay on our interest on the debt that we have run up—\$17 trillion. According to CBO, we are going to add another \$7 trillion over the next 10 years. We will have to pay \$24 trillion on interest.

He told us that if interest rates go up 1 percent, it will add \$1.5 trillion to the amount of interest we would pay over the next 10 years. Most people tell us our interest rates are going up.

I guess what I am saying to my colleagues is that we know we face a financial challenge. We know we have to get spending under control. The Ryan-Murray bill was designed to ease this year's cuts in the Budget Control Act and sequester, and this was the tightest and toughest year of all. They eased that, and they said they paid for it with tax increases and spending reductions.

The bill before us would eliminate one of the pay-fors and substitute nothing else, which would mean we would add another \$6 billion to the deficit. That is the path to fiscal irresponsibility and financial danger, and we need to get off of it.

I thank the Chair, yield the floor, and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I rise in support of S. 1963, the Military Pay Restoration Act.

Last year, the Senate passed the Bipartisan Budget Act—a bipartisan and bicameral agreement that funded our government, provided stability for our economy, and reduced our deficit by over \$22 billion.

I think my colleagues and the American people will agree that last year was tough. We saw the delay of the farm bill, the government shutdown, and the debt ceiling. Needless to say, this budget agreement was a positive step forward.

However, I will be the first to admit—and I think I maybe was the first to admit, possibly—that this wasn't perfect, especially when it came to the harmful budget cuts made at the expense of our men and women in uniform.

There is no question we need to cut our spending. I think almost everyone in this Chamber agrees with that, and I think so many Americans agree with that, but we must do it responsibly. We can address the issues we all talk about, such as cutting waste and fraud and abuse. We can be smart and eliminate items—again, once we think about them and roll up our sleeves and do the hard work and recognize we should—such as unnecessary government property purchases and maintenance, and pursue other cuts such as out-of-date and inefficient programs. All of those issues should be addressed.

But we cannot balance the budget on the backs of our hard-working military members and their families. We are a free nation today because of the sacrifices our men and women in uniform make. They make those sacrifices for all of us. They make sacrifices for the Nation and for the world. They lay their lives on the line for us, oftentimes in places far away from their homes and their families, so we can live in peace right here at home.

Ashley, a soldier's wife from Alma, AR, recently wrote me and said: "My husband signed up to serve so those that don't want to wouldn't have to."

We have made a commitment to our servicemembers and we need to honor that commitment today by ensuring they receive the benefits they have earned.

When Aaron of Lake City, AR, signed up for the Army and deployed to Iraq, he counted on those earned benefits to provide for himself and his family. As he said in his letter: "I held up my end of the contract and I believe the government should uphold their end."

I agree with Aaron. Singling out our brave servicemembers isn't just unfair, it is wrong.

Dwayne of Drasco, AR, who served in the Air Force, said: "I have been to Iraq and Afghanistan many times. I left a wife and three kids that depended on me. I fulfilled my obligation."

The government must right this wrong and fulfill our obligation to servicemembers such as Dwayne.

I have introduced the Military Retirement Pay Restoration bill to repeal section 403 of the budget agreement that unfairly reduces the cost-of-living adjustment benefits for our military retirees under the age of 62 by 1 per-

cent and to ensure that our future military retirees receive their full retirement pay.

Unfortunately, I have heard a lot of back-and-forth here in the Senate and on the Senate floor about this provision. Instead of working against each other, let's work together to get this done. As President John F. Kennedy said:

Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.

We can fix this. Today, we will take an important step forward in fixing it. I am proposing a responsible solution which everyone on this floor should be able to support. In fact, I have even heard Speaker BOEHNER down the hall here urging his colleagues over in the House to consider supporting legislation that would repeal section 403 of the budget agreement, just as mine does, just as ours does.

Supporting our men and women in uniform is not a partisan issue; it is an American issue. We have seen 30 of the major veterans groups urge us to fix this: the Air Force Association, the Marine Corps League, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the U.S., the Association of the U.S. Navy, the Military Officers Association of America, just to name a few. There are 30 of these organizations that have urged us to fix this. They have told us: "This provision breaks faith with each individual who has faithfully served their nation for over two decades in uniform."

So let's fix it. Let's restore America's faith in Congress by doing the right thing today. Let's give our soldiers and their families the unwavering support they have given us. Let's put the partisanship aside, and let's pass this bill. Our military members and their families are counting on us.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. I try to come down to the floor every week or so to give voices to the victims of gun violence. All across this country, every day and every week, dozens, hundreds, thousands of Americans are gunned down on our streets and in our homes, in part because the Congress does absolutely nothing, has done absolutely nothing over the course of the past several years, over the course of the past decade, to try to curb this scourge of destruction that plagues virtually

every corner of our society. Eighty-six people a day die at the hands of guns; 2,639, approximately, people every month. We lose 31,000 people every year. There is not another first-world country in the world that can come close to the level of gun violence we have here in the United States.

On top of these numbers are the horrific trendlines on mass shootings. Over the course of January, we saw a school shooting essentially every 2 days that school was in session. "Luckily" is not the word to ascribe to this sentence, but luckily, in each one of those instances, the damage was relatively minor to the potential damage that will unfortunately one day come when a shooter walks into one of these schools and is able to perpetrate the kind of violence that Adam Lanza did in Newtown, CT. We are sending a message of complicity when the Senate and the House of Representatives stand absolutely silent in the face of this violence.

I have come to the floor almost every week, and I hope that almost every time I arrive at the floor, I let my colleagues know that I don't expect that any law we pass is going to reduce 31,000 or 2,600 or 86 to zero. I understand that the reality is there is no law we can pass that will end all incidents of gun violence, that there is no panacea to this problem that Congress can offer, but we send a very clear message when we do nothing. When the Senate does not act, when the House does not act, we tell people in this country that we must be OK with the numbers that continue to accrue and move upward. I know that isn't the case. I know my Republican colleagues are just as sickened as I am at 86 people dying every day from guns. I know that supporters of the NRA, gun owners themselves, can't stand that this number is so high at 31,000 a year. But if the stats don't do it, then hopefully the voices of these victims will. So I offer four more recent victims, all from the streets of our cities in Connecticut.

Varnouard Hall was killed just a few days ago in New Haven, CT, January 31. He was shot and killed on the corner of East Pearl Street and Pierpont Street in New Haven. Emergency personnel were dispatched shortly before 10 p.m., and they found Hall lying on the ground, unresponsive, with a gunshot wound to his head. He was pronounced dead at the scene. Hall was the third homicide victim of the year, 31 days into January.

A couple of days later about 60 people gathered at the corner where Hall was shot. He had a lot of family, he had a lot of friends, and they mourned together. His family members and friends remember him as a very kind person. The family says: We don't want retaliation; we want justice.

Hall's sister Renee Evans said:

I need people to stop being afraid to say what they see. If you see it, say it; you don't

need to give your name. . . . Anyone who knows something should call the police.

He was a well-liked person all across the neighborhood.

Varnouard Hall, shot dead, was 33 years old.

Durell Patrick Law was killed 10 days earlier in New Haven. He had just started attending church regularly, the Faith Revival Temple Church in West Haven. He had gone to one of his first services on January 19, and he didn't make it to the next service—not by choice but because he was shot dead on Eastern Street on January 20. This was the city's first homicide of 2014. Mourners packed that church, where he was a new parishioner, to mourn him. They said he was a good man who liked to goof around, especially with his many family members.

Durell leaves behind a 1-year-old son. He was very active in sports in high school, and he was only 20 years old. In high school he had participated in football and track.

Justin Mariano was 29 years old when just before the new year he was killed in Bridgeport, CT. He was shot on the evening of November 9. Police responded to Bridgeport Hospital, where Mariano later died from his injuries. He had just started working at a barbershop called Sharp Cutz, and he was remembered by the people who worked with him and the folks who trained him at a local cosmetology school as talented, bright, and energetic.

Jerome Copeland was 22 years old when he was killed on the streets of Hartford. He was the 16th homicide victim in Hartford when he was killed in the late summer of 2013. A woman who knew him said that "he was a young father, struggling, trying to make ends meet." He leaves behind a son, a brother, two sisters, and a loving girlfriend who described him as "an energetic man who loves music."

When I was at Central High School in Bridgeport a few weeks ago, I was sitting with a group of kids who wanted to see what they could do to end the violence on the streets of their city, to feel a little safer when they walked to school in the morning. I asked them all: How many of you know someone—a close relative or friend—who has been killed by guns? They looked at me strangely; in part, because every single one of them raised their hands. At Central High School you just accept at some point before you reach the age of 18 you are going to know somebody—a close friend or relative—who has been killed by guns in that city.

At a similar meeting of high school students in Hartford, CT, one young girl said the signs of police sirens at night were her lullaby growing up. She just knew there was a pretty good chance on any night someone was going to be killed in her neighborhood and she had come to accept the signs of crisis response as just the pitter-pat of raindrops outside.

To these kids, they look at their lives, in which they fear for their safety when they walk to school, in which they accept the inevitable fact they will lose someone close to them over the course of their teenage years, and they do not understand the complacency of the Senate.

A recent study of Cook County hospitals in and around Chicago showed of all the people they treated for episodes of violence, nearly half of them displayed signs of PTSD. The fact is, in these neighborhoods, PTSD is a reality in the same way it is for our troops who serve us overseas because they witness horrific acts of violence in neighborhoods that are supposed to be safe for our kids. We shouldn't have to compare the levels of PTSD in the neighborhoods our kids transit in the same way we look at PTSD on the field of battle.

It is time we did something—whether it is an investment in new mental health resources or beefed-up background checks to make sure criminals aren't buying guns or a recognition there are some weapons that probably deserve to be in the hands of the military rather than in the hands of everyday citizens. It is time for us to have an answer. These numbers—31,000, 2,600, and 86—are too high. If the stats don't do it, then hopefully over time the voices of victims will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

RECOGNIZING NORTH DAKOTA FIREMEN

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, most of the country watched with a great deal of interest right before the new year, when we unfortunately had a train derailment in Casselton, ND. What was unique about this train derailment was that the train that derailed subsequently derailed another train which resulted in a fairly large explosion, which sent shock waves through the rest of the country as we started to address the issue of how do we maintain safety on the rails.

So we have been having a lot of discussions about what is the appropriate level of regulation. We have been having a lot of discussions about tank cars. The U.S. Department of Transportation has been meeting with the railroad industry as well as the oil and gas industry trying to assure whatever decisions are made, that they enhance safety. But I wish to talk about something that is not about government regulation and it is not about long-term strategies, except to point out the heroics and the importance of first responders.

I rise to honor the heroics of Geoff Andersen, an engineer in training for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, whose bravery following the recent train derailment near Casselton prevented the dangerous explosions from the crash from spreading even farther.

For many of us in the Senate, the Casselton derailment has trained our focus on our efforts to improve safety for the rail shipments of crude oil. From increased track inspections to updated tanker car standards, to the consideration of new routing options for crude shipments, all angles for improving the safety of crude rail shipments are being considered. What we should not overlook in our efforts, however, is the importance of skillful and well-trained railmen on the lines. Railmen such as Geoff Andersen are the backbone of that industry, and when one goes above and beyond the call of duty to prevent a disaster from spreading, they deserve to be recognized.

On December 30, a grain car carrying soybeans to the Pacific Northwest derailed near Casselton, ND. An axle broke on the car near the middle of the train, forcing the car off the rails and onto the tracks of the adjacent line carrying trains in the opposite direction. Conductor Bruce Anderson and Road Foreman of Engines Paul Douglas radioed the emergency to the oncoming train on the opposite track, but there was insufficient time to slow down that train headed their way. In the brief moments following the derailment, an eastbound train carrying crude oil collided with a soybean car lying over the tracks and the eastbound train exploded.

Following the crash, Geoff and the entire crew of the westbound grain train sprang into action. Immediately following the derailment, Conductor Bruce Anderson went back and pulled approximately 50 cars away from the fire. Recognizing the fire would soon spread to the remaining cars, Geoff worked with Assistant Fire Chief Adrian Kieffer to hatch a plan to couple back onto the remaining oil cars and unhook the tanker cars and pull them to safety.

Geoff, a former civilian firefighter for the Grand Forks Air Force Base, borrowed two radios and fire protection gear from the Casselton Fire Department. His engineer and trainer, Tom Cooks, jumped into the rear engine of the train to reverse the locomotive toward the fire and connected the train to the tanker cars in danger of exploding.

Geoff, armed in fire protection gear, walked toward the fire to connect the train to the cars. He then walked even closer to the fire to pull the pin on the closest tanker car within a safe distance, getting 25 more cars away from the fire.

Remember, these are cars filled with crude oil.

Once the pin was pulled, Geoff radioed to Tom to pull the cars away.

Because of Geoff's heroics, the danger from the derailment was minimized and the explosions were isolated to the tanker cars adjacent to the derailment.

Had it not been for Geoff, this disaster would have been much worse.

I would like to take this time to thank not only Geoff Andersen but all those involved in the response, including Engineer Tom Cooks, Conductor Bruce Anderson, Road Foreman of Engines Paul Douglas, Casselton Fire Chief Tim McLean, and Casselton Assistant Fire Chief Adrian Kieffer, for their presence of mind and their decisive action following the crash to minimize the danger of this derailment.

I rise with some awareness of what firemen do. As attorney general for the State of North Dakota, I had the pleasure of also being responsible for the fire marshal's office. As somebody in charge of the fire marshal's office, I spent a great deal of time traveling across North Dakota visiting not only with full-time firemen but the wonderful volunteer fire offices we have all across North Dakota.

I have a special spot in my heart for firemen. My dad was chief of the fire department in Mantador, ND, for years and years, and took that effort quite seriously, took the training quite seriously.

As we move forward in this discussion of guaranteeing the safety of crude moving on the rails, I ask this body to consider a third prong, beyond simply looking at routing decisions and prevention of derailment, and then in the unfortunate incidence, of containment of the consequences of derailment; that is, the importance of training, the importance of doing everything we can to provide the equipment and to provide the training and the resources to our first responders.

Anyone who doubts the commitment of those first responders to put their lives in harm's way need only look to the 9/11 responders and realize, if you have worked with firemen, they all knew when they walked into that building their chances of returning were virtually nonexistent. Yet they walked into that building in an effort that we can only shake our heads at—the heroics of that effort. Take a look at the heroics of Geoff Andersen and his colleagues in doing everything they could to promote public safety and to guarantee public safety. Let's respond with appropriate public policy and appropriate training and appropriate resources for our first responders.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I am one of the sponsors of the bill pending before the Senate at this moment. As

we know, the bill is about as simple as we can get around this place: a one-sentence measure to restore the fairness to America's military retirees. The bill repeals the COLA cut Congress gave to working-age military retirees when we passed the budget just before Christmas.

The budget bill had a lot of good provisions and passed with large bipartisan support on both sides of the Capitol. It avoided another government shutdown. Alaska's delegation was unified in passing the budget bill. It prevented another round of major cuts to Defense Department and other agencies. It showed the American people that Republicans and Democrats can work together. But it wasn't much of a Christmas present for our veterans—the brave Americans who made a career out of serving their country and, in many cases, putting their lives on the line.

That budget deal says working-age military retirees will see their pension COLA adjustments reduced by 1 percent annually. For many this is a hit totaling tens of thousands of dollars over years. For some the total reduction over their lifetime is upwards of \$80,000. It is completely unacceptable. This is why many of us only supported the budget deal because we had already committed to rolling back the COLA cut once the deal was completed.

The bill before us right now will take care of the problem once and for all. The chief sponsors are Senators HAGAN, PRYOR, SHAHEEN, and myself. Many others are coming onboard. In fact, I don't know a single Member of this Chamber who opposes making sure our military retirees continue to receive their full COLA. It is right to do. When these heroes signed on to serve and made their military service a career, it is what they were promised. They should expect no less now.

But I have been around the block a few times and I know what is coming. Many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are going to come to this floor and talk a good game. They are going to pledge their loyalty to the troops, they are going to wrap themselves in the flag, and then they are going to pivot. They are going to start qualifying things. They are going to say the sky is falling. And they are going to say we can only pass this bill if we pay for it. We have already been down that road. Many of us in this Chamber tried to fix the military COLA last month, but our efforts failed in a fight over what is known around here as a pay-for. Honestly, I am sick of it.

The bill before us right now—the bill I proudly sponsor—has no pay-for. Why is that, people ask. Because the men and women of our Armed Services have already paid—paid up on their end of the deal—and now it is time for us to pay our part.

Unfortunately, too many of them have paid the ultimate sacrifice, with their lives. All of them—even those who served, who survived, and were lucky enough to retire—had agreed to put their lives on the line. That is the deal when you sign up to serve this country.

So to my colleagues I say, don't come down to this floor and lecture me about paying for this bill, because it is a simple thing to do.

I have a list right here of Alaskan soldiers who died in battle during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the wars that weren't paid for. There are 22 names here. Alaska is a small-populated State, so every one of these losses hit us hard.

In all, nearly 6,800 American soldiers have died in these 2 wars. Half of these fallen soldiers were between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. With permission, I am going to read just a few of the names of our fallen Alaskans:

TSgt Leslie Williams, Air Force, age 36, Juneau; PFC Adare Cleveland, Army, age 19, Anchorage; SGT Kurtis Arcala, Army, age 22, Palmer; Michael Lasky, Marine Reserves, age 22, Sterling.

Twenty-two Alaskans have paid the price. Granted, we will never know if these brave soldiers would have chosen to make a full career out of the military. We will never know if they would have collected a pension from the country they served. But this much we do know: Every American troop who is serving right now, especially the career soldiers, signed on with a promise from the rest of us that in return for their sacrifice, their government would take care of them.

It is time for those of us in Congress to step up and do that—both sides of the aisle on both sides of the Capitol. It is time for us to pass this bill and to make good once again on our end of a deal.

Let me make one point. Our actions so far on this issue are not theatrical. This isn't about some ideological policy debate. By voting to reduce the COLA adjustment, we have already impacted real people and real families and created uncertainty in their future. Here are just two examples of Alaskan constituents.

A soldier from Anchorage wrote to me and said:

I myself am on active duty with just over 18 years of service. Maybe I made a mistake by devoting my life from age 19 to now to the Air Force.

He said he has moved six times, has two failed marriages and two children, one of whom is disabled. He says we changed the rules of the game and now wonders what would have happened if he had chosen college instead of the military. The letter says:

I can't undo 18 years of service. I can't change my career path. It seems very unfair to be changing our retirement like this.

Another family from the North Pole up near Fairbanks wrote to me. The husband served 20 years in the Air Force, and their daughter is currently a major in the Air Force. They were promised benefits for life, such as good health care and retirement benefits with a COLA adjustment. The husband could have left sooner and started another career, but he chose to stay because of the benefits. Their message to me was very simple: The vote to reduce the COLA breaks faith with them, with those already retired, and with everyone who has chosen a military career.

And what about those bright young people who are deciding right now whether to sign up and perhaps make a career out of the military? What are they thinking about their Congress and their future?

We need to fix this, and fix it right now, starting with our vote this evening—not next month, not later this spring, not next fall, but right now.

I know there is going to be a lot of debate. Hopefully tonight we will see the cloture vote and move to the debate. I know there will be a list of pay-fors. As I said earlier, the people whom this protects and ensures they have a COLA and retirement they can depend on are people who served this country and put their lives on the line. We have an obligation—an obligation today, tonight, and tomorrow—to finish this and put their COLA back in place.

I know we will hear arguments about the deficit and all these explanations. But I can't say enough about the payment that has already been made by our military, by the people who served not only on the frontlines but throughout this world, protecting our country. I hope we put aside our political debates and our politicking, and get on with doing what is right.

When we put this in perspective about the 6,800 who perished in the two unpaid-for wars—\$2 trillion-plus unpaid for—this is a \$6 billion issue over the next 10 years. It is a small amount to make sure we solve this problem for our retirees.

The military coalition—an incredible organization of many of our military organizations around the country—has sent a letter today supporting S. 1963, the bill we have up today. So I hope Members on both sides put aside this whole argument on the pay-for and let's get on with doing what is right with our retirees. They have paid the price, they have served our country, and it is time to pay the bill—and that is voting for this piece of legislation tonight, voting to close it in cloture, and then moving on to final passage.

I look forward to the debate.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I wish to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I see that S. 1963, a bill to repeal certain reductions made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, is on the calendar. I didn't vote for the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, and my no vote was cast for one reason—this so-called CPI-minus-1-percent injustice done to military retirees. Military retirees under the age of 62—according to this newly passed bipartisan budget bill signed by the President—will not be able to keep up with the cost of living because their annual cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, would be reduced each year by 1 percent.

I think we have clearly pointed out to the American people the injustice of this provision in the Budget Act. An enlisted person would lose approximately \$80,000 out of his or her pocket over their lifetime. These military retirees have fulfilled every part of their bargain. After they have done their share and subjected themselves to worldwide duty—perhaps serving in a war zone any number of times—the government comes along in the form of this bill and says: We have changed our minds. We are not going to give you your full cost of living. We are going to take a percent of that each year. For officers it is even more than \$80,000 over their lifetime.

I believe most Americans now realize that it was a mistake to do this. It needs to be corrected, and we need to go back and keep our promise to military retirees. We have an obligation to do this for our military retirees.

At the same time, we have an obligation to future generations not to go back on the budget savings that were so hard fought in this budget act. I supported the level of budget savings, but I didn't like the way they were done.

Time and time again I, along with Senator AYOTTE, Senator GRAHAM, and others came to the Senate floor and pointed out that there were other ways to pay for the savings that needed to be made in the budget. There are better ways to do that than taking it out of the hides of the people who volunteered to serve their country in the military.

We have a bill, S. 1963, that we will be considering, and it is authored by Mr. PRYOR, Mrs. HAGAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. BEGICH. I like the idea of addressing the problem. There is only one fault in the bill. It does not have a pay-for. So of the budget savings that we made last December, some \$6 billion of that would simply go away and we would end up spending that \$6 billion we were planning to save.

Our obligation needs to be to the military people and to future generations. Why do we need to cut \$6 billion? Why do we need to stay with the \$6 billion in budget savings? Because we have an obligation to do something about the debt. That was the whole reason for the budget bill last December. We are drowning in a sea of debt to the tune of \$17 trillion-plus and growing every day. We need to rectify the wrong done to military people, and at the same time we need to find the budget savings elsewhere.

Today I will vote to proceed to the bill. I will do so in the hope that Republicans and conservatives will be allowed to offer amendments in the regular order and find the \$6 billion in savings needed over a 10-year period to pay for this bill.

There is a proposal by me, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator GRAHAM that would use an Obama administration pay-for to pay for the cost of rectifying the wrong to the military retirees. It is a closing of a loophole in the U.S. Tax Code. The loophole I am referring to allows people to improperly claim an additional child credit.

The Joint Committee on Taxation has estimated that this change could save approximately \$20 billion over the next decade. This was an issue identified by the Obama administration's Treasury Department and their inspector general. We are not taking something from the Heritage Foundation. This is something by the Treasury Department of the Obama administration and their inspector general.

I simply submit this to my colleagues. Let's rectify the wrong done to the military retirees and also admit we have an obligation to future generations and not add to the debt any more than this Congress has already done. We can fulfill both of these obligations today, and the way to do it is to vote for cloture on the motion to proceed, which I, and I believe many of my Republican colleagues, will do.

In return, we ask for regular order on this important bill. Allow amendments and pay-fors through the Ayotte-Graham-Wicker legislation or perhaps through another amendment. If there are Members on the other side of the aisle who have a better pay-for, bring that to the floor, offer it, let the sun shine on these suggestions, and let the American people know where we stand on righting the wrong and protecting future taxpayers.

I say to my colleagues, vote yes on cloture on the motion to proceed. I say to the leadership, don't lock it down this time like it has done in the past. Don't fill up the amendment tree. Allow Republicans and Democrats—who have other ideas about how to protect our future generations from a sea of debt—to bring those ideas to the floor, vote on them, and let the American people see that we can correct this

wrong to the military without adding \$6 billion to the debt.

I hope we will have a bipartisan consensus and begin this new year with regular order and allow the elected representatives of the States to work their will rather than having deals cut behind closed doors.

I thank the Presiding Officer and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

Harry Reid, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Kay R. Hagan, Jeanne Shaheen, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Christopher A. Coons, Angus S. King, Jr., Bill Nelson, Richard J. Durbin, Tim Kaine, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Jeff Merkley, Debbie Stabenow, Barbara Boxer, Kirsten E. Gillibrand.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 94, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 26 Leg.]

YEAS—94

Alexander	Boxer	Collins
Ayotte	Brown	Coons
Baldwin	Burr	Cornyn
Barrasso	Cantwell	Crapo
Begich	Cardin	Cruz
Bennet	Carper	Donnelly
Blumenthal	Casey	Durbin
Blunt	Chambliss	Enzi
Booker	Coats	Feinstein
Boozman	Cochran	Fischer

Flake	Lee	Rockefeller
Franken	Levin	Sanders
Gillibrand	Manchin	Schatz
Grassley	Markey	Schumer
Hagan	McCain	Scott
Harkin	McCaskill	Sessions
Hatch	McConnell	Shaheen
Heinrich	Menendez	Shelby
Heitkamp	Merkley	Stabenow
Heller	Mikulski	Tester
Hirono	Moran	Thune
Hoehn	Murkowski	Toomey
Inhofe	Murphy	Udall (CO)
Isakson	Murray	Udall (NM)
Johanns	Nelson	Vitter
Johnson (SD)	Paul	Warner
Kaine	Portman	Warren
King	Pryor	Whitehouse
Kirk	Reed	Wicker
Klobuchar	Reid	Wyden
Landrieu	Risch	
Leahy	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—5

Coburn	Graham	Rubio
Corker	Johnson (WI)	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 94, the nays are 0. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of S. 1963.

I ask unanimous consent that after my remarks, Senator BROWN from Ohio follow me for a time not to exceed 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, this is a bill Senator PRYOR and I have introduced to repeal the harmful cuts to military retirement pay in the recent Bipartisan Budget Act. As the Senator from the most military-friendly State in the Nation, I am pleased that we have just voted to advance this important legislation that will affect so many brave men and women from North Carolina and around the country who serve our Nation in the military.

These harmful cuts to military retirement pay were included in the recent bipartisan budget that passed the House and Senate with bipartisan support. While I supported the Murray-Ryan budget because it rolled back across-the-board sequester cuts that threaten our military capabilities and the safety of our troops, I am opposed to the provisions in this budget that reduce these cost-of-living adjustments for military men and women who have served our country with honor and distinction. Without action these cost-of-living cuts will take effect in December of 2015. By passing this legislation this week we can keep our promise to our servicemembers and veterans who do not deserve to have their retirement benefits cut.

The proposed cuts would affect our current and future retirees who are still serving our country on Active Duty. If allowed to remain, the cost-of-living cuts would cost a typical retiree over \$80,000. In my State of North Carolina, close to 90,000 retirees as well as thousands of servicemembers still on

Active Duty would bear the brunt of these cuts.

I recently heard from a veteran from Apex, NC, who served in the military for 21 years, including two tours in Afghanistan, one in Saudi Arabia, and one in Korea. He said the cost-of-living cuts changed the promise made to his family. After moving 12 times in 21 years, his family made decisions on where to live, what house to purchase, what job to take, and how to save for his son's education based on this pension income.

I also heard from a woman whose husband is an Active-Duty marine stationed at Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville, NC. She wrote:

My husband has served 16 years in the infantry, four tours in Iraq and is preparing to deploy to Afghanistan soon. He has kept his promise to the U.S. and earned his benefits in full. We have lived with long-term separations, uncertainty and financial stress. Please do not add to that. The money may not sound like a lot to some, but it means a whole lot to us.

Once again, that woman's husband is an Active-Duty marine.

This is unacceptable. We have made a commitment to these brave men and women, many of whom have deployed multiple times to combat zones overseas. We must keep our promises to our servicemembers after they have sacrificed so much for us.

These cost-of-living cuts would negatively impact not only individual servicemembers but also the military as a whole. I serve on the Armed Services Committee. Two weeks ago military leaders testified that retirement benefits are an integral part of a servicemember's decision to remain in the military or to further reenlist. We cannot overlook the consequences these cuts would have on the retention of servicemembers, particularly midgrade officers and noncommissioned officers who are considering the length of their future service, nor can we overlook the effect they would have on the military's long-term readiness.

I am pleased that we have acted to prevent the cost-of-living cuts for the most severely wounded military retirees and Survivor Benefit Plan recipients, but our bill would go further. This would repeal these cost-of-living adjustment cuts for all military retirees. Yes, it is true that our country faces difficult fiscal challenges. However, we can never balance the budget on the backs of those who have answered the call to duty. We must keep the promises we have made to our veterans, who have put their lives on the line to protect us. I urge my colleagues to support our legislation that will ensure current and future veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the words of Senator HAGAN, who

has been a leader in the Senate on issues for our veterans, for their health care and Camp Lejeune and so many other ways, looking out for pensions and health care for those who have earned it and sacrificed for us. She, as do I, believes it is an honor to honor those who have sacrificed for us.

CVS TOBACCO SALES

Today I was at a CVS drugstore in Lakeland, OH, a city west of Cleveland, thanking and celebrating, if you will—perhaps a strong word—CV's decision they announced last week that they would stop selling tobacco products at their 7,000 stores and pharmacies and that they would invest in a national smoking-cessation campaign designed to help people quit smoking. CVS's CEO said that is "the right thing to do for customers and our company to help people on their path to better health . . . Put simply, the sale of tobacco is inconsistent with our purpose."

That is good news.

In my State one in every five deaths is connected to tobacco. Ohio ranks sixth in the adult smoking rate, and 16,900 children in Ohio under 18 start smoking each year. The Presiding Officer knows what we know about tobacco. We know that every year in the United States of America 480,000 people die of tobacco-related illnesses. Do you know what else we know? Because 480,000 Americans die from tobacco-related illnesses, we know that the big tobacco company executives understand they have to find 480,000 new customers every year to buy their products.

The Presiding Officer knows there is nothing particular about his age or mine, but they do not aim at people such as us. They do not aim at people in their forties, fifties, and sixties to get them to join to replace those 480,000 people who have passed away; they aim at people the age of our pages who are sitting in the well.

In fact, they don't aim at only 16- and 17-year-olds, they are aiming at 12-, 13-, 14-, and 15-year-olds.

Joining me at CVS today were two young women, Shanisha Collins and Melissa Renton. They both smoke and are both working to quit smoking. Both are doing very well as they quit smoking. They both started smoking, they told us, as teenagers, and CVS is working with them in their smoking-cessation campaign.

We were also joined by Michael Roizen of the Cleveland Clinic who has done remarkable work in preventive care in a preventive medical practice, if you will, at the Cleveland Clinic. He is a heart doctor who also has done so well in various kinds of care to help people quit smoking, to help people lose weight, and to help people prevent diabetes—all of the preventive care he has worked on.

We were also joined by two nurse practitioners, Lauren and Molly, who

as part of the CVS clinic have helped people do to better manage their health.

The point is CVS has made this decision. It isn't earth-shaking. Half of the cigarettes bought today are from gas stations, and that is not going to change much. Cigarettes are going to be available. It is a legal product. In fact, people should have the right to buy cigarettes if they choose to. But the point is tobacco companies shouldn't be able to target young people the way they do.

We have seen major progress. Fifty years ago the Surgeon General issued his groundbreaking report on the health effects of tobacco use. Look at the progress we have made. Some 42 percent of adults smoked cigarettes in 1965. Today 18 percent of adults smoke cigarettes. It has been a huge public health victory, and it has been a huge public health victory in small steps and large steps.

First, the report was very important. We remember as kids—the Presiding Officer is old enough to remember this, as I am—we could smoke anywhere in our society. State governments then began to prohibit smoking in public buildings and then began to prohibit smoking in other publicly owned buildings—government buildings. Then people couldn't smoke in public places in many States around the country.

We remember people used to smoke on airplanes. Then over time smoking was restricted to, I remember, aisles 18 to 35 or something—so you could smoke if you were in one of those aisles but not in a seat in front of that or behind that—whatever it was. Now smoking is banned on all flights. We have seen major progress made.

CVS is one step in that. We have sent a group of us led by Senator HARKIN—Senator BLUMENTHAL has been involved, and a number of others—asking the other drugstore chains—Walgreens and Right Aid—to do the same, to quit selling cigarettes there.

So we have seen progress, but it is still a major public health problem. In one of the places it is particularly a problem. I said at the beginning of my remarks that 480,000 people in America die from tobacco-related illnesses every year—heart diseases, cancer, a whole host of illnesses that are connected to smoking or chewing tobacco. So they aim at children, for sure, with their targeted campaigns, but they also go overseas. The tobacco companies are trying to undermine public health laws, particularly in poor countries around the world.

If someone is a public health official in India, they have to worry about cholera, malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, child diarrhea. They have to worry about all the things that kill people prematurely in that country. When the tobacco companies come in—whether they are American companies, British compa-

nies or companies from any other country—they don't have much defense against that. That is why I know the Presiding Officer from Indiana has been a real leader in opposing bad trade policy for our country.

But one of the elements of a bad trade policy is giving U.S. tobacco companies too much power to go into far too many of these countries to cajole, threaten, and even undermine public health laws.

In fact, we have seen in more than one country—thought to be a poor country, without too many people, and that does not have many public resources, and where people are very poor—we have seen tobacco companies threaten those countries that are about to enact a health care law, and that country backs off because they don't have the dollars or the resources to fight the tobacco companies' efforts in court.

We have a lot of work to do.

I wanted to share what happened today in Lakewood, OH, with my colleagues, how important it is, and what a huge public health victory. Again, I want to emphasize how successful these efforts to curb the use of tobacco are—the greatest preventable killer in the country—and how successful we have been. More than 40 percent of people smoked in 1965 and today fewer than 20 percent. That is because of a partnership among government, local officials, public health officials, the American Cancer Society, and the American Heart Association. So many of these organizations have stepped up in a way that has mattered—the American Lung Association and others—to protect the public interest and especially to protect children.

I applaud the efforts of that company and the efforts of so many of my colleagues who have been working on this issue.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING PAT MULROY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedicated service of my friend Pat Mulroy who is

retiring from her position as general manager of the Las Vegas Valley Water District and the Southern Nevada Water Authority.

In Nevada, as well as much of the Southwest, water is an important and scarce resource; and since 1989, Pat has been an unparalleled leader for Nevada and the Nation in managing our precious water supplies. I applaud her tremendous abilities and vast understanding of our region's water demands, which helped her lead our State through unprecedented strains on our water resources.

During her time at the water district and the water authority, Pat worked tirelessly to invent solutions to solve Nevada's complex water problems and has been instrumental in finding a balance between regional growth and water conservation. In a 6-year span, from 2002 to 2008, the population in the Las Vegas area increased by more than 400,000 people. Yet Pat's innovative conservation techniques have helped reduce Southern Nevada's water usage by a third.

Over the years, I have watched Pat rise to challenge after challenge. Early on, she initiated negotiations with water purveyors in Arizona, then Utah, California, and Mexico. Pat has proven herself as a powerful and effective voice for Nevada when negotiating Colorado River system agreements, and her strong leadership helped her build unmatched partnerships with the States that share the Lower Colorado River Basin. Through Pat's persistence and proactive response to climate change and western water issues, she has truly helped shape Southern Nevada and the region into what it is today.

Pat has received many acknowledgments and awards for her hard work, including the National Jewish Medical and Research Center's Humanitarian Award, the University and Community College System of Nevada Board of Regents' Distinguished Nevadan Award, and the Public Education Foundation's Education Hero Award.

Many know Pat as an expert on water issues, but I also know her as a loving wife to her husband Robert, a devoted mother, and an active leader in her community. I think so highly of Pat and believe she has done such important work for our State and our country. She will surely be missed, and I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

REMEMBERING CAPTAIN JOHN JAMES MCGINTY III

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to report some sad news to my colleagues. John James McGinty III—raised in my hometown of Louisville, KY—succumbed to bone cancer on Friday, January 17, after 73 years of life. Although

his wife Elaine passed in 1991, he is survived by his sons Michael and John IV. Mr. McGinty was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps who received the Medal of Honor for his exemplary record of valor in the Vietnam War. Our country owes him, as we do all of our veterans, an unimaginable debt of gratitude for his service.

John J. McGinty III was born to John and Eve McGinty on January 21, 1940, in Boston, MA. The family soon moved to Louisville, where John completed grammar school and began high school. The call to serve his country, however, rang more loudly and clearly than the school bell. After a year and a half, he dropped out and enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves in February 1957.

John enlisted in the regular Marine Corps the following year. He served as a drill instructor and a brig officer until 1966, when he volunteered for duty in Vietnam. In June of that year he took part in Operation Hastings, during which his service to his country would extend above and beyond the typical call of duty. Three days into the operation, McGinty's company, reduced to a strength of 100 men, was ordered to withdraw. On July 18, Sergeant McGinty's platoon was providing rear security for the withdrawal when they were attacked by what was estimated to be 1,000 North Vietnamese soldiers.

Amidst the chaos of the attack, two squads from his platoon were cut off and nearly surrounded. Sergeant McGinty rushed through the jungle under a hail of gunfire to find his men in dire straits—20 were wounded and their medical corpsman had been killed. Showing little regard for his own shrapnel wounds to his leg, back, and left eye, Sergeant McGinty reloaded the wounded men's weapons and, according to his Medal of Honor citation, "directed their fire upon the enemy." When the attackers inched closer and closer to his men, Sergeant McGinty drew his .45-caliber pistol and killed five enemy soldiers at point-blank range. Then, with enemies at all sides and still taking heavy gunfire, he accurately called in naval airstrikes to within 50 yards of his position.

His actions that day were consistent with the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps, and at a White House ceremony on March 12, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson bestowed upon then-Second Lieutenant McGinty the Medal of Honor.

Although he retired from the Marine Corps as a captain in 1976, Mr. McGinty continued to work to better the lives of America's service men and women. He worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs in various capacities, and along with fellow veterans, made several trips to Iraq and Afghanistan to visit with American troops. He would, however, stop wearing his Medal of Honor after becoming a born-again Christian

in the early 1980s. His son Michael McGinty explains, "He didn't have a problem with the honor." Rather, it was the medal's depiction of the Roman goddess Minerva that ran contrary to his deeply held belief that the reason he was still alive is the one true God.

Captain McGinty was modest about his own heroic actions. His son Michael has said, "My father used to say that he did what any Marine sergeant would have done in that situation." There can be no doubt, with his record of valor, however, that Capt. John James McGinty III is indeed a hero, and America has lost a hero with his passing. John's service to his country, both as a U.S. Marine and as a private citizen, is deserving of the highest praise and respect of this body. Thus, I ask my U.S. Senate colleagues to join me in honoring and mourning this fallen soldier with roots in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. All Kentuckians, and all Americans, should be honored that he fought to protect us, and grateful for his service and sacrifice.

2014 OLYMPIANS

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today it is with great pride I congratulate all of the 2014 Winter Olympians, especially Tim Jitloff, David Wise, and Chas Guldmond, the three Nevada proudly call their own.

A Reno native, Tim Jitloff grew up on skis and has been claiming international titles since 2005. Tim's unwavering dedication to his sport has developed him into a two-time Olympic athlete, qualifying for the Men's U.S. Ski Team for the first time when he was just 19 years old. In Sochi, he will compete in Alpine skiing's super combined giant and common slalom. Tim's successes extend not only to a first place finish at the 2013 U.S. Championship, but off the snow where he is a determined advocate in the fight against breast cancer, as his mother is a survivor. Tim's passion for service is marked by the respect he has earned on the big snow as well as his earnestness and resounding hard work.

David Wise's Olympic status begins in the Reno snow where he began skiing as a 3-year-old. He turned professional at an early age after securing his first U.S. national title when he was 15. His wins include The Dew Tour, The Grand Prix, and repeat Winter X Game titles. David continued his achievements in 2013 when he qualified for his first Olympics in this year's debut sport of ski halfpipe. David's dedication to his passion, family, and faith personifies a true talent, unmatched and inspiring for all of Nevada.

Chas "Chuck G" Guldmond has been a driving force in snowboarding since moving to Lake Tahoe in 2005. Working a series of odd jobs to pay his own way

for the sport for years is just one of the testaments of character Chas contributes to the 2014 U.S. Olympic team. Chas has had seven healthy seasons of competition and won almost every major event in snowboarding since his early days of participating in the sport. In Sochi, he competes as one of the biggest names in slopestyle. The dedication and sacrifices Chas has made in pursuit of his dream are commendable.

Steadfast in their training, each one of these athletes reminds us that even the seemingly unfathomable is possible. Our American pride grows stronger as these Nevadans compete in Sochi. It is an honor to watch them and the entire team compete in the name of a United States victory in these 22nd Winter Olympics. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating these and all of the remarkable athletes on their accomplishments thus far. We wish them a safe and gold-winning trip to Russia.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GERARD GRIMALDI

• Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me today in honoring the work of Gerard Grimaldi. Gerard has a long history of public service in Kansas City, stretching back to his time serving as an aide to Senator Tom Eagleton and later as an aide to Congressman Alan Wheat. More recently, since 2001, Gerard has ably served as vice president of health policy and government relations for Truman Medical Centers. Everyone who knows Gerard respects him, and everyone who gets to work with him considers themselves lucky.

A few years ago, I asked Gerard to serve as my nominee on a volunteer community advisory panel for the Bannister Complex in Kansas City, MO. This opportunity required a significant time commitment from Gerard—time he would normally spend with his beautiful wife and four lovely children—to serve on a panel which offered Gerard no personal or professional benefit. Not only that, but this panel was created to help facilitate constructive community dialogue around some sensitive issues in a very heated environment. But, true to his background as a public servant, Gerard didn't hesitate when I asked him to volunteer.

Gerard not only served on the community advisory panel for over 3 years, but he also was the chair of the panel, heading a diverse group of community leaders. This panel worked diligently to facilitate constructive community input and to help ensure transparency by government agencies involved in the Bannister Complex environmental cleanup and redeployment efforts. The work Gerard and the panel did was successful and has now come to an end.

In the course of my adult life, I have been fortunate to meet many outstanding public servants—men and women who exemplify leadership and a genuine desire to contribute to the greater good. Of those public servants, Gerard is one of the best. I am proud that he is a Missourian, and I am honored to be able to recognize him here today.

I ask that the Senate join me in congratulating and honoring Gerard Grimaldi for his exemplary public service to Kansas City and the great State of Missouri.●

BEAR PAW DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Bear Paw Development Corporation of Northern Montana, which celebrates its 45th anniversary this month. Bear Paw Development is a proven leader in providing economic and community development solutions to challenges faced by northern Montana's small businesses and local and tribal governments. On behalf of all Montanans, I commend Bear Paw Development for its 45 years of outstanding work to build economic momentum and institutional support to ensure a brighter future for our State.

Bear Paw Development Corporation, one of the oldest federally recognized economic development districts in the Nation, provides information, technical support and hands-on assistance for northern Montana, helping business owners and local leaders take hold of their potential and build on their success. The dedicated employees of Bear Paw Development assist our communities in every aspect of planning and development, from providing business loans and small business counseling to facilitating investment in critical infrastructure projects.

As a farmer, I have a special appreciation for their work in value-added agriculture. Bear Paw serves as one of four centers in the Montana Food and Agriculture Development Center Network, working with farmers to create greater market access so that Montana agricultural products can compete on a global scale.

Working with local governments, Bear Paw coordinates millions of dollars of investment every year into infrastructure. Through the construction of drinking water systems, wastewater systems, bridges, and other community infrastructure projects, Bear Paw's work is vital to the residents, communities and businesses of northern Montana.

Since the creation of Bear Paw Development's revolving loan fund, they have assisted hundreds of small businesses with their financing needs to either start a new business or expand an existing one. In total, through more than 330 individual loans, Bear Paw De-

velopment has disbursed \$21.7 million to businesses in northern Montana, helping to create or retain a total of over 1,240 jobs.

Over the next 45 years, I fully expect Bear Paw Development to continue its historic and significant success in the areas of business growth, alternative energy, workforce development, community improvement, and of course, agriculture. Its continued commitment to the economic growth and diversification of northern Montana will continue to be a shining example of the role economic development districts can play throughout our country.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2954. An act to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2954. An act to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3590. An act to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3964. An act to address certain water-related concerns in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4591. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Chariton, IA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0255)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4592. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Gainesville, TX" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0586)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4593. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Chatom, AL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2012-1186)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4594. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Donlin Creek, AK" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0786)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4595. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revocation of Class E Airspace; Danville, IL" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0657)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4596. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Sisseton, SD" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0641)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4597. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Leesburg, VA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0033)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4598. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Mis-

cellaneous Amendments (8); Amdt. No. 3570" ((RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4599. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (15); Amdt. No. 3569" ((RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4600. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (39); Amdt. No. 3567" ((RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4601. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (36); Amdt. No. 3568" ((RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4602. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0704)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 23, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4603. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Piper Aircraft, Inc. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0724)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4604. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Maule Aerospace Technology, Inc. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0725)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4605. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; EADS CASA (Type Certificate Previously Held by Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0688)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4606. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4607. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Schempp-Hirth Flugzeugbau GmbH Gliders" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0661)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4608. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; AgustaWestland S.p.A. (Type Certificate previously held by Agusta S.p.A.) Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0604)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4609. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0416)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4610. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0365)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4611. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0706)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4612. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshift Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0557)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4613. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0421)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4614. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0340)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4615. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Limited Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0603)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4616. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-1030)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4617. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0304)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4618. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; CFM International S.A. Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0407)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4619. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Various Aircraft Equipped with Wing Lift Struts" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0023)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4620. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Corporation Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2009-0811)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4621. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-1004)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 29, 2014; to the Com-

mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4622. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0879)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4623. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0370)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4624. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E Airspace; Loup City, NE" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-6070)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4625. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation (Sikorsky) Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0636)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4626. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; CENTRAIR Gliders" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0018)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4627. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0634)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4628. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0095)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4629. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-1003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Com-

mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4630. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Alexander Schleicher, Segelflugzeugbau Gliders" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-4-0019)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4631. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboprop Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0575)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4632. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0635)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-195. A resolution adopted by the Township Council of the Township of East Hanover, New Jersey urging Congress to dedicate additional federal funds for highway maintenance and infrastructure improvements in New Jersey; to the Committee on Appropriations.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2007. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for regulating clinical and health software, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 2008. A bill to strengthen resources for entrepreneurs by improving the SCORE program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 2009. A bill to improve the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans in rural and highly rural areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2010. A bill to amend the Water Conservation and Utilization Act to authorize the development of non-Federal hydropower and issuance of leases of power privileges at

projects constructed pursuant to the authority of the Water Conservation and Utilization Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER) (by request):

S.J. Res. 31. A joint resolution relating to the approval of the proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representatives Office in the United States Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 398

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 398, a bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum, and for other purposes.

S. 619

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 619, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent unjust and irrational criminal punishments.

S. 1133

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1133, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the new markets tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 1143

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1143, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to physician supervision of therapeutic hospital outpatient services.

S. 1352

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1352, a bill to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1761

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a

cosponsor of S. 1761, a bill to permanently extend the Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act of 2009 and establish a private right of action to enforce compliance with such Act.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1941

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1941, a bill to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.

S. 1943

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1943, a bill to incentivize State support for postsecondary education and to promote increased access and affordability for higher education for students, including Dreamer students.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1963

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

S. 1972

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Massa-

chusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1972, a bill to prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of an individual's status or history of unemployment.

S. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1978

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1978, a bill to increase access to primary care services through training and accountability improvements.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1987

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1987, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for certain buildings of the Department of Veterans Affairs at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. 2007. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for regulating clinical and health software, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about rapid advancements in health care information technology or health IT. Health IT holds amazing potential to transform Americans' everyday lives for the better. I believe that protecting this kind of exciting innovation from overregulation and excessive taxation needs to be a high priority.

That is why I am introducing the Preventing Regulatory Overreach to Enhance Care Technology or the PROTECT Act of 2014. Together with Senator ANGUS KING of Maine and Senator

MARCO RUBIO of Florida, we are putting forward this pro-jobs, risk-based framework governing health IT.

Before I speak about our bill, I thank my colleague from Maine Senator ANGUS KING for joining me in this effort. I am informally telling people that our efforts might be the start of the “surf and turf caucus” in the Senate, the place where Nebraska and Maine come together politically to find common ground and work to address real problems in this country.

We are able to do so together because Senator KING is known as an independent thinker, a problem-solver who isn't afraid to work across the aisle in order to get things done. It is refreshing, and I sincerely appreciate his willingness to work with me.

I also give special thanks to Senator RUBIO for his interest in this issue as well. He is also an original cosponsor, and he has worked with us on this important topic.

What we are trying to do is clarify the Food and Drug Administration's oversight authority over health information technologies. Under current law dating back to 1976, the FDA can apply its definition of a medical device to assert broad regulatory authority over a wide array of health IT, including applications that do not pose a threat to human safety.

That means low-risk health IT can be treated like traditional medical devices, subjecting job creators and innovators to these challenges that really don't make sense.

The PROTECT Act fixes this discrepancy. The PROTECT Act keeps the FDA's resources focused on products that pose the highest risk to human health. In doing so it also gives regulatory certainty to innovators and job creators who are developing these new products that use data safely to improve health care and also to reduce its cost. Furthermore, the PROTECT Act relieves categories of low-risk clinical and health software from the 2.3-percent medical device tax. Most importantly, though, it protects and promotes American jobs in a key growth sector of our economy.

The mobile health and mobile application market is expected to exceed \$26 billion by 2017, while the U.S. mobile apps economy is responsible for nearly half a million new American jobs. A report from Health Data Management anticipates 23-percent annual growth in this sector over the next 5 years. The FDA highlights on their Web site that 500 million smartphone users worldwide will be using health apps by 2015. The mobile analytics platform Localytics, which monitors more than 20,000 apps, has seen a 19-percent increase in new health and fitness apps in 2013 from the year prior. That is amazing.

But what is even more impressive is the health IT's ability to protect peo-

ple. Consider the example of a young man named Xavier Jones whose basketball coach downloaded a \$1.99 mobile application that gave him a refresher course on how to properly administer CPR. It was a skill that came in handy the very next day when Xavier collapsed in the middle of practice.

In 2012 the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs partnered to release a free Apple and Android app called the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Coach. PTSD Coach has been downloaded over 100,000 times in 74 countries. It provides reliable information on PTSD and treatments on users' smartphones.

Other types of health IT, such as electronic health records and low-risk clinical decision software, can also lower costs and can improve outcomes. Some of these technologies hold the power to quickly and broadly disseminate new information about effective treatments and recent clinical trials. Patients want their doctors to have access to these cutting-edge therapies. Protecting low-risk health IT is about empowering people with access to information. We need to protect that kind of innovation because innovation is an equalizer for consumers.

These technological benefits don't stop at our borders. Think about this statistic: One estimate shows that mobile health deployment in Africa could save as many as 1 million lives by 2017. From assisting nurses with scheduling to reminding pharmacists to refill their stock or even tracking emerging malarial epidemics, mobile health is already transforming the landscape of the developing world in very dramatic ways.

These stories only scratch the surface of where this technology is going. It is important how we treat innovation here in the United States. Other countries around the world are looking at how our government will regulate and oversee these low-risk technologies.

Our bill makes it so low-risk, highly innovative clinical and health software technologies—and the potential they have to empower people—are not undercut by these burdensome regulations. FDA's promise to use its enforcement discretion over low-risk health IT only serves to create confusion and uncertainty in the marketplace. Regulatory discretion by its very nature is something that can easily change over time, and discretion can be misused or abused.

Clear rules should be set because the current FDA regulatory model for medical devices is not well suited for low-risk health information technologies. In a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing last year, the FDA submitted a letter to the committee that said:

For 2011 and 2012, the average time for FDA review of medical device submissions that

were identified as containing a mobile medical app was 67 days and the average total time from submission to FDA decision was 110 days.

When regulatory days turn into months, problems are going to persist, and that is not something we should leave to discretion. The regulatory time line for risky devices should not be the same for low-risk software that gets released every 60 days, has major updates every month, and sees regular changes every week. Having an approval process that takes longer than the shelf life of the average device operating system stifles opportunity and it stifles innovation.

Innovators, regulators, and consumers need clarity and certainty into how these regulations are going to be enforced. Since mobile wellness apps and most clinical decision support technologies pose little risk to patients, they should not be subject to the same costly painstaking processes as medical devices. The answer is the commonsense, risk-based regulatory approach the PROTECT Act provides. It protects innovation, it protects jobs here in the United States, and it protects jobs in this U.S.-based job sector. Most importantly, it protects patient safety by giving the FDA continued authority and oversight over health IT that is risky and by creating an appropriate regulatory framework for that which is lower risk.

With the introduction of the PROTECT Act, I would also like to acknowledge the great work of Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER of Tennessee, Senator ORRIN HATCH of Utah, Senator MICHAEL BENNET of Colorado, and others who have undertaken this effort in the past. These Senators have helped to lay the groundwork for the development of a risk-based framework for health IT. The ideas included in the PROTECT Act would not be possible without the progress they secured in previous Congresses and in the FDA's Safety and Innovation Act.

I am committed to working with anyone on these issues to exchange views and to exchange ideas so we can get the right policy balance our country needs and deserves.

Again, I thank my friends Senator KING from Maine and Senator RUBIO from Florida for joining me in this important effort. Together, we can achieve our shared vision of protecting patient safety, protecting innovation, and protecting U.S. economic job growth and opportunity.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, it is a pleasure to join the Senator from Nebraska. I love the idea of the surf-and-turf caucus reaching across the country to try to find commonsense solutions. I often think about legislation and what we are attempting to do, and

there is an attempt to codify common sense, to try to bring to the regulatory process, as it deals with medical devices, a little more thoughtfulness and cautiousness as it affects health information technology.

The first part of the bill actually sets up a process whereby we can examine in a thoughtful kind of way some of these issues to reduce the regulatory burden and at the same time foster innovation and, very importantly, protect patient safety. It sets up a process involving the National Institute of Standards and Technology and other parts of the administration so that the regulatory process in this area can be rationalized across agencies and better coordinated.

The heart of the bill, however, as the Senator just outlined, is our attempt to differentiate between medical software, which has a direct impact upon patient health, and software that is more peripheral and can range from the app I have on my iPhone, which is a pedometer that tells me how much I have walked each day and how much I should walk each day, to the kind of software that is being developed across the country to assist medical practices in their billing and in the operational part of the medical business.

I think one of the most important points, as the Senator pointed out, is that software evolves almost overnight, and if you go through this burdensome regulatory process—whether it is 60 days, 120 days, or 1 year—to get your software approved and then you find there is a bug you have to fix, that could restart the whole regulatory process. So I think we should acknowledge that this is a bit of preemptive legislation because the FDA thus far has not intruded very deeply into this process, and we believe it is important in order to define the areas where regulation and the protection of patient safety is important, but software that manages the billing process of a medical practice should not fall into that category and should not be subject to that level of regulation. That is really what we are talking about.

As the Senator mentioned, this law goes back to 1976. In thinking about 1976, Gerald Ford was President and software was a mink coat. We weren't really thinking about what we are doing today, and of course the legislation did not anticipate the kind of intense innovation and new thinking that is going on that is able to protect people's health just by giving them information about themselves. No doubt the time will come when a smartphone will be able to do blood pressure or temperature or certainly provide one's heart rate, and that is information we should have ourselves, not necessarily regulated by the Federal Government.

I am delighted to join the Senator from Nebraska and the Senator from Florida in introducing this piece of leg-

islation. I think it is important. It is part of a larger project to try to bring our Federal regulatory process into the 21st century where time is of the essence, innovation is at the speed of light, and that we can't burden our people who are creating these innovations with a lengthy and, yes, expensive process that has a tendency to discriminate against smaller entrepreneurs and businesspeople.

I compliment the Senator from Nebraska for bringing this piece of legislation forward. I am absolutely delighted to join her in its sponsorship, and I look forward to moving it through the legislative process. There is a companion piece of legislation in the House, and I think this, as I said at the beginning, is an effort to get as close as we can to legislating common sense in this area, and I believe it will make a difference for businesses, for people, for patients, and for the health care system in America.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2732. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. THUNE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. BURR, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COATS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2732. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. THUNE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. BURR, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COATS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. ENZI, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) REPEALS.—

(1) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIRED TO CLAIM THE REFUNDABLE PORTION OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(e) IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT WITH RESPECT TO QUALIFYING CHILDREN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), no credit shall be allowed under this section

to a taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and taxpayer identification number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.

“(2) REFUNDABLE PORTION.—Subsection (d)(1) shall not apply to any taxpayer with respect to any qualifying child unless the taxpayer includes the name and social security number of such qualifying child on the return of tax for the taxable year.”.

(2) OMISSION TREATED AS MATHEMATICAL OR CLERICAL ERROR.—Subparagraph (I) of section 6213(g)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(I) an omission of a correct TIN under section 24(e)(1) (relating to child tax credit) or a correct Social Security number required under section 24(e)(2) (relating to refundable portion of child tax credit), to be included on a return.”.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Rules and Administration will meet on February 12, 2014 at 10 a.m., to hear testimony on the “Bipartisan Support for Improving U.S. Elections: An Overview from the Presidential Commission on Election Administration.”

For further information regarding this hearing, please contact Lynden Armstrong at the Rules and Administration Committee (202) 224-6352.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Rules and Administration will meet at 10:30 a.m., on February 12, 2014, to conduct a business meeting to consider the nominations of Thomas Hicks and Myrna Perez to be members of the Election Assistance Commission.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Lynden Armstrong at the Rules and Administration Committee at (202) 224-6352.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on February 13, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “From Poverty to Opportunity: How a Fair Minimum Wage Will Help Working Families Succeed.”

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Sarah Cupp of the committee staff on (202) 224-5363.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Elizabeth Lievens and David Pope, interns in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Chris Sweitzer, a military fellow in the office of Senator PRYOR, be granted the privilege of the floor for the duration of the calendar year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair lays before the Senate the letter of resignation of Senator MAX BAUCUS of Montana dated Thursday, February 6, 2014.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the letters relating to the resignation of the Senator from Montana, MAX BAUCUS, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, February 6, 2014.

Governor STEVE BULLOCK,
Montana State Capitol,
Helena, MT.

DEAR GOVERNOR BULLOCK: In order to assume the responsibility of serving as the United States Ambassador to China, I write to resign my seat in the United States Senate effective upon my appointment as Ambassador. Representing the people of Montana for 40 years has been the honor of a lifetime. I am grateful for the trust Montanans have bestowed on me and the opportunity to contribute to our great state and nation.

Respectfully,

MAX BAUCUS.

FEBRUARY 7, 2014.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, Jr.,
President of the Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN: In accordance with my letter of February 6, 2014 to Governor Bullock, this is to clarify that my resignation as United States Senator became effective at the close of business on February 6, 2014.

Sincerely,

MAX BAUCUS.

PROVIDING FOR EXTENSION OF ENFORCEMENT INSTRUCTION

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1954 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1954) to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2014.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BEGICH. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read for a third

time, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 1954) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1954

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF ENFORCEMENT INSTRUCTION ON SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS FOR OUTPATIENT THERAPEUTIC SERVICES IN CRITICAL ACCESS AND SMALL RURAL HOSPITALS THROUGH 2014.

The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall continue to apply through calendar year 2014 the enforcement instruction described in the notice of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services entitled "Enforcement Instruction on Supervision Requirements for Outpatient Therapeutic Services in Critical Access and Small Rural Hospitals for CY 2013", dated November 1, 2012 (providing for an exception to the restatement and clarification under the final rule-making changes to the Medicare hospital outpatient prospective payment system and calendar year 2009 payment rates (published in the Federal Register on November 18, 2008, 73 Fed. Reg. 68702 through 68704) with respect to requirements for direct supervision by physicians for therapeutic hospital outpatient services).

COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAYO CLINIC

Mr. BEGICH. I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 339 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
A resolution (S. Res. 339) commemorating the 150th anniversary of Mayo Clinic.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BEGICH. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 339) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of Monday, January 27, 2014, under "Submitted Resolutions."

READING OF WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the resolution of the Senate of January 24, 1901, the traditional reading of Washington's Farewell Ad-

dress take place on Monday, February 24, following the prayer and pledge; further, that Senator KING be recognized to deliver the address.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to the order of the Senate of January 24, 1901, as modified by the order of February 10, 2014, appoints the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) to read Washington's Farewell Address on Monday, February 24, 2014.

Mr. BEGICH. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 11, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1963, the military retirement pay restoration bill, postcloture; that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; and, finally, that all time during adjournment and recess count postcloture on the motion to proceed to S. 1963.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. BEGICH. Senator-designate WALSH from Montana will be sworn in at 12:15 p.m. tomorrow. Senators will be notified when the next vote is scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:38 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 11, 2014, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

MARK GREEN, OF WISCONSIN, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CASSANDRA Q. BUTTS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS.

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

MATTHEW T. MCGUIRE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS, VICE IAN HODDY SOLOMON, TERM EXPIRED.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

- MARK L. DRIVER, OF COLORADO
LAWRENCE RUBEY, OF MARYLAND
TODD M. SORENSON, OF TEXAS
SHERYL A. STUMBRAS, OF FLORIDA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

- MONICA MCQUEARY AZIMI, OF FLORIDA
DAVID A. BRUNS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ANNA MARY COBURN, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW EVAN COHEN, OF CALIFORNIA
ANNE MARIE DEL CASTILLO, OF FLORIDA
JAMES J. DOBSON, OF MARYLAND
KRISTINE ANN HERRMANN-DELUCA, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID ISAAO HOFFMAN, OF CALIFORNIA
BRIONI E. JAMES, OF WASHINGTON
BENJAMIN D. KAUFFELD, OF VIRGINIA
MARK A. KERR, OF FLORIDA
KENT ADAMS LARSON, OF VIRGINIA
WENDY S. MARSHALL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
STACIE E. MARTIN, OF NEW YORK
PAUL G. MCDERMOTT, OF CALIFORNIA
TATIA L'KAE MILLER, OF NEW YORK
SAM F. NASSIF, OF TEXAS
JOHN R. PASCH, OF MAINE
JULIA BECKER RICHARDS, OF TEXAS
PETER RILEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
HEATHER ANN SCHLIDGE, OF VIRGINIA
JAIDEV SINGH, OF WASHINGTON
ZERIC KAY SMITH, OF NEW YORK
LEWIS J. TATEM, OF VIRGINIA
W. DAVID YOUNG II, OF NEW YORK

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

- MICHELLE BAHK, OF NEW YORK
LAURA MARIE BUTLER BERGER, OF OHIO
SUSAN BETSY BRUCKNER, OF CONNECTICUT
SCOTT CAMERON, OF CALIFORNIA
SUSAN L. CHEUNG, OF PENNSYLVANIA
SUSAN CHUWA EASLEY, OF TEXAS
ERICKA ERSLAND, OF FLORIDA
BRIAN G. FINK, OF MICHIGAN
CHITAHKA N. FLOORE, OF COLORADO
MARTY D. GEORGE, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TIMOTHY HART, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL E. HARTER, OF VIRGINIA
BLAIR ANDREW KING, OF MARYLAND
TALY S. LIND, OF NEW YORK
HANNAH MALONEY, OF OHIO
CLARE DAVINA MASSON, OF WISCONSIN
ELIZABETH MENDENHALL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JUANA MORALES, OF FLORIDA
MEGHAN WATKINS TIERNEY NALBO, OF VIRGINIA
JESSICA PEARCH, OF MARYLAND
LESLIE CARL PETERSEN, OF VIRGINIA
TIMOTHY PRUETT, OF TEXAS
SONJAI REYNOLDS COOPER, OF MARYLAND
AARON H. RUBLE, OF CALIFORNIA
EDUARDO SANTOS, OF FLORIDA
DANIEL CURTIS SWIFT, OF VIRGINIA
RYAN M. WEDDLE, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
JAMES B. WHITAKER, OF VIRGINIA
AMY FRANCESCA WIELKOSZEWSKI, OF ARIZONA
KARL WILLIAM WURSTER, OF WASHINGTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR PROMOTION INTO AND WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

SCOTT S. SINDELAR, OF MINNESOTA

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

- JEANNE F. BAILEY, OF ILLINOIS
CLAY M. HAMILTON, OF TEXAS
KATHERINE C. NISHIURA, OF FLORIDA
BOBBY GENE RICHEY, JR., OF TEXAS
CHRISTINE M. SLOOP, OF OREGON

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. TRAVIS D. BALCH

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ANTHONY G. CRUTCHFIELD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF THE DENTAL CORPS AND ASSISTANT SURGEON GENERAL FOR DENTAL SERVICES, UNITED STATES ARMY, AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 3036 AND 3039(B):

To be major general

COL. THOMAS R. TEMPEL, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

MICHAEL E. CANNON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

AIZENHAWAR J. MARROGI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

- THOMAS E. BYRNE
JAMES H. CHANG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

- CHRISTOPHER D. COULSON
JACKIE A. HUBER
JAMES NUGENT, JR.
FREDERICK D. PASLEY
LEO A. RYAN
MICHAEL WOODRUFF

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DENTAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

- RALF C. BEILHARDT
JERRY M. CARBONE
LISA A. FRANKLIN
WILLIAM J. GREENWOOD
BRETT H. HENSON
TAWANNA MCGHEETHONDIQUE
RICHARD V. RITTER
RICHARD L. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

- MICHAEL P. ABEL
HANS E. BAKKEN
DOUGLAS B. BEECH
RICHARD A. BICKEL, JR.
DANIELLE N. BIRD
LORANEE E. BRAUN
SCOTT E. BRIETZKE
RICHARD O. BURNEY
ARTHUR L. CAMPBELL III
AUSTIN H. CHHOEU
DAVID W. COLE
WILLIAM P. CRUM
PETER J. CUENCA
KURT G. DAVIS
SHAD H. DERRING
KENT J. DEZEE
CHARLES S. DIETRICH III
MARTIN DOPERAK
MARY J. EDWARDS
MELISSA L. GIVENS

- JOSEPH D. GRAMLING
BRET A. GUIDRY
CHAD A. HALEY
DONALD L. HELMAN, JR.
JEFFREY V. HILL
SEAN A. HOLLONBECK
DEAN H. HOMMER
DANIEL J. IRIZARRY
CHRISTOPHER G. JARVIS
DWIGHT C. KELLICUT
MARY M. KLOTE
JEFFREY K. KLOTZ
GREGORY T. LANG
CHRISTOPHER L. LANGE
BRENT L. LECHNER
CHRISTINE F. LETTIERI
PEDRO F. LUCERO
JAMES H. LYNCH IV
LOUIS R. MACAREO
CHRISTOPHER B. MAHNKE
ROBERT F. MALSBY III
MARK W. MANOSO
CHRISTOPHER R. MARTIN
GREGORY J. MARTIN
LARRY J. MCCORD
IAN K. MCLEOD
LEAH P. MCMANN
CHRISTIAN J. MEKO
MICHAEL J. MINES
JEFFREY S. MORGAN
PAUL M. MORRISSEY
ROBERT J. OCONNELL
MICHAEL E. PARKER
TARAK H. PATEL
JEREMY G. PERKINS
KRISTOFER A. RADCLIFFE
THOMAS J. RICHARD
INGER L. ROSNER
DEAN A. SEEHUSEN
CASTANEDA A. SIEROCKA
KAREN E. SMITH
MARSHALL H. SMITH
BENJAMIN SOLOMON
SCOTT R. STEELE
TIMOTHY S. TALBOT
RENEE THAI
SEAN F. THOMAS
KIRK H. WAIBEL
JUSTIN T. WOODSON
JOHNNIE WRIGHT, JR.
D001883

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

- EDWARD AHN
IAN W. BALDWIN
STEVEN E. BRADY
SHEILA L. BURNS
BRIAN K. CARR
CESAR B. CASAL
CHRISTOPHER COLEMAN
DAVID C. COLLVER
WILLIAM J. COOK
JENIFFER G. H. COX
KEVIN S. COX
SHANNA L. CRONIN
CHRISTOPHER C. CROSS
NOBERTO O. DALUZ
GRETCHEN L. DAVENPORT
SHESSEY T. DAVIS
CHRISTIAN E. DELUKE
MATTHEW E. DYSON
CRAIG C. FORD
JUSTIN P. FRELAND
JERROD B. FUSSNECKER
ROBERT L. GADDY
RICHARD M. GALLAGHER
EDWARD P. GILMAN
ELISABETH L. GILMAN
MICHAEL F. HAYDEN
ERIK S. HENDRICKSON
ADAM M. HILL
JONATHAN D. HOAG
MATTHEW P. HURT
AARON R. INKENBRANDT
DAVID M. JONES
CHRISTOPHER M. JUDAH
NOLAN T. KOON
RYAN D. KROHN
DAVID C. LAI
RACHEL A. LANDSEE
RYAN A. LITTLE
BRIAN D. LOHNES
MICHAEL J. LOVELACE
BRENDAN J. MAYER
MEGHAN A. MCBENERNEY
ROBERT N. MICHAELS
ROBERT E. MURDOUGH
JOHN A. NELSON
MIKE S. NI
LAURA A. ODONNELL
JOHN C. OLSON
ANTHONY M. OSBORNE
KIRK W. OTTO
BENJAMEN J. PERRY
DAVID L. PETERSON
MARK S. PITZAK
ROBERT K. PRUITT
STEWART M. REYES

GEOVANNY A. ROJAS
EMILY M. ROMAN
LUKE S. ROSE
ROBERT C. ROTEN
SARAH J. RYKOWSKI
DOUGLAS J. SACKETT
DOUGLAS M. SCHAEFER
CRAIG J. SCHAPIRA
PAUL M. SHEA
CHRISTOPHER L. SIMONS
BURT D. SMITH
CORMAC M. SMITH
JOHN T. SORON
KENTON E. SPIEGLER
DAVID H. STEM, JR.
ANGELA D. SWILLEY
BRETT A. WARCHOLAK
ALAN W. WEHBE
EDWARD L. WESTFALL
JENNY S. WHITE
MALCOLM H. WILKERSON
JOHN R. WITHERS
JOSHUA J. WOLFF
ABRAHAM L. YOUNG
D012017

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

RYAN M. OLEKSY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

SEAN T. HAYS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

LAKENDRICK D. WRIGHT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JOHN E. SIMPSON III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be major*BILL W. BROOKS, JR.
MICHAEL W. COSTA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JAMES R. KELLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

CLENNON ROE III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RICHARD P. OWENS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

ANTHONY REDMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JEFFREY P. WOOLDRIDGE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

ROBERT M. MANNING

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

BILLY A. DUBOSE

JOHN P. MULLERY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

CHRISTOPHER S. EICHNER

JAMES SMILEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

RANDALL E. DAVIS

PAUL E. RICHARD

WADE E. WALLACE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

DAMON L. ANDERSEN

JAMES Y. MALONE

RICHARDO A. SPANN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

PAULO T. ALVES

THOMAS E. JAMES

PATRICK J. TOAL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

CHRISTIAN D. GALBRAITH

JACOB A. HAGAN

BYUNG H. KIM
MARK J. LEHMAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be major*TIMOTHY J. ALDRICH
MARCO R. GOMEZ
LONNIE M. MCGHEE, JR.
DAVID W. PECK
CODY D. STEWART
CHRIS A. STOREY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be major*KENNETH L. AIKEY
DONALD A. FRITZ
JACOB R. LEWIS
LEAH R. PARROTT
JAMES H. RAMSEY
SCOTT B. ROLAND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

*To be major*TERRY H. CHOI
JASON D. ECK
CLARK E. HOWARD II
SHAWN E. MCGOWAN
PETER D. NELSON
CHRISTOPHER T. PIENKOWSKI
JOHN A. TAPP IV
FREDDIE D. TAYLOR

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

MEGAN M. DONNELLY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant commander

DANIELLE L. LEIBY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE REGULAR NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

*To be commander*MICHAEL R. CATHEY
DIANA TOROK*To be lieutenant commander*MELISSA C. AUSTIN
BENJAMIN R. BLEVINS
ANDREW C. BRIGHT
CHRISTOPHER M. DAVIS
JUSTIN A. DYE
JOHN A. ENGLER
NAZIMA N. KATHIRIA
MICHAEL A. KUHN
FRANKLIN C. MARGARON
CHRISTOPHER S. MUDGE
CHARLES G. ROGERS III
BRIAN W. SHIPPERT
DENISE M. THIGPEN
ANDREW J. YOUNG

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Monday, February 10, 2014

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 10, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LUKE MESSER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks, I have come to the House floor on numerous occasions to talk about the interim nuclear agreement that this administration is negotiating with Iran. I have come here to discuss exactly what that administration is—or, more importantly, isn't—negotiating and what that means for our national security and the stability of the region as a whole.

While there can be no question that we need to continue having that discussion about whatever else the regime in Tehran decides to do, like send warships off of our eastern coast, we also need to take some time to discuss what exactly the real power brokers in Iran are doing when they aren't talking about destroying Israel or attacking America.

Many of my colleagues have been down on this very floor before to discuss the oppressive nature of the Iranian regime. It is important that we remind folks just how tyrannical those who are in power there really are.

So, just what exactly have we seen since the election of the self-described moderate President in Iran? We have largely seen the continuation of the same human rights abuses that we have seen for years in Iran. We have seen the grip of Tehran's media and Internet sensors tighten since Mr. Rouhani came to power. Web sites have been restricted and mobile phone applications have also been blocked. There have also been reports of numerous newspapers and blogs being shut down altogether and their reporters and editors being arrested.

Now, what do they all have in common, Mr. Speaker? What they have in common is these people advocate for reform and are critical of the regime in Iran. We have seen a number of Iran's executions occur at an alarming rate since Mr. Rouhani took office. There are many theories as to why this is happening, but the fact remains, somewhere upwards of 60 people are being executed each month in Iran. Some of these executions are being carried out in public with those in charge intentionally leaving the bodies to hang from construction cranes in public areas.

We have seen the persecution of religious minorities. We should all support freedom of religion, and the regime's persistent crackdowns and arrests of Christians, the Baha'is, and other religious minorities should trouble everyone.

Mr. Speaker, as I have talked about before, Iran continues to prop up Hezbollah across the Middle East. Their involvement across the region is widely noted. Of particular concern should be their connection to Syria. Iran sends trained murderers and weapons to prolong the brutal civil war that continues to destroy Syria, separate families, and cause millions to flee their country.

Sadly, this is not even a comprehensive list of what goes on inside of Iran. We could discuss their appalling human rights trafficking record or their full record of sponsoring terrorism, in addition to what we have already discussed.

Why is all of this important when we are talking about the administration's pursuit of a nuclear deal with Iran? Two reasons: first, it should serve as a stark reminder of just whom exactly the Obama administration is really negotiating with; second, it shows the true intentions and belief of those that are really in power in Iran. It shows the disconnect between the rhetoric of the self-described moderate President

and what is really going on within Iran's borders. Above all, it shows where the real power lies, which is in the hands of the Supreme Leader of Iran.

To forget about the plight of the Iranian people and not address what happens domestically in Iran would be a failure, plain and simple, and one which will continue to cost innocent lives.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD'S ANNUAL HUNGER REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to and highlight Bread for the World's annual hunger report. This year's report is entitled, "Ending Hunger in America." Frankly, it couldn't be more appropriate or timely.

Mr. Speaker, over 49 million Americans go hungry every year, and we in the Federal Government—we in this Congress—are not doing nearly enough to fight to end hunger in this country. In fact, over the past 6 months, Congress stood by and let an \$11 billion cut to the premier antihunger safety net program, SNAP, take effect. To make matters worse, Congress followed up by enacting another \$8 billion cut to SNAP as part of the farm bill. We should all be ashamed.

The fact is Congress continues to make it harder and harder for the hungry in America to make ends meet and put food on their table. Although the Obama administration came into the office under the most difficult economic conditions in nearly a century, they also came in with a lot of promise. In fact, President Obama came in with, among other things, a pledge to end childhood hunger in America by 2015. That goal was achievable. Unfortunately, we have gone backwards over the past 5 years.

While I still believe there is time for the Obama administration to turn this around and make some real headway in the fight to end hunger, the sad reality is we are not going to end child hunger in America by 2015, and may not even make a significant dent in hunger by the end of this administration.

Just because President Obama will not meet his stated goal doesn't mean we should give up. That is why I am encouraged by this report from Bread for the World. First and foremost, it is refreshing that this report is honest and

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

blunt. It rightfully states that hunger is a subset of poverty and that we can't truly end hunger without addressing poverty.

Just look at a few of the statistics listed in the report:

The average incomes of the top 1 percent of households rose by 19.6 percent in 2012, while the incomes of the other 99 percent grew just by 1 percent.

Nearly two-thirds of SNAP recipients are children, elderly, or disabled. Among SNAP households with children and at least one working-age, non-disabled adult, 62 percent work while receiving SNAP and 87 percent work in the prior or subsequent year, which hopefully should put to rest this distortion that somehow people on SNAP don't want to work.

Another statistic here is that while children make up roughly 24 percent of our total population, they comprise one-third of the Nation's poor.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that poverty must be addressed because that is the root cause of hunger. But Bread for the World lays out achievable and timely goals, goals that are not pie in the sky but actually doable. They call an end for hunger in America by 2030, and they do so in a four-point plan: one, a jobs agenda; two, a stronger safety net; three, human capital development; and four, public-private partnerships to support community-led initiatives against hunger.

They call for achievable goals of a 25 percent reduction in hunger by 2017, a 50 percent reduction by 2023, and completely ending hunger by 2030. We can do this if we make the political decision to focus on and commit to ending hunger.

I fully support this plan. I only want to move quicker to achieve the goal of ending hunger. This report rightly states:

Ending hunger in the United States will require leadership not only at the Federal level, but also the State and local levels.

We already have Governors and mayors who are working to combat hunger. Governors Deval Patrick of Massachusetts and Don Beebe of Arkansas are committed to this effort. Former Boston Mayor Tom Menino was a leader; and I know the new mayors of New York and Boston, Bill de Blasio and Marty Walsh, are just as committed. And they aren't the only ones, but we need more help and commitment. The White House should convene a conference on food and nutrition to build on the recommendations in the Bread for the World report and come up with a comprehensive, holistic plan to end hunger in America.

Hunger at its core is a political condition. We know how to end it. We have the food and the resources to end hunger once and for all; we just don't have the political will to do so. Bread for the World, through this annual report and through their everyday actions, is try-

ing to build the political will to end hunger in America. I know we can do it.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

In these days give wisdom to all the Members, that they might execute their responsibilities to the benefit of all Americans. And may their constituents understand, as well, that many in this country have interests at odds with their own, and that the task entrusted to their representatives is extremely complex.

Bless us, O God, and be with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THE STATUS QUO DESTROYS JOBS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, a weekend editorial by The Washington Times stated:

The unemployment rate fell in January, which ought to be good news. But it isn't. Over the past decade, we have fallen into a strange and puzzling wonderland of opposites, where "economic recovery" comes with no growth, and unemployment rates drop when people aren't working.

The President's misleading message conveys that fewer jobs and government dependency is the new status quo, which destroys fulfilling lives.

Last week, a Congressional Budget Office report confirmed what the NFIB and House Republicans have been saying for years: ObamaCare is destroying and will destroy 2.5 million jobs. 2.5 million fewer Americans will be out of work due to the President's health care takeover.

Our economy cannot truly recover unless ObamaCare is repealed. The President's Big Government policies are destroying jobs. House Republicans have solutions that will put Americans back to work. We understand the status quo should be job growth to help our middle class families achieve opportunity.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

THIRD YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF BAHRAIN PROTESTS

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the third anniversary of the peaceful uprising in Bahrain. Three years after mass protests filled the streets, the Bahraini Government's promises of reform remain unfulfilled. Systematic human rights abuses, restrictions on freedom of expression, and arbitrary detention continue unabated.

Nabeel Rajab, a prisoner of conscience whom I have adopted as part of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission's Defending Freedoms project, is one of thousands who have been detained or tortured for peacefully calling for reforms. Prisoners like Nabeel

are denied access to medical treatment, and many are prevented from speaking about their abuse, even to their families and lawyers.

Because Bahrain is our ally and home to the 5th Fleet, the U.S. has the responsibility to ensure that the Bahraini Government adheres to its human rights commitments and enacts meaningful reforms. These should include releasing political prisoners and ensuring accountability for torture. Absent such steps, the U.S. must consider contingency planning for the relocation of the fleet.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1730

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK) at 5 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2431) to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2431

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. NIDIS PROGRAM AMENDMENTS.

Section 3 of the National Integrated Drought Information System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 313d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting before the period at the end the following: "to better inform and provide for more timely decision-making to reduce drought related impacts and costs";

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

"(b) SYSTEM FUNCTIONS.—The National Integrated Drought Information System shall—

"(1) provide an effective drought early warning system that—

"(A) collects and integrates information on the key indicators of drought and drought impacts in order to make usable, reliable, and timely forecasts of drought, including assessments of the severity of drought conditions and impacts; and

"(B) provides such information, forecasts, and assessments on both national and regional levels;

"(2) communicate drought forecasts, drought conditions, and drought impacts on an ongoing basis to public and private entities engaged in drought planning and preparedness, including—

"(A) decisionmakers at the Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local levels of government;

"(B) the private sector; and

"(C) the public;

"(3) provide timely data, information, and products that reflect local, regional, and State differences in drought conditions;

"(4) coordinate, and integrate as practicable, Federal research and monitoring in support of a drought early warning system;

"(5) build upon existing forecasting and assessment programs and partnerships, including through the designation of one or more cooperative institutes to assist with National Integrated Drought Information System functions; and

"(6) continue ongoing research and monitoring activities related to drought, including research activities relating to length, severity, and impacts of drought and the role of extreme weather events and climate variability in drought."; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(e) REPORT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2013, the Under Secretary shall transmit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that contains—

"(A) an analysis of the implementation of the National Integrated Drought Information System program, including how the information, forecasts, and assessments are utilized in drought policy planning and response activities;

"(B) specific plans for continued development of such program, including future milestones; and

"(C) an identification of research, monitoring, and forecasting needs to enhance the predictive capability of drought early warnings that include—

"(i) the length and severity of droughts;

"(ii) the contribution of weather events to reducing the severity or ending drought conditions; and

"(iii) regionally specific drought impacts.

"(2) CONSULTATION.—In developing the report under paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall consult with relevant Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local government agencies, research institutions, and the private sector."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 4 of such Act (15 U.S.C. 313d note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

"There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act \$13,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Texas (Mr. HALL) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 2431, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2431, a bill to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

I want to thank Chairman SMITH for his good work in bringing this bill to the House floor and for his bipartisan support. I also want to thank the gentleman and Representative BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico for joining me as an original sponsor. In 1998, Congress passed the National Drought Policy Act, establishing a Commission to provide recommendations on Federal drought policies.

The concept of creating a national drought monitoring and information system was proposed by the Commission in its 2000 report and promoted by various stakeholders, including the Western Governors' Association and in the 2004 report, "Creating a Drought Early Warning System for the 21st Century."

I was pleased to become involved in this effort with former Congressman and now-Senator MARK UDALL and to introduce the NIDIS Act of 2006, which Congress passed and became public law.

NIDIS is administered within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. NIDIS established the U.S. Drought Portal, which has become a very valuable resource for decision-makers at the Federal, State, and local levels, and for farmers, businessmen, and individuals.

This Web site provides current data for weather observations, early warnings about droughts, and support services for managing droughts. The Web site includes the U.S. Drought Monitor map, another valuable feature that is updated weekly. For example, according to the most recent Drought Monitor map, about 21 percent of the U.S. is experiencing severe to exceptional drought conditions. More than 56 percent of the country has abnormally dry to exceptional drought conditions.

Madam Speaker, NIDIS is an example of a program that is working effectively and that has broad support. Rather than creating a new government bureaucracy, NIDIS represents a collaborative framework between Federal, states, and academic partners.

The NIDIS reauthorization will improve interagency coordination, early

warnings, critical data sharing, and decision services related to drought. The bill encourages further research, monitoring, and forecasting, along with further development of regional early warning systems.

Madam Speaker, reauthorizing NIDIS will strengthen this important program and will help our State, it will help the local, and it will help the Federal officials, farmers, and water managers better prepare for and respond to drought.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2431, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2431, the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2013. This vital program, known as NIDIS, was originated by my friend and former committee chair, Mr. RALPH HALL, in 2006. The program provides critical drought information to communities all across our Nation.

Over the past three decades, it is estimated that droughts have cost our country hundreds of billions of dollars in economic impacts. Loss estimates from the 2012 drought alone run upwards of \$70 billion. Moreover, the effects of climate change are anticipated to exacerbate this problem in many parts of the country, including my home State of Texas.

Right now, California is experiencing its driest period in recorded history. Sixty-seven percent of the State of California is experiencing extreme or exceptional drought conditions. We all know that farmers and ranchers bear the brunt of these dry conditions. That hits the pocketbooks of every American as food prices do go up, but the damage is not limited to agriculture.

For instance, in the West, conditions are again ripe for extreme wildfires that scarred more than 9 million acres last year, putting homes and properties in jeopardy.

Tourism is suffering as water levels in lakes and rivers plummet and snow packs languish, leaving boats on dry land and skis in the attic. Communities are imposing water restrictions, and power plants and grid operators are taking a serious look at the emergency plans should water for cooling towers and hydroelectric dams fall short.

If you look at the top five most expensive disasters in the United States since 1980, three of those are due to drought. The NIDIS program is intended to help alleviate some of the economic impacts of drought.

Notably, one of the program's goals is to improve drought early warning. Advanced warning of impending droughts would allow States, localities, and farmers to better plan their activi-

ties so that the economic costs associated with droughts could be reduced or mitigated.

In light of the scope of the economic impacts of drought, and the potential of the NIDIS program to lessen these impacts, I remain concerned about the authorization levels in H.R. 2431. My Democratic colleagues and I tried to modestly increase the authorization levels during committee consideration of the bill, but we were not successful.

Every witness who has ever testified or spoken to our committee about this program has highlighted the need to improve the program's early warning capability. This isn't a goal that can be accomplished for free. It will take a sustained investment of additional funds to achieve results we desperately need.

While I wish the authorization numbers in the bill before us today were higher, they are much better than the numbers in the Senate bill, which locks the program into a funding cap that is below current spending for the next 5 years.

When the Federal Government is spending tens of billions of dollars per year to mitigate the effects of drought, I think it makes sense to spend a couple million extra dollars to try to reduce those massive costs to our taxpayers in our communities. It is pretty clear that in this instance an ounce of prevention will get us a pound of cure.

In spite of these concerns, however, I support H.R. 2431 and the reauthorization of NIDIS, a program which provides crucial information to help our farmers and communities prepare for and mitigate the impacts of drought.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1745

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the former chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee for yielding me time.

H.R. 2431, the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2013, makes minor improvements to the NIDIS program and helps establish better drought forecasting and coordination.

I am glad that the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's chairman emeritus, Congressman RALPH HALL of Texas, is the lead sponsor of this bill and the original author of the NIDIS authorization in 2006. I thank the gentleman for his persistent leadership over the years on this issue.

Recent droughts in Texas and around the country have been severe. The NIDIS program has helped State and local governments, farmers, ranchers, and others both monitor and predict drought conditions.

More than one-third of the United States is currently experiencing moderate to severe drought conditions. By some estimates, the historic drought in 2012 cost our national economy as much as \$70 billion.

NIDIS is a good program that has a history of bipartisan support. It represents the kind of interagency and intergovernmental cooperation that we need to reauthorize in this difficult fiscal environment.

As a success story, the NIDIS program currently operates the U.S. Drought Portal, a Web site that features a range of services related to drought. This includes historical data on past droughts, current data from climate observations, early warnings about emerging and potential droughts, decision support services for managing droughts, and a forum for stakeholders to discuss drought-related issues.

These services have been vital to our efforts to better forecast as well as understand the conditions that lead to drought. This bill reauthorizes an important program that provides early warnings about potential droughts. It also supports services for local and State decisionmakers to better manage and prepare for drought conditions.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT).

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas, though at this moment I feel like I am surrounded by Texans in this particular discussion.

I am from Arizona. I am actually from the desert part of Arizona in the desert Southwest. So why is a bill such as H.R. 2431 so important to us?

The data collection and the management of the data models for those of us who are in an arid region of the country is really, really important to us. We have come so far in the last couple of decades. The ability for my water management authorities in our reservoirs to know what is happening in the snowpacks all the way up into Colorado and on this side of the Continental Divide and learning whether we are moving into a "La Niña" or "El Niño" year—which actually makes huge differences to the expected rainfall, particularly in the winter months, in the desert Southwest—is important to us because we are getting better and better at forecasting even a year out in our expectations.

And so I have great appreciation for the gentlewoman from Texas, the chairman emeritus, and the other chairman from Texas, one more time—remember, as Texans, you are easterners to those of us in Arizona—because this bill is appreciated.

I know there is always a discussion about funding. But one of my great interests in this is the continued movement of the data-sharing as our universities across the country, particularly in the Southwest, build better and better and healthier and more robust models and the ability for that data to help States like mine manage our water resources into the future.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would simply urge support for H.R. 2431, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2431, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SUPPORTING THE DEMOCRATIC AND EUROPEAN ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 447) supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine, and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 447

Whereas a democratic, prosperous, and independent Ukraine is in the national interest of the United States;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine has declared integration with Europe a national priority and has made significant progress toward meeting the requirements for an Association Agreement;

Whereas on November 21, 2013, following several months of intense outside pressure, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich abruptly suspended negotiations on the Association Agreement one week before it was due to be signed at the European Union's Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania;

Whereas this reversal of stated government policy precipitated demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens in Kyiv as well as in cities throughout the country;

Whereas the demonstrators have been overwhelmingly peaceful and have sought to exercise their constitutional rights to freely assemble and express their opposition to President Yanukovich's decision;

Whereas the demonstrators have consistently expressed their support for democracy,

human rights, greater government accountability, and the rule of law, as well as for closer relations with Europe;

Whereas on November 30, 2013, police violently dispersed peaceful demonstrators in Kyiv's Independence Square, resulting in many injuries and the arrest of several dozen individuals;

Whereas on December 11, 2013, police raided 3 opposition media outlets and the headquarters of an opposition party;

Whereas on December 11, 2013, despite President Yanukovich's statement the previous day that he would engage in talks with the opposition, police attempted to forcibly evict peaceful protesters from central locations in Kyiv;

Whereas several journalists, including from Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and civic activists supporting the demonstrators have been brutally attacked;

Whereas on January 16, 2014, the Ukrainian parliament passed, and President Yanukovich signed, legislation which severely limits the right of peaceful protest, constrains freedom of speech and the independent media, and unduly restricts civil society organizations;

Whereas the passage of these undemocratic measures and President Yanukovich's refusal to engage in substantive dialogue with opposition leaders precipitated several days of violence and resulted in several deaths and hundreds of injuries, as well as numerous allegations of police brutality; and

Whereas in the face of spreading demonstrations, Ukrainian Government representatives and opposition leaders have entered into negotiations which on January 28, 2014, resulted in the resignation of the Prime Minister and his cabinet and the repeal of most of the anti-democratic laws from January 16, 2014: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) greatly values the warm and close relationship the United States has established with Ukraine since that country regained its independence in 1991;

(2) supports the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine, and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear;

(3) calls on the United States and the European Union to continue to work together to support a peaceful resolution to the crisis, and to continue to support the desire of millions of Ukrainian citizens for democracy, human rights, government accountability, and the rule of law, and closer relations with Europe;

(4) urges the Government of Ukraine, Ukrainian opposition parties, and all protesters to exercise the utmost restraint and avoid confrontation, and calls on the Government of Ukraine to live up to its international obligations and respect and uphold the democratic rights of its citizens, including the freedom of assembly and expression, as well as the freedom of the press;

(5) condemns all acts of violence and calls on the Government of Ukraine to bring to justice those responsible for violence and brutality against peaceful protesters, and to release and drop any criminal charges against those detained for peacefully exercising their democratic rights;

(6) welcomes the repeal by the Ukrainian parliament of most of the anti-democratic measures adopted on January 16, 2014, and urges President Yanukovich to continue to engage in substantive talks with opposition leaders to address the legitimate grievances of the opposition, and to take additional steps to de-escalate tensions;

(7) urges the United States and the European Union to continue to make clear to Ukraine's leaders that those who authorize or engage in violence against peaceful protesters will be held personally accountable;

(8) supports the measures taken by the Department of State to revoke the visas of several Ukrainians linked to the violence, and encourages the Administration to consider additional targeted sanctions against those who authorize or engage in the use of force; and

(9) urges all parties to engage in constructive, sustained dialogue in order to find a peaceful solution to Ukraine's current political and economic crisis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and introduce extraneous materials on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to thank my good friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ELIOT ENGEL, for introducing this bipartisan resolution supporting the democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian people.

It is a timely appeal to the Government of Ukraine to stand down and to avoid all further violence, to exercise the utmost restraint and avoid confrontation. It calls on the government to bring to justice those responsible for violence against peaceful protesters and to release and drop any criminal charges against those detained for peacefully exercising their democratic rights.

At this point, the government's crackdown has led to the deaths of at least four protesters—perhaps more—and throughout Ukraine to numerous beatings, arrests, detentions, abductions—including some from hospitals—the harassment of activists, journalists, medics, lawyers, and pro-democracy NGOs.

On the Kyiv Maidan alone, or Independence Square, more than 1,800 individuals, mostly protesters but also some riot police, have been injured. Thirty-six persons are confirmed missing, 49 people remain in detention, and 26 are under house arrest. At least 30 medics working to aid the injured on the Maidan have been attacked.

Also, 136 journalists have been attacked on the Maidan, including investigative journalist Tetyana Chornovol,

brutally beaten on Christmas Day, and who investigators, rather incredibly, claimed was a victim of road rage.

One of the most outrageous examples has been the case of activist Dmitry Bulatov, who was abducted for 8 days before being left in a forest outside of Kyiv, during which time he was tortured by his captors who tried to force him to say he was an American spy.

The heroism, Madam Speaker, of the Ukrainian people persistently demonstrating, struggling, and risking themselves for justice and dignity is deeply inspiring. The witness of so many clergy on the Maidan is a powerful reminder of the spiritual values that are at stake.

Just last Thursday, I had the high honor and privilege of meeting in my office with Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Patriarch Sviatoslav of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. These brave and holy religious leaders are deeply concerned for the faithful—and for the whole Ukrainian nation—and alarmed about the potential for even worse violence, perhaps even civil conflict.

Patriarch Filaret said recently:

I appeal to both the power and opposition to stop violence and to come to the negotiating table. All of you are responsible before God for your earthly doings.

At the Vatican, Pope Francis called for an end to the violence, and said:

I am close to Ukraine in prayer and, in particular, to those who have lost their lives in recent days and to their families. I hope that a constructive dialogue between the institutions and civil society can take place, that any resort to violence is avoided, and that the spirit of peace and a search for common ground is in the hearts of all.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York expressed strong support for antigovernment protesters in Ukraine. Writing on his blog, he summarized the conflict as “government thugs relishing the chance to bludgeon and harass the hundreds of thousands of patriotic Ukrainians,” and described the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as “a church that has been starved, jackbooted, imprisoned, tortured, persecuted, and martyred by Hitler, Stalin, and company.”

That said, Madam Speaker, I do want to note that there is a paradox here. I know there are many outstanding people working in and for the Ukrainian Government who love their country and have its best interest at heart. Last year, for example, I met many times with Ukrainian ministers, high-level officials, and the ambassador, including meetings in Kyiv. This was because, in 2013, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kozhara chaired the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and made the fight against human trafficking a top priority for the organization.

In June, it held a high-level conference in Kyiv to investigate and promulgate best practices and ways that

the 57 OSCE countries can better coordinate antitrafficking efforts, including through training transportation and hospitality industry employees in victim identification. The Kyiv call to action was serious and successful. I know because I was there. And what came out of that was a new OSCE plan of action to combat human trafficking.

Madam Speaker, I want to point out that this resolution does not take any position on whether Ukraine should sign an Association Agreement with the European Union. That is a decision for the Ukrainians to make themselves.

At the committee markup, we decided to make that point clear, and the message should be clear. This is not about politics; this is about human rights. Congress is supporting the Ukrainian people in their defense of universal human values and not inserting itself into the question of what Ukraine does vis-à-vis the European Union.

Madam Speaker, the Ukrainian people have endured horrific suffering over the course of the last century, and this is what gives their peaceful resistance on the Maidan such power.

Two world wars were fought on their soil. In the 1930s, as we all know, Stalin inflicted a genocidal famine on them, which resulted in the death of millions of men, women, and children, to say nothing of 70 years as a captive nation in the Soviet Union.

In the 1980s, many of us in this Chamber, and on the Helsinki Commission especially, spoke out on behalf of Ukrainian human rights activists imprisoned in the gulag, called for the legalization of the then-banned and repressed Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and held several hearings on the Chernobyl disaster.

With Ukraine's long-awaited independence in 1991, newfound freedoms also became a reality—or, we thought. But since 2010, with the election of Viktor Yanukovich, human rights, rule of law, and democracy have been under relentless attack—symbolized by the continued unjust imprisonment of former Prime Minister and opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko, whose daughter, Yevhenia, testified at a Helsinki Commission hearing I held in May of 2012 and on whose behalf I, along with my colleagues, introduced a resolution in the previous Congress.

□ 1800

It is the Ukrainian people's dissatisfaction with Yanukovich, his rollback of democracy, that drives the protest movement. The long-suffering Ukrainian people deserve a government that treats them with dignity and treats them with respect. I am confident they will prevail in their heroic struggle.

I strongly support this resolution and, again, thank my friend from New York for authoring it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 447, a resolution I authored supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine.

I would first like to thank my original cosponsors, Chairman ED ROYCE and Representatives WILLIAM KEATING, ranking member of the Europe Subcommittee; and MARCY KAPTUR, SANDY LEVIN, and JIM GERLACH, of the Ukraine Caucus, for their invaluable help in crafting this bipartisan resolution.

I also thank my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), for his remarks and agree with everything he said.

The United States has been a staunch supporter of a democratic, prosperous, and sovereign Ukraine. At this moment we must stand with the people of Ukraine more than ever before.

As the world has watched, over the past several months, hundreds of thousands of ordinary Ukrainian citizens have turned out in Kyiv and cities throughout the country to exercise their democratic rights and express their views.

The initial impetus for the demonstration was the Ukrainian Government's unexpected rejection of an offer from the European Union for closer political and economic ties. This rejection represented a reversal of government policy and, in the view of a great many Ukrainians, a lost opportunity for Ukraine to strengthen democratic institutions and values and increase economic opportunities.

In addition, the demonstrators have turned out not only in support of closer relations with Europe, but also more fundamentally in support of democracy, good governance, human rights, and basic human dignity. The fact that they have done so in an overwhelmingly peaceful manner is very, very impressive. It is also inspiring.

Sadly, there have been exceptions to the peaceful nature of the protests. These include police violence on several occasions late last year, the disturbing pattern of beatings and abductions of journalists and civil society activists, and the most recent and tragic violence in January.

Following this dramatic increase in tensions last month, the most recent developments in Ukraine give some cause for hope. I welcome the fact that meaningful talks appear to have begun between the government and opposition leaders.

I would also like to applaud the admirable efforts of the Obama administration and our European partners to deescalate tensions and support this dialogue.

Nevertheless, the situation in Ukraine remains highly volatile, and it

is imperative that we actively support a peaceful, negotiated end to this crisis.

This resolution advances to that goal by strongly condemning all acts of violence, irrespective of their perpetrators. Let me also take this opportunity to condemn all acts of extremism in Ukraine, all acts of hatred, and all acts of anti-Semitism.

Moreover, the resolution calls on all individuals to behave responsibly. In particular, it calls on the Ukrainian authorities to respect and uphold the democratic rights of the citizens of Ukraine.

It also states that those who authorize or engage in violence should be held personally accountable for their actions, including by targeted sanctions, if appropriate. This is why I welcome the recent actions by the Department of State to revoke the visas of several individuals linked to the violence.

The resolution further urges the Ukrainian Government to bring to justice those responsible for violence against peaceful protesters, journalists, and civic activists, and to take additional steps to deescalate tensions.

Finally, the resolution urges all parties to continue the substantive and sustained dialogue to peacefully resolve the crisis and address the legitimate desire of millions of Ukrainian citizens for a democratic, European future looking West, not East.

In sum, the passage of this resolution would send a strong message of support to the people of Ukraine. At this critical moment, they should know that the United States and the United States Congress stand with them as they seek to build a democratic, prosperous, and secure Ukraine, respecting human rights and dignity and anchored firmly in Europe.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 447.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH), the cochair of the Ukrainian Caucus.

Mr. GERLACH. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey.

Madam Speaker, I rise today because, every now and then, we are reminded that there are still people around the world fighting fiercely to secure the same individual liberties and foster the very same democratic traditions that Americans have been blessed with for nearly 238 years.

During the past 3 months, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens have taken to the streets of Kyiv and other cities in peaceful protest of a government that has ignored the will of the people and steered the country away from closer ties to democratic allies and supporters.

The initial response from Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was bru-

tal. Government forces attacked protesters, resulting in at least five reported deaths.

Furthermore, President Yanukovich enacted harsh new laws aimed at snuffing out dissent by making it a crime to peacefully protest against the government.

Thanks to the vigilance of my colleagues in the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus and the leadership of Congressman ENGEL, Chairman ROYCE, and Subcommittee Ranking Member KEATING, the actions of President Yanukovich have not gone unnoticed here in the United States Congress.

Many of us have individually condemned the use of violent, repressive tactics against the protesters. Those of us in the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus have tried to convey to those fighting for democracy in Ukraine that their efforts are not in vain, and that totalitarianism must not be allowed to rise again in any fashion.

Today, all of us in the House have a chance to stand united with our friends in Ukraine who desire greater economic opportunity and individual liberty. So I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution to let the world know the United States will not stand by and allow repression, violence, and political intimidation to prevail in Ukraine.

Let's adopt this resolution for all those in Ukraine who wish for a government that is transparent, honors the fundamental human rights of its citizens, and respects the dignity of all Ukrainians, regardless of political affiliation.

I thank the gentleman from California for introducing this resolution. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for recognizing me.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. ENGEL, for yielding, and to Mr. SMITH also, congratulations on your work.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 447, supporting the democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian people and their right to choose their country's future and to choose its direction, free from fear or intimidation, whether internal or external.

For 3 months now, countless scores of Ukrainians across the country have braved not only the bitter cold, but also the constant threat of government-authorized violence, to peacefully stand up for the universal principles of democracy and respect for human rights.

With this resolution, we, in the U.S. House, stand with them now.

A few weeks ago, I joined a large number of members of the Ukrainian American community that I proudly represent in the Ninth Congressional

District to express support for those demonstrating in the still-colder winter in Ukraine.

As a founding cochair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus and original cosponsor of this resolution, I believe it is important that the House pass this expression of support for the Ukrainian people.

Those on Kyiv's Maidan and throughout the country need to know that the world is watching, that the U.S. is watching, that we here are watching, and we support them. I say to them, we are, and we do.

With colleagues, I recently had the privilege of meeting with opposition members of the Ukrainian Parliament. I was struck by what they indicated is their biggest fear and that of the demonstrators. There is the fear of riot police and government-backed thugs beating peaceful protesters, abhorrent behavior that has happened, resulting in numerous deaths.

There is a fear of being among the disappeared. According to reports, 20 opposition activists are still missing. What those brave democratic activists told us they are most afraid of is being forgotten, of the international community turning its attention elsewhere, of our global commitment to human rights and the rule of law being mere words, idealism overtaken by other foreign policy priorities.

The House today will take an important step to ensure that does not happen; that that fear is not realized.

Together with the Obama administration's continued forceful efforts, and the earlier passage of a similar resolution in the Senate, we present a unified American front. We show the people of Ukraine that we will steadfastly support their democratic and European aspirations.

We show Ukrainian President Yanukovich that America will not sit on the sidelines in the face of their government repression and gross human rights violation, and, as the Obama administration has shown, America will not only condemn, we will take action.

Like others, I welcomed the State Department's revocation of visas held by Ukrainian Government officials found to be responsible for violence against peaceful protesters.

I encourage the administration to take additional action, including targeted financial sanctions, should violence and human rights violations continue, which is what this resolution calls for.

It is time for the Government of Ukraine to immediately cease the use of violence, recognize the human rights of peaceful protesters and independent media, and participate in a true national dialogue with the opposition.

I urge all of my colleagues to stand and stand up with the courage, resilience, and indomitable spirit of the

Ukrainian people and pass this resolution.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), a very distinguished member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 447. As the tensions continue to rise in Ukraine about the future direction of this country, we understand that the people of Ukraine are hoping to secure basic democratic freedoms of association and speech for all citizens.

I join my colleagues in stressing the importance of the adoption of democratic social norms in Ukraine and in the region.

Over the past several years, we have seen some impressive improvements in the area of human rights. However, the situation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals continues to cause serious concern. The rampant and unacceptable state-sponsored homophobia that we are witnessing in neighboring Russia is slowly invading Ukraine as well.

Some individuals have sought to introduce legislation in the Ukrainian Rada, similar to Russia's, to ban so-called "homosexual propaganda," which does nothing more than limit the fundamental freedoms of association, speech, and assembly for all Ukrainians, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The citizens of Ukraine, including her LGBT citizens, deserve much, much better, and they should know we stand with them as they pursue a free, inclusive, and democratic society.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, how much time do I have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 10½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the cochair of the Ukrainian Caucus, an original cosponsor of this resolution, and she and I had the opportunity many years ago to travel together to Ukraine.

□ 1815

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL of New York for his great leadership and Chairman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey for bringing this vitally important resolution up tonight.

Madam Speaker, I rise to express my support for House Resolution 447, supporting the courageous democratic aspirations of the people of Ukraine. I

want to thank, on a bipartisan basis, Congressman JIM GERLACH of Pennsylvania for his cochairmanship of our Ukrainian Caucus. We all stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

The people of Ukraine have the human right to choose their own future, free of intimidation and fear. What courage it took for these interfaith religious leaders at Maidan to stand with their religious symbols, icons, and crosses and other religious garb, along with their leaders, with their backs to the barricades, protecting the students as they faced the police.

Over the past few months, the world has stood witness as Ukrainians have risen up, united in their desire for a more free, transparent, and democratic Ukraine. If one knows anything about the history of Ukraine, one knows what it took to do that in that place.

The passage of House Resolution 447 here this evening means that our Congress stands in solidarity with those in Maidan and that we lend our support to the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians peacefully demonstrating in the freezing, bitter subzero temperatures for over 2 months for a more democratic and better future for all their people.

If there is a God—and I believe there is—surely he or she will look down on this place and bless these people.

The Ukrainian national anthem opens with the words:

Ukraine's glory has not yet died, nor her freedom; upon us, fellow compatriots, fate shall smile once more.

Indeed, fate shall smile once more upon Ukraine. Long live Ukraina. Long live her young people who hold in their hearts the democratic future of that nation.

Madam Speaker, I urge the passage of H. Res. 447. I say to my colleagues here, this is a most important crossroads in history. Truly, this country can be the borderland nation that links West and East and South and North in that important part of the world.

The world needs Ukraine. She is already the third-largest grain exporter to the world's people. Her talent, her artistry, her vision has been quashed for so many, many, many decades and generations. Now is her moment, and we stand with her people, aspiring to that better day for all.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I just want to take 30 seconds to respond and thank the gentlewoman from Ohio for her very eloquent defense of the Ukrainian people and for, again, reminding Americans and the world of the pivotal role that the patriarch and the highest, as well as people who are just among the faithful, are playing.

The religious community is standing in solidarity with those who are aspiring for freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights. And they have literally put themselves between the

police and the barricades in a way that puts their very lives at risk, holding up crosses, holding up other, as the gentlewoman said, icons of faith to say that we serve a God of peace and reconciliation.

Ms. KAPTUR. Will the gentleman yield?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds, and I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. KAPTUR. I would just say to the gentleman, looking back at the history of Ukraine and that region, the fact that you would have leaders of the Jewish faith, leaders of the Islam faith, leaders of Christian faiths, be they Orthodox or Uniate or Roman Rite, all—all—risking their substance, it is just incredible.

This should be on the front page of every newspaper in the world, and world opinion should move progress forward and help those people who have stood in that bitter cold weather for over 2 months. Unless you have traveled to Ukraine and experienced those temperatures yourself, you would not fully appreciate what they are enduring.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

I am glad you brought up the interfaith aspect of this as well. I actually chaired another hearing on anti-Semitism just several months ago, and the chief rabbi from the Ukraine came and testified and gave very powerful testimony as to how the faith community is working side by side to mitigate and, hopefully, end the cruelty of anti-Semitism while simultaneously working with Christians and others on behalf of human rights.

Again, this demonstration of the faith community should go noted by everybody in this Chamber and, I hope, by everyone in the world.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), a very distinguished member of both the Budget and Ways and Means Committees and a member of the Ukrainian Caucus as well.

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I thank both Mr. ELIOT ENGEL of New York and Mr. CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey for leading us through what are important things for us to contemplate, because what is applicable to Ukraine is applicable to a lot of places in this world. So I am a proud cosponsor and a strong supporter of H. Res. 447. It expresses our solidarity with the Ukrainian people and affirms their right to choose their own future.

In this room, not that many years ago, we brought in the Prime Minister.

Many of us had these flags, the colors of the Ukraine country.

Mass protests have broken out in Ukraine following President Yanukovich's decision in November to back away from negotiations for closer integration with Europe. So Russia has their fingers in all of this. Beware.

There was an agreement which had been supported by millions of Ukrainians in Ukraine and around the world. We have known about the violence. We have known about the detainment because folks just expressed their legitimate dissatisfaction with Yanukovich's government.

However, the current crisis in Ukraine had deeper roots. Almost a decade ago, the Orange Revolution led to the annulment of a fraudulent election which would have brought Viktor Yanukovich to power. In the wake of protests and civil disobedience on a massive scale, the Ukrainian people, instead, chose President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. She is in jail. She is in jail right now, as we speak, still. Now the democratic gains made as a result of that Orange Revolution are at risk. Viktor Yanukovich has gained the presidency, and former Prime Minister Tymoshenko, as I said, is still in jail.

The use of force to suppress open expression by political opponents or popular protests could never be tolerated in a free and democratic society, and those within the Ukrainian Government who authorized these brutal crackdowns should be held accountable for their egregious abuse of power.

There has been a strong outpouring of support for the protesters from the large and active Ukrainian American community, many of whom live in my district, the Ninth Congressional District of New Jersey.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. PASCRELL. Ukrainian Americans deeply desire a solution to this crisis which respects the fundamental rights of their sisters and brothers in Ukraine to free speech, press, and peaceful assembly. It is my sincere hope that the United States can facilitate a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Ukraine which respects the will of the Ukrainian people and brings justice to those who have been harmed through wrongful arrests and violence.

As we saw in Syria, crackdowns on nonviolent protests can lead to an all-out civil war, and we still do not do what we should be doing with those refugees from Syria. That is a disgrace.

We need to act now to help the people of Ukraine before the violence escalates further. I urge my colleagues to join this vital show of support from the American people to the people of Ukraine.

I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for yielding.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I want to continue to urge my colleagues to support the resolution. As anyone can see, this is a very bipartisan resolution. It is very important.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I, again, thank my good friend and colleague from New York, ELIOT ENGEL, for his sponsorship of this important resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for H. Res. 447, a resolution supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the Ukrainian people and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear.

As an original co-sponsor and as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, I believe it is essential for Congress to continue to show its strong support for the Ukrainian people. In the two decades since Ukraine gained its independence from the Soviet Union, Congress has been at the forefront of efforts to foster democratic and economic reform in Ukraine.

I have been deeply troubled by developments in Ukraine since President Yanukovich's surprising announcement last November that his government would not sign an Association Agreement with the European Union. I remain concerned that Mr. Yanukovich and his government were unduly pressured by outside forces to take a decision at odds with the long-term interests of the Ukrainian people and that the government's decision was not taken in consultation with other political stakeholders.

Since November, I have watched Ukraine's unfolding political crisis with growing concern, especially authorities' use of violence against peaceful protesters. I have been deeply dismayed by the deaths and injuries sustained on all sides. I applaud the Administration's decision to revoke the visas of the Ukrainian government officials who were responsible for ordering or committing acts of violence against peaceful protesters. I believe additional sanctions should be considered in the event of further violence, but hope they will not be necessary.

In the past few weeks, we have started to see signs of progress toward a resolution, including the repeal of repressive measures adopted by parliament in mid-January and the resignation of the prime minister and his cabinet on January 28. Both developments created an opening for serious dialogue between the government and the opposition. I urge all parties to seize this important opportunity.

This resolution does not take sides in what is quite rightly a matter that Ukrainians must decide for themselves. Instead, it urges all parties to refrain from violence and to engage in constructive, sustained dialogue in order to find a peaceful solution to the current crisis.

To facilitate that process, this resolution underscores to protesters, to the government, and to all Ukrainians that the United States will continue to defend Ukraine's sovereign

right to chart its own course and build its own future.

It also makes clear, not just to the protestors, but to President Yanukovich as well, that the United States will continue to support the Ukrainian people's aspirations to build a strong and prosperous democracy—one that is firmly rooted in Europe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 447, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules on H.R. 2431 and H. Res. 447, in each case by the yeas and nays, and the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2431) to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 365, nays 21, not voting 45, as follows:

[Roll No. 55]
YEAS—365

Andrews	Barton	Bilirakis
Bachmann	Bass	Bishop (GA)
Bachus	Beatty	Bishop (NY)
Barber	Becerra	Black
Barletta	Benishek	Blackburn
Barr	Bentivolio	Blumenauer
Barrow (GA)	Bera (CA)	Bonamici

Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett

Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Levin
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry

McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Brown (FL)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Serrano
Sessions

McIntyre
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)

Amash
Bridenstine
Broun (GA)
Duncan (TN)
Gohmert
Graves (GA)
Holding

Aderholt
Amodei
Bishop (UT)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Campbell
Capuano
Cárdenas
Cassidy
Connolly
Cramer
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DesJarlais

Franks (AZ)
Gosar
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Harris
Hultgren
Israel
Jackson Lee
Johnson (GA)
Kind
Kingston
Latham
Lee (CA)
Lewis

Hudson
Huelskamp
Jones
Labrador
Lankford
Massie
Perry

Hudson
Huelskamp
Jones
Labrador
Lankford
Massie
Perry

SUPPORTING THE DEMOCRATIC AND EUROPEAN ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 447) supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine, and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski

Hudson
Huelskamp
Jones
Labrador
Lankford
Massie
Perry

Lofgren
Matsui
Neal
Noem
Pastor (AZ)
Pingree (ME)
Rohrabacher
Royce
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Schwartz
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stockman
Stutzman

Franks (AZ)
Gosar
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Harris
Hultgren
Israel
Jackson Lee
Johnson (GA)
Kind
Kingston
Latham
Lee (CA)
Lewis

Hudson
Huelskamp
Jones
Labrador
Lankford
Massie
Perry

Hudson
Huelskamp
Jones
Labrador
Lankford
Massie
Perry

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 381, nays 2, not voting 48, as follows:

[Roll No. 56]
YEAS—381

Amash
Andrews
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett

Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett

Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeb sack
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry

Pelosi	Ryan (WI)	Thornberry
Perlmutter	Salmon	Tiberi
Perry	Sánchez, Linda	Tierney
Peters (CA)	T.	Tipton
Peters (MI)	Sanchez, Loretta	Titus
Peterson	Sanford	Tonko
Petri	Sarbanes	Tsongas
Pittenger	Scalise	Turner
Pitts	Schakowsky	Upton
Pocan	Schiff	Valadao
Poe (TX)	Schneider	Van Hollen
Polis	Schock	Vargas
Pompeo	Schrader	Veasey
Posey	Schweikert	Vela
Price (GA)	Scott (VA)	Velázquez
Price (NC)	Scott, Austin	Visclosky
Quigley	Scott, David	Wagner
Rahall	Sensenbrenner	Walberg
Rangel	Serrano	Walden
Reed	Sessions	Walorski
Reichert	Sewell (AL)	Walz
Renacci	Shea-Porter	Wasserman
Ribble	Sherman	Schultz
Rice (SC)	Shimkus	Waters
Richmond	Shuster	Waxman
Rigell	Simpson	Weber (TX)
Roby	Sinema	Welch
Roe (TN)	Sires	Wenstrup
Rogers (AL)	Slaughter	Westmoreland
Rogers (KY)	Smith (MO)	Whitfield
Rogers (MI)	Smith (NE)	Williams
Rokita	Smith (NJ)	Wilson (FL)
Rooney	Smith (TX)	Wilson (SC)
Ros-Lehtinen	Southerland	Wittman
Roskam	Stewart	Wolf
Ross	Swalwell (CA)	Womack
Rothfus	Takano	Woodall
Roybal-Allard	Terry	Yarmuth
Ruiz	Thompson (CA)	Yoder
Runyan	Thompson (MS)	Young (AK)
Ruppersberger	Thompson (PA)	Young (IN)

NAYS—2

Jones	Massie
NOT VOTING—48	
Aderholt	Gosar
Amodei	Green, Gene
Bishop (UT)	Grijalva
Braley (IA)	Gutiérrez
Brown (FL)	Hultgren
Campbell	Israel
Capuano	Jackson Lee
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)
Cassidy	Kind
Connolly	King (NY)
Cramer	Kingston
Davis, Danny	Latham
DeFazio	Lee (CA)
DeGette	Lewis
DesJarlais	Lofgren
Franks (AZ)	Matsui
Neal	Noem
Pastor (AZ)	Pingree (ME)
Rohrabacher	Royce
Rush	Ryan (OH)
Schwartz	Smith (WA)
Speier	Stivers
Stockman	Stutzman
Webster (FL)	Yoho

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on February 10, 2014, I was unavoidably detained attending to representational activities in my congressional district and thus unable to return in time for rollcall votes 55 and 56.

Had I been present I would have voted as follows: on rollcall No. 55, I would have voted “aye” (February 10) H.R. 2431—The National Integrated Drought Information Systems Reauthorization Act (Representative HALL—Science, Space and Technology); On rollcall No. 56, I would have voted “aye” (February

10) (H. Res. 447, Supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, as amended 2319, Native American Veterans’ Memorial Amendments Act of 2013 (Representative ENGEL—Foreign Affairs).

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 241, noes 123, answered “present” 1, not voting 66, as follows:

[Roll No. 57]

AYES—241

Bachmann	Diaz-Balart	Kennedy
Bachus	Dingell	Kildee
Barletta	Doggett	King (IA)
Barr	Duncan (TN)	King (NY)
Barrow (GA)	Edwards	Kline
Bass	Engel	Kuster
Beatty	Enyart	Labrador
Becerra	Eshoo	LaMalfa
Bera (CA)	Esty	Lamborn
Bilirakis	Farr	Lankford
Black	Fattah	Larsen (WA)
Blackburn	Fincher	Larson (CT)
Blumenauer	Fleischmann	Latta
Bonamici	Fortenberry	Levin
Boustany	Poster	Lipinski
Brady (PA)	Frankel (FL)	Loeb
Brady (TX)	Frelinghuysen	Long
Bridenstine	Fudge	Lowenthal
Brownley (CA)	Gabbard	Lowe
Buchanan	Galleo	Lucas
Butterfield	Garamendi	Luetkemeyer
Calvert	Garrett	Lujan Grisham
Camp	Gibbs	(NM)
Capito	Goodlatte	Luján, Ben Ray
Capps	Gowdy	(NM)
Carney	Granger	Lummis
Carson (IN)	Grayson	Massie
Carter	Griffith (VA)	McAllister
Cartwright	Grimm	McCarthy (CA)
Castor (FL)	Guthrie	McCarthy (NY)
Castro (TX)	Hahn	McClintock
Chabot	Hanabusa	McHenry
Clark (MA)	Harper	McIntyre
Clay	Harris	McKeon
Cleaver	Hastings (FL)	McMorris
Coble	Hastings (WA)	Rodgers
Coffman	Heck (WA)	McNerney
Cole	Herrington	Meadows
Collins (NY)	Herrera Beutler	Meehan
Conyers	Higgins	Meeks
Cook	Himes	Meng
Courtney	Hinojosa	Messer
Crawford	Holt	Mica
Crenshaw	Honda	Michaud
Cuellar	Horsford	Miller (FL)
Culberson	Huelskamp	Miller (MI)
Cummings	Huffman	Miller, Gary
Daines	Hunter	Moran
Davis (CA)	Issa	Mullin
DeLauro	Johnson, Sam	Murphy (FL)
DeBene	Kaptur	Murphy (PA)
Dent	Kelly (IL)	Nadler
Deutch	Kelly (PA)	Napolitano

Neugebauer	Ruppersberger	Swalwell (CA)
Nunes	Ryan (WI)	Takano
Nunnelee	Salmon	Thornberry
O’Rourke	Sánchez, Linda	Tierney
Olson	T.	Titus
Payne	Sanchez, Loretta	Tonko
Pelosi	Sanford	Tsongas
Perry	Scalise	Turner
Petri	Schiff	Van Hollen
Pocan	Schneider	Vargas
Polis	Schrader	Wagner
Pompeo	Schweikert	Walorski
Posey	Scott (VA)	Walz
Price (NC)	Scott, Austin	Wasserman
Quigley	Scott, David	Schultz
Rangel	Sensenbrenner	Waters
Ribble	Serrano	Waxman
Rice (SC)	Sessions	Webster (FL)
Roby	Shea-Porter	Welch
Rogers (KY)	Sherman	Wenstrup
Rogers (MI)	Shimkus	Westmoreland
Rokita	Shuster	Whitfield
Rooney	Simpson	Williams
Roskam	Smith (NE)	Wilson (FL)
Ross	Smith (NJ)	Wilson (SC)
Rothfus	Smith (TX)	Wolf
Roybal-Allard	Southerland	Womack
Ruiz	Stewart	Yoho
Runyan	Stivers	Young (IN)

NOES—123

Amash	Griffin (AR)	Paulsen
Andrews	Hall	Pearce
Barber	Hanna	Peters (CA)
Barton	Hartzler	Peters (MI)
Benishek	Heck (NV)	Peterson
Bentivolio	Holding	Pittenger
Bishop (NY)	Hoyer	Pitts
Brooks (IN)	Hudson	Poe (TX)
Broun (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Price (GA)
Bucshon	Jeffries	Rahall
Burgess	Jenkins	Reed
Chaffetz	Johnson (OH)	Reichert
Chu	Johnson, E. B.	Renacci
Clarke (NY)	Jones	Rigell
Clyburn	Jordan	Roe (TN)
Cohen	Joyce	Ros-Lehtinen
Collins (GA)	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Conaway	Kinzinger (IL)	Schakowsky
Costa	Kirkpatrick	Schock
Cotton	Lance	Sewell (AL)
Crowley	Langevin	Sires
Davis, Rodney	LoBiondo	Slaughter
Denham	Lynch	Smith (MO)
DeSantis	Maffei	Terry
Duckworth	Maloney,	Thompson (CA)
Duffy	Carolyn	Thompson (MS)
Duncan (SC)	Maloney, Sean	Thompson (PA)
Ellison	Marchant	Tipton
Ellmers	Marino	Upton
Farenthold	Matheson	Valadao
Fitzpatrick	McCaul	Veasey
Fleming	McDermott	Velázquez
Flores	McGovern	Visclosky
Forbes	McKinley	Walberg
Fox	Miller, George	Walden
Garcia	Moore	Weber (TX)
Gardner	Mulvaney	Wittman
Gerlach	Negrete McLeod	Woodall
Gibson	Nolan	Yoder
Graves (GA)	Nugent	Young (AK)
Graves (MO)	Palazzo	
Green, Al	Pallone	

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Gohmert
NOT VOTING—66

Aderholt	Cramer	Johnson (GA)
Amodei	Davis, Danny	Keating
Bishop (GA)	DeFazio	Kingston
Bishop (UT)	DeGette	Latham
Braley (IA)	Delaney	Lee (CA)
Brooks (AL)	DesJarlais	Lewis
Brown (FL)	Doyle	Lofgren
Bustos	Franks (AZ)	Matsui
Byrne	Gingrey (GA)	McCollum
Campbell	Gosar	Neal
Cantor	Green, Gene	Noem
Capuano	Grijalva	Owens
Cárdenas	Gutiérrez	Pascarell
Cassidy	Hultgren	Pastor (AZ)
Ciçilline	Hurt	Perlmutter
Connolly	Israel	Pingree (ME)
Cooper	Jackson Lee	

Richmond	Ryan (OH)	Stockman
Rogers (AL)	Schwartz	Stutzman
Rohrabacher	Sinema	Tiberi
Royce	Smith (WA)	Vela
Rush	Speier	Yarmuth

Mineral Society, which next week will host the 60th annual Tucson Gem and Minerals Show.

This show began as a small club gathering, and over the past six decades, it has grown to set the standard for other such events around the world. This year's show will be held from February 13 through 16 with the theme "60 Years of Diamonds, Gems, Silver, and Gold."

As a result of the interest generated by this long-running event, dozens of satellite events very much like it have proliferated throughout the Tucson area. These feature gems, minerals, fossils, meteorites, and other items from around the world and are known as the Tucson Gem, Mineral and Fossil Showcase. These events bring an estimated \$100 million to southern Arizona.

None of this would have been possible without the work of the volunteers of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society. I am proud to recognize this long-time Tucson tradition and this great organization and the economic benefits it brings to my district.

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a Miami native and Cuban American short-track speed skater, Eddy Alvarez.

When I first heard about this south Florida ice speed skater, I was even more astounded than when I found out about the Jamaican bobsled team. Disney may have to make a movie about this. In all seriousness, Eddy had his first competition in Sochi this morning, and he will continue competing in events this week.

Eddy learned to roller skate in south Miami, and then took to the ice, eventually competing internationally with great success. I am proud to note that Eddy attended Christopher Columbus High School and practiced at the Kendall Ice Arena—both great institutions in my district.

Eddy is a remarkable example of American determination and dedication. I wish him and his fellow Olympians all the success in Sochi.

ENDING RUSSIA'S BAN ON INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, as millions of Americans turn their attention to Sochi for the Winter Olympics, we cannot overlook Russia's continued ban on intercountry adoption.

Every day, families across America eagerly await news that the Russians' ban on allowing American families to adopt Russian children has finally ended. Some families have decided to look at other places to adopt, but many are still committed to completing their adoptions. Families like the Thomases, from Minnetrista, Minnesota, have not given up hope in adopting their second child from Russia. In 2008, they completed an adoption for their son Jack. After a successful transition, they have now begun the process of adopting Jack's younger brother, Nikolai. Unfortunately, Russia's adoption ban has squashed any hopes of completing that adoption.

Mr. Speaker, every child, no matter where he is born, should have the opportunity to grow up in a loving family. I urge my colleagues to continue fighting to end the Russian adoption ban and to let our families bring home their children.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF PATRICIA McNAMARA BEAZLEY

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of a great American, Patricia McNamara Beazley, a

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1913

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding my recent absence from the House on Monday, February 10. On this day, I was unavoidably detained in my district.

Because of this absence, I missed votes on the House floor. I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Nos. 55, 56 and 57.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, due to being extremely sick, I was not present for tonight's rollcall votes No. 55, No. 56, and No. 57. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 55, 56, and 57.

GARETH PREBBLE, A ROLE MODEL

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Gareth Prebble, a sixth-grade student from Mount Nittany Middle School in State College, Pennsylvania. Gareth has hopes of connecting what he refers to—and rightfully so—as the divide between the physically disabled and the rest of the population.

Young Gareth took a giant step towards this goal last month when he entered the Martin Luther King Commemoration Student Showcase essay contest. The contest, sponsored by Pennsylvania State University, is titled "Reflect on Yesterday. Experience Today. Transform Tomorrow."

Gareth, who has cerebral palsy, wrote about his life experiences: "People often look at me and make assumptions based on my appearance." Gareth's essay evokes Dr. King's powerful message—for all people in this country to be treated with respect and dignity.

Mr. Speaker, Gareth went on to win this competition. I rise to congratulate him for his work and for having the strength and courage to share his story. In doing so, he is a role model for each and every one of us in how we, too, can transform the future.

TUCSON GEM AND MINERALS SHOW

(Mr. BARBER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the Tucson Gem and

TAXMAN STEALS THE GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, America's best athletes carry the banner of Old Glory into the Olympic Games. They are a remarkable breed and have dedicated their lives in training to represent Team USA in lands far, far away.

This year is no different as they hit the snowy Winter Games in Russia, and they are already doing quite well. As the "Star-Spangled Banner" plays, they stand on the podium to receive gold, silver, and bronze medals—but lurking in the creepy shadows of the medal ceremony is the U.S. taxman.

The IRS wants a piece of the gold even though these medals were won overseas. It is absurd that the IRS can levy a tax on these medals. These athletes are ambassadors for America. Their medals should not be taxed by the IRS. Are some winners going to have to sell their medals to pay the taxman? Who knows?

Congress should pass Congressman FARENTHOLD's legislation this week that would keep the greedy hands of the IRS off the medals of the Olympians.

Mr. Speaker, the taxman should not be able to steal the gold, silver, and bronze.

And that's just the way it is.

OLYMPIAN EDDY ALVAREZ

(Mr. GARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

magnificent woman and citizen whom we laid to rest today in Toledo, Ohio, after a mass at Gesu Church, a place that she called home.

Pat Beazley was an extraordinary human being. The minute you met her you felt like a member of her family. She was an artist of family, a dedicated wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and an artist in her own right. Her paintings abound not just in her home but throughout our country and, certainly, in her home community.

Her son, Michael—a personal friend—her daughters, her grandchildren, her great-grandchildren, and her wonderful husband, Ben, just know that our entire community stands with you. We know what a builder of family and community Pat was. We celebrate her life—her life of love, her life of contributions to others, her very quiet way of building friendships and, in so doing, building a community that was strong—her church family, her community of artists and, obviously, her own family.

We say “thank you” to the Beazley Family for sharing Pat with us these many, many decades. We have been so blessed by her presence, and the beauty of her life and the beauty of her works will remain with us always. May she rest in peace, and may God give comfort to those who remain behind to carry forward her legacy.

[From: Toledo Blade]

Patricia Beazley, 83, an award-winning artist known for her skill in portraiture and in depicting family scenes and children, died Wednesday in her Sylvania Township home.

Mrs. Beazley developed complications after a series of strokes the last few years, her son, Michael, said. Mrs. Beazley and her loving, surviving husband, Ben, raised three gifted children—Michael, Mary Beth and Trish. Their grandchildren & great grandchildren pay tribute to their lifetime of love and devotion.

Pat was an artist in every sense of the word. She accepted commissions and she created formal portraits, such as of professors and administrators at the University of Toledo and Ohio State University. Families commissioned her to depict a mother with a baby or a montage of family scenes. On occasion, she was asked on short notice to do a portrait that could be displayed at a wake or funeral service. She created the familiar picture, “Daughter Too,” of the pig-tailed girl eating an apple on the side of Al Peake & Sons & Daughter Too produce trucks.

“Her biggest strength as an artist was she really captured the likeness,” her daughter Mary Beth said. “A friend of hers stopped by and said, ‘She captured the spirit.’”

Mrs. Beazley worked primarily in pastel, though she was versed in other media.

“She enjoyed anything from the still lifes to the flowers,” her son said. “Her line of pencil drawings she used to call ‘captured moments.’ She always took joy in the craft and a special pride in the reactions of the families she did work for.”

Her work has been selected for the annual Toledo Area Artists Exhibition at the Toledo Museum of Art and for a Pastel Society of America exhibition and has been included in

other shows at the museum and through the Athena Art Society and other groups. She received a Grumbacher Bronze Medallion, and at several exhibitions, her works were deemed best-of-show.

Her mother was an amateur artist, but Mrs. Beazley did not take an art class until she was 39. She actively resisted training as a child, she told *The Blade* in 1981, because “I just knew I wasn’t good enough.”

She also was active at Gesu Church and volunteered for the League of Women’s Voters—she produced a public television program featuring debates among local candidates—and on behalf of civil rights.

She’d painted a mural on the kitchen wall when the family lived in Chicago. She began sketching.—See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/toledoblade/obituary.aspx?n=patricia-beazley&pid=169562150#sthash.VEUvWbOK.dpuf>.

A “CLEAN” DEBT CEILING: A DIRTY DEAL FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. BARTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, sometime in the very near future, we are going to have to vote on an increase in the national debt. The national debt ceiling is currently at \$17 trillion, and all expectations are that the increase will put it up over \$18 trillion or at least \$17.5 trillion.

It is unconscionable to me that one of the largest items already in our budget is the interest on the national debt, and that it is also one of the fastest growing items in the budget. I will not vote, Mr. Speaker, for a so-called “clean” debt ceiling, because I think that is a dirty deal for the American people.

It is time to begin structural changes to our entitlement programs that make them subject to some sort of caps so that we can get back to balance and keep our budget in balance. This is one of those inflection points in American history, and I hope that the House of Representatives will insist on real reform in our budget before we vote to increase the public debt by one penny.

MIAMI-DADE TEACHER OF THE YEAR MYRNA BETANCOURT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased tonight to rise to congratulate a Miami teacher who is going above and beyond for our south Florida students.

Myrna Betancourt, a culinary arts teacher at the South Dade Educational Center, is Miami-Dade County’s 2015 Teacher of the Year.

Working out of her kitchen in the Chapman Partnership Homeless Center in Homestead, Myrna is giving hun-

dreds—thousands—of often disadvantaged, special needs or homeless Miami students a second chance at life. A former social worker and public school-teacher, Myrna has always wanted to help those in need. Thanks to her hard work, Myrna’s chefs are learning to cook gourmet foods, are finding jobs in good restaurants, and are receiving scholarships at the finest culinary schools in our country. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, Myrna is giving them hope and an opportunity to follow their dreams.

Congratulations, Myrna. South Florida is also very proud of you.

CONGRATULATIONS WALLA WALLA VALLEY

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take time to recognize the beautiful Walla Walla Valley and the 30th anniversary of their Federal designation as an American Viticultural Area.

Over the past 30 years, the Walla Walla Valley has earned national and international recognition for being one of the best wine regions in the world. Just ask Gary and Nancy Figgins, who opened Leonetti Cellar in 1984 when there were just four wineries in the valley. Today, within 1,800 acres of green, rolling hills, you will find 130 different wineries.

This growth has allowed businesses to expand and the wine tourism to become one of the top industries in our State. Our community has rallied around the business owners, and now wine-related jobs account for nearly 15 percent of the total jobs in the area. All of this leads to a \$500 million economic impact, but it is not just the numbers, as it is about a community that makes us all proud in Washington State to call it our home.

I am honored to represent the Walla Walla Valley, and congratulations on 30 exceptional years. Best wishes for many, many more to come.

□ 1930

SHAME ON YOU

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, today, once again, the President has unilaterally, almost like a monarch, said ObamaCare is the law.

The fact is HARRY REID and the Senate were willing to shut down the government instead of just passing a bill that would have suspended ObamaCare for a year—or, at least suspend the mandates—and he did it again today.

So it makes it very clear the shut-down of our government that hurt so

many people was clearly a political game by HARRY REID and the Senate Democrats because they wanted America to hurt—and blame the Republicans—when all along they were willing to agree to what we offered to avoid the shutdown.

Shame on you.

CONFLATING THE TERMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. I have a number of things that I would like to bring to your attention that are on my mind and I think are on the minds of the American people.

The number one topic in this Capitol Building, at least on the House side right now—and I believe on the Senate side, too—is the question of the debt ceiling that has been brought forward. A lot of us have some memories of how difficult that was the last time that came through.

There are a good number of Members in this Congress that have pledged they will never vote to increase the debt ceiling. We have a President who used extraordinary methods the last time and stretched the debt ceiling out and the crunch time that was supposed to come for months. And it is curious that even though the Congress did backfill that debt ceiling for him, now he doesn't have any extraordinary means, evidently, and now we are up against the time line, up against the wall of perhaps a February 15 date. It causes this Congress to have to scramble.

It is not because this government is in risk of default, Mr. Speaker. That is the language that emerged 2 or 3 years ago on the debt ceiling. Republicans and Democrats alike talked about how this country's credit is good and we can't allow our government to default.

The definition of default really isn't what has been used in this dialogue over the debt ceiling. The default would be if the United States could not and failed to service its debt. That would be if we didn't have the revenue stream to pay the interest and to roll the bonds over, then we would be in default. We are a long, long way from that, Mr. Speaker. We have, by some measurements, as much as 8 or 9 or 10 times the revenue necessary to pay the interest and roll the bonds over.

So America is not in danger of default, but we are in danger of getting confused about the debate and losing track of the essence of it because we allow language to be conflated in the minds of the American people, the minds of the people in the House and

the Senate, and in the press. The press allows that to happen as well. And when language gets conflated, we lose the center of the argument.

To drive that point home, Mr. Speaker, I would say this. About 6 or 7 years ago, I noticed that the language was being conflated between health care and health insurance. I recall our then-Governor to the State of Iowa came here in this very building. We had a meeting with the Iowa congressional delegation and the Governor, and he pressed us around the table, seven of us at the time—five House Members and two Senators—and he said, There are 40,000 kids in Iowa that don't have health care.

No one said anything. I looked at him and I said, Governor, there can't be 40,000 kids in Iowa that don't have health care. We are taking care of those kids. Why have I not heard about kids without health care?

He said, No, there are 40,000 kids in Iowa without health care.

And I brought it back to him again. They all have access to health care. If nothing else, in the emergency room they are going to have access to health care. We would not turn a child away—not from a clinic, not from a hospital, not from an ER.

And we went around and around five or six times with that verbiage of the Governor saying 40,000 kids don't have health care and me saying that can't be true, hoping that I could get him to be the guy that figured out that he really meant health insurance, not health care.

I had to explain it to him, Mr. Speaker. There is a difference. What you really mean is there are 40,000 kids—at the time—in Iowa that didn't have their own health insurance policy, which is far different than not having health care.

But you see what has happened. The language was already conflated in his mind and he couldn't separate them apart, even at a meeting with the Iowa congressional delegation where he was pitching for more resources to go into the program.

And so if that happens in the mind of a Governor of the State of Iowa, I have to believe it happens in the minds of a lot of other people across the country. And then I have to wonder, did this happen by accident? Did the language get conflated by accident, or were there people that wanted to advance a policy and they decided we are going to conflate this language because it helps our liberal agenda?

Well, it is the latter. It helps the liberal agenda to conflate the language. They did so on health insurance and health care, and that is just a model.

The next piece of this would be the example that happens with immigration.

Now, we know that there is a difference between illegal immigrants and

legal immigrants. There is a tremendously different moral underpinning of this. I don't know anyone in this Congress that isn't very supportive of legal immigrants. And all of us who took an oath to uphold the Constitution should be for enforcing the rule of law even as they set about trying to change it.

But the term "immigrant," which connotes a legal immigrant, and the adjective "illegal" immigrant are entirely different. They have been conflated, because when you use the term "immigrant" interchangeably with "illegal immigrant," it suits the argument of the people who are for the open borders lobby and for amnesty.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, they have intentionally conflated the terms so that they can move their agenda, because it makes it harder to debate the distinctions if you have to stop and define the difference between "immigrant" and "illegal immigrant."

And then, of course, they argue that we shouldn't use that terminology—even "illegal immigrant." We should use "undocumented" or "not yet granted amnesty." Oh, wait. That wouldn't be theirs, Mr. Speaker. But you get the point. You conflate the terms "illegal immigrant" and "immigrant," and then you give the moral standing of the immigrant to the illegal immigrant; and then you can make the argument that you should grant them amnesty because somehow they should have access to American citizenship and all the benefits thereof.

It is a similar argument that comes along with "health care" and "health insurance." By conflating the two terms, they convinced the American people—at least a significant number of them—that everybody has not only a right to health care, but everybody has a right to their own health insurance policy.

These are a far cry from what our Founding Fathers laid out as rights. And, by the way, they are even a far cry from what Franklin Delano Roosevelt laid out as the four new freedoms. When I go down and look at the Roosevelt monument, it gives me a bit of a creepy feeling thinking how he manufactured freedoms that didn't come from God but fit a liberal agenda—even then.

So we have got the terminology of "health care" and "health insurance" and "immigrant" and "illegal immigrant" conflated, and now we are in the debt ceiling debate, and people on both sides of the aisle are arguing that we can't allow the United States to default. Their definition of "default" is the moment that the United States runs out of borrowing capacity, which isn't the same, because the cash flow still comes flowing in, hundreds of billions of dollars a month, which is plenty of money to service the interest and to pay the debt.

We are not up against a hard break here, Mr. Speaker. We are not up

against a deadline that says that if we can't get credit at the bank, we are going to have the house foreclosed on. That is not it at all. It is a matter of where we take the money from to service our debt and what bills we pay.

I do think that the inertia of the spending and the structure of the budget that we have pushes this Congress towards a debt ceiling increase at some point. But the House of Representatives has the majority of Republicans for a reason. It is because the American people rose up in 2010 and said, You are shoving too much government on us. We want to keep our God-given liberty. We want to reject ObamaCare. We want to have a smaller government with less taxes and less spending and less regulation, less intrusion, less nanny state, more freedom, more God-given liberty.

That is what the American people said in 2010.

They reiterated it again in 2012 with regard to the House of Representatives. And with the President, Mr. Speaker, they evidently decided that they wanted a President that would perhaps send them an Obama phone and maybe pick up the rent check and the heat bill and the grocery bill without that much responsibility.

I don't know that the American people were looking down the line to see that if they push this debt off into the next generation, it is their children and their grandchildren that will be paying the debt in the next generation.

When I go to a high school and talk to the high school students, invariably they will say to me, What are you going to do about the cost of tuition and what are you going to do about the cost of my student loan?

They are planning to go to college, and I am glad they are.

The answer to that and the answer I give them is, The best thing that can be done for the increasing cost of tuition is for you, the consumer, to make an astute choice on where you will go to school and the best education you can get for the tuition dollar. Calculate that. Go visit the schools. Don't think that you are going to pay a premium because you want a certain kind of sheepskin hanging in a frame on the wall someday and believe that you can put your feet on the desk and live happily ever after.

The world doesn't work that way. Not that often, in any case, Mr. Speaker.

Instead, go evaluate the tuition costs and the cost of housing and all of the associated costs with a college education and bargain for the best buy that you can get, and go there and get that education.

If you are determined that you want a degree from a prestigious institution, you can start a 4-year degree there. Maybe you will spend 5 years getting that degree. Or you can go to a smaller

institution that is maybe closer to home and a little cheaper, get a couple years in, maybe a third year in, and transfer to that 4-year school. You can achieve that degree and put it in the frame with less dollars and maybe get more back in return for the tuition dollar.

Be good consumers is the piece of advice that I would give to the students looking at going to college. That is one of the educational components of where we are going with this country. But the debt that is there for an individual is the debt of the country in its aggregate.

When I tell the students that this is how you get the best buy for your dollar, they say, What are you going to do to buy down the interest rate on my student loan?

My answer to that is, If we do that, we have to borrow the money here in Congress from maybe the Chinese, maybe the Saudis, maybe the American people. About half of this U.S. debt, this \$17.3 trillion, is held in the hands of the American people in the form of Treasury bonds, et cetera. And so if we have to borrow the money to buy down your interest rate, you are going to be the one paying it back. You get your college education; you go off into the workforce; you start paying down the interest and the principal on your student loan; you are the one paying it back. If we borrow the interest rate down now, you still have to pay back your student loan, maybe at a lower interest rate, but you are going to be paying back the national debt as the other part of that bargain.

I have a number of grandchildren, all of them tremendous gifts and miracles in their own right, but the most recent two are the ones that I happened to have actually kept the math on. My little granddaughter Reagan is 3 years old. When she came into the world, her share of the national debt was \$48,000.

□ 1945

Little Wallace, the youngest, who has been here since, oh, back in mid-November, his share of the national debt when he came into the world was \$54,000. Three years apart. If we are gifted with another grandchild, you know their share of the national debt is going to be greater and greater.

This Congress needs to understand and think about our duty to the succeeding generations. Maybe it is an easy enough thing to pass a debt ceiling increase here to pacify a President who refuses to take on entitlement reform.

We all know that this debt is out of control. The spending is out of control. The spending is on auto-pilot, and the spending is going into programs like Medicaid and Medicare and Social Security.

By the way, the latter of the three is the one that is the easiest to fix, and if

we could get our employment up, we could get Social Security back on track easier than any other way. The reform of entitlements is a necessary thing if we are ever going to get this country to balance.

So the question emerges to me and others, Mr. Speaker: What would you attach to a debt ceiling increase, a debt ceiling increase that would satisfy the President which, apparently, would be an entire year, a credit card for an entire year at whatever limit that might be? What would you attach to that to send the message, to hang on to something that you can point to and say, I focused on fiscal restraint?

What could be that list of items?

Well, one would be, and my Number 1 item, Mr. Speaker, that I would attach, and this would get me to vote for a limited debt ceiling increase, would be this: a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution passed out of the House of Representatives, passed out of the United States Senate, messaged to the States.

I would step up and take a real good look, depending on the terms of it, of course, at voting for a debt ceiling increase under those conditions.

Now, the balanced budget amendment to our Constitution would have to include, in my view, it would need to include a cap on the GDP spending. I would cap it at 18 percent.

Another would be that we would have to be able to waive that balanced budget requirement in the case of a declared war, and we have got some language, or a very serious national emergency. Those would be some provisions.

No tax increases without a supermajority, another provision.

A balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution that enforces fiscal responsibility from this point forward, provided that the States would ratify that constitutional amendment.

Now, Congress could pass a balanced budget amendment out of here with a two-thirds majority, out of the House and out of the Senate and message it to the States. That is all that we can ask out of here. The States then pick the balance up from there.

Meanwhile, a debt ceiling increase would pass, I believe, out of this Congress, and the 38 States required to ratify a balanced budget amendment, I believe they would step forward and do that, because, after all, they do have balanced budget requirements within their Constitutions, almost all of them, a balanced budget requirement, and we see how they live within their means.

I worked in the State senate in Iowa for 6 years. We made our way to balance the budget sometimes when it was painful, but we knew we had no choice and, therefore, you carve that budget to match. You live within your means.

Tax increases come hard. In fact, we have reduced taxes, not increased taxes. Now we have a surplus.

I mentioned the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution as a requirement before we could vote for a debt ceiling increase. I don't know if that appetite exists here in this Congress.

I make the point to you, Mr. Speaker, because I think more need to think about the merits of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

Another component that we could attach to a debt ceiling increase would be a requirement to audit the Fed. Now, that is something that has had a lot of signatures on it here in the House of Representatives. When Ron Paul served here in the House, he pushed that constantly. Yes, we have passed it out of the House of Representatives in the past, and they don't have an interest in taking it up in the Senate.

We don't know what is going on in the Fed. There are trillions of dollars that are maneuvered around over the course of years, and we aren't able to take a look at those dollars, and our job is oversight.

So when you give the Fed, essentially, an open checkbook and they can inject funds into the economy, and they can run the throttle on our economy up and down without congressional oversight, without even having access to that information to see what they are doing—the closest we get to auditing the Fed is to read *The Wall Street Journal* that picks up little tidbits and writes it into the newspaper, that gives us a better feel of what is going on.

Thanks to *The Wall Street Journal*, Mr. Speaker, but that is not enough. We do need to audit the Fed. It is a no-brainer from where I sit. Congress has an oversight responsibility. We should do so, and we should not be inhibited or held back.

It is too bad that something as simple and as clear, with the kind of support that auditing the Fed has, you would even have to think about attaching it to a debt ceiling increase in order to try to get that done and get a Presidential signature.

The President doesn't want Congress to know what is going on in the Fed, and he will resist this.

There has been a consistent pattern, Mr. Speaker, of the Majority Leader in the United States Senate being a shield for the President of the United States.

Each time we move an idea that is a good idea from the voice of the American people—by definition, when it comes out of this Congress it is the voice of the American people by virtue of the republican form of government, which is guaranteed to us in the Constitution, I might add, Mr. Speaker.

But the Majority Leader in the Senate puts up the shield if the President doesn't want to see it on his desk. Then the debate stops because the President of the United States has a blocking agent, the Majority Leader in the United States Senate.

So here we sit in the House making argument after argument, as I am doing tonight, Mr. Speaker, arguing for a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, arguing that we should audit the Fed, arguing that raising the debt ceiling without restraints feeds spending and accelerates the accumulation of debt.

By the way, you just heard a few minutes ago, Mr. GOHMERT talk about the President, again, altering or amending his own bill, ObamaCare.

Now, think of this. I came here an innocent neophyte who just simply studied and read this Constitution for a good number of years, and carried one in my pocket longer than I have been in this Congress. Each day that I had a jacket I kept it in my jacket pocket, and the times that I was in the Iowa senate, and that is getting to be a few years ago now, Mr. Speaker.

When I took an oath to uphold this Constitution, and I actually remember where I was sitting right over there when that took place the first time here, and I never imagined that article I responsibilities that give the authority for legislation to the Congress would be so usurped by the President of the United States.

Article I, section 1, all legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, there is no mention in this Constitution about the President involved in legislation. It says all legislative powers herein granted.

Well, where do these powers come from?

They come from God, granted to the people, and we, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, established this Constitution of the United States of America, and all legislative powers are vested in the Congress.

Article I, not article II or article III, this Federal Government, this contractual guarantee called the Constitution of the United States, was put together with the first respect for the people of the United States of America and the laws that they would ask to be passed through their republican form of government, their representatives here in the House and in the Senate.

Yet, the President, who gave a lecture a couple of years ago, on March 28, I remember the date—it might have been 2011—at a school just here in Washington, DC, at a high school, and he was talking about the Constitution.

Now, remember, Mr. Speaker, that the President is a former adjunct law professor who taught constitutional law at the University of Chicago, a very highly respected and revered school, especially their law school, and their school of economics as well.

I have great respect for the people who have gone through law school at

the University of Chicago. I have met a good number of them, and the ones that I have met, they have been smart, they have been good people. They understood the Constitution. They had good judgment.

Some of them were in the classroom—I circled by six or seven of them one evening—in the classroom of Barack Obama when he was teaching constitutional law, and they told me that each time that they reverted back to the clear letter of the Constitution, the clear meaning of the Constitution, that Adjunct Professor Obama would stretch it out and turn it over into an activist interpretation.

It is pretty interesting to hear that, but this President knew what he was doing when he spoke to the high school here in this city, March 28, I believe, 2011. He said, you are good students; you know this. The Congress writes the laws, and I am the executive branch, so my job is to see to it that the laws are enforced, and then the courts interpret the laws.

Pretty clear. That is what he said. It was an accurate interpretation of the Constitution, of articles I, II and III of our Constitution. He knows the Constitution, he has taught it.

In spite of that, Mr. Speaker, he steps forward and violates his own oath of office and seeks to legislate by executive edict. I don't use that first word, Executive order, Mr. Speaker, because occasionally it is an Executive order, but sometimes it is a press conference; sometimes it is the President's people, on a third-tier U.S. Treasury Web site, announcing that there has been some change in Federal policy that effectively amends Federal law.

Now, Presidents are required to take their oath of office, it is in this Constitution, by the way, and inclusive within that oath is the Take Care Clause, that the President's obligation is to take care that the laws be faithfully executed. That is a component of the oath that he gives when he swears in out here on the west portico of the Capitol on January 20, every leap year. We hear that oath.

So when the President of the United States doesn't enforce the laws that have been passed by the Congress, messaged to a previous President, signed by a previous President, and go into the Federal Code, when the President doesn't enforce those laws, if he says he disagrees with the laws that have been passed before he arrived at the west portico and took the oath of office, that is a constitutional violation. That is a violation of his oath of office. That is the reason that he takes it, is so we can compel him to follow the Constitution.

This President not only has refused to enforce the laws that were on the books when he became President—and it is multiple cases. The President has refused to enforce the law when it

comes to Welfare to Work. There is only one component of the 80 different means-tested Federal welfare programs that we have that requires work.

That was the big deal that emerged during the mid-nineties, when we had Welfare to Work, and there were two or three vetoes by President Clinton, who finally took credit for signing Welfare to Work.

Only one of the 80 requires work, and that one the President willfully, simply disregarded, and so he ended Welfare to Work. After all of the bare-knuckle fights here in this Congress and the vetoes and the Presidential positioning and the politics that went into it, President Obama just wiped out Welfare to Work, willy nilly, even though it was written carefully so that a President couldn't ignore the work component of Welfare to Work and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families component of welfare. That is one violation.

Then we had the President just simply set aside No Child Left Behind. That was Teddy Kennedy's piece that he negotiated with George W. Bush. President Obama decided I don't like No Child Left Behind, kicked that one off the table. I am going to ignore it, and you all can ignore it because I, essentially, direct you to.

Then we get to the immigration component of this, and there are five pieces of the—we call it the Morton Memos, where the President has decided that he is refusing to enforce existing immigration law, and they argue that it is on an individual basis only.

There were seven different references to an individual basis only by Janet Napolitano, who testified before the Judiciary Committee. That is in there, Mr. Speaker, so that they can argue that it is not creating a class of people that are now exempted from the law. Well, they create classes of people and they exempt them from the law.

That is the immigration piece of the violations. Now it brings me to ObamaCare, and on ObamaCare, I can't keep track of the times that he has decided that he is not going to enforce ObamaCare and he is going to change it or amend it. The list is so full at this point I don't know if anyone has memorized how many violations, how many changes that have come to the ObamaCare law because of the President's executive edicts that come down.

I would lay the foundation of this, Mr. Speaker, in the passage of ObamaCare itself, and in the Stupak amendment, and I would like to take that discussion up in a moment.

□ 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I am slightly mystified by that. But in any

case, I will try to be aware of that comment.

To take us back to ObamaCare, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I would be happy to pick it up at this point. So we have a President who was, of course, involved in the negotiations with the passage of ObamaCare, and the question became whether they could put the votes together to pass it here on the floor of the House of Representatives because it was clear to us that ObamaCare was going to fund abortions. So what emerged from that was a group of Democrats known at the time as the "Stupak dozen," who conditioned their support for the bill upon a provision, which became the Stupak amendment, that would prohibit abortions funded under ObamaCare or required under ObamaCare.

Well, as that debate ensued, the message became clear that the White House was negotiating that the President would simply sign an executive order that amended ObamaCare after it passed, after the fact, and that would fix the Stupak problem. That is the shorthand version, Mr. Speaker, of what took place.

But in any case, it was a bit breathtaking to hear that we had a President in the White House who believed that he could sign an executive order to amend legislation after the legislation passed and announce that he was going to do so, which was a condition for it to get the votes in order for it to pass.

Now, I know that there are people at home that are listening, Mr. Speaker, to whom that sounds like a lot of legalese gibberish, but it is the fact of what happened. The President, according to the press, had promised that he was going to amend ObamaCare by executive order after the fact; so, therefore, the Stupak language would remain in tact, even though it was to be stripped out in the Senate. That is essentially what happened, Mr. Speaker, and we ended up with ObamaCare that imposes funding of abortion in all but a very few cases.

To give an example, here in the House of Representatives, we are compelled to sign up for ObamaCare. If there was a way out of it, I would have found it. And there were 112 different programs to look at. And of those, there were only nine that didn't fund abortion; and of those nine, eight of them didn't cover me. So it came down to this Member was compelled to sign up for ObamaCare, pay essentially the doubling of my contribution to the premium, and it was the tripling of my deductibles for the only policy that, at least reportedly, didn't fund abortion.

Now, we had to dig pretty deeply. And I thank the gentleman from New Jersey, CHRIS SMITH, for digging that up and giving us at least that much foundation, or I would have had to buy a pig in a poke, Mr. Speaker. I know that is going on across the country in many, many places.

But my point on this is that the President cannot constitutionally amend legislation by executive order, edict, press conference, or a third-tier Web site announcement from the Department of the United States Treasury. None of those things are consistent with the Constitution. And as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOMMERT) said in his previous discussion, in his 1-minute about a half-hour ago now, he continues to make alterations not to somebody else's legislation—that is bad enough. I mean, it is all the same kind of constitutional violation, in my view.

But when the President decides that he is going to amend ObamaCare that has got his name on it—that is his bill; he signed it—how can he, with a straight face, step up and say, I am going to change it on the fly; I am going to delay the employer mandate; I am going to delay the individual mandate; I am going to waive this; I am going to waive that; I am going to set different provisions for businesses that have 50 employees and those that have 99 employees and those that are large businesses?

And I remember also, when he stepped up in a press conference out at the White House after he had taken a couple weeks of grief for the conscience protection violations that were supposedly in the bill that Kathleen Sebelius' rules eliminated, and that was a requirement that religious organizations, as well, had to provide policies and insurance that covered contraceptives, abortifacients, sterilizations.

Contraceptives, Mr. Speaker, people understand. Abortifacients are abortion-causing drugs. Sterilizations, we know what these are. These were requirements in the rule embodied within the rule that HHS rolled out. And after 2 weeks of the religious organizations making the case against that, the President did his press conference at noon on a Friday, and he stepped up to the podium, and he said, I am going to make an accommodation to the religious organizations, an accommodation. They don't want to provide these things. So now, he said, I am going to require the insurance companies to provide these things for free.

The President of the United States had the audacity to step up to the podium and say, I am going to require the insurance companies now to fund contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations for free.

Now, that is pretty interesting because maybe it just got lost in the language. Maybe the President was really talking about he was going to agree, and he was going to ask Congress if Congress would actually change the law. Maybe he thought that he was going to have Kathleen Sebelius publish a different rule that would go out for comment, and once it followed the administrative procedures, it could

have the force and effect of law if it fit within the language of the ObamaCare legislation. Maybe, maybe, maybe, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we could give the President the benefit of the doubt.

Trust, but verify. So I went back and checked the rules, the rules that had been published, that compelled the religious organizations to follow the path of all of the others to provide for abortifacients and sterilizations and contraceptives, and the President's announcement that he was going to change things now and make an accommodation to the religious organizations and require that these things be provided for free from the insurance companies. And you would think there would have been a proposal for an amendment, a bill to amend ObamaCare in Congress. You would think there would be a change in the rules. But, Mr. Speaker, nothing changed in the rules. There wasn't an "i" dotted differently. There wasn't a "t" crossed differently. But the insurance companies began to line up behind the verbal edict of the President. That is breathtaking in scope when you think of it.

When you read this Constitution where it says, "all legislative powers." It doesn't say all legislative powers, except those assumed by the President under certain circumstances, if he so chooses. It says, "all legislative powers." And yet the President is legislating by announcements on Web sites, by directing his people to change the rules, by verbal press conference that changed nothing, no rules. And he has the temerity to wave his pen at us and say, I have a cell phone, and I have a pen; I don't need the Congress—and to make that same statement from the rostrum back here, Mr. Speaker.

So I am very concerned about our Constitution and the violations of it. But the President has time after time after time made changes to ObamaCare. It is bad law, and I don't accept the constitutional decision that came down from the Supreme Court. It has got a clear and stark contradiction in it that one day I hope goes back to the Court to be reviewed again.

But in any case, we have got to adhere to this Constitution. We give an oath to uphold the Constitution, as does the President. It is our job to preserve, protect, and defend it.

And here we are, faced with a debt ceiling increase. And the reasons that we might be supportive of that increase are, in the short term, it gets people off the hook in the short term. But I want a balanced budget amendment attached to it. If we don't get that, let's audit the Fed. If we don't get that, then I would say, here is something we all ought to get behind: eliminate the bailout of our insurance companies.

Our insurance companies wrote into ObamaCare that they would be protected from a stop-loss, essentially pro-

tected from loss if their actuarial numbers and their premiums don't match up.

Now, it would be impossible for them to figure this out because the President has been changing this law all along. Most all of the changes have been unconstitutional. I would bet the clearest one would be when the President of the United States decided that he was going to extend the employer mandate for a year.

Now, the law that was signed by President Barack Obama says that the employer mandate shall commence in each month after December of 2013. That means it must start January 2014. We should be in the second month of the employer mandate. And I am happy enough for the policy to change. I don't think it ever should be implemented. If they bring that extension to this Congress, I would vote for an extension to delay the employer mandate for a year because that is probably the right kind of policy.

We didn't get that before this Congress. Instead, the President just announced he was going to extend it. And I happen to have been on a bit of a trip when the notice came that he was going to do some delays of the individual mandate, and I remember sending an email off to one of the top insurance companies, Is anybody there talking about the constitutional violations? The answer that came back was, Well, not very much. But, yes, he is sure they are talking about them. My answer was, Merry Christmas.

This is what we get for Christmas, the President rewriting ObamaCare at will. It is ever-changing.

Months ago, a search of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD will show, Mr. Speaker, that I said nobody knows what the law is. Nobody knows what ObamaCare, the law ObamaCare is because it keeps changing. And of the thousands of pages of regulations that are piled on top of it, on the 2,700 pages of legislation altogether, it has been changed over and over again. Insurance companies can't abide by these changes. They can't adjust their premiums. And yet they wrote into the bill the risk corridors. And they say to me, But we have to have this because, after all, if ObamaCare is going to be here, we can't be going broke if the President changes the law on us again. That has kind of compressed the discussion.

And I say to them, Were you for or against ObamaCare when it passed? Their answer is, Well, hmm—they might check their shoe shine when they answer. And they will say, Well, our choice was either to be at the table or on the menu. So I am supposed to infer, and the proper inference is, they were at the table.

The large insurance companies in the country, they weren't just at the table; they were at the White House. They decided they didn't want to be on the

menu, so they got to the table at the White House and they negotiated their risk corridors, their bailout that protects them from losing money under ObamaCare—or at least losing very much money under ObamaCare.

Well, if they weren't on the menu—they were at the table instead—who was on the menu, Mr. Speaker? And I would argue that, instead of the insurance companies being on the menu, it was the taxpayers that got put on the menu. And we ended up with risk corridors, the bailout for the insurance companies, because they wanted to stay in the large insurance business. And they believe that if they can get the taxpayers to fund the premiums, it is a more reliable premium funding stream than if you have to get that from the individual ratepayers; and also, it was designed to put 30 million more people on the insurance roles.

So whoever is in the business of expanding their business and trying to get a margin—and I have not been an anti-insurance person. I have paid a lot of premiums and have stepped up and done so willingly. They are an important component of the stability in a free enterprise economy. All insurance is, as a matter of fact.

But when they drew that protection and wrote that protection in—the stop-loss protection called risk corridors—the bailout for the insurance companies into ObamaCare, somebody was going to pick up the tab. That is the taxpayers. It expanded their potential universe to 30 million more insureds, 30 million more premiums. And, of course, there is a profit margin in that, and that is what they are in the business of doing.

Well, you expand the premiums to that 30 million, and the design that came out of ObamaCare was that we were going to see more insured. And at this point, I would lay the wager down, Mr. Speaker, that there are fewer people insured today in this country than there were the day that ObamaCare was signed into law, and we are losing people continually. And as we see what employers are going to do as they watch this, the employer mandate kick in over time—delayed now—more employers are going to be dropping people from insurance. More employers are cutting hours. More employers are reducing the number of employees.

I happen to know of an employer that had 58 employees, and he lined them up and said, If ObamaCare is passed into law and implemented, there will be 49 of you, not 58.

That had to have happened all across the country, businesses that shrunk down to under the 50 mandate, businesses that decided not to grow into that 50 employees where they are mandated to cover their insurance.

□ 2015

That is the fact of this life if you have more than those in employees,

and then the formerly 40-hour workweek, which has been used to measure a full-time worker, was reduced under ObamaCare to 30 hours—30 hours, not 40. So we ended up with people that are getting 28 hours, that are working 28 hours a week so they are underneath the mandate, and the employer then who can't afford the premiums often for the higher cost health insurance can keep his employees on.

So here are the circumstances. There might be somebody that has got a job, and they could be working let's just say about 48 or 50 hours a week, a little overtime, time and a half overtime on that—I have done the math on this, Mr. Speaker—but running in at about 50 hours a week. The employer looks at that and says, I can't afford the health insurance. This Federal mandate is either going to take me out of business or I am going to have to lower your hours.

So he looks at his full-time employees and says, sorry, you are part time. You are 28 hours, you are 28 hours, you are 28 hours. Well, he needs more employees to fill up the production. So he goes and hires more part-time workers. Well, that is a good thing for some people, but those who had a full-time job and were getting time and a half overtime and they get their hours cut, the person who was working 50 hours now is down to 28, they have to go get another part-time job that maybe is another 28 hours. Now they are up to 56 or 60 hours, but they don't have health insurance with two jobs. Maybe that is dad, and mom is the same circumstance. She has been cut. She has got to have another job.

So now we have mom and dad trying to raise a family when each were working 50 hours a week with some overtime, now they are working 56 hours a week in two jobs with transportation and the shuttle of schedules, four jobs for two people to raise a family.

Those circumstances are emerging today under ObamaCare, Mr. Speaker, and it is wrong. We need to raise that minimum, that 30-hour standard for full time, that mandate up to 40. That is an essential component of ObamaCare. I would attach that to the debt ceiling. Any one of these, one at a time, all together, I'm fine with, a 40-hour workweek.

Another one, Mr. Speaker, is this, full deductibility for everyone's health insurance premium. It has always been wrong that a certain percentage of the American populace has had to buy their health insurance with aftertax dollars. I have done this for years. As an employer, I started a construction company in 1975. I provided health insurance for our employees, but I couldn't deduct the premium for me unless I incorporated, put myself on a salary and wrote off those wages. I wanted to stay a sole proprietor for a number of reasons, but I couldn't deduct my health insurance premiums.

I would write off the business expense of premiums for my employees, a legitimate expense just like wages, salary, and benefits, write those off. But I couldn't write off my own. So Marilyn and I had to pay for health insurance with aftertax dollars, that piece that is left after you pay Uncle Sam, after you pay the Governor, the take-home pay so to speak. After you pay the payroll tax, the take-home pay is what I had to pay my health insurance with—not a deductible.

Now, here we are in the circumstance where that is bad, and it should have been changed a long time ago because it is an injustice and an inequity, but now we have ObamaCare that mandates that individuals buy that health insurance. It is a Federal mandate: you shall buy this health insurance. Now, in my case, it isn't that I go out on the marketplace and shop for a health insurance policy. It is that if I am going to comply with the law, I have got one choice and one choice only, and that is not competition. By the way, one of the reasons that the President wanted to pass ObamaCare is so that there would be more competition. He wanted to have a Federal health insurance company to compete with the private sector companies so that there would be more competition. I don't know if anybody has talked about this in quite some time here on the floor. It is the President's plan.

Well, I had one choice, but to have the Federal Government impose that you buy a product that is either produced or approved by the Federal Government, and they take it out of your check. They commandeer your take-home pay to pay that premium. While that is going on, an employer somewhere off in a large corporation can deduct that same premium for all their people as a business expense. But ma and pa operations, the family farm, whoever it might be, they can't. It puts them at a significant disadvantage.

This country needs to provide for full deductibility of everybody's health insurance premiums. It is immoral to compel someone to buy a product that is produced or approved by the Federal Government, and it is even more immoral, Mr. Speaker, to say to them, and the money that you shall pay shall be aftertax dollars, and I am going to send the IRS in to audit you and make sure that you are paying that premium with aftertax dollars, and if not, we are going to levy a tax against you. It was just going to be a penalty, but now it is convenient to make the argument before the Supreme Court that it is a tax.

I have a whole series of things that we could do. The debt ceiling is in front of us. There is an increase that is being pushed at us. If the President's people in this Congress think a clean debt ceiling is a good idea, they should step up and all of them pledge to vote for it. I think we might find enough Repub-

licans that would vote for a clean debt ceiling increase. If not, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest we put a balanced budget amendment on that and send it over to HARRY REID. If that doesn't work, then I would suggest that we resurrect Ron Paul's legislation to audit the Fed, attach that to the debt ceiling, and send it over there. If that doesn't work, then I would put the elimination of the bailouts for health insurance companies on there and send it over to the Senate. If that doesn't work, then I would take the 30-hour workweek, which is supposedly the standard for full time, I would change that to 40 so that mom and dad who were working 50 hours, and now they are working 56 hours or 60 hours each, can hang on to just one job, not two each, and they would get, instead of having their hours cut from 50 to 28, or maybe even 40 to 28, they can keep their full-time job and go to work and manage their lives and their schedules.

By the way, this argument that, according to the CBO, ObamaCare cuts the job equivalent of 2½ million jobs over the course of a decade, that is also appalling and breathtaking, Mr. Speaker. To think that this ObamaCare that was going to create 4 million jobs according to then-Speaker PELOSI now is going to reduce by 2½ million jobs, that is 6½ million jobs off from what was predicted compared to what we now have a better look at what we are likely to end up with, and I won't say that number is certain, it might be substantially greater than that—2½ million jobs.

So how does the administration spin this? You would think that they would find an alternative number and argue the CBO score. Or you would think that they would find a way to point out that somehow these definitions don't quite match up just right. Oh, they looked around pretty hard to find a way to rebut the CBO's numbers and they came up empty. So they settled on the spin, the spin, Mr. Speaker, which is this: oh, 2½ million jobs, think of this: all of those people that don't have to work much because we are borrowing money from the Chinese to subsidize the health insurance premium that we require that they pay to buy the insurance under ObamaCare, and so they will understand that if they stay under a certain threshold, they will get a Federal premium subsidy to buy their ObamaCare. It won't pay for them to work as many hours as they did before, and when you reduce this all down and get people under the 30-hour workweek, which I just finished discussing, then they will have more time to spend with their families, more time to play with their children, more time to paint and more time to muse about the esoteric things in life. Maybe we will have more people that are pontificating about metaphysics for this price of losing 2½ million jobs. Oh, it is a good thing we have people working less in America.

That is the core argument for this administration: it is a good thing that we have people working less in America because of ObamaCare. It gives them more free time. Well, if working less is a good idea, I guess that fits with their philosophy, because we have heard, we have heard from the minority whip as well as a number of other people, in fact, I believe it would also be the former Speaker, who say this: Food stamps and unemployment are the two quickest ways you get economic stimulus, the quickest way to grow the economy.

Now, when I first heard that, it was shocking to me that anybody could say that out loud and perhaps believe it. How do food stamps stimulate the economy? How do unemployment checks stimulate the economy? An economy has to produce goods and services that have a marketable value here and abroad, and if you borrow money abroad to pay people not to produce goods and services, let alone those with a marketable value, you are building a nation of debt and a nation of people who, if they have job skills, are atrophying because they are not using them, and as technology increases, they get further and further behind by not maintaining the skills they have and not keeping their skills up to date with technology as it moves.

This idea that this is only a consumer-driven economy, this Keynesian concept of let's just say we can't audit the Fed, but they can inject in QE 1, 2, and 3 trillions of dollars into this economy, and because a lot of the world is afraid to invest, therefore, we haven't seen inflation take hold in this way yet. But the Fed can inject the money into QE 3, and then the Federal Government can do an economic stimulus plan like the President's \$825 billion that went north of that, I guess it was \$787 billion that got to 825 billion, inject this money into the economy, spend this money, and it is going to stimulate the economy, and this growth will eventually create enough tax money that you work your way out of debt.

The problem with that is, Mr. Speaker, it has never succeeded. There is no existing model of a Keynesian experiment that has ever brought a country and economy out of an economic recession. We are in the fifth year of this recovery. I guess you can say that we are coming out of the economic recession of 2008. We have had this slow improvement in unemployment numbers that has taken place. We are down there in the sixes somewhere. We have watched as the number of 15 million unemployed has worked its way down by 1 million here, 1 million there. One year ago, there were 12 million unemployed. Today, according to the most recent report, there are 10.2 million unemployed. Actually, it has been a full 2 million people less on the unemploy-

ment roles. But the monthly job increases that we have seen, 74,000 last month, a little over 100,000 this month, are not nearly enough to keep pace, Mr. Speaker.

This growth has been down there to where if you look at the last 4 to 5 years, the GDP increase in the economy has been greater in Mexico than it has in the United States. As I listened to some of the, let me say some of the self-appointed economic experts, they will explain to us that we need to import more people into the United States that have low or no skill and likely are illiterate in their own language to do the work that Americans don't want to do in this country, and in doing so will stimulate our economy and increase our fertility rate. We know who those people are, Mr. Speaker, that seem to think that. Much of this concept is just simply wrong. Keynesian economics is wrong. The idea of an open borders economic stimulator is wrong.

What is right is the understanding of first principles, the understanding of the pillars of American exceptionalism, the understanding that put those parameters in place by our Founding Fathers well more than 200 years ago, when they saw that we had to have the rule of law in America. Without the rule of law, we are not a lot different from Third World countries.

We are a nation of laws and not of men, and our laws need to be applied equally to all of us. The problem we have today is it looks like those who are let's say not favored by the current administration have to fear the law more than those who are favored. One of those examples would be the IRS, Mr. Speaker. Our Founding Fathers would have never envisioned an IRS in the first place. It took a constitutional amendment to even provide for it, the 16th Amendment. I introduce a resolution each year to repeal the 16th Amendment, and one day I hope to see that done.

In the meantime, our Founding Fathers imagined that there would be taxes gathered through other means and that the government would be limited. Our Constitution is the very description of limited government. The concept of Federalism, Mr. Speaker, sometimes needs to be defined and described, especially so young people understand. Federalism is the devolution of power out to the political subdivisions, to the States or respectively to the people, a limited Federal Government with enough power to protect our borders and our shores, to leave us as much as possible otherwise alone, and let the States and their political subdivisions and the people solve those problems so that the laboratories of the States can be where the experiments are taking place.

They are to some degree. I see some of these experiments. There are some

States that have some healthy experiments. One of them is Texas: no income tax, a dynamic economy, one that has shown, that has demonstrated to be a big chunk of the growth in our GDP and the growth of employment in the country because they run a free and fair government in Texas and no income tax. Florida is a State with no income tax. South Dakota is a State with no income tax. They seem to be destination States for people that are seeking to get out of the high-tax States like Illinois and California, the model of the States that are in economic difficulty.

□ 2030

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, we have seen some cities that have been run by that Keynesian philosophy of borrow, tax, and spend get to the point of collapse and ruin, Detroit among them. Detroit, a great, great, American city with a tremendous legacy, a vibrant tone within the history of America, shuffled down into bankruptcy, and with grass growing in the streets of the city because they didn't take care of their finances. That is what is in store for entire States if they don't turn the corner, and that is what is in store for this entire country if we don't turn the corner.

I am concerned that politics here in the House of Representatives is downstream from the culture. Politics in any legislative body is generally downstream from the culture. Yes, we have leaders here. We have leaders that step up and strike the right tone and chart the right course, but they would not be followed unless the culture provided the directive.

This American experiment, this grand country that we are, is dependent upon the people in this country understanding what made us great, preserving and protecting and refurbishing those pillars of American exceptionalism that can sustain a greatness into the future, above and beyond any that we have achieved today.

That is what is in store for us if we teach our children well, if we teach them the responsibility of work, if we teach them the core of our faith, the faith that laid the foundation for America, the faith that will see us through any trials, the foundation for the family, the ideal way to raise children, a mom and dad and a family, raising their children with love and setting the standard for them, and setting the standard of work as well as morality.

This country can come back again. We need to teach American history, the pillars of American exceptionalism. We need to do it from inside out, from the family on out, and those young people need to emerge as the leaders in all walks of life from the educational to the journalism to the production,

and we need to revere and respect all work. All work has honor. All work has dignity. We need to put a lot more Americans back to work. There are over 101 million Americans of working age who are simply not in the workforce. We don't need to import more people to do the work that Americans won't do. We need to provide the incentive for Americans to step up and shoulder the burden with the rest of us. That is more important.

So, Mr. Speaker, we will see how the debt ceiling unfolds. I have offered a number of options, and I appreciate your attention.

I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3193, CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION SAFETY AND SOUNDNESS IMPROVEMENT ACT; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 13, 2014, THROUGH FEBRUARY 24, 2014; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. SESSIONS (during the Special Order of Mr. KING of Iowa), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-350) on the resolution (H. Res. 475) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; providing for proceedings during the period from February 13, 2014, through February 24, 2014; and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS ADDRESSES RAISING DEBT CEILING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Missouri). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, once again it is an honor and a privilege to come to the floor of the House of Representatives and to anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order in partnership with my coanchor, the

distinguished gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD), where for the next 60 minutes members of the Congressional Black Caucus will have the opportunity to speak directly to the American people about an issue of great consequence and great significance for our country, for our economy, for our future, and for our well-being, and that is the debt ceiling.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a Yogi Berra moment. It is *deja vu* all over again.

Time and time and time again we have been forced to come to the floor of the House of Representatives and urge our colleagues on the other side of the aisle not to plunge this country into a painful default and risk the full faith and credit of the United States of America for the first time in the history of the Republic.

Whenever we have been forced to have this conversation, we are always put into a position where we need to clarify what the debt ceiling is really all about because it has been subject to a lot of misrepresentation. The debt ceiling is not a forward-looking vehicle that is designed to give the President the opportunity to spend more; it is a backward-looking vehicle designed to give the President the opportunity to pay bills that the Congress has already incurred: bills that were incurred during the previous decade, bills that were incurred during the 8 years of the Bush administration during which time our good friends on the other side of the aisle were in control of both the House and the Senate, and we will go into that in greater detail as we move forward.

Let's have an honest conversation about the realities that we face concerning the debt in this country, in excess of \$17 trillion. There is reason for us to be concerned about it, but let's not manipulate the facts as to how we got ourselves into this situation.

I am pleased that we have been joined by a very distinguished Member of the Congress and of the freshman class. In fact, we affectionately refer to him as the ranking member of the freshman class of the Congressional Black Caucus in the 113th Congress, and I am very pleased to yield to my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. PAYNE. I thank my colleagues, the gentleman from New York and the gentleman from Nevada for their continued leadership on these CBC Special Orders. I am honored to join them once again on a topic that is paramount right now in our Nation's history, and also a situation that we must deal with in a manner to keep this Nation moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my friends on the other side of the aisle to do one simple thing. It is something that we expect from every American, and every person in this country ex-

pects it from us. That simple thing I am asking for, Mr. Speaker, is for Congress to pay our Nation's bills on time. There should be no resistance, no strings attached, no threats of default. Americans deserve better than to have the full faith and credit of the United States of America held hostage so that some of my Republican colleagues can demand ransom for their radical agenda.

Mr. Speaker, the full faith and credit of the United States is nonnegotiable, period. So I am urging this Congress to raise the debt ceiling swiftly and to do it with no strings attached.

Only recently in our Nation's history has the debt ceiling been used as a reckless bargaining chip. In fact, since the great hero of the other side, Ronald Reagan, took office, the debt ceiling has been raised 45 times. It is nothing new, and it is nothing radical.

Now the allegations put out there about what raising the debt ceiling will do to our deficit are misleading at best. The debt ceiling does not grow our deficit by one single dime. Rather, what it does is permit the government to pay what this Congress has already decided to spend. We had the credit card. We used the credit card. Now it is time to pay our Nation's bills and pay them on time.

So, Mr. Speaker, raising the debt ceiling is in fact the fiscally responsible thing to do here. If we default, the cost to American families will be significant: 26 million Americans won't get their Social Security checks on March 3. I will repeat that: 26 million Americans will not get their Social Security checks on March 3.

There are 1.5 million seniors, children, and disabled New Jerseyans who receive Social Security to help make ends meet, and many of them will not see their checks if this is not followed through.

Nearly 4 million Americans may not receive their disability benefits, including 50,000 veterans in New Jersey. Now the other side of the aisle needs to take these things seriously. They talk about supporting veterans. They talk about supporting working families. They talk about all of these values, but if the debt ceiling is not raised, these families will not get the support and the benefits that they need to make ends meet. So, Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent upon the Members on the other side of the aisle instead of just talking the talk, walk the walk.

New Jersey families will have to pay higher interest rates for mortgages, auto loans, student loans, and credit cards. Many families in my district already can't afford to send their children to college. A default would put a college education even further out of reach.

I am hopeful that my Republican colleagues have learned their lesson from the last default threat in 2011 and from

shutting down the government last year. The last time we threatened to default in 2011, the economy flew into a tailspin. Consumer confidence took a nosedive, and our credit rating was downgraded. Our economic recovery came to a screeching halt because of it. In an already fragile recovery, we cannot afford another possible meltdown of our economy.

So I am urging my Republican colleagues to help try and set an example, hoping that they have learned their lesson from last year, when they shut down the Federal Government. Let's pay our Nation's bills on time, Mr. Speaker. If we demand this kind of responsibility from the American people, then we should demand it from ourselves.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey for walking us through some of the episodes that the American people have been subjected to as a result of the extreme behavior that has been articulated and enacted, in fact, as part of the agenda put forth by the majority over the last two terms.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, to end the irresponsibility, end the recklessness, end the extremism, and end the brinksmanship so we can get back to doing the business of the American people with a fiscally responsible, sustainable course; but one that recognizes that here in this Congress, time and time again we have inflicted wounds on the economy and on the American people. We did it last spring in advance of sequestration taking effect. We were warned by independent economists that if you allow sequestration to take effect, \$85 billion in random cuts spread out without reason across the economy, it would cost us approximately 750,000 jobs, but yet it happened.

Then we were warned that it would be problematic if you allowed the government to shut down. Nonetheless, some people couldn't help the recklessness, the irresponsibility, the extremism, and so the government was shut down for 16 days. Standard & Poor's estimated that it cost us \$24 billion in lost economic productivity.

Yet here we are again, a Yogi Berra moment, déjà vu all over again, confronting an unnecessary, manufactured crisis. Just lift the debt ceiling, consistent with what has happened time and time again across Democratic and Republican administrations.

Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the co-anchor of the CBC Special Order, the distinguished gentleman from the Silver State, my good friend, Representative HORSFORD.

Mr. HORSFORD. I thank my good friend and colleague from the great State of New York, Mr. JEFFRIES, and for your leadership in anchoring this hour on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, and to bring the Amer-

ican people into a very important conversation about what the House of Representatives should be doing as you talked about tonight, and that is, Mr. Speaker, raising the debt ceiling and averting another crisis.

□ 2045

We are here tonight to urge our colleagues on the other side to work with Democrats and the administration to pass a clean and swift debt ceiling expansion without delay.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Lew, emphasized in a letter to Congressional leadership last Friday that "no Congress in our history has failed to meet that responsibility," and "it would be a mistake to wait until the last possible minute to act."

Why should we act, Mr. Speaker? Why should we delay in acting? This Congress, unfortunately, being known as the "do-nothing" Congress, has failed to pass more bills than other previous sessions of Congress at a time when the American public expect their elected officials to work together to get things done. Under the leadership of the majority, fewer than 60 bills that have been passed by Congress have ultimately become law in the last year.

Now we are here facing yet another self-imposed, self-inflicted crisis. As my colleagues, Mr. JEFFRIES and Mr. PAYNE, have said, this is nonsense. The American public is looking at Congress and saying, Do your job.

The Treasury Department has made clear that it will exhaust all extraordinary measures in meeting our country's final financial obligations by February 27. The House—this House—is only in session for 5 more days between now and then, Mr. Speaker. That is why we are here to urge our Republican colleagues to act to raise the debt ceiling now, to do it swiftly, to do it without putting our country's full faith and credit of the United States at risk.

As my colleagues have said, we have to raise the debt, and it is not for negotiation. Let us remember that the debt ceiling has been raised 45 times since President Ronald Reagan took office. It doesn't grow our deficit by a single dime. All it does is allow the Treasury to pay for what this Congress has already spent and the obligations previous Congresses have already made on behalf of the United States.

There has already been much talk about Speaker BOEHNER turning something that could be very simple into a hostage situation with sweeping concessions. I would hope that my Republican colleagues remember the damage that was caused the last time we debated increasing the debt ceiling. The fact that House Republicans are debating among themselves another demand to hold our full faith and credit of the United States hostage is outrageous.

As we stated before, Mr. Speaker, House Democrats agree with President

Obama that the full faith and credit of the United States is nonnegotiable. I stand with House Democrats in support of a clean debt ceiling increase that ensures the full faith and credit of the United States of America and avoids having this Congress play political games and brinksmanship. We have said it before and we will say it again: we should be representing the people's best interest, not punishing them.

There are drastic implications to not passing this debt ceiling increase by February 27. I want to yield to my colleague, Mr. JEFFRIES, for us to be able to highlight some of these damaging consequences.

I know in my home State of Nevada, it would mean an average increase in mortgage rates, leaving the average home buyer to pay an additional \$100 a month, costing families \$36,000 over the lifetime of a typical 30-year mortgage. 85,267 Nevada residents took out a home mortgage or refinanced their existing mortgage in the past year. All of them would be subject to these increases in mortgage interest rates.

So this is just one example of one State and the families that would be impacted. This is the type of impact that would happen across our Nation. The consequences are real. It is time for our colleagues on the other side to stop playing games, increase the debt ceiling, and meet our obligations.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for pointing out some of the catastrophic consequences that the American people will be forced to endure if we fail to raise the debt ceiling and force a default and threaten the full faith and credit of the United States of America for the first time in the history of the Republic.

I just want to go over some of the things that would be at stake as a few of my colleagues have already laid out, but it bears reemphasis:

Social Security payments owed to the American people will be jeopardized by a failure to raise the debt ceiling;

Veterans benefits will be jeopardized by a failure to raise the debt ceiling;

Mortgage interest rates could increase as a result of a failure to raise the debt ceiling;

Automobile loan interest rates could increase as a result of a failure to raise the debt ceiling;

Credit card payments as a result of an increase in interest connected to debt that is held on American Express or MasterCard or Visa, or any of the other credit cards that the American people have, could increase as a result of a failure to raise the debt ceiling.

This is not an esoteric concept. This is something that will have a real impact on the American people. That is why we need a debt ceiling increase consistent with what every Congress and every American President has done since the founding of this country.

I want to read into the RECORD, and then perhaps have my good friend react to it, a Presidential letter that relates to this debt ceiling issue, and it reads in part:

This country now possesses the strongest credit in the world. The full consequences of a default—or even the serious prospect of default—by the United States are impossible to predict and awesome to contemplate. Denigration of the full faith and credit of the United States would have substantial effects on the domestic financial markets and the value of the dollar in exchange markets. The Nation can ill-afford to allow such a result.

This is a letter that was written on November 16, 1983, by President Ronald Reagan, addressed to then-Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker. President Reagan, I believe, my good friends on the other side of the aisle, have deified him as a “fiscal warrior,” a “true conservative.” Yet we know that Ronald Reagan raised the debt ceiling 18 times during his Presidency, and in this letter to Senator Baker lays out in bold, uncompromising terms the consequences of a failure to raise the debt ceiling.

This is not a partisan issue. We as Democrats are not standing here on the floor of the House of Representatives because we want to beat up the other side. We are here to defend the best interest of the American people—east, west, north, south, rural America, urban America, and suburban America—because the consequences of a failure to raise the debt ceiling will hurt everybody.

If the distinguished gentleman from Nevada could just react to the notion that this is somehow a partisan issue that needs to be discussed so that President Obama is being fiscally irresponsible by requesting that Congress do its constitutional duty.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you. I appreciate my good friend for yielding.

The remarks by the former President, President Reagan, speak to the reality of the consequence of Congress failing to act and what that will mean to our economy, to average Americans, to businesses, to the global economy because of the role that the United States plays, and to the value of the dollar, and to somehow hold this process hostage because Members on the other side have still not come to terms that the election is over, the President won, and it is time for this Congress to work with him to move our country forward, not to use this as another means to extract more concessions or demands in order for you to do your job. You don't have to agree with President Obama on everything, but what you do have to do is your job on behalf of the American people that elected you.

While no one knows with certainty the full extent of the damage to the economy should the U.S. default on its debts—and we don't know because it has never happened because every

other Congress, regardless of party, regardless of which party controls the White House or the administration on a given time, did its job to extend and raise the debt—what we do know is that the average American family will feel a significant negative impact.

We are not here to scare our constituents. Our constituents are going through enough every day trying to survive to make ends meet, to put food on the table, working hard for themselves and their families. But what we are here to do is to talk about what some of the potential impacts might be, so let me highlight that.

If you look for a moment at this chart, this graphic provides some explanation. What are the debt ceiling deniers missing?

Household wealth would increase by \$1 trillion if we fail to raise the debt ceiling.

Retirement assets would drop by \$800 billion at a time when people are trying to provide security for themselves and their future. A decision by this Congress to fail to raise the debt ceiling could result in \$800 billion of retirement assets declining.

We have talked about an increase in interest rates for borrowers at a time when our housing market is beginning to recover from the prolonged recession. Why would this Congress fail to act and the consequence of that result in increased mortgage rates for homeowners and borrowers?

And a huge hit, a huge hit, for financial markets around the globe causing the Dow Jones and the S&P to plummet. Families' retirement savings and 401Ks would drop as the stock market plummets.

3.4 million veterans who could not receive disability payments; 10 million Americans not receiving Social Security checks on time in just the first week alone; delayed tax refunds for up to 110 million Americans; and drug reimbursements under Medicare stopping and doctors and hospitals not getting paid, all for what? So that our colleagues on the other side who don't like the results of an election can use the debt ceiling as another attempt to get more concessions and more demands for things and ideas that have already been rejected by the American public.

□ 2100

So, Mr. Speaker, we are here to say enough is enough already. Let's get to work. Let's make 2014 a year of action, not obstruction. It starts by increasing the debt ceiling, by meeting our obligations and not doing harm to an already fragile economy and to an American public that expects its Representatives to act in its best interest, not in more political grandstanding or gamesmanship.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman for a very thorough

explanation and for the illustration as it relates to the state of denial that, I think, some individuals within this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, or throughout the Capitol are in as it relates to the real consequences of a default and what it really means to threaten the full faith and credit of the United States of America.

Now, this denial syndrome is not really a strange concept. It is something that, unfortunately, I have had to familiarize myself with since being sworn in as a Member of Congress on January 3 of 2013.

Weather patterns are shifting. Global warming appears to me, based on the scientific evidence, to be a reality, yet there are people in this Congress who persist in denying that climate change is a reality. In advance of sequestration, notwithstanding the fact that independent economists warned that randomly spreading out cuts across the American economy, given the fragile nature of the economic recovery, would be a harmful thing and would threaten hundreds of thousands of jobs moving forward, there were people who denied that sequestration would be a tough thing for the American people to have to absorb. Yet, at the end of the year, wisdom prevailed because people saw that it actually was something that was problematic for the American people and our economy.

I guess, a long, long time ago, there were people who denied that the Earth was round, who believed that it was flat. So the denial syndrome is something that throughout time has been commonplace as it relates to individuals who want to articulate a particular agenda. I understand that, Mr. Speaker, but it is a dangerous game to play—to deny the reality of the catastrophic impact that would occur as a result of a default on our debt for the first time in our history. It would be another self-inflicted wound, as my distinguished friend from Nevada has indicated.

I was interested in a study that I came across a few days ago that I wanted to highlight and bring to the attention of the American people, and perhaps my colleague can react to it.

There is a new study, the Times reported, from the Peterson Institute for International Economics, a Washington, DC-based research group, that indicated that all of the theatrics—all of the drama, all of the brinkmanship—that occurred in this Congress last year around the government shutdown and the potential debt ceiling default and whether we would be able to come together and reach an agreement—have cost us about \$150 billion in lost economic productivity. It shaved off about a percentage point in economic growth, and it may have cost us approximately 750,000 jobs. That is not our saying it; that is an independent research group, the Peterson

Institute for International Economics. So there is a price to pay for the theatrics, and that is why we have come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to say we need a clean debt ceiling increase and that we need to do it now.

Secretary Lew has indicated that his ability to use extraordinary measures will run out by the end of the month. Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there are some on the other side of the aisle who are in disbelief as it relates to that statement. We have heard individuals make the representation that that can't be accurate. There is a logical reason why in this particular instance the capacity for the administration to use extraordinary measures to get us beyond the debt ceiling cap is only weeks in this particular instance and not months as it has been in the past. It is because the Treasury of the United States in February and in March and in April and, perhaps, even into May, returns a lot of money—billions of dollars—to the American people who have filed taxes and are owed money in connection with a tax return.

I believe that we would all conclude it is a good thing for the American people who are owed money by the Federal Government to be able to get that money back in return. That is why, in February, the capacity at this moment for extraordinary measures to be used is extremely limited. It is because we don't want to short-circuit the American taxpayer. It is bad enough that we are threatening to short-circuit Social Security beneficiaries or veterans and others, but now we are potentially risking withholding money from the American people that belongs to them. We hear that refrain all of the time, but that is what we are faced with right now.

Let me yield to my good friend, Representative HORSFORD.

Mr. HORSFORD. I thank my friend for yielding.

You bring up a very valid point.

Over the weekend, I was at the William Pearson Community Center in my district, which is a tax preparation site for the Las Vegas Urban League. It was packed. There was not a seat available because so many people were there, seeking assistance in order to file their annual tax returns, particularly this year. They were trying to get them done early so they could get the refunds that were coming to them so that they could then help meet an obligation that they have in their households. It has been tough for a lot of families.

So you make a very valid point as to the fact of the timing of this particular debt ceiling increase and the February 27 date and the obligations that the country has and this time period in particular. There are 110 million Americans who will be filing their tax returns, many of whom will be getting a

refund, and I don't think they will take kindly to a delay in that refund if our colleagues on the other side use this debt ceiling legislation as an opportunity to load it up with conditions and requests that have nothing to do with the debt ceiling issue.

I would ask my colleagues on the other side to listen to their constituents, to be aware of their needs and to know your decision to fail to pass a clean debt ceiling could have very negative consequences on our economy.

We don't have to look very far. We can look back to 2011. The GOP brinksmanship during that time cost the economy the following:

It was the first time the U.S. credit was downgraded in U.S. history by failing to increase the debt ceiling on a timely basis. We ultimately got it done, but it was delayed. There was some concern in the markets of what would happen, and it resulted in the first U.S. credit downgrade in our history.

Are we going to allow that to happen again?

The stock market plummeted 17 percent. Consumer confidence dropped to its lowest point since the financial crisis of 2008. We saw businesses stop hiring in 2011 with one of the lowest months of job growth over the last 2 years during that period.

We have seen what the consequences of failing to pass a clean, swift debt ceiling would mean. Why would we even toy with the idea of failing to do it now, or to do it by adding conditions to it that basically hold the bill up as a hostage?

Finally, there was \$1.3 billion added to our national debt for fiscal year 2011 and \$19 billion over 10 years in higher government borrowing costs. If you are a fiscal hawk—if you are someone who is concerned like I am about our Federal deficit, if you want to have good fiscal discipline—then you might want to pass a clean, swift debt ceiling bill so that we don't have added costs to our national debt and so that we don't have additional borrowing expenses added to a debt and a deficit that under this administration in the last few years has been on the decline.

Let's do our job. Let's help the process. Let's move our country forward. Let's work together. Let's be a Congress that acts, not a Congress that continues to obstruct.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my good friend and colleague for that thorough explanation again as to why there is such urgency in terms of our acting now.

Throughout my time here in the Congress, we consistently hear about strict constructionism and adherence to the Constitution. The 14th Amendment of the Constitution reads in part: The validity of the public debt authorized by law shall not be questioned. That is a constitutional principle, and it is the

reason the brinksmanship that we have seen time and time again is so reckless and threatens the well-being of the American people.

Earlier in my remarks, I referenced this being a "Yogi Berra moment," that great Yankee catcher having once made the observation that he feels like it is déjà vu all over again. There is another contemporary, urban philosopher I want to quote. Her name is Mary J. Blige. She said: No more drama.

I think that the American people are tired of drama and theatrics. If they want theatrics, they can go to Broadway in New York City. If they want drama, you have got Hollywood, but Congress is here to do the business of the American people, not to entertain, but to do the business of the American people. The matter before us that, hopefully, we will deal with this week—not with unnecessary ideological demands that we attempt to inflict on the American people—in order to do what our constitutional responsibility says Congress should do is, again, a clean debt ceiling.

I want to explain as best I can to those who are interested in understanding how we arrived at this moment. When you hear characterizations about what is at stake, why we can't just simply raise the debt ceiling without going through the drama and the theatrics, the representation that is made, which seems reasonable to many, is that we have a \$17 trillion-plus debt. That is a very significant number, and we can't just simply give the President the unfettered ability to continue to drag this country further down a debt hole. That is the argument that is advanced by many, Mr. Speaker.

It is just fundamentally inaccurate. The debt ceiling is not a forward-looking vehicle designed to give the President the ability to spend more money.

□ 2115

It is a backward-looking vehicle simply designed to give the President the capacity to pay bills that the Congress has already incurred. And if you actually were to inspect what those bills actually were, many Americans would be surprised to know that it was incurred often by those same individuals who now claim the mantle of fiscal responsibility.

And so let's go through this chart. What it does is illustrates both the projected debt under current policies, largely enacted during the administration of George W. Bush, and what the debt would have been without these factors.

So the top line is an illustration of what the current debt is and what it is projected to be over time in advance of 2019 as a result of things that this Congress has already done that were not paid for, and the lowest line on the chart is an illustration of what the

debt would be had these things not been done, Mr. Speaker.

What is interesting is that a significant part of the debt, as this chart illustrates, resulted from the war in Iraq, a completely unnecessary war, chasing down weapons of mass destruction that did not exist. Lies were told to the American people and hundreds of billions of dollars unnecessarily spent and debt incurred under the previous administration.

The war in Afghanistan was inappropriately prosecuted. Even if it was, in the beginning, a necessary one in response to the tragedy on 9/11, it was inappropriately prosecuted because we were distracted in Iraq. We didn't pay for that war either. It is responsible for the debt burden that we now have.

The Bush-era tax cuts. A tax cut in 2001 largely and disproportionately benefited the wealthy and well-off, not paid for. It is responsible, in part, for the debt burden that we now confront.

Another tax cut enacted by this Congress in 2003 largely benefiting the wealthy and the well-off was not paid for and responsible, in part, for the debt that we have incurred.

Of course, there was the economic downturn. That occurred in 2008. It resulted, in part, from the failed policies of the previous administration.

And we allowed some on Wall Street to run wild and to plunge us into the worst economic collapse since the Great Depression. That, in part, is responsible for the debt that we have incurred. We had to bail out Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. There was the TARP bailout.

Then, of course, there were the recovery measures enacted in response to this horrible collapse of the economy inflicted upon the American people.

These are the policies that are largely responsible for the debt that we find ourselves in, and that is why we find it a bit curious that President Obama is often blamed and we have got to have this drama connected to the debt ceiling, when, in fact, much of the debt, the bills that he is trying to pay now, he wasn't even responsible for. In fact, when a lot of these policies were enacted, the current President of the United States was in the Illinois State Legislature, yet you want to blame him for the out-of-control spending. It is not just factually accurate.

Mr. HORSFORD. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JEFFRIES. I will yield to the gentleman from Nevada.

Mr. HORSFORD. I appreciate you providing this historical context because, as you indicate, a lot of times on this floor we tend to focus on the rhetoric of the day and not the facts of the matter.

As you have well illustrated here, if it were not for the Bush-era tax cuts, which are the biggest contributing factor to the debt and the deficit—and the

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—we probably would be in a much better position to address the domestic needs in this country and to have the type of economic investments to help grow our economy, put people to work, grow and build up our infrastructure, help our roads, our highways, our schools, the things that matter here in the United States.

But yet money has been obligated by previous administrations, enacted by Members of Congress before you and I got here, and now this Congress and some on the other side want to hold the process hostage and add a new set of demands and conditions to that process for items that this administration or current Members of Congress and our constituents, who are expecting us to do our job, did not have the decision to begin with.

So I appreciate you giving that historical perspective, and I hope that my colleagues on the other side will listen to the facts of the matter and move away from this drama of the brinksmanship and the political games that, unfortunately, are done too often to distract from the realities of the issues that you brought forward.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman.

As you have pointed out—I think this was very important—in terms of the explosion of the public debt that has taken place over the last decade or so, the most significant factor, as this chart illustrates, is the Bush-era tax cuts.

And so the question, then, that many people back home in my district are asking is, What was it all for? Because now we know that income inequality has exploded out of control. The middle class is being left behind.

What was it all for?

Well, we were told, based on a very stale, old philosophy, that these type of tax cuts help to generate economic activity. They create jobs. Okay.

In the previous 8 years prior to the Bush administration, during the 8 years of the Presidency of Bill Clinton, the tax rate for the highest income bracket was 39.6 percent, and 20.3 million jobs were created during those 8 years. And then we have a new President who comes in and, by the way, he inherits a surplus. And then immediately, as a result of these reckless policies, foreign and domestic, creates deficit after deficit after deficit. That didn't happen under this President. It happened under the previous President.

But the American people, the people whom I represent back at home, say, What was it all for? A tax rate of 39.6 percent under the administration of President Clinton and 20.3 million jobs created. We get tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 as a precursor to the recession, and during the 8 years of the previous administration we lost 650,000 jobs here in America.

What was it all for? We lost jobs. Income inequality has grown. You add it to the debt. And yet folks on this side of the aisle are supposed to be fiscally irresponsible.

Let's just have a reasonable, evidence-based conversation. That is all we want. That is what the American people are asking for.

And so as we prepare to close, let me just yield to my good friend for any parting remarks.

Mr. HORSFORD. One additional area that I would like to touch on and ask, maybe, my colleague to expound upon is that, under those Bush-era tax cuts, it included tax cuts to companies that ship jobs overseas, which contributed, did it not, to that 650,000 job loss? Was there a correlation there or not?

Mr. JEFFRIES. I think that is a very appropriate question. We are going to have to have a broader conversation about some of our policies that have resulted in the exportation of middle class American jobs to other parts of the world; and for the life of me, I haven't been able to figure out why anyone in Washington thinks that that is a good idea.

We have had an economic recovery under this President, and I believe more than 7 million private sector jobs have been created, but we still have a long way to go. And we certainly cannot afford to engage in the type of policies that, as you have pointed out, have led to the transfer of American jobs overseas.

Why? Because we are incentivizing companies to ship jobs abroad as opposed to incentivizing American companies to keep jobs here at home in the great United States of America. And I certainly hope that that is something that can be reversed as we move forward and enter into a discussion about some of the agreements that will be pending before this Congress.

Mr. HORSFORD. If the gentleman would yield, I would just say—and I think that this would be an appropriate discussion for us to have at a future Special Order—the fact that some of those corporate tax breaks to ship American jobs overseas resulted in debt that is now being obligated by this country into future years indicates a change in policy that we need to have.

We agree we need tax reform in this country. We need tax reform that allows those jobs to be returned to the United States by eliminating the corporate welfare that was provided by giving those tax incentives to those companies to take American jobs overseas to begin with and, to add insult to injury, to have it included in the overall debt and obligations of this country going forward.

But the bottom line here tonight, Mr. Speaker, is we have a job to do this week, and that job, we are asking, is to bring a clean, swift, debt ceiling bill to

the floor without a bunch of conditions or demands, and allow this Congress to do its job this week and send to the Senate a clean debt ceiling bill that allows us to meet our obligations.

Those obligations, as my colleague here tonight has aptly explained, are obligations that prior administrations and prior Congresses have entered this country into. We have to keep the full faith and credit of the United States intact. We cannot repeat some of the damaging consequences from 2011. We cannot have a repeat, Mr. Speaker, of lost economic productivity or economic activity. We cannot have the stock market plummeting. We cannot have lower consumer confidence. We cannot have businesses deciding whether to hire more employees because they are concerned that this Congress is going to cause more harm than help by failing to pass a clean debt ceiling.

That is what we are asking here tonight.

I thank my colleague, the anchor for this hour, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), for leading this discussion. I am pleased to have participated.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my good friend for his very thoughtful and comprehensive remarks and analysis of the situation that we find ourselves in and his very clear-eyed plea that we in the Congress simply do our job and raise the debt ceiling to avoid a default and threatening of the full faith and credit of the United States of America.

The 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution states, in part, that the validity of the public debt of the United States enacted into law shall not be questioned.

No more drama. No more theatrics. No more brinkmanship. No more extremism. Let's raise the debt ceiling and get back to doing the business of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues Congressmen JEFFRIES and Congressman HORSFORD for once again leading the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour.

As a result of your leadership, the Congressional Black Caucus continues to discuss critical issues facing our nation on the House floor and to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss why we must raise our nation's debt ceiling and bring a clean debt ceiling bill to the floor.

The full faith and credit of the United States should not be subject to negotiation.

On Friday, February 7th, the United States of America once again reached its debt limit.

Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has again begun paying our bills with what he calls "extraordinary measures."

This is not a new situation for us, as we have been here many times before.

And we have seen that each time we face this fully preventable crisis, the result is harm to the American people and to this nation's international economic reputation.

In August 2011, Members of Congress faced a debt ceiling standoff that resulted in the Budget Control Act of 2011.

Because we could not come to a budget agreement as required by the Budget Control Act, Congress instituted automatic spending cuts to our military and to critical services to our communities.

In October 2013, we faced another debt limit crisis when our government shut down for 17 days, leaving hundreds of thousands of government workers unsure of when their next paycheck would arrive.

By the end of February, if we do not raise the debt limit, we will again be teetering at the end of a financial cliff.

It is reported that Republican House leadership is deciding what they should ask for in return for allowing our nation to meet its financial obligations.

Once again, they are looking to barter this country's financial well-being for narrow political wins when they've seen the harmful results of their actions.

We cannot continue to play political games when our nation's credit is at risk.

Approaching the 11th hour in this debate, when a clean debt ceiling bill can be brought to the floor today, should not be an option. It is not in the best interest of this nation.

Before I yield back, I also want to clarify what raising the debt limit means. There is often confusion about raising the debt ceiling. Some believe it allows our government to authorize additional or new spending, which is not the case.

Raising the debt ceiling does not mean our country will be allowed to spend more money; it means that we will be able to pay the financial obligations which we have incurred in the past.

Just like millions of people across this nation have bills to pay that keep the lights on in their homes, or to pay for the car they drive

back and forth to work, America must pay the bills required to keep our state and local governments running.

America must make sure that millions of seniors receive their Social Security checks.

We must not let partisanship or brinkmanship do any more damage to our federal programs or our ability to borrow in the future.

This is why raising the debt ceiling is so important.

I urge my colleagues to bring a clean debt ceiling bill to the floor.

No conditions or concessions should be made in turn for raising our country's debt ceiling.

The full faith and credit of the United States is not for sale.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ADERHOLT (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and the balance of the week on account of family medical reasons.

Mrs. NOEM (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of flight cancellation.

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of illness.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of weather in Oregon.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Ms. MATSUI (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of illness.

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of an illness in the family.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, February 11, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2013 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Anne Marie Chotvacs	11/4	11/7	Egypt	856.00							856.00
Commercial airfare							10,135.10				10,135.10
Misc. embassy costs								714.00			714.00

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013—
Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Jennifer Miller	11/4	11/6	Turkey		514.00						514.00
	11/6	11/8	Qatar		566.00						566.00
	11/8	11/12	Jordan		1,560.00						1,560.00
Commercial airfare							12,189.05				12,189.05
Hon. Ken Calvert	11/21	11/25	Portugal		706.00						706.00
Commercial airfare							6,619.10				6,619.10
Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart	11/26	11/27	Belgium		648.00						648.00
Commercial airfare							10,994.90				10,994.90
Total					4,850.00		39,938.15		714.00		45,502.15

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. HAROLD ROGERS, Chairman, Jan. 31, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Visit to Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt—October 30–November 4, 2013 with STAFFDEL Karem:											
Michael Casey	10/31	11/3	Lebanon		150.00						150.00
	11/3	11/4	Turkey		262.00						262.00
Commercial transportation	11/3	11/4					5,459.50				5,459.50
Visit to Germany, Poland, United Kingdom—Nov. 4–11, 2013											
Hon. Michael Turner	11/5	11/8	Germany		366.00						366.00
	11/7	11/7	Poland								
	11/8	11/10	United Kingdom		368.00						368.00
Hon. Loretta Sanchez	11/5	11/8	Germany		366.00						366.00
	11/7	11/7	Poland								
	11/8	11/10	United Kingdom		368.00						368.00
John Wason	11/5	11/8	Germany		366.00						366.00
	11/7	11/7	Poland								
	11/8	11/10	United Kingdom		368.00						368.00
Douglas Bush	11/5	11/8	Germany		366.00						366.00
	11/7	11/7	Poland								
	11/8	11/10	United Kingdom		368.00						368.00
Visit to Philippines—Nov. 22–26, 2013 with CODEL Smith:											
Hon. Trent Franks	11/2	11/26	Philippines		577.00						577.00
Visit to India—Dec. 14–22, 2013 with CODEL Holding:											
Hon. Madeleine Bordallo	12/15	12/21	India		670.00						670.00
Commercial transportation							539.24				539.24
Total					670.00		539.24				1,209.24

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON, Chairman, Jan. 31, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Mary Neumayr	11/18	11/23	Poland		2,087.06		1,966.20				4,053.26
Phillip Barnett	11/19	11/22	Poland		1,043.53		1,566.20				2,609.73
Gregory Dotson	11/19		Poland						791.53		791.53
Hon. Pete Olson	12/14	12/17	India		1,718.36		10,665.01				12,383.37
Committee total					4,848.95		14,197.41		791.53		19,837.89

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

³ Cancellation fee for lodging in Poland. Gregory Dotson did not travel on the STAFFDEL.

Hon. FRED UPTON, Chairman, Jan. 29, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Al Green	11/23	11/26	Philippines								
Hon. Robert Pittenger	12/18	12/19	Israel		843.00						843.00
	12/19	12/20	Austria		632.12						632.12
	12/20	12/21	Norway		343.56		12,333.47				12,677.03

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013—
Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Committee total					1,818.68		12,333.47				14,152.15

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. JEB. HENSARLING, Chairman, Jan. 31, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Adam Kinzinger	11/1	11/2	Pakistan		22.00		4,676.20				4,698.20
	11/2	11/3	Afghanistan				(³)				663.82
	11/3	11/4	UAE		266.07				439.75		705.82
Hon. Scott Perry	11/1	11/2	Pakistan		42.00		11,964.20				12,006.20
	11/2	11/3	Afghanistan		28.00		(³)				28.00
	11/3	11/4	UAE		369.07						369.07
Hon. Juan Vargas	11/1	11/2	Pakistan		42.00		12,901.20				12,943.20
	11/2	11/3	Afghanistan		28.00		(³)				28.00
	11/3	11/4	UAE		369.07						369.07
Andrea Thompson	11/1	11/2	Pakistan								
	11/2	11/3	Afghanistan				(³)				
	11/3	11/4	UAE								
Sajit Gandhi	11/1	11/2	Pakistan		32.00		11,964.20				11,996.20
	11/2	11/3	Afghanistan		28.00						28.00
	11/3	11/4	UAE		369.07						369.07
Leah Campos	11/3	11/6	Mexico		911.00		932.83				1,843.83
Ramon Zertuche	11/3	11/6	Mexico		981.00		1,023.33				2,004.33
Chris Smith	11/23	11/26	Philippines		581.00		7,536.90		444.85		8,162.75
Greg Simpkins	11/23	11/26	Philippines		583.33		7,736.90				8,320.23
Piero Tozzi	11/23	11/26	Philippines		693.15		8,571.70				9,264.85
Thomas Hill	11/23	11/25	Honduras		526.00		1,030.90				1,556.90
Edward Acevedo	11/23	11/25	Honduras		486.00		1,065.90				1,551.90
Brent Woolfork	11/23	11/25	Honduras		505.42		1,065.90				1,571.32
Janice Kaguyutan	11/23	11/25	Honduras		508.72		1,030.90				1,539.62
Hon. Adam Kinzinger	11/22	11/24	Canada		534.47		1,296.67				1,831.14
Hon. Steve Chabot	11/4	11/6	Bangladesh		460.00		11,296.80				11,756.80
	11/4	11/4	UAE						4299.48		299.48
Kevin Fitzpatrick	11/5	11/6	Bangladesh		465.00		11,296.80				11,761.80
	11/4	11/4	UAE								11,761.80
Hon. Ted Poe	11/22	11/26	Peru		1,093.47		1,598.14				2,691.61
Hon. Lois Frankel	11/22	11/25	Peru		763.20		1,470.64				2,233.84
Luke Murry	11/22	11/26	Peru		1,269.13		1,132.64				2,401.77
Ramon Zertuche	11/22	11/26	Peru		1,288.42		1,633.64				2,922.06
Hon. George Holding	12/15	12/20	India		1,430.38		12,032.91		420,279.06		33,742.35
Helen Heng	12/16	12/20	India		1,522.78		13,752.41				15,275.19
Hunter Strupp	12/15	12/20	India		1,568.36		10,749.91				12,318.27
Sajit Gandhi	12/15	12/20	India		1,603.36		10,034.97				11,638.33
Hon. Greg Meeks	11/25	11/25	Germany								
	11/25	11/27	Belgium		807.07		5,734.50				6,541.57
Committee total					20,176.54		153,531.09		21,021.14		194,728.77

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

³ Military air transportation.

⁴ Indicates delegation costs.

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE, Chairman, Oct. 31, 2013.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER, Chairman, Jan. 9, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Jason Chaffetz	11/9	11/10	Malta		156.00						156.00
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		819.43						819.43
Commercial airfare							15,307.65				15,307.65
Hon. Cynthia Lummis	11/9	11/10	Malta		271.00						271.00
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		895.43						895.43
Commercial airfare							15,829.20				15,829.20
Hon. Stephen Lynch	11/9	11/10	Malta		271.00						271.00
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		895.43						895.43

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Commercial airfare											
Hon. Peter Welch	11/9	11/10	Malta		271.00		14,512.20				14,512.20
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		895.43						271.00
Commercial airfare											895.43
Ali Ahmad	11/9	11/10	Malta		196.00		14,639.10				14,639.10
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		870.92						196.00
Commercial airfare											870.92
Bruce Fernandez	11/9	11/10	Malta		271.00		11,556.10				11,556.10
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		895.43						271.00
Commercial airfare											895.43
James Lewis	11/9	11/10	Malta		211.00		10,365.70				10,365.70
	11/10	11/12	Egypt		861.43						211.00
Commercial airfare											861.43
Delegation expenses							14,140.20		1,054.00		14,140.20
Committee total					7,780.50		96,50.15		1,054.00		105,184.65

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA, Chairman, Jan. 31, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. David Schweikert	12/15	12/22	India	41,915.20	670.00		15,129.91				15,799.91
Committee total			670.00				15,129.91				15,799.91

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. LAMAR SMITH, Chairman, Jan. 31, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²

HOUSE COMMITTEES

Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return.

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. BILL SHUSTER, Chairman, Jan. 12, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Stephen Claeys	12/3	12/6	Indonesia		1,197.00		³ 19,226.20				20,423.20
Elizabeth Baltzan	12/3	12/6	Indonesia		1,317.00		³ 12,382.10				13,699.10
Stephen Claeys	12/6	12/11	Singapore		2,093.00						2,093.00
Behnaz Kibria	12/6	12/11	Singapore		1,982.00		13,419.50				15,401.50
Committee total					6,589.00		45,027.80				51,616.80

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

³ Cost included in above flight.

HON. DAVE CAMP, Chairman, Jan. 31, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Devin Nunes	11/21	11/25	Europe		706.00						706.00
Commercial airfare							6,780.60				7,486.60
Andy Keiser, Professional Staff	11/21	11/25	Europe		706.00						706.00
Commercial airfare							2,351.60				3,057.60
Hon. Mike Rogers	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						754.29
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59
Hon. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						754.29
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013—Continued

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Mike Pompeo	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59
Hon. Terri A. Sewell	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59
Darren Dick, Staff Director	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59
Tom Corcoran, Professional Staff	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59
Susan Phalen, Professional Staff	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						
Commercial airfare							1,834.30				2,588.59
Robert Minehart, Professional Staff	12/15	12/18	Europe		754.29						
Commercial airfare							1,799.20				2,588.59
Hon. Mike Thompson	12/13	12/19	S. America		1,614.00						
Commercial airfare							11,540.37				13,154.37
Linda Cohen, Professional Staff	12/13	12/19	S. America		1,920.00						
Commercial airfare							11,072.37				12,992.37
Hon. Michele Bachmann	12/14	12/16	Middle East		605.75						
	12/16	12/17	Middle East		75.00						
	12/17	12/17	Middle East								
	12/17	12/19	Middle East		843.00						
	12/19	12/20	Europe		417.00						
	12/20	12/21	Europe		344.42						
Commercial airfare							13,850.40				16,135.57
Committee total											73,500.13

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.

² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. MIKE ROGERS, Chairman, Jan. 30, 2014.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4713. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's "Major" final rule — Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds (RIN: 7100-AD82) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4714. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Rockland County, NY, et al.); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4715. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Isabella County, MI, et al.); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4716. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Dearborn County, IN, et al.); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4717. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Fort Bend County, TX, et al.); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4718. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security,

transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility (Erie County, PA, et al.); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8317] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4719. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRAD, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds [Docket No.: OCC-2014-0003] (RIN: 1557-AD79) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4720. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRA, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds [Docket No. OCC-2011-0014] (RIN: 1557-AD44) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4721. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Removal of Transferred OTS Regulations Regarding Recordkeeping and Confirmation Requirements for Securities Transactions Effected by State Savings Associations and Other Amendments (RIN: 3064-AE06) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4722. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's "Major" final rule — Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests in, and Relationships with, Hedge Funds and Private Eq-

uity Funds (RIN: 3064-AE11) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4723. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's "Major" final rule — Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds (RIN: 3064-AD85) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4724. A letter from the General Counsel, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Information to Be Distributed to the Federal Home Loan Banks and the Office of Finance Under 12 CFR Part 1260 [No. 2013-N-15] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4725. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's "Major" final rule — Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds (RIN: 3235-AL52) received January 29, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4726. A letter from the Director, Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Advisory Committee; Pharmacy Compounding Advisory Committee [Docket No.: FDA-2013-N-1687] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4727. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Current Good Manufacturing Practice for Medicinal Feeds [Docket No.: FDA-2013-N-0002] received January 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4728. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — National Institutes of Health Loan Repayment Programs [Docket No.: NIH-2008-0003] (RIN: 0905-AA43) received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4729. A letter from the Director, Regulations Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-2013-0725; FRL-9904-02-Region 9] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4730. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: HI-STORM 100 Cask System; Amendment No. 9 [NRC-2012-0052] (RIN: 3150-AJ12) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4731. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Establish Funding Responsibilities for the Electronic Logbook Program [Docket No.: 130710605-3999-02] (RIN: 0648-BD41) received January 17, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4732. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Lower Mississippi River Mile 94.1 — Mile 95.1; New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0989] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4733. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone, Lucas Oil Drag Boat Racing Series; Thompson Bay, Lake Havasu City, AZ [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0746] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received January 8, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4734. A letter from the Assistant Chief Counsel for Hazardous Materials Safety, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Hazardous Materials: Adoption of ASME Code Section XII and the National Board Inspection Code [Docket Number: PHMSA-2010-0019 (HM-241)] (RIN: 2137-AE-58) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4735. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0365; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-223-AD; Amendment 39-17704; AD 2013-25-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4736. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshift Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0557; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-22-AD;

Amendment 39-17679; AD 2013-24-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received January 23, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4737. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Section 5000A Transition Relief for Individuals with Certain Government-Sponsored Limited-Benefit Health Coverage [Notice 2014-10] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4738. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — February 2014 (Rev. Rul. 2014-6) received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4739. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Temporary Nondiscrimination Relief for Closed Defined Benefit Plans and Request for Comments [Notice 2014-5] received January 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4740. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Deadline to Submit Opinion and Advisory Letter Applications for Pre-approved Defined Benefit Plans is Extended to February 2, 2015 (Announcement 2014-4) received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4741. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Extension of Time under Sec. 301.9100-3 to Elect Portability of Deceased Spousal Unused Exclusion Amount (Rev. Proc. 2014-18) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4742. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Revenue Procedure: Qualified Census Tracts (Rev. Proc. 2014-9) received January 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2385. A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to set the rate of pay for employees of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection in accordance with the General Schedule (Rept. 113-349, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SESSIONS: Committee on Rules. H. Res. 475. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; providing for proceedings during the period from February 13, 2014, through February 24, 2014; and for other purposes (Rept. 113-350). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2385 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 4021. A bill to suspend the application of the limit on the Nation's debt for a 10-year period, to reduce the pay of Members of Congress for failing to meet fiscal sustainability targets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself and Mr. CUMMINGS):

H.R. 4022. A bill to provide for a strategic plan to reform and improve the security clearance and background investigation processes of the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MATHESON (for himself and Mr. CHAFFETZ):

H.R. 4023. A bill to promote competition and help consumers save money by giving them the freedom to choose where they buy prescription pet medications, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. CAPITO:

H.R. 4024. A bill to protect navigable waters from contamination by chemical storage facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. KEATING (for himself and Mr. TIERNEY):

H.R. 4025. A bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to reauthorize and amend the Fishing Safety Training Grant Program and the Fishing Safety Research Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4026. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide for the eligibility of Transportation Security Administration employees to receive public safety officers' death benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRAWFORD:

H.R. 4027. A bill to increase the statutory limit on the public debt and to require House and Senate votes on constitutional amendments to balance the Federal budget and to restrict new entitlement spending; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4028. A bill to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to include the desecration of cemeteries among the many forms of violations of the right to religious freedom; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 4029. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to transfer all Federal land, facilities, and any other assets associated with the Ozark National Scenic Riverways to the State of Missouri for the purposes of maintaining a State park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida (for herself, Mr. GARCIA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. MICA, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. POSEY, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. ROSS, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. BILIRAKIS):

H.R. 4030. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 18640 NW 2nd Avenue in Miami, Florida, as the "Father Richard Marquess-Barry Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself and Mr. ENGEL):

H.J. Res. 109. A joint resolution providing for the approval of the Congress of the proposed agreement for cooperation between the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States concerning peaceful uses of nuclear energy pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 4021. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution which states in part:

"The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. LYNCH:

H.R. 4022. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. MATHESON:

H.R. 4023. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mrs. CAPITO:

H.R. 4024. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the constitutional authority to enact this legislation pursuant to the

power granted under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 (related to regulation of Commerce among the States).

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 4025. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4026. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CRAWFORD:

H.R. 4027. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 1 and 2 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

Article V of the U.S. Constitution, which grants Congress the authority to propose Constitutional amendments.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4028. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 4029. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular state."

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 4030. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.J. Res. 109. Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

- H.R. 15: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.R. 20: Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. MEEKS.
- H.R. 24: Mr. HALL.
- H.R. 32: Mr. WALZ.
- H.R. 60: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. RUSH.
- H.R. 62: Mr. COHEN.
- H.R. 115: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
- H.R. 118: Mr. LIPINSKI.
- H.R. 148: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.R. 164: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. RIBBLE.
- H.R. 233: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
- H.R. 288: Mr. QUIGLEY.
- H.R. 303: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
- H.R. 411: Mr. KINGSTON.
- H.R. 494: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
- H.R. 503: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. HUDSON.

- H.R. 508: Mr. STUTZMAN.
- H.R. 580: Mr. WOMACK.
- H.R. 635: Mrs. ELLMERS.
- H.R. 637: Mr. JEFFRIES.
- H.R. 647: Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SWALWELL of California and Ms. MENG.
- H.R. 685: Mr. HUDSON.
- H.R. 713: Mr. YODER and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
- H.R. 755: Mr. HARPER.
- H.R. 795: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. GOSAR, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. PITTS, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. PRICE of Georgia.
- H.R. 920: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
- H.R. 946: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
- H.R. 961: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. HINOJOSA.
- H.R. 1020: Mr. POSEY and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
- H.R. 1041: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
- H.R. 1091: Mr. PETERSON.
- H.R. 1188: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
- H.R. 1243: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
- H.R. 1249: Mr. GALLEGO.
- H.R. 1250: Ms. FUDGE.
- H.R. 1263: Mr. DELANEY and Mr. KILMER.
- H.R. 1276: Mr. CARNEY, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. TIERNEY, and Ms. TITUS.
- H.R. 1286: Mr. HIGGINS.
- H.R. 1313: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
- H.R. 1362: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
- H.R. 1386: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. RIBBLE.
- H.R. 1518: Mrs. WALORSKI.
- H.R. 1573: Mr. FARR.
- H.R. 1627: Ms. NORTON.
- H.R. 1630: Mr. PALLONE.
- H.R. 1648: Mr. CONYERS.
- H.R. 1666: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
- H.R. 1685: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
- H.R. 1701: Mr. BYRNE.
- H.R. 1726: Mr. HUDSON.
- H.R. 1814: Mr. DENHAM, Mr. BERA of California, and Mr. WILLIAMS.
- H.R. 1830: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
- H.R. 1835: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
- H.R. 1838: Mr. BARBER and Mr. KING of New York.
- H.R. 1852: Mr. NEAL and Mr. WOODALL.
- H.R. 1869: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. POLIS.
- H.R. 1984: Mr. TAKANO.
- H.R. 2068: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
- H.R. 2178: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
- H.R. 2203: Mr. MICHAUD.
- H.R. 2305: Mr. KILMER.
- H.R. 2313: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.
- H.R. 2333: Mr. KIND, Mr. SCHNEIDER, and Mr. OWENS.
- H.R. 2424: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
- H.R. 2468: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
- H.R. 2504: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. PEARCE.
- H.R. 2537: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
- H.R. 2548: Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. MAFFEI.
- H.R. 2575: Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MATHESON, and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.
- H.R. 2591: Mr. KILMER.
- H.R. 2638: Mr. CICILLINE.
- H.R. 2652: Ms. LOFGREN.
- H.R. 2707: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
- H.R. 2726: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
- H.R. 2739: Mr. DOYLE.
- H.R. 2746: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. CHABOT.
- H.R. 2788: Mr. CICILLINE.

- H.R. 2827: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 2835: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 2841: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2847: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 2911: Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 2918: Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. DENT, Mr. HORSFORD, and Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 2939: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. DEUTCH, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 2983: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 2996: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 3040: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 3043: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.
H.R. 3099: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3116: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 3133: Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. WOODALL.
H.R. 3136: Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 3137: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 3153: Ms. CHU and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 3180: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 3344: Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 3357: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 3361: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 3370: Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 3372: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 3374: Mr. COOPER, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3383: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 3384: Ms. CHU and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3403: Mr. DUFFY.
H.R. 3453: Mr. LANGEVIN and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 3461: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RUPERSBERGER, Mr. NEAL, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. WAXMAN.
H.R. 3464: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3471: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 3485: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 3488: Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. POSEY, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. GARCIA.
H.R. 3493: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3505: Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 3510: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 3513: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. COHEN, and Ms. CHU.
H.R. 3530: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 3537: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 3546: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.
H.R. 3556: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CLAY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3579: Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. HALL, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BARTON, and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 3635: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. BYRNE.
H.R. 3649: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 3657: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3658: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. COLE.
H.R. 3663: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 3666: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 3670: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 3673: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 3689: Mr. MCCLINTOCK and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3698: Mr. COOK, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 3707: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 3712: Mr. SERRANO and Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 3717: Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. BERA of California.
H.R. 3740: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3747: Mr. RUNYAN.
H.R. 3788: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 3807: Mr. HALL.
H.R. 3826: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 3850: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3852: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 3855: Mr. YODER, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. FARR, and Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 3857: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3865: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. HALL, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. BENISHEK, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Ms. FOXX, and Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3877: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3887: Mr. RIGELL.
H.R. 3888: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3895: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 3912: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 3930: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MCALLISTER, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. JONES, and Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 3972: Ms. KELLY of Illinois and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 3973: Mr. FORBES and Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 3978: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3982: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. FARR, and Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 3987: Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. MESSER, Mr. YODER, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. LAMALFA, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 3991: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. OWENS, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 4019: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.J. Res. 2: Mr. BYRNE.
H.J. Res. 21: Mr. HIGGINS.
H. Con. Res. 16: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. HORSFORD, and Mr. JONES.
H. Con. Res. 52: Ms. ESTY.
H. Con. Res. 78: Mr. RANGEL.
H. Res. 36: Ms. GRANGER and Mr. HOLDING.
H. Res. 59: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H. Res. 72: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H. Res. 284: Mr. VEASEY.
H. Res. 302: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. LATTA.
H. Res. 326: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
H. Res. 387: Ms. KUSTER.
H. Res. 442: Mr. LATTA, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. CARTER, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. MULLIN.
H. Res. 447: Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. DENT.
H. Res. 467: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING LINDA MARTIN

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Mrs. Linda Martin, a finalist for the 2014 School Counselor of the Year award. This distinguished award, presented by the American School Counselor Association, honors school counselors "who have made outstanding and exemplary contributions to students, the school community, and the school counseling profession."

Mrs. Martin has led the Comprehensive Guidance Program at Palm Lake Elementary School for 20 years. As an innovative teacher, she founded the Kids Who Care program to serve Palm Lake Elementary, the Orlando community and Nkomo Primary School, a sister school in South Africa. Her classroom lessons cover a wide range of topics including character development and leadership.

Mrs. Martin's remarkable service has also been recognized on the county and state levels. In 2012, she was named Orange County School Counselor of the Year, and, in 2013, was awarded Elementary School Counselor of the Year by the Florida School Counselor Association.

School counselors play an invaluable role in students' academic and personal development, teaching important life skills and compelling them to strive toward their goals. It is my pleasure to recognize Mrs. Martin for her exemplary dedication to the students of Palm Lake Elementary.

RECOGNIZING WTOC OF SAVANNAH'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize WTOC-TV of Savannah, which celebrates its 60th anniversary on February 14, 2014. WTOC provides our community with up-to-the-minute, accurate news.

WTOC, or Welcome To Our City, went on the air on February 14, 1954, making it the first television station in Savannah. WTOC began as a radio station, WTOC-AM 1290, in October of 1929 and added an FM station in 1946. As WTOC-FM was a CBS Radio affiliate, WTOC-TV affiliated with CBS as well and has been with the network ever since.

WTOC has been a leader in Savannah area news, topping the Nielson ratings almost every year since its inception. The station won both an Emmy and an Edward R. Murrow award in 2003. Many of its individual reporters have

earned major awards for their stories and editing, including an Emmy for a 2006 story about 3rd Infantry Division fighters in Iraq. WTOC lives up to its slogan as "The Southeast News Leader."

From hard-hitting local news to Emmy-winning sports coverage, WTOC-TV has set the standard for local news in Savannah for the past 60 years. I am proud to support WTOC-TV while they celebrate this milestone in their history. My thoughts are with them during this special time.

COMMENDING THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT'S STEPS TO COMBAT ANTI-SEMITISM

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán for the actions his government is taking to combat anti-Semitism. Under his leadership, Hungary has stressed a "zero tolerance policy" toward anti-Semitic attitudes, and has focused on law enforcement and legal measures, Holocaust education and remembrance, and support for Jewish cultural renaissance in Hungary.

Measures implemented by Prime Minister Orbán and his government, including the 50 percent pension increase to Holocaust survivors and the agreement on compensation of Holocaust survivors living in foreign countries, are only two of the numerous actions Hungarians are taking to ensure that those who have suffered have a dignified retirement.

We must never forget the terrible atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust. I want to remind my colleagues that steps can be taken to aid the painful memories and create awareness of these past events. Prime Minister Orbán is taking a leading role in the battle against anti-Semitic voices in Europe and throughout the world. Later this year, Hungary will inaugurate a memorial site to commemorate the child victims of the Holocaust. In addition, Hungary is investing resources to include Holocaust Remembrance Day in public schools and is recognizing the people who helped save Jewish lives during that time period.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in standing in solidarity with those that have been oppressed and to continue to shine light on this dark history to ensure that it doesn't happen again. I am honored to pay tribute to Prime Minister Orbán and his government for their continued service to the people of Hungary on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these remarkable efforts.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON ONE

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with sincere appreciation and deep respect that I rise today to recognize the contributions of the United States Navy Airborne Early Warning Squadron One, designated VW-1. For their courage while facing danger head on and their willingness to defend our nation's military, these brave individuals are to be commended.

In 1944, recognizing the need for early warning radar and aircraft to assist in protecting the United States Naval Fleet from attack by identifying ships and low flying aircraft, the United States Navy launched its first program to help minimize the impact on service members and operations. The initial program would evolve, and in June 1952, led to the establishment of Airborne Early Warning Squadron One, designated VW-1, first located at Naval Air Station Barbers Point, in the then Territory of Hawaii. Soon after, a permanent detachment of VW-1 was established in the Western Pacific, where it provided heavy airborne early warning coverage and participated in the Korean War. Following its relocation to the Naval Air Station Agana, Guam, Mariana Islands, in 1957, VW-1 began to take on additional responsibilities, and in 1961, was tasked with weather reconnaissance. This increased focus on identifying hazardous weather conditions included the addition of six meteorologists and eighteen aerographers, as well as new technological equipment. During 1961 alone, VW-1 flew more than 1,000 hours of weather reconnaissance, thus identifying the squadron as the "Typhoon Trackers."

Through their valiant efforts, VW-1 provided airborne early warning support and protection for the U.S. Seventh Fleet during the Vietnam War, from 1964 through 1971. Their mission was to fly north of the DMZ in the Gulf of Tonkin, providing airborne protection for the Seventh Fleet, which was operating below the DMZ. They were tasked with warning the Seventh Fleet against enemy attacks and dangerous storms, in addition to providing radar surveillance for air strikes over North Vietnam. From 1964 through 1967, VW-1 operated out of bases in the Republic of the Philippines for an extended airborne mission time of eighteen hours. Often times these missions were extended beyond the aircraft's fuel range, requiring them to refuel at Da Nang Air Base in the Republic of Vietnam before returning to their base in the Philippines. In late 1967, a detachment was established at Chu Lai in the Republic of Vietnam but later moved to Da Nang Air Base in an effort to shorten the mission time to twelve hours.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

From its establishment in June 1952 until July 1971, when the unit was absorbed into VQ-1, VW-1 completed its mission with an astonishing nineteen years of accident-free flight, totaling more than 160,000 flight hours. For its efforts, VW-1 was twice awarded the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation. Individual aircrew members have received more than 1,200 Air Medals, and the unit also includes two Purple Heart recipients, whose injuries were sustained in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring the brave men of Airborne Early Warning Squadron One, designated VW-1. The squadron represented an important part of the United States Military, and its gallant members are a true example of unwavering patriotism. Let us never forget their service and the sacrifices they made in defense of our nation and their fellow service members.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND COMMITMENT OF VERNA MACDONALD TO THE WESTPORT COMMUNITY AND GRAYS HARBOR REGION

HON. DEREK KILMER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding community service of Verna MacDonald, who has dedicated herself to enriching her fellow citizens through her affiliations with the Westport Senior House, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #3057, the American Legion Post #140 Lady Auxiliary, the Westport and Grayland area Volunteer Fire Departments, and the Coastal Harvest food distribution warehouse.

Verna MacDonald first moved to Westport with her husband Donald MacDonald in 1986. The unexpected passing of her husband in 1999 inspired her to get out and interact with her community. She has since been recognized as the "Grandma" of the city of Westport. It is difficult to find a person within the community that has not heard of the service Ms. MacDonald has provided. Her positive disposition and can-do attitude is well known.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. MacDonald has displayed a constant commitment to serving those in need through her varied volunteer activities. One of her most notable contributions to the Westport community has been her engagement with the Westport Senior House. Starting as secretary, Ms. MacDonald dedicated years to improving the building and providing meals and resources to its residents. One of her many accomplishments was securing a grant to fund a new handicapped access ramp named for her late husband. Later, as director, she worked to transform the Senior House into a certified Red Cross Emergency Shelter, equipped with cots, bedding, emergency food supplies and even a generator. Ms. MacDonald didn't stop there; she spearheaded the Westport Freedom Walk in 2006 to honor the victims of the September 11, 2001 attack, has organized a holiday gift donation program serving the senior citizens in Grays Harbor

and northern Pacific counties, and volunteers at Coastal Harvest Food Bank. Ms. MacDonald's work is boundless, and her retirement does not appear to have decreased her commitment to serving those in need.

As I close, I say with pride that our region is a better place thanks to the dedicated and selfless service of Verna MacDonald. Her unprecedented community involvement will impact the Westport community for years to come. I am pleased to recognize this service today in the United States Congress.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF COLORED CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES IN SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

HON. DANIEL B. MAFFEI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. MAFFEI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to commemorate Black History Month and recognize the 150th anniversary of the National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States in Syracuse, New York.

On September 9, 1864, the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator* included a call for the convention. Frederick Douglass, a writer, statesman and leader of the Abolition Movement, annotated an "Address to the People of the United States." In his address to the people, Frederick Douglass explains, "No notice should be taken of the color of men; but justice, wisdom, and humanity should weigh alone, and be all-controlling."

The National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States convened on October 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th of 1864 in Syracuse, New York.

In October of 1864, Frederick Douglass came to Syracuse to discuss the state of the ex-slave following the Civil War. Douglass served as convention president, which drew nearly 150 delegates from all across the nation. During the meeting, the delegates crafted a document modeled after the Declaration of Independence, entitled "Declarations of Rights and Wrongs", which was read during the Convention in Syracuse.

Central New York has a rich connection in history to the Abolition Movement. From Harriet Tubman and her tireless devotion to the cause, to Frederick Douglass with his Address to the People of the United States and "Declaration of Rights and Wrongs," Central New York and the City of Syracuse have continued to lead the charge for equality.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the 150th anniversary of the National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States in Syracuse, New York. Let us never grow old or weary of the struggle that our predecessors led, and let us work every day to uphold the values that Frederick Douglass and so many others demanded us to do at the National Convention of Colored Citizens of the United States.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,258,482,479,004.37. We've added \$6,631,605,430,091.29 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING THE RUSSELL HOUSE FOR ITS 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Russell House for its 20 years of service to South Central Missouri. Since its founding in 1994, the Russell House has provided a safe haven for victims of domestic violence. In addition to shelter, the Russell House provides a wide range of free services to both residents and non-resident families as they transition to a life free of abuse. The Russell House also educates the community on preventing violence and intervention.

During the first years of service, the house could only shelter seven victims but thanks to the continued support of the Phelps County Family Crisis Services organization the Russell House now has the capacity to provide shelter for 64 people at any given time. Over the past 20 years of service to the community the Russell House has sheltered more than 2,000 adults and 1,800 children. I applaud the hard working staff and supporters of the Russell House for their hearts of service and dedication to the families of Missouri. It is my pleasure to recognize their efforts and achievements before the House of Representatives.

IN TRIBUTE TO DR. NICHOLAS J. CONTORNO

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a published composer, arranger, educator, guest conductor, saxophone soloist and composer in residence. He was a highly successful and visible educator at all levels of school bands both as a conductor and clinician. On February 2, 2014, Dr. Nicholas J. Contorno passed away leaving his wife Lucille, two daughters, Camille and Gina, and a host of family and friends to remember his many accomplishments.

Dr. Nicholas J. Contorno retired in 2007 after 24 years as the Director of Bands and Orchestra at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He received his undergraduate and master's degrees in music education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and was granted a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Composition from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He began his teaching career in 1961 as an Instrumental Music teacher in the Glendale (WI) Public Schools and also served as Director of Bands at Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin. He served as Music Curriculum Supervisor and Director of Bands at Kettle Moraine High School in Wales, Wisconsin. Dr. Contorno's work with young musicians made him one of the most beloved composers for concert and jazz bands.

Dr. Contorno was an A.S.C.A.P. award winning composer and arranger. He is listed in "Leaders of Secondary Education" (1972), "World's Who's Who of Musicians" (1977), and "Encyclopedia of Band Composers" (1991). As an active professional musician, he performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Holiday on Ice Orchestra, Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus Band, Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, and Les Elgart Orchestra. In addition, he performed with many national shows and artists, including "Annie," "42nd Street," Linda Ronstadt, Natalie Cole, Manhattan Transfer, Vic Damone, Johnny Mathis, Mel Torme, and Sonny & Cher, to mention a few. His many honors include the Hugo Anhalt Music Achievement Award (1973); National Band Association Outstanding Jazz Educator Award (1982); and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Music Alumni Achievement Award (1990).

Dr. Contorno also held memberships in numerous professional organizations, such as the American Federation of Musicians—Local 8, ASBDA, the National Band Association, and the Wisconsin Bandmasters Association. He served on the board of directors of the Festival City Orchestra of Milwaukee and the Waukesha Symphony Orchestra. He was the musical coordinator of Festa Italiana-Milwaukee, Wisconsin from 1982 to 1998, served as the Musical Director/Conductor of the First Brigade Civil War Band of Wisconsin from 1970–1982 and The Milwaukee Concert Band from 1996–2002. In addition, he served as guest conductor of the Goldman Band of New York and the "President's Own" United States Marine Band. Dr. Contorno has a music school named after him in Gonaives, Haiti.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I am honored to a tribute to Dr. Nicholas J. Contorno. Dr. Contorno's contributions have greatly benefited the citizens of the Fourth Congressional District, the State of Wisconsin and the global community.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MIKE
BREWER

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Mike Brewer, who passed

away at Hospice House in Sumterville, Florida, on January 4, 2014. Mr. Brewer was born on August 8, 1953, in Chicago, Illinois to Stanley and Patricia Brewer. He married his wife, Mary Eaton Brewer, on March 22, 2003 in Orlando, Florida. Mr. Brewer, aged 60, was a devoted husband and a tradesman whose presence in the community will be deeply missed.

Mr. Brewer worked for the Building Trades in Orlando, Florida. He previously served as Business Agent for the Carpenters Local 1765 before helping to form the Carpenters Local 1820 in 1985. In the same year, he was elected Chairman of the Walt Disney World (WDW) Craft Maintenance Council, a position he would hold for twelve years. From 1987 until 2007, Mr. Brewer served as Executive Secretary and Treasurer for the Florida Council of Industrial and Public Employees. In 2008 he became a member of the Florida Council of Carpenters' Office of President. Most recently, Mr. Brewer was appointed to serve as the administrator of the AFL-CIO's collective bargaining proceedings with the Walt Disney Company.

Mr. Brewer devoted his career to his fellow tradesman and made it his life's work to better the lives of workers. He is survived by his wife Mary; daughter Sarah; stepson Robert Phan; his mother Patricia Brewer; his brother Tommy Brewer; and his sisters Janis Murphy, Susan Bane, and Debbie Cozart.

I am saddened by the loss of this valuable member of the Central Florida community and extend my heartfelt condolences to his family.

HONORING RHONDA WHITE-
WARNER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Minister Rhonda White-Warner, a former minister and a social activist. Known throughout the Bay Area as a scholar, teacher, activist, preacher, and as a dedicated mother and grandmother, Minister White-Warner has left an indelible mark on our community. With her passing on January 15, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of her life's work and the inspiring role she played in many lives through her community activism and as a spiritual leader.

Born and raised in Oakland, Minister Rhonda White-Warner's passion for helping people began at a young age. After graduating from Oakland Technical High School in 1969, she received her Masters of Divinity from the American Baptist Seminary of the West, graduating with the highest GPA in her class and advancing to candidacy for a Doctor of Ministry degree at the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Minister White-Warner graduated with honors and received the Jessie Drexler Award for outstanding competency in Biblical Studies.

Minister Rhonda White-Warner had a profound sense of dedication to helping the people in her community. As HIV/AIDS began to take its toll on the community, she knew it was important for faith based groups to step up

and take action. She helped to establish the East Bay HIV Faith Collaborative. This collaborative is comprised of a group of HIV/AIDS advocates who educate and provide tools to African American Faith leaders. Aside from managing programs for HIV/AIDS, Minister White-Warner also worked to address domestic violence and mental health services.

Minister White-Warner also appreciated and promoted the arts. During the 1990s, she published a monthly magazine called Tibbets. This publication served to promote African American arts. Later, she became a founding member of the Oakland Ensemble Theatre in 1993, which established itself as the sole professional theater company in Oakland.

Minister Rhonda White-Warner has left a lasting imprint on our society and communities of faith. She was a charter member of the Womanist Symposium Project at the Graduate Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California. This project engages womanist theology within the context of Black women in the local church setting. Their mission is to energize African American women to live positively and productively, as well as to empower and liberate African American women in the context of biblical scripture.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and social activist, Minister Rhonda White-Warner. As an Oakland-native, Minister White-Warner's efforts have truly paved the way for minorities and impacted so many lives throughout the nation. I join all of Rhonda's loved ones in celebrating her incredible life. She will be deeply missed.

HONORING THE PORTOPERA ON
ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate PORTOpera on its 20th anniversary season.

Since 1994, PORTOpera has been the only company in the State of Maine performing fully staged operas with nationally and internationally acclaimed artists. It has provided unduplicated opportunities to enjoy creative, inspiring opera that showcases excellence and brings the brightest stars and musical professionals to Maine.

PORTOpera has generated critical acclaim from national publications, including its 2012 production of Madama Butterfly by Opera News and 2001's Le Nozze di Figaro by the Boston Globe. PORTOpera has also been involved in educating upcoming generations who dream of performing in the theater through the opera-in-schools program with the University of Southern Maine and the Young Artists Program.

I am proud of PORTOpera's commitment to developing and expanding the arts in Maine on many levels. The company has enriched Portland and the State of Maine culturally and has maintained a reputation for creativity, sophistication, and artistic excellence for two decades. Its work is critical to the quality of life we enjoy in our State.

As Maine's creative culture continues to develop and receive national attention, I am proud to recognize PORTopera for its leadership and success.

Bravo!

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MR.
TROY BOWLING

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding individual, Mr. Troy Bowling of Lexington, Kentucky. His military service during World War II and his continued commitment to supporting our veterans and the men and women in uniform is an inspiration to us all.

At age 19, Mr. Bowling began his service as a United States Marine and was a proud member of the Easy Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Marines, 5th Division. During the United States' campaign to end the war against Japan, Mr. Bowling's unit was among the first to arrive on the beachheads of Iwo Jima. While attempting to secure Mt. Suribachi, his unit came under intense and concentrated fire, completely overwhelming his unit. Two projectiles struck Mr. Bowling in the chest and leg, leaving him critically wounded on the battlefield. At that moment, Mr. Bowling said he looked to the heavens and committed to serving mankind for the rest of his life if he survived.

Miraculously, a combat photographer and medical team then carried Mr. Bowling to the safety of a landing craft where he witnessed the planting of the American flag atop Mt. Suribachi—an iconic image that persists as one of the most legendary and triumphant moments of the war. The U.S. Marines eventually took control of the island; however, this victory came at a heavy cost as over 6,800 U.S. servicemembers gave their lives during the battle of Iwo Jima.

In keeping faith with his commitment to God made during that battle, Mr. Bowling has since devoted over 73,000 hours of volunteer service to others at the Lexington VA Medical Center. For over 63 years, Mr. Bowling has risen through the ranks within the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) organization, holding nearly every position possible including State Commander.

The Bible teaches in Proverbs 21:21 that, "He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor." Mr. Bowling has brought great honor upon himself through his dedication, determination, and love for serving the people of our community. Without a doubt, he has remained true to the commitment he made on the rocky terrain of Iwo Jima.

Mr. Bowling embodies the best of America's ideals, values, and commitment to serving others—never abandoning the Marine motto of *Semper Fidelis*, "Always Faithful." I would like to thank Mr. Bowling for his many years of service to our Nation and our community. He is truly an outstanding American and an inspiration to us all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MATT SALMON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, due to a technical error on rollcall 38, my vote was inaccurately recorded as "yea." I have always been a vocal and firm supporter of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) waivers, which save taxpayer dollars and decrease red tape by allowing federal agencies to approve the use of federal public land for recreational fishing, hunting, and shooting without needless process and paperwork that has no benefit to wildlife or wildlife habitat.

I would like to state that my intended vote was "nay" for rollcall 38—On Agreeing to Amendment No. 6 by DEFAZIO of Oregon.

HONORING WILLIAM "BILL"
SINKIN

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late William "Bill" Sinkin, a truly remarkable citizen of San Antonio. Throughout his lifetime, Mr. Sinkin dedicated himself to improving and serving the city of San Antonio.

For almost 70 years, Mr. Sinkin dedicated his life to civic accomplishments and advocating for all citizens of San Antonio. He had a true passion for people, diversity, and innovation. Mr. Sinkin helped put San Antonio on the map as a tourist destination with his leadership role in creating HemisFair, a celebration of San Antonio's 250th anniversary and the first world fair to be held in Texas. Mr. Sinkin had a first-hand role in the redevelopment of HemisFair Park which eventually led to the Institute of Texan cultures, the Convention Center, and the River Walk.

Mr. Sinkin was a groundbreaking chairman of the San Antonio Housing Authority where he added 2,500 new housing units to the city, promoted diversity and hired the organization's first female executive director. He co-founded the Goodwill Industries of San Antonio in 1946, and provided employment opportunities for those affected with mental and physical disabilities and founded the Urban Coalition of San Antonio to address issues affecting low income communities.

Mr. Sinkin was a civic leader and active voice for the community throughout his entire life. As a banker, he advocated for racial equality, minority hiring, and business development by increasing minority representation and small business lending. In the way he lived his life, in the relationships he cultivated, and in the community groups he belonged to and nurtured, Mr. Sinkin fostered greater understanding between people from different cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Enduring relationships were created in the Jewish-Latino and Black-Jewish Dialogues which he was instrumental in starting.

As a pioneer and avid supporter of alternative energy, Mr. Sinkin worked to raise awareness about solar power. He founded Solar San Antonio in 1999, which promotes the use of solar electricity as a major source of power and launched Metropolitan Partnership for Energy which became Build San Antonio Green. Mr. Sinkin's efforts in alternative energy led to San Antonio being designated as a Solar America City.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had the opportunity to recognize the late Bill Sinkin. His extensive record of service and achievement has truly impacted many lives and our community.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DAN
B. KIMBALL AS SUPER-
INTENDENT OF EVERGLADES
NATIONAL PARK

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to rise today in order to celebrate the service and accomplishments of Mr. Dan B. Kimball, Superintendent of Everglades National Parks. After 10 years, Dan will be retiring in March 2014.

During his tenure as superintendent, Dan consistently demonstrated his expertise and unwavering commitment to the preservation of our national parks. Upon his arrival in 2004, he was entrusted with managing the park's involvement in the restoration of the Everglades, the largest ecosystem restoration project in the world. He and his team faced complex challenges with skill and resolve, making invaluable contributions to the ongoing defense of the Everglades and to the balance of Florida's ecosystem.

A 20-year veteran of the National Park Service (NPS), Dan also served as the Chief of National Park Service Water Resources Division. He was instrumental in the successful settlement of park water rights issues in the western United States, and in the continued protection of Yellowstone National Park. In addition, he has held positions at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Surface Mining (OSM), as well as in various environmental consulting firms. His accomplishments have earned him a number of awards, including the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOT) Superior Service Award (1989), the Stephen Tyng Mather Award for resource conservation given by the National Parks Conservation Association (1995), and the Pacific Northwest Regional Directors Award for Professional Excellence in Natural Resources (2002).

Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased that I had the opportunity to work with Mr. Dan Kimball. I want to offer my sincerest congratulations and heartfelt gratitude to him for all that he has done for the state of Florida and this nation. I wish him the very best on his retirement, and much success in his future pursuits.

CELEBRATING BERNITA PEEPLES

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Bernita Peeples, the newest honoree of the Yellow Rose of Texas Award for her tremendous legacy as a Texas woman of outstanding volunteer and public service. A pillar of the Belton, TX community, Bernita's life and career is a reflection of hard work, activism, and dedication to bringing news to central Texas.

Lucky enough to know what she wanted her life's work to be since she was a young lady, Bernita started her career as a reporter for The Belton Journal during her senior year of high school. In an age when the average worker stays on the job for just over four years, Bernita has been faithfully reporting to her desk for 80 years! While chronicling stories big and small, as well as producing regular and popular columns, she's seen The Belton Journal's circulation climb tenfold.

The unofficial historian of Belton, Bernita's truly seen it all. A career that began on a 1927 Royal typewriter witnessed the rise of personal computers, the Internet, and social media to transmit the news. While reporting on 13 presidential administrations, WWII, and nearly a century of American advancement and innovation, she's kept her ear to the ground in Belton, never forgetting the community she calls home.

Bernita took breaks from writing and even retired once. But like all who have a calling, she couldn't stay away from her profession and soon returned to journalism. She still has a desk at The Belton Journal office where she writes one feature per week. Even better, she still has the typewriter with which she started her career.

Bernita's work doesn't stop when the paper has gone to the printers. She's involved in many organizations, including the Bell County Historical Commission and 1874 Church Restoration, for which she posed on a motorcycle for a 2010 calendar. She didn't miss a meeting of the Belton Rotary Club for 19 years and she was the first woman to receive the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Citizen award.

The people of Belton and central Texas are lucky to have Bernita Peeples. She's a local treasure and a fitting recipient of the Yellow Rose of Texas Award. I join all who celebrate her enormous contributions to journalism and her beloved community.

CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION
FOR 60TH ANNUAL TUCSON GEM
AND MINERAL SHOW

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th Annual Tucson Gem and Mineral Show—the largest gem and mineral

exhibition in the United States and an event that has set the standard for such shows around the world.

The show, which will be held this year from Feb. 13–16, has been hosted for the past six decades by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society Inc. The show began as a club show and today is dedicated to presenting extraordinary mineral, gem, fossil, lapidary and jewelry exhibits that provide a rare window into private and museum collections from around the world.

The theme of this year's show is "60 years of Diamonds, Gems, Silver and Gold" and will feature a display of diamonds from the Smithsonian Institution.

As a result of interest generated by this long-running show, dozens of satellite shows have proliferated throughout the Tucson area—bringing with them gems, minerals, fossils, meteorites and other items from around the world. This weeks-long collection of events has become known as the Tucson Gem, Mineral and Fossil Showcase and attracts thousands of participants, enthusiasts and buyers from across the globe.

During the showcase, Tucsonans and visitors find everything from rare diamonds to boxes made of petrified wood. There are dinosaur skeletons, loose stones, jewelry, African art, beads, polished stones, minerals and gifts of every description.

None of this would have happened without the vision and the hard work by members and volunteers of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society Inc., which remains dedicated to promoting the study of earth sciences. I am proud to recognize the organization and its members including President Diane Braswell and Vice President John Callahan. Its other officers are Marilyn Reynolds, Ellen Alexander, Alrene Hibben, Madison Barkley, Mark Marikos, Bob O'Donnell, Mark Ascher and Robert and Elaine Royer. The chairman of this year's show is Paul Harter.

I am proud to recognize the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society Inc. on the occasion of its 60th Annual Tucson Gem and Mineral Show.

IN MEMORY OF HOUSTON COUNTY
ICON GUY PORTER GILLETTE

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Western Music Icon Guy Porter Gillette who is being honored this weekend in Houston County.

Guy left us on September 2nd, but his memory is alive and well. Guy was the son of famed photographer Guy and his wife Doris Gillette. He and his brother, Pipp, co-owned the Camp St. Café & Store where they enjoyed entertaining southeast Texas.

The brothers were raised in Yonkers, New York, but spent their summers at their grandparents' Lovelady ranch. Back in their teens, the brothers had a band called the Roadrunners. Their lead singer was a young woman named Diane Keaton, who later became a movie star. Guy met Diane while

studying at The Neighborhood Playhouse School of Theatre in Manhattan, NY and the brothers were known for playing coffee houses in many states, but Texas kept a piece of their hearts.

They inherited their grandparents' Lovelady ranch and shortly after Guy's return to Texas he met Cathi Stas from Wheeler. They married and welcomed daughter, Dorcie in 1995. After fixing up their family homestead, Camp Street in Crockett was their next project. They turned a pool hall and barbershop their grandfather built into a new music venue where they could entertain us with a unique mix of blues, cowboy ballads and Celtic folk songs. One never knew what was on the bill at Camp Street. It could be comedy one minute and vaudeville the next—and audiences loved it.

The awards stacked up for the Gillette Brothers: the Western Heritage Award for Best Traditional Western CD of 2010; two Cowboy Culture Awards; the Wrangler Award for Best Original Composition of 2012 for the song "Tradeoff"; as well as awards for their chuck wagon sourdough biscuits.

While cancer may have silenced Guy's tenor voice just two weeks after his father's passing, Cathi, Dorcie and Pipp have wonderful memories of music, laughter, and love to cherish.

Guy was a bright star that gave so much to Houston County, Texas. He will be missed. God bless Texas.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WORK OF
DR. AMPARO VILLABLANCA AND
THE 20TH YEAR OF THE WOMEN'S
CARDIOVASCULAR MEDICINE PROGRAM

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the work of Dr. Amparo Villablanca, Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at the University of California, Davis, and to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Women's Cardiovascular Medicine Program. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Villablanca, who has devoted her career in medicine to identifying and building awareness of the cardiovascular disease risk factors for women.

In 1994, Dr. Villablanca established the nation's first program dedicated to researching, preventing and treating heart disease in women. Heart disease is the leading cause of death of women in the United States, causing one in three deaths each year, more than all forms of cancer combined. Dr. Villablanca has conducted laboratory research that has advanced scientific knowledge of the unique biological causes and indicators of heart disease in women.

Dr. Villablanca has actively engaged with grassroots organizations in conducting community-based research to identify and mitigate heart disease risk factors among populations most at risk, including African American and Hispanic women. Her tireless advocacy for women's heart health earned her a place on

the Woman's Day magazine Heart Health Advisory Board and the magazine's inaugural Red Dress Award.

Furthermore, this year marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Women's Cardiovascular Medicine Program at the University of California, Davis, which recognizes the importance of research and patient-care programs to identify the risk factors and preventions for heart disease among women. As part of the program, Dr. Villablanca has hosted the annual Women's Heart Care Education and Awareness Forum since 2006 to encourage community champions for women's health and expand appreciation for lifestyles and health behaviors that benefit cardiovascular health. In 2010, Dr. Villablanca forged an innovative partnership with the UC Davis Department of Design to create and display a collection of student-designed red dresses and ensure heart-health messages reach a younger generation of women. The Forum embraces the link between health and art that the UC Davis Red Dress Collection represents and its role in engaging young women in understanding the importance of paying attention to their heart health.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in recognizing the ongoing work of Dr. Amparo Villablanca and the UC Davis Women's Cardiovascular Medicine Program in providing a woman-centered, culturally sensitive and respectful approach to patient care.

HONORING MORRIS TURNER

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Morris "Morrie" Turner, former cartoonist for the Oakland Tribune. Known throughout the Bay Area and the Nation by his cartoon strip "Wee Pals," Mr. Turner has left an indelible mark on our national discourse. With his passing on January 25, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of his life's work and the inspiring role he played in breaking racial barriers as the first nationally syndicated African American cartoonist.

Born on December 11, 1923 Morrie Turner was born and raised in Oakland. His passion for drawing began as a young child. After graduating from Berkeley High School, Mr. Turner served in World War II as a mechanic for the Tuskegee Airmen. During this time, he drew comic strips for military newspapers. Once returning back to the Bay Area, he worked as a clerk for the Oakland Police Department while freelancing cartoons to newspapers and magazines. In 1964, Mr. Turner's drive and admiration for cartooning inspired him to create cartoons full time.

During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, Morrie Turner realized that African American kids rarely appeared in cartoons. Inspired by Charles Schulz's "Peanuts" cartoon, Mr. Turner began creating a comic strip featuring kids from all backgrounds called "Wee

Pals." In the beginning, only a few papers would run the strip. After the tragic event of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968, "Wee Pals" achieved national recognition, appearing in more than 100 newspapers.

Morrie Turner's "Wee Pals" covered issues of racism, sexism and bullying. His hope was "to portray a world without prejudice, a world in which people's differences—race, religion gender and physical and mental ability—are cherished not scorned." There was a wide range of characters, encompassing many different ethnicities. The success of the comic strip inspired an animated television show called "Kid Power." As he continued to produce comic strips, Mr. Turner wrote and illustrated children's books.

Renowned for his cartoons and children's books, Mr. Turner received numerous awards. Among the many prestigious awards, he received the Sparky Award from San Francisco's Cartoon Art Museum, the Anti-Defamation League's humanitarian award, the Boys and Girls Club Image Award and the California Educators Award. During the Vietnam War, Mr. Turner had the honor as one of six cartoonists with the National Cartoonist Society to travel to Vietnam and draw more than 3,000 caricatures of the service people on the frontlines and in hospitals.

Morrie Turner left an imprint on many generations by addressing these important topics still facing our Nation. He found a creative way to educate children and reach out to approximately 25 million readers with his "Wee Pals" cartoon. In addition, he was actively involved in educational programs and charities in the Bay Area.

On several occasions I was humbled to be one of Morrie's caricatures in his very creative, educational and funny cartoons. When I met him, I knew I was in the presence of not only a brilliant intellect but a soaring spirit. It was an honor and a privilege to have been in his presence on many occasions.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and cartoonist, Morris Turner. As an Oakland native, Mr. Turner's efforts have truly paved the way for minorities and impacted so many lives throughout the Nation. I join all of Morrie's loved ones in celebrating his incredible life. He will be deeply missed.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOHN COLACCHIO

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding member of the Central Florida community, John Colacchio. Mr. Colacchio is an 89-year-old veteran of the Second World War who recently participated in an Honor Flight. The Honor Flight, comprised of 50 World War II, Korean, and Vietnam veterans, was a one-day event in which these veterans flew from Florida to Wash-

ington, D.C. and visited the memorials to their fallen comrades. A native of Long Island, New York, Mr. Colacchio was drafted at the age of 18 after graduating from high school. He bravely fought with the Army's 2nd Infantry Division in historic battles including the Invasion of Normandy. Mr. Colacchio served with distinction for two years and nine months. He earned the rank of Staff Sergeant and was awarded a Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts.

After his service, Mr. Colacchio returned to work at the Long Island Railroad, where he worked for another 34 years. In 2008, after the passing of his beloved wife, Laura, Mr. Colacchio moved to be near his only child, in Celebration, Florida. His daughter, Barbara, is a Marine Corps veteran and served as Honor Guardian on his recent Honor Flight. On Veterans Day 2013, his daughter and friends dedicated a memorial brick in his name at the Veterans Memorial Park in Celebration.

Mr. Colacchio sacrificed greatly to help our country in a time of need. He served with dedication and bravery and has remained active in the veteran community. It is my pleasure to recognize his accomplishments and contributions to the community.

HONORING KEIFER MARSHALL, JR

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Keifer Marshall, Jr., recipient of the Drayton and Elizabeth McClain Community Achievement Award for individuals who truly exemplify public service leadership. Marshall's life of sacrifice and activism reflects the very best values of central Texas.

Marshall, a native son of Temple, TX, bravely stepped forward when his country needed him most and served in the U.S. Marine Corps during WWII. Stationed in the Pacific Theater, he fought the ferocity of the Japanese head on. At Iwo Jima, the casualties of his company were the severest of the entire campaign. Out of 250 Marines, Marshall was one of the lucky few to survive.

This proud Marine is also a committed citizen. Marshall returned to Temple and began the next chapter of his life of extraordinary service. A member of numerous councils and boards, he later became a City Councilman and a two-term Mayor. Marshall was President of the Temple Chamber of Commerce, was commissioned a Kentucky Colonel, and was awarded Temple Citizen of the Year honors in 1992. He remains a respected leader who's made a real and positive impact on his community.

Ronald Reagan once said, "Some people live an entire lifetime wondering if they've made a difference in the world, Marines don't have that problem." Keifer Marshall is a local treasure and a fitting recipient of the Drayton and Elizabeth McClain Community Achievement Award. I join all who celebrate his selfless service to his nation and his hometown.

HONORING GEORGE PHIL WRIGHT

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. George Phil Wright of Rolla, Missouri for his years of exemplary service to his country through the United States Air Force. Mr. Wright's career as meteorological technician first began when he entered the Air Force as a weather apprentice in 1964. His active military service includes assignments in Illinois, Missouri, South Carolina and Turkey. Mr. Wright was a distinguished airman earning several awards including the Air Force Good Conduct Medal and Air Force Expert Marksman Ribbon. He also completed the Non-Commissioned Officer Leadership School at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey.

After ten years of active military service, Staff Sergeant Wright separated from the Air Force and was hired as a civil service weather observer at McEntire Air Force National Guard Base, South Carolina. He was later promoted to his most current position at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. At Fort Leonard he manages three weather technicians and provides weather support to 4th MEB, 1st of the 106th Air Assault Company, U.S. Army Engineer School, Military Police School, and the U.S. Army CBRN School. Mr. Wright has earned many awards and accolades during his time serving as a weather observer. On May 15, 2014 Mr. Wright will have completed 50 years of service to the United States Air Force Service. It is my pleasure to recognize his efforts and achievements before the House of Representatives.

TO RECOGNIZE JACK CORY FOR HIS WORK WITH THE FLORIDA ALLIANCE OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

HON. DENNIS A. ROSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jack Cory for his work with the Florida Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs.

Boys & Girls Club organizations located across Florida serve over 161,000 youths between the ages of 6 and 18 annually.

Since 2006, Jack has represented the Florida Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs—fighting to secure funding for over 40 member organizations.

This funding is vital for the Florida Alliance of Boys & Girls Club's mission to help young people; especially those who need us most to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible adults.

By encouraging civic involvement at a young age, Jack has also empowered entire generations of young Floridians remain active in their respective communities for years to come.

Again, I rise to recognize Jack Cory for his achievements, and his hard work and dedica-

tion to the Florida Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF COMMUNITY OPTIONS

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Community Options of New Jersey, as they celebrate their 25th anniversary this year.

Founded in 1989, Community Options, Inc. was established around the belief that all people should have the freedom to experience the highest degree of self-determination. The nonprofit is built around that philosophy and provides housing and support services, and advocates on behalf of people with disabilities.

Originating in New Jersey, Community Options has expanded its services across multiple states to support people with mental retardation, autism, physical disabilities, traumatic brain injury and dual diagnoses. Recognizing that people with the most severe disabilities require environments and support that are tailored to very specific needs, Community Options works with state and county based authorities to facilitate community placement and work opportunities that encourage individual choice and flexibility.

Community Options is the sixth-largest nonprofit organization in New Jersey, and has developed a number of partnerships with Non-Governmental Organizations in countries across the world. Providing advocacy assistance to empower people with disabilities, Community Options believes that all people, regardless of disability level, should live and work in the community with dignity, choice and self-determination.

I have seen firsthand how their facilities in Wayne and Morristown work to create the best possible environment for persons with disabilities. This includes 24-hour residential services, supported employment to match people with disabilities for competitive jobs, entrepreneurial businesses, as well as programs supporting persons with very significant medical needs.

The mission and work of Community Options has made the nonprofit an important asset to New Jersey. Their continued dedication to support thousands of families, and champion the rights of persons with disabilities, is to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Community Options, Inc. of New Jersey as they celebrate their 25th anniversary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN A. YARMUTH

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 10, 2014

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall 50 on final passage of H.R. 3694, the Sac-

ramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Deliver Act, my vote was incorrectly recorded as "yes." I intended to vote "no."

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 12

10 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) reauthorization, focusing on the economic importance of maintaining Federal investments in our transportation infrastructure.

SD-406

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine extreme weather events, focusing on the costs of not being prepared.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold an oversight to examine the report of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board on Reforms to the Section 215 telephone records program and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.

SD-226

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine bipartisan support for improving United States elections, focusing on an overview from the Presidential Commission on Election Administration.

SR-301

Special Committee on Aging

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold a joint hearing to examine the challenges and advantages of senior entrepreneurship.

SD-562

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Rules and Administration

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Thomas Hicks, of Virginia, and Myrna Perez, of Texas, both to be a Member of the Election Assistance Commission.

SR-301

- Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration. SR-428
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Energy
To hold an oversight hearing to examine lessons for Federal policy from state efficiency and renewable programs. SD-366
- Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine fisheries treaties and Port State Measures Agreements. SD-419
- Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Indian Law and Order Commission Report, focusing on a roadmap for making Native America safer. SD-628
- FEBRUARY 13
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Robert O. Work, to be Deputy Secretary, and Michael J. McCord, of Ohio, to be Under Secretary (Comptroller), both of the Department of Defense. SD-G50
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Rhea Sun Suh, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, and Janice Marion Schneider, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, both of the Department of the Interior. SD-366
- Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine how a fair minimum wage will help working families succeed. SD-430
- Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the intelligence community, focusing on keeping watch over its contractor workforce. SD-342
- Committee on the Judiciary
Business meeting to consider S. 1675, to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, S. 149, to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and the nominations of Steven Paul Logan, John Joseph Tuchi, Diane J. Humetewa, Rosemary Marquez, Douglas L. Rayes, and James Alan Soto, all to be a United States District Judge for the District of Arizona. SD-226
- 10:30 a.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress. SD-538
- 11:30 a.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine Syria spill-over, focusing on the growing threat of terrorism and sectarianism in the Middle East. SD-419
- 2 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Joseph William Westphal, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Douglas Alan Silliman, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, and Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Independent State of Samoa, all of the Department of State. SD-419
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security
To hold hearings to examine enhancing our rail safety, focusing on current challenges for passenger and freight rail. SR-253
- Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of John P. Carlin, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice. SD-138
- FEBRUARY 25
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Christine E. Wormuth, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Policy, Brian P. McKeon, of New York, to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Policy, David B. Shear, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, and Eric Rosenbach, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense, all of the Department of Defense. SD-G50
- MARCH 5
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program. SH-216
- MARCH 6
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command and United States Africa Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program. SD-G50
- MARCH 11
- 2:15 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session. SR-222
- MARCH 13
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program. SD-G50
- MARCH 27
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program. SD-G50
- APRIL 3
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program. SD-G50
- APRIL 10
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program. SD-106

SENATE—Tuesday, February 11, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RICHARD J. DURBIN, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, clothed with honor and majesty, You make the clouds Your chariot and walk upon the wind. You cause the Earth to yield its harvest and send blessings to those who fear You.

Guide our lawmakers today to fulfill Your purposes. Lord, enable them to see the stamp of Your image in each person they serve, realizing that when they lift the marginalized, they labor for You. Use them to bring order out of chaos as You keep them on the road of integrity. Reward their diligence with Your bountiful blessings.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICHARD J. DURBIN, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DURBIN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The majority Leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Repub-

lican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1963, the Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act. Senator-designate JOHN WALSH of Montana will become a Senator today at 12:15. The Senate will recess today from 12:30 until 2:15 to allow for our weekly caucus meetings.

WELCOMING LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOHN WALSH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today it is my pleasure to welcome the next Senator from Montana, Lt. Gov. JOHN WALSH. Governor WALSH will be sworn in prior to the weekly caucus meetings.

I am really happy with this man coming here. My friend the assistant leader has heard me say this before, but I think it is worth repeating. When I served in the House of Representatives, I served on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and Henry Kissinger appeared before the subcommittee chaired by Congressman Solarz from New York. The Congressman said to Henry Kissinger: "I am really at a loss as to what to call you. Doctor?" He was a Ph.D. "Mr. Ambassador?" He had been an ambassador. "Mr. Secretary?" He went through some other titles he previously had. Finally, Kissinger interrupted him and said: "Your Excellency" would be just fine.

We now have the same problem. JOHN WALSH has been a general. He has been Lieutenant Governor, and it is protocol when one is Lieutenant Governor to be referred to as "Governor." So he has a number of different titles, but soon he will be Senator.

I have talked to him on many different occasions. He is a fine man. I am confident he will find his time here among the most rewarding experiences of his distinguished career. And he is distinguished. He spent his entire adult life serving the people of Montana and our Nation.

Lieutenant Governor WALSH served in the Montana National Guard for more than three decades. After enlisting as a private, he rose through the ranks to lead the Montana National Guard as Adjutant General. He led 2,000 guardsmen in response to the devastating wildfires in 2000. General WALSH also led 700 soldiers of the Montana National Guard's 1st Battalion, 163rd Infantry Regiment in combat in Iraq. And combat it was. It was some of the most difficult fighting that took place in the entire war. It was the largest mobilization of guardsmen in Montana since World War II. The battalion was awarded the Valorous Unit Citation, and General WALSH received a Bronze Star for his exemplary service.

In 2008 Lieutenant Governor WALSH was appointed Adjutant General for the Montana National Guard. He led the State's guardsmen until 2012, when he retired to continue his public service in a new capacity as Lieutenant Governor of the State of Montana. Both as Adjutant General and as Lieutenant Governor, he has fought for access to education for veterans and for every Montana child. The Walsh family places great value on the power of education. Lieutenant Governor WALSH was the first member of his family to graduate from college. His wife of 29 years, Janet, has taught in the public schools in Montana for many years. In fact, John and Janet met while they were both attending Carroll College in Helena, MT. They have two children and one grandchild, all of whom they are very proud. JOHN WALSH received his master's degree at the U.S. Army War College in 2007.

JOHN WALSH possesses a true independent Western spirit and a commendable dedication to the people of Montana. I have no doubt he will continue to serve his State and the Nation with distinction as a U.S. Senator.

RESTORING EARNED PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in addition to the swearing-in of Lieutenant Governor WALSH, I expect that this afternoon the Senate will adopt the motion to proceed to legislation to restore the earned pensions of military retirees. This measure restores cost-of-living adjustments for military retirees. Although no veterans will be affected until the end of next year, there is no reason to delay a solution. I will continue to work with my Republican colleagues to process what we need to do to pass this important measure. We know the Ayotte amendment is one Republican have indicated they want a vote on, and I see no reason why we shouldn't allow them to have a vote on it.

OBAMACARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was surprised this morning to hear Republicans literally howling over President Obama's decision to ease the transition for medium-sized businesses to providing health insurance for all of their employees. Republicans have complained that health care reform is a burden to employers, but now they are complaining that President Obama is trying to ease that burden and smooth the transition to a new system. Think about that one.

But this Republican duplicity should come as no surprise. After all, Republicans are the ones who invented the individual mandate. It was their idea. It is a conservative idea that every American has a responsibility to seek insurance to cover their health care needs, and the government has a responsibility to make that coverage accessible and affordable. But now Republicans are attacking their own brain child—the individual mandate. The individual mandate was their idea, and Republicans are willfully ignoring the fact that the Affordable Care Act creates a transition period for individuals to obtain insurance as well.

It is time for Republicans to stop talking out of both sides of their mouths. If they have legitimate concerns about the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare, and not just political gripes, they should work with the President and the Democrats in Congress to fix and improve the law; otherwise, they should stop complaining and get out of the way.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

IRS REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the two parties have engaged in a lot of big debates over the past several years, and no one, obviously, should be surprised by that. The President came into office vowing to fundamentally transform the country, and a lot of us have had big problems with the policies he has tried to implement in pursuit of that goal. But there are some things we should all agree on, and one of them is this: No President—no President of either party—should use the power of the Federal Government to punish his ideological opponents. That is why, when the targeting of conservative groups by the IRS came to light after the last Presidential election, just about everybody denounced the Nixonian tactics up and down and loudly declared that it should never be allowed to happen again. They knew that this kind of targeting represented a direct attack on our most fundamental freedoms—on our abilities to organize and educate and engage in the democratic process. And while the abuse may have been aimed at conservatives this time, it is easy to see how it could one day be used against organizations of any ideological hue.

So America's culture of civic engagement simply has to be defended—by all of us. Yet, with the passage of time, that is not what we have seen. Instead of putting safeguards in place to protect our civil liberties, the Obama administration is now dragging the IRS back in the opposite direction. It is

now pushing a regulation that would actually entrench and encourage the harassment of groups who dare to speak up and engage in the conversation. It is trying to intimidate into silence those who send donations to civic groups too.

Predictably, the Obama administration has tried to spin these regulations as some sort of “good government” measure, as reforms initiated in response to the IRS scandal, but, of course, we know that is simply not true. In recent days we learned that these regulations—regulations designed to suppress free speech—have been in the works for years.

So let's be clear. All of this is simply unacceptable. After denouncing the abuse last year, I believe it is shortsighted of our friends on the other side not to oppose these rules forcefully today. The path this administration is embarking on is a dangerous one with the slipperiest of slopes. Left-leaning civic groups should be just as alarmed about what these regulations could mean for them in the future as what the rules almost certainly will mean for conservative groups today. That is why some, such as the ACLU, have begun to speak out against these regulations.

Last week I joined several of my colleagues in sending a letter to the new Commissioner for the IRS that laid out these concerns. We reminded Commissioner Koskinen that he was confirmed with a mandate to reform the IRS and return the agency to its actual mission—processing tax returns, not suppressing speech. We expect him to fulfill that mandate—to prove his reformist credentials—by halting the regulations immediately and to enact new rules that would stop similar harassment from occurring in the future. This is something the Commissioner can and must do now. He needs to realize this isn't some issue to move past but a serious threat to be confronted.

Commissioner Koskinen could go down in history as a hero, as did the IRS Commissioner who stood up to Nixon and said no to harassment of political opponents. I want to believe that this is the choice he will make, that he wants to be remembered as a strong and independent public servant rather than some political pawn. But we can't be sure what he will do, and the American people need a backup plan in case he decides his fealty lies with the opponents of free speech rather than with them.

That is why today I, along with Senators FLAKE, ROBERTS, HATCH, and others, have introduced legislation that would prevent the IRS from enacting regulations that would permit the suppression of First Amendment rights. It aims to return the agency to its mission and get it out of the speech police business altogether—a goal that should be a bipartisan one.

This is something worth fighting for. It is something I hope Commissioner Koskinen will work with us to achieve. But if he does not—if he does not—he should know we are prepared to go to the mat to defend the First Amendment rights of our constituents and our neighbors—and that we will continue to do so until those rights are safe once again.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1963, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 298, S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

AYOTTE AMENDMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Presiding Officer is new to the Senate, and we are glad to have him. He will find in the course of his senatorial experience that occasionally good legislative ideas come from unexpected places. Occasionally they come from phone calls to your office, emails, and letters, where people tell their stories, and from those stories you see the need for a new law, a change in policy.

That happened to me 13 years ago. A Korean-American mother called my office in Chicago with a problem. Her problem was that her daughter Tereza was about to graduate from high school and had an opportunity to go, on scholarship, to the Manhattan Conservatory of Music in New York.

This was a poor family. Mom worked at a dry cleaners. They barely got by. But her daughter had an extraordinary musical talent. She was an accomplished pianist, even as a senior in high school, and this was her chance.

As her daughter started to fill out the application form for the Manhattan Conservatory of Music, there was a box that asked her to identify her nationality, her citizenship. She turned to her mom and said: What should I put here? Her mother said: I'm not sure.

You see, Tereza Lee was brought to the United States at the age of 2 on a visitor's visa. When the visa expired, her mom, her dad, and she stayed in the United States and did nothing else. Technically Tereza, having lived about 16 years in this country, was just another undocumented kid.

So they called my office and said: What do we do about this? Well, we checked the law. The law is very clear. Tereza and those just like her were to be deported from the United States for a minimum of 10 years and then be allowed to petition to come back in.

That seemed to me fundamentally unfair. So I wrote a change for the law called the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act said if you are a child under the age of 16 brought to this country by parents, if you will finish high school, have no serious criminal record, and you are prepared to go to college or enlist in the military, we will put you on a path to citizenship.

I introduced that 13 years ago. As you can see, the wheels of justice grind exceedingly slow in the U.S. Senate. But over the years, this idea of the DREAM Act has really caught hold. The reason is not because of me; it is because of the DREAMers. Initially, they were frightened, afraid of deportation, raised as children in families where they were warned every day: Be careful. Do not get in a position where you are going to get arrested. You will get deported, and the whole family might get deported. We don't want to break up our family, so be careful. So they held back in the shadows, wondering, worrying about a knock on the door.

Over time, though, something happened, and I cannot explain it. The same kids who used to stand outside my meetings, after I would talk about the DREAM Act in Chicago—waiting in the darkness, in the shadows, to tell me, in a whisper, they were DREAMers—decided to step up and speak to the United States, to identify themselves. It was an act of courage. Some people say: Well, they were kids, and kids do rash things. I think it was more courageous than rash.

I came to the floor on more than 50 different occasions to tell the story of the DREAMers: who they are, what they have done, what they hope to do—amazing stories, incredible stories, of young people across America just asking for a chance to be legalized, to be part of America's future. They felt they were Americans start to finish.

The Presiding Officer's colleague, Senator BOB MENEZES, used to talk about Hispanics, who are the largest group of DREAMers, standing in those classrooms, hand over their heart, pledging allegiance to the only flag they have ever known, who faced the cruel reality that they were not going to be American citizens unless we changed the law.

Here is the good news. Over time—a long time; 13 years—the sentiment not just of the American people but of Members of Congress started to change. It changed for the better. The House of Representatives enacted the DREAM Act. Even the Senate, in the comprehensive immigration reform bill

this last year, enacted the strongest DREAM Act ever written.

In fact, just last week, when Speaker BOEHNER, in the midst of his examination, if you will, of the immigration issue, issued a statement of principles, smack-dab in the middle of it, in clear language, was an endorsement of the DREAM Act. So although the Speaker may have some misgivings—and I am sorry to say I disagree with him—but may have some misgivings about comprehensive immigration reform, he acknowledged that on a bipartisan basis the DREAM Act was something that both parties should embrace.

I still believe in comprehensive immigration reform. The DREAMers will be the first to say: Don't forget my mom and dad when you are talking about immigration reform. But the reason I give this preface to my remarks is to put in perspective an amendment which will be on the floor of the Senate this week offered by Senator KELLY AYOTTE of New Hampshire. It is an amendment which addresses a provision of the Tax Code.

Here is what our laws currently say when it comes to taxes and families working in America. If you are undocumented, you are not legally allowed to work in America. That is what the law says. But if you do work in America, even undocumented, you have a legal obligation to pay your taxes. So how would an undocumented worker pay their taxes? Well, they would have an ITIN, they call it, a basic identification number that they can use to file their tax returns; and so many do.

Undocumented workers here in the United States pay their income taxes, as required by law. One of the provisions in our Tax Code—for every taxpayer—says if you are in certain income categories, you are allowed to claim a credit for your children. It helps 38 million American families who take this credit on their tax returns because they are working families and have children and the Tax Code said: We will help you raise your children.

On its face, it is worth about \$1,000 a year in reduced taxes. But there are limitations. If your income reaches certain levels, you do not qualify for this tax credit.

Now comes Senator AYOTTE who makes a proposal that we basically change this child tax credit as it applies to the tax-paying undocumented workers—that we say to them their children can only be claimed for this child tax credit if the children can produce a Social Security number. Therein lies the problem, because many of these children, although they are legally claimed today, do not have a Social Security number.

Let's talk about DREAMers, because that is a group affected most directly by the Ayotte amendment. DREAMers—those who would qualify if the DREAM Act becomes law—have been

given a special status because of President Obama. He created a deferred deportation, deferred action program so that DREAMers could step up, identify themselves to the government, register, be given a work permit, and be allowed to apply for a Social Security number—DACA it is called.

We estimate there are about 2.1 million eligible DREAMers in America for the law that I want to change. So far, a half a million of them have applied for DACA and therefore can obtain Social Security numbers. That leaves 1.6 million DREAMers who cannot, under the Ayotte amendment, be counted as children under the child tax credit.

So ultimately what Senator AYOTTE is doing is to deny those who are working in America and paying their income taxes that provision of the Tax Code which says: You get a special consideration for your children. I think that is just plain wrong.

Listen to these numbers: The child tax credit—a refundable credit for working families—of \$1,000 for each child under the age of 17 is limited, as I mentioned earlier. The most anyone can claim for the tax credit is 15 percent of family income minus \$3,000, regardless of the number of children. For example, a minimum-wage worker earning \$14,500 with two or more children would receive at most \$1,725 as a tax credit or refundable tax credit. The credit is only available for taxpayers who are working, earning income, and raising children.

The Ayotte amendment, though, has to be put in this perspective. Nearly 38 million families are expected to benefit from this child tax credit this year—I should say this year, filing for last year's income. Sixty percent of those who claim this tax credit earn less than \$25,000 a year. Nearly half of the workers, members of families working in America claiming the child tax credit, earn \$10 an hour or less, and 90 percent of those who would be hurt by the Ayotte amendment are Hispanic.

The tax credit is legally available for qualified taxpayers who have children with ITINs—these are individual tax identification numbers—and not everyone who uses an ITIN is undocumented. This amendment, the Ayotte amendment, would also affect lawfully present children who use ITINs, including victims of human trafficking, DREAMers, as I mentioned, under DACA, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and those with a pending application for asylum.

The child tax credit, we estimate, lifts about 3 million people, including 1.5 million children, out of poverty every year. It is an incentive for these low-income families who are working and paying taxes but not earning enough to take care of their kids. The Ayotte amendment would eliminate the use of a tax credit for 1 million

children, pushing many low- and moderate-income families with children deeper into poverty.

What Senator AYOTTE is trying to do is to use the proceeds from this amendment she is offering to pay for the cost-of-living adjustment under the military pensions. Those veterans have already paid for their pensions. They paid by volunteering to serve this country and risk their lives. Some of them have come home with visible and invisible wounds of war that will be with them for a lifetime.

I do not believe we should come up with a pay-for for something these veterans have already paid for, No. 1. And, No. 2, I think it is unfair for us to impoverish more children in America as a means of helping our veterans. What a cruel choice to put before the U.S. Senate.

Do not take my word for it. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the statement I am about to refer to be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the NETWORK, Feb. 10, 2014]

IMMIGRANT FAMILIES SHOULD NOT PAY THE PRICE

(By Simone Campbell)

For a while now, kids—particularly those in immigrant families—have been unfairly under attack in the Senate, and the only plausible explanation is unconscionable: to score political points.

Sen. Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., recently proposed variations of a plan to strip away the refundable Child Tax Credit that now goes to millions of children of taxpaying immigrant workers in low-wage jobs.

Ayotte alleges that immigrants are fleeing taxpayers by claiming children who do not live in the country or do not really exist. At one point, the senator said she wanted money gained by denying the tax credit to pay for extension of emergency unemployment insurance benefits. Then she switched her focus to helping restore earlier cuts to veterans' pension benefits. In fact, there are much fairer sources of funding for these goals. For example, New Hampshire's other senator, Jeanne Shaheen, said veterans' benefits could be paid for by closing offshore tax loopholes.

In the end, it doesn't really matter where the money would go since taking money away from children of low-wage, tax-paying families is indefensible. Ayotte's proposal is misguided and antithetical to the Gospel call to care for children and those at the margins of society. It violates our long-held values as a nation, and it should be rejected.

To set the record straight, children targeted by her plan do exist and they do live in the U.S. Four million of them are U.S. citizens and others are "little DREAMers," young children brought to this country by their families. Under existing tax laws, their families may apply for the child tax credit if they qualify financially. If fraud is suspected, the solution is not to deny all eligible children access to this critical anti-poverty program. That is cruel and ineffective.

The Child Tax Credit is a proven success in addressing poverty. Senators concerned about child poverty agree that funding for

other programs can be found without targeting needy children.

Ayotte says she understands families' needs, yet wants to deny a child tax credit to taxpaying immigrant families. Actions speak louder than words, and her proposal hurts families.

Our political leaders should never place poor children in a position of competing with other vulnerable populations for funds that help pay for food and other basic needs.

Deliberately harming immigrant families goes against the fundamental goodwill of Americans, including thousands of people we met last year as our "Nuns on the Bus" traveled 6,500 miles across the U.S. to speak out for justice. Throughout our journey, we stood with, prayed with, and heard the stories of hundreds of immigrants who have long served the needs of our nation.

Responsible leaders in Congress should look into their hearts and reject proposals like this one pushed by Ayotte. This political tactic is not good for our economy or the wellbeing of our entire nation—especially children who are the future of our country. We are better than this.

Mr. DURBIN. Sister Simone Campbell is somebody whom I greatly respect. Sister Simone Campbell is executive director of NETWORK, a national Catholic social justice lobby. She is also one of the organizers of Nuns on the Bus, Catholic nuns who have traveled all over the United States speaking out on issues of social justice.

She has sent us a statement opposing the Ayotte amendment. It is a lengthy statement. I will not read it all, but I do want to read several parts that I think are important. Sister Simone Campbell says:

To set the record straight, children targeted by [the Ayotte amendment] do exist and they do live in the U.S. Four million of them are U.S. citizens and others are "little DREAMers," young children brought to this country by their families. Under existing tax laws, their families may apply for the child tax credit if they qualify financially. If fraud is suspected, the solution is not to deny all eligible children access to this critical anti-poverty program. That is cruel and ineffective.

Those are the words of Sister Simone Campbell in reference to this proposed amendment. She concludes by saying:

Responsible leaders in Congress should look into their hearts and reject proposals like this one pushed by [Senator] Ayotte. This political tactic is not good for our economy or the wellbeing of our entire nation—especially children who are the future of our country. We are better than this.

I agree with Sister Campbell. Why is it, week after week, from the other side of the aisle, from the other side of the Rotunda, we hear proposal after proposal to make it harder for working families, and particularly lower income families, to get by in America?

When we talked about unemployment benefits for those who have lost their jobs so they can find additional work, only four Republican Senators would step up and join us in that effort. When we talk about extending the minimum wage so that those who get up and go to work every single day have a fight-

ing chance, the opposition consistently comes from the other side of the aisle.

Now we have before us this proposal to change the Tax Code to the disadvantage of the poorest workers and the poorest families and the poorest children in America. We are better than this. Sister Campbell is right. I would say to my colleagues, if you believe in the DREAM Act—and many of you have said you do—you cannot vote for the Ayotte amendment without realizing what it does to these children. To impoverish these children on 1 day in the Senate, and before that say that we think they should be citizens some day—we have to have a consistent moral ethic when it comes to the way we treat children in America.

Denying children the most basics in life, whether it is food stamps or assistance on the tax returns of their parents, is just not what America should be about. This Ayotte amendment will really call into question our dedication to these kids and their families. These workers are stepping up, meeting their legal obligation to pay their taxes. All they are asking for is to be treated like everyone else under the Tax Code. The Ayotte amendment will deny that to millions of these children. That is absolutely unacceptable.

Now, let me address a very real issue. Senator AYOTTE has identified some instances—I do not know how many—of fraud in the use of this child tax credit. I stand with her in trying to fight back and end that fraud. But let's be honest. A person making barely minimum wage, filing their tax returns and claiming this credit, is not likely to set out to game the system.

The people who are gaming the system are the tax preparers. They are the ones who may be lying to the government and are guilty of fraud. I will join with Senator AYOTTE and any other colleague who wants to stop that perpetration of fraud. I do not stand for fraud in any program. I do not think any Senator would. But to take this out on the children and low-income taxpayers is just plain wrong.

I urge my colleagues, let's stand by the veterans and restore their pensions. Let's do it as quickly as we can. But please do not help our veterans at the expense of children in America. This is an important amendment. It is one that calls into question our values. I urge my colleagues to look at this very carefully.

This is the last point I will make before I yield the floor; I see other colleagues here. I support comprehensive immigration reform. If the Ayotte amendment is enacted into law, the cost of bringing the DREAMers into citizenship has just gone up by billions of dollars, which we will have to raise to undo the Ayotte amendment at a future time. Let's not put ourselves in that position.

For the good of these children and their families and to put this Nation in

the right place by fixing our broken immigration system, I urge my colleagues to oppose the Ayotte amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRS POLITICAL TARGETING

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise today to bring attention to the latest installment concerning political targeting by the IRS. Last spring we learned of the IRS's targeting of conservative groups that were applying for 401(c)(4) tax exempt status, thanks to a report by the IRS's inspector general. This report detailed how the IRS singled out conservative groups for excessive scrutiny, which caused some applications to lie pending for more than 3 years and another 28 organizations to actually give up on their unanswered application.

The President claimed the targeting was due solely to "boneheaded decisions." Unfortunately, with the head of the tax-exempt organizations unit at the agency, Lois Lerner, choosing to plead the Fifth and resigning rather than answer questions before Congress, we may find that the source of this problem is a little more troubling than that.

Thankfully, multiple investigations are taking place to answer lingering questions such as this one. I look forward to their findings wherever they may lead. Uncovering who directed and participated in the inappropriate targeting and why will allow us to bring justice to the groups affected and ensure that no such targeting like this occurs again.

So imagine my surprise when over the Thanksgiving holiday I learned that the IRS had diagnosed the problem and offered its regulatory solution, despite the fact that multiple investigations are far from complete. On Friday, November 29, without warning, the IRS published a proposed rule that would restrict the activities of 501(c)(4) organizations, effectively limiting their speech and curtailing their civic participation.

This brings a whole new meaning to the term "Black Friday." This rule singles out the same conservative groups that were previously targeted by the IRS and threatens to shut them down. It further attempts to legitimize the targeting of organizations that hold ideological views that are inconsistent with the administration's views.

It should be no surprise, since critics of these conservative organizations have openly called for their extinction, that this is occurring. At the least, some would like to force 401(c)(4) orga-

nizations into ill-fitting structures devised more appropriately for political committees in order to require the disclosure of conservative supporters.

The IRS and the White House claim innocently that the proposed rule is meant to clear up confusion about the process of applications for 501(c)(4) organizations involved in political activities. Over the past several months, we have heard this administration tell the public multiple times how confusing the applications are. Yet 501(c)(4) applications have been processed for years without excessive complaints of confusion that has occurred in recent months.

In fact, before the IRS began flagging the applications of conservative groups in February 2010, these types of applications were being processed within 3 months. Email traffic between IRS employees shows that the applications of conservative organizations were not flagged out of confusion but, rather, because of media attention and potential interest to Washington.

So let's call this rule what it is. It is an attempt to silence the voices of conservative organizations. To be clear, 501(c)(4)s are permitted to engage in the political process and in political discourse, and they should continue to be allowed to do so. But this regulation seeks to limit their participation in a host of advocacy and education activities, even nonpartisan voter registration and education drives.

These activities have a clear role in promoting civic engagement and social welfare, the precise purpose of the 501(c)(4) structure. Unfortunately, the rule would suppress conservative voices by forcing organizations to quit these activities or to be shut down. In fact, according to evidence collected by the House Ways and Means Committee and Chairman DAVE CAMP, the administration has been working on this rule since 2011.

Not surprisingly, the Treasury Department kept quiet of its plans. In fact, it neglected to mention consideration of this rule in the agency's 2011 or 2012 policy guidance plan. These are usually the ones that detail upcoming projects. If it sounds suspicious, it is. Just 3 months after the IRS abuse surfaced, the Treasury Department listed in its 2013 plan the development of guidance related to the political activities of 501(c)(4)s.

Conveniently, the publicity of the IRS abuse provided an opportunity to finally roll out the agency's rule as a solution to its "boneheaded decisions." But this administration is not fooling anyone. Over 20,000 people have already submitted comments to the proposed rule. According to the new IRS Commissioner, this is the largest number of comments ever received by any agency. Clearly, the public sees through the administration's veiled attempts to squash free speech and to shut down

opposition to its priorities. This is not a way to win back trust.

Just this past December the IRS Commissioner, known for his ability to turn around organizations, was confirmed as the new IRS Commissioner. This is John Koskinen. He promised to work towards restoring trust to the scandal-ridden agency. But he has yet to turn things around and is allowing this politically charged rule to move ahead.

So I come to the floor today, along with my friend from Kansas, Senator ROBERTS, and with the support of 37 additional Members of this body, to introduce legislation to stop the rule's implementation. I see Senator HATCH from Utah and Senator CORNYN of Texas who will also speak to this in a moment.

The Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act will prevent this rule or any other that seeks to continue the targeting of groups based on their ideology. It is time to end the intimidation and harassment. Let's preserve the First Amendment rights of all groups regardless of their ideology, especially those that commit themselves to improve our society. Let's restore the public's faith in the ability of the IRS to fairly administer our Nation's laws. I hope the rest of the Senate will join us in this effort. I look forward to coming back to the floor later in the week to ask unanimous consent to pass this legislation outright.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I would like first to thank my colleagues for working with Senator FLAKE and myself to bring this proposal forward. This is a critical issue, one that really gets straight to the heart of our American democracy.

The current investigations of the IRS clearly show it is not an overreaction to say that the Internal Revenue Service did suppress political opposition. Now, to Kansans, to Arizonans, to Texans, to Utahns all across the country, and to my colleagues, this is not only a scandal but one that is egregious.

There is a great deal more than a "smidgen" at stake here. It gets right to the heart of our system of government. The government must be held accountable for its actions and must never be permitted to trample on the constitutional rights of our citizens. The behavior of the IRS in singling out select groups at their discretion for extra scrutiny and harassment just because they hold views that differ from the administration is simply outrageous.

Worse, the IRS continues to target groups whose politics it does not like even as we speak on the floor of the Senate. In fact, the proposed IRS 501(c)(4) regulations will even more directly prevent groups the IRS does not

favor from really participating in the political process.

The proposed regulations would place much tougher controls on what would be considered political activity, effectively blocking the normal practice of a wide range of not-for-profit organizations, not only conservatives. Under the proposed rules, healthy debate and discussion of political issues, political candidates, and Congressional actions would be prohibited.

This is, in effect, suppression of free speech for these Americans. The proposed regulations would result in continued sanction, intimidation and harassment to these groups, and permit the Federal Government to be used as a partisan tool. We recently learned that the proposed regulations have been under development for some time. Senator FLAKE has just mentioned this. This is nothing new, and perhaps it is as far back as 2011. Some say even 2010.

These proposed regulations until recently have been considered off-line—my colleagues, pay attention to this—off-line. Off-line means that the regs are being considered outside the normal regulatory process, which, in my view, has been done in order to circumvent the Administrative Procedures Act. There is no transparency here.

I cannot help but think that all of this, the targeting, the slow walking of exemption applications, and the proposed regulations are part of a calculated plan to deny unfavored groups their First Amendment rights to participate in the political process of the Nation.

My colleagues, this is simple. What we are seeing is a deliberate effort to infringe the peoples' First Amendment rights. It is incredible. I never thought I would live to see the day that this would happen in the United States and we would have to be debating this. This is a copy of the Constitution of the United States—the First Amendment by James Madison. This was given to me by Robert C. Byrd, the institutional flame of the Senate, who sat right over there to the left of the distinguished ranking member from Utah, and I know who is our Republican lead in regards to the investigation of all of this in the Finance Committee.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof or abridging the freedom of speech.

The freedom of speech, my colleagues, or the press or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and/or to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

As former chair of the Intelligence Committee, I can say that the arrogant response of the administration to the IRS actions, the denials, the evasions, the attempts to downgrade the implications of the IRS efforts, and now

counteraccusations—they look like they came from some counterespionage handbook.

The real problem is that the IRS has proposed these regulations before Congress has even completed, as the Senator from Arizona pointed out, its investigation of the agency's actions in these matters. The manner in which these regulations have come up raises questions about the integrity of the rulemaking process—the exact opposite direction the agency should be taking.

Even worse, the IRS proceeds with these rules when they have done as much as possible to slow down the Finance Committee's investigation—I am a member of that committee; Senator HATCH is leading the effort on the Republican side—by responding to document requests at a glacial pace at best and redacting large amounts of critical information.

Senator FLAKE and I have proposed a very straightforward, very common-sense approach to this entire mess. We simply halt further action on the proposed regulations until the Justice Department and the congressional investigations by the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee into the IRS actions are completed. The bill freezes further IRS action for 1 year and would make it clear that the IRS could only enforce the regulations that were in place before all this mess began.

It is no wonder, given the IRS's behavior, that Kansans and virtually every American—with very good reason—doubt that the agency can in good faith administer the Tax Code. Clearly, the IRS has no capacity to regulate any political activity without running roughshod over the people's fundamental constitutional rights.

I have said this many times, but the scandal also shows that the IRS is too big, too intrusive, and too involved in taxpayers' business. The time for us to scale it back is now. In fact, it is easily the most distrusted agency in the Federal Government. That is a shame. The IRS has become a four-letter word.

This growing lack of faith in the IRS is a very strong reason why Congress should consider a wholesale rewrite of the tax system by simplifying tax collection and reducing the government's intrusion into economic and other affairs of the public. This is the main reason I am supporting legislation to scrap the Tax Code and move to a simplified, single-rate tax system. We do not need the IRS regulating constitutionally guaranteed free speech and muzzling lawful activity in regard to politics and taking part as a partner in government.

Will Rogers once said, "The difference between death and taxes is death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets." Today, Will Rogers is wrong. It is not Congress that is making things worse, it is the IRS.

So let's pass this bill and work to get the IRS out of Americans' lives and their freedom of speech.

I thank Senator FLAKE again for being a cosponsor of the legislation.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Senator from Kansas.

I yield to the Senator from Utah, the ranking minority member on the Finance Committee.

Mr. HATCH. I thank my colleague from Arizona and my colleague from Kansas as well.

I rise today in support of the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, the bill introduced today by our Senator from Arizona and the senior Senator from Kansas. This is a Senate companion to the bill being marked up today in the House Ways and Means Committee. This is an important piece of legislation that will protect free speech and ensure—at least for the time being—that the Internal Revenue Service is not used as yet another political arm of this administration.

As we all know, last November the IRS unveiled proposed regulations that would fundamentally alter the nature of the activities tax-exempt 501(c)(4) organizations can engage in. Under current regulations, 501(c)(4) organizations—or social welfare groups—can engage in political activities on a limited basis so long as their primary activity is the promotion of social welfare. However, they remain free to educate the public on important issues—even those that may be politically charged—because that falls within the exempt purpose of promoting social welfare. They can also conduct voter registration drives and distribute voter guides outlining candidates' priorities on issues important to the organization.

Under the proposed regulation, virtually all of these activities would be considered political activity and would be considered inconsistent with various groups' exemptions under 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. As a practical matter, this would mean that grassroots organizations all over the country would be forced to shut down—or, to put it more bluntly, conservative grassroots organizations all over this country would be forced to shut down.

That is precisely the point. The Obama administration does not want grassroots organizations—even those that are legitimately nonpartisan—educating the public on the issues of the day. They don't want tax-exempt organizations to be able to tell voters where candidates and politicians stand on the issues. And they certainly don't want these types of groups participating in the political process in any meaningful way. That is why we are seeing these regulations, that is why they were drafted in the first place, and that is why the administration seems set to finalize them right before the 2014 midterm elections or, at the

very latest, before the 2016 Presidential election.

We need to call this what it is.

This is an affront to free speech and the right of all American citizens to participate in the democratic process. This is an attempt by the Obama administration to further marginalize its critics and keep them on the sidelines. It is a blatant attempt to continue the harassment and intimidation that has already been taking place at the IRS over the past few years.

This regulation is just one of many problems we see at the IRS. Indeed, the American people have ample reason to doubt the credibility of the IRS, particularly when it comes to dealing with organizations that might be critical of the President and his policies. The IRS is currently under investigation on three separate congressional committees for its targeting of conservative organizations during the run-up to the 2010 and 2012 elections.

On top of that, the agency recently came under widespread condemnation when, in the midst of these ongoing investigations, they announced they were reinstating bonuses that had been canceled in response to the targeting scandal. It is almost as if they believe there was no scandal at all. Of course, if you have been listening to other people in the Obama administration, that type of thinking appears to be the predominant view. Several weeks ago, for example, leaks from the Justice Department indicated that no criminal charges were likely to be filed in the targeting scandal, even though this scandal is still under investigation. Talk about politics. Talk about political control. Talk about ignoring what is going on.

On Super Bowl Sunday, President Obama said in an interview that there was not a "smidgen" of corruption at the IRS. Well, when it comes to suppressing free speech, there is far more than a smidgen of corruption at the IRS. If anything, these proposed regulations on 501(c)(4)s are additional proof. It is one side trying to one-up the other in all cases because they happen to control the Presidency and one House of Congress.

When the proposed rule was first made public, the IRS said it was drafted in response to the 2013 TIGTA report that revealed all the issues the agency was having with regard to 501(c)(4) applications. However, as we learned in a Ways and Means Committee hearing last week, those regulations were under consideration for 2 years before the report was issued—2 years.

On top of that, the regulations were pursued outside of the normal channels for IRS and Treasury Department regulatory efforts in a manner that some IRS officials labeled "off-plan." "Off-plan" in this case means hidden—h-i-d-d-e-n—from the public. Why does the IRS need to hide a draft regulation

from the public when a regulation project is normally listed on a public Treasury guidance plan? I suppose we can only speculate, but I think it is fair to assume they didn't want the public to know these regulations were in the works. And they expect the American people to believe there is no political motivation for these regulations? Give me a break.

The fact is that these proposed regulations demonstrate that the IRS is willing and able to carry the President's political water even when the agency is, by law, supposed to be an independent and nonpartisan agency. That is why this legislation that has been introduced today by the two distinguished Senators who preceded me in their remarks is so important. We need to send a message to the administration that it cannot tamper with the rules of free speech just because it doesn't like what is being said.

If enacted, this legislation would delay the implementation of these rules for a year. This is the least we can do to protect free speech. People from all across the political spectrum—from the ACLU, to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, to the unions—have recognized just how egregious this proposed rule is. It needs to be stopped, and our bill would stop it.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Indeed, everyone who supports the right of American citizens to participate in the political process, whether they are Republican or Democrat, should support this bill.

I say to our new IRS Commissioner—whom I fought to get confirmed, who I believe is sincere, who I believe is a person who can clean up this mess over there, this nest of partisan people who are in the IRS, where there should not be any partisanship—Mr. Koskinen, you have the power to stop this regulation from becoming final.

The Commissioner should stop this. All he has to do is just not sign it.

I have to say that I will be watching very carefully because I am sick and tired of the IRS being used for political purposes. I don't want to be used for Republican purposes, Democratic purposes, liberal purposes, or conservative purposes. I want freedom in this country, and I want people to be able to express themselves freely.

What they are trying to do is outrageous, and it shows an administration that can't win fair and square with all of the advantages that it has.

We know that many of the 501(c)(4)s are basically organizations that have a conservative tilt. The 501(c)(5)s are the unions that we know almost 100 percent support Democrats, even though 40 percent of union members are Republicans. I know; I used to be a skilled tradesman. I learned a skilled trade, went through a formal apprenticeship, worked for 10 years in a building construction trade union, and I am proud

of that, and I was proud to be a union member. Forty percent of union members are Republicans. Yet almost 100 percent of their effort goes to elect Democrats. The uptick in 501(c)(5) applications was just as high as the uptick for conservative organizations in 501(c)(4)s. We didn't see any of this—neither the targeting nor the regulations—being used against 501(c)(5)s. The only conclusion is that there is a group of people who basically want to support only one side of the equation.

We have to get politics out of the IRS. I don't know what that means. It may mean—like other agencies where we don't want any politics involved—getting rid of any partisan controls. That might include the union. Because we have people who were partisan and did wrong things—our investigation is not complete, but it is a matter of great concern to us—and then to come up with this type of stuff, it is enough to just make you want to cry or, should I say, throw up.

I am a Republican. The Presiding Officer is a Democrat. We are friends. We don't agree on a lot of things. That is what makes this country great. But when one side tries to stifle the free speech of the other side, we both have to stand together. I hope Mr. Koskinen, the new Commissioner, will do what is right and get rid of these regulations. My gosh, let's not have regulations that give a tilt to one side or the other. Let's have the IRS be down the middle, straightforward, decent, and honest, which it has not been in the last number of years. We are going to show that.

All I can say is I commend my two colleagues for their leadership in introducing this bill. It is long overdue, and I hope every Senator in this Senate will support it.

I yield the floor.

Mr. FLAKE. I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Utah and his recitation of the chronology and how this happened.

These regulations are supposedly in response to the scandal that came up, although the President is not calling it a scandal. He says there is not any evidence there was any wrongdoing. But these plans were actually being developed a couple years ago—long before we knew the IRS was targeting conservative organizations. So the notion this is in response to what just occurred is wrong.

What is equally troubling—or more troubling—as the Senator from Utah noted, these plans were described, in an internal memo, as "off-plan," around the process—that were hidden. So that is what we are asking for in this legislation. Let's not do any rulemaking until the results of the investigations that are going on come back to us. That is a prudent thing to do, and I hope we will follow through.

I now yield to the minority whip, Senator CORNYN.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I will be brief, but I just wanted to commend the Senators from Arizona, Kansas, and my friend and colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, for their comments and for their support for getting the IRS out of the speech police business.

As if the IRS doesn't have its hands full already with the addition of the implementation of ObamaCare, on top of all of its other problems. I don't know anybody who thinks they need more to do, particularly when it comes to discriminating against people based upon their political affiliations and their desire to engage in debate and advocate their views in the arena. This is a politically neutral issue because we know this legislation will protect people on the left as much as on the right.

I have to agree with my colleagues that it appears there has been a disproportionate amount of attention given to people on the right under this administration. I know my colleague from Arizona has heard of Catherine Engelbrecht of Houston, TX, with the King Street Patriots and True the Vote. She founded two organizations dedicated to improving elections and furthering the ideals of our Founding Fathers. She led a coalition of citizen volunteers to work as election monitors who provide resources for voter registration and to root out election fraud.

One would think those would be commendable actions, not a reason for government discrimination and investigation. But for 3 years the IRS denied her organization tax-exempt status while comparable organizations—as I think the Senator from Arizona pointed out—had received expedited or fairly routine treatment. In the meantime, she was subjected to over-the-top inquiries by the IRS and even by the ATF and other government organizations. The IRS wanted to subpoena every one of her tweets on her Twitter account as well as entries made on her Facebook account.

You can't make up this stuff. It is extraordinarily offensive.

What these proposed rules are going to do is to institutionalize the role of the IRS as the speech police, something we ought to avoid like the plague. We ought to make sure people of all ideological and political affiliations are free to engage in their constitutional rights of association and of political speech.

I wish to point out, in conclusion, that 60 years ago the Supreme Court of the United States handed down a very important decision. It is called the NAACP v. Alabama. The question there was whether the government could compel the disclosure of the membership list of the NAACP when the NAACP felt its members would then be targeted by the government in a negative sort of way. The Supreme Court

said the Constitution of the United States and the First Amendment guarantees the right of free association in addition to a right of free speech and that was constitutionally protected activity. Given the importance of that right under the Constitution and also given the likelihood of negative attention by the government, they said the NAACP could keep its membership list confidential.

So at a time when the American people have taxes on their minds—I know my wife and I have a deadline in our family that by the end of February we like to get everything to the people who help us prepare our tax returns—and with a midterm election looming, the last thing we need to do is to support the IRS becoming the speech police and suppressing the constitutionally protected rights of the American people.

I would particularly say to my friend from Arizona that I pulled out a Gallup poll report, dated January 15, 2014, where government was cited as the top problem. That report shows that 21 percent of people in the poll said they were dissatisfied with the government, Congress, politicians, poor leadership, corruption, and abuse of power. What greater abuse of power could there be than to confer upon the IRS the legitimacy to intimidate and suppress people exercising their constitutionally protected rights of free speech.

So I commend the Senator from Arizona and others who are working on this. They can count on me to lend my voice and support to their efforts.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Senator from Texas and my other colleagues who have participated in this colloquy. I hope we can speedily bring the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act to the floor. When the Senator from Texas talks about his constituents and what they endured at the hands of the IRS, how anybody can say there is nothing amiss there or there is nothing wrong, especially when somebody is asked, upon application for a 501(c)(4), to give up their Facebook posts and tweets and let the IRS review them to see if they are worthy of receiving such status, there is something wrong. I think Americans know that.

I appreciate the support of my colleagues on this legislation and I appreciate the Senator from Kansas, my partner in this effort.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise for the purpose of notifying my colleagues

that later today or tomorrow I intend to ask unanimous consent for two of my judge nominees to be voted on this week. Both are noncontroversial, both have been heartily endorsed by Senator BOOZMAN, my colleague from Arkansas, and basically everybody else who has looked at this. These two judges came out of the Judiciary Committee, one of them on October 31 and the other on November 14.

These two judges are completely noncontroversial, but we have a sense of urgency, not only because we have two vacancies on the Federal bench in Arkansas, which is in and of itself a problem, but we have a real sense of urgency because one of these judges is an elected judge. In Arkansas, those are nonpartisan elections. One of these judges is an elected judge and the filing period for his seat opens on February 24 and closes on March 3.

We find ourselves in a situation where we are here this week, then we will be in recess next week. We will then come back on the evening of February 24, presumably for 5:30 p.m. votes, if things work on that day as they typically do around here. We would presumably have a 5:30 p.m. vote, and at that point the filing would be open, with other lawyers and judges interested in that position, and there is a domino effect that happens in Arkansas because of that.

So I am not going to ask unanimous consent right now, but I wanted to put all my colleagues on notice that I intend to do that either later today or tomorrow.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, first, I wish to thank Senator PRYOR. Senator PRYOR and a group of us have introduced a piece of legislation that rights a wrong; that makes sure our military continues to receive their COLA in full course and in the full amount.

As the Presiding Officer knows, we had a budget issue we worked through, and in that process the COLA for our active retired military was reduced by 1 percent. We all knew we would take the time, because we had the time after the budget passed, to fix this problem. We have already done it for our disabled retired veterans and now we need to fulfill the final and full promise of their COLA in total.

I spoke last night about this issue, and then we had the vote on cloture, with the result being 94 to 0—94 to 0. If that isn't an indication of how much support there is to make sure the COLA comes back in full force, I don't know what is.

I do know starting right after that vote we began hearing from people already coming up with, well, I voted for cloture, but I have a caveat. I have some qualifications I want to add on that vote. I want to have these things in Washington that are called pay-fors.

Let me make it very clear to the veterans in my State—and there are 77,000 veterans who live in my State. The highest per capita in the Nation is in Alaska. They have paid the bill. They paid the bill time and time again.

This is a perfect photo to use as an example of our military who have served in combat, who served on the frontlines. Think about those who have already paid the ultimate bill—almost 6,800 servicemembers have died in Iraq and Afghanistan; from Alaska alone, 22, and I will read some of those names in a second.

First, I wish to make it very clear we are going to hear these convoluted reasons as to why we should have this pay-for. I wasn't here when they paid for these wars—no, I am sorry, they didn't pay for these wars. They didn't pay the \$2 trillion-plus for the wars, but now that it is time to pay the bill for those who committed to serve our country, to go to the frontlines when called upon and ensure we have the freedom we enjoy in this country, some are saying: Well, yes, we want to give them that retirement COLA, but—there should be no “but” here. A promise made is a promise we need to keep.

My view is we should have their backs every single day, and this is the day to do it. Let me make it very clear to those who are going to have this convoluted reason for this pay-for: This is a vote for vets or a vote against vets. You can have all the gobbledygook, all the convoluted arguments, but at the end of the day if you vote against this bill, without all this stuff added to it—just a clean and simple giving the COLA back and then let's move on, give them their full COLA—you are voting against vets.

I don't care how they try to press-release it, spin it, or what amendments they want to add to create a political situation for other Members on other issues unrelated to vets. A promise made is a promise we need to keep. We need to have their backs. They have our backs every single day to make sure this country is safe, no matter where American citizens are in this country or in this world. It is our time to do what is right for veterans.

I shared some stories last night about Alaskans who are struggling with this issue and the commitment they thought they had. One gentleman served 18 years in the military and is close to retirement. He is wondering what did he sign up for. He has had enormous pressures on his family. He has moved six different times. He has two children, one disabled, and a variety of personal issues. But he continues to serve this country. And for us to play politics and start talking about immigration, child tax credits, forget it. It is time to do what is right for our veterans, to put this COLA back in full force.

Over 30 veterans organizations support this bill with no pay-for, clean and

simple. Senator PRYOR and I were on a phone call last week and talked to many—the Air Force Association, Army Aviation Association, the Fleet Reserves, Gold Star Wives—I can go through the list of 30-plus organizations who work with our veterans every single day and want us to pass this bill—not an amended bill but this bill: Get it done and give peace of mind to our veterans and retirees and active military.

To some degree this puts our readiness at risk. If someone is thinking about joining the military, they are looking at the benefits. They know at some point they may be called to duty and put their life on the line. So they are looking at the benefits: What can they provide for themselves and their families? What is the retirement if they become a career officer or a career enlisted member? And now they are questioning if they should.

I received emails from some parents whose sons and daughters are currently enlisted and are now wondering, what did they get into when at a moment's notice the commitments, the promises we—Congress—made can change overnight.

Our readiness is at risk, and the promises and commitments we make to our military are in question. Today is the start to make sure our commitments are there. We cannot say to our veterans: Sign up; we will promise you these things, and tomorrow we might change them. That doesn't help our readiness and commitment.

I get that there is going to be a lot of policy wonk conversation by some Members because they want to confuse the issue and make it hard for people to understand what is really going on in Washington. But it is simple. The chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee knows this issue is simple. It is about our vets. If you vote yes, you are for our vets; if you vote no, you are against our vets. That is it. They can put in all the spin and all the amendments to make it sound good. But in reality, they are trying to cover an activity they are struggling with; that is, they don't necessarily like some of us who are sponsors. I get that. But let's put aside our politics. Let's do what is right for the vets, let's have their backs, let's keep the promise we made to them.

Again, this bill is simple. It is so simple it is 1 page. It just says: Repeal that action.

I hope my colleagues on the other side who are wondering about what they should do will vote for the vets. Vote yes. Don't mess with amendments, don't try to have this pay-for convoluted argument. The vets at home who will be watching don't care about that. They just want to make sure their COLA is there. Let's give them the peace of mind they deserve.

I will read a few of the names who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. I read

some of these last night: GySgt Christopher Eastman, Marines, age 28, from Moose Pass, AK; SGT Joel Clarkson, Army, age 23, Fairbanks; LCpl Grant Fraser, Marine Reserves, age 22, Anchorage; SPC Shane Woods, Army, age 23, Palmer.

These are just a few of the 22 Alaskans who have lost their lives. I don't know if they would have been long-term career if they stayed in the Army or Air Force, but they sacrificed their lives. They put their lives on the line to make sure we do the right thing here. It is time we do it. Today is the opportunity. Don't convolute it with all kinds of amendments. Vote up or down. You are either for vets or against vets.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise in full support of the legislation on the floor.

I think most Members understand, as part of the 2013 bipartisan budget agreement, language was included which cut COLAs for military retirees. I think most Members here in the Senate and the House understand that was a mistake, an oversight, and is something that should be rectified and it should be rectified now. Promises made to people in the military should be kept, and our job is to do that.

This morning, as the chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I wish to say a word on broader issues impacting the veterans community.

Shortly after this legislation is disposed of, we are going to move on to a comprehensive piece of legislation which addresses many of the very serious problems facing our veterans community. I will give a brief overview of what the legislation does. The legislation is the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014—S. 1982.

The first point I will make is I honestly believe, in terms of the veterans issues, there is widespread bipartisan support. On the Veterans Committee, every Member of our committee—Democrat, Republican, or in my case Independent—believes very much that we owe our veterans more than we can provide them. Their sacrifices are too deep, the pains are great. But all Members of the committee in a bipartisan way are doing their best to protect the interests of our veterans, and I thank all of them for their hard work.

To as great a degree as possible, the bill which will be on the floor—the comprehensive veterans bill—is a bipartisan bill. It contains many provisions brought forth by my Republican colleagues. This bill consists of two omnibus bills unanimously passed by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, supported by Democrats and

Republicans. It also includes other provisions which had strong bipartisan support.

This legislation also contains two new provisions, both of which have bipartisan support. The first new addition addresses the restoration of cuts made to military retiree COLAs as a result of the 2013 bipartisan agreement, the exact same issue being debated on the floor right now. We also have that language in our bill. Promises made to veterans have got to be kept. We have to restore those cuts to COLAs for military retirees.

The second new provision not discussed, frankly, by the committee also has widespread bipartisan support, and authorizes the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico.

Interestingly, the legislation which will soon be on the floor contains two major provisions already passed by House Republicans. So to as great a degree as possible, in terms of language in the bill, in terms of working with our Republican colleagues in the House, this is a bipartisan bill and should have the support of every Member of the Senate who believes in protecting the interests of veterans. And I hope that is the vast majority of the people here.

As Senator BEGICH mentioned a moment ago, our veterans have paid a very heavy price. What I have learned in the little bit more than the year in which I have been chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee is I think most Americans, including myself, were not fully aware of what that sacrifice was. And what that sacrifice was in recent years was not just the loss of over 6,700 Americans who lost their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq but the impact of those wars on hundreds and hundreds of thousands of veterans who came home either wounded in body—loss of arms, loss of legs, loss of hearing, or loss of sight—or the more invisible wounds of war.

What most Americans don't know is a rather shocking number, but we are now dealing with hundreds of thousands of men and women who came home from Iraq and Afghanistan who are doing their best to cope with post-traumatic stress disorder, which has a terrible impact on their lives, on their families' lives, and on their ability to get a job and keep a job; and traumatic brain injury, the result of being in the presence of IEDs and the explosions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We are also dealing in this rough economy, this struggling economy, with high unemployment economy, with many young veterans coming home unable to find jobs. Some in the National Guard left decent jobs and came home to find those jobs are not there.

I think virtually every Member in the Senate understands that at a time when the VA went from paper to dig-

ital and made the transformation which was necessary to deal with the claims process, the claims process today remains too long. The backlog is too great. We have to deal with that issue.

We are dealing with a situation where young men and women were wounded in war who had hopes and dreams of starting their own families, but as a result of injuries sustained in those wars, for whatever reason, lost their reproductive capabilities and they still want to have families.

We are dealing with issues of sexual assault—a scandal, an outrage I know every Member of the Senate feels strongly about. Women and men who were sexually assaulted are coming home in need of treatment and are unable to get that treatment.

We are dealing with a situation today above and beyond the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, where there are people—often women, wives and sisters—who are under great stress taking care of disabled veterans who have no arms and no legs. They have devoted their lives to those people and they are hurting as well. As chairman of the veterans' committee, what I have done is listened as carefully as I could to what the veterans community—representing some 22 million veterans—had to say about the problems veterans are facing.

My very fine staff and I—along with my Republican colleagues and their very fine staffs—worked together. We said: These are the problems facing our veterans. We all know that on Veterans Day and Memorial Day every Member of the Senate goes out and gives a great speech about how much they love and respect veterans and how much they appreciate the sacrifices made by veterans.

Now is the time to stand and go beyond words and rhetoric. Now is the time to, in fact, address the real and serious problems facing those men and women whose families experienced the ultimate sacrifice and those men and women who came home wounded in body and spirit.

We cannot solve all of the problems facing veterans. We cannot bring back loved ones lost in Iraq, Afghanistan, Vietnam, and the other wars. We cannot bring them back to their wives, their mothers, their dads, and their kids. We cannot do that. We cannot magically replace the arms and the legs or eyesight lost in war, but we do have the moral obligation to do everything humanly possible to protect and defend those men and women who protected and defended us. We can do that and that we must.

I am very proud the legislation that will soon be on the floor has the strong support of virtually every veteran and military organization in this country, and that includes all of the major organizations representing millions and millions of veterans.

I thank the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the VFW, the Disabled American Veterans, also known as DAV, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Military Officers Association of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Gold Star Wives, and dozens and dozens of other veterans and military organizations that are supporting this legislation.

The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs has received letters of support from virtually all of these organizations, and if Members want to check out why these organizations that are representing millions of veterans are supporting this bill, they will find those letters on our Web site.

I will quote from one of the letters. This letter is from the Disabled American Veterans, DAV.

This . . . bill, unprecedented in our modern experience, would create, expand, advance, and extend a number of VA benefits, services and programs that are important to DAV and to our members.

They see it—as do many of the other veterans organizations—as one of the most comprehensive pieces of veterans legislation brought forth in the modern history of Congress. I am proud of it. I thank the veterans organizations not just for their support of this legislation but for the help they gave us in drafting this legislation.

This legislation did not come from BERNIE SANDERS or from anybody else on the committee. It came from the veterans community itself. It came from representatives of veterans organizations who came before us in hearings, who came before us in private meetings, and said: Senator, here are the problems facing our veterans. If you are serious about going beyond rhetoric and speeches and truly want to help veterans and their families, this is what needs to be done.

We listened. We could not do everything, but we did put many of the major concerns facing the veterans community in this bill. Again, I thank the veterans organizations for being our partner in drafting this legislation.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank those people who have currently cosponsored this legislation, and that includes Senator LANDRIEU, Senator BEGICH, the Presiding Officer Senator SCHATZ, Senator BROWN, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator HIRONO, Senator BOXER, Senator CASEY, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator HEINRICH, Senator HEITKAMP, Senator MERKLEY, Senator MURRAY, Senator REED, Senator SHAHEEN, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator TESTER, and Senator CANTWELL. I thank all of them for their strong support.

I will take a few minutes to touch on some of the areas this comprehensive bill covers. As I return to the floor in the coming days, I will go into greater

length about each of these provisions. Each of these provisions, unto themselves, is enormously important in terms of the needs of our veterans.

As I mentioned earlier, our comprehensive veterans bill—consistent with the Pryor bill—will restore the cuts made in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 to military retirees. We address that issue in our bill.

This comprehensive veterans legislation deals with another issue—not necessarily a sexy issue—that in fact impacts a large number of veterans in communities all over America, and that is that it will allow the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico. That means—for a variety of reasons too complicated to get into right now—we have CBOC, community-based outpatient clinics, and other veterans facilities that are ready to go. They are on the drawing board.

Actually, it is beyond the drawing board, but we have not been able to pull the plug on it. This is very important to veterans all over this country. It is important to Republicans, it is important to Democrats, and it is time to get this done. By the way, this has been passed in the House of Representatives. We need to do it and that is part of this legislation.

This legislation includes groundbreaking provisions that would expand access to VA health care. In my view and in the view of veterans all over this country, the VA provides high-quality, cost-effective care to millions and millions of our veterans. There are approximately 6.2 million veterans accessing VA health care today. About 8 million are signed up for VA care.

This legislation expands access to VA health care, allows more veterans to come in, and ends a very complicated priority 8 eligibility. Priority 8 is a situation where there are hundreds and hundreds of different eligibility levels all over the country, and it makes it very confusing for priority 8 veterans to determine whether they are eligible. We ended that and simplified it. The result is that more veterans will be able to access VA health care. We have also expanded complementary and alternative medicine within the VA. The truth is the VA is now doing a good job in providing complementary and alternative medicine, and that means meditation, acupuncture, yoga, and other treatments to veterans who are concerned about not being dependent on medication. One of the great problems we have nationally and in the VA is overmedication of people who have problems associated with pain and other ailments. The VA has done a good job. We are going to expand that opportunity.

My experience—having gone around the country—is that both within the Department of Defense hospitals and the VA, more and more veterans are

looking at these alternative-type treatments and want to break their dependence on overmedication.

What we also do in this legislation is something that is terribly important. It is my strong belief that dental care must be considered a part of health care. The fact is that in this country there are millions of people—above and beyond the veterans community—who cannot find affordable dental care. Right now within the VA, dental care—with the exception of service-connected problems and homeless veterans—is not open to veterans, and we begin the process to do a significant pilot program to bring dental care into the VA. That is extremely important for the veterans community.

I think all of us remember not so many months ago the Government of the United States was shut down and caused all kinds of problems for all kinds of people. What is not widely known is that disabled veterans and veterans receiving their pension were 7 to 10 days away from not getting their checks. We have disabled veterans all over this country who live from month to month through those checks, and they were 7 to 10 days away from not getting those checks. This legislation provides for advanced appropriations for mandatory VA benefits. By passing that provision, we will never again put disabled vets or veterans who are dependent on their pensions in the position of not getting their checks when they need it.

One of the issues that has been discussed a great deal is the issue of benefits backlog. There is no disagreement in this Senate—whether one is a Republican, Democrat, Independent—that it is not acceptable for veterans who applied for benefits to have to wait for years to get those benefits. In my view, what the VA is now doing is undergoing a massive transformation of their benefit system, going from paper—which was incomprehensible to me. In 2008 their system was paper. They are going from paper to digital. They are making progress, but I want to see them make more progress. This legislation includes some important provisions to make sure we end this unacceptable backlog of VA benefits.

One of the issues that has also received some attention is the issue of in-state tuition assistance for post-9/11 veterans. A number of years ago we passed very significant legislation which enabled some 900,000 post-9/11 veterans and family members to get higher education throughout this country. This legislation would give our transitioning servicemembers a fair shot at attaining their educational goals without incurring an additional financial burden.

We deal with the issue of somebody from out of State moving into another State and making sure that a veteran is paying no more than what the

in-state tuition is for that State. This is a very important provision and, by the way, a provision that was passed in the House of Representatives. The language is pretty much the same in this bill.

We promised veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan that they would have 5 years of free VA health care when they came home. For a variety of reasons, people have not taken advantage of that. We think it is important to extend—from 5 to 10 years—unfettered access to VA health care for recently separated veterans, and that is what this legislation does.

I don't have to mention to anybody that our economy—while slowly improving—still has many challenges. Unemployment is much too high. What this legislation would do is reauthorize provisions from the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, including a 2-year extension for the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, otherwise known as the VRAP program. In other words, what we are saying to our veterans is when they come home, we want a job to be there for them. We want them to get integrated back into civilian life, so we have some very important provisions in here for employment opportunities for our veterans.

As I mentioned earlier, sexual assault is a scandal. The numbers are appallingly high. What this legislation does is enable those women and men who were sexually assaulted to come into the VA to get the quality of care their situations require and deserve.

This provision was inspired by Ruth Moore, who struggled for 23 years to receive VA disability compensation. So we have language making sure those who suffered sexual assault will get the care within the VA they absolutely are entitled to.

I mentioned earlier, also, that several thousand men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan were wounded in ways that make it impossible for them to have babies. These are people who really want families, and some of them are now spending a very significant amount of money in the private sector through a number of approaches in order to be able to have babies. We have language, a provision in this bill, which would help female and male veterans who have suffered significant spinal cord, reproductive, and urinary tract injuries to start a family. I think that is absolutely the right thing to do.

Several years ago this Congress did the right thing by establishing a Caregivers Act, which said to those people who were caring for disabled vets that we understand how difficult—how difficult—that work is, that you are taking care of people who need constant attention, loved ones who need constant attention, and we are going to help you do what you have been doing.

The good news is we passed that legislation. The bad news is it only applied to post-9/11 veterans. I think there was a general understanding, an assumption, that we were going to expand that program to all veterans—Vietnam, World War II, Korea—so those people, mostly women who are staying home, taking care of veterans, get the support they need. So the extension of the Caregivers Act is also included in this legislation.

Those are some of the provisions. This is a 400-page bill, and I just touched on some of them. But let me end in the way I began. There is no way we can ever fully repay the debt we owe to the men and women who put their lives on the line defending this country. That is just the simple nature of things. We are not going to bring back the husbands who were lost in war, the wives who came back without any legs. We are not going to bring fathers and mothers back to children who lost their dad or their mom. We are not going to restore eyesight to people who are blind. We cannot do that.

But if this country means anything, it means that we have to keep the promises we made to veterans and their families; that while we cannot do everything, we have to do as much as we can to make the lives of our veterans and their families, their loved ones, as happy and productive as we possibly can.

So this legislation is from Senators who listened to our veterans, heard their concerns, worked with them, and developed this comprehensive bill.

Let me conclude once again by thanking all of the veterans organizations. We have virtually every veterans organization in America—not all but almost all—supporting this legislation. We thank them for the work they do every day on behalf of our veterans. I thank them very much for all the help they have provided me and the committee in writing this legislation.

Speeches on Veterans Day or Memorial Day are great. That is good. It is important we all do it. But now is the time to go beyond speeches. Now is the time to address the problems facing the veterans community. This legislation does this in a very comprehensive way, and I ask for the support of all my colleagues in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, before my colleague, the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, leaves the floor, I say thank you to him for his passion and advocacy. The legislation he spoke of this morning is incredibly important. I say to Senator SANDERS, if I am not yet on that bill, I need to be and will be. Please sign me up.

It is absolutely true we need to do more than just make speeches. We need

to put our commitment, our resources, and keep our promises to our veterans. That is what this bill does, and we thank the Senator very much.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank the Senator.

Ms. STABENOW. We also, Mr. President, have a bill in front of us that is about our veterans. This bill is about our veterans, and the question is on a "yes" or "no" on this final bill. If we support our veterans, we vote yes. If we do not support our veterans, if we want to play political games with it, find some other excuse not to support veterans, then you vote no. It is very simple. To keep our promise, vote yes. If you do not care about keeping our promise, vote no.

We had a vote last night in the Senate to end the filibuster. I think it was embarrassing we had to have the vote. I thank our friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Arkansas Mr. PRYOR for putting this bill forward, along with a number of colleagues. But we should not even have had to have a vote to end a filibuster to move forward on this bill. This is something that everyone should want to do as quickly as possible. It should not be controversial.

Unfortunately, instead of moving it forward and getting this done, we are seeing Republican colleagues who are arguing about amendments, amazingly, that would increase taxes on families in order to "pay for" helping our veterans.

Now, I think every veteran in America should find this absolutely outrageous. I know I do. These men and women have sacrificed for our Nation. Some did not come home. Some came home without an arm or a leg or a closed head injury. They have paid in full for this bill. "Paid in Full" is what we stamp on this piece of legislation.

I am proud to represent nearly 700,000 veterans who are living in Michigan—veterans and their families. That is my pay-for for this bill. They have paid in full to make sure they get their veterans benefits, their pensions, the health care we promised them.

I would like to read just a very few of the names of people in Michigan who are the pay-for I offer today on the floor of the Senate:

Richard Belisle from Saint Joseph, MI, who retired from the Coast Guard after 21 years of service—twenty-one years of service—has paid in full for this bill.

Bill Garlinghouse of Holland spent 22 years in the Navy—I am partial to the Navy; my dad was in the Navy—and then 5 years working for the Navy as a civilian. With twenty-two years in the Navy; 5 years working for the Navy as a civilian, he has paid in full for this bill.

Richard Eversole of Sumner spent 22 years in the Air Force and retired as a master sergeant. Richard has paid in full for this bill.

Frank Bell from Kalamazoo retired 10 years ago as a senior master sergeant in the U.S. Air Force. He is 51 years old, so he will see his pension cut by 1 percent every year for the next 11 years.

This needs to be fixed now—no games, no debating about amendments—yes or no on making sure Frank Bell gets his full pension because he has paid in full for this bill.

David Lord of Cheboygan retired from the Navy after 20 years of service. Again, he has paid in full.

John Frollo of Saint Charles spent 20 years in the Navy before retiring in 2006.

Joseph Boogren of Gwinn, MI, spent 32 years—32 years—in the Navy. He served in Iraq and Afghanistan. He flew 177 combat missions defending our country, putting himself in harm's way on behalf of all of us. I believe Joseph Boogren has paid in full for his pension and the other benefits we have promised him and his family.

Debbie Rasmussen from Sheridan, MI, wrote in on behalf of her military family. Debbie and her husband are both Navy veterans, and their son Matt is an Active Duty sailor with over 15 years of service, including service in Afghanistan. They believe—and I believe—the Rasmussens have paid in full for this benefit.

Karen Ruedisueli is the wife of an Active Duty Army major currently stationed at the Pentagon. Kurt and Karen have been a military family for 12 years. The Ruedisuelis have paid in full.

I could go on and on with so many similar letters. Every service is represented in these letters because veterans from every part of our armed services would be hurt by what has been put in place.

We know this needs to be addressed and needs to be fixed. We have all said that—that this needs to be fixed, we need to honor the commitment we have made to the men and women who have served us, and continue to serve us. This bill will restore the cost-of-living adjustments for all military retirees.

We need to act now so our veterans have the certainty and the peace of mind they need to move forward with their lives. We should not be involved in wrangling, in folks trying to find political advantage, and take political hostages, score points in some way. We need to just get this done—no amendments, no jockeying here, just vote for this bill and get this done.

This bill is about keeping our promise to the men and women who have served us and continue to serve us. A "yes" vote says we have your back. A "yes" vote says we honor and support you. A "no" vote or other votes that confuse the situation and play political games are really votes that turn your back on our veterans. Very simply, vote yes to get this done—no distractions, no extraneous issues. No matter

how people feel about other things, bringing them into this is not right. It is not fair. This is about yes for veterans or no for veterans.

I hope we will all stand together and understand the “paid for” are the people who have served in our States and continue to serve us today. They have paid in full. We need to vote yes and get this done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from South Dakota.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I come to the floor today to discuss the stagnant Obama economy and how ObamaCare is making it worse. This Monday marks the fifth anniversary of the day the President signed his trillion-dollar stimulus bill into law. In remarks he gave in Denver that very day he signed the bill, the President stated that the legislation marked “the beginning of the end” of the Nation’s “economic troubles.”

Five years later, however, the end of the Nation’s economic troubles is nowhere in sight. The headlines of the jobs report released Friday say it all. The headlines from the Associated Press said, “U.S. Economy May Be Stuck in Slow Lane for Long Run.”

The New York Times headline: “Weakness Continues as 113,000 Jobs Are Added in January.”

From CBS News: “Another month of weak job growth raises slowdown fears.”

From the Wall Street Journal: “U.S. Adds 113,000 Jobs, in Latest Worrying Sign on Growth.”

From Reuters: “U.S. employment fails to rebound strongly from winter chill.”

Well before passage of the stimulus, Presidential adviser Christina Romer predicted that the stimulus bill would reduce the unemployment rate to 5 percent by the year 2014. In fact, over the past 5 years, the unemployment rate has never come close to falling that low. Last month’s unemployment rate was 6.6 percent. If so many people had not dropped out of the labor force over the past several years, that number would be even higher.

If the labor force participation rate were the same as it was when President Obama took office, our current unemployment rate would be a staggering 10.5 percent. Despite the fact that the recession technically ended 55 months ago, we are still nowhere near where we need to be in terms of economic recovery.

CBS News reported on Friday that the economy would have to gain an average of 285,000 jobs per month for the next 3 years just to get us back to where we were before the recession. Yet job creation for the past year has not even come close to that. In fact, our economy has added just 180,000 new jobs per month, approximately, over

the past year. If we continue at that same rate, it will take us over 5 years to return to where we were before the recession.

President Obama’s economic policies have left our economy mired in stagnation. His health care law is making things even worse. Last week the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office released a new report on ObamaCare. It found that ObamaCare will result in the equivalent of 2.5 million fewer full-time jobs over the next 10 years—2.5 million fewer jobs. Our economy is millions of jobs away from where it needs to be.

Our labor force participation rate is near a 35-year low. The President’s health care law is going to result in 2.5 million fewer full-time jobs. How will that work? Well, the CBO report made it clear that ObamaCare provides disincentives to work, particularly for those at the low income end of the spectrum.

An individual receiving ObamaCare subsidies to pay for his or her health insurance may decide not to accept more hours or a higher paying job so that she or he does not exceed the income caps for receiving subsidies. At the higher end of the wage spectrum, workers may decide not to rise too far up the ladder so their income does not reach the point at which it would be subject to ObamaCare taxes. Thus, ObamaCare essentially traps workers in lower paying jobs, putting a de facto limit on the prosperity of literally millions of Americans.

The CBO reinforces that notion, not just by projecting that 2.5 million people will drop out of the workforce but also by projecting that those who stay in the workforce will earn less.

According to one analysis of the CBO report, ObamaCare will reduce total wages by an estimated \$70 billion per year. Without question, most of this burden will be placed on lower and middle-income families who already are struggling to make ends meet. Furthermore, by providing Americans with disincentives to work, ObamaCare will limit our economic growth.

As the editors of the National Review put it, “The depth of the Obamacare crater in the labor force isn’t some abstract unemployment rate, but the lost value of the work those Americans would have done.”

Americans working creates economic growth. It is as simple as that. Encouraging Americans to work less or quit work altogether will undermine American prosperity and American families’ security. Those who find work and are willing and able to fulfill their jobs deserve wages that are unhindered by a government takeover of health care.

Combine the CBO report with our experience of ObamaCare so far and the future does not look promising: lower income Americans living off meager salaries and government health care

subsidies just to get by; middle-income Americans struggling to pay higher health insurance premiums and deductibles; and upper income Americans and small business owners too reluctant to create jobs and wealth for fear that they will be subjected to ObamaCare’s burdensome taxes and regulations.

That is not the kind of future any American desires, but that is exactly the future ObamaCare is bringing us. In fact, for too many Americans, that future is already here. With ObamaCare’s full implementation this year, Americans are facing huge premium increases and steep hikes in their out-of-pocket costs. They are losing access to their doctors and hospitals. All too often they are facing fewer hours with fewer benefits at their jobs as their employers struggle to comply with ObamaCare’s taxes and mandates.

Even the President has tacitly acknowledged the burdens his health care law places on employers by once again delaying one of the law’s job-destroying mandates. While I am glad some businesses will get relief until 2016, Congress should go further, much further, and ensure that every single American is protected from this disastrous law.

We can do better than ObamaCare and the President’s economic policies. The President has called for 2014 to be a year of action. Republicans could not agree more. It is past time to take action to start reversing ObamaCare’s damage and finally get our economic recovery off the ground.

Almost 2 weeks ago, the Obama State Department released its fifth environmental review showing that the Keystone XL Pipeline would have no significant impact on global carbon emissions. There is strong bipartisan support in both Houses of Congress for approving that pipeline and the 42,000 jobs it will support. The President needs to stop pandering to far-left environmentalists and immediately approve the pipeline and the good-paying jobs it will open for Americans.

Next, the President should pick up that phone he keeps talking about to call the Senate majority leader and tell him to bring the bipartisan trade promotion authority legislation to the floor. Passing trade promotion authority will help U.S. farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and job creators gain access to 1 billion consumers around the globe. The majority leader needs to stop obstructing the jobs this bill would create and join Members of both parties to pass this important legislation.

Finally, the President should throw his support behind a repeal of the medical device tax in his health care law. This tax on lifesaving medical technology such as pacemakers and insulin pumps is forcing medical device companies to send American jobs overseas.

There is strong bipartisan support for repealing the tax, and the President should add his.

Far too many Americans have spent the past 5½ years of the Obama Presidency struggling to get by. Household income has fallen. Health care costs have risen. Jobs and opportunity have been few and far between. For many Americans, the possibility of a secure economic future seems further and further out of reach. It does not have to be this way. We can turn our economy around by abandoning the President's failed economic proposals and embracing the kind of legislation that will open up new jobs and opportunities for the American people.

The three proposals I have outlined above are a good place to start. I hope the President will join Republicans and Democrats to get these priorities done.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair lays before the Senate a Certificate of Appointment to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Senator Max Baucus of Montana. The certificate, the Chair is advised, is in the form suggested by the Senate. If there is no objection, the reading of the certificate will be waived and it will be printed in full in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATE OF MONTANA

CERTIFICATE OF APPOINTMENT

To the President of the Senate of the United States:

This is to certify that, pursuant to the power vested in me by the Constitution of the United States and the laws of the State of Montana, I, Steve Bullock, the governor of said State, do hereby appoint John E. Walsh a Senator from said State to represent said State in the Senate of the United States until the vacancy therein caused by the resignation of Max Sieben Baucus, is filled by election as provided by law.

Witness: His Excellency our governor Steve Bullock, and our seal hereto affixed at Helena, Montana this ninth day of February, in the year of our Lord 2014.

By the governor:

STEVE BULLOCK,
Governor.

LINDA MCCULLOCH,
Secretary of State.

[State Seal Affixed]

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

The VICE PRESIDENT. If the Senator-designee will now present himself

at the desk, the Chair will administer the oath of office.

The Senator-designee, escorted by Senator TESTER, advanced to the desk of the Vice President, the oath prescribed by law was administered to him by the Vice President, and he subscribed to the oath in the Official Oath Book.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Congratulations, Senator.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HIRONO. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, there is overwhelming bipartisan support to repeal the COLA reduction for military retirees that was enacted last December in the budget bill. The debate now is whether and how to pay for the cost of this repeal. I agree with my friend Senator MARK BEGICH of Alaska that our veterans have already paid for this repeal with their service to this country. However, there are some Senators who take a different view and have offered what we refer to as pay-for amendments.

Today I rise in strong opposition to the Ayotte pay-for amendment. The bill before us, S. 1963, the Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act, would repeal the COLA reduction for military retirees. This bill is sponsored by Senators PRYOR, HAGAN, and BEGICH, and I applaud their leadership on this issue.

Cutting military pensions was a bad idea. An even worse idea is to set up a contest between providing pensions to veterans and providing antipoverty assistance to children. That is the choice Republicans want us to make. I wish I could honestly say this so-called choice is hard to believe, but I can't. It is like choosing between cutting off an arm or a leg from the body politic. Vets or poor children—aren't they both in need of fair treatment?

Again, there is bipartisan support to restore the COLA cuts for veterans, but I am told that my Republican colleagues won't allow us to have an up-or-down vote on the Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act unless we also vote on the Ayotte amendment No. 2732.

What does this amendment do? The Ayotte amendment would deny anti-poverty assistance to the children of undocumented immigrants who are

working and paying billions of dollars in taxes. It would cut this child poverty program by more than \$18 billion over 10 years to pay for the restoration of COLAs for military retirees, which would cost about \$6 billion over 10 years. In other words, the Ayotte amendment would deny \$3 of anti-poverty assistance to children in order to restore \$1 of retirement pay to our veterans. That is unconscionable. We should not take the benefits we provide to veterans by hurting children in the process. Hurting children does no honor to our veterans' service.

The children targeted by the Ayotte amendment did not decide on their own to come to this country illegally. They were brought here by their parents. These children are DREAMers—our DREAMers. We should not punish them for their parents' decisions. We should help these children to succeed so they can contribute to this great country. Their parents are doing their part by working and paying more than \$16 billion in taxes each year, more than \$160 billion over 10 years. We should not deny them this small measure of help.

Let me acknowledge that it is politically difficult to vote against the offset in the Ayotte amendment. Why? Because the amendment targets people who have no political power. These are children of parents who cannot vote. These are children of parents who are very poor, who themselves live on the edge of poverty or far into the depths of it. Their parents work one, two, or even three jobs and pay the taxes they owe, but they are barely making ends meet. They are far removed from the level of wealth that too often today translates into political power. These are children of parents who came to this country the same way many of our ancestors came to this country 100 or 200 years ago and for the same reasons—to escape poverty, to seek opportunity, and to give their children a better life than they had. Their parents are working and paying billions of dollars in taxes each year, which is extending the lives of the Social Security and Medicare trust funds, as examples. Their parents are working and paying taxes, but they came here illegally, and therefore they must live in the shadows and live in fear.

Put simply, these are children of families who have no political power—none. They are the easiest to go after, and that is what this Ayotte amendment does. But we should help these families. We should help these DREAMers. It is an ancient and universal principle that we should help the least among us. To paraphrase the Book of Matthew, we should treat the least among us as we would treat the mightiest among us. That is why the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops opposes the Ayotte amendment. We should not hurt the least among us in order to help our veterans.

How much money would the Ayotte amendment deny to these children? The maximum child tax credit is \$1,000 per child, which is about \$2.74 per day per child. To many of us, \$2.74 per day seems like a small amount, but to a child in poverty it is literally the difference between eating and not eating.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2011 the average cost of one meal for one person was \$2.67. That was the average cost, which means that a lot of people spent less than \$2.67 on each meal. By way of comparison, SNAP benefits average about \$4 per person per day—\$4 for three meals, not just one. So our own food program is less than what our own Bureau of Labor Statistics says is the average cost of a meal.

So for a low-income child, the \$2.74 per day she gets from the child tax credit is equivalent to about one meal. If a child is very poor, it probably means two meals. Put simply, if she gets the child tax credit, she eats. If she doesn't, she doesn't.

Of course, not every child receives the maximum refundable credit. The amount of the refund is determined, in part, on a family's income, so poor families receive even less. The average income for the families who would be affected by the Ayotte amendment is about \$21,000 per year. They have to be working and paying taxes to get even one dime from the child tax credit program. Their average child tax credit refund is about \$1,800, which is about \$5 a day. That may not be much money to the Senators in this body, but that \$5 pays for a meal for the whole family. It is about 8 percent of their income.

We should not be denying this basic level of assistance to any child in this country, no matter who their parents are or how they came here. We should not deny children this assistance when their parents—and I am going to repeat it—will pay over \$160 billion in taxes in the 10 years during which this provision is cutting \$18 billion. The way the child tax credit is structured, only working families who are paying these kinds of taxes can claim the refundable portion. It is not fair that families work and pay taxes but are then denied help—\$2.74 per day per child.

We should not deny children this assistance under the guise of combating fraud. Imposing a Social Security number requirement on qualifying children will not end the fraud the proponents of this amendment have cited. We should go after the fraud, but it should be obvious that any criminal willing to commit the fraud described by the proponents will not be deterred by having to fill in a 9-digit Social Security number. This does not solve the fraud problem.

The fraud we have heard about involves undocumented immigrants who are falsifying where they live and where their children live in order to

claim their tax credit. We are told about four immigrants using a single address, and yet we hear nothing about the 18,000 corporations that use one address in the Cayman Islands to avoid paying their fair share of corporate tax. Instead of going after working families who are paying taxes, we should close the loophole that allows these corporations to evade their taxes.

How many groups in this country is this Congress going to hurt? We hurt women when we don't raise the minimum wage. We hurt people who are out of work through no fault of their own when we don't extend unemployment benefits. Now we are hurting DREAMers. We should not do this. I urge my colleagues to oppose the Ayotte amendment.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:33 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

REPEALING SECTION 403 OF THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING WILLARD HACKERMAN

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, there is an epitaph on the wall above where Sir Christopher Wren—one of England's greatest architects—is buried. The epitaph reads in part:

Here . . . lies . . . Christopher Wren, who lived beyond ninety years, not for his own profit but for the public good. Reader, if you seek his monument, look around you.

A similar epitaph would be entirely suitable for my dear friend, the great businessman, engineer, philanthropist, and devoted Baltimorean Willard Hackerman, who died yesterday at the age of 95.

In 1938, Willard was a 19-year-old civil engineer who had just graduated from Johns Hopkins University. He went to work for the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company in his native Baltimore. G.W.C. Whiting and LeBaron Turner had started the construction firm in 1909. In 1955, Whiting promoted Willard to be the president and chief executive officer of the firm, and he served in that capacity until his recent death.

Whiting-Turner issued a press release which stated:

Mr. Hackerman led Whiting-Turner from a modest-sized local and regional contractor to a highly-ranked nationwide construction manager and general contractor working in all major commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors.

Last year—Willard's 75th year with the firm—it reported \$5 billion in revenue. The firm, which has 33 regional offices and more than 2,100 employees, is ranked fourth in domestic general building by Engineering News Record and ranked 117th on the list of America's largest private companies.

As the Baltimore Sun noted, Whiting-Turner Contracting Company built the new University of Baltimore School of Law last year, the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, the National Aquarium, and the M&T Bank Stadium. The firm's clients included Yale and Stanford universities, the Cleveland Clinic, Target, IBM, and Unilever, and the Hippodrome Theater. If you seek his monument, look around you.

Through Whiting-Turner, Willard teamed with then-mayor William Donald Schaefer to help transform Baltimore by building the Convention Center, Harborplace, and the Aquarium. These statistics and lists attest to Willard's incredible skills as an engineer and businessman, but they don't begin to capture the magnitude of his accomplishments, his charitable contributions, or his generous spirit.

Willard and his beloved wife Lillian have been lifelong supporters of Johns Hopkins University. He helped to reestablish the university's stand-alone engineering school in 1979, and secured the school-naming gift from the estate of his mentor, G.W.C. Whiting.

Other activities include funding the Willard and Lillian Hackerman Chair in Radiation Oncology at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, construction of the Hackerman-Patz Patient and Family Pavilion, and the Hackerman Research Laboratories at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center. He and his wife also provided major support for the Robert H. and Clarice Smith Building at the Wilmer Eye Institute.

In 1984, Willard and Lillian donated a mansion on Mount Vernon Place adjacent to the Walters Art Gallery to the city of Baltimore, which in turn entrusted the property to the gallery—now known as the Walters Art Museum—to house its collection of Asian art.

In December 2001, Mr. Hackerman gave the largest gift in the history of the Baltimore City Community College Foundation to establish the Lillian and Willard Hackerman Student Emergency Loan Program, which provides no-interest loans to BCCC students. If you seek his monument, look around you.

Timothy Regan, the Whiting-Turner executive vice president who will succeed Willard as the firm's third president in its 105-year history, noted:

He is a legend for his good works, and the irony is that most of his good works are not even known.

The Sun recounted a story Baltimore architect Adam Gross told about accompanying Willard through a newly completed project at the Bryn Mawr School. According to Mr. Gross, Willard asked the school's headmistress how many women were graduating with engineering degrees. Then, a few days later, he sent a sizable check to the school to provide scholarships for women in engineering. "He was like that. He did deeds that nobody knew about," Mr. Gross said.

Willard was a man of quiet strength who professionally and charitably enriched his beloved Baltimore. He was an active alumnus of Johns Hopkins University who gave back to the school and its hospital in countless ways. He was a humble man and rarely stood still to take credit for his many successes because he had already begun to tackle the next challenge. Despite being at the helm of one of the largest general building companies in America, Willard never outgrew his city or his fellow citizens. The Meyerhoff, the National Aquarium, and M&T Bank Stadium all stand as enduring monuments to a great man. His benevolent legacy extended to the synagogue where my family and I worship, Beth Tfiloh Congregation, where he will be missed as a man of great faith. Willard Hackerman was a true son of Baltimore.

My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Lillian, their daughter Nancy, their son Steven Mordecai, their five grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren, and his extended family at Whiting-Turner, all of whom loved him deeply.

I encourage my fellow colleagues, my fellow Baltimoreans and Marylanders, and all Americans to celebrate Willard Hackerman "who lived beyond ninety years, not for his own profit but for the public good. If you seek his monument, look around you."

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor week after week and talk about the President's health care law. As a physician who has practiced medicine in Wyoming for 25 years, I am here to give a doctor's second opinion

about the law. As we continue to learn more and more and see more and more, I am concerned about how the law affects my former patients, the doctors and nurses who take care of those patients, and the taxpayers who, of course, have been impacted as well.

It has been clear for a long time that this health care law is not working. It has been obvious from the beginning that this law would not work out the way the Democrats had promised the American people it would work out. Republicans had warned that it was a terrible idea, and even some Democrats have admitted this law has been a train wreck.

The Obama administration has been desperate to talk about anything but the failure of the health care law, and they have been desperate to hide some of the biggest problems with the law. The President has unilaterally made one change after another—sometimes with, in my opinion, no legal authority to do so—and tried to do this in a way that, perhaps, nobody would even notice.

Late yesterday the administration leaked word that it would delay again the law's unpopular employer mandate. It was the second time the Obama administration had changed the health care law in just a few days.

On the front page of USA Today, above the fold: "Health law faces new delay."

The Wall Street Journal: "Health-Law Mandate Put Off Again."

The Washington Post reported on modifications over the weekend. This is from Saturday: "Administration to allow some changes to health-care plans." That article says:

The Obama administration has quietly reworked rules and computer code for HealthCare.gov to try to stem an outpouring of discontent—

"an outpouring of discontent"—

by . . . Americans who have discovered that the health plans they bought do not include their old doctors or allow them to add new babies or spouses.

So the administration then sent out a 14-page memo to insurance companies with changes to how its Web site works and new rules for how people can buy coverage.

The Washington Post article goes on to say:

The changes reflect recent work—still underway—to improve the computer system for the marketplace, as well as fresh thinking about the needs of people who are buying the coverage.

"Fresh thinking about the needs of people who are buying the coverage"? Did the administration not think of these people before they wrote all of these things? The Obama administration has been working on this Web site for 4 years. Do they not talk to people and think about people and lives? I know a lot of these folks who work for the administration have gone right

from college to graduate or law school and then right into some cubicle on the administration's payroll. Do they have no clue about how the real world works?

It is worse than that. On Super Bowl Sunday, President Obama sat down for an interview, and he was asked about the failure of his health care Web site, healthcare.gov—the Web site. This is what he said:

It got fixed within a month and half, it was up and running and now it's working the way it's supposed to.

I do not think many people around the country who have gone on this Web site even today believe it is working the way it is supposed to.

The President was with Bill Clinton in September at the Clinton Forum, and President Obama said: Easier to use than Amazon, cheaper to buy than your cell phone bill. I assume the President actually believed that. I assume the President believes it is working the way it is supposed to today. But I think that is the reason the President's poll numbers are so low—because the American people say the President is out of touch with what the American people are seeing in their own homes and in their own communities, and the President in the White House has very little realization of what is happening in America. So according to the President, healthcare.gov is now working the way it is supposed to work.

Well, if that is true, why did we learn a week later that there are another 14 pages of rules changes and changes to the Web site? Did the President not have a clue that they were even coming? Why do we learn now that their work is "still underway," trying to think about the needs of people who have been forced to buy insurance through this Web site?

Back in December the press gave President Obama the lie of the year award for his statement that if you like your health care plan, you can keep it. Well, when the President says that his Web site is working the way it is supposed to, either he continues to be in denial or he has another entry for this year's lie of the year.

On Sunday, Bob Schieffer on "Face the Nation" asked about the latest rules changes. Those were the rules changes that were before Sunday, not the ones that came out yesterday. The President has changed these rules now over two dozen times.

Bob Schieffer said: "Things just seem, in every day and every way, to be more confused." This is Bob Schieffer, who for years, as the face of "Face the Nation," has become a trusted person whom people turn to. As he says in a reasonable way, things just seem, in every day and every way, to be more confused. He then asked: "Is there any hope of getting it straightened out?" That is what Bob Schieffer

asked—"any hope of getting it straightened out?"

Well, the majority party whip was on the show. The Democratic Senator was on the show, and instead of answering the question, he avoided it. He tried to change the subject, and he repeated an old Democratic talking point. This time that Senator claimed that "10 million Americans have health insurance today who would not have had it"—this is the Democratic Senator—without the President's law—not actually responding to the question from Bob Schieffer about whether we can get things straightened out—no, not at all, not answering whether there is any hope of getting the law straightened out, just the same old talking points, and the talking points are not even true.

The Washington Post Fact Checker said the statement was so wrong, it deserved four Pinocchios—the most you can get. Well, that is the highest number possible—four Pinocchios. The Washington Post called the Democratic Senator's claim "simply ridiculous."

The reality is that the overwhelming majority of the American people signing up under the Obama health care law already had health insurance, so they are actually not getting new insurance or are newly insured because of the law. These are people who got cancellation letters and then said: Uh-oh, I need to get insurance. So then they went to the Web site to buy something—often much more expensive, requiring higher copays, higher deductibles. The law forced them to lose the coverage they had and the coverage that actually had worked for them.

Many people are paying far more now than they were for worse coverage, and it is not the right fit for their families. They are often paying for insurance which they are not going to use, do not want, which is more than they would ever need, and they are paying more than they ever had intended. That is what I hear when I talk to people in Wyoming. I was in Wyoming—in Cheyenne and Casper—this weekend. That is what I hear at home. The administration does not want to talk about that. Democrats in Washington do not want to talk about it at all. They just want to repeat their talking points even though they are completely false and have been proven to be false. Democrats want to avoid the tough questions about how the law has failed. They rely on denial and deception.

The Web site still is not working in spite of what the President may have said on Super Bowl Sunday. The law is not working. The answer to the question is, No, there is no hope of getting it straightened out. The Web site problems we have seen are just the tip of the iceberg.

People are paying higher premiums. Coverages are canceled. People cannot

keep their doctors. Fraud and identity theft are going to continue to be a plague of this health care Web site. People are paying higher copays and deductibles.

It has been reported, interestingly enough, that in California, with the so-called navigators—the people who are the certified navigators—over 40 of them are convicted criminals. Forty convicted criminals were hired and certified—certified—to be navigators in California in spite of the fact that people are being asked to give personal information, health information, financial information to these navigators. So it is no surprise that we are going to continue to see issues of fraud and identity theft.

Another interesting thing we learned recently: The Congressional Budget Office came out with its new estimates about the health care law and its effect on parts of the economy and on jobs. It also talked about the number of people who do not have insurance. It said that in the year 2024—10 years from now—there will be 31 million Americans who will be uninsured: Ten years from now, 31 million Americans uninsured.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for an additional 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Let's think about the speech the President gave in 2009. He came to Congress. He wanted to talk about health care reform. He talked about why it was so urgent that the Congress pass health care reform. He said: "There are now more than 30 million American citizens who cannot get coverage." So in 2009 the President said 30 million Americans could not get coverage.

The Congressional Budget Office just comes out and says: Ten years in the future—15 years after the President gives his speech—31 million Americans with no insurance. Yet we will have spent trillions of dollars, and yet it will not fix so big of a problem that we know we need to deal with—health care in America—and this present law, this enormous law, this 2,700-page law, has completely failed to deal with the reason the President said we had to deal with this in 2009. Fifteen years later, the same numbers—30 million; over 30 million in 2024. How is that a victory for uninsured Americans? How can the President say this law has succeeded? How is it a sign that the health care law is working in the way it is supposed to work?

On top of that, middle-class people all across the country are paying more because of the health care law. Their premiums have gone up. Their deductibles have gone up. Their copayments have gone up. Millions of hard-working Americans have had their insurance policies canceled because of the law. And the administration is still

working on the Web site, in spite of what the President may say about it.

The President says it is working as it is supposed to. On this and so many issues, the President continues to be wrong, and the American people see it. The Web site is not working. The health care law clearly is not working. It is not working the way he promised. It is not working the way the American people need health care to work for them in this country.

It is time for the administration to stop sneaking out these changes under the cover of darkness, in blog posts. If the President is going to make a change, why doesn't he come and tell the American people what he is going to do?

It is time for the Democrats to stop the four-Pinocchio talking points. It is time for folks to be honest about the failings of the health care law. It is time to eliminate this terrible health care law and replace it with real reform that gives people better access to quality, affordable health care—the care they need, from a doctor they choose, at lower cost.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, we have reached a historic moment in the history of our Republic when the President of the United States claims the unilateral power to waive, delay, or just simply ignore the law of the land.

One of the most frequent questions I get back home in Texas is, How can the President do that? How can he do that? They remember when he was sworn in and put his hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States, and now how can he simply ignore what those laws are? How can that contradiction exist?

Usually what I find myself doing is saying: Well, Congress has the authority to pass the laws, and it is the executive branch—the President—that has the authority to enforce the law. That is why he has the authority to appoint the head of the Department of Justice, the Attorney General of the United States, Attorney General Eric Holder.

But when the President and, by extension, his own Department of Justice refuse to enforce the law of the land, what have we become? Well, we certainly cannot claim in good conscience to believe in the rule of law, where the law applies to all of us no matter whether you are the President of the United States or you are the most humble of our citizens. That is the promise over the top of the Supreme Court of the United States. All you have to do is look out the window here. It says: Equal Justice Under The Law.

Quite simply, the President has no legal authority under our Constitution or under any law in America to pick and choose which laws he is going to enforce or not enforce based on political expediency. And the fact that he

claimed to do so again, for perhaps the two-dozen-th time, does not change anything.

So my constituents at home ask me—they say: Well, Senator CORNYN, what are you going to do about it? I said: Well, I am going to support private litigation to challenge the President. Indeed, that is the nature of the litigation that originally challenged the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare. There was private litigation that challenged the President's claimed authority to make a recess appointment and bypass the advice and consent function in the Constitution for the Congress to the National Labor Relations Board, which has now been held unconstitutional by the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, and now the Supreme Court of the United States is considering an appeal from that court.

So there is a way to challenge the President, although it takes time and it is not exactly very satisfying because people say: Well, months, if not years, will go by before we will ultimately get a decision. But just think about the implications of what the President is doing. How would our Democratic friends feel if a Republican President decided not to enforce certain laws—let's say as they pertained to the environment?

They would be outraged. You know what. They would be right; it is wrong. I do not care whether you are a Democratic President or you are a Republican President or an Independent or whatever. It is wrong for the President to put his hand on the Bible, to take an oath to uphold the law of the land and then refuse to do so and to have no embarrassment, no sense of regret, but just the hubris and the arrogance to say: I am going to do it until somebody stops me.

I have said it before, and I will say it again. The issues here go far beyond the health care policy and ObamaCare. Checks and balances are not optional. They are the very fundamental structure of our Constitution. James Madison and the authors of the Federalist Papers, who wrote so eloquently about the new Constitution, at the time said that the concentration of power in a single branch of government is the very definition of tyranny. If the Obama administration continues to undermine checks and balances, it will not only undermine respect for the rule of law but also will create even greater distrust of the Federal Government and Congress itself, not to mention the office of the Presidency.

Make no mistake. We all understand why the President is going down this path. It is because ObamaCare has proved to be even more unworkable than its biggest critics might have imagined. The entire law needs—well, we need a do over. Let me put it that way. This side of the aisle has repeatedly encouraged the President and his

allies to work with us to try to replace ObamaCare with patient-centered reforms which would bring down the cost and make sure that we as patients and our families get to make decisions in consultation with our family, and not outsource those to the Federal Government.

We could come up with some ideas, and we actually have ideas that would lower costs, expand coverage, and improve access to care. Unfortunately, the President has shown zero intention in addressing those. I know I heard him say, even at the latest State of the Union: If my Republican friends have some good ideas, bring them to me.

We have been bringing them to him since 2009 and he simply has ignored or affirmatively rejected any other idea because he is so wed to this signature piece of legislation. I cannot help but think that one reason why the President claimed the authority to unilaterally waive the employer mandates until after the election is because he is focused on—you guessed it—the November elections, and he realizes what an albatross this is around the necks of those people who are going to be going to the voters and asking for them to reelect them.

But if he is wondering why Americans have grown so cynical about Washington, DC, all he needs to do is to look at his own administration's handling of this signature piece of legislation, a program that has come to symbolize big government overreach, and—I hate to say it, but it is true—contempt for the rule of law.

I want to say just a few more words in conclusion about America's fiscal health. As you know, Members of Congress have once again been asked to raise the debt ceiling, even though the national debt is in excess of \$17 trillion. The President likes to boast about short-term deficit reduction. That is the difference between what the government brings in on an annual basis and what it spends.

It is true that on an annual basis the last couple of years the number has gone down a little bit, primarily because the President raised taxes by \$1.7 trillion, coupled together with the caps on discretionary spending in the Budget Control Act. But the long-term trajectory remains just as bad as it ever was, and America continues to spend money that it does not have.

We are waiting for the President. He is the Commander in Chief. He is the leader of the free world. We are waiting for the President to put out a serious plan to address this problem. Many of us held out hope in December 2010 when the Simpson-Bowles bipartisan fiscal commission got together and made some bipartisan recommendations for doing exactly that. Unfortunately, they were ignored by the President. He demanded, in exchange for the so-called "grand bargain" that he wanted \$1 trillion more in revenue, more taxes.

Imagine what a body slam that would have been to the American economy. The American economy is still so weak that unemployment is at a historic high, particularly compared to recoveries following recessions. But \$1 trillion of additional taxes would have been catastrophic in terms of people looking for work and not being able to find work.

But since the President took office in 2009, our national debt has increased by \$6.6 trillion. It is now larger than our entire economy. I wonder who the President thinks will have to pay that back. Probably not our generation; we will not be around. But this generation will be around. They will be left holding the bag as a result of our irresponsibility and unwillingness to deal with this important problem.

Even though interest rates are at a very low point now, and, yes, the interest we have to pay the Chinese government and our other creditors is at a relatively low rate, imagine what will happen, as the Congressional Budget Office has, when interest rates start to tick back up to their historic norms. We will see that more and more of the tax dollars of the American people are used to pay interest on the debt. Whether you are concerned about safety net programs that our most vulnerable citizens need or our national security, we will not be able to do either the way we want to and need to.

According to the CBO's baseline projections, the annual deficit will steadily rise after 2015 and exceed \$1 trillion in 2022, at which time the Federal Government will be spending \$755 billion a year on net interest payments alone. To put that in another perspective, net interest payments in 2014 are estimated to be \$233 billion. That is not money that helps the most vulnerable in our society. That is not money that helps the warfighter keep us safe. That is money we are paying on the debt to our creditors, to the Chinese and other creditor nations as interest for all of this money we are borrowing that eventually somebody some day is going to have to pay back.

The Congressional Budget Office has consistently reminded us that even a small change in U.S. economic growth or interest rates or inflation could dramatically affect the Federal budget outlook. In fact, if interest rates were to rise just 1 percentage point above the CBO baseline each year over the next decade, our cumulative deficit will increase by \$1.5 trillion. That shows you how fragile the condition of our fiscal house is.

On multiple occasions back in the mid 1990s, this Chamber came within one vote—one vote—of passing a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Since the vote in March of 1997, our national debt has gone from \$5.3 trillion to \$17.2 trillion. It has more than tripled. Yet even as the debt

problem has gotten massively worse, the number of folks on the other side of the aisle who are willing to acknowledge that we cannot continue to spend money that we do not have and that the debt is a threat to our national security and our ability to do the things we know we want to do and need to do, continue to seem to ignore it.

I am proud to say that everyone on this side of the aisle has cosponsored a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that would force Washington, whether led by Democrats or Republicans—it would force Washington to live within our means and meet the same type of fiscal requirements that virtually all State governments have to meet.

To those who think that a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution is not the answer, I ask: Where is your plan? I realize that there are some who think that we can raise taxes. Let's raise taxes some more. But even they must understand that we simply cannot tax away our long-term debt problem. The only way we can solve that is by controlling our spending and reforming our programs like Social Security and Medicare. Sooner or later, even the President will have to acknowledge that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about S. 1963, which is supported by well over 30 veterans organizations. I want to thank my colleagues for their help and their support of the military retirement pay restoration bill that repeals section 403 of the budget agreement, which unfairly singled out our brave men and women in uniform.

I could spend a long time here, but I do not intend to because I know we have other colleagues who are on the way to speak. But I do want to thank my colleagues for their support. We got a huge vote the other night to move to this measure. I do not think there were any dissenting votes. I appreciate my colleagues voting to move to it.

The bottom line is this bill is about honoring the commitments we have made to our servicemembers. My State is the home of nearly 255,000 veterans—255,000 veterans. We only have a population of 3 million. So if you do the math, per capita we have a lot of veterans in my State—a very patriotic State. These brave men and women have put their lives on the line, and they have also put their lives on hold to serve their country, oftentimes in faraway places, far away from their homes and their families and from their beloved country to protect our Nation and defend our way of life.

They have fulfilled their obligations, and we need to fulfill ours. Day after day we get emails and letters and phone calls from Arkansas veterans

and their families. They talk about what the Senate is talking about today; that is, whether we should fix this cost of living adjustment or not and even down to the details of whether we should pay for this or not.

Let me just read a few. I have eight Arkansans here who have written in recent weeks.

MAJ Adam Smith of Sherwood said:

When I signed on twelve years ago, I swore an oath to defend my country, one that I have upheld through four combat deployments in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa. It pains me to see that my government is not keeping its faith in my oath. I have served and will continue to serve faithfully, but I want my government to properly compensate me for all the times I nearly made my wife a young widow.

The second one is from Therese Wikoff of North Little Rock. She is an employee of the VA, and she is married to someone in the military. She says:

I see [our veterans] every day struggling. They served and it is our duty to respect and take care of them.

John Barnwell of Fort Smith says:

I spent a career in the U.S. Air Force defending this great country from all enemies . . . How could [Congress] even consider cutting veterans benefits when our sacrifices are the reason we are even able to live in a free country?

SMSGT John W. Smith of Cabot writes:

I served my country for 28 years with the promise that once I completed my part, I would be given a retirement for the rest of my life to include the cost of living increases. However, it appears the government has decided to change the promise made and not honor their part of the bargain.

Sam Garland of Jacksonville says:

When I enlisted I was told if I did my time that I would receive retirement . . . [Don't take away] this hard worked promise.

Marshall Harmon of Vilonia wrote:

This is a military retirement that I worked extremely hard for and in fact earned! The documents I was provided at the time of retirement assured me that my buying power would remain strong and consistent . . . It seems that is just not the case.

Chadwick Cagle of Sherwood wrote to say:

I am a military veteran of almost 15 years, including two deployments to Iraq. I was an Infantryman in the Marine Corps . . . I find it very frustrating that the reductions in benefits were taken from the very men and women who have served and protected this country.

The next will be the last one. I could go on for a long time. As people can tell, I have a lot more where these came from.

Bill Patrick of Mountain Home says:

As a veteran of the U.S. Army, I am saddened by the provision in this bill that in essence penalizes those that have given the most for this great country of ours. Although I do realize the importance of keeping the government funded and running, I am opposed to the fact that we are doing it on the backs of those who have served honorably, and long.

I want those words to sink in for my colleagues in the Senate today. These are men and women from my State. The Senators have the same types of folks in their States. They put on the uniform and they serve our country. This is not how we should repay them.

I know that on this floor and out in press conferences and in press releases and all of that, people say: Well, we need to pay for this.

This bill, S. 1963, has no pay-for. The way I feel about it is this cut to their benefits, this cut in their COLA, the 1 percent adjusted downward, doesn't take effect until 2015. We have all of this year to find a pay-for if that is what we decide we are going to do.

But the way I feel about this is they have already paid. They have paid for this with their service. This was something that was added to a budget deal, and it is something I think probably came in and was put in by the House Republicans. In effect, we are trying to solve this problem for them.

But, regardless, I have a list that I did not fabricate for this speech. This stands in my office in Washington every day. I have a similar poster identical to this poster in Little Rock. It is there every day in our lobby, in our entryway for anyone and everyone who comes to the office to see the sacrifice that Arkansans have made to this country. These men and women—there are over 100 listed.

As much as I hate to say it, this list grows all the time. We change this list out frequently. There are over 100 listed. In fact, there are over 110 listed. These are troops from Arkansas or based in Arkansas who paid the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan. These people paid for this benefit.

All of the veterans who will receive this benefit were in the exact same situation that these men and women were, but by the grace of God they made it home. We need to honor the commitments we have made to our veterans.

This is no laughing matter. This isn't politics, this isn't a Democratic thing or a Republican thing, this is an American thing.

Do you know what. When we make commitments to our veterans, if we cannot honor those commitments, we never should have made them in the first place.

I know a lot of people in Washington make all kinds of promises, but we have made these commitments to our veterans. Some of them mentioned when they signed on in the very beginning or when they take their retirement in the very end, it is very clear the type of retirement benefits they will get. Just because it is hard now, because it is expensive, doesn't mean we back out on the commitments we have made to our men and women in uniform. We don't back out on the commitments we have made to our veterans.

But now what we have is we have people in Washington who are saying: We like our veterans, but they need to pay for this. They need to pay for this. I disagree. We have all this year. If we make that decision later to find a way to pay for this change, we have time to find the pay-for later.

I am always reminded when I think of our folks who served this Nation in the military, of this one verse that is found in John 15:13. It says: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

I have been to a number of funerals, and I have made a number of calls to these families. I don't know how many people I have talked to who have lost a loved one in Iraq or Afghanistan—or in some other military operation somehow, some way—and that is the verse I always remember because they laid down their lives for their country.

Everyone else who puts on that uniform, by the very nature of them putting on that uniform, has made the commitment that they are willing to lay down their lives too. They are in harm's way for us.

I think it is wrong for us to try to lower their benefits. I think it is wrong for us to be having a debate about finding a way to pay for this. We have time to pay for this over the course of this year. I am totally open to talking to people about how to pay for this as we go.

But let's, for crying out loud, not send the message to our men and women in uniform, to our veterans, that we are going to balance the budget on their backs. They are the ones who have made the commitment. They are the ones who have traveled and served overseas.

When it comes to government spending—I just heard a couple of speeches by my friends on the other side of the aisle—everybody who is paying attention knows we can cut unnecessary government programs. We can eliminate duplicative policies. We can do good in the regulatory world to make government more efficient, more effective. We can do that, but we should not use these folks to balance our budget.

I see my colleague from Florida has stepped in. I know he would like to say a few words.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. I am here to support Senator PRYOR's bill. I am a cosponsor. We were about to have a press conference, and the bottom line is there is no way to fully repay someone who puts their life on the line for our country, but we can do what we can, and this legislation ensures that we continue to do all we can. That is a summary of the whole thing.

I have the privilege of being a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, and from day one one of the

things we recognize is that we want to keep our promises to the men and women of our military. The strength of the military will always be the people, and they commit their lives to the service of the country. During that commitment there is a lot of sacrifice: overseas deployments, they miss births, birthdays, and countless other hardships.

A retiree has spent years earning the benefits they looked forward to and those were some of the reasons they made the sacrifices when they took the oath of office and put on the uniform.

When that servicemember joins the military, they look at the retirement system in place at the time, and they begin to build their life and their plans around those specific retirement benefits. Those who choose to devote long years and the retirement period of 20 years of service—and then happen to retire and pursue a second career—it gives them the flexibility to move back to a location where they can help out a family member or finally become a full-time part of a family business, whatever it is. Those folks shouldn't be penalized because they are not yet 62 years old. They have already done 20 years of service, if not more.

They are choosing to innovate to serve their community or to finally start that small business they had always dreamed about, and so it is unfair to penalize them when others are not. Why in the world would we want to make a difference between those who had retired from the military?

So safeguarding the benefits servicemembers have earned not only protects the all-volunteer force, but it also attracts and will continue to attract the best talent and encourage somebody to make the military a career. For the career soldier, sailor, airman or marine, what they give back over those 20-plus years is immeasurable.

We have bipartisan agreement that restricting military benefits in this way is not the correct path to address defense cuts and the debt. We must restore this full cost-of-living adjustment for military retirees.

With that vote yesterday, zero against it, why are we out here having to spend all this time? Why don't we just take it up and pass it, because the votes are obviously here. I am hoping that is what the Senate is going to do in the next few hours.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. I come to the floor to talk about an amendment I have pending to the bill pending on the floor to fix the unfair cuts to our military retirees.

Let me remind everyone of how we got to this point. It was right before the holidays and there was a budget agreement that was reached between the chairman of the Senate Budget

Committee and the chairman of the House Budget Committee.

Let me remind everyone in this Chamber that I serve on the Senate Budget Committee. No one on the Senate Budget Committee—at least myself, I wasn't included, I guess I missed it—brought to our attention the budget agreement before it was brought as a fait accompli to the floor, and that is one of the problems that brought us to where we are today. Only in Washington could you serve on the actual Budget Committee, they come up with a budget agreement and actually never show it to you—even though you are on the Budget Committee.

Had they shown it to me in advance, I can tell you what I would have told them, that this idea to single out our military retirees is totally unfair. It is the wrong priority for America to single out those who have taken the bullets for us when, if we look at the changes that were made in the budget agreement to the contributions for Federal employees, they were prospective. Only new hires had to pay additional contributions.

But for our men and women in uniform, those working-age retirees under 62—and originally our wounded warriors were included in that as well—took the cut. So when I did find out about it—and I see my colleague from South Carolina, who also serves on the Senate Budget Committee, is here—when we and others found out about it—also my colleague Senator WICKER from Mississippi—we pointed out from the beginning, before this body even voted on the budget agreement, that the cuts to military retirees were unfair; that of all the people we were going to single out, why would we single out the people who have taken the bullets for us? What kind of message does that send to those who have served us and sacrificed so much for our country?

So I remember it. We came down here before Christmas, before the holidays. Senator GRAHAM, my colleague from South Carolina, came down here, Senator WICKER from Mississippi, and we said to our colleagues then: Let's fix this. Let's fix this unfair cut now before we actually pass this budget into law, because we have time to do it. Do you know the response we got? We are in a rush. We have to get home to our families before the holidays, rather than fix what was wrong from the beginning.

Right now I hear so many of our colleagues coming to the floor and saying: We have to fix this, even though they voted for this budget agreement.

Mr. GRAHAM. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Ms. AYOTTE. Yes, I yield for a question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank the Chair.

Does the Senator agree with me, if the budget deal had not been paid for it would never have passed?

Ms. AYOTTE. I would agree with that.

Mr. GRAHAM. Most Republicans, and I am sure some Democrats, would not have voted for a budget deal unless it was deficit-neutral and paid for. I know it wouldn't have passed the House. So now, after the fact, if you fix the COLA problem without paying for it, haven't you basically blown the budget deal apart?

Ms. AYOTTE. Well, that is the irony of where we find ourselves. We have people who came to the floor, even though we warned them and said this is really unfair, why are we doing this to military retirees, we should fix this now and we can find other ways to cut spending—

Mr. GRAHAM. And their response was: We can fix it later. Our response was: Well, will you pay for it later? And everybody said yes.

So here we are. I appreciate Senator PRYOR and Senator HAGAN from North Carolina wanting to fix it. The good news is everyone in the body wants to undo the damage done to our military retirees. That is the good news. The bad news is we are doing it in a fashion that would break the budget agreement, and I don't think that should be our choice.

In order to right a wrong done to the military retirement community—which was a \$6 billion taking from them, unlike anybody else in the country—can we not find \$6 billion over the next 10 years to make up for it? Because if we don't, we have broken the budget agreement and put a burden on the next generation. So, really, to help the military retiree, do you have to turn around and screw future generations by adding \$6 billion of debt on top of the \$16 trillion? I guess that is the question. And I would say no. That is why I appreciate the Senator's offset.

Ms. AYOTTE. The answer is no. Of course we don't. We don't have to burden the next generation to fix what we should have fixed from the beginning, which was unfair from the beginning. That said, I have an offset—

Mr. GRAHAM. What is the Senator proposing here?

Ms. AYOTTE. I have an offset that is pretty straightforward. We have two major refundable tax credits in our Tax Code, the earned income tax credit and the additional child tax credit, both of which, when you claim them, you actually get money back under the Tax Code. My amendment is pretty straightforward. When you file for the earned income tax credit, you actually have to put a Social Security number when you file for it as the tax filer. Also, if you have a dependent, you have to put a Social Security number. For the additional child tax credit, there was a Treasury IG report done under

this administration in 2011 and it raised real concerns about the way this tax refund was being administered, because when you filed for it, you didn't have to put a Social Security number. Also, for any child for whom you were seeking a refund, you didn't have to put a Social Security number.

My fix is very straightforward: All I am asking is, if you want to seek that tax refund for your child, you list a Social Security number for the child. Why is that important? It is important because the Treasury IG found with this tax refund billions and billions of dollars going out the door. In fact, with the amendment I just mentioned, we can save \$20 billion over the next 10 years.

There were investigations done of this tax refund, and guess what they found. Massive examples of fraud, which I will go through in detail, of people claiming kids who may not even live in this country; of people claiming kids who might live in Mexico, because there are absolutely no parameters on the way this is being interpreted right now.

So here is the question: Should we fix fraud in our Tax Code and really address this issue, still allowing American children and children who the President has said are eligible—certain DREAMer children—to get this tax refund—real children in this country—or should we let this fraud continue and also add to our debt and not address the underlying problems facing our Nation?

I don't understand why we can't pass something commonsense like this.

Mr. GRAHAM. Let me see if I have this right. There is an earned income tax credit you can receive based on need; is that right?

Ms. AYOTTE. Exactly.

Mr. GRAHAM. We are not going to get it. You are not going to get it for your kids because you make too much money.

Ms. AYOTTE. Right.

Mr. GRAHAM. I think this is a Ronald Reagan idea. If you are working, even though you may not have any income tax liability, we are going to give you an earned income tax credit. I think it is \$500 per child; is that right?

Ms. AYOTTE. This is the earned income we are talking about.

Mr. GRAHAM. Yes, I know. But under the earned income tax credit—

Ms. AYOTTE. I don't know the amount.

Mr. GRAHAM. I think it is \$500. But the point is, do you have to have a Social Security number?

Ms. AYOTTE. Yes.

Mr. GRAHAM. Ok. If the argument is that by adding a Social Security number requirement to the additional credit you are somehow burdening people, why isn't that an argument made against the EITC? Because to get the earned income tax credit you have to have a Social Security number.

This new additional tax credit, on top of the earned income tax credit, doesn't have the same requirements. So those who come to the floor to say we are destroying families, why wouldn't you come down here and propose to do away with the Social Security number on the earned income tax credit? That would make perfect sense to me.

If requiring a Social Security number is a bad thing for families, why do you tolerate it for the EITC? The reason you wouldn't propose that change is because people in Treasury would say you would be crazy, because now you have an additional tax credit, something new on top of the EITC, that Senator AYOTTE has found without a Social Security number you have \$19 billion in fraud.

So I am curious. If you think requiring a Social Security number for a child to get an additional tax credit is destroying the family, why don't you come down here and suggest changing the law for the EITC? If you did that, you would get blistered by the auditor saying you are opening a new line of fraud.

So could the Senator tell us what would happen to the American taxpayer, what benefit would inure to the American taxpayer if we followed the Senator's proposal and accepted her amendment of requiring a Social Security number?

Ms. AYOTTE. The American taxpayer would save \$20 billion over the next 10 years. This is about protecting the American taxpayer. Let me talk about some of the fraud that was found.

In Indiana, they found 4 workers were claiming 20 children living inside 1 residence. The IRS sent these illegal immigrants tax refunds of a total of \$29,000-plus. They also found many people were claiming the tax credit for kids who live in Mexico. These are our taxpayer dollars going out the door in this way.

An Indiana tax preparer, who acted as a whistleblower, said: We have seen sometimes 10 or 12 dependents, most times nieces and nephews, on these tax forms. The more you put on there, the more you get back, even though they are not verifying that any of these children live here or exist. That is our tax money going out the door. The whistleblower had thousands of examples.

Another example from a whistleblower: We have over \$10,000 in refunds for nine nieces and nephews, he said. It is so easy. I can bring out stacks and stacks. It is so easy, it is ridiculous.

In North Carolina, investigators tied at least 17 tax returns totaling more than \$62,000 in returns to a Charlotte, NC, apartment that 1 woman leased. At another apartment nearby, investigators discovered 153 returns valued at over \$700,000 in refunds. Another address in the same apartment complex

had 236 returns worth over \$1 million in returns.

This is money taken into our treasury and turned back in. All I am saying with this amendment is if you can put a Social Security number for the child you are claiming the credit for, you can get this credit. That is all this is, making this consistent with the earned income tax credit. And in fact, the filer can be an undocumented worker in this country and have a child who legitimately has a Social Security number and get the credit for it. So I have modified my amendment to address that issue.

What I am saying is this: Let us end fraud and let us take that money that is being taken from the American taxpayer—\$20 billion—and take \$6 billion of it to be used to restore these military cuts. This will make sure we do not burden the next generation and we fix a wrong that should be righted.

Let me talk about some other examples of what we have seen. In Tennessee, a search warrant was prepared by the IRS for a tax company that was encouraging undocumented workers to lie on their tax returns by claiming children who live in Mexico as dependents. Why can this tax preparer even encourage that? Because right now, when the refund for the additional child tax credit is filed for, you don't have to put anything about the child to prove the child even exists. So simply requiring a Social Security number for the child you are getting money back for would end that fraud.

The IRS says the Tennessee tax preparer has filed 6,000 tax returns over the last 3 years, and although his—listen to this—although his clients only paid \$3.3 million in taxes, they were able to receive back \$17 million in refunds. Imagine that: \$3.3 million in taxes his clients as a whole claim they have paid, and they received \$17 million in refunds back. Pretty good deal, isn't it. Well, it is a bad deal for the American taxpayer.

This amendment makes so much common sense I just hope I can get a vote on it on the floor of the Senate. In the past, when I have tried to bring this amendment forward, I have been denied a vote on many occasions.

I hope the people of this country understand what the vote on the floor is. The vote on the floor is straightforward. This amendment fixes the unfair cuts to our military retirees and ensures we aren't breaking the budget agreement that was just passed or burdening the next generation with debt. In fact, my amendment will further reduce the debt because it saves more money than just paying for this fix. We can also fix this tax fraud and do the right thing by the American taxpayer.

What worries me most is that because this is Washington, and this makes so much sense, I fear I won't get a vote and that my colleagues will use

excuses to say: We shouldn't vote for this because—as I heard my colleague from Illinois on the floor this morning saying—we are going to harm children. Well, children will still be able to get this refund. Put a Social Security number down and American children will get this refund. Also children the President has already deemed eligible—so-called DREAMers. In fact, my colleague from Illinois who came to the floor this morning admitted already ½ million of them have filed for a Social Security number, and they too could receive this tax refund.

If we don't pass this amendment, there are two groups that lose: the veterans, but also, most importantly, all of us—the American taxpayer.

Before I conclude, I wanted to mention the groups endorsing my amendment: the American Legion, American Veterans—AMVETS—Concerned Veterans for America, the Military Officers Association of America, the National Guard Association of the United States, the National Military Family Association, the Naval Enlisted Reserve Association, the Retired Enlisted Association, the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association, the U.S. Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association, and the U.S. Coast Guard Enlisted Association.

I hope my colleagues will vote for this commonsense amendment, so we can fix this unfair cut to our military retirees and pay for it and make sure we aren't also adding to our debt and burdening future generations.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield to the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 4:30 p.m., the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 516, 517, 518, and 593; that there be 30 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of the time the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form prior to each vote, and that all rollcall votes after the first be 10 minutes in duration.

I appreciate the Senator yielding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with the Senator from South Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFGHANISTAN PRISONER RELEASE

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I would say to my friend from South Carolina that we have received some disturbing news today; that is, the President of Afghanistan, President Karzai, has made a decision to release 65 of the 88 detainees at Parwan prison in Afghanistan.

The Senator from South Carolina and I have known the President of Afghanistan for many years. We have had many meetings with the President of Afghanistan, and I believe we had established a rather cordial relationship over these last 13 years.

Many of my colleagues may not know that the Senator from South Carolina, in his capacity as a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, a lawyer, has spent a great deal of his active-duty time in Afghanistan on Active Duty primarily focusing on the whole issue of detainees, how they are tried, how they are incarcerated, and steps for release and detention. In other words, there is no one that I know who has more indepth knowledge of this issue than the Senator from South Carolina. I don't believe anybody has ever worked as hard as he has on this issue, and there have been significant accomplishments as a result of his and other wonderful Americans' work.

I think facts are stubborn things; and I would ask my friend from South Carolina, isn't it true the release of these detainees poses a direct threat to the lives of our service men and women who are serving in Afghanistan? Is it true that 25 of these individuals are linked to the production and/or emplacement of IEDs; that 33 tested positive for explosive residue when processed after capture; that 40 percent are associated with direct attacks, killing or wounding 57 Afghan citizens and allied forces; that 30 percent are associated with direct attacks, killing or wounding 60 U.S. or coalition force members; that 32 were captured after the ANSF assumed responsibility?

So isn't it clear, I ask my colleague, after all these years of work trying to get this whole system of detainees and trials and incarceration, that we are now seeing—sadly—this result of individuals who can be traced to attacks on or directly responsible for the deaths of brave Americans?

Mr. GRAHAM. Senator McCAIN is absolutely right.

I thank him for showing such an interest in this topic. He has been so

helpful in making sure we get this detention issue right. Having been incarcerated in a war, I think Senator MCCAIN knows the difference between a system that works and one that doesn't. It has always been helpful to have Senator MCCAIN travel with me and make a point to the Afghans that he knows what doesn't work.

General Dunford called this morning with a lot of sadness and, quite frankly, anger in his voice. We have captured thousands of Afghans and some third-country nationals during the 12-year war in Afghanistan. Our confinement facility at Bagram Air Base has improved a thousand percent. We have made our fair share of mistakes, but the prison now called Parwan I would put up against any prison in West Virginia, South Carolina or Arizona. It is a state-of-the-art prison. It is being transferred over to the Afghans.

As we take this prisoner population and turn it over to the Afghans with a collaborative process where we work together to determine what force to take, they have what is called an Accountability Review Board, which is an Afghan board looking at the disposition of this prison population. They were about ready to release about 88 about whom our commander felt the evidence in question deserved criminal court disposition.

The Afghan criminal court at the prison, which is attached right to the prison—the JSAP—has heard 6,000 cases with a 70-percent conviction rate. I am very proud of the judges and lawyers who run that facility.

All we are asking is that they not let 65 of the 88 walk out the door because of an administrative review board which is not recognized under Afghan law. The guy in charge of it is openly against the Bilateral Security Agreement. I think he is a corrupt individual.

General Dunford has basically said: You are going too far here. I cannot in good conscience not object.

We have lodged our objections, and we thought this would be fixed, and they were going to turn these cases over to the attorney general. I received a phone call Sunday night. There was a caveat which nobody told us about. They turned the 88 files over to the attorney general we thought for prosecution, but apparently President Karzai told the attorney general to release 65 of the 88.

If you believe in the rule of law, the President of the country does not have the authority under Afghan law to tell the judiciary or the attorney general what cases to dispose of. This is an extrajudicial exercise of legal authority by the President of Afghanistan. The people in question, the 88, are responsible for killing 60 Americans and coalition forces and 57 Afghans, and the Afghan population does not like the idea that these people are going to walk out of the jail.

I will read the statement issued by our commander in Afghanistan right after the phone call:

United States Forces-Afghanistan has learned that 65 dangerous individuals from a group of 88 detainees under dispute have been ordered released from the Afghan National Detention Facility at Parwan.

The U.S. has, on several occasions, provided extensive information and evidence on each of the 88 detainees to the Afghan Review Board, the Afghan National Directorate of Security and the Attorney General's office.

This release violates the agreements between the U.S. and Afghanistan.

The agreement is called the Memorandum of Understanding, and this violates the spirit and the letter of the agreement we have negotiated.

We have made clear our judgment that these individuals should be prosecuted under Afghan law. We requested that the cases be carefully reviewed. But the evidence against them was never seriously considered, including by the Attorney General, given the short time since the decision was made to transfer these cases to the Afghan legal system.

So within 24 hours they decided to let 65 people go. Clearly, they didn't spend much time.

The release of the 65 detainees is a legitimate force protection concern for the lives of both coalition troops and Afghan National Security Forces.

It goes to Senator MCCAIN's question, and I have spent a lot of time looking at every file. This is our own ground commander, General Dunford, who I think is doing a great job, telling us: If you let these people go, it represents a force protection problem.

He further goes on to say:

The primary weapon of choice for these primary individuals is the improvised explosive device, widely recognized as the primary cause of civilian casualties in Afghanistan.

And quite frankly, the death of our own troops. Senator MCCAIN made a good point. Twenty-five of the 65 are directly linked to planting IEDs against our forces. We have fingerprints on these people. I have literally seen the evidence where there is biometric identification, where we can look at the pressure plate and the tape and all the material around the making of the IED and pick up fingerprints. When we do that, they match to the biometric data. We have identified the person by fingerprint, and they are going to let that person go. Some of these people have been captured previously. The recidivism rate is growing in Afghanistan.

This is the final paragraph:

The release of these detainees is a major step backward for the rule of law in Afghanistan. Some previously-released individuals have already returned to the fight, and this subsequent release will allow dangerous insurgents back into Afghan cities and villages.

Back into the Afghan cities and villages to kill our troops and kill innocent Afghans.

I thank Senator MCCAIN so much for his interest in this subject matter.

We are drafting a resolution condemning the actions of the Afghan government, President Karzai, in the strongest terms possible. We are suggesting that, in light of the breach of this agreement, putting our troops at risk, letting killers go, that we suspend all economic aid until after the election.

I want to let this body know that the troops are watching this. Can you imagine being one of the soldiers—Afghan and American—who risked their life to capture these people to have them walk right out the door and never face justice for killing one of your comrades? They are watching us. We have to prove to the troops on the ground in Afghanistan—both Afghan and American and coalition forces—that the Congress of the United States will not accept this; that we have their back; and that we should push back as hard as humanly possible to make the message clear to President Karzai and the Afghan government how much this displeases us. They are due to walk out of the jail Thursday.

I hope I don't have to come back on the floor of the Senate and read about the death of an American caused by one of the people President Karzai released.

Senator MCCAIN and I have been to Afghanistan more times than I can think of. I have not found anybody more attuned to the idea that we need a sustaining permanent relationship with the Afghan people than the Senator from Arizona. He understands a follow-on force is necessary, and that we can win this conflict and end it well with honor if we have a follow-on force, and the Senator from Arizona wants to stay involved.

But does Senator MCCAIN agree with me that the actions of President Karzai defying our commander, his own judges, his own legal system has done enormous damage to public support for this war effort—which is already low—and has hurt the relationship between the Congress and the Afghan government?

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank the Senator from South Carolina, and I hope my colleagues will understand the in-depth knowledge which he has about this issue. No one understands it as well or has been more involved, to the point of being involved with each of the individual cases.

Before I respond to the question, I think it important for our colleagues to understand some of these specific cases. I am not going to submit for the record all 65 because it is long. But let me just mention a couple of examples of people who are about to be released into Afghanistan while our men and women are still there in harm's way.

Habibulla Abdul Hady is a Taliban member, emplaced IEDs used in attacks against ANSF and ISAF forces in Kandahar province which took American lives, and was biometrically

matched to an IED incident in Daman, Kandahar, where pressure plate IEDs and components which took American lives were seized by coalition forces.

Nek Mohammad facilitated rocket attacks against our forces in Kandahar province, is an IED expert, and transferred money to Al Qaeda.

The list goes on.

Akhtar Mohammad is a suspected Taliban commander who conducts attacks, provides lethal aid and supports Taliban leaders in operations against ANSF and ISAF in Nangarhar and Kunar province. He acted as a trusted courier for the former Ghaziabad Taliban shadow governor. The list goes on and on. These are not random arrests. These are not misdemeanors. These are serious, hard-core professional terrorists who have already committed these acts, and that is what is so disappointing about it.

Again, I say to my friend from South Carolina, we have been there often, and being around these brave young Americans who are serving and sacrificed has probably been the best part of our lives. Some of them have had three, four, five, six tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq. It seems to me that we owe them at least the security of not releasing these trained killers—they are not amateurs—into the fight again. We already know that the ones we released voluntarily—I think it was 27 or 30 percent—reentered the fight.

I say to my friend in response: Isn't it almost totally predictable that these hard-core individuals will quickly reenter the fight? They are talented, professional, trained zealots, and it would obviously put American lives in danger.

Finally, in answer to my colleague's question, again, I am saddened because President Karzai, my friend from South Carolina, Senator Lieberman, and I have developed a relationship over many years of cooperation and assistance. There are reasons for some of his behavior. It has been terribly mishandled by this administration. We still don't know the number of troops they want to leave behind.

Having said all of that, and the sadness I feel, I think it has been replaced a bit by anger because this kind of action cannot be excused when we have an obligation to do everything we can to protect the lives of the young men and women who are serving. To let this go without a response is an abrogation of our responsibility to these young men and women.

I still have hopes for the agreement. I would point out to my colleagues that it was first raised a couple of years ago by Senator GRAHAM when he and I were over there. The overwhelming majority of Afghans support this agreement. But when we have people such as this running around, it is not just Americans and our allies who are in danger but the lives of the Af-

ghan people, whom President Karzai was elected to represent, are in danger.

I ask my colleague again how many times he has been through this drill with President Karzai where they were about to release these people and we managed to pull them back from the brink? Apparently they have finally stepped over the line.

Mr. GRAHAM. We are not asking to bring these people back to the United States for trial. We are asking that they go through the criminal process under Afghan law where Afghan judges will decide their fate. Afghan prosecutors and defense attorneys will take over the case, not us. We agreed to 550 people being released under this administrative review board, but these 88—according to General Dunford, and my own review—represent a different case of detainee.

The evidence in some cases is overwhelming. With some investigation, I think a case could be made against all of them. Many of the people who are part of the NDS, which is basically their FBI and CIA rolled into one, lost their lives capturing these folks.

All we ever asked the Afghans to do is basically follow their own rule of law. The accountability review board was never meant to be a release mechanism. General Dunford did the right thing by lodging a complaint.

I talked to the President of Afghanistan personally about how this is against the letter and spirit of the memorandum of understanding we have regarding detainees and how this will play back in America. Apparently what we think doesn't matter to him anymore. I understand being upset with this administration for the uncertainty and a lot of mistakes they made.

We may be the last two in the whole Senate who understand that we need a relationship with Afghanistan post Karzai. I believe a lot of my colleagues understand that too.

I hope every U.S. Senate Member will agree, no matter what they may think about what we should be doing in the future in Afghanistan, that we need to make a clear statement and agree to this resolution. If there are any Members who have any ideas to enhance it, I welcome those ideas.

I want this body to speak with a single voice—Republicans and Democrats—and stand behind our general and tell the President of Afghanistan that we will not let this happen without a push-back. We owe it to those who have died, we owe it to those who are in harm's way, we owe it to our own value system, and now is the time for the Congress—and particularly the Senate—to speak with one voice and let President Karzai know that he doesn't understand what is going on in America. He is detached from reality when it comes to Afghanistan and America. No President of Afghanistan

who understood this issue at all would ever do this. He is making it impossible for an American political leader and an American general to not respond forcefully.

I look forward to working with Senator MCCAIN on this resolution.

Mr. MCCAIN. I will emphasize one point that my friend from South Carolina has already made. We are not giving up on Afghanistan. We believe that we can't afford to see the movie that we saw in Iraq in which the total withdrawal of American forces caused the chaos and the situation in Iraq today.

In the second battle of Fallujah, 96 soldiers and marines were killed and 600 were wounded. Today the black flags of al-Qaida fly over the city of Fallujah. There is no greater metaphor for the failure of this administration in Iraq.

We are saying that we will make a new deal with Karzai's successor. We will provide the economic assistance and we will provide the follow-on force. But right now we cannot stand by without responding to this act which directly puts the lives of Americans and Afghans in danger. These are professional killers. They are terrorists. They are good at their work, and we cannot expose our allies, our friends, and our men and women to this kind of danger without a response.

I will finally say again that no one understands this issue better than Colonel GRAHAM. Colonel GRAHAM has been through every single one of these cases. He has fought this battle many times before, and if anybody has any question about the severity and the consequences of the act being taken today by President Karzai, I suggest they talk with him since he has all the information.

I thank my colleague for his many years of service in Afghanistan and Iraq on behalf of the men and women who are serving and have served with him.

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank the Senator from Arizona.

To conclude, this is not LINDSEY GRAHAM or Colonel GRAHAM saying this. This is what General Dunford is saying. I know he is right. I clearly understand what he is telling us. I have seen it firsthand.

To the folks at 435, who are in charge of the detainee population—they lost two yesterday. An IED killed two of our civilian contractors, Paul and Michael, who were working out of the Pul-i-Charkhi prison. I know them well. I met them a bunch of times. They have been over there as civilian contractors for years trying to improve the Afghan detention facilities and legal system, and they gave their lives for a very worthy cause.

All I am saying is we need to suspend aid. We are taking hundreds of millions of dollars of American taxpayer money and investing it in Afghanistan in a way that is inappropriate.

After President Karzai's decision to release these detainees, we should cut off the money. Not a dime should go to economic development. No more money. I can't go to a taxpayer in South Carolina and say that they should write a check to a government that is being led by Karzai. Hopefully, as Senator MCCAIN said, when somebody new comes along, reason will prevail.

I thank my colleagues and need their support. I urge every Member of this body to speak out with one voice.

I will conclude with recognizing my good friend from Connecticut. His son is a marine who served in Afghanistan, and he has been there many times. I want Senator BLUMENTHAL to know that we are doing this today to let our marines know that their sacrifice will not go unnoticed, and we will not let these guys walk out of jail without a fight.

Mr. MCCAIN. I want to also recognize that the Senator has a son in the Navy as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I thank my distinguished colleagues for recognizing my sons' service. One is a marine reservist deployed to Afghanistan and the other is a Navy officer currently in further training.

I thank them and offer my support to the goals they have articulated today. I look forward to the resolution they are offering and talking further about the specifics of it. I again thank them for recognizing the urgent need for this body to take action at this point in supporting those goals. I look forward to continuing my work with them. Again, my gratitude to them for their courage and determination, and I offer my thanks and support.

I am here today to talk about a bill that undoes an injustice, and frequently the work of this body is to undo injustices, and sometimes even mistakes, such as the repeal of the cost-of-living adjustment reduction for certain military retirees.

I have spoken before in this Chamber and at home in Connecticut about my opposition to the pension cost-of-living adjustment reduction contained in the budget agreement approved by this body. I firmly believe there is no just way to balance the budget on the backs of our military retirees. It was a mistake then, and we can undo it now without a so-called pay-for. Their sacrifice and service has been paid in full. With their sacrifices, military retirees deserve to be paid in full for the promises we have made to them. We made those promises to them for their service and sacrifice that they have given us already, and we should not break that promise.

The reduction in these cost-of-living adjustments impacts both the brave veterans who served for 20 years in the

military and those who earned their retirements because of a service-connected medical disability. We should keep our promises to both.

Last month I discussed this problem with about 25 veterans in American Legion Post 96 in West Hartford with Commander Ken Hungerford. Our brave patriots who served and sacrificed for our country understandably agreed they should receive the full benefit of present cost-of-living adjustments. This is a promise we have made and a promise we must keep.

To fix this issue, Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and I first introduced the Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act. I continue to support it. I also support Chairman SANDERS' comprehensive veterans legislation that would restore this cut to military retiree pensions, along with improving access to health care and tackling benefits backlogs for veterans.

I am very proud to have helped draft the omnibus bill, known as the mega bill, that has already been offered on the floor.

There is a very simple, straightforward solution that we should adopt before either of those two options. It is S. 1856, which would repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013. S. 1856 meets this criteria of paid in full. It is simple and straightforward. It has no pay-for because there is no need for an offset when we are talking about fulfilling our promises to our brave and dedicated veterans, who have given on the battlefield their all, who have given us, in service and sacrifice—even before they reach combat or even if they had no combat—the kind of contribution to our national security and our national defense that merits these cost-of-living adjustments.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I listened to the testimony of Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense Christine Fox that it was not consulted in the drafting of the cuts in COLA—the cost-of-living adjustments—and does not support the reduction in military retiree benefits enacted through section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

If there is a need to combat fraud in any of our programs, let the Department of Justice increase the vigor and effectiveness of enforcement efforts. If there is a need to repair a statute, to prevent waste or fraud or corruption, we should deal with that issue separately and distinctly. If there is a need to reduce the debt and the deficit—and I agree we should be mindful of fiscal responsibility—we ought to do it without breaking our promises to veterans. We ought to keep those promises without worrying about the debt that could be cut by other measures. And we should adopt those other measures rather than demanding a payback or an offset or whatever the terminology may be.

In the next 5 years, we will see 1 million Americans leave the U.S. military. As troops come home from Afghanistan, as the military downsizes, the Marines and the Army reduce the number of men and women serving in uniform, 1 million Americans will leave the military. That number consists of individuals' lives—it is not just a statistic—individual stories of heroism and bravery on the battlefield, of invisible wounds, as well as horrific visible injuries; invisible wounds involving the issues of post-traumatic stress and chronic brain injury. More than one-third of them, perhaps as many as a half of all of those young men and women leaving the military, will bear those invisible wounds of war.

We need to provide them with the health care, job counseling, skill training, jobs, and treatment for those invisible wounds of war they deserve and they have earned. That is the purpose of the bill I have helped to draft with Senator SANDERS' leadership, the omnibus bill that will address those issues.

I am hopeful, also, we will adopt the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, to extend tax credits for employers who hire those veterans, tax credits that expired at the end of last year. My bill would restore them.

But let us now urgently and immediately adopt S. 1856—a simple and straightforward measure to restore justice to the Federal pension system for military retirees. Let us not balance our budget on the backs of our brave veterans. Let us restore those pensions to the level we promised and keep our promises as a nation to the military veterans who have kept our freedoms strong.

Mr. President, that is the end of my remarks. I thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank Senator BLUMENTHAL for his remarks, and I am going to utilize the same chart he had in a moment because I think it says it all. It was my colleague MARK BEGICH who first used this terminology—that our soldiers have paid for this benefit already and to get distracted by a discussion on how much to hurt children in order to restore these benefits is not worthy, in my opinion, of the men and women in uniform. So I am proud to stand up in support of Senator PRYOR's commonsense bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to proceed for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Senator PRYOR's bill is a restoration bill. It restores fairness and justice to our military veterans. It repeals the cuts to cost-of-living adjustments—we call them COLAs—for military retirees under the age of 62.

I see the Senator from Alaska just came in the Chamber, and I want to reiterate how much I appreciate his leadership. I say to Senator BEGICH, his analysis of this important restoration bill—restoring fairness and justice—was so right when he said our veterans have paid in full, and to get into some conversation of who do we hurt in order to pay these veterans is not worthy of our men and women in uniform. I want to thank him for his leadership.

Repealing these COLA cuts, well, that is the right thing to do. We are talking about men and women in uniform who have served our Nation bravely for more than 20 years. I have to say, as I stand up in strong support of the Pryor amendment in restoring these benefits to our veterans, I adamantly oppose the Ayotte amendment, which is hurtful to children, very hurtful to children, and I will get into that later.

When these veterans first put on the uniform and they promised to protect and defend our Nation, we made them a solemn promise to provide them with the care and benefits they earned. These men and women have sacrificed so much for us and, tragically, too many of them made the ultimate sacrifice.

In my State of California, we lost 892 service men and women in Iraq, and we have lost 411 in Afghanistan. We cannot break faith with those who put their lives on the line for our Nation. We hear about people who have served 4 deployments, 5 deployments, 6 deployments—I have heard of 10 deployments.

When this benefit was diminished as part of the budget deal, everyone knew we would have to move quickly and change it. We knew right away. That is what we are trying to do. We are not offering a slew of amendments on unrelated matters that hurt children and risk losing this very simple premise: that we honor our men and women in uniform.

We want a simple vote. Either you are for the vets or you are not for the vets. It is pretty simple. Thirty-five organizations are supporting this. We must recognize that when you attach unrelated amendments that have nothing to do with veterans, you slow down the bill. We all know that. It is a way to derail things.

Look what my friends tried to do on unemployment compensation—get us off on some discussion of how to pay for all that in an emergency situation with the long-term unemployed; and that rate is so high historically. Then we said: OK, we will play on your turf. We will agree. We will find a pay-for. We found a pay-for they said they liked. No. It was not good enough for them. We only got 59 votes. We needed 60. If anyone thinks that was not planned, I have a plot of land to sell you in a dump somewhere. Come on.

We know how it goes around here. Don't tell me 59 and no more. Please. Those are games. This is not an issue we should be playing games about—restoring veterans' benefits.

So what we have in the Ayotte amendment is an amendment which demeans an entire population—an entire population. The amendment is antichildren, it is anti-immigrant, and it does not do one thing to help our veterans. But it will hurt some of our young DREAMers. We know the DREAMers. We have met the DREAMers—those children who came to the United States through no fault of their own, but now they want to contribute to our great society by staying in school and staying out of trouble. But yet the Ayotte amendment attacks the childcare tax credit, which impacts some of these DREAMers and which protects 1.5 million children from falling into poverty every year.

Honestly, this Ayotte amendment is so mean-spirited, so unnecessary, I just hope it is defeated soundly. The U.S. poverty rate is now the highest it has been in 20 years, with 22 percent of children living in poverty. Why would someone come down to the floor and attack children? Twenty-two percent of children live in poverty.

Low-income immigrant families who claim the child tax credit earn an average of \$23,000 a year, and they use this tax benefit to provide for their children's basic needs, including food, rent, and clothing.

This tax credit, which Senator AYOTTE would essentially take away from a whole group of people, is an incentive to do the right thing. These low-income families are working hard. They are earning money. But they need a tax break to help care for their children.

My Republican friends are always fighting for tax breaks for the top, top, top—for the top. What about the people struggling, who are working and earning \$23,000 a year? Where are my friends on raising the minimum wage? So far I have not heard of their support. I hope they will change their mind. Where are my friends on giving unemployment insurance to those who through no fault of their own cannot find a job and who paid into that insurance system? Where are they? They are absent. They offer amendments they know are going to get us off track, distract us, and bring the bill down. But we are not doing it this time, I hope. I hope we will say no to the Ayotte amendment because it is an amendment that guts a very important tax break.

So let's be clear. To claim the child tax credit, which is what Senator AYOTTE's amendment wants to weaken, families have to file taxes. So we are talking about tax-paying families. The child tax credit only goes to working people who earn money and pay payroll

taxes, who pay State and local taxes, and any other taxes they may owe.

This Ayotte amendment is an outrageously disproportionate response to a problem the Internal Revenue Service is addressing. The IRS has implemented changes to improve enforcement. They are working with the Department of Homeland Security to make sure fake documents do not slip through the cracks.

Let me be clear. If a person commits fraud in this program, as in any other program, we should go after that person. The law is on the books. I ask Senator AYOTTE, look at the law. The law says: If you commit in any way fraud in the filing of this credit, and you are found guilty of a felony, you will be fined not more than \$100,000—\$500,000 in the case of a corporation—or imprisoned for not more than 3 years, or both.

So here we have a situation where if fraud is committed by anyone claiming this child tax credit, they can go to jail for 3 years and be fined \$100,000.

But what does Senator AYOTTE do? She takes a brush and she paints it all across America to immigrant families with children and says: We do not trust you. I think it is so offensive. It is not fair for law-abiding, tax-paying families to lose their child tax credit because of fraud that might be committed by a few.

I have worked with a number of my colleagues. They have identified billions and billions of dollars of tax-avoidance schemes in this country. We have corporations that use tricks so that they pay zero in taxes. I do not see Senator AYOTTE—and I hope she will do this in the future—come down to the floor and rail against these wealthy individuals and corporations. No. She just goes after the weakest constituency—children. Children. Why should any of us attack children, literally take food out of the mouths of children? Why?

We need to keep our promise to the veterans, but we should keep our promise to the children. You do not say: I will restore one promise, but I will break another promise. We already have a law on the books: If anyone is guilty of fraud in this program, they go to jail for 3 years; they could be fined up to \$100,000.

I just think it is so wrong. It is so wrong.

We can do this.

I wish to close by reading from Sister Simone Campbell, executive director of NETWORK, a national Catholic social justice lobby. I know Senator DURBIN has quoted this. I hope I am not being too repetitive, but her words ring to my heart.

Some of you know about Nuns on the Bus. These were nuns who saw the injustice in some of the budgets that came before the Congress. They went on a bus and they said: Please do not

cut funds for the most vulnerable people. That is not America. We are already losing the middle class.

The Presiding Officer knows that 400 families are worth more in this country than 150 million Americans. I want us to think about that—400 American families are worth more than 150 million Americans. Surely we can do better than hurt our most vulnerable children as we aim to restore benefits to our veterans.

This is what Sister Simone Campbell says about the Ayotte amendment:

For a while now, kids—particularly those in immigrant families—have been unfairly under attack in the Senate, and the only plausible explanation is unconscionable: to score political points.

This is Sister Simone:

Sen. KELLY AYOTTE recently proposed variations of a plan to strip away the refundable Child Tax Credit that now goes to millions of children of taxpaying immigrant workers in low-wage jobs. The proposal is misguided and antithetical to the Gospel call to care for children and those at the margins of society. It violates our long-held values as a nation, and it should be rejected.

I have such respect for Sister Simone Campbell and the work of NETWORK because they do not just read the gospel and go to church and practice their religion, they live it. They live it. When they see things happening on this floor that hurt the most vulnerable people, they speak out. That is what Nuns on the Bus did. That is what Sister Simone Campbell says.

This is what she says further:

Ayotte says she understands families' needs, yet she wants to deny a child tax credit to taxpaying immigrant families. Actions speak louder than words, and her proposal hurts families. Our political leaders should never place poor children in the condition of competing with other vulnerable populations for funds that help pay for food and other basic needs.

Deliberately harming immigrant families goes against the fundamental goodwill of Americans, including thousands of people we met last year as our "Nuns on the Bus" traveled 6,500 miles across the U.S. to speak out for justice. Throughout our journey, we stood with, prayed with, and heard the stories of hundreds of immigrants who have long served the needs of our nation.

Responsible leaders in Congress should look into their hearts and reject proposals like this one . . . The political tactic is not good for our economy or the wellbeing of our entire nation—especially children who are the future of our country. We are better than this.

As I sum up, let's go back to our other chart. Senator PRYOR, Senator BEGICH, and a group of Senators, I believe including Senator SHAHEEN, Senator HAGAN, and Senator LANDRIEU—I believe they are all on this proposal.

With their sacrifice, military retirees paid in full. They paid in full. And to offer amendments that have nothing to do with the subject matter but open an entire battle on immigrant families, who are working so hard, because there are some examples of fraud, just as

there are examples of fraud in corporate America—unfortunately, there are examples of fraud all across America, including in politics. But I have to say that to go after the most vulnerable children and the most vulnerable families and try to convince this Senate that is something fair—I think it is off the mark. I hope we will reject the Ayotte amendment. I hope everyone will read what Sister Simone says:

The proposal to go after children is misguided and antithetical to the gospel call to care for children and those at the margins of society. It violates our long-held values as a nation and it should be rejected.

I want to remind everyone that if anyone commits fraud in this society, I will be the first one on the floor saying: Go after them. We already have a law that is very clear. Anyone who commits fraud in connection with the child credit, the refundable credit, shall be guilty of a felony and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not more than \$100,000—\$500,000 in the case of a corporation—or imprisonment of not more than 3 years or both.

If the Justice Department or the IRS is not doing enough to go after this fraud, I have to say, let's call the folks in charge and let's tell them we want to make sure there is an effort. Write a letter. But do not say—because a few people are doing a bad thing and should go to jail for it, do not take your paint brush and paint every immigrant family who has dreams with this. This is an outrageous thing to do, especially to claim that you are not doing anything to hurt children and you are doing it to help the veterans. The veterans have paid in full.

Let's vote for the veterans—for the veterans and for the children. You vote for the veterans by voting for Pryor. You vote for the children by voting no on the mean-spirited Ayotte amendment.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor today in support of S. 1963, a bill to restore the 1 percent COLA cut for military retirees.

We must honor the sacrifices our military men and women—and their families—have made at home and abroad. We can do this by making sure that they have a government on their side and that promises made are promises kept.

Our men and women in uniform face specific challenges when it comes to their own financial security. It can be difficult to save for retirement while serving abroad or to build equity in a home when relocating every few years. Having a COLA you can depend on and plan for is crucial to building financial security.

That is why I fully support restoring the 1 percent COLA for all military retirees. As chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, I included a provision in the fiscal year 2014 omnibus spending bill to cancel the COLA cut

for working-age disabled veterans and survivors of departed members. This provision was an important downpayment toward restoring COLA for all military retirees.

Today we must finish the job to ensure that no military retiree has his or her COLA reduced. There are smarter and fairer ways to save money than reducing COLAs for men and women who served in uniform. We can start by closing tax loopholes for businesses sending jobs overseas or canceling outdated Dust-Bowl farm subsidies.

Rather than targeting veterans for budget savings, we should be working together to make sure they and their families are supported medically, financially, and emotionally.

Today is the day to right this wrong, and I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded and that the nominations be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF RICHARD STENGEL TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.

NOMINATION OF SARAH SEWALL TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (CIVILIAN SECURITY, DEMOCRACY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS)

NOMINATION OF CHARLES HAMMERMAN RIVKIN TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS).

NOMINATION OF SLOAN D. GIBSON TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk reported the nominations of Richard Stengel, of New York, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy; Sarah Sewall, of Massachusetts, to be an Under Secretary of State (Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights); Charles Hammerman Rivkin,

of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Economic and Business Affairs); and Sloan D. Gibson, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that any time in quorum calls be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I come to the floor to talk about three highly qualified nominees for very significant posts at the Department of State.

The Foreign Relations Committee, which I am privileged to chair, has moved 48 nominees through the committee this year alone. I am pleased these three will move, but I would like to express my concern about the remaining nominees. They are critical to us promoting our foreign policy and our national interests and security interests abroad. I urge my colleagues to support movement of these nominees to the floor as quickly as possible.

There are three today.

Richard Stengel has more than 30 years of experience as an author and journalist. He brings a very unique perspective to his role as Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, on which we will be voting.

He has served as the managing editor of Time magazine during the past 7 years, demonstrating his impressive managerial capabilities.

As president and CEO he led the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, where he led public education efforts to raise awareness about our Nation's founding charter and the values enshrined in it.

This public diplomacy role is incredibly important in a world that is constantly getting closer and smaller by virtue of the mass media, the Internet, and all of the different forms of communication. Our advocacy in public diplomacy is incredibly important to get our message out as the United States in terms of our bilateral and multilateral pursuits.

Dr. Sarah Sewall has been nominated to serve as Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. She comes to this position with significant relevant experience. She taught at the Naval War College and

served as a director of Harvard's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. She is highly regarded as an expert on mass-atrocity prevention and response. She is now a senior lecturer in public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Her large portfolio includes a range of issues, including challenges to civilian security in Latin America; Syria's growing refugee problem, which is a concern for us in terms of the entire region and our good ally—Jordan, for example; counterterrorism; counter-narcotics; human trafficking; and women's issues. These are all incredibly important in the pursuit of our foreign policy.

I am confident Dr. Sewall will be an excellent Under Secretary, and I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

Finally, we have Ambassador Charles Rivkin's deep experience in the private sector and clear talent for managing large organizations which position him well to take on the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

At a time when our country is pursuing the most ambitious trade agenda in generations and our companies and workers are facing tougher and more aggressive competition than ever before, Ambassador Rivkin has demonstrated the skill and the experience needed to lead the State Department's participation in formulating and implementing international economic policies aimed at protecting and advancing U.S. economic, political, and security interests.

Particularly at a time in which we are seeking to create more jobs here at home, our advocacy abroad to open markets, to have transparency, to have the rule of law for our companies that do invest abroad, to ultimately ensure that when they make such decisions, if there is a violation of their contracts, they have a transparent judicial process in which they can litigate their judicial issues are not only incredibly important to our companies' investments abroad but to the jobs created at home that promote the products and services we generate across the globe.

I urge my colleagues to support these nominations in pursuit of the national interest and security of the United States.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time on both sides, including the 2 minutes prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Richard Stengel, of New York, to be Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 27 Ex.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Rockefeller
Brown	Hoeben	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cruz	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Fischer	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—8

Crapo	McCain	Shelby
Inhofe	Risch	Vitter
Lee	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn	Corker
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The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SEWALL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Sewall nomination.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TOOMEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, shall the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Sarah Sewall, to be an Under Secretary of State (Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights)?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 28 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Graham	Murphy
Ayotte	Grassley	Murray
Baldwin	Hagan	Nelson
Barrasso	Harkin	Paul
Begich	Hatch	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Blunt	Heller	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Risch
Boozman	Hoeven	Roberts
Boxer	Inhofe	Rockefeller
Brown	Isakson	Rubio
Burr	Johanns	Sanders
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (WI)	Schumer
Carper	Kaine	Scott
Casey	King	Sessions
Chambliss	Kirk	Shaheen
Coats	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Fischer	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Moran	
Gillibrand	Murkowski	

NAYS—1

Shelby
NOT VOTING—2

Coburn Corker

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. REID. Madam President, we are going to have one more recorded vote. We think we will have another vote that will not be recorded, but it will be a voice vote and that will be the last vote tonight.

I am totally aware of the weather prediction, that we might get some snow tomorrow night. We will see what happens midday tomorrow and find out how much snow the weather forecasters are predicting, if any.

Tomorrow around 11:30 a.m. we are going to have a series of votes. The floor staff will be working on what the votes will be, and I will be discussing that with Senator MCCONNELL.

We have one more vote tonight and we have a series of votes tomorrow at 11:30 a.m.

VOTE ON RIVKIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the

usual form prior to a vote on the Rivkin nomination.

Mr. REID. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

Under the previous order, the question occurs on the Rivkin nomination.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Charles Hammerman Rivkin, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 29 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Alexander	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Ayotte	Graham	Murkowski
Baldwin	Grassley	Murphy
Barrasso	Hagan	Murray
Begich	Harkin	Nelson
Bennet	Hatch	Paul
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Portman
Blunt	Heitkamp	Pryor
Booker	Heller	Reed
Boozman	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Burr	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Johanns	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Chambliss	King	Stabenow
Coats	Kirk	Tester
Cochran	Klobuchar	Thune
Collins	Landrieu	Toomey
Coons	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lee	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Levin	Vitter
Donnelly	Manchin	Walsh
Durbin	Markey	Warner
Enzi	McCain	Warren
Feinstein	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Fischer	McConnell	Wicker
Flake	Menendez	Wyden
Franken	Merkley	

NAYS—6

Cornyn Moran Roberts
Crapo Risch Shelby

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn Rubio

The nomination was agreed to.

VOTE ON GIBSON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Gibson nomination.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, today I wish to speak in strong support

of the nomination of Sloan Gibson to serve as Deputy Secretary at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Before I speak about Mr. Gibson's qualifications, I believe it is important that my colleagues understand the realities that Mr. Gibson will face if confirmed. He would be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Department charged with operating the Nation's largest integrated health care system and providing a variety of benefits and services to America's veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors.

It is also no secret the Department of Veterans Affairs faces a number of challenges. We know it takes VA too long to issue claims decisions. We know it takes the Board of Veterans' Appeals too long to decide appeals. We know VA and the Department of Defense have spent years on an integrated electronic health record with very little to show for their efforts. We know VA has difficulty managing major construction projects; and we know far too many veterans still do not know about the benefits and health care for which they are entitled. These are the just some of the challenges awaiting Mr. Gibson and highlight the need for this body to move quickly to confirm Mr. Gibson for this important vacancy.

All too often, VA's challenges can cast a large shadow over the things that VA does well. I think it is also important to acknowledge the amazing things VA is accomplishing each and every day. For instance, patient satisfaction at VA medical centers remains high throughout the country as does the quality of care veterans receive. VA has taken an aggressive stance on homelessness by pursuing the ambitious goal of eliminating veteran homelessness by 2015 and continues to make significant progress in reducing the number of veterans living on the street. Finally, the VA continues to make significant advances in health care through its world-class research programs.

These are the realities and the challenges facing any nominee for a leadership position at the Department. I firmly believe Sloan Gibson is uniquely qualified to address these challenges. Mr. Gibson has a history of service to this Nation that has provided unique insights into the challenges confronting the servicemember and veteran communities. Mr. Gibson began his service as a cadet at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He graduated in 1975 and went on to serve as an infantry officer, earning airborne and ranger qualifications during his military service. His service to this country, however, did not end when Mr. Gibson left military service. He continues this tradition of service today by leading the United Service Organizations, commonly known as the USO, which has the important mission of

lifting the spirits of America's troops and their families.

I feel the relationships Mr. Gibson has developed with the Congress and senior leaders within the Department of Defense during his tenure at the USO will serve him well as Deputy Secretary. Collaborative efforts between VA and DOD such as the Integrated Electronic Health Record and Integrated Disability Evaluation System have the potential to make the delivery of benefits and services much more efficient and to provide servicemembers with a smooth transition to civilian life. Yet, these efforts continue to face significant challenges. VA needs a Deputy Secretary like Sloan Gibson who will be able to provide the leadership attention necessary to ensure continued and meaningful collaboration between the Departments.

Sloan Gibson also has the business experience, gained from service in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, necessary to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Following military service, Mr. Gibson spent 20 years serving in a number of positions within the banking industry. This service included 11 years as an executive at AmSouth Bancorporation. He retired from AmSouth in 2004 as vice chairman and chief financial officer.

Sloan Gibson's tradition of service, business experience, and educational qualifications make him well suited to manage the day-to-day operations of one of this Nation's largest Cabinet Departments. I am confident that if confirmed Mr. Gibson's service as Deputy Secretary would improve the lives of America's veterans and their families and as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee I look forward to working with Mr. Gibson to do just that.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting today to confirm the nomination of Sloan Gibson to serve as Deputy Secretary at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Sloan D. Gibson, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MODERNIZING CUBA POLICY

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, today the Atlantic Council's Adrienne Arsht Latin American Center released a new, bipartisan public opinion survey on Americans' views about U.S. policy toward Cuba which should be read by every Member of Congress. The findings of this thorough and wide-ranging poll will surprise many. For instance, not only do Floridians—and Cuban-Americans in Florida—favor new policy approaches, but they do so in even larger numbers than do Americans in other regions of the Nation.

It is time—past time—to modernize our policies and the frozen-in-time embargo on Americans' travel and trade with Cuba that have accomplished nothing but to give the Cuban regime a scapegoat for the failures of the Cuban economy. Change will come to Cuba, but our policies have delayed and impeded change. It is time to elevate the voice of a crucial stakeholder: the American people. Thanks to this poll, they are silent no longer.

It is time to recognize that U.S. policy toward Cuba has been unsuccessful in achieving any of its objectives. There is no disagreement among Americans on both sides of the issue about the desire for a government in Cuba that respects individual liberties. We want to see freedom of expression in Cuba, just as we want to see American citizen Alan Gross, who has been imprisoned there for more than 4 years, come home. The disagreement is over how best to achieve that.

Just about the only beneficiary of our embargo has been Cuba's current regime.

The poll shows that a solid majority of Americans, including Cuban-Americans, favor a different course.

Trade with Latin America is the fastest growing part of our international commerce. Rather than isolate Cuba with outdated policies, we have isolated ourselves. Our Latin, European and Canadian friends engage with Cuba all that time. Meanwhile, U.S. companies are prohibited from any economic activity on the island.

This new detailed survey paves the way for a policy toward Cuba that is in the national interest of the United States as a whole. That is what the country needs, it is what the American people have made clear they want, and it is the responsibility of the White House and the Congress to act.

Let us have the common sense, and the courage, to finally put an end to the Cold War in our own hemisphere.

In this same spirit of bipartisanship as this public opinion poll, Senator JEFF FLAKE and I joined together in writing a guest column about the compelling reasons to change these antiquated policies. Our piece appeared today in the Miami Herald. I call it to the attention of the Senate, and I invite other Senators to join in re-examining and changing our self-defeating approach in our relationship with Cuba and the Cuban people. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Miami Herald, Feb. 11, 2014]

TIME FOR A NEW POLICY ON CUBA

(By PATRICK LEAHY and JEFF FLAKE)

We are in the fifth decade—more than half a century—of our country's embargo toward Cuba. During that time the Soviet Union has ceased to exist. Apartheid in South Africa has ended. We have re-established diplomatic relations with the communist governments of China and Vietnam. Still, the United States has refused to reexamine the political and economic embargo on Cuba.

A majority of Americans, including Cuban-Americans, wants to change course. So do we.

A new public opinion poll commissioned by the Atlantic Council's Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center and carried out by a team of highly respected pollsters from both sides of the aisle shows a stark contrast between current American attitudes and the archaic U.S. embargo.

A solid majority of Americans from every region and across party lines supports normalizing relations with Cuba. When asked about specific elements of the policy—such as undoing the ban on travel by Americans to Cuba, facilitating financial transactions, meeting with the Cuban government on bilateral issues like fighting drugs and smuggling—the margin is more than 61 percent.

Challenging conventional wisdom that Floridians—and especially the state's large Cuban-American population—are in lockstep with the embargo, the poll finds stronger support for normalization in Florida (63 percent) than in the country overall (56 percent). A full 67 percent of Floridians support removing all restrictions for Americans to travel to Cuba, and 82 percent favor meetings with the Cuban government on issues of mutual concern.

Simply put: The state that reportedly once had the greatest reluctance to re-engage has reversed its position.

Having jailed political opponents, Cuba has a political climate that is far from free. The Cuban government continues to hold former USAID subcontractor Alan Gross in prison. The Cuban government has inched toward loosening its grip on the island's economy. Despite that, however, the Cuban people continue to live under a repressive regime.

However, it would appear that a standard of 100 percent political alignment with the United States before allowing freedom of travel or economic activity with another country is only applied to Cuba. For instance, U.S.-China trade topped \$500 billion in 2011, and we granted permanent normalized trade relations to Russia in 2012. American tourists visit both countries without restriction. It is easy to see why most Americans now oppose our frozen-in-time policies toward Cuba.

Trade with Latin America is the fastest growing part of our international commerce. In 2014, economic growth in Latin America is expected to continue to outpace U.S. growth. Rather than isolate Cuba with outdated policies, we have isolated ourselves.

For example, the presidents of our Latin American partners, including close allies such as Colombia and Mexico, recently traveled to Cuba alongside the U.N. secretary general. In January, Brazil joined Cuba in inaugurating a huge new shipping terminal on the island. And our European and Canadian friends engage with Cuba. Meanwhile, U.S. companies are prohibited from any economic activity on the island.

Just about the only beneficiary of our embargo has been Cuba's current regime. The embargo actually has helped the Castros maintain their grip on power by providing a reliable and convenient scapegoat for Cuba's failing economy. Change will come to Cuba. These counterproductive U.S. policies have delayed it.

President Obama has already relaxed some facets of our Cuba policy, lifting restrictions on Cuban-American travel and remittances, which have had positive effects. Anecdotally, U.S. remittances have been crucial in allowing Cuban entrepreneurs to take full advantage of economic openings that the Castro regime has been forced to allow. This not only improves Cubans' lives but will make future economic contractions by the Cuban government difficult for the regime to attempt. Current policy boxes U.S. entrepreneurs and companies out of taking part in any of this burgeoning Cuban private sector.

Further, there is simply no legitimate justification for restricting any American travel to Cuba. The travel ban, like the rest of the embargo, only bolsters the Cuban government's control over information and civil society. Instead of willingly restricting the liberty of our own citizens, we should be taking every opportunity to flood Cubans with American interaction, with our ideas, with our young people.

Americans want a change in our Cuba policy. The president should heed the majority of those across the country who recognize that we have much to gain by jettisoning this Cold War relic.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

LITTLE COUNTRY THEATRE

• Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, I am pleased to honor and recognize the Little Country Theatre at North Dakota State University as it celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Founded in 1914 by a small group of drama students, the Little Country Theatre has inspired, challenged, and educated countless students, faculty, and community members across North Dakota. Today, the Little Country Theatre is well recognized and respected for its diverse programming and for bringing the gift of theater to the public.

Over the last 100 years, the Little Country Theatre has presented hundreds of plays throughout North Dakota. It is celebrating its 100th season with several special events, including the screening of a documentary on the rich history of the theater, its faculty,

its leaders and its impact on the community. In addition, the group will be performing classic stories such as Oklahoma and Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* and hosting many thought-provoking discussions.

The Little Country Theatre is a fixture on the North Dakota State University campus and serves as an important hub for current students by helping them understand the great value of theater and performance art. But its impact can be felt well beyond the stage and campus. It has spread the joy of the theater to rural communities across the State, while inspiring the next generation of actors and actresses. I am proud to acknowledge and honor this significant milestone for the Little Country Theatre.

I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating the Little Country Theatre on its first 100 years and in wishing continued success in the future.●

SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA MOBILE HEALTH CLINIC

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, today I wish to celebrate an exciting and significant victory for local veterans in southern West Virginia and to recognize the unwavering dedication of the people who have worked tirelessly to bring the first-ever mobile veterans health clinic to Mercer County.

Today, the Beckley VA Medical Center will debut the long-awaited mobile health clinic in Bluefield, WV. This facility will improve access to primary and mental health-care to the growing number of veterans in the region.

This is wonderful news for our brave heroes who have been without accessible health care for far too long. Until now, our veterans' only option for receiving health care has been to drive over an hour to the closest clinic or hospital. Expecting our veterans to commute this far after these courageous men and women have already risked their lives in the defense of this country is simply unacceptable.

I have always said that West Virginia is one of the most patriotic states in this great Nation, and we are so proud of the number of veterans and Active-Duty members who have served with honor and distinction. Upon returning home, they truly deserve the absolute best care and treatment that is available. That is why we have made it our top priority to bring this clinic to serve the veterans in Mercer County and the surrounding communities with quality care.

The mobile health clinic will be an extension of the Beckley VA Medical Center, and it will be initially stationed in Bluefield, WV. As long as it is utilized by area veterans, we can count on this facility to stay in southern West Virginia for years to come.

I especially want to emphasize the efforts of one very special West Virginian

who has dedicated the past 18 years to helping the veterans of southern West Virginia—Al Hancock. His leadership and commitment to the betterment of the veteran community is truly why this mobile clinic will open its doors today.

Throughout his life and still today, Al has answered the call of service—whether it was serving our great Nation or helping the people of West Virginia. He is a retired teacher and a retired Air Force veteran who served two tours in Vietnam.

A proud and passionate leader, he was the chairman of the retired military support group and he led discussions among over 250 veterans about the issues concerning them most. He talked with fellow veterans, their spouses, and their families regularly.

One issue that continued to arise was the need for more accessible health care. After more than 150 letters sent to the local newspaper and issuing a petition containing more than 3,000 resident signatures, he provided a voice to the veteran community. Despite the many obstacles and hurdles, Al never gave up—he worked passionately and tirelessly to bring this issue to light. And finally, that voice resonated loud and clear. Because of Al's perseverance and determined vision, I am proud to have worked closely with Al to help bring people together to make his vision a reality.

With the hard work and partnership of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Beckley VA, and the West Virginia delegation, we have been able to make a difference for Al and for all of the veterans who reside throughout southern West Virginia.

We owe our veterans more than a debt of gratitude. Showing our appreciation to the brave men and women who have served is something we should do each and every day. By delivering this mobile health clinic, we are paying tribute to those who have answered America's call of duty.

I thank Al, the VA, the Beckley VA Center, and all those who have worked to bring this much needed health care access to Mercer County.

This clinic will greatly benefit communities that have a need for health care resources, and it will help ensure all of our veterans and their families have access to the care they need and truly deserve.●

REMEMBERING J. SMITH LANIER II

• Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I would like to take a moment to recognize the passing of a great American patriot, J. Smith Lanier II. Smith Lanier was an entrepreneur, business leader, philanthropist, community leader, national leader, and friend.

He was a native of Georgia, attended Auburn University then transferred to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

where he earned a degree in mechanical engineering and a commission into the U.S. Navy.

In 1950, he joined his aunt's insurance agency, Lanier Insurance Agency, based in West Point, GA. His career was interrupted by 2 years of active duty aboard the USS Ault DD698 during the Korean war. When he returned from that service, he purchased the agency under the name J. Smith Lanier & Co. He began with a single office and five employees and grew to have offices throughout Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida, and Kentucky. Today the company is one of the oldest and largest insurance brokerage firms in the United States. He served as its chairman and CEO until 1998 and was chairman emeritus until his death.

During his life, he helped launch many other companies including Async, Inc.; SouthernNet; Interface, Inc.; NASDAQ; Valley Realty Company, Inc.; ITC Holding Co., Inc.; Avdata, Inc.; National Vision Associates, Inc.; Cookbook Brands, Inc., now Beverage House; Powertel, Inc., formerly Intercel, Inc. and now TMobile; and ITC DeltaCom, NASDAQ. A remarkably successful entrepreneurial career indeed.

He was a strong advocate for education at all levels, both public and private, founding Springwood School in Lanett, AL and serving on the boards of trustees of several colleges and universities. He was a strong advocate for fair treatment for hospitals in the area, an issue that I worked with him to address.

Mr. Lanier was very close to Auburn University. He served on many boards for the university and in 2010 was presented the Auburn University Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

Smith was also active in local, regional and national politics serving the Republican Party in many ways, including being a delegate to two Republican National Conventions. He was always a strong supporter of policies that he believed served the long term interests of the United States.

Smith Lanier was, in the end, what he prepared to become in the beginning. An Eagle Scout, he credited the Boy Scout Oath and the twelve Boy Scout laws as foundations for his personal and business life.

Mr. Lanier leaves behind his wonderful wife, Elizabeth "Betty" Walker, daughters Mary Ellen (Mrs. Anthony Lee Collins, Sr.) of Lanett, AL, Elizabeth Lanier Lester of West Point, GA, and Edith Carroll (Mrs. Joseph Wiley Hodges, Jr.) of McDonough, GA, eight grandchildren, as well many other family members, friends and colleagues. They have been given a great legacy indeed.

Smith Lanier was a great patriot reflecting the highest and best values of American citizenship, and I am hon-

ored to be able to pay tribute to his many contributions to business, education, health, and his community.●

REMEMBERING YETTA GLENN SAMFORD, JR.

● Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I note the passing at age 90 of a truly outstanding American citizen, Yetta Glenn Samford, Jr., a lifelong resident of Opelika, AL. Opelika Mayor Gary Fuller rightly called him an icon. The product of a distinguished Alabama family, he was successful in law and business, all the while giving of himself for his Nation and community.

That such characteristics, such cast of mind and heart, have provided the unique values that have made America great is without doubt. The deeply held concept of neighbor helping neighbor has been the glory of the Republic. A member of the "greatest generation", Yetta Samford served his country and was consistently successful in his undertakings. He flourished in law and business. But, he was focused on giving back. He loved his country, State and community and was a strong believer in education. During World War II, he piloted B-17 bombers being stationed in England in 1944 and 1945—a calling that placed his very life at risk. Returning from the war, grateful for his survival, he declared, "I thank the Lord for letting me come back." Then he married his wonderful lifetime partner, Mary Austill, got his degree at Auburn University and his law degree at the University of Alabama.

From then on success followed him and he lived a life of generosity. How many today will reach his level of service? Are we still producing such people? Perhaps so, but in the same numbers?

Yetta Samford was supportive of a host of positive activities. He was active in many local organizations, donated the land for the Opelika Sportsplex and Aquatics Center, and was a member of the board of deacons for the First Baptist Church of Opelika for 60 years. He served on the prestigious board of trustees of the University of Alabama, serving a 3-year-term as president pro tempore. He was, in addition, a founding trustee for the University of Mobile, a fine Baptist affiliated liberal arts college.

Mr. Samford was respected and loved throughout the Opelika area. He set a high standard for a life well lived. I was honored to have his friendship. Professionally accomplished, a man of high character and generous with his time, talents and resources, Yetta Samford's life reflected the highest qualities of American citizenship. It is fitting that this Senate take note of such a life.

He took great joy in his exceptional wife, Mary Austill Samford, and daughters Mary Austill Samford Lott and Katherine Park Samford Alford, five grandchildren and seven great-grand-

children. They reflect these same qualities and can take solace in the heritage that he has left them.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:22 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2431. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2431. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4633. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General William N. Phillips, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4634. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Keith B. Alexander, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4635. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Kenya; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4636. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Canada; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4637. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department's Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) program for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4638. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to Technical Collection for the New START Treaty (OSS-2013-0151); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4639. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible

affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0160); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4640. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0159); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4641. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0134); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4642. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0137); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4643. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0136); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4644. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the waiver of the restrictions contained in Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act of 1992; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4645. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-176); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4646. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-187); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4647. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-179); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4648. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-186); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4649. A communication from the Regulatory Officer, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Environmental Impact and

Related Procedures" (RIN2125-AF48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4650. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures" (RIN2132-AB05) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4651. A communication from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Patterns of Safety Violations by Motor Carrier Management" (RIN2126-AB42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4652. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (32); Amdt. No. 3571" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4653. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (48); Amdt. No. 3572" (RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4654. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Part 95 Instrument Flight Rules; Miscellaneous Amendments (4); Amdt. No. 511" (RIN2120-AA63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4655. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment and Modification of Area Navigation (RNAV) Routes" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0860)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4656. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modification of the Dallas/Fort Worth Class B Airspace Area; TX" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2012-1168)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4657. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to Class B Air-

space; Detroit, MI" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2012-0661)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4658. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Restricted Areas; Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point, NC" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-1021)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ENZI, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COATS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. RISK, Mr. VITTER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. JOHANNES, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. COBURN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WICKER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. SHELBY, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2011. A bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2012. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to more effectively regulate anabolic steroids; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 2013. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2014. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for clarification regarding the children to whom entitlement to educational assistance may be transferred under Post-9/11 Educational Assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. INHOFE):

S. 2015. A bill to help individuals receiving assistance under means-tested welfare programs obtain self-sufficiency, to provide information on total spending on means-tested welfare programs, to provide an overall spending limit on means-tested welfare programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2016. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, and the

Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take actions to provide additional water supplies and disaster assistance to the State of California due to drought, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. Res. 353. A resolution designating September 2014 as "National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. McCONNELL, Mr. BURR, and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 354. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should leave no member of the Armed Forces unaccounted for during the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan; to the Committee on Armed Services.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 357

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 357, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.

S. 511

At the request of Mr. RISCH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 511, a bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to enhance the Small Business Investment Company Program, and for other purposes.

S. 987

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 987, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 1158

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1158, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service, and for other purposes.

S. 1446

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1446, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve the affordability of the health care tax credit, and for other purposes.

S. 1725

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas

(Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1725, a bill to amend the Securities Investor Protection Act of 1970 to confirm that a customer's net equity claim is based on the customer's last statement and that certain recoveries are prohibited, to change how trustees are appointed, and for other purposes.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the names of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1911

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1911, a bill to reform and strengthen the workforce investment system of the Nation to put Americans back to work and make the United States more competitive in the 21st century, and for other purposes.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1963

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

S. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1982, a bill to im-

prove the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 345

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 345, a resolution strongly supporting the restoration and protection of State authority and flexibility in establishing and defining challenging student academic standards and assessments, and strongly denouncing the President's coercion of States into adopting the Common Core State Standards by conferring preferences in Federal grants and flexibility waivers.

AMENDMENT NO. 2732

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2732 intended to be proposed to S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2732 intended to be proposed to S. 1963, supra.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2012. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to more effectively regulate anabolic steroids; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today I am pleased to join Senator HATCH once again in introducing the bipartisan Designer Anabolic Steroid Control Act. Like the legislation we introduced in 2012, this measure will help keep American children and families safe from dangerous designer drugs that masquerade as healthy dietary supplements.

Doctors and scientists have long recognized the health hazards of non-medical use of anabolic steroids. For that reason, Congress has previously acted to ensure that these drugs are listed as controlled substances. Nonetheless, according to investigative reporting and Congressional testimony, a loophole in current law allows for designer anabolic steroids to easily be found on the Internet, in gyms, and even in retail stores.

Designer steroids are produced by reverse engineering existing illegal steroids and then slightly modifying the chemical composition, so that the resulting product is not on the Drug Enforcement Administration's, DEA, list of controlled substances. When taken by consumers, designer steroids can cause serious medical consequences, including liver injury and

increased risk of heart attack and stroke. They may also lead to psychological effects such as aggression, hostility, and addiction.

These designer products can be even more dangerous than traditional steroids because they are often untested, produced from overseas raw materials, and manufactured without quality controls. As one witness testified at a Crime Subcommittee hearing on the issue, "all it takes to cash in on the storefront steroid craze is a credit card to import raw products from China or India where most of the raw ingredients come from, the ability to pour powders into a bottle or pill and a printer to create shiny, glossy labels."

The unscrupulous actors responsible for manufacturing and selling these products often market them with misleading and inaccurate labels. That can cause consumers who are looking for a healthy supplement—not just elite athletes, but also high school students, law enforcement personnel, and mainstream Americans—to be deceived into taking these dangerous products. While the world's top athletes competing in the Winter Olympics are subjected to strict guidelines and rigorous testing to prevent the use of steroids, as they should be, many Americans may be unknowingly dosing themselves with these harmful substances.

Loopholes in existing law allow these dangerous designer steroids to evade regulation. Under current law, in order to classify new substances as steroids, the DEA must complete a burdensome and time-consuming series of chemical and pharmacological testing. As a DEA official testified before Congress: "in the time that it takes DEA to administratively schedule an anabolic steroid used in a dietary supplement product, several new products can enter the market to take the place of those products."

The Designer Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2014 would quickly protect consumers from these dangerous products. First, it would immediately place 27 known designer anabolic steroids on the list of controlled substances. Second, it would grant the DEA authority to temporarily schedule new designer steroids on the controlled substances list, so that if bad actors develop new variations, these products can be removed from the market. Third, it would create new penalties for importing, manufacturing, or distributing anabolic steroids under false labels.

Senator HATCH and I worked closely with a range of consumer and industry organizations to ensure that this legislation would not interfere with consumers' access to legitimate dietary supplements. I thank these organizations for their support, and look forward to working with them, with Senator HATCH, and with colleagues from both sides of the aisle to enact this commonsense measure into law.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2014. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for clarification regarding the children to whom entitlement to educational assistance may be transferred under Post-9/11 Educational Assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2014

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "GI Education Benefit Fairness Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE CHILDREN TO WHOM ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE MAY BE TRANSFERRED UNDER POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 3319 of title 38, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

"(c) ELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS.—

"(1) TRANSFER.—An individual approved to transfer an entitlement to educational assistance under this section may transfer the individual's entitlement as follows:

"(A) To the individual's spouse.

"(B) To one or more of the individual's children.

"(C) To a combination of the individuals referred to in subparagraphs (A) and (B).

"(2) DEFINITION OF CHILDREN.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'children' includes dependents described in section 1072(2)(I) of title 10."

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to educational assistance payable under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2016. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take actions to provide additional water supplies and disaster assistance to the State of California due to drought, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of myself and Senators BOXER, WYDEN and MERKLEY to introduce legislation to respond to California's devastating drought conditions.

This weekend's storm in Northern California was more than a year in coming, and there are some encouraging signs that came from it: Rainfall in the Sacramento Valley averaged 2 to 3 inches. North of San Francisco Bay, precipitation averaged 4 to 7 inches. Between Friday and Monday, about 7 inches of precipitation fell in the Northern Sierra. The Southern Sierra

saw more than 3 inches. Over the same period, the water contained in Northern Sierra snow increased by 3 inches; Central Sierra by 4 inches; and Southern Sierra by an inch.

But one storm in the North will not end this historic drought. In the San Joaquin Valley, precipitation over the weekend was less than an inch, while San Diego and Los Angeles saw only about a quarter-inch of rain. Also, the snowpack in the Sierra remains very troubling. Statewide, the snowpack is at 29 percent of normal for this date. The Northern California mountains are at 18 percent, and the Central Sierra is 36 percent.

State officials have confirmed that this weekend's rain and snow will have very little effect on the amount of water available for California. Even after this storm, California faces some of the driest conditions in modern times, leading to last month's declaration by Governor Brown of a drought emergency.

As of the beginning of February, at least 10 communities are in danger of running out of drinking water within 2 months. Without relief, more communities may face similar difficulties.

California's State Water Project helps supply water to 25 million Californians and 750,000 acres of farmland. For the first time in its 54-year history, it will not be providing any water to its water agencies.

The Central Valley Project irrigates about 3 million acres of farmland, supplies water to millions of Californians and supports crucial environmental habitats. This year, it will likely not be able to provide water to many farmers in the Central Valley.

As of February 9, Lake Shasta, California's largest reservoir, and Lake Oroville, the State Water Project's principal reservoir, are both at only 37 percent of capacity. San Luis Reservoir, crucial to farmers south of the Delta, is at only 30 percent of capacity.

Without water, farmers north and south of the Delta have lost crops, trees, workers, and income. Businesses, factories, schools, hospitals, fire departments, and other social services facilities will have trouble carrying out their work.

Let me put this in perspective: According to the State, to reach average annual rain and snowfall levels, this past weekend's rainfall must be repeated very frequently from now until May. And even then, California would still remain in drought conditions.

We need a forceful and immediate response to help those who are suffering. That is why I am introducing the California Emergency Drought Relief Act of 2014 along with Senators BOXER, WYDEN and MERKLEY. Representative JIM COSTA will introduce this bill in the House.

This bill focuses on measures that can provide water supplies to California this year. It would cut red tape

and free up federal agencies to operate with maximum flexibility and speed so they can move water to those who need it. When we have more water to move from storms like we saw this weekend, this bill will make an even greater difference.

Let me sum up how this bill would help. First, the bill would increase water supplies. By being smarter about how we manage water projects, we can free up more water. For example: This bill directs Federal agencies to open water gates on the Sacramento River for as long as possible when few salmon are migrating. This should allow thousands of acre feet of water to be pumped without harming the species.

It also directs agencies to find ways to control turbid waters so endangered Delta smelt that are attracted to these waters do not swim near the water pumps. Less risk to fish means more water can be pumped. And the bill mandates agencies to use the maximum authority allowed under the Endangered Species Act to provide as much water as possible from Delta pumping while staying within the law.

The bill would also reduce bureaucracy. During this emergency situation, the federal government must work as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Relying on emergency authorities that already exist, the bill directs Federal agencies to complete environmental reviews under shortened timeframes so water supply measures such as water transfers and fallowing of land can be carried out with minimal delay.

The bill would also provide emergency funding and disaster assistance. It authorizes additional expenditures to fund measures that can make a difference now, especially for the communities that are at risk of running out of drinking water soon.

They include \$100 million to carry out projects to maximize water supplies. There is also \$200 million for disaster relief to help farmers and rural communities. That includes \$100 million for emergency conservation measures so farmers can carry out projects to protect lands, crops and watersheds; \$25 million in grants for rural communities to take action to upgrade, repair or secure water systems; \$25 million in pre-disaster hazard mitigation grants so communities and the State can complete projects to lessen the effects of the drought; \$25 million in grant funding for public and nonprofit organizations to provide emergency assistance to low-income migrant and seasonal farmworkers affected by the drought; and \$25 million in grants to private forest landowners for conservation measures related to drought and wildfire. The bill would also direct Federal agencies to prioritize grant funding for water projects that can yield water supplies and alleviate the drought's effects now.

The bill also amends the Stafford Act. The 1988 Stafford Act was meant

to provide a comprehensive framework for how the country responds to major disasters, including droughts. However, because the Act has been interpreted very narrowly since its passage, eight drought-stricken States have applied for a major disaster declaration, and all eight have been denied: California in 2009; Georgia in 2008; Virginia in 2003; Maine in 2002; Texas and Oklahoma in 1998; and Minnesota and North Dakota in 1988.

To correct this, the bill amends the Stafford Act. These changes will provide States with greater flexibility to access Federal disaster assistance programs. These programs help individuals affected by drought conditions with disaster unemployment assistance and crisis counseling.

Let me be clear: this bill does not create new Federal assistance programs. It is an effort to clarify the intent of Congress regarding the Stafford Act, and to make the Stafford Act work better for droughts. When major disasters like a severe drought occur, communities should be eligible for Federal assistance.

During these emergency times, I also strongly believe some requirements should be relaxed to relieve the pressures faced by water users. To that effect, my bill proposes giving North-of-Delta water contractors more time to take delivery of water they were allocated in 2013, so they have more flexibility with their 2014 supplies. It also delays some water contract payments that Central Valley Project contractors must pay the Federal Government to lessen financial stress as they confront and recover from the drought.

I want to be clear: the success of some of these measures will depend on how much rain we get and how much water is available to be moved. This bill is not a replacement for rain, but it will give us tools to make water available when we have storms like the one over the weekend. My goal is to make sure we are maximizing every drop of water in the system and we are doing everything as quickly as possible to offer some measure of relief.

Finally, there are important lessons to learn. Southern California is better prepared than the rest of the State to cope with this drought thanks to decades of work to build storage and improve water conservation. Metropolitan Water District, I understand, has enough water supplies for 19 million customers through voluntary water use reductions.

Were it not for the more than 2 million acre-feet of water reserves, including 600,000 acre feet in Diamond Valley Lake, Southern California water users would be facing up to 50 percent mandatory water use restrictions.

The message is clear: For the long term, we must build additional storage if we are to be prepared for the next drought which is sure to come.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and our counterparts in the House, to support this bill.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2016

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "California Emergency Drought Relief Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents of this Act are as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.

Sec. 2. Table of contents.

TITLE I—CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF

Sec. 101. Findings.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Sec. 103. Emergency projects.

Sec. 104. Emergency funding.

Sec. 105. Emergency environmental reviews.

Sec. 106. State revolving funds.

Sec. 107. Drought planning assistance.

Sec. 108. CalFed Bay-Delta Act reauthorization.

Sec. 109. Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act reauthorization.

Sec. 110. Secure Water Act reauthorization.

Sec. 111. Effect on State laws.

Sec. 112. Klamath Basin water supply.

Sec. 113. Termination of authorities.

TITLE II—EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL AGRICULTURE DISASTER APPROPRIATIONS

Sec. 201. Emergency supplemental agriculture disaster appropriations.

TITLE III—FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Sec. 301. Treatment of drought under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

TITLE IV—EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS

Sec. 401. Emergency designations.

TITLE I—CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF

SEC. 101. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) as established in the Proclamation of a State of Emergency issued by the Governor of the State on January 17, 2014, the State is experiencing record dry conditions;

(2) extremely dry conditions have persisted in the State since 2012, and the current drought conditions are likely to persist into the future;

(3) the water supplies of the State are at record-low levels, as indicated by a statewide average snowpack of 12 percent of the normal average for winter as of February 1, 2014, and the fact that all major Central Valley Project reservoir levels are below 50 percent of the capacity of the reservoirs as of the date of enactment of this Act;

(4) the 2013–2014 drought constitutes a serious emergency posing immediate and severe risks to human life and safety and to the environment throughout the State;

(5) the emergency requires—

(A) immediate and credible action that respects the complexity of the State of California's water system and its importance to the entire State; and

(B) policies that do not pit stakeholders against one another, which history has shown only leads to costly litigation that benefits no one and prevents any real solutions;

(6) Federal law (including regulations) directly authorizes expedited decision-making procedures and environmental and public review procedures to enable timely and appropriate implementation of actions to respond to such a type and severity of emergency; and

(7) the serious emergency posed by the 2013–2014 drought in the State fully satisfies the conditions necessary for the exercise of emergency decision making, analytical, and public review requirements under—

(A) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(B) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(C) water control management procedures of the Corps of Engineers described in section 222.5 of title 33, Code of Federal Regulations (including successor regulations); and

(D) the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (Public Law 102–250; 106 Stat. 53).

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT.**—The term “Central Valley Project” has the meaning given the term in section 3403 of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (106 Stat. 4707).

(2) **KLAMATH PROJECT.**—The term “Klamath Project” means the Bureau of Reclamation project in the States of California and Oregon—

(A) as authorized under the Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093); and

(B) as described in—

(i) title II of the Oregon Resource Conservation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–208; 110 Stat. 3009–532); and

(ii) the Klamath Basin Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–498; 114 Stat. 2221).

(3) **RECLAMATION PROJECT.**—The term “Reclamation Project” means a project constructed pursuant to the authorities of the reclamation laws and whose facilities are wholly or partially located in the State.

(4) **RESERVED WORKS.**—The term “reserved works” means Bureau of Reclamation-owned project facilities for which the operations and maintenance are performed by employees of the Bureau of Reclamation or by contract, regardless of funding source.

(5) **SECRETARIES.**—The term “Secretaries” means—

(A) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(B) the Secretary of Commerce; and

(C) the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) **STATE.**—The term “State” means the State of California.

(7) **STATE WATER PROJECT.**—The term “State Water Project” means the water project described by California Water Code section 11550 et seq., and operated by the California Department of Water Resources.

SEC. 103. EMERGENCY PROJECTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In response to the declaration of a state of drought emergency by the Governor of the State, the Secretaries shall provide the maximum quantity of water supplies possible to Central Valley Project and Klamath Project agricultural, municipal and industrial, and refuge service and repayment contractors, State Water Project contractors, and any other locality or municipality in the State, by approving, consistent with applicable laws (including regulations)—

(1) any project or operations to provide additional water supplies if there is any possible way whatsoever that the Secretaries can do so unless the project or operations constitute a highly inefficient way of providing additional water supplies; and

(2) any projects or operations as quickly as possible based on available information to address the emergency conditions.

(b) **MANDATE.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the applicable agency heads described in that subsection shall, consistent with applicable laws (including regulations)—

(1) authorize and implement actions to ensure that the Delta Cross Channel Gates shall remain open to the greatest extent possible, timed to maximize the peak flood tide period and provide water supply and water quality benefits for the duration of the State’s drought emergency declaration, consistent with operational criteria and monitoring criteria developed pursuant to the California State Water Resources Control Board’s Order Approving a Temporary Urgency Change in License and Permit Terms in Response to Drought Conditions, effective January 31, 2014, or a successor order;

(2)(A) collect data associated with the operation of the Delta Cross Channel Gates described in paragraph (1) and its impact on species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), water quality, and water supply; and

(B) after assessing the data described in subparagraph (A), require the Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service to recommend revisions to operations of the Central Valley Project and the California State Water Project, including, if appropriate, the reasonable and prudent alternatives contained in the biological opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service on June 4, 2009, that are likely to produce fishery, water quality, and water supply benefits;

(3)(A) implement turbidity control strategies that allow for increased water deliveries while avoiding jeopardy to adult delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*) due to entrainment at Central Valley Project and State Water Project pumping plants; and

(B) manage reverse flow in Old and Middle Rivers as prescribed by the biological opinion issued by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and dated December 15, 2008, to minimize water supply reductions for the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project;

(4) adopt a 1:1 inflow to export ratio for the increased flow of the San Joaquin River, as measured as a 3-day running average at Vernalis during the period from April 1 through May 31, resulting from voluntary transfers and exchanges of water supplies, among other purposes;

(5) issue all necessary permit decisions under the authority of the Secretaries within 30 days of receiving a completed application by the State to place and use temporary barriers or operable gates in Delta channels to improve water quantity and quality for State Water Project and Central Valley Project South of Delta water contractors and other water users, which barriers or gates should provide benefits for species protection and in-Delta water user water quality and shall be designed such that formal consultations under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536) would not be necessary;

(6)(A) require the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation to complete all requirements under the Na-

tional Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) necessary to make final permit decisions on water transfer requests associated with voluntarily following nonpermanent crops in the State, within 30 days of receiving such a request; and

(B) require the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to allow any water transfer request associated with following to maximize the quantity of water supplies available for nonhabitat uses as long as the following and associated water transfer are in compliance with applicable Federal laws (including regulations);

(7) allow North of Delta water service contractors with unused 2013 Central Valley Project contract supplies to take delivery of those unused supplies through April 15, 2014, if—

(A) the contractor requests the extension; and

(B) the requesting contractor certifies that, without the extension, the contractor would have insufficient supplies to adequately meet water delivery obligations;

(8) maintain all rescheduled water supplies held in the San Luis Reservoir and Millerton Reservoir for all water users for delivery in the immediately following contract water year unless precluded by reservoir storage capacity limitations;

(9) to the maximum extent possible based on the availability of water and without causing land subsidence—

(A) meet the contract water supply needs of Central Valley Project refuges through the improvement or installation of wells to use groundwater resources and the purchase of water from willing sellers, which activities may be accomplished by using funding made available under section 104 or the Water Assistance Program or the WaterSMART program of the Department of the Interior; and

(B) make a quantity of Central Valley Project surface water obtained from the measures implemented under subparagraph (A) available to Central Valley Project contractors;

(10) make WaterSMART grant funding administered by the Bureau of Reclamation available for eligible projects within the State on a priority and expedited basis—

(A) to provide emergency drinking and municipal water supplies to localities in a quantity necessary to meet minimum public health and safety needs;

(B) to prevent the loss of permanent crops;

(C) to minimize economic losses resulting from drought conditions; and

(D) to provide innovative water conservation tools and technology for agriculture and urban water use that can have immediate water supply benefits;

(11) implement offsite upstream projects in the Delta and upstream Sacramento River and San Joaquin basins, in coordination with the California Department of Water Resources and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, that offset the effects on species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) due to actions taken under this Act;

(12) for reserved works only, authorize annual operation and maintenance deficits, owed to the Federal Government and incurred due to delivery of contract water supplies to a Central Valley Project or Klamath Project water contractor during each fiscal year the State emergency drought declaration is in force, to accrue without interest

for a period of 5 years and then to be repaid, notwithstanding section 106 of Public Law 99-546 (100 Stat. 3052), to the Federal Government over a period of not more than 10 years at the lesser of—

(A) the project interest rate; and

(B) the rate specified in section 106 of Public Law 99-546 (100 Stat. 3052); and

(13) use all available scientific tools to identify and implement any changes to real-time operations of Bureau of Reclamation, State, and local water projects that could result in the availability of additional water supplies.

(c) OTHER AGENCIES.—To the extent that a Federal agency other than agencies headed by the Secretaries has a role in approving projects described in subsections (a) and (b), the provisions of this section shall apply to those Federal agencies.

(d) ACCELERATED PROJECT DECISION AND ELEVATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of the State, the heads of Federal agencies shall use the expedited procedures under this subsection to make final decisions relating to a Federal project or operation to provide additional water supplies or address emergency drought conditions pursuant to subsections (a) and (b).

(2) REQUEST FOR RESOLUTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of the State, the head of an agency referred to in subsection (a), or the head of another Federal agency responsible for carrying out a review of a project, as applicable, the Secretary of the Interior shall convene a final project decision meeting with the heads of all relevant Federal agencies to decide whether to approve a project to provide emergency water supplies.

(B) MEETING.—The Secretary of the Interior shall convene a meeting requested under subparagraph (A) not later than 7 days after receiving the meeting request.

(3) NOTIFICATION.—Upon receipt of a request for a meeting under this subsection, the Secretary of the Interior shall notify the heads of all relevant Federal agencies of the request, including the project to be reviewed and the date for the meeting.

(4) DECISION.—Not later than 10 days after the date on which a meeting is requested under paragraph (2), the head of the relevant Federal agency shall issue a final decision on the project.

(5) MEETING CONVENED BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary may convene a final project decision meeting under this subsection at any time, at the discretion of the Secretary, regardless of whether a meeting is requested under paragraph (2).

SEC. 104. EMERGENCY FUNDING.

(a) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Financial assistance may be made available under the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (43 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.), subtitle F of title IX of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (42 U.S.C. 10361 et seq.) (commonly known as the “Secure Water Act of 2009”), and any other applicable Federal law (including regulations), to be divided among each applicable program at the discretion of the Secretary for the optimization and conservation of Reclamation Project water supplies to assist drought-plagued areas of the State and the West.

(2) ADDITIONAL AVAILABILITY.—Financial assistance may be made available under this section to organizations and entities, including tribal governments, that are engaged in collaborative processes to restore the environment while settling water rights claims

that are part of an active water rights adjudication or a broader settlement of claims that are part of a basin-wide solution for restoration.

(b) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under subsection (a) shall include a range of projects, including—

(1) the installation of pumps, temporary barriers, or operable gates for water diversion and fish protection;

(2) the installation of groundwater wells in wildlife refuges and other areas;

(3) the purchase or assistance in the purchase of water from willing sellers;

(4) conservation projects providing water supply benefits in the short-term;

(5) exchanges with any water district willing to provide water to meet the emergency water needs of other water districts in return for the delivery of equivalent quantities of water later that year or in future years;

(6) maintenance of cover crops to prevent public health impacts from severe dust storms;

(7) emergency pumping projects for critical health and safety purposes;

(8) activities to reduce water demand consistent with a comprehensive program for environmental restoration and settlement of water rights claims;

(9) the use of new or innovative water on-farm water conservation technologies or methods that may assist in sustaining permanent crops in areas with severe water shortages;

(10) technical assistance to improve existing irrigation practices to provide water supply benefits in the short-term; and

(11) any other assistance the Secretary determines to be necessary to increase available water supplies or mitigate drought impacts.

(c) FUNDING.—There is appropriated, out of funds of the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$100,000,000 to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce to carry out this section.

SEC. 105. EMERGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS.

To minimize the time spent carrying out environmental reviews and to deliver water quickly that is needed to address emergency drought conditions in the State, the head of each applicable Federal agency shall, in carrying out this Act, consult with the Council on Environmental Quality in accordance with section 1506.11 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (including successor regulations) to develop alternative arrangements to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) during the emergency.

SEC. 106. STATE REVOLVING FUNDS.

The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in allocating amounts for each of the fiscal years during which the State's emergency drought declaration is in force to State water pollution control revolving funds established under title VI of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.) and the State drinking water treatment revolving loan funds established under section 1452 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-12), shall, for those projects that are eligible to receive assistance under section 603 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1383) or section 1452(a)(2) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-12(a)(2)), respectively, that the State determines will provide additional water supplies most expeditiously to areas that are at risk of having an inadequate supply of water for public health and safety purposes or to improve resiliency to drought—

(1) require the State to review and prioritize funding for such projects;

(2) issue a determination of waivers within 30 days of the conclusion of the informal public comment period pursuant to section 436(c) of title IV of division G of Public Law 113-76; and

(3) authorize, at the request of the State, 40-year financing for assistance under section 603(d)(2) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1383(d)(2)) or section 1452(f)(2) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-12(f)(2)).

SEC. 107. DROUGHT PLANNING ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of Central Valley Project or Klamath Project contractors or other Reclamation Project contractors in the State, the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation, shall provide water supply planning assistance in preparation for and in response to dry, critically dry, and below normal water year types to those Central Valley Project or Klamath Project contractors or other Reclamation Project contractors making those requests, including contractors who possess contracts for refuge water supplies or deliver refuge water supplies.

(b) TYPES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) hydrological forecasting;

(2) assessment of water supply sources under different water year classification types;

(3) identification of alternative water supply sources;

(4) guidance on potential water transfer partners;

(5) technical assistance regarding Federal and State permits and contracts under the Act of February 21, 1911 (36 Stat. 925, chapter 141) (commonly known as the “Warren Act”);

(6) technical assistance regarding emergency provision of water supplies for critical health and safety purposes;

(7) activities carried out in conjunction with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Integrated Drought Information System, and the State partners of the National Integrated Drought Information System under the National Integrated Drought Information System Act of 2006 (15 U.S.C. 313d)—

(A) to collect and integrate key indicators of drought severity and impacts; and

(B) to produce and communicate timely monitoring and forecast information to local and regional communities, including the San Joaquin Valley, the Delta, and the Central Coast; and

(8) any other assistance the Secretary determines to be necessary.

SEC. 108. CALFED BAY-DELTA ACT REAUTHORIZATION.

Title I of the Water Supply, Reliability, and Environmental Improvement Act (118 Stat. 1681; 123 Stat. 2860) (as amended by section 207 of title II of division D of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014) is amended by striking “2015” each place it appears and inserting “2018”.

SEC. 109. RECLAMATION STATES EMERGENCY DROUGHT RELIEF ACT REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 301 of the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 (43 U.S.C. 2241) is amended—

(1) by striking “\$90,000,000” and inserting “\$190,000,000”; and

(2) by striking “2012” and inserting “2017”.

SEC. 110. SECURE WATER ACT REAUTHORIZATION.

Section 9504 of Public Law 111-11 (42 U.S.C. 10364) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3)(E), by adding at the end the following:

“(v) AUTHORITY OF COMMISSIONER.—The Commissioner of Reclamation may, at the discretion of the Commissioner—

“(I) waive any cost-share requirements to address emergency situations; and

“(II) prioritize projects based on the ability of the projects to expeditiously yield water supply benefits during periods of drought.”; and

(2) in subsection (e), by striking “\$200,000,000” and inserting “\$250,000,000”.

SEC. 111. EFFECT ON STATE LAWS.

Nothing in this Act preempts any State law in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, including area of origin and other water rights protections.

SEC. 112. KLAMATH BASIN WATER SUPPLY.

The Klamath Basin Water Supply Enhancement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-498; 114 Stat. 2221) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 4 through 6 as sections 5 through 7, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 3 the following:

“SEC. 4. WATER MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES.

“The Secretary is authorized to engage in activities, including entering into agreements and contracts, or otherwise making financial assistance available, to reduce water consumption or demand, or to restore ecosystems in the Klamath Basin watershed, including tribal fishery resources held in trust, consistent with collaborative agreements for environmental restoration and settlements of water rights claims.”.

SEC. 113. TERMINATION OF AUTHORITIES.

The authorities under sections 103, 104, 105, and 106 expire on the date on which the Governor of the State suspends the state of drought emergency declaration.

TITLE II—EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL AGRICULTURE DISASTER APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 201. EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL AGRICULTURE DISASTER APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) for the emergency conservation program established under title IV of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) and the emergency watershed protection program established under section 403 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2203) \$100,000,000, to be divided among each applicable program as the Secretary determines to be appropriate—

(A) to provide to agricultural producers and other eligible entities affected by the 2014 drought assistance upon declaration of a natural disaster under section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1961(a)) or for the same purposes for counties that are contiguous to a designated natural disaster area; and

(B) to carry out any other activities the Secretary determines necessary as a result of the 2014 drought, such as activities relating to wildfire damage.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this subsection the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(b) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR LIVESTOCK, HONEY BEES, AND FARM-RAISED FISH.—Notwithstanding any other applicable limitations under law, the Secretary shall use such sums as are necessary of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out the emergency assistance program for livestock, honey bees, and farm-raised fish under section 531(e) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1531(e)) for fiscal year 2014 to provide assistance to agricultural producers for losses due to drought.

(c) FEMA PREDISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 for mitigation activities related to drought and wildfire hazards.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this subsection the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(d) EMERGENCY COMMUNITY WATER ASSISTANCE GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

(A) as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 to provide emergency community water assistance grants under section 306A of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926a) to address impacts of drought;

(B) the maximum amount of a grant provided under subparagraph (A) for fiscal year 2014 shall be \$1,000,000; and

(C) for fiscal year 2014, a community whose population is less than 50,000 shall be eligible for a grant under this paragraph.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this subsection the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(e) OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2014, to remain available until expended, for oversight of activities carried out by the Department relating to drought.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Inspector General of the Department of Agriculture shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this subsection the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(f) EMERGENCY GRANTS TO ASSIST LOW-INCOME MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 to provide emergency grants to assist low-income migrant and seasonal farmworkers under section 2281 of the Food,

Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 5177a) to address impacts of drought upon declaration of a natural disaster under section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1961(a)) or for the same purposes in counties that are contiguous to a designated natural disaster area.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this subsection the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

(g) EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer to the Secretary \$25,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 for the Emergency Forest Restoration Program under section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2206) to address impacts of drought or wildfire upon declaration of a natural disaster under section 321(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1961(a)) or for the same purposes in counties that are contiguous to a designated natural disaster area.

(2) RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE.—The Secretary shall be entitled to receive, shall accept, and shall use to carry out this subsection the funds transferred under paragraph (1), without further appropriation.

TITLE III—FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

SEC. 301. TREATMENT OF DROUGHT UNDER THE ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the term “major disaster” (as defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)) includes drought, yet no drought in the 30 years preceding the date of enactment of this Act has been declared by the President to be a major disaster in any of the States in accordance with section 401 of that Act (42 U.S.C. 5170);

(2) a major drought shall be eligible to be declared a major disaster or state of emergency by the President on the request of the Governor of any State;

(3) droughts are natural disasters that do occur, and while of a different type of impact, the scale of the impact of a major drought can be equivalent to other disasters that have been declared by the President to be a major disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.); and

(4) droughts have wide-ranging and long-term impacts on ecosystem health, agriculture production, permanent crops, forests, waterways, air quality, public health, wildlife, employment, communities, State and national parks, and other natural resources of a State and the people of that State that have significant value.

(b) AMENDMENT.—Section 502(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5192(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7), by striking “and”;

(2) in paragraph (8), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(9) provide disaster unemployment assistance in accordance with section 410;

“(10) provide emergency nutrition assistance in accordance with section 412; and

“(11) provide crisis counseling assistance in accordance with section 416.”.

TITLE IV—EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS
SEC. 401. EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS.

(a) This Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-139; 2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(b) In the Senate, this Act is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 403(a) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 353—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2014 AS “NATIONAL BRAIN ANEURYSM AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. MARKEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 353

Whereas a brain aneurysm is an abnormal sacular or fusiform bulging of an artery in the brain;

Whereas an estimated 1 out of every 50 people in the United States has a brain aneurysm;

Whereas brain aneurysms are most likely to occur in people between the ages of 35 and 60 and there are typically no warning signs;

Whereas brain aneurysms are more likely to occur in women than in men by a 3-to-2 ratio;

Whereas young and middle aged African Americans have a higher risk of brain aneurysm rupture compared to Caucasian Americans;

Whereas various risk factors can contribute to the formation of a brain aneurysm, including smoking, hypertension, and a family history of brain aneurysms;

Whereas approximately 6,000,000 people in the United States have a brain aneurysm;

Whereas an unruptured brain aneurysm can lead to double vision, vision loss, loss of sensation, weakness, loss of balance, incoordination, and speech problems;

Whereas a brain aneurysm is often discovered when it ruptures and causes a subarachnoid hemorrhage;

Whereas a subarachnoid hemorrhage can lead to brain damage, hydrocephalus, stroke, and death;

Whereas each year, more than 30,000 people in the United States suffer from ruptured brain aneurysms and 40 percent of these people die as a result;

Whereas annually, between 3,000 and 4,500 people in the United States with ruptured brain aneurysms die before reaching the hospital;

Whereas a number of advancements have been made in recent years regarding the detection of aneurysms, including the computerized tomography (CT) scan, the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) test, and the cerebral arteriogram, and early detection can save lives;

Whereas various research studies are currently being conducted in the United States in order to better understand, prevent, and treat brain aneurysms; and

Whereas the month of September would be an appropriate month to designate as “National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2014 as National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month; and

(2) continues to support research to prevent, detect, and treat brain aneurysms.

SENATE RESOLUTION 354—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD LEAVE NO MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES UNACCOUNTED FOR DURING THE DRAWDOWN OF FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. TOOMEY (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. BURR, and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. RES. 354

Whereas the United States is a country of great honor and integrity;

Whereas the United States has made a sacred promise to members of the Armed Forces who are deployed overseas in defense of this country that their sacrifice and service will never be forgotten; and

Whereas the United States can never thank the proud members of the Armed Forces enough for what they do for this country on a daily basis: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) believes that the United States should undertake every reasonable effort—

(A) to find and repatriate members of the Armed Forces who are missing; and

(B) to repatriate members of the Armed Forces who are captured;

(2) believes that the United States has a responsibility to keep the promises made to members of the Armed Forces who risk their lives on a daily basis on behalf of the people of the United States;

(3) supports the United States Soldier's Creed and the Warrior Ethos, which state that “I will never leave a fallen comrade”; and

(4) believes that, while the United States continues to transition leadership roles in combat operations in Afghanistan to the people of Afghanistan, the United States must continue to fulfill these important promises to any member of the Armed Forces who is in a missing status or captured as a result of service in Afghanistan now or in the future.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2733. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2734. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2735. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. KAINE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1963, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2736. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill S. 1963, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2737. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2738. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. COATS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2739. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2740. Mr. REID (for Mr. BEGICH) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1068, to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2733. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, strike lines 5 through 7 and insert the following:

(a) **ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.**—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

SEC. 2. LIMITATIONS ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.

(a) **FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT.**—

(1) **RESTRICTIONS ON ASSISTANCE UNDER SECTION 7008.**—In accordance with section 7008 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Act, 2012 (division I of Public Law 112-74; 125 Stat. 1195), the United States Government, including the Department of State, shall refrain from providing to the Government of Egypt the assistance restricted under such section.

(2) **ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS.**—In addition to the restrictions referred to in paragraph (1), the following restrictions shall be in effect with respect to United States assistance to the Government of Egypt:

(A) Deliveries of defense articles currently slated for transfer to Egyptian Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) shall be suspended until the President certifies to Congress that democratic national elections have taken place in Egypt followed by a peaceful transfer of power.

(B) Provision of defense services to Egyptian MOD and MOI shall be halted immediately until the President certifies to Congress that democratic national elections have taken place in Egypt followed by a peaceful transfer of power.

(C) Processing of draft Letters of Offer and Acceptance (LOAs) for future arms sales to Egyptian MOD and MOI entities shall be halted until the President certifies to Congress that democratic national elections have taken place in Egypt followed by a peaceful transfer of power.

(D) All costs associated with the delays in deliveries and provision of services required under subparagraphs (A) through (C) shall be borne by the Government of Egypt.

(b) **OTHER LIMITATIONS ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.**—

(1) PROHIBITION.—No amounts may be obligated or expended to provide any direct United States assistance, loan guarantee, or debt relief to a Government described under paragraph (2).

(2) COVERED GOVERNMENTS.—The Governments referred to in paragraph (1) are as follows:

- (A) The Government of Libya.
- (B) The Government of Pakistan.

(C) The Government of a host country of a United States diplomatic facility on the list submitted to Congress pursuant to paragraph (3).

(3) DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY.—The Secretary of State shall submit to Congress a list of all United States diplomatic facilities attacked, trespassed upon, breached, or attempted to be attacked, trespassed upon, or breached on or after September 1, 2012, not later than 5 days after the date of enactment of this Act and not later than 5 days after any subsequent attack, trespass, breach, or attempt.

(4) CERTIFICATION.—Beginning 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President may certify to Congress that—

(A) a Government described under paragraph (2)—

(i) is cooperating or has cooperated fully with investigations into an attack, trespass, breach, or attempted attack, trespass, or breach;

(ii) has arrested or facilitated the arrest of, and if requested has permitted extradition of, all identifiable persons in such country associated with organizing, planning, or participating in the attack, trespass, breach, or attempted attack, trespass, or breach;

(iii) is facilitating or has facilitated any security improvements at United States diplomatic facilities, as requested by the United States Government; and

(iv) is taking or has taken sufficient steps to strengthen and improve reliability of local security in order to prevent any future attack, trespass, or breach; and

(B) all identifiable persons associated with organizing, planning, or participating in the attack, trespass, breach, or attempted attack, trespass, or breach—

(i) have been identified by the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, or other United States law enforcement entity; and

(ii) are in United States custody.

(5) REQUEST TO SUSPEND PROHIBITION ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.—Upon submitting a certification under paragraph (4) with respect to a Government described under paragraph (2), the President may submit a request to Congress to suspend the prohibition on foreign assistance to the Government.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section takes effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and applies with respect to funds made available to any Federal department or agency beginning with fiscal year 2015.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION TO SELL LAND.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—For each of fiscal years 2014 through 2024 or when the authority under this section is terminated in accordance with subsection (d), whichever occurs first, subject to valid existing rights, the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as the case may be, shall offer for competitive sale by auction all right, title, and interest, to the extent provided in subsection (b)(2), in and to the following:

(1) Eight percent of the Federal land managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) Eight percent of the National Forest System land.

(b) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—

(1) CONFIGURATION OF LAND.—The Secretary concerned shall configure the land to be sold to maximize marketability or achieve management objectives, and may prescribe such terms and conditions on the land sales authorized by this Act as the Secretary deems in the public interest.

(2) MINERAL RIGHTS.—For each fiscal year, the Secretary concerned may include in the sale of land under subsection (a) the mineral rights to such land for not more than 50 percent of the total acreage sold under subsection (a) by that Secretary, if the Secretary determines that such inclusion is likely to maximize marketability.

(c) PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF LAND.—All proceeds from the sale of land under this section shall be deposited into the Treasury and applied—

(1) to reduce the annual Federal budget deficit for the fiscal year in which the sums are received, except as provided in paragraph (2); and

(2) if there is no annual Federal budget deficit for the fiscal year in which the sums are received, to reduce the outstanding Federal debt.

(d) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority under this section shall terminate when the proceeds deposited into the Treasury under subsection (c) equal \$3,500,000 or at the end of fiscal year 2024, whichever occurs first.

SA 2734. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF CERTAIN REDUCTIONS MADE BY THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is hereby repealed.

SEC. 2. REDUCTION OF NONMEDICARE, NON-DEFENSE DIRECT SPENDING.

Section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(11) ADDITIONAL REDUCTION OF NONMEDICARE, NONDEFENSE DIRECT SPENDING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2015 through 2023, in addition to the reduction in direct spending under paragraph (6), on the date specified in paragraph (2), OMB shall prepare and the President shall order a sequestration, effective upon issuance, reducing the spending described in subparagraph (B) by the uniform percentage necessary to reduce such spending for the fiscal year by \$757,000,000.

“(B) SPENDING COVERED.—The spending described in this subparagraph is spending that is—

- “(i) nonexempt direct spending;
- “(ii) not spending for the Medicare programs specified in section 256(d); and
- “(iii) within the revised nonsecurity category.”.

SA 2735. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms.

HIRONO, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. KAINE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF FOREIGN CORPORATIONS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED IN THE UNITED STATES AS DOMESTIC CORPORATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7701 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (p) as subsection (q) and by inserting after subsection (o) the following new subsection:

“(p) CERTAIN CORPORATIONS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED IN THE UNITED STATES TREATED AS DOMESTIC FOR INCOME TAX.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (a)(4), in the case of a corporation described in paragraph (2) if—

“(A) the corporation would not otherwise be treated as a domestic corporation for purposes of this title, but

“(B) the management and control of the corporation occurs, directly or indirectly, primarily within the United States, then, solely for purposes of chapter 1 (and any other provision of this title relating to chapter 1), the corporation shall be treated as a domestic corporation.

“(2) CORPORATION DESCRIBED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A corporation is described in this paragraph if—

“(i) the stock of such corporation is regularly traded on an established securities market, or

“(ii) the aggregate gross assets of such corporation (or any predecessor thereof), including assets under management for investors, whether held directly or indirectly, at any time during the taxable year or any preceding taxable year is \$50,000,000 or more.

“(B) GENERAL EXCEPTION.—A corporation shall not be treated as described in this paragraph if—

“(i) such corporation was treated as a corporation described in this paragraph in a preceding taxable year,

“(ii) such corporation—

“(I) is not regularly traded on an established securities market, and

“(II) has, and is reasonably expected to continue to have, aggregate gross assets (including assets under management for investors, whether held directly or indirectly) of less than \$50,000,000, and

“(iii) the Secretary grants a waiver to such corporation under this subparagraph.

“(3) MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations for purposes of determining cases in which the management and control of a corporation is to be treated as occurring primarily within the United States.

“(B) EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT.—Such regulations shall provide that—

“(i) the management and control of a corporation shall be treated as occurring primarily within the United States if substantially all of the executive officers and senior management of the corporation who exercise day-to-day responsibility for making decisions involving strategic, financial, and operational policies of the corporation are located primarily within the United States, and

“(ii) individuals who are not executive officers and senior management of the corporation (including individuals who are officers or employees of other corporations in the same chain of corporations as the corporation) shall be treated as executive officers and senior management if such individuals exercise the day-to-day responsibilities of the corporation described in clause (i).

“(C) CORPORATIONS PRIMARILY HOLDING INVESTMENT ASSETS.—Such regulations shall also provide that the management and control of a corporation shall be treated as occurring primarily within the United States if—

“(i) the assets of such corporation (directly or indirectly) consist primarily of assets being managed on behalf of investors, and
“(ii) decisions about how to invest the assets are made in the United States.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning on or after the date which is 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, whether or not regulations are issued under section 7701(p)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section.

SA 2736. Mr. HOEVEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:
SEC. 2. EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

Section 251A(6)(B) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a(6)(B)) is amended by striking “and for fiscal year 2023” and inserting “, for fiscal year 2023, and for fiscal year 2024”.

SA 2737. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:
SEC. 2. REPEAL OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GOAL REGARDING USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY TO MEET ELECTRICITY NEEDS.

Section 2911 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (e).

SA 2738. Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. COATS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE II—EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014”.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “January 1, 2014” and inserting “April 1, 2014”.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—
(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting “and” at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

“(K) the amendment made by section 202(a) of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014;”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 203. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111-5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking “December 31, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “March 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2014”.

(b) EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.—Section 5 of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “June 30, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2014”.

(c) EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “March 31, 2014”; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “March 31, 2014”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 204. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking “through fiscal year 2014” and inserting “through the first quarter of fiscal year 2015”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-240).

SEC. 205. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(1) by striking “June 30, 2013” and inserting “September 30, 2013”; and

(2) by striking “December 31, 2013” and inserting “March 31, 2014”.

(b) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such

section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board \$62,500 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. 206. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) FLEXIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before December 1, 2013, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after December 29, 2013.

(b) PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.—Nothing in title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall preclude a State whose agreement under such title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this Act if the State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

SEC. 207. ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO JOBLESS MILLIONAIRES AND BILLIONAIRES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments of unemployment compensation (including such compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970 and the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008) to an individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than \$1,000,000.

(b) COMPLIANCE.—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify the individual’s adjusted gross income was not equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 in the preceding year.

(c) AUDITS.—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) STATUS OF APPLICANTS.—It is the duty of the states to verify the residency, employment, legal, and income status of applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining an individual’s eligibility under this Act.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 208. FUNDING STABILIZATION.

(a) FUNDING STABILIZATION UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—The table in subclause (II) of section 430(h)(2)(C)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.	90%	110%

"If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2017	85%	115%
2018	80%	120%
2019	75%	125%
After 2019	70%	130%".

(b) FUNDING STABILIZATION UNDER ERISA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The table in subclause (II) of section 303(h)(2)(C)(iv) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 is amended to read as follows:

"If the calendar year is:	The applicable minimum percentage is:	The applicable maximum percentage is:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.	90%	110%
2017	85%	115%
2018	80%	120%
2019	75%	125%
After 2019	70%	130%".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Clause (ii) of section 101(f)(2)(D) of such Act is amended by striking "2015" and inserting "2019".

(B) STATEMENTS.—The Secretary of Labor shall modify the statements required under subclauses (I) and (II) of section 101(f)(2)(D)(i) of such Act to conform to the amendments made by this section.

(c) STABILIZATION NOT TO APPLY FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN ACCELERATED BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION RULES.—

(1) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—The second sentence of paragraph (2) of section 436(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "of such plan" and inserting "of such plan (determined by not taking into account any adjustment of segment rates under section 430(h)(2)(C)(iv))".

(2) EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.—The second sentence of subparagraph (B) of section 206(g)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1056(g)(3)(B)) is amended by striking "of such plan" and inserting "of such plan (determined by not taking into account any adjustment of segment rates under section 303(h)(2)(C)(iv))".

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2014.

(B) COLLECTIVELY BARGAINED PLANS.—In the case of a plan maintained pursuant to 1 or more collective bargaining agreements, the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to plan years beginning after December 31, 2015.

(4) PROVISIONS RELATING TO PLAN AMENDMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If this paragraph applies to any amendment to any plan or annuity contract, such plan or contract shall be treated as being operated in accordance with the terms of the plan during the period described in subparagraph (B)(ii).

(B) AMENDMENTS TO WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—This paragraph shall apply to any amendment to any plan or annuity contract which is made—

(I) pursuant to the amendments made by this subsection, or pursuant to any regulation issued by the Secretary of the Treasury or the Secretary of Labor under any provision as so amended, and

(II) on or before the last day of the first plan year beginning on or after January 1,

2016, or such later date as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

(ii) CONDITIONS.—This subsection shall not apply to any amendment unless, during the period—

(I) beginning on the date that the amendments made by this subsection or the regulation described in clause (i)(I) takes effect (or in the case of a plan or contract amendment not required by such amendments or such regulation, the effective date specified by the plan), and

(II) ending on the date described in clause (i)(II) (or, if earlier, the date the plan or contract amendment is adopted),

the plan or contract is operated as if such plan or contract amendment were in effect, and such plan or contract amendment applies retroactively for such period.

(C) ANTI-CUTBACK RELIEF.—A plan shall not be treated as failing to meet the requirements of section 204(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and section 411(d)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 solely by reason of a plan amendment to which this paragraph applies.

(d) MODIFICATION OF FUNDING TARGET DETERMINATION PERIODS.—

(1) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—Clause (i) of section 430(h)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "the first day of the plan year" and inserting "the valuation date for the plan year".

(2) EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.—Clause (i) of section 303(h)(2)(B) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1083(h)(2)(B)(i)) is amended by striking "the first day of the plan year" and inserting "the valuation date for the plan year".

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by subsections (a), (b), and (d) shall apply with respect to plan years beginning after December 31, 2012.

(2) ELECTIONS.—A plan sponsor may elect not to have the amendments made by subsections (a), (b), and (d) apply to any plan year beginning before January 1, 2014, either (as specified in the election)—

(A) for all purposes for which such amendments apply, or

(B) solely for purposes of determining the adjusted funding target attainment percentage under sections 436 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and 206(g) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 for such plan year.

A plan shall not be treated as failing to meet the requirements of section 204(g) of such Act and section 411(d)(6) of such Code solely by reason of an election under this paragraph.

SEC. 209. REQUIREMENT THAT INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN A SYSTEMATIC AND SUSTAINED EFFORT TO OBTAIN SUITABLE WORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (h) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended to read as follows:

"(h) ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of subsection (b)(4), payment of emergency unemployment compensation shall not be made to any individual for any week of unemployment—

"(A) during which the individual fails to accept any offer of suitable work (as defined in paragraph (3)) or fails to apply for any suitable work to which the individual was referred by the State agency; or

"(B) during which the individual fails to actively engage in seeking work, unless such individual is not actively engaged in seeking work because such individual is, as determined in accordance with State law—

"(i) before any court of the United States or any State pursuant to a lawfully issued summons to appear for jury duty (as such term may be defined by the Secretary); or

"(ii) hospitalized for treatment of an emergency or a life-threatening condition (as such term may be defined by the Secretary), if such exemptions in clauses (i) and (ii) apply to recipients of regular benefits, and the State chooses to apply such exemptions for recipients of emergency unemployment benefits.

"(2) PERIOD OF INELIGIBILITY.—If any individual is ineligible for emergency unemployment compensation for any week by reason of a failure described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1), the individual shall be ineligible to receive emergency unemployment compensation for any week which begins during a period which—

"(A) begins with the week following the week in which such failure occurs; and

"(B) does not end until such individual has been employed during at least 4 weeks which begin after such failure and the total of the remuneration earned by the individual for being so employed is not less than the product of 4 multiplied by the individual's average weekly benefit amount for the individual's benefit year.

"(3) SUITABLE WORK.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'suitable work' means, with respect to any individual, any work which is within such individual's capabilities, except that, if the individual furnishes evidence satisfactory to the State agency that such individual's prospects for obtaining work in his customary occupation within a reasonably short period are good, the determination of whether any work is suitable work with respect to such individual shall be made in accordance with the applicable State law.

"(4) EXCEPTION.—Extended compensation shall not be denied under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) to any individual for any week by reason of a failure to accept an offer of, or apply for, suitable work—

"(A) if the gross average weekly remuneration payable to such individual for the position does not exceed the sum of—

"(i) the individual's average weekly benefit amount for his benefit year, plus

"(ii) the amount (if any) of supplemental unemployment compensation benefits (as defined in section 501(c)(17)(D) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) payable to such individual for such week;

"(B) if the position was not offered to such individual in writing and was not listed with the State employment service;

"(C) if such failure would not result in a denial of compensation under the provisions of the applicable State law to the extent that such provisions are not inconsistent with the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (5); or

"(D) if the position pays wages less than the higher of—

"(i) the minimum wage provided by section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, without regard to any exemption; or

"(ii) any applicable State or local minimum wage.

"(5) ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN SEEKING WORK.—For purposes of this subsection, an individual shall be treated as actively engaged in seeking work during any week if—

“(A) the individual has engaged in a systematic and sustained effort to obtain work during such week, and

“(B) the individual provides tangible evidence to the State agency that he has engaged in such an effort during such week.

“(6) REFERRAL.—The State agency shall provide for referring applicants for emergency unemployment benefits to any suitable work to which paragraph (4) would not apply.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 210. REDUCTION IN BENEFITS BASED ON RECEIPT OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 224 the following new section:

“REDUCTION IN BENEFITS BASED ON RECEIPT OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

“SEC. 224A (a)(1) If for any month prior to the month in which an individual attains retirement age (as defined in section 216(1)(1))—

“(A) such individual is entitled to benefits under section 223, and

“(B) such individual is entitled for such month to unemployment compensation,

the total of the individual’s benefits under section 223 for such month and of any benefits under section 202 for such month based on the individual’s wages and self-employment income shall be reduced (but not below zero) by the total amount of unemployment compensation received by such individual for such month.

“(2) The reduction of benefits under paragraph (1) shall also apply to any past-due benefits under section 223 for any month in which the individual was entitled to—

“(A) benefits under such section, and

“(B) unemployment compensation.

“(3) The reduction of benefits under paragraph (1) shall not apply to any benefits under section 223 for any month, or any benefits under section 202 for such month based on the individual’s wages and self-employment income for such month, if the individual is entitled for such month to unemployment compensation following a period of trial work (as described in section 222(c)(1), participation in the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program established under section 1148, or participation in any other program that is designed to encourage an individual entitled to benefits under section 223 or 202 to work.

“(b) If any unemployment compensation is payable to an individual on other than a monthly basis (including a benefit payable as a lump sum to the extent that it is a commutation of, or a substitute for, such periodic compensation), the reduction under this section shall be made at such time or times and in such amounts as the Commissioner of Social Security (referred to in this section as the ‘Commissioner’) determines will approximate as nearly as practicable the reduction prescribed by subsection (a).

“(c) Reduction of benefits under this section shall be made after any applicable reductions under section 203(a) and section 224, but before any other applicable deductions under section 203.

“(d)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), if the Commissioner determines that an individual may be eligible for unemployment compensation which would give rise to a reduction of benefits under this section, the Commissioner may require, as a condition of certification for payment of any benefits under

section 223 to any individual for any month and of any benefits under section 202 for such month based on such individual’s wages and self-employment income, that such individual certify—

“(A) whether the individual has filed or intends to file any claim for unemployment compensation, and

“(B) if the individual has filed a claim, whether there has been a decision on such claim.

“(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the Commissioner may, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, rely upon a certification by the individual that the individual has not filed and does not intend to file such a claim, or that the individual has so filed and no final decision thereon has been made, in certifying benefits for payment pursuant to section 205(i).

“(e) Whenever a reduction in total benefits based on an individual’s wages and self-employment income is made under this section for any month, each benefit, except the disability insurance benefit, shall first be proportionately decreased, and any excess of such reduction over the sum of all such benefits other than the disability insurance benefit shall then be applied to such disability insurance benefit.

“(f)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the head of any Federal agency shall provide such information within its possession as the Commissioner may require for purposes of making a timely determination of the amount of the reduction, if any, required by this section in benefits payable under this title, or verifying other information necessary in carrying out the provisions of this section.

“(2) The Commissioner is authorized to enter into agreements with States, political subdivisions, and other organizations that administer unemployment compensation, in order to obtain such information as the Commissioner may require to carry out the provisions of this section.

“(g) For purposes of this section, the term ‘unemployment compensation’ has the meaning given that term in section 85(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and the total amount of unemployment compensation to which an individual is entitled shall be determined prior to any applicable reduction under State law based on the receipt of benefits under section 202 or 223.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 224(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 424(a)) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “the age of 65” and inserting “retirement age (as defined in section 216(1)(1))”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall apply to benefits payable for months beginning on or after the date that is 12 months after the date of enactment of this section.

SEC. 211. EXTENSION OF NONMEDICARE, NON-DEFENSE DIRECT SPENDING REDUCTIONS.

Section 251A(6) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a(6)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D)(i) On the date OMB issues its sequestration preview report for fiscal year 2024, pursuant to section 254(c), the President shall order a sequestration, effective upon issuance such that the percentage reduction for spending described in clause (ii) is the same percent as the percentage reduction for nonexempt direct spending for nondefense functions for fiscal year 2021 calculated under paragraph (4)(B).

“(ii) The spending described in this clause is spending that is—

“(I) nonexempt direct spending;

“(II) not spending for the Medicare programs specified in section 256(d); and

“(III) within the revised nonsecurity category.”

SA 2739. Mr. VITTEB submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1963, to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES.

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility leases at the locations specified, and in an amount for each lease not to exceed the amount shown for such location (not including any estimated cancellation costs):

(1) For a clinical research and pharmacy coordinating center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, an amount not to exceed \$9,560,000.

(2) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Brick, New Jersey, an amount not to exceed \$7,280,000.

(3) For a new primary care and dental clinic annex, Charleston, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed \$7,070,250.

(4) For the Cobb County community-based Outpatient Clinic, Cobb County, Georgia, an amount not to exceed \$6,409,000.

(5) For the Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Access Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, including a co-located clinic with the Department of Defense and the co-location of the Honolulu Regional Office of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Kapolei Vet Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, an amount not to exceed \$15,887,370.

(6) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Johnson County, Kansas, an amount not to exceed \$2,263,000.

(7) For a replacement community-based outpatient clinic, Lafayette, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed \$2,996,000.

(8) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lake Charles, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed \$2,626,000.

(9) For outpatient clinic consolidation, New Port Richey, Florida, an amount not to exceed \$11,927,000.

(10) For an outpatient clinic, Ponce, Puerto Rico, an amount not to exceed \$11,535,000.

(11) For lease consolidation, San Antonio, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$19,426,000.

(12) For a community-based outpatient clinic, San Diego, California, an amount not to exceed \$11,946,100.

(13) For an outpatient clinic, Tyler, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$4,327,000.

(14) For the Errera Community Care Center, West Haven, Connecticut, an amount not to exceed \$4,883,000.

(15) For the Worcester community-based Outpatient Clinic, Worcester, Massachusetts, an amount not to exceed \$4,855,000.

(16) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, an amount not to exceed \$4,232,060.

(17) For a multispecialty clinic, Chattanooga, Tennessee, an amount not to exceed \$7,069,000.

(18) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Chico, California, an amount not to exceed \$4,534,000.

(19) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Chula Vista, California, an amount not to exceed \$3,714,000.

(20) For a new research lease, Hines, Illinois, an amount not to exceed \$22,032,000.

(21) For a replacement research lease, Houston, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$6,142,000.

(22) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lincoln, Nebraska, an amount not to exceed \$7,178,400.

(23) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lubbock, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$8,554,000.

(24) For a community-based outpatient clinic consolidation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed \$8,022,000.

(25) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Phoenix, Arizona, an amount not to exceed \$20,757,000.

(26) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Redding, California, an amount not to exceed \$8,154,000.

(27) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Tulsa, Oklahoma, an amount not to exceed \$13,269,200.

(b) BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITIES LEASES.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(A) Title 31, United States Code, requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record the full cost of its contractual obligation against funds available at the time a contract is executed.

(B) Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 provides guidance to agencies in meeting the statutory requirements under title 31, United States Code, with respect to leases.

(C) For operating leases, Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record upfront budget authority in an “amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease or [an] amount sufficient to cover first year lease payments plus cancellation costs”.

(2) REQUIREMENT FOR OBLIGATION OF FULL COST.—Subject to the availability of appropriations provided in advance, in exercising the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into leases under subsection (a), the Secretary shall record, pursuant to section 1501 of title 31, United States Code, as the full cost of the contractual obligation at the time a contract is executed, either—

(A) an amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease; or

(B) if the lease specifies payments to be made in the event the lease is terminated before the full term of the lease, an amount sufficient to cover the first year lease payments plus the specified cancellation costs.

(3) TRANSPARENCY.—

(A) COMPLIANCE.—Subsection (b) of section 8104 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) In the case of a prospectus proposing funding for a major medical facility lease, a detailed analysis of how the lease is expected to comply with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 and section 1341 of title 31 (commonly referred to as the ‘Anti-Deficiency Act’). Any such analysis shall include the following:

“(A) An analysis of the classification of the lease as a ‘lease-purchase’, ‘capital lease’, or ‘operating lease’ as those terms are defined in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11.

“(B) An analysis of the obligation of budgetary resources associated with the lease.

“(C) An analysis of the methodology used in determining the asset cost, fair market value, and cancellation costs of the lease.”.

(B) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Such section 8104 is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h)(1) Not later than 30 days before entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives—

“(A) notice of the intention of the Secretary to enter into the lease;

“(B) a copy of the proposed lease;

“(C) a description and analysis of any differences between the prospectus submitted pursuant to subsection (b) and the proposed lease; and

“(D) a scoring analysis demonstrating that the proposed lease fully complies with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11.

“(2) Each committee described in paragraph (1) shall ensure that any information submitted to the committee under such paragraph is treated by the committee with the same level of confidentiality as is required of the Secretary by law and subject to the same statutory penalties for unauthorized disclosure or use to which the Secretary is subject.

“(3) Not later than 30 days after entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to each committee described in paragraph (1) a report on any material differences between the lease that was entered into and the proposed lease described under such paragraph, including how the lease that was entered into changes the previously submitted scoring analysis described in subparagraph (D) of such paragraph.”.

(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection, or the amendments made by this subsection, shall be construed to relieve the Department of Veterans Affairs from any statutory or regulatory obligations or requirements existing prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. ____ . ELIGIBILITY FOR CHILD TAX CREDIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (e) of section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “under this section to a taxpayer” and all that follows and inserting “under this section to any taxpayer unless—

“(1) such taxpayer includes the taxpayer’s valid identification number (as defined in section 6428(h)(2)) on the return of tax for the taxable year, and

“(2) with respect to any qualifying child, the taxpayer includes the name and taxpayer identification number of such qualifying child on such return of tax.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2740. Mr. REID (for Mr. BEGICH) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1068, to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 412. TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AS EMPLOYMENT IN NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN HIRING DECISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by this title, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 269A. TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AS EMPLOYMENT IN ADMINISTRATION FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN HIRING DECISIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which the Secretary accepts an application for a position of employment with the Administration and limits consideration of applications for such position to applications submitted by individuals serving in a career or career-conditional position in the competitive service within the Administration, the Secretary shall deem an officer who has served as an officer in the commissioned officer corps for at least 3 years to be serving in a career or career-conditional position in the competitive service within the Administration for purposes of such limitation.

“(b) CAREER APPOINTMENTS.—If the Secretary selects an application submitted by an officer described in subsection (a) for a position described in such subsection, the Secretary shall give such officer a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service, as appropriate.

“(c) COMPETITIVE SERVICE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘competitive service’ has the meaning given the term in section 2102 of title 5, United States Code.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 269, as added by this title, the following new item:

“Sec. 269A. Treatment of commission in commissioned officer corps as employment in Administration for purposes of certain hiring decisions.”.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Rules and Administration will meet at 10:30 a.m., on February 12, 2014, to conduct a business meeting to consider the nominations of Thomas Hicks and Myrna Perez to be members of the Election Assistance Commission.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources will meet on February 13, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The purpose of the Business Meeting is to consider the following nominations.

Rhea S. Suh, to be the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; and Janice M. Schneider, to be an Assistance Secretary of the Interior, Land and Minerals Management.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to sam_fowler@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sam Fowler at (202) 224-7571.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Prospects for Democratic Reconciliation and Workers' Rights in Bangladesh."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2014, at 9 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Nominations."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 11, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Margaret Taylor, a detailee from the State Department to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, be granted floor privileges today in anticipation of votes on nominations and for the rest of the 113th Congress in order to assist with matters related to the work of the committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, February

12, 2014, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 525, 595, 527, and 529; that there be 30 minutes for debate divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form prior to each vote and all votes after the first be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TO REAUTHORIZE AND AMEND THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS ACT OF 2002

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 292, S. 1068.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1068) to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill (S. 1068) to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002, and for other purpose, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2013".

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002.

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 101. Strength and distribution in grade.

Sec. 102. Exclusion of officers recalled from retired status and positions of importance and responsibility from number of authorized commissioned officers.

Sec. 103. Obligated service requirement.

Sec. 104. Training and physical fitness.

TITLE II—APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION OF OFFICERS

Sec. 201. Appointments.

Sec. 202. Personnel boards.

Sec. 203. Delegation of authority for appointments and promotions to permanent grades.

Sec. 204. Temporary appointments.

Sec. 205. Officer candidates.

Sec. 206. Procurement of personnel.

TITLE III—SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT OF OFFICERS

Sec. 301. Involuntary retirement or separation.

Sec. 302. Separation pay.

TITLE IV—RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

Sec. 401. Education loan repayment program.

Sec. 402. Interest payment program.

Sec. 403. Student pre-commissioning education assistance program.

Sec. 404. Limitation on educational assistance.

Sec. 405. Applicability of certain provisions of title 10, United States Code.

Sec. 406. Applicability of certain provisions of title 37, United States Code.

Sec. 407. Application of certain provisions of competitive service law.

Sec. 408. Eligibility of all members of uniformed services for Legion of Merit award.

Sec. 409. Application of Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services to members of commissioned officer corps.

Sec. 410. Protected communications for commissioned officer corps and prohibition of retaliatory personnel actions.

Sec. 411. Criminal penalties for wearing uniform without authority.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 501. Technical correction.

Sec. 502. Report.

Sec. 503. Effective date.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS ACT OF 2002.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.).

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 101. STRENGTH AND DISTRIBUTION IN GRADE.

Section 214 (33 U.S.C. 3004) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 214. STRENGTH AND DISTRIBUTION IN GRADE.

“(a) GRADES.—The commissioned grades in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration are the following, in relative rank with officers of the Navy:

“(1) Vice admiral.

“(2) Rear admiral.

“(3) Rear admiral (lower half).

“(4) Captain.

“(5) Commander.

“(6) Lieutenant commander.

“(7) Lieutenant.

“(8) Lieutenant (junior grade).

“(9) Ensign.

“(b) PROPORTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The officers on the lineal list shall be distributed in grade in the following percentages:

“(A) 8 in the grade of captain.

“(B) 14 in the grade of commander.

“(C) 19 in the grade of lieutenant commander.

“(2) GRADES BELOW LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.—The Secretary shall prescribe, with respect to the distribution on the lineal list in

grade, the percentages applicable to the grades of lieutenant, lieutenant (junior grade), and ensign.

“(c) ANNUAL COMPUTATION OF NUMBER IN GRADE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall make a computation to determine the number of officers on the lineal list authorized to be serving in each grade.

“(2) METHOD OF COMPUTATION.—The number in each grade shall be computed by applying the applicable percentage to the total number of such officers serving on active duty on the date the computation is made.

“(3) FRACTIONS.—If a final fraction occurs in computing the authorized number of officers in a grade, the nearest whole number shall be taken. If the fraction is $\frac{1}{2}$, the next higher whole number shall be taken.

“(d) TEMPORARY INCREASE IN NUMBERS.—The total number of officers authorized by law to be on the lineal list during a fiscal year may be temporarily exceeded if the average number on that list during that fiscal year does not exceed the authorized number.

“(e) POSITIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY.—Officers serving in positions designated under section 228(a) and officers recalled from retired status shall not be counted when computing authorized strengths under subsection (c) and shall not count against those strengths.

“(f) PRESERVATION OF GRADE AND PAY.—No officer may be reduced in grade or pay or separated from the commissioned officer corps of the Administration as the result of a computation made to determine the authorized number of officers in the various grades.”.

SEC. 102. EXCLUSION OF OFFICERS RECALLED FROM RETIRED STATUS AND POSITIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY FROM NUMBER OF AUTHORIZED COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

Section 215 (33 U.S.C. 3005) is amended—

(1) in the matter before paragraph (1), by striking “Effective” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) POSITIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY.—Officers serving in positions designated under section 228 and officers recalled from retired status—

“(1) may not be counted in determining the total number of authorized officers on the lineal list under this section; and

“(2) may not count against such number.”.

SEC. 103. OBLIGATED SERVICE REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 216. OBLIGATED SERVICE REQUIREMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary shall prescribe the obligated service requirements for appointments, training, promotions, separations, continuations, and retirement of officers not otherwise covered by law.

“(2) WRITTEN AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary and officers shall enter into written agreements that describe the officers’ obligated service requirements prescribed under paragraph (1) in return for such appointments, training, promotions, separations, and retirements as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(b) REPAYMENT FOR FAILURE TO SATISFY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may require an officer who fails to meet the service requirements prescribed under subsection (a)(1) to reimburse the Secretary in an amount that bears the same ratio to the total costs of the training provided to that officer by the Secretary as the

unserved portion of active duty bears to the total period of active duty the officer agreed to serve.

“(2) OBLIGATION AS DEBT TO UNITED STATES.—An obligation to reimburse the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall be considered for all purposes as a debt owed to the United States.

“(3) DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY.—A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11 that is entered less than 5 years after the termination of a written agreement entered into under subsection (a)(2) does not discharge the individual signing the agreement from a debt arising under such agreement.

“(c) WAIVER OR SUSPENSION OF COMPLIANCE.—The Secretary may waive the service obligation of an officer who—

“(1) becomes unqualified to serve on active duty in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a circumstance not within the control of that officer; or

“(2) is—

“(A) not physically qualified for appointment; and

“(B) determined to be unqualified for service in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a physical or medical condition that was not the result of the officer’s own misconduct or grossly negligent conduct.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 215 the following:

“Sec. 216. Obligated service requirement.”.

SEC. 104. TRAINING AND PHYSICAL FITNESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), as amended by section 103(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 217. TRAINING AND PHYSICAL FITNESS.

“(a) TRAINING.—The Secretary may take such measures as may be necessary to ensure that officers are prepared to carry out their duties in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration and proficient in the skills necessary to carry out such duties. Such measures may include the following:

“(1) Carrying out training programs and correspondence courses, including establishing and operating a basic officer training program to provide initial indoctrination and maritime vocational training for officer candidates as well as refresher training, mid-career training, aviation training, and such other training as the Secretary considers necessary for officer development and proficiency.

“(2) Providing officers and officer candidates with books and school supplies.

“(3) Acquiring such equipment as may be necessary for training and instructional purposes.

“(b) PHYSICAL FITNESS.—The Secretary shall ensure that officers maintain a high physical state of readiness by establishing standards of physical fitness for officers that are substantially equivalent to those prescribed for officers in the Coast Guard.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372), as amended by section 103(b), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 216 the following:

“Sec. 217. Training and physical fitness.”.

TITLE II—APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION OF OFFICERS

SEC. 201. APPOINTMENTS.

(a) ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 221 (33 U.S.C. 3021) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 221. ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS.

“(a) ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS.—

“(1) GRADES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an original appointment of an officer may be made in such grades as may be appropriate for—

“(i) the qualification, experience, and length of service of the appointee; and

“(ii) the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.

“(B) APPOINTMENT OF OFFICER CANDIDATES.—

“(i) LIMITATION ON GRADE.—An original appointment of an officer candidate, upon graduation from the basic officer training program of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, may not be made in any other grade than ensign.

“(ii) RANK.—Officer candidates receiving appointments as ensigns upon graduation from basic officer training program shall take rank according to their proficiency as shown by the order of their merit at date of graduation.

“(2) SOURCE OF APPOINTMENTS.—An original appointment may be made from among the following:

“(A) Graduates of the basic officer training program of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.

“(B) Graduates of the military service academies of the United States who otherwise meet the academic standards for enrollment in the training program described in subparagraph (A).

“(C) Licensed officers of the United States merchant marine who have served 2 or more years aboard a vessel of the United States in the capacity of a licensed officer, who otherwise meet the academic standards for enrollment in the training program described in subparagraph (A).

“(3) MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES OF THE UNITED STATES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘military service academies of the United States’ means the following:

“(A) The United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.

“(B) The United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland.

“(C) The United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

“(D) The United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut.

“(E) The United States Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York.

“(b) REAPPOINTMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), an individual who previously served in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration may be appointed by the Secretary to the grade the individual held prior to separation.

“(2) REAPPOINTMENTS TO HIGHER GRADES.—An appointment under paragraph (1) to a position of importance and responsibility designated under section 228 may only be made by the President.

“(c) QUALIFICATIONS.—An appointment under subsection (a) or (b) may not be given to an individual until the individual’s mental, moral, physical, and professional fitness to perform the duties of an officer has been established under such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe.

“(d) PRECEDENCE OF APPOINTEES.—Appointees under this section shall take precedence in the grade to which appointed in accordance with the dates of their commissions as commissioned officers in such grade. Appointees whose dates of commission are the same shall take precedence with each other as the Secretary shall determine.

“(e) INTER-SERVICE TRANSFERS.—For inter-service transfers (as described in the Department of Defense Directive 1300.4 (dated December 27, 2006)) the Secretary shall—

“(1) coordinate with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating to promote and streamline inter-service transfers;

“(2) give preference to such inter-service transfers for recruitment purposes as determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

“(3) reappoint such inter-service transfers to the equivalent grade in the commissioned officer corps.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by striking the item relating to section 221 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 221. Original appointments and reappointments.”.

SEC. 202. PERSONNEL BOARDS.

Section 222 (33 U.S.C. 3022) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 222. PERSONNEL BOARDS.

“(a) **CONVENING.**—Not less frequently than once each year and at such other times as the Secretary determines necessary, the Secretary shall convene a personnel board.

“(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A board convened under subsection (a) shall consist of 5 or more officers who are serving in or above the permanent grade of the officers under consideration by the board.

“(2) **RETIRED OFFICERS.**—Officers on the retired list may be recalled to serve on such personnel boards as the Secretary considers necessary.

“(3) **NO MEMBERSHIP ON 2 SUCCESSIVE BOARDS.**—No officer may be a member of 2 successive personnel boards convened to consider officers of the same grade for promotion or separation.

“(c) **DUTIES.**—Each personnel board shall—

“(1) recommend to the Secretary such changes as may be necessary to correct any erroneous position on the lineal list that was caused by administrative error; and

“(2) make selections and recommendations to the Secretary and the President for the appointment, promotion, involuntary separation, continuation, and involuntary retirement of officers in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration as prescribed in this title.

“(d) **ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**—If any recommendation by a board convened under subsection (a) is not accepted by the Secretary or the President, the board shall make such further recommendations as the Secretary or the President consider appropriate.”.

SEC. 203. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FOR APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS TO PERMANENT GRADES.

Section 226 (33 U.S.C. 3026) is amended—

(1) by striking “Appointments” and inserting the following:

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Appointments”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) **DELEGATION OF APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY.**—If the President delegates authority to the Secretary to make appointments under this section, the President shall, during a period in which the position of the Secretary is vacant, delegate such authority to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce or the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere during such period.”.

SEC. 204. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 229 (33 U.S.C. 3029) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 229. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS.

“(a) **APPOINTMENTS BY PRESIDENT.**—Temporary appointments in the grade of ensign, lieutenant junior grade, or lieutenant may be made by the President.

“(b) **TERMINATION.**—A temporary appointment to a position under subsection (a) shall terminate upon approval of a permanent appointment for such position made by the President.

“(c) **ORDER OF PRECEDENCE.**—Appointees under subsection (a) shall take precedence in the grade to which appointed in accordance with the dates of their appointments as officers in such grade. The order of precedence of appointees who are appointed on the same date shall be determined by the Secretary.

“(d) **ANY ONE GRADE.**—When determined by the Secretary to be in the best interest of the commissioned officer corps, officers in any permanent grade may be temporarily promoted one grade by the President. Any such temporary promotion terminates upon the transfer of the officer to a new assignment.

“(e) **DELEGATION OF APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY.**—If the President delegates authority to the Secretary to make appointments under this section, the President shall, during a period in which the position of the Secretary is vacant, delegate such authority to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce or the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere during such period.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by striking the item relating to section 229 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 229. Temporary appointments.”.

SEC. 205. OFFICER CANDIDATES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subtitle B (33 U.S.C. 3021 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 234. OFFICER CANDIDATES.

“(a) **DETERMINATION OF NUMBER.**—The Secretary shall determine the number of appointments of officer candidates.

“(b) **APPOINTMENT.**—Appointment of officer candidates shall be made under regulations which the Secretary shall prescribe, including regulations with respect to determining age limits, methods of selection of officer candidates, term of service as an officer candidate before graduation from the program, and all other matters affecting such appointment.

“(c) **DISMISSAL.**—The Secretary may dismiss from the basic officer training program of the Administration any officer candidate who, during the officer candidate’s term as an officer candidate, the Secretary considers unsatisfactory in either academics or conduct, or not adapted for a career in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration. Officer candidates shall be subject to rules governing discipline prescribed by the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps.

“(d) **AGREEMENT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each officer candidate shall sign an agreement with the Secretary in accordance with section 216(a)(2) regarding the officer candidate’s term of service in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.

“(2) **ELEMENTS.**—An agreement signed by an officer candidate under paragraph (1) shall provide that the officer candidate agrees to the following:

“(A) That the officer candidate will complete the course of instruction at the basic officer training program of the Administration.

“(B) That upon graduation from the such program, the officer candidate—

“(i) will accept an appointment, if tendered, as an officer; and

“(ii) will serve on active duty for at least 4 years immediately after such appointment.

“(e) **REGULATIONS.**—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section. Such regulations shall include—

“(1) standards for determining what constitutes a breach of an agreement signed under such subsection (d)(1); and

“(2) procedures for determining whether such a breach has occurred.

“(f) **REPAYMENT.**—An officer candidate or former officer candidate who does not fulfill the terms of the obligation to serve as specified under section (d) shall be subject to the repayment provisions of section 216(b).”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 233 the following:

“Sec. 234. Officer candidates.”.

(c) **OFFICER CANDIDATE DEFINED.**—Section 212(b) (33 U.S.C. 3002(b)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (5) through (7), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) **OFFICER CANDIDATE.**—The term ‘officer candidate’ means an individual who is enrolled in the basic officer training program of the Administration and is under consideration for appointment as an officer under section 221(a)(2)(A).”.

(d) **PAY FOR OFFICER CANDIDATES.**—Section 203 of title 37, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f)(1) An officer candidate enrolled in the basic officer training program of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is entitled, while participating in such program, to monthly officer candidate pay at monthly rate equal to the basic pay of an enlisted member in the pay grade E-5 with less than 2 years service.

“(2) An individual who graduates from such program shall receive credit for the time spent participating in such program as if such time were time served while on active duty as a commissioned officer. If the individual does not graduate from such program, such time shall not be considered creditable for active duty or pay.”.

SEC. 206. PROCUREMENT OF PERSONNEL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subtitle B (33 U.S.C. 3021 et seq.), as amended by section 205(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 235. PROCUREMENT OF PERSONNEL.

“The Secretary may make such expenditures as the Secretary considers necessary in order to obtain recruits for the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, including advertising.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372), as amended by section 205(b), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 234 the following:

“235. Procurement of personnel.”.

TITLE III—SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT OF OFFICERS

SEC. 301. INVOLUNTARY RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION.

Section 241 (33 U.S.C. 3041) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) **DEFERMENT OF RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION FOR MEDICAL REASONS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Secretary determines that the evaluation of the medical condition of an officer requires hospitalization or medical observation that cannot be completed with confidence in a manner consistent with the officer’s well being before the date on which the officer would otherwise be required to retire or be separated under this section, the Secretary may defer the retirement or separation of the officer.

“(2) CONSENT REQUIRED.—A deferment may only be made with the written consent of the officer involved. If the officer does not provide written consent to the deferment, the officer shall be retired or separated as scheduled.

“(3) LIMITATION.—A deferral of retirement or separation under this subsection may not extend for more than 30 days after completion of the evaluation requiring hospitalization or medical observation.”.

SEC. 302. SEPARATION PAY.

Section 242 (33 U.S.C. 3042) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) EXCEPTION.—An officer discharged for twice failing selection for promotion to the next higher grade is not entitled to separation pay under this section if the officer—

“(1) expresses a desire not to be selected for promotion; or

“(2) requests removal from the list of selectees.”.

TITLE IV—RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

SEC. 401. EDUCATION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 267. EDUCATION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORITY TO REPAY EDUCATION LOANS.—For the purpose of maintaining adequate numbers of officers of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration on active duty who have skills required by the commissioned officer corps, the Secretary may repay, in the case of a person described in subsection (b), a loan that—

“(1) was used by the person to finance education; and

“(2) was obtained from a governmental entity, private financial institution, educational institution, or other authorized entity.

“(b) ELIGIBLE PERSONS.—To be eligible to obtain a loan repayment under this section, a person must—

“(1) satisfy 1 of the requirements specified in subsection (c);

“(2) be fully qualified for, or hold, an appointment as a commissioned officer in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration; and

“(3) sign a written agreement to serve on active duty, or, if on active duty, to remain on active duty for a period in addition to any other incurred active duty obligation.

“(c) ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—One of the following academic requirements must be satisfied for purposes of determining the eligibility of an individual for a loan repayment under this section:

“(1) The person is fully qualified in a profession that the Secretary has determined to be necessary to meet identified skill shortages in the commissioned officer corps.

“(2) The person is enrolled as a full-time student in the final year of a course of study at an accredited educational institution (as determined by the Secretary of Education) leading to a degree in a profession that will meet identified skill shortages in the commissioned officer corps.

“(d) LOAN REPAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the limits established under paragraph (2), a loan repayment under this section may consist of the payment of the principal, interest, and related expenses of a loan obtained by a person described in subsection (b).

“(2) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—For each year of obligated service that a person agrees to serve in an agreement described in subsection (b)(3), the Secretary may pay not more than the amount specified in section 2173(e)(2) of title 10, United States Code.

“(e) ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE OBLIGATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A person entering into an agreement described in subsection (b)(3) incurs an active duty service obligation.

“(2) LENGTH OF OBLIGATION DETERMINED UNDER REGULATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the length of the obligation under paragraph (1) shall be determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(B) MINIMUM OBLIGATION.—The regulations prescribed under subparagraph (A) may not provide for a period of obligation of less than 1 year for each maximum annual amount, or portion thereof, paid on behalf of the person for qualified loans.

“(3) PERSONS ON ACTIVE DUTY BEFORE ENTERING INTO AGREEMENT.—The active duty service obligation of persons on active duty before entering into the agreement shall be served after the conclusion of any other obligation incurred under the agreement.

“(f) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO COMPLETE OBLIGATION.—

“(1) ALTERNATIVE OBLIGATIONS.—An officer who is relieved of the officer's active duty obligation under this section before the completion of that obligation may be given any alternative obligation, at the discretion of the Secretary.

“(2) REPAYMENT.—An officer who does not complete the period of active duty specified in the agreement entered into under subsection (b)(3), or the alternative obligation imposed under paragraph (1), shall be subject to the repayment provisions under section 216.

“(g) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section, including—

“(1) standards for qualified loans and authorized payees; and

“(2) other terms and conditions for the making of loan repayments.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 266 the following:

“Sec. 267. Education loan repayment program.”.

SEC. 402. INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by section 401(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 268. INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may pay the interest and any special allowances that accrue on 1 or more student loans of an eligible officer, in accordance with this section.

“(b) ELIGIBLE OFFICERS.—An officer is eligible for the benefit described in subsection (a) while the officer—

“(1) is serving on active duty;

“(2) has not completed more than 3 years of service on active duty;

“(3) is the debtor on 1 or more unpaid loans described in subsection (c); and

“(4) is not in default on any such loan.

“(c) STUDENT LOANS.—The authority to make payments under subsection (a) may be exercised with respect to the following loans:

“(1) A loan made, insured, or guaranteed under part B of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq.).

“(2) A loan made under part D of such title (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.).

“(3) A loan made under part E of such title (20 U.S.C. 1087aa et seq.).

“(d) MAXIMUM BENEFIT.—Interest and any special allowance may be paid on behalf of an officer under this section for any of the 36 consecutive months during which the officer is eligible under subsection (b).

“(e) FUNDS FOR PAYMENTS.—The Secretary may use amounts appropriated for the pay and

allowances of personnel of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration for payments under this section.

“(f) COORDINATION WITH SECRETARY OF EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of Education regarding the administration of this section.

“(2) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall transfer to the Secretary of Education the funds necessary—

“(A) to pay interest and special allowances on student loans under this section (in accordance with sections 428(o), 455(l), and 464(j) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(o), 1087e(l), and 1087dd(j)); and

“(B) to reimburse the Secretary of Education for any reasonable administrative costs incurred by the Secretary in coordinating the program under this section with the administration of the student loan programs under parts B, D, and E of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq., 1087a et seq., 1087aa et seq.).

“(g) SPECIAL ALLOWANCE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘special allowance’ means a special allowance that is payable under section 438 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087-1).”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 428(o) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(o)) is amended—

(A) by striking the subsection heading and inserting “ARMED FORCES AND NOAA COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS STUDENT LOAN INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAMS”; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or section 264 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002” after “Code,”; and

(ii) by inserting “or an officer in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, respectively,” after “Armed Forces”.

(2) Sections 455(l) and 464(j) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(l) and 1087dd(j)) are each amended—

(A) by striking the subsection heading and inserting “ARMED FORCES AND NOAA COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS STUDENT LOAN INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAMS”; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or section 264 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002” after “Code,”; and

(ii) by inserting “or an officer in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, respectively” after “Armed Forces”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372), as amended by section 401(b), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 267 the following:

“Sec. 268. Interest payment program.”.

SEC. 403. STUDENT PRE-COMMISSIONING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by sections 401(a) and 402(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 269. STUDENT PRE-COMMISSIONING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—For the purpose of maintaining adequate numbers of officers of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration on active duty, the Secretary may provide financial assistance to a person described in subsection (b) for expenses of the person while the person is

pursuing on a full-time basis at an accredited educational institution (as determined by the Secretary of Education) a program of education approved by the Secretary that leads to—

“(1) a baccalaureate degree in not more than 5 academic years; or

“(2) a postbaccalaureate degree.

“(b) ELIGIBLE PERSONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A person is eligible to obtain financial assistance under subsection (a) if the person—

“(A) is enrolled on a full-time basis in a program of education referred to in subsection (a) at any educational institution described in such subsection;

“(B) meets all of the requirements for acceptance into the commissioned officer corps of the Administration except for the completion of a baccalaureate degree; and

“(C) enters into a written agreement with the Secretary described in paragraph (2).

“(2) AGREEMENT.—A written agreement referred to in paragraph (1)(C) is an agreement between the person and the Secretary in which the person agrees—

“(A) to accept an appointment as an officer, if tendered; and

“(B) upon completion of the person's educational program, agrees to serve on active duty, immediately after appointment, for—

“(i) up to 3 years if the person received less than 3 years of assistance; and

“(ii) up to 5 years if the person received at least 3 years of assistance.

“(c) QUALIFYING EXPENSES.—Expenses for which financial assistance may be provided under subsection (a) are the following:

“(1) Tuition and fees charged by the educational institution involved.

“(2) The cost of books.

“(3) In the case of a program of education leading to a baccalaureate degree, laboratory expenses.

“(4) Such other expenses as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(d) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall prescribe the amount of financial assistance provided to a person under subsection (a), which may not exceed the amount specified in section 2173(e)(2) of title 10, United States Code, for each year of obligated service that a person agrees to serve in an agreement described in subsection (b)(2).

“(e) DURATION OF ASSISTANCE.—Financial assistance may be provided to a person under subsection (a) for not more than 5 consecutive academic years.

“(f) SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who receives financial assistance under subsection (a) shall be entitled to a monthly subsistence allowance at a rate prescribed under paragraph (2) for the duration of the period for which the person receives such financial assistance.

“(2) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall prescribe monthly rates for subsistence allowance provided under paragraph (1), which shall be equal to the amount specified in section 2144(a) of title 10, United States Code.

“(g) INITIAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—

“(1) TRAINING.—The Secretary may prescribe a sum which shall be credited to each person who receives financial assistance under subsection (a) to cover the cost of the person's initial clothing and equipment issue.

“(2) APPOINTMENT.—Upon completion of the program of education for which a person receives financial assistance under subsection (a) and acceptance of appointment in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, the person may be issued a subsequent clothing allowance equivalent to that normally provided to a newly appointed officer.

“(h) TERMINATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall terminate the assistance provided to a person under this section if—

“(A) the Secretary accepts a request by the person to be released from an agreement described in subsection (b)(2);

“(B) the misconduct of the person results in a failure to complete the period of active duty required under the agreement; or

“(C) the person fails to fulfill any term or condition of the agreement.

“(2) REIMBURSEMENT.—The Secretary may require a person who receives assistance described in subsection (c), (f), or (g) under an agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1)(C) to reimburse the Secretary in an amount that bears the same ratio to the total costs of the assistance provided to that person as the unreserved portion of active duty bears to the total period of active duty the officer agreed to serve under the agreement.

“(3) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the service obligation of a person through an agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1)(C) if the person—

“(A) becomes unqualified to serve on active duty in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a circumstance not within the control of that person; or

“(B) is—

“(i) not physically qualified for appointment; and

“(ii) determined to be unqualified for service in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a physical or medical condition that was not the result of the person's own misconduct or grossly negligent conduct.

“(4) OBLIGATION AS DEBT TO UNITED STATES.—An obligation to reimburse the Secretary imposed under paragraph (2) is, for all purposes, a debt owed to the United States.

“(5) DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY.—A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11, United States Code, that is entered less than 5 years after the termination of a written agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1)(C) does not discharge the person signing the agreement from a debt arising under such agreement or under paragraph (2).

“(i) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may promulgate such regulations and orders as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out this section.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372), as amended by section 402(c), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 268 the following:

“Sec. 269. Student pre-commissioning education assistance program.”

SEC. 404. LIMITATION ON EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2013, the Secretary of Commerce shall ensure that the total amount expended by the Secretary under section 267 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (as added by section 401(a)), section 268 of such Act (as added by section 402(a)), and section 269 of such Act (as added by section 403(a)) does not exceed the amount by which—

(1) the total amount the Secretary would pay in that fiscal year to officer candidates under section 203(f)(1) of title 37, United States Code (as added by section 205(d)), if such section entitled officers candidates to pay at monthly rates equal to the basic pay of a commissioned officer in the pay grade O-1 with less than 2 years of service; exceeds

(2) the total amount the Secretary actually pays in that fiscal year to officer candidates

under section 203(f)(1) of such title (as so added).

(b) OFFICER CANDIDATE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “officer candidate” has the meaning given the term in section 212 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3002), as added by section 205(c).

SEC. 405. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 10, UNITED STATES CODE.

Section 261(a) (33 U.S.C. 3071(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (13) through (16) as paragraphs (20) through (23), respectively;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (12) as paragraphs (12) through (17), respectively;

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively;

(4) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) Section 771, relating to unauthorized wearing of uniforms.

“(5) Section 774, relating to wearing religious apparel while in uniform.

“(6) Section 982, relating to service on State and local juries.

“(7) Section 1031, relating to administration of oaths.”

(5) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated, the following:

“(11) Chapter 58, relating to the Benefits and Services for members being separated or recently separated.”; and

(6) by inserting after paragraph (17), as redesignated, the following:

“(18) Subchapter I of chapter 88, relating to Military Family Programs.

“(19) Section 2005, relating to advanced education assistance, active duty agreements, and reimbursement requirements.”

SEC. 406. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 37, UNITED STATES CODE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 261 the following:

“SEC. 261A. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 37, UNITED STATES CODE.

“(a) PROVISIONS MADE APPLICABLE TO COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS.—The provisions of law applicable to the Armed Forces under the following provisions of title 37, United States Code, shall apply to the commissioned officer corps of the Administration:

“(1) Section 324, relating to accession bonuses for new officers in critical skills.

“(2) Section 403(f)(3), relating to prescribing regulations defining the terms ‘field duty’ and ‘sea duty’.

“(3) Section 403(l), relating to temporary continuation of housing allowance for dependents of members dying on active duty.

“(4) Section 414(a)(2), relating to personal money allowance while serving as Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps.

“(5) Section 488, relating to allowances for recruiting expenses.

“(6) Section 495, relating to allowances for funeral honors duty.

(b) REFERENCES.—The authority vested by title 37, United States Code, in the ‘military departments’, ‘the Secretary concerned’, or ‘the Secretary of Defense’ with respect to the provisions of law referred to in subsection (a) shall be exercised, with respect to the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, by the Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary's designee.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 261 the following:

"Sec. 261A. Applicability of certain provisions of title 37, United States Code."

SEC. 407. APPLICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF COMPETITIVE SERVICE LAW.

Section 3304(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting "and members of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (or its predecessor organization the Coast and Geodetic Survey) separated from such uniformed service" after "separated from the armed forces";

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking "or veteran" and inserting "veteran, or member"; and

(3) in paragraph (4), by inserting "and members of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (or its predecessor organization the Coast and Geodetic Survey) separated from such uniformed service" after "separated from the armed forces".

SEC. 408. ELIGIBILITY OF ALL MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES FOR LEGION OF MERIT AWARD.

Section 1121 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking "armed forces" and inserting "uniformed services".

SEC. 409. APPLICATION OF EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES TO MEMBERS OF COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS.

Section 4303(16) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting "the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration," after "Public Health Service,".

SEC. 410. PROTECTED COMMUNICATIONS FOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AND PROHIBITION OF RETALIATORY PERSONNEL ACTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 261 (33 U.S.C. 3071), as amended by section 405, is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (8) through (23) as paragraphs (9) through (24), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

"(8) Section 1034, relating to protected communications and prohibition of retaliatory personnel actions."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following: "For purposes of paragraph (8) of subsection (a), the term 'Inspector General' in section 1034 of such title 10 shall mean the Inspector General of the Department of Commerce."

SEC. 411. CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR WEARING UNIFORM WITHOUT AUTHORITY.

Section 702 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking "Service or any" and inserting "Service, the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or any".

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 501. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

Section 101(21)(C) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting "in the commissioned officer corps" before "of the National".

SEC. 502. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall submit to Congress a report evaluating the current status and projected needs of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to operate sufficiently through fiscal year 2017.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The average annual attrition rate of officers in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) An estimate of the number of annual recruits that would reasonably be required to operate the commissioned officer corps sufficiently through fiscal year 2017.

(3) The projected impact of this Act on annual recruitment numbers through fiscal year 2017.

(4) Identification of areas of duplication or unnecessary redundancy in current activities of the commissioned officer corps that could otherwise be streamlined or eliminated to save costs.

(5) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate regarding the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 503. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, sections 101 through 411 shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date on which the Secretary of Commerce submits to Congress the report required by section 502(a).

Mr. REID. I further ask that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered; the Begich amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the committee-reported substitute, as amended, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2740) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To treat certain officers in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as employees of the Administration for purposes of vacant positions of employment open only to current employees of the Administration)

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 412. TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AS EMPLOYMENT IN NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN HIRING DECISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by this title, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 269A. TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AS EMPLOYMENT IN ADMINISTRATION FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN HIRING DECISIONS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which the Secretary accepts an application for a position of employment with the Administration and limits consideration of applications for such position to applications submitted by individuals serving in a career or career-conditional position in the competitive service within the Administration, the Secretary shall deem an officer who has served as an officer in the commissioned officer corps for at least 3 years to be serving in a career or career-conditional position in the competitive service within the Administration for purposes of such limitation.

"(b) CAREER APPOINTMENTS.—If the Secretary selects an application submitted by an officer described in subsection (a) for a position described in such subsection, the Secretary shall give such officer a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service, as appropriate.

"(c) COMPETITIVE SERVICE DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'competitive service' has the meaning given the term in section 2102 of title 5, United States Code."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled "An

Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes" (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 269, as added by this title, the following new item:

"Sec. 269A. Treatment of commission in commissioned officer corps as employment in Administration for purposes of certain hiring decisions."

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1068), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1068

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2013".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002.

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 101. Strength and distribution in grade.

Sec. 102. Exclusion of officers recalled from retired status and positions of importance and responsibility from number of authorized commissioned officers.

Sec. 103. Obligated service requirement.

Sec. 104. Training and physical fitness.

TITLE II—APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION OF OFFICERS

Sec. 201. Appointments.

Sec. 202. Personnel boards.

Sec. 203. Delegation of authority for appointments and promotions to permanent grades.

Sec. 204. Temporary appointments.

Sec. 205. Officer candidates.

Sec. 206. Procurement of personnel.

TITLE III—SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT OF OFFICERS

Sec. 301. Involuntary retirement or separation.

Sec. 302. Separation pay.

TITLE IV—RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

Sec. 401. Education loan repayment program.

Sec. 402. Interest payment program.

Sec. 403. Student pre-commissioning education assistance program.

Sec. 404. Limitation on educational assistance.

Sec. 405. Applicability of certain provisions of title 10, United States Code.

Sec. 406. Applicability of certain provisions of title 37, United States Code.

Sec. 407. Application of certain provisions of competitive service law.

Sec. 408. Eligibility of all members of uniformed services for Legion of Merit award.

Sec. 409. Application of Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services to members of commissioned officer corps.

Sec. 410. Protected communications for commissioned officer corps and prohibition of retaliatory personnel actions.

Sec. 411. Criminal penalties for wearing uniform without authority.

Sec. 412. Treatment of commissioned officer corps as employment in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for purposes of certain hiring decisions.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

Sec. 501. Technical correction.

Sec. 502. Report.

Sec. 503. Effective date.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS ACT OF 2002.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.).

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 101. STRENGTH AND DISTRIBUTION IN GRADE.

Section 214 (33 U.S.C. 3004) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 214. STRENGTH AND DISTRIBUTION IN GRADE.

“(a) GRADES.—The commissioned grades in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration are the following, in relative rank with officers of the Navy:

- “(1) Vice admiral.
- “(2) Rear admiral.
- “(3) Rear admiral (lower half).
- “(4) Captain.
- “(5) Commander.
- “(6) Lieutenant commander.
- “(7) Lieutenant.
- “(8) Lieutenant (junior grade).
- “(9) Ensign.

“(b) PROPORTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The officers on the lineal list shall be distributed in grade in the following percentages:

- “(A) 8 in the grade of captain.
- “(B) 14 in the grade of commander.
- “(C) 19 in the grade of lieutenant commander.

“(2) GRADES BELOW LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.—The Secretary shall prescribe, with respect to the distribution on the lineal list in grade, the percentages applicable to the grades of lieutenant, lieutenant (junior grade), and ensign.

“(c) ANNUAL COMPUTATION OF NUMBER IN GRADE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall make a computation to determine the number of officers on the lineal list authorized to be serving in each grade.

“(2) METHOD OF COMPUTATION.—The number in each grade shall be computed by applying the applicable percentage to the total number of such officers serving on active duty on the date the computation is made.

“(3) FRACTIONS.—If a final fraction occurs in computing the authorized number of officers in a grade, the nearest whole number shall be taken. If the fraction is $\frac{1}{2}$, the next higher whole number shall be taken.

“(d) TEMPORARY INCREASE IN NUMBERS.—The total number of officers authorized by law to be on the lineal list during a fiscal year may be temporarily exceeded if the average number on that list during that fiscal year does not exceed the authorized number.

“(e) POSITIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY.—Officers serving in positions des-

ignated under section 228(a) and officers recalled from retired status shall not be counted when computing authorized strengths under subsection (c) and shall not count against those strengths.

“(f) PRESERVATION OF GRADE AND PAY.—No officer may be reduced in grade or pay or separated from the commissioned officer corps of the Administration as the result of a computation made to determine the authorized number of officers in the various grades.”.

SEC. 102. EXCLUSION OF OFFICERS RECALLED FROM RETIRED STATUS AND POSITIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY FROM NUMBER OF AUTHORIZED COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

Section 215 (33 U.S.C. 3005) is amended—

(1) in the matter before paragraph (1), by striking “Effective” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Effective”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) POSITIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY.—Officers serving in positions designated under section 228 and officers recalled from retired status—

“(1) may not be counted in determining the total number of authorized officers on the lineal list under this section; and

“(2) may not count against such number.”.

SEC. 103. OBLIGATED SERVICE REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 216. OBLIGATED SERVICE REQUIREMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—

“(1) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary shall prescribe the obligated service requirements for appointments, training, promotions, separations, continuations, and retirement of officers not otherwise covered by law.

“(2) WRITTEN AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary and officers shall enter into written agreements that describe the officers’ obligated service requirements prescribed under paragraph (1) in return for such appointments, training, promotions, separations, and retirements as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(b) REPAYMENT FOR FAILURE TO SATISFY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may require an officer who fails to meet the service requirements prescribed under subsection (a)(1) to reimburse the Secretary in an amount that bears the same ratio to the total costs of the training provided to that officer by the Secretary as the unserved portion of active duty bears to the total period of active duty the officer agreed to serve.

“(2) OBLIGATION AS DEBT TO UNITED STATES.—An obligation to reimburse the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall be considered for all purposes as a debt owed to the United States.

“(3) DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY.—A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11 that is entered less than 5 years after the termination of a written agreement entered into under subsection (a)(2) does not discharge the individual signing the agreement from a debt arising under such agreement.

“(c) WAIVER OR SUSPENSION OF COMPLIANCE.—The Secretary may waive the service obligation of an officer who—

“(1) becomes unqualified to serve on active duty in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a circumstance not within the control of that officer; or

“(2) is—

“(A) not physically qualified for appointment; and

“(B) determined to be unqualified for service in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a physical or medical condition that was not the result of the officer’s own misconduct or grossly negligent conduct.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107–372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 215 the following:

“Sec. 216. Obligated service requirement.”.

SEC. 104. TRAINING AND PHYSICAL FITNESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A (33 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), as amended by section 103(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 217. TRAINING AND PHYSICAL FITNESS.

“(a) TRAINING.—The Secretary may take such measures as may be necessary to ensure that officers are prepared to carry out their duties in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration and proficient in the skills necessary to carry out such duties. Such measures may include the following:

“(1) Carrying out training programs and correspondence courses, including establishing and operating a basic officer training program to provide initial indoctrination and maritime vocational training for officer candidates as well as refresher training, mid-career training, aviation training, and such other training as the Secretary considers necessary for officer development and proficiency.

“(2) Providing officers and officer candidates with books and school supplies.

“(3) Acquiring such equipment as may be necessary for training and instructional purposes.

“(b) PHYSICAL FITNESS.—The Secretary shall ensure that officers maintain a high physical state of readiness by establishing standards of physical fitness for officers that are substantially equivalent to those prescribed for officers in the Coast Guard.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107–372), as amended by section 103(b), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 216 the following:

“Sec. 217. Training and physical fitness.”.

TITLE II—APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION OF OFFICERS

SEC. 201. APPOINTMENTS.

(a) ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 221 (33 U.S.C. 3021) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 221. ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS AND RE-APPOINTMENTS.

“(a) ORIGINAL APPOINTMENTS.—

“(1) GRADES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an original appointment of an officer may be made in such grades as may be appropriate for—

“(i) the qualification, experience, and length of service of the appointee; and

“(ii) the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.

“(B) APPOINTMENT OF OFFICER CANDIDATES.—

“(i) LIMITATION ON GRADE.—An original appointment of an officer candidate, upon graduation from the basic officer training program of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, may not be made in any other grade than ensign.

“(ii) RANK.—Officer candidates receiving appointments as ensigns upon graduation from basic officer training program shall take rank according to their proficiency as shown by the order of their merit at date of graduation.

“(2) SOURCE OF APPOINTMENTS.—An original appointment may be made from among the following:

“(A) Graduates of the basic officer training program of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.

“(B) Graduates of the military service academies of the United States who otherwise meet the academic standards for enrollment in the training program described in subparagraph (A).

“(C) Licensed officers of the United States merchant marine who have served 2 or more years aboard a vessel of the United States in the capacity of a licensed officer, who otherwise meet the academic standards for enrollment in the training program described in subparagraph (A).

“(3) MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES OF THE UNITED STATES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘military service academies of the United States’ means the following:

“(A) The United States Military Academy, West Point, New York.

“(B) The United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland.

“(C) The United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

“(D) The United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut.

“(E) The United States Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York.

“(b) REAPPOINTMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), an individual who previously served in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration may be appointed by the Secretary to the grade the individual held prior to separation.

“(2) REAPPOINTMENTS TO HIGHER GRADES.—An appointment under paragraph (1) to a position of importance and responsibility designated under section 228 may only be made by the President.

“(c) QUALIFICATIONS.—An appointment under subsection (a) or (b) may not be given to an individual until the individual’s mental, moral, physical, and professional fitness to perform the duties of an officer has been established under such regulations as the Secretary shall prescribe.

“(d) PRECEDENCE OF APPOINTEES.—Appointees under this section shall take precedence in the grade to which appointed in accordance with the dates of their commissions as commissioned officers in such grade. Appointees whose dates of commission are the same shall take precedence with each other as the Secretary shall determine.

“(e) INTER-SERVICE TRANSFERS.—For inter-service transfers (as described in the Department of Defense Directive 1300.4 (dated December 27, 2006)) the Secretary shall—

“(1) coordinate with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating to promote and streamline inter-service transfers;

“(2) give preference to such inter-service transfers for recruitment purposes as determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

“(3) reappoint such inter-service transfers to the equivalent grade in the commissioned officer corps.”

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107–372) is amended by

striking the item relating to section 221 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 221. Original appointments and reappointments.”

SEC. 202. PERSONNEL BOARDS.

Section 222 (33 U.S.C. 3022) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 222. PERSONNEL BOARDS.

“(a) CONVENING.—Not less frequently than once each year and at such other times as the Secretary determines necessary, the Secretary shall convene a personnel board.

“(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A board convened under subsection (a) shall consist of 5 or more officers who are serving in or above the permanent grade of the officers under consideration by the board.

“(2) RETIRED OFFICERS.—Officers on the retired list may be recalled to serve on such personnel boards as the Secretary considers necessary.

“(3) NO MEMBERSHIP ON 2 SUCCESSIVE BOARDS.—No officer may be a member of 2 successive personnel boards convened to consider officers of the same grade for promotion or separation.

“(c) DUTIES.—Each personnel board shall—

“(1) recommend to the Secretary such changes as may be necessary to correct any erroneous position on the lineal list that was caused by administrative error; and

“(2) make selections and recommendations to the Secretary and the President for the appointment, promotion, involuntary separation, continuation, and involuntary retirement of officers in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration as prescribed in this title.

“(d) ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS NOT ACCEPTABLE.—If any recommendation by a board convened under subsection (a) is not accepted by the Secretary or the President, the board shall make such further recommendations as the Secretary or the President consider appropriate.”

SEC. 203. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FOR APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS TO PERMANENT GRADES.

Section 226 (33 U.S.C. 3026) is amended—

(1) by striking “Appointments” and inserting the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Appointments”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) DELEGATION OF APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY.—If the President delegates authority to the Secretary to make appointments under this section, the President shall, during a period in which the position of the Secretary is vacant, delegate such authority to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce or the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere during such period.”

SEC. 204. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 229 (33 U.S.C. 3029) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 229. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS.

“(a) APPOINTMENTS BY PRESIDENT.—Temporary appointments in the grade of ensign, lieutenant junior grade, or lieutenant may be made by the President.

“(b) TERMINATION.—A temporary appointment to a position under subsection (a) shall terminate upon approval of a permanent appointment for such position made by the President.

“(c) ORDER OF PRECEDENCE.—Appointees under subsection (a) shall take precedence in the grade to which appointed in accordance with the dates of their appointments as officers in such grade. The order of precedence of appointees who are appointed on the same date shall be determined by the Secretary.

“(d) ANY ONE GRADE.—When determined by the Secretary to be in the best interest of the commissioned officer corps, officers in any permanent grade may be temporarily promoted one grade by the President. Any such temporary promotion terminates upon the transfer of the officer to a new assignment.

“(e) DELEGATION OF APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY.—If the President delegates authority to the Secretary to make appointments under this section, the President shall, during a period in which the position of the Secretary is vacant, delegate such authority to the Deputy Secretary of Commerce or the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere during such period.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107–372) is amended by striking the item relating to section 229 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 229. Temporary appointments.”

SEC. 205. OFFICER CANDIDATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B (33 U.S.C. 3021 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 234. OFFICER CANDIDATES.

“(a) DETERMINATION OF NUMBER.—The Secretary shall determine the number of appointments of officer candidates.

“(b) APPOINTMENT.—Appointment of officer candidates shall be made under regulations which the Secretary shall prescribe, including regulations with respect to determining age limits, methods of selection of officer candidates, term of service as an officer candidate before graduation from the program, and all other matters affecting such appointment.

“(c) DISMISSAL.—The Secretary may dismiss from the basic officer training program of the Administration any officer candidate who, during the officer candidate’s term as an officer candidate, the Secretary considers unsatisfactory in either academics or conduct, or not adapted for a career in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration. Officer candidates shall be subject to rules governing discipline prescribed by the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps.

“(d) AGREEMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each officer candidate shall sign an agreement with the Secretary in accordance with section 216(a)(2) regarding the officer candidate’s term of service in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration.

“(2) ELEMENTS.—An agreement signed by an officer candidate under paragraph (1) shall provide that the officer candidate agrees to the following:

“(A) That the officer candidate will complete the course of instruction at the basic officer training program of the Administration.

“(B) That upon graduation from the such program, the officer candidate—

“(i) will accept an appointment, if tendered, as an officer; and

“(ii) will serve on active duty for at least 4 years immediately after such appointment.

“(e) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section. Such regulations shall include—

“(1) standards for determining what constitutes a breach of an agreement signed under such subsection (d)(1); and

“(2) procedures for determining whether such a breach has occurred.

“(f) REPAYMENT.—An officer candidate or former officer candidate who does not fulfill the terms of the obligation to serve as specified under section (d) shall be subject to the repayment provisions of section 216(b).”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 233 the following:

“Sec. 234. Officer candidates.”

(c) OFFICER CANDIDATE DEFINED.—Section 212(b) (33 U.S.C. 3002(b)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (5) through (7), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) OFFICER CANDIDATE.—The term ‘officer candidate’ means an individual who is enrolled in the basic officer training program of the Administration and is under consideration for appointment as an officer under section 221(a)(2)(A).”

(d) PAY FOR OFFICER CANDIDATES.—Section 203 of title 37, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(f)(1) An officer candidate enrolled in the basic officer training program of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is entitled, while participating in such program, to monthly officer candidate pay at monthly rate equal to the basic pay of an enlisted member in the pay grade E-5 with less than 2 years service.

“(2) An individual who graduates from such program shall receive credit for the time spent participating in such program as if such time were time served while on active duty as a commissioned officer. If the individual does not graduate from such program, such time shall not be considered creditable for active duty or pay.”

SEC. 206. PROCUREMENT OF PERSONNEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B (33 U.S.C. 3021 et seq.), as amended by section 205(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 235. PROCUREMENT OF PERSONNEL.

“The Secretary may make such expenditures as the Secretary considers necessary in order to obtain recruits for the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, including advertising.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372), as amended by section 205(b), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 234 the following:

“235. Procurement of personnel.”

TITLE III—SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT OF OFFICERS

SEC. 301. INVOLUNTARY RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION.

Section 241 (33 U.S.C. 3041) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) DEFERMENT OF RETIREMENT OR SEPARATION FOR MEDICAL REASONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary determines that the evaluation of the medical condition of an officer requires hospitalization or medical observation that cannot be completed with confidence in a manner consistent with the officer’s well being before the date on which the officer would otherwise be required to retire or be separated under this section, the Secretary may defer the retirement or separation of the officer.

“(2) CONSENT REQUIRED.—A deferment may only be made with the written consent of the officer involved. If the officer does not provide written consent to the deferment, the officer shall be retired or separated as scheduled.

“(3) LIMITATION.—A deferral of retirement or separation under this subsection may not extend for more than 30 days after completion of the evaluation requiring hospitalization or medical observation.”

SEC. 302. SEPARATION PAY.

Section 242 (33 U.S.C. 3042) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) EXCEPTION.—An officer discharged for twice failing selection for promotion to the next higher grade is not entitled to separation pay under this section if the officer—

“(1) expresses a desire not to be selected for promotion; or

“(2) requests removal from the list of selectees.”

TITLE IV—RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

SEC. 401. EDUCATION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 267. EDUCATION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORITY TO REPAY EDUCATION LOANS.—For the purpose of maintaining adequate numbers of officers of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration on active duty who have skills required by the commissioned officer corps, the Secretary may repay, in the case of a person described in subsection (b), a loan that—

“(1) was used by the person to finance education; and

“(2) was obtained from a governmental entity, private financial institution, educational institution, or other authorized entity.

“(b) ELIGIBLE PERSONS.—To be eligible to obtain a loan repayment under this section, a person must—

“(1) satisfy 1 of the requirements specified in subsection (c);

“(2) be fully qualified for, or hold, an appointment as a commissioned officer in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration; and

“(3) sign a written agreement to serve on active duty, or, if on active duty, to remain on active duty for a period in addition to any other incurred active duty obligation.

“(c) ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—One of the following academic requirements must be satisfied for purposes of determining the eligibility of an individual for a loan repayment under this section:

“(1) The person is fully qualified in a profession that the Secretary has determined to be necessary to meet identified skill shortages in the commissioned officer corps.

“(2) The person is enrolled as a full-time student in the final year of a course of study at an accredited educational institution (as determined by the Secretary of Education) leading to a degree in a profession that will meet identified skill shortages in the commissioned officer corps.

“(d) LOAN REPAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the limits established under paragraph (2), a loan repayment under this section may consist of the payment of the principal, interest, and related expenses of a loan obtained by a person described in subsection (b).

“(2) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—For each year of obligated service that a person agrees to serve in an agreement described in subsection (b)(3), the Secretary may pay not

more than the amount specified in section 2173(e)(2) of title 10, United States Code.

“(e) ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE OBLIGATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A person entering into an agreement described in subsection (b)(3) incurs an active duty service obligation.

“(2) LENGTH OF OBLIGATION DETERMINED UNDER REGULATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the length of the obligation under paragraph (1) shall be determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

“(B) MINIMUM OBLIGATION.—The regulations prescribed under subparagraph (A) may not provide for a period of obligation of less than 1 year for each maximum annual amount, or portion thereof, paid on behalf of the person for qualified loans.

“(3) PERSONS ON ACTIVE DUTY BEFORE ENTERING INTO AGREEMENT.—The active duty service obligation of persons on active duty before entering into the agreement shall be served after the conclusion of any other obligation incurred under the agreement.

“(f) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO COMPLETE OBLIGATION.—

“(1) ALTERNATIVE OBLIGATIONS.—An officer who is relieved of the officer’s active duty obligation under this section before the completion of that obligation may be given any alternative obligation, at the discretion of the Secretary.

“(2) REPAYMENT.—An officer who does not complete the period of active duty specified in the agreement entered into under subsection (b)(3), or the alternative obligation imposed under paragraph (1), shall be subject to the repayment provisions under section 216.

“(g) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to carry out this section, including—

“(1) standards for qualified loans and authorized payees; and

“(2) other terms and conditions for the making of loan repayments.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 266 the following:

“Sec. 267. Education loan repayment program.”

SEC. 402. INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by section 401(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 268. INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may pay the interest and any special allowances that accrue on 1 or more student loans of an eligible officer, in accordance with this section.

“(b) ELIGIBLE OFFICERS.—An officer is eligible for the benefit described in subsection (a) while the officer—

“(1) is serving on active duty;

“(2) has not completed more than 3 years of service on active duty;

“(3) is the debtor on 1 or more unpaid loans described in subsection (c); and

“(4) is not in default on any such loan.

“(c) STUDENT LOANS.—The authority to make payments under subsection (a) may be exercised with respect to the following loans:

“(1) A loan made, insured, or guaranteed under part B of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq.).

“(2) A loan made under part D of such title (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.).

“(3) A loan made under part E of such title (20 U.S.C. 1087aa et seq.).

“(d) MAXIMUM BENEFIT.—Interest and any special allowance may be paid on behalf of an officer under this section for any of the 36 consecutive months during which the officer is eligible under subsection (b).”

“(e) FUNDS FOR PAYMENTS.—The Secretary may use amounts appropriated for the pay and allowances of personnel of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration for payments under this section.

“(f) COORDINATION WITH SECRETARY OF EDUCATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall consult with the Secretary of Education regarding the administration of this section.

“(2) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall transfer to the Secretary of Education the funds necessary—

“(A) to pay interest and special allowances on student loans under this section (in accordance with sections 428(o), 455(1), and 464(j) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(o), 1087e(1), and 1087dd(j)); and

“(B) to reimburse the Secretary of Education for any reasonable administrative costs incurred by the Secretary in coordinating the program under this section with the administration of the student loan programs under parts B, D, and E of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq., 1087a et seq., 1087aa et seq.).

“(g) SPECIAL ALLOWANCE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘special allowance’ means a special allowance that is payable under section 438 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087–1).”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 428(o) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078(o)) is amended—

(A) by striking the subsection heading and inserting “ARMED FORCES AND NOAA COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS STUDENT LOAN INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAMS”; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or section 264 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002” after “Code,”; and

(ii) by inserting “or an officer in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, respectively,” after “Armed Forces”.

(2) Sections 455(1) and 464(j) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(1) and 1087dd(j)) are each amended—

(A) by striking the subsection heading and inserting “ARMED FORCES AND NOAA COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS STUDENT LOAN INTEREST PAYMENT PROGRAMS”; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or section 264 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002” after “Code,”; and

(ii) by inserting “or an officer in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, respectively” after “Armed Forces”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107–372), as amended by section 401(b), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 267 the following:

“Sec. 268. Interest payment program.”.

SEC. 403. STUDENT PRE-COMMISSIONING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by sections 401(a) and 402(a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 269. STUDENT PRE-COMMISSIONING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

“(a) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—For the purpose of maintaining adequate numbers of officers of the commissioned officer corps of the Administration on active duty, the Secretary may provide financial assistance to a person described in subsection (b) for expenses of the person while the person is pursuing on a full-time basis at an accredited educational institution (as determined by the Secretary of Education) a program of education approved by the Secretary that leads to—

“(1) a baccalaureate degree in not more than 5 academic years; or

“(2) a postbaccalaureate degree.

“(b) ELIGIBLE PERSONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A person is eligible to obtain financial assistance under subsection (a) if the person—

“(A) is enrolled on a full-time basis in a program of education referred to in subsection (a) at any educational institution described in such subsection;

“(B) meets all of the requirements for acceptance into the commissioned officer corps of the Administration except for the completion of a baccalaureate degree; and

“(C) enters into a written agreement with the Secretary described in paragraph (2).

“(2) AGREEMENT.—A written agreement referred to in paragraph (1)(C) is an agreement between the person and the Secretary in which the person agrees—

“(A) to accept an appointment as an officer, if tendered; and

“(B) upon completion of the person’s educational program, agrees to serve on active duty, immediately after appointment, for—

“(i) up to 3 years if the person received less than 3 years of assistance; and

“(ii) up to 5 years if the person received at least 3 years of assistance.

“(c) QUALIFYING EXPENSES.—Expenses for which financial assistance may be provided under subsection (a) are the following:

“(1) Tuition and fees charged by the educational institution involved.

“(2) The cost of books.

“(3) In the case of a program of education leading to a baccalaureate degree, laboratory expenses.

“(4) Such other expenses as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(d) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall prescribe the amount of financial assistance provided to a person under subsection (a), which may not exceed the amount specified in section 2173(e)(2) of title 10, United States Code, for each year of obligated service that a person agrees to serve in an agreement described in subsection (b)(2).

“(e) DURATION OF ASSISTANCE.—Financial assistance may be provided to a person under subsection (a) for not more than 5 consecutive academic years.

“(f) SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A person who receives financial assistance under subsection (a) shall be entitled to a monthly subsistence allowance at a rate prescribed under paragraph (2) for the duration of the period for which the person receives such financial assistance.

“(2) DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall prescribe monthly rates for subsistence allowance provided under paragraph (1), which shall be equal to the amount specified in section 2144(a) of title 10, United States Code.

“(g) INITIAL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE.—

“(1) TRAINING.—The Secretary may prescribe a sum which shall be credited to each person who receives financial assistance under subsection (a) to cover the cost of the

person’s initial clothing and equipment issue.

“(2) APPOINTMENT.—Upon completion of the program of education for which a person receives financial assistance under subsection (a) and acceptance of appointment in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, the person may be issued a subsequent clothing allowance equivalent to that normally provided to a newly appointed officer.

“(h) TERMINATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall terminate the assistance provided to a person under this section if—

“(A) the Secretary accepts a request by the person to be released from an agreement described in subsection (b)(2);

“(B) the misconduct of the person results in a failure to complete the period of active duty required under the agreement; or

“(C) the person fails to fulfill any term or condition of the agreement.

“(2) REIMBURSEMENT.—The Secretary may require a person who receives assistance described in subsection (c), (f), or (g) under an agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1)(C) to reimburse the Secretary in an amount that bears the same ratio to the total costs of the assistance provided to that person as the unserved portion of active duty bears to the total period of active duty the officer agreed to serve under the agreement.

“(3) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the service obligation of a person through an agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1)(C) if the person—

“(A) becomes unqualified to serve on active duty in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a circumstance not within the control of that person; or

“(B) is—

“(i) not physically qualified for appointment; and

“(ii) determined to be unqualified for service in the commissioned officer corps of the Administration because of a physical or medical condition that was not the result of the person’s own misconduct or grossly negligent conduct.

“(4) OBLIGATION AS DEBT TO UNITED STATES.—An obligation to reimburse the Secretary imposed under paragraph (2) is, for all purposes, a debt owed to the United States.

“(5) DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY.—A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11, United States Code, that is entered less than 5 years after the termination of a written agreement entered into under subsection (b)(1)(C) does not discharge the person signing the agreement from a debt arising under such agreement or under paragraph (2).

“(i) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may promulgate such regulations and orders as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out this section.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107–372), as amended by section 402(c), is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 268 the following:

“Sec. 269. Student pre-commissioning education assistance program.”.

SEC. 404. LIMITATION ON EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each fiscal year, beginning with fiscal year 2013, the Secretary of Commerce shall ensure that the total

amount expended by the Secretary under section 267 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (as added by section 401(a)), section 268 of such Act (as added by section 402(a)), and section 269 of such Act (as added by section 403(a)) does not exceed the amount by which—

(1) the total amount the Secretary would pay in that fiscal year to officer candidates under section 203(f)(1) of title 37, United States Code (as added by section 205(d)), if such section entitled officers candidates to pay at monthly rates equal to the basic pay of a commissioned officer in the pay grade O-1 with less than 2 years of service; exceeds

(2) the total amount the Secretary actually pays in that fiscal year to officer candidates under section 203(f)(1) of such title (as so added).

(b) OFFICER CANDIDATE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “officer candidate” has the meaning given the term in section 212 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 3002), as added by section 205(c).

SEC. 405. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 10, UNITED STATES CODE.

Section 261(a) (33 U.S.C. 3071(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (13) through (16) as paragraphs (20) through (23), respectively;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (12) as paragraphs (12) through (17), respectively;

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (6) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively;

(4) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) Section 771, relating to unauthorized wearing of uniforms.

“(5) Section 774, relating to wearing religious apparel while in uniform.

“(6) Section 982, relating to service on State and local juries.

“(7) Section 1031, relating to administration of oaths.”;

(5) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated, the following:

“(11) Chapter 58, relating to the Benefits and Services for members being separated or recently separated.”; and

(6) by inserting after paragraph (17), as redesignated, the following:

“(18) Subchapter I of chapter 88, relating to Military Family Programs.

“(19) Section 2005, relating to advanced education assistance, active duty agreements, and reimbursement requirements.”.

SEC. 406. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 37, UNITED STATES CODE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 261 the following:

“SEC. 261A. APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 37, UNITED STATES CODE.

“(a) PROVISIONS MADE APPLICABLE TO COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS.—The provisions of law applicable to the Armed Forces under the following provisions of title 37, United States Code, shall apply to the commissioned officer corps of the Administration:

“(1) Section 324, relating to accession bonuses for new officers in critical skills.

“(2) Section 403(f)(3), relating to prescribing regulations defining the terms ‘field duty’ and ‘sea duty’.

“(3) Section 403(l), relating to temporary continuation of housing allowance for dependents of members dying on active duty.

“(4) Section 414(a)(2), relating to personal money allowance while serving as Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps.

“(5) Section 488, relating to allowances for recruiting expenses.

“(6) Section 495, relating to allowances for funeral honors duty.

“(b) REFERENCES.—The authority vested by title 37, United States Code, in the ‘military departments’, ‘the Secretary concerned’, or ‘the Secretary of Defense’ with respect to the provisions of law referred to in subsection (a) shall be exercised, with respect to the commissioned officer corps of the Administration, by the Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary’s designee.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 261 the following:

“Sec. 261A. Applicability of certain provisions of title 37, United States Code.”.

SEC. 407. APPLICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF COMPETITIVE SERVICE LAW.

Section 3304(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and members of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (or its predecessor organization the Coast and Geodetic Survey) separated from such uniformed service” after “separated from the armed forces”;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “or veteran” and inserting “, veteran, or member”; and

(3) in paragraph (4), by inserting “and members of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (or its predecessor organization the Coast and Geodetic Survey) separated from such uniformed service” after “separated from the armed forces”.

SEC. 408. ELIGIBILITY OF ALL MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES FOR LEGION OF MERIT AWARD.

Section 1121 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking “armed forces” and inserting “uniformed services”.

SEC. 409. APPLICATION OF EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES TO MEMBERS OF COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS.

Section 4303(16) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting “the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,” after “Public Health Service.”.

SEC. 410. PROTECTED COMMUNICATIONS FOR COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AND PROHIBITION OF RETALIATORY PERSONNEL ACTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 261 (33 U.S.C. 3071), as amended by section 405, is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (8) through (23) as paragraphs (9) through (24), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

“(8) Section 1034, relating to protected communications and prohibition of retaliatory personnel actions.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by adding at

the end the following: “For purposes of paragraph (8) of subsection (a), the term ‘Inspector General’ in section 1034 of such title 10 shall mean the Inspector General of the Department of Commerce.”.

SEC. 411. CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR WEARING UNIFORM WITHOUT AUTHORITY.

Section 702 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking “Service or any” and inserting “Service, the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or any”.

SEC. 412. TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AS EMPLOYMENT IN NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN HIRING DECISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle E (33 U.S.C. 3071 et seq.), as amended by this title, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 269A. TREATMENT OF COMMISSION IN COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AS EMPLOYMENT IN ADMINISTRATION FOR PURPOSES OF CERTAIN HIRING DECISIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In any case in which the Secretary accepts an application for a position of employment with the Administration and limits consideration of applications for such position to applications submitted by individuals serving in a career or career-conditional position in the competitive service within the Administration, the Secretary shall deem an officer who has served as an officer in the commissioned officer corps for at least 3 years to be serving in a career or career-conditional position in the competitive service within the Administration for purposes of such limitation.

“(b) CAREER APPOINTMENTS.—If the Secretary selects an application submitted by an officer described in subsection (a) for a position described in such subsection, the Secretary shall give such officer a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service, as appropriate.

“(c) COMPETITIVE SERVICE DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘competitive service’ has the meaning given the term in section 2102 of title 5, United States Code.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections in section 1 of the Act entitled “An Act to authorize the Hydrographic Service Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes” (Public Law 107-372) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 269, as added by this title, the following new item:

“Sec. 269A. Treatment of commission in commissioned officer corps as employment in Administration for purposes of certain hiring decisions.”.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 501. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

Section 101(21)(C) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting “in the commissioned officer corps” before “of the National”.

SEC. 502. REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall submit to Congress a report evaluating the current status and projected needs of the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to operate sufficiently through fiscal year 2017.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The average annual attrition rate of officers in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) An estimate of the number of annual recruits that would reasonably be required to operate the commissioned officer corps sufficiently through fiscal year 2017.

(3) The projected impact of this Act on annual recruitment numbers through fiscal year 2017.

(4) Identification of areas of duplication or unnecessary redundancy in current activities of the commissioned officer corps that could otherwise be streamlined or eliminated to save costs.

(5) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate regarding the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 503. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, sections 101 through 411 shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date on which the Secretary of Commerce submits to Congress the report required by section 502(a).

APPOINTMENTS

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9355(a), appoints the following Senator to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Air Force Academy: The Honorable JERRY MORAN of Kansas, vice The Honorable JOHN HOEVEN of North Dakota.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Section 1295b(h) of title 46 App., United States Code, and upon the recommendation of the

Chairman of the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, appoints the following Senators to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy: The Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas and The Honorable ROGER WICKER of Mississippi.

**ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 12, 2014**

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, February 12, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; and that following morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. So there will be up to four rollcall votes starting at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow. We expect to receive the debt limit legislation and the military retirement pay bill from the House tomorrow and we hope to consider both items during tomorrow's session.

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW**

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:45 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 12, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 11, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD STENGEL, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.

SARAH SEWALL, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (CIVILIAN SECURITY, DEMOCRACY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS).

CHARLES HAMMERMAN RIVKIN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS).

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SLOAN D. GIBSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 11, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 11, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG LAMALFA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

WHAT IS MORE DANGEROUS, MARIJUANA OR METHAMPHETAMINES?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last week, during a hearing with the Deputy Director of the Office of Drug Policy, there was a moment of clarity for me. I was struck by the realization that our own office, charged with drug policy, discouraging or eliminating drug use, might well be part of the problem.

The poor witness was unable to answer my simple question, What is more dangerous, marijuana or methamphetamines? I asked, How many marijuana overdose deaths were there last year? No clear answer.

The United States does have a drug problem—make no mistake—and it appears to be getting worse: 100 people per day die of drug overdoses. About 9 of them are from heroin; 60 percent of the deaths are from prescription drugs; pharmaceuticals, over 22,000 in 2010, the most recent year we have available, almost three times higher than in 1999.

Why is the \$25 billion we spend fighting drugs each year so ineffective in stopping, much less reversing, the trend? Are our policies and programs misguided? Could it be that too many of the wrong people are spending far too long in jail, wasting lives and money? The States seem to think so. They are reducing sentences and releasing prisoners. Now even the Federal Government is starting to do that as well.

I think part of the problem is that we aren't honest about the impacts and dangers. Nothing better illustrates that than the continued misclassification of marijuana under Federal law as worse than cocaine and methamphetamines. That's according to Federal law.

Is it possible that this Federal dishonesty means that people don't take drug warnings seriously? No one knows anybody who ever died from a marijuana overdose. The failed marijuana prohibition could actually make the real drug problem worse.

Since all marijuana sales are, by definition, illegal, in the shadows, the money, the income, the profits help finance a drug trade that destroys life, like heroin, cocaine, illegal prescription drugs, and methamphetamines.

How easy is it for the distributor, who has no license to lose, who never checks ID, to offer his marijuana customer something else, something worse, something more dangerous?

I fear spreading misinformation and wasting resources, arresting two-thirds of a million people for something that most Americans now think should be legal, undermines what could be an effective approach. Think for a moment. Unlike marijuana, tobacco is a highly addictive killer—over four hundred thousand people a year die from it yet tobacco use has declined almost two-thirds in the last half century. How did that happen?

We don't arrest people who smoke. We didn't try tobacco prohibition. What we did was research. We found out the facts. We told the truth. We controlled the product. We taxed it heavily, raising the cost, especially to young people—all the steps exactly the opposite of our failed marijuana approach.

I will be clear. For me, this goes beyond issues of marijuana policy. It is a symbol of a political process that is not thoughtful, not rational on dealing with things from the national debt, to our failing infrastructure, to climate change. Isn't it time for us to face

some facts, adjust some policies, and move ahead?

CELEBRATING THE WORLD WAR II WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, we had beautiful skies in Miami. It was a perfect day for flying. I was given the opportunity to visit the Wings Over Miami Air Museum to revel in the history of aviation with veterans, fliers, and the families of World War II Women Airforce Service Pilots celebrating the life of one special WASP, Fran Sargent.

We came to honor these American heroines, the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft. They flew over 60 million miles in every type of aircraft on every type of mission, except combat missions.

The WASPs served our country without hesitation and no expectations of recognition or praise. Yet, as our 23rd President, Benjamin Harrison, once noted:

The manner by which women are treated is a good criterion to judge the true state of a society.

These courageous women had never received the full recognition they warranted for their wartime military service to America. It was my honor then, as the most senior Republican woman in the House of Representatives, to introduce the bipartisan legislation to honor and award the Women Airforce Service Pilots of World War II with the Congressional Gold Medal. The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest honor that this body, the United States Congress, can bestow. Cointroducing the bill with me was Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS of California and Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas and BARBARA MIKULSKI of Maryland. I was so honored to be part of this effort to finally grant these women the recognition they deserved.

It was right there at the Wings Over Miami Air Museum in August of 2009 that I was able to present to our local WASP framed, signed copies of the legislation for the Women Airforce Service Pilots' Congressional Gold Medal; and in March of 2010, the presentation ceremony of the Congressional Gold Medal was held in Emancipation Hall, in our Nation's Capital, with over 100 WASPs in attendance.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

South Florida is very fortunate to herald several Women Airforce Service Pilots in our midst. Air Force Major Ruth Shafer Fleisher is now retired. Bee Haydu is active and says “hello” to her fellow WASPs. Shirley Chase Kruse was there with us on Saturday and shared her vivid memories, while Jeremy Snapp and family represented his mother, whom we recently lost, Helen Wyatt Snapp. Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, we gathered for a celebration of life and a memorial for Frances Rohrer Sargent, who was well represented by her daughter, Donna—and Terry and Jim—Timmons, and Fran’s son, Kenny Sargent, with many grand- and great-grandchildren honoring their WASP.

My thanks to aviatrix Ursula Davidson and all of the women pilots flying with the Ninety-Nines for honoring these women of aviation and to the Civil Air Patrol and the crew at Wings Over Miami for making the day possible. We know you loved Fran as your director emeritus and as a great teacher of flight.

How special are they, these women pioneers of flight? While 25,000 volunteered, only 1,830 qualified women pilots were accepted, and then only 1,102 women earned the wings of WASP. The WASP are all true pioneers whose examples paved the way for the armed services to finally lift the ban on women attending military flight training in the 1970s. While flying their P-14s and AT-4s in training in Sweetwater, Texas, the WASP never sought to break the barriers for women, but through their service and their success, more opportunities became available for women in all fields.

Fran became a professor at my alma mater, Miami Dade College, where she took charge of developing the aviation program. One of her students, 73-year-old Judy Portnoy, called Professor Sargent “the most amazing person I know.”

Mr. Speaker, today, women in military fly every type of aircraft, from the F-15s to the space shuttle. My daughter-in-law, Lindsay Nelson, a Marine Corps pilot, is part of this lasting legacy of WASP. Lindsay, a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, served combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan where she flew F/A-18 fighter jets. I am so proud of Lindsay and of all of our servicewomen, past and present, who continue to inspire young women to achieve what was, heretofore, unimaginable. So, on behalf of Lindsay, my congressional colleagues and a grateful Nation, I offer my sincere thanks and utmost admiration to our WASP.

Climbing high into the Sun, Helen, Ruth, Bee, Shirley, and Fran, thank you all, women pioneers.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, all things are subject to interpretation, but as Nietzsche once said:

Whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is often more a function of power and not truth.

Last week, the Congressional Budget Office came out with a report evaluating the economic impacts of the Affordable Care Act. Since then, there are those who have used the power they have to frame a false narrative. Rather than talking about what the report actually says, they have spent the last week talking about what they would like it to say. Their false interpretation of the ObamaCare act is that it will cost the American economy 2.5 million jobs; but the truth is that the much-misrepresented CBO study didn’t say that at all because, as The Wall Street Journal accurately reported, reducing the total number of hours Americans have to work is very different than eliminating jobs.

One of the reasons we passed the Affordable Care Act in the first place was to fix the pitfalls of this country’s employer-based health care system. Before the ACA, people with preexisting conditions were often forced to stay in their jobs to avoid losing their health care coverage. Even if they wanted to leave their jobs to reduce their hours, retire early, change careers, or to spend more time with their families, they couldn’t because doing so would risk their ability to provide affordable health insurance for their families.

□ 1015

What the Affordable Care Act did was right this wrong. By broadening access to health insurance, the ACA has increased personal freedom and market choice. Now Americans can choose jobs based on what they want to be doing instead of staying where they are unhappy just to keep their insurance.

The expansion of Medicaid eligibility and the subsidies available in the exchanges will give Americans the flexibility they need to raise their families, not encourage workers to seek less employment, which was one of the most misleading claims made after the report was released.

The idea that hardworking Americans will modify their employment just to be eligible for social safety net programs is both ludicrous and offensive. Nobody wants to live in a situation that makes you eligible for Medicaid or other social safety net programs, but too many hardworking Americans are forced to.

In Illinois, a family of four must exist on less than \$32,500 per year to qualify for these programs. In the Chicago area, the cost of living is high and families struggle to make ends meet.

Measures like Medicaid and SNAP are meant to help people lift themselves from poverty. Claiming that poor people want to be poor to rely more on the government is misguided and just flat out wrong.

I have said from the beginning that the ACA is far from perfect and that we should work together to improve it, but arguing that at-risk and low-income Americans will actively choose to work less, reducing their own incomes and jeopardizing their family’s economic future just to “game the system,” is not a legitimate issue and speaks volumes about the extreme views that are dividing our government and preventing real reform from occurring.

By focusing on false interpretations, we are forgetting the economic benefits contained in the law. To quote the CBO report:

If some people seek to work less, other applicants will be readily available to fill those positions and the overall effect on employment will be muted.

At a time when long-term employment is at its highest since World War II, there are more than enough workers willing and able to take these jobs. That is why the director of the CBO recently testified about the likelihood of the ACA creating jobs, not eliminating them.

The report also acknowledged that insurance premiums under the law are 15 percent lower than originally forecast, that “the slowdown in Medicare cost growth” is “broad and persistent,” and that enrollments will increase over time to where they would have been if not for the Web site’s issues.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans can now access affordable health insurance. With a focus on personal responsibility, preventive care, consumer protections, and increased choices, the Affordable Care Act has helped empower Americans to lead healthier lives.

Let’s put aside the punditry and focus on the facts.

GOOGLE GLASS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a story about Patrick Jackson.

Patrick is a firefighter from North Carolina who is using new technologies and his programming skills in his mission to save lives. Patrick is using Google Glass, along with the Android and iPhone apps he has developed, to support firefighters on the job. The apps he has created encourage and increase communication between firefighters and emergency responders to accelerate the process of saving victims and putting out fires as quickly as possible.

Although Google Glass is not yet on the market, except for Google's Explorer's program, it has generated a lot of buzz in the tech community. With Glass, people can send and view messages and emails, videos and pictures, and surf the net without using their hands. They can also ask the device for information or get directions without using their hands.

Patrick's Glass app would help firefighters locate incidents and hydrants, and give them hands-free building layouts and the ability to record video from the first responders on the scene. Some departments that have expressed interest in this technology want to take it a step further, such as linking the app to a thermal imaging camera and oxygen masks to increase a firefighter's ability to see in smoke. Although it is still in its preliminary stage of development, technologies like Patrick's could potentially help firefighters and other emergency response teams do their jobs and save lives.

Mr. Speaker, Patrick's idea is a perfect example of how technology betters our lives and can, ultimately, save lives. Innovation leads to job creation. We need to encourage more innovators like Patrick to keep America on top as the world's leader in innovation.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday morning, I tweeted out a message to the 30,000 people who follow me on Twitter. The tweet said:

The GOP doesn't determine when the fight for immigration reform ends. We will continue to fight for a bill in 2014 because that is what is right, what is fair, and what is best for the USA.

I sent this because many in the pro-immigration reform community thought they heard Speaker JOHN BOEHNER giving up on immigration reform in 2014. That is not what I heard, but many in the community and in the press heard it that way.

I wanted to make it clear that the immigrant community and the huge movement behind immigration reform—business, clergy, and everyone else—are just not going away. We are not taking "wait," "maybe," and "no" for an answer.

By now, every time Speaker BOEHNER says anything about immigration reform, the press and the pundits go crazy. Even if it isn't clear what exactly the Speaker said, a good percentage of the press runs out and writes obituary number 247 for immigration reform.

What I heard the Speaker say last week was that getting immigration reform passed in the House would be hard.

Tell me about it.

I also heard the Speaker say at his news conference that the House "needs" to get immigration reform done this year, and he is right.

Then I heard the Speaker say that the GOP doesn't trust the President of the United States. Really? Despite 2 million deportations and the lowest rate of illegal immigration in recent decades, the House GOP doesn't believe President Barack Obama will enforce immigration laws.

Well, I have been working on this for a while, and, first of all, you are right. It is hard. For more than a decade, I had to work on my own party to get them behind substantial immigration reform, but the Democrats are ready now—and ready to help you, Mr. Speaker, pass a bill. The movement will help supporters of immigration reform in the House GOP Conference work to convince their members that moving forward to actual legislation is not only the right thing to do from a justice perspective, from a law and order perspective, and from an economic perspective, but the right thing to do from a political perspective.

Mr. Speaker, when you said the House needs to pass a bill, boy, are you right.

Nobody believes the Republican Party can elect anyone for President unless you find some way to neutralize the damage you have done to yourselves with your deportation-only approach to immigration. The immigration issue doesn't just hurt you with Latino voters. It has hurt you with Asian and younger voters, too.

There is simply no math that adds up to 270 electoral votes unless the Republican Party stops getting slaughtered by 30, 40, or 50 points among the largest-, fastest-growing groups of voters in this country. It gets only worse with each passing day, with another 2,000 Latino citizens turning 18 every day and becoming eligible to vote.

Speaker BOEHNER knows this is the best chance his party has of getting the immigration issue off the table before 2016, and I believe he plans to come back to immigration reform. The cost to the GOP politically is just too high if the GOP-controlled House blocks legislation this year.

You thought the Super Bowl was a blowout last month? Wait until November 2016 if immigration reform is still hanging out there undone. You can tell the babysitter you will be home by 10:30 on election night. The contest will be over early. It will be Democrats in the White House by a landslide.

This notion, Mr. Speaker, that President Obama cannot be trusted to enforce immigration laws just doesn't make any sense to anyone who follows the issue. Every day, day after day, week after week, and year after year, people are being "disappeared" by our immigration enforcement machine. Another 1,100 today—and tomorrow.

Where is the generosity of spirit in that? This lax, liberal, soft-heartedness you seem to imagine, I wish you could tell that to the estimated 5,000 children currently in foster care because their parents are in detention or have already been deported. Tell them how soft Obama is.

I am going out to suburban Washington this evening to talk with immigrants and advocates at Casa de Maryland. I don't expect I will hear very much praise for President Obama's enlightened approach to deportation and detention tonight.

They are not waiting patiently for Speaker BOEHNER or anyone in the Republican Conference to make up their minds about whether or when to start legislating on this matter. I know they are not taking "maybe" or "not now" or "no" for an answer.

Mr. Speaker, you are not going to be spared. Kids will keep showing up to interrupt your breakfast as long as their parents are facing deportation and their communities are being ripped apart.

Mr. Speaker, you can't deport your way out of this. You can't ignore your way out of this. You can't blame Obama for your way out of this. You must act for the good of the country.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am on the House floor today to share with my colleagues several recent headlines from our national papers.

From The Washington Post on January 30:

After billions in U.S. investment, Afghanistan roads are falling apart.

This article goes on to describe the Afghan road network, built with U.S. tax dollars, as a "\$4 billion project that was once a symbol of promise in post-Taliban Afghanistan but is now falling apart."

Another headline from January 30 from The New York Times:

U.S. aid to Afghanistan flows on despite warnings of misuse.

This report informs us that two global firms hired by the United States 3 years ago have found that none of the 16 Afghan ministries can be counted on to keep American aid from being stolen or wasted.

Most recently, this week Reuters published an article titled, "U.S. aid plan seeks to shield Afghanistan from end to war economy," which details a new initiative from the U.S. Agency for International Development that would spend almost \$300 million to prop up the Afghan economy.

Mr. Speaker, the common factor in these articles is that each describes in

alarming detail the absolute waste of American tax dollars overseas. How can we in good conscience tell the American people we are going to continue to send their money to Afghanistan for 10 more years under the Bilateral Strategic Agreement that the United States is currently negotiating with President Karzai?

I hope President Karzai will not sign the agreement. It would be the best thing to happen to the American taxpayer.

Ironically, today or tomorrow we are going to raise the debt ceiling. This is after already raising it by \$230 billion in October of 2013, with \$30 billion reserved for Afghanistan. This is not right or fair to the American people.

We need to stop the insanity in Afghanistan, which could be done if the leaders of the House and Senate would allow Members of both parties to bring bills related to this issue to the floor for a vote.

In addition to the money we are spending, how many more American lives must be lost overseas before Congress decides to act? We cannot continue to waste American money and precious lives in this manner. It is time to end the abuse of the American resources in Afghanistan.

With that, I will ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform and their families, and ask God to please continue to bless America.

EXPRESSING MY APPRECIATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in appreciation.

Next week, I am leaving the Congress to pursue the chance to build a career in the private sector. I wanted to take a few minutes this morning to offer appreciation and thanksgiving for a lot of people who have helped make this wonderful experience possible.

I start with, as in all things in my life, my wife, Camille, and my daughters, Jacquelyn and Josie, without whom nothing good would be possible and through whom all good things are.

□ 1030

I look forward to many, many more happy years, God willing, with them and thank them for their support and sacrifice.

I thank my staff. Over all of these years, these men and women are overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated, sometimes by their employer. These are true public servants. They are inspirations, and I assure you that I have learned much more from them than I have taught to them.

I want to single out, in particular, in the present staff, our chief of staff, Fran Tagmire; our general counsel,

Amanda Caruso; and our legislative director, J.Z. Golden, for their excellence, and for many, many others over many, many years.

I want to thank my colleagues. I thank Speaker BOEHNER for his friendship and leadership.

I especially thank the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives—in my view the best Speaker of the House of Representatives—NANCY PELOSI, who has taught me strength and principle and doggedness and focus, and whose inspiration will guide me, my daughters, and others' sons and daughters for many years to come. I thank her profoundly for her influence and service.

I thank all of my colleagues. I want to come back to that in a minute.

I most especially thank the people of the First Congressional District of the State of New Jersey, who have been the best employer one could possibly have for these last 24 years. And, yes, I would include the people who stop us in the supermarket and complain about a vote that we have cast or wonder why we haven't solved a problem. There are a few of them.

There are many, many more whose words of encouragement have lifted us up for all these years, and I assure you that we appreciate you, and we are staying in our community and looking forward to new ways that we can serve our friends and our neighbors.

I especially, though, do want to come back to the men and women with whom I have had the privilege of serving for all these years. We have done a lot of things that are good together. Some of us have not always agreed on what is good together, but we passed the Affordable Care Act, which I believe will withstand the test of time and will stand together with Medicare and Social Security as pillars of middle class prosperity and American opportunity.

We have opened the door for college students with the direct student loan program that has helped many, many millions of students get an education.

We have improved our environment. In our district at home, there are construction workers building transportation projects today because of our work. There are police and firefighters and teachers on the job because of our cooperation.

There are two veterans health clinics. We can simply not say thank you with our words to our veterans, but by our deeds. And I must say this morning that I especially remember young men and women on duty around the world serving our country, and I express my deepest appreciation to them.

But to my colleagues, I would say this, that I have had 150,000 constituents over the years come to our office with various issues and problems, and they are certainly an inspiration. But so, too, ladies and gentlemen, are you, my colleagues.

The House is a rambunctious and energetic place. I suspect we will see some of that rambunctiousness even later today. We have seen a little bit this morning. People should not confuse debate with division. Healthy, passionate debate is the elixir of American democracy. It is the fuel that makes the country better. And for those who look at the House and say, well, all they ever do is argue with each other, I would certainly hope so. I would certainly hope we would bring to this Chamber deeply held beliefs, deeply held convictions, and express them in the course of debate.

Of course, there is time for compromise, and there is always a season to get the job done; but may this place never lose the strong convictions of people, right and left, Republican and Democrat, north, south, east, and west, because that is what makes democracy go.

I would also say this, that we, in this Chamber, should never confuse a difference of opinion with a difference of intention. I have served here for nearly 24 years, and I can safely say I have never met a fellow Member who does not love this country, who was not here for the purpose of improving this country as he or she sees that improvement. I have certainly disagreed with the definition of "improvement," but I have never questioned the motivation or motive of any of the men and women with whom I have had the privilege of serving.

So my admonition would be: Keep the energy flowing. Those who misunderstand debate, let them misunderstand it. Keep the passionate beliefs that occupy this place going. And when we do, I believe with great confidence that the institution will continue to lead the way to a country that is more prosperous, more safe, more free, and more generous than any nation in the history of the face of the Earth.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve. I thank each of you who has given me this privilege.

RUSSIAN OCCUPATION OF THE COUNTRY OF GEORGIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, as ROB departs the Chamber, let me thank him for his service and for his family's service. As, obviously, the first Republican Member to be able to respond to your comments, let me say what most of us always know, that although many of us disagree on public policy, no one has ever questioned your commitment, your sacrifice, your focus, and your tenacity, and I think I value that more than almost anything we do.

Your words are very important for us and for the American people to understand that spirited debate is not bad. It

is a part of this process. As a former high school teacher in government history, we would relish this in our classrooms, to have this type of exchange between our students. So thank you for that, and I am just fortunate to be here when you made your comments.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to focus and turn my comments to Sochi, Russia. As the world focuses on that area of the world, let me talk about what is going on on the southern side of the Caucasus mountain range.

In the country of Georgia, a small country, people have to understand that the Russian Federation occupies two provinces of the country of Georgia, actually, with military troops: one for a long time, South Ossetia, one relatively recently in Abkhazia.

That kind of changes the understanding of this great show that the Russian Federation is putting on with the treatment of their neighbors in occupying provinces. That would be like a country occupying one or two of our States and occupying one or two of the provinces in Georgia.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is important to just remind the public of this, especially when the world's focus is there. And I want to specifically talk about what has happened with the Olympics and the Abkhazia region, using Olympic security as an excuse.

Russia has actively created a so-called buffer zone between Abkhazia and Georgia, pushing the cease-fire line established in 2008 7 miles further into Georgia territory. So here we have an international peace agreement that kind of sets a line allowing the occupation in Georgian territory of Russian forces, and then the Russian Federation decides, based upon the Olympics, to push that line further into the country of Georgia 7 more miles.

It is a very troubling extension of Russia's earlier efforts to enclose South Ossetia, this other province, in a barbed wire enclave. And this new incursion of Georgian territory is a violation of Georgia's sovereignty as it stands in stark contrast to Russia's many commitments under international law.

According to the cease-fire signed on August 12, 2008, Russian military forces were to return to their pre-war positions, yet they have now established militarized security perimeters on the Georgian side of the administrative border with both South Ossetia and Abkhazia. This is a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Russia is a signatory, and a violation of customary international law.

Russian President Putin claims that he must close borders within the internationally recognized territory of Georgia to prevent security threats in Sochi. This move is nothing more than a power grab. I will continue to support Georgia's sovereignty and urge my colleagues to do the same.

HONORING AMELIA BOYNTON ROBINSON DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to continue my commitment to honoring influential African Americans from Alabama during this Black History Month. This week, we honor the heroines of the movement for civil rights and voting rights. These courageous women had tremendous roles in our Nation's fight for justice and equality, and I am honored to share their stories.

Today I honor the tremendous life and legacy of Mrs. Amelia Boynton Robinson. Amelia was a key figure in the voting rights movement in Selma, Alabama, and she is often remembered for her historic role in Bloody Sunday, on that solemn day on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. At 102 years old, she is an American treasure whose story is a testament to her commitment to serving as a conduit of change.

Amelia Boynton Robinson was born August 18, 1911, in Savannah, Georgia. Her mother was an activist during the women's suffrage movement. After the passage of the 19th Amendment, she and her mother would distribute voter registration information to women from the family's horse and buggy in the 1920s.

Her mother's tireless efforts to secure the right to vote for women would have a lasting impact on Amelia. It also paved the way for the young activist to claim her own place in history. Fueled by the same passion, Amelia began her own service to mankind when she and her husband, Samuel Boynton, fought for voting rights and property ownership for Blacks in the poorest rural counties of Alabama.

She was later named the only female lieutenant to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the civil rights movement. In this role, Amelia would travel alongside Dr. King and often appear in his stead for various events and gatherings during the movement.

Amelia is best known for being on the front lines during Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama. During the protest, she was gassed, beaten, and left for dead at the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Despite the violent attacks, this heroine was committed to staying the course. Her direct involvement in the movement led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Amelia was such a valued part of this process that some of the contents of the bill were drafted at her kitchen table in Selma.

On May 5, 1964, Amelia Boynton Robinson broke yet another barrier when she became the first woman in the State of Alabama to run for Congress. She garnered 10.7 percent of the vote during a time when very few Blacks

were registered voters. Her historic run further solidified her impact on the movement for human rights, civil rights, and voting rights in Alabama.

When this extraordinary woman wasn't contributing her time to the causes of her generation, she worked as an educator, a home agent with the Department of Agriculture, an insurance agent, an income tax preparer, as well as a real estate agent.

She attended Georgia State Industrial School, which is now known as Savannah State University, and Tuskegee Normal, which is also known as Tuskegee University.

I am certain that I would not stand before you today as Alabama's first Black Congresswoman without the tremendous contributions of this amazing woman. It is indeed humbling to experience and pay honor and tribute to the first African American woman to pursue this office in my great State.

Her compelling story is one that reminds us of the undeniable power of courage. She refused to be silent and even risked her life to blaze trails for future generations. And at 102 years old, Amelia is still alive and still with us today, and she is still dispensing her wisdom.

As we celebrate Black History Month and the notable contributions of African Americans to this country, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Mrs. Amelia Boynton Robinson, an Alabama gem and an American treasure.

□ 1045

TRIBUTE TO PENN STATE LUNAR LION SPACE TEAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, Penn State University's Lunar Lion Team will make history as the first-ever university-led space mission to the Moon.

This group of talented young minds is competing in the Google Lunar XPRIZE competition to land a robotic spacecraft on the Moon in December of 2015. The mission, which the team began preparing in January of 2013, includes a launch onboard a commercial space vehicle, a cruise through space for 5 days, landing, and a relaunch for a second landing on the Moon. The mission will then be used to send high resolution images, videos, and other information back to Penn State's mission control center.

To put this in perspective, only the U.S., Russia, India, Japan, and China have ever landed a craft on the Moon. Penn State looks to join this elite club next year.

The Lunar Lion Team includes Penn State science and engineering researchers as well as 80 undergraduate

and graduate students in science, technology, engineering, and math programs, commonly known as STEM, as well as communications, business, logistics, computer science, and information technology, just to name a few majors.

The team will have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in spacecraft design, construction, and operation. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, the team is learning skills necessary for public-private partnerships through collaboration with NASA and commercial space companies.

Like so many of the university's education research initiatives, it will also be used to support new innovations and research in the private sector, real world outcomes that will benefit not just students, but America's competitiveness.

Penn State's bold mission sets the stage for a resurgence of interests in space exploration among America's youth and demonstrates an exciting practical application of STEM education. The team is making great progress towards the mission. Prototype development is underway, and last month, the team commenced rocket testing.

As a Penn State alumnus and a lifelong resident of Centre County, I take great pride in the university and its long list of scholastic and volunteer achievements. The Lunar Lion Team adds another stellar achievement to that list.

The work at the university that has led to the formation and development of this program is another example of innovation and creative leadership on the part of the Penn State community.

As one of the only nonprofit groups working towards the Lunar XPRIZE, and the only university, those working on this Lunar Lion project in State College are truly doing something special.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my very best to the Penn State Lunar Lion Team as they continue this important work. Their community and the Nation are very proud.

MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, before presenting the topic on which I plan to speak about this morning, I want to take a couple of minutes to talk about the career of the gentleman from New Jersey, Congressman ROB ANDREWS, who leaves this House on February 18 after a remarkable career.

We will be losing an amazing talent, a great intellect, and a fine leader. It has been a great privilege to serve with him and to watch him do his work so ably. We will miss you, ROB.

I now rise, Mr. Speaker, to speak for the 29th time on this House floor about

rape in the military. I rise today to speak on a scathing report on military sexual assault by the Associated Press. Sexual assault scandals exposed by the press are the new norm for the military, but this damning report offers us a window into the gross mishandling of sexual assaults at the hands of the chain of command on a massive scale.

This weekend, a deluge of sex crime reports in Japan have been revealed, thanks not to the military disclosing them, but to the Associated Press through FOIA requests. The data reveal how broken the military scales of justice truly are and offers a rare glimpse into how reports of sexual assaults are handled.

Many of these stories involved commanders that undermined investigations, refused to bring a case to court-martial, or overturned a case after a jury had found the perpetrator guilty and sentenced them to jail. Of the 1,000 reports, punishments were wildly inconsistent, and of the suspects determined to be guilty, two-thirds of them spent no time in jail at all. In more than 30 cases, a letter of reprimand was the only punishment. What is truly unacceptable is that we have to rely on FOIA requests at all.

These cases and their outcomes must face the light of day and the scrutiny of the taxpayers that pay for our military in the first place, and I intend to work to make sure that this happens.

What is clear from these cases is that commanders are part of the problem, not the solution. Commanders often decided to not move forward with court-martial, but when they did—even with DNA evidence and tape-recorded confessions of rape—the predators were typically given mild punishments after pleading to lesser offenses. It is the culture of the military that the rules simply don't apply. Commanders also lessened numerous punishments unilaterally and, in two cases, threw out guilty verdicts and punishments completely.

Among the most disturbing stories in the AP analysis was about a doctor at a health clinic at a Naval Air Facility near Tokyo. Airman Tina Wilson went to the clinic in 2008 to have a dressing changed following surgery on her tailbone. But the doctor, Lieutenant Commander Anthony L. Valasquez, decided it was perfectly okay to slip his hand down the front of her panties and then have the nerve to give her a smile and a wink as she walked out the door.

Wilson complained, an investigation was started, and three other women also reported the doctor had touched them inappropriately, but after 10 months, the investigation was closed with no action taken, according to an NCIS document on the investigation obtained by the AP.

The story gets even more disgusting. Two years later, the Navy finally filed charges against the doctor after more

than 25 women reported he touched them, too. But guess what? Most of the charges were dropped under a plea deal, and the doctor served just a week in the brig. He was dismissed and thankfully stripped of his license, but Valasquez could have been stopped years before. Instead, he was allowed to carry on his lewd behavior and scar so many more victims.

Airman Tina Wilson left the Navy, distraught over how the case was handled, according to the AP analysis. This is another of the thousands of tragedies of how sexual assault victims are treated in the military justice system. They often leave or are forced out after making their reports and enduring a grueling, unjust process. Survivors often face retaliation and punishment while their predators get letters of reprimand.

The retaliation is brutal. Survivors are debased, humiliated, and then discharged by the military they so proudly served because another servicemember raped them or sexually assaulted them.

As we know, there are an estimated 26,000 sexual assaults a year in the military, but reporting is low. Court-martial are rare, and the conviction rate is less than 1 percent. This is the result of a legal system beholden to the chain of command that some are hell-bent on protecting.

It is time to pass the STOP Act and bring back justice for all servicemembers, especially victims. When will we stop protecting the predators?

FINAL FRONTIERS OF FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in, again, calling attention to our continued war on poverty, and I thank my colleague and neighbor in California, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, for leading this effort.

This war is, however, but the latest chapter in a larger struggle that goes all the way back to the founding of our country. When we declared our independence in 1776, Thomas Jefferson helped define the purpose and the mission of this new country with his timeless words in that Declaration of Independence. He wrote:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

They endeavored on what was called at the time a freedom experiment. It was this perfect idea that no longer should this British nobility system prevail where your destiny was often charted for you before you were even born based on where you were born or

to whom you were born to. It was the idea that you should be able to decide your own independence, chart your own destiny.

It was a perfect idea carried out by imperfect men. It wasn't extended to African Americans. It wasn't extended to women. Certain religious sects were left out. So we fought a civil war, ended slavery. We went through the suffragist movement, and women were given the right to vote. Eventually, entire classes of people—Catholics, the poor, and others who had been shut out—were now brought into American opportunity.

Today, when I think about what are some of the final frontiers of freedom that have not yet been expanded, I think back to President Johnson. We are very grateful for President Johnson's declaration of the war on poverty. Fifty years ago, he stated that we are in a war on poverty, and we must fight for civil rights, and he signed legislation that marked the beginning of the end of the Jim Crow era. He also recognized it was time to give the poor a real chance to pursue their happiness.

He hearkened back, just as I did, to our Nation's beginnings. President Johnson said that our Founders made a covenant with this new land and that it was conceived in justice. In his words, this "justice was the promise that all who made the journey would share in the fruits of the land."

So began a renewed effort in America to fight poverty, a renewed effort to give those who are poor the freedom to dream that they could be anything they want. We recognized that kids needed to be better prepared before they go to school, so we created the Head Start program. We recognized the critical importance of health and wellness, and so we created Medicare and Medicaid.

But this freedom to dream has not yet been expanded across America. In fact, I see every day that there are still millions of children living in poverty, and just like every politician, when I see one of these young children in a schoolhouse, I ask them, What do you want to be when you grow up? After doing this a number of times, I realized, I should really ask them, Are you hungry? Are you cold? Are you safe? Because the opportunities around them—the crumbling buildings they are trying to learn in, the parents who are working at a minimum wage that is not a living wage—do not provide them with the tools that these children need to realize their opportunity. This leaves them no different than a child born in the 1700s under the British nobility system.

The freedom to dream is no different, and they are no more able to dream beyond where they were born or whom they were born to. So our goal must be to continue to fight this war on pov-

erty, to give every child across every schoolhouse in this country the freedom to dream. This means we must raise the minimum wage. We must extend unemployment insurance for the long-term unemployed so that they can find a job and make sure they can reinforce the skills at home that their children are learning in the classroom.

We will not rest on this issue until I can ask and every Member of this Congress can ask a child, What do you want to be when you grow up? And that child will be able to say, My country has given me the tools to be anything I want.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 57 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

As You make available to Your people the grace and knowledge to meet the needs of the day, we pray that Your spirit will be upon the Members of this people's House, giving them the richness of Your wisdom.

Bless the Members of the minority party as they prepare to gather the end of this week. May they, with those who accompany them, travel safely and meet in peace.

Bless also the majority party, as they will be returning to their constituencies. Give them hearts and ears to listen well to all those whom they represent.

May the power of Your truth and our faith in Your providence give them all the confidence they must have to do the good work required for service to our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote

on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HUFFMAN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING MATT COWDREY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Matt Cowdrey on being named Australia's 2013 Multi-Class Swimmer of the Year.

Matt is serving as a fellow in my office as part of the UNI-Capitol Washington Internship Program, which is ably led by Director Eric Federing. Matt is no stranger to success. He is the most decorated Paralympic athlete of all time in Australia, having won 13 gold medals, and 23 overall in Athens, Beijing, and London.

Even though Matt was born Down Under, he exemplifies the American spirit and is a testimony to the power of hard work and determination.

Matt, it has been wonderful having you be part of our congressional team. I look forward to hearing all about your future successes, including from the pool in Rio in 2016, and likely someday in the Australian Parliament.

Congratulations, Matt, once again, on all of your amazing accomplishments. It has been great having you on our team.

COLGAN FLIGHT 3407

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, 5 years ago tomorrow, Continental Flight 3407 crashed in western New York. This was a tragedy that took so many people far too soon and changed a community forever.

The cause of the crash was found to be pilot and crew error, with fatigue being a contributing factor. In an inspiring act of love, the families of those lost formed as impressive an advocacy effort as I have ever seen. Drawing strength and purpose from their loss, they successfully convinced Congress and the FAA to enact landmark aviation safety reforms.

Their call for "one level of safety" has become a rallying cry for all of those who want to make sure that this kind of preventable tragedy is not visited upon other families and other communities.

Madam Speaker, I and all of western New York stand united with the families of Flight 3407. We feel their loss and express our sympathy to them. We also stand in awe of their commitment and tireless effort to work on behalf of travelers everywhere. The entire American traveling public owes a debt of gratitude to these families who turned tragedy into purpose.

CBO REPORT MAKES REFORMS EVEN MORE URGENT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, recent CBO estimates predict that regulatory changes created by ObamaCare will remove 2.3 million Americans from the full-time workforce. The President has gone to great lengths to spin this as a positive development, saying job losses will come as a result of people voluntarily choosing to pursue interests other than full-time work.

It is true that, all else being equal, individuals and families being able to make ends meet while working less is a cause for celebration. The problem is that all else is not equal. We have a social safety net that depends on robust economic growth and is already forecast to run perpetual deficits for decades to come. No one disputes that 2.2 million lost jobs will diminish economic growth.

For as long as I have been in Congress, Republicans have been working to enact structural reforms to put our budget back in balance. Last week's CBO report makes those reforms even more urgent.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, in the aftermath of the Great

Recession, Congress established the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for a very clear reason: to ensure that financial markets and services work for all Americans, not just the big banks and best connected.

Today, the CFPB makes sure that consumers get the information they need to make smart financial decisions on everything from mortgages to credit cards to student loans.

Today, the House majority will introduce a purely partisan measure called the Consumer Financial Protection Safety and Soundness Improvement Act. That is a mouthful, if nothing else, but rather than improve the CFPB, it would do precisely the opposite by undermining its independence and eliminating its rulemaking authority.

Consumer protections could be scrapped. We must not repeat the same costly mistakes that put our economy in the free fall of the Great Recession.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL MARRIAGE WEEK

(Mr. BYRNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BYRNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of National Marriage Week.

Every year, in the lead-up to Valentine's Day, we recognize the importance of the institution of marriage and the stability it brings to the American household. Married couples lead longer lives, have greater financial and emotional stability, and are healthier and generally happier than their unmarried counterparts. However, only 52 percent of adults in America are married today—a steep decline from 80 percent in 1970.

Children who grow up in a two-parent household generally perform better in school, stay out of trouble, and are on track to live a healthier and happier life. Yet today, over 40 percent of babies are born out of marriage, compared to only 5 percent in 1960.

I have been married to my wife, Rebecca, for 32 years. We have enjoyed raising our four wonderful children together, the oldest of whom is now married himself.

I believe promoting the positive benefits of marriage is important for the happiness, stability, and well-being of the next generation. I am proud to recognize National Marriage Week, and I am honored to be married to Rebecca and be the father of Patrick, Kathleen, Laura, and Colin.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, just a few minutes ago, I left the House

Judiciary Committee, where they were discussing, "Asylum Fraud: Abusing America's Compassion," a hearing that was called by the Republican majority.

Madam Speaker, I adhere to following the law, but I do believe as we approach the 50th year of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, we will see more and more voices being raised for the indignity and lack of human rights in not passing comprehensive immigration reform.

Let me remind my colleagues that the Refugee Act was signed by President Reagan in 1980. It reflects America's values and this country's deep-seated commitment to liberty and human dignity, as well as to pledge, under the Refugee Convention protocols, to save those who have been abused, sexually or otherwise, and children or families who have been subject to violence.

Let's get on with the values of this Nation. Let's pass comprehensive immigration reform. Let's restore the values of this country and provide laws that secure all of our borders. Yet we continue to have these hearings suggesting that those of us who cry out for immigration reform do not understand the law. Coming from a border State, let me be very clear, Madam Speaker, that I understand the law.

Let's pass comprehensive immigration reform.

HONORING ILLINOIS VETERAN OF THE MONTH JOHN CARR

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor U.S. Army veteran John Carr, who was recognized as Illinois' January Veteran of the Month.

Enlisting in 1969 during the Vietnam war, John was wounded in action and was medically retired in 1972. For his service, John received the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal, and a Purple Heart, among others.

John didn't know what was in store upon leaving the service, but when he saw an ad to transport other veterans to the hospital, he signed up. He then joined the Kane County Veteran's Assistance Commission as a hospital caseworker and was elected as superintendent only 3 years later. He retired last February, after nearly four decades of service to his fellow veterans.

My staff is proud to have worked alongside John to help Illinois veterans navigate the Federal benefits system. Constituents regularly told us how John helped anxious veterans or spouses receive their well-deserved benefits.

Thank you, John, for your service to our country and to the men and women like you who have made sacrifices to defend it.

JOBS AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of joblessness in America.

A simple way to enhance opportunities for all Americans is continued investments in career technical education or vocational schools. Not every child's career path takes them through a 4-year college. It is necessary to provide opportunities for them to learn skills to apply for a job either right after graduation or through further certification.

Career technical education teaches general employment skills and teaches skills required in specific occupations or careers. It can provide young people with confidence to focus on a career path.

Many occupations taught at vocational schools are in high demand, such as nursing, business administration, culinary arts, automotive maintenance, software programming, and engineering technology.

Our labor market is evolving and placing greater emphasis on high-tech skills. To ensure vocational training keeps pace with these changes, we should encourage private industries to partner with vocational schools to identify emerging job markets and have students trained to fill these jobs.

By investing in career technical education we can ensure that more Americans have secure career opportunities after graduation.

END THE TAX ON U.S. OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MESSER. Madam Speaker, there is almost nothing Uncle Sam won't tax. You get hit at the grocery store, the gas pump, and your paycheck. You even get taxed when you die.

Now, as the eyes of the world are on Sochi, Uncle Sam's eyes are on yet another way to collect: U.S. Olympians.

Believe it or not, our men and women who bring home the gold, silver, or bronze are taxed on the value of the medals they earn and their minimal winnings while representing our country on the world stage. That is not okay.

Competing on the U.S. Olympic team is an achievement that should be celebrated, not taxed. That is why I have cosponsored the Tax Exemptions for American Medalists Act. It prevents Olympic athletes from paying taxes on their winnings. Our Federal Government shouldn't penalize them for performing at their best.

We need broad-based tax reform. In the meantime, I encourage my colleagues to support the TEAM Act and end this undue tax on our Olympians.

□ 1215

THE END OF SNOW

(Mr. HUFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, there was a deeply troubling story this Sunday in *The New York Times*, entitled, "The End of Snow."

Like all of you, I have been cheering on our Olympians in Sochi, particularly in the snow-related events. But as this article notes, climate change is threatening the very concept of Winter Olympics and snow sports in general.

Current models project a 7-degree rise in global temperatures by the year 2100, leaving winters drier and our mountains bare of snow. Of the 19 cities that have hosted Winter Olympics, only 10 might still be cold enough by 2050 to host them again.

Warmer winters and less snow will be disastrous to the United States' \$66 billion ski industry. Until this weekend, California had just 12 percent of its average snowpack. Thankfully, it snowed in the Sierras, bringing some needed relief.

But one snowstorm in California and another on the east coast does not solve our bigger, long-term climate crisis. Climate change will impact our lives in every way. Let's get to work. Let's reduce greenhouse gases and prevent the worst impacts of climate change.

THE TRAIN WRECK OF OBAMACARE

(Mr. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARRIS. Madam Speaker, the train wreck of the President's health care reform just continues.

This week, there have been two developments: the first one, the CBO announcing their study that shows that 2½ million full-time equivalents—that is, jobs—will be eliminated from the economy by ObamaCare; and yesterday, the President finally recognized that ObamaCare, in fact, destroys jobs and will delay the bill's mandate to buy insurance, but only for corporations, not for hardworking American families.

Madam Speaker, you don't get to keep your policy. You don't get to keep your doctor. Now you don't get to keep your job. America deserves better.

TWIN PRIME NUMBERS

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I would like to talk about twin prime numbers. Twin primes are two prime numbers separated by a single number,

like 11 and 13, or 17 and 19. The question is, Are there an infinite number of twin primes? It was the general consensus of the mathematical community until just recently that that question was beyond the capability of our current mathematical community.

However, there have been some stunning advances on this problem in the last few years. In particular, last May, with the help of an online collaborative project, mathematicians pioneered new methods for addressing this problem with a huge breakthrough from Tom Zhang at the University of New Hampshire. We now know that there are an infinite number of prime number pairs separated by amounts smaller than 270.

While the twin prime problem itself is still unsolved, mathematicians are hopeful that this year they can reduce the separation from 270 to less than 100.

SUPPORT FOR THE A-10 AND CLOSE AIR SUPPORT

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the A-10 and close air support for our warfighters.

Hundreds of brave Americans are alive today because of the performance of the A-10 in Iraq and Afghanistan. I agree with Army Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno, who said in an SASC hearing, "The A-10 is the best close air support platform we have today." Even Air Force Chief of Staff General Mark Welsh has said the A-10 "is the best airplane in the world at what it does."

The Air Force should not retire the A-10 before its replacement reaches full operational capability. Otherwise, it will result in a close air support gap that will put our ground troops at increased risk.

There is no greater responsibility than ensuring our men and women in uniform have the support they need to accomplish their missions and return home safely. Premature divestment of the A-10 by the Air Force would create a dangerous close air support capability gap that could unnecessarily endanger American servicemembers in future conflicts.

FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of raising the minimum wage and passing H.R. 1010, the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which would give approximately 28 million Americans an overdue pay raise, promote economic growth, and strengthen the middle class.

In America, if you work hard and play by the rules, you should be able to

provide for your family and provide them with a decent quality of life. But for about 4.6 million Americans living in poverty, this is not the case.

It has been 5 years since those working for the minimum wage have seen an increase in the minimum wage and, according to one study, the minimum wage today is worth \$2 less than in 1968. This is shameful, and we have the responsibility to address growing income inequality by increasing the minimum wage immediately.

Unfortunately, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle oppose this commonsense legislation, arguing that it will hurt jobs. But as *The New York Times* noted this past weekend, this position is contrary to decades of economic research that shows increases in the minimum wage have lifted pay without hurting employment.

Americans deserve a raise, and raising the minimum wage will help to protect U.S. workers, grow our economy, and build ladders of opportunity into the middle class.

THE DAY WE FIGHT BACK

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Madam Speaker, each day Americans use new and more common technology to communicate with each other, to read online, share photographs, shop and purchase goods, do their banking, and countless other everyday tasks.

In this new tech age, Americans live their lives online, yet the Federal Government acts as if these communications are not subject to Fourth Amendment protections. In fact, the IRS has claimed that Americans “do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy” when it comes to their emails being read by the Federal Government.

Thousands of Americans are joining together today in an effort to bring awareness to some of the unconstitutional and intrusive surveillance practices of our United States Government.

February 11 is “The Day We Fight Back.” It is a reminder that law-abiding Americans have certain expectations of privacy and rights guaranteed in our Constitution that our government cannot unreasonably search and seize our personal property, including electronic property, without just cause. That is why I am a lead sponsor of the Email Privacy Act, which will apply the same Fourth Amendment protections to our electronic communication as the paper documents in your home file cabinet.

Madam Speaker, let’s pass this bipartisan bill. Let’s draw clear lines to ensure our government protects the constitutional rights of every American.

CONGRESS MUST ALSO MAKE 2014 A YEAR OF ACTION

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, 2 weeks ago, President Obama stood in this Chamber and addressed the Nation, declaring 2014 as the “Year of Action”: a year of action to put more Americans back to work and continue to make sure that middle class families across the country are secure in their jobs and their homes; a year of action to continue fighting for equal pay, for equal work, in order to strengthen the American family and ensure fairness in the workplace for women; a year of action to understand that, when women succeed, America succeeds.

Just today, I witnessed in the 100 years of the Federal Reserve to have a female Chair, Janet Yellen, come before us.

A year of action to make sure that American students can have dreams and that they can have an affordable education.

We must understand that we must work together. Democrats, Madam Speaker, are doing their part. We invite our Republican colleagues to understand we need a year of action.

NATIONAL COURT REPORTING AND CAPTIONING WEEK

(Mr. ROSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor National Court Reporting and Captioning Week, taking place from February 16 to February 22, a week that serves to recognize the value and importance that court reporters and captioners have made in American society.

As a lawyer who has spent over 25 years as a litigator, I have a profound respect and appreciation for those who preserve the official record.

Court reporters, broadcast captioners, and Communication Access Realtime Translation, or CART, captioners serve an integral role in my home State of Florida and throughout the United States. In fact, Florida has a particularly vibrant court reporting economy. My cousin, Les Renfro, has been one for over 35 years. They have over 400 small business owners in Florida, 1,300 court reporters and captioners, and three court reporting programs which will help fulfill the needs of an industry, an industry that the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts will grow by 2022.

That is why I am happy to join the National Court Reporters Association in commemorating the week from February 16 to February 22 as National Court Reporting and Captioning Week.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Madam Speaker, every February we have the opportunity to celebrate Black History Month by honoring the great achievements and contributions of African American leaders who have courageously pushed boundaries and moved our country forward in the name of justice and equality. It is an honor for me today to mention some of the great leaders from Los Angeles who have made Black history:

Tom Bradley, from Los Angeles, the first African American to be mayor of Los Angeles; great leaders like Merv Dymally, the first African American Lieutenant Governor of California; Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald, the first African American woman to chair the House Administration Committee; Aja Brown, the first African American female mayor of Compton; and my colleague, Congresswoman KAREN BASS, the first Black woman to be speaker of any State legislature in U.S. history.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act, but this milestone should be a reminder of the work that still needs to be done. We can’t forget that, for many Americans, the promise of civil rights and equality remains unfulfilled. So, today and every day, let us reaffirm our commitment.

PASS A BIPARTISAN FLOOD INSURANCE BILL

(Ms. CASTOR of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge the House Speaker and the Republican leadership to take up the bipartisan flood insurance bill as soon as possible.

Hardworking families all across America, and plenty of small businesses as well, are facing exorbitant increases in their flood insurance rates. This is very harmful to their economic security and is really putting a damper on the economic recovery in communities all across the country. We need the Congress to fix this.

After the reform bill was passed last session, no one imagined these exorbitant increases in flood insurance rates. The best course of action right now is to take up the bipartisan Senate-passed flood insurance bill that passed on January 30.

We can work on this together, but we need action now.

WHAT DO WOMEN WANT FOR VALENTINE'S DAY?

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, February 14 is Valentine's Day, a great commercial event. But what is it that women really want for Valentine's?

It may differ for each of us, but I believe we can all agree on one thing: we want equality.

Women want equal pay for equal work.

Women want equal access to health care, not paying more for our health care premiums, not having pregnancy defined as a preexisting condition, and not having decisions as to our body made for us by the denial of contraceptive services.

Women want to be treated as political equals, recognized for the work we do, what we have contributed, not looked upon as second-class citizens, not deemed less, somehow, because our right to vote is less than 100 years old and our great country will be celebrating its 238th birthday.

We want what we have earned: equality.

BRING AN END TO DEPORTATION

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, today, unfortunately, we commemorate the 2 millionth deportation under President Obama. President Obama continues to tear families apart by deporting noncriminal immigrants to our country who want nothing more than to make our country stronger, grow our economy, and raise their American families.

But the President can bring an end to deportation. Even if this body doesn't act, the President can stop deporting noncriminal detainees. If somebody has violated our criminal laws, they should suffer the consequences of their crimes.

If their only crime was trying to make a better life for themselves in our great country, just as our own forebears did, just as my great-grandparents did, we should welcome them to help make our country stronger, create jobs for Americans, and grow our economy.

Madam Speaker, it is time for this body to act. Absent this body acting on comprehensive immigration reform, I encourage the President to stop deporting noncriminal aliens.

□ 1230

THE RULE OF LAW

(Mr. WENSTRUP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WENSTRUP. In 1788, over 225 years ago, James Madison wrote these words:

It will be of little avail to the people that the laws are made by men of their own choice, if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood. If they be repealed or revised before they are promulgated, or undergo such incessant changes, that no man who knows what the law is today, can guess what it will be tomorrow.

Oh, how relevant these remarks are today. Off-the-cuff changes and delays to the Affordable Care Act without proper legislative authority confuse and confound American individuals and businesses alike.

We are formed as a Nation of laws, laws crafted by Representatives of the people. America achieved great things by adhering to the principles of our legal framework. The fundamental genius of the American Republic came from the simple, yet absolute, affirmation that we, as a Nation, operate by the rule of law, law crafted by the many, not the one.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 11, 2014 at 11:05 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1954.

Appointments:

Washington's Farewell Address.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3193, CONSUMER FINANCIAL FREEDOM AND WASHINGTON ACCOUNTABILITY ACT; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 13, 2014, THROUGH FEBRUARY 24, 2014; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 475 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 475

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for

consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and amendments specified in this section and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-36 modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. On any legislative day during the period from February 13, 2014, through February 24, 2014—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of February 12, 2014, providing for consideration or disposition of a measure relating to the public debt limit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Boulder, Colorado (Mr. POLIS), my colleague and my friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 475 provides for a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 3193. This rule makes in order every amendment that complied with House rules, giving House Members of the majority and the minority ample opportunity to participate in today's debate.

The legislation before us today takes important steps to restore transparency, accountability, and effective oversight in our Federal regulatory process. Established in 2010 under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, known as CFPB, is granted the authority to regulate the financial services industry in an effort to limit bad actors and protect consumers from fraud and abuse.

Unfortunately, by design—no mistake—the CFPB has virtually zero congressional oversight, limited judicial review, and the unilateral ability to promulgate any rule or regulation it deems appropriate. In essence, it is wholly unaccountable to the American people and to the United States Congress, the men and women who, by the Constitution of the United States, have the authority and the responsibility to represent the American people through elected office.

This is not how our government was meant to operate, but this is what former Speaker NANCY PELOSI and House Democrats desperately wanted, control of the financial services industry by one person, one person who answers solely to the President of the United States.

I have heard from numerous community bankers in Texas. Madam Speaker, I am from Dallas, Texas, and am proud to say that Dallas, Texas, is home to community bankers who understand that they are on the front lines of a new regulatory regime, and that is not just community bankers, but all bankers and those covered under financial services regulations. Their accounts of the impacts stemming from the new CFPB rules are startling. Specifically, they have told me that the CFPB's new regulations

regarding "qualified mortgages" will significantly increase borrowing costs and considerably reduce the number of available mortgages.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Sounds like something that the Democrats concocted to make sure that health care was in trouble so they could show up with the answer of the Affordable Care Act, which is nothing that is implied in its name.

They are doing exactly to financial services what the Democrats did to health care in this country, and bankers and the financial services industry understand this.

In a time when Americans are looking to the Federal Government simply to promote increased private sector investment in our economy and to allow the free enterprise system to flourish, up to and including offering more jobs, stable opportunities for meaningful capital, instead, we see one person at the head of the organization who can make all these decisions handing down new rules and regulations which, I believe, do the exact opposite of making it easier, safer, and better to grow jobs and to have Americans be competitive in the marketplace.

The bill before us today is not about deregulation. It is about appropriate balanced regulation with ideas that come from not just the Committee on Financial Services, led by our great young Chairman JEB HENSARLING, but perhaps, more importantly, ideas that coincide with other government agencies, where it is a bipartisan effort, not by a particular head of one organization.

While the American people do need protection from bad actors in the financial services industry, they also need protection, I believe, from an activist government that unilaterally dispenses burdensome and needless regulations which negatively impact not only our economy but the industry that helps provide needed capital, jobs, and enrichment of the American financial services industry, which is a part of the free enterprise system.

Madam Speaker, I am sure you are familiar with ObamaCare's Independent Payment Advisory Board, known as IPAB. Yes, it is the one body of unelected bureaucrats which rations health care and makes decisions, once again, without judicial or congressional oversight on America's seniors.

Just as IPAB restricts choices in the health care sector, so too do unelected bureaucrats at the CFPB. They restrict choices in the financial sector. They are trying to choke off the free enterprise system as a result of rules and regulations that become burdensome, and so people quit offering their services.

By regulating the types of credit cards, mortgages, or loans that Americans can get, the CFPB makes unilateral decisions regarding what types of

financial tools Americans can use. The American people, I believe, deserve something better from Washington, as opposed to this which they are getting, which is a one-size-fits-all approach from Washington, D.C.

That is why I support H.R. 3193. It brings much-needed balance to the CFPB by replacing the lone director with a five-member commission to be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, similar to other financial regulators, so that no one person can unilaterally determine regulations which impact millions of Americans and has little oversight by our courts or by Congress.

Additionally, as an independent agency housed in the Federal Reserve today, the CFPB is not subject to appropriation. They are a mandatory spending item as a result of what President Obama and House and Senate Democrats have done.

By restoring this important check and balance, Congress needs to make sure that we appropriate the money that they should use. It will ensure that the CFPB acts as intended and does not continue to impose economically devastating regulations on the American economy.

To have no oversight and no authority for the money that they spend I believe is a misuse of the way we would want a government agency to work. Whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, we should be for understanding they should serve at the pleasure of the American people, not the reverse therein.

Finally, this legislation takes important steps. It protects Americans' personal nonpublic information. Yesterday, up in the Rules Committee, we heard testimony from Chairman JEB HENSARLING of Dallas, Texas, that the CFPB currently maintains over 900 million credit card records. That is right: the NSA of financial services, that is exactly what the CFPB is, and such an immense amount of private data held by the Federal Government presents ample opportunity for misuse.

Madam Speaker, I do not believe that they should have this information, and I believe they should immediately recuse themselves of gaining this information.

H.R. 3193 will ensure that Americans are protected by requiring express written consent from the CFPB before they can obtain, access, collect, use, or disclose any personal nonpublic information.

□ 1245

I think it is dangerous to have a government agency with this type of power, information, and, as we have seen from the IRS, a misuse of personal information and data that has become an abuse of power. This bill will require that the CFPB assert in writing how that information will be used and to request it.

Madam Speaker, the American people are tired of the Obama administration's blatant disregard for the laws which govern our great Nation. Just yesterday, we witnessed, once again, President Obama's willingness to do whatever he wants when he unilaterally delayed the employer mandate of the health care bill by 1 year. Instead of giving all Americans relief from the Affordable Care Act, known as ObamaCare, the administration is single-handedly picking winners and losers—by the way, on behalf of business as opposed to individuals. Just as the President has done with health care, there is nothing to prevent the CFPB from following suit and unilaterally deciding who will be subject to crushing regulation and who will not. That is why H.R. 3193 is so important.

Madam Speaker, we are on the floor today because we are talking about what literally is a Big Government action that was done several years ago by the President of the United States, by the former Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, and by Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID. Republicans understand that Big Government not only is costly and expensive but that some people want them to control our lives. Freedom, in fact, Madam Speaker, is worth fighting for, and so Republicans are here today on the floor to balance that tilt in favor of freedom, opportunity, and for the right of their own person, an individual in this Nation, to know if your government is collecting your financial records.

And you have a right to know that. That is another reason why Republicans are pleased to say today we are talking about very, very important issues to every single American. It is more than freedom. It is rule of law.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill, H.R. 3193. This package of bills was brought under a restrictive process that prevented efforts by Members on both sides of the aisle to improve the legislation.

H.R. 3193 would gut the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Now, a lot has been said by the gentleman from Texas that I believe has mischaracterized what the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau actually does. It in no way restricts our freedoms, Madam Speaker. In fact, banks aren't the only entities that have freedom. American consumers have freedom, too. American consumers want to be protected from predatory practices, Madam Speaker.

How many of us have signed a credit card agreement with a font size that is

too small to even read? We want to make sure that people aren't giving away their home and their livelihood when they enter into a credit card agreement, a simple loan, or other financial transactions. The American people want that certainty.

When we are talking about making sure that markets operate well, that competition exists in the consumer financial marketplace, that people have different financial options that empower themselves, there needs to be a referee on the field. This bill effectively blindfolds and handcuffs that referee, takes her off the field, and let's the banks have their day with the American people.

That is why I oppose this bill. This bill will not advance a constructive economic agenda. This bill will not address our broken immigration system. It won't secure our borders that hundreds of people enter our country illegally every day, and it won't reunite shattered families.

Earlier today, I spoke of how, under President Obama's administration, over 2 million people have now been deported from this country. This bill will not end that. Instead of moving forward, it blindfolds the referee and ensures that predatory financial institutions can take advantage of the American people without a watchdog.

This bill has serious flaws. It would add additional bureaucracy to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau by replacing its Director with a commission. The gentleman from Texas said somehow this bill meant that there wasn't Big Government. This bill establishes more Big Government, more commissions, rather than having—guess how most private companies are run, Madam Speaker? There is usually a CEO in charge. They don't have some directorate or commission. I mean, that sounds more like the Soviet Union than the United States of America what the Republicans are proposing in this bill.

This bill would also prevent the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau from offering salaries and benefits to employees that are competitive with other financial regulators. Guess what, Madam Speaker? The financial industry pays well. The big banks pay well. That is wonderful. That is the beauty of the capitalist system. If they are creating value working for a big bank and they are earning hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in our market economy, that is wonderful. Well, guess what? If you want somebody who understands that business to be able to work on behalf of the American people as a watchdog, you need to pay a competitive salary to make sure that they are able to then use their expertise that they have developed in the private sector to protect their fellow Americans from predatory or scrupulous activities.

This bill would impede the ability to attract and retain qualified and experienced people that have to handle very complex regulatory issues. It would also eliminate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's independence and parity with other regulators by subjecting it to the appropriations process.

Sadly, last night during the rules debate, one of my colleagues on the Rules Committee equated the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau with the gestapo. That is insulting to our civil servants who work for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, consumers that it serves, and it is extremely offensive to the true victims of Nazi Germany. It is inappropriate to even compare the intentions of the U.S. Government, whether it is led by Democrats or Republicans, to those of Adolph Hitler and Nazi Germany.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has played a crucial role in helping millions of Americans become more informed and empower them to make financial choices that benefit them and their families. For instance, at a time that we know that higher education and college are more important than ever, the cost of higher education continues to skyrocket. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has developed a Web site that helps students understand their borrowing options before they take on substantial debt and make sure they are aware of the lowest interest rates that they can use to finance their education. Their user-friendly tools allow families to compare financial aid and college costs, choose a loan with a low interest rate, and select repayment terms that are most favorable to them. As the largest student loan lender, the Federal Government should help make sure that students have the information they need to help take control of their financial destinies.

I was honored to work with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on my Know Before You Owe Act, which would provide students and families with information about their eligibility for Federal loans before they take out more costly, higher interest rate, private loans. While I hope that Congress would pass this bill, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau also hopes to advance this important cause even without legislation. This bill on the floor today would hamper their ability to prevent students from paying more than they need to for their college education.

Now, Democrats are open to improving the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau through bipartisan proposals. Unfortunately, the House majority has shunned bipartisanship in favor of these bills. We can do better, Madam Speaker. The American people want to make sure there is a referee and that there is a watchdog. We want to make

sure that our banking industry and financial services industry can continue to grow and flourish in this country. One of the most important factors in the success of that industry is the confidence that the American people have in the financial services industry to be fair and honest.

The establishment of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau helps ensure that the American people are confident in the financial products that are being marketed by banks across the country and will lead to continued job growth in the financial services industry, which America is a leader in, both here and abroad.

Let's talk for a moment about what we are not discussing under this rule, Madam Speaker. We are not taking one step, 1 inch, towards fixing our broken immigration system—a huge drag on our economic growth. Many residents of our country that are living here illegally in the shadows of the underground economy simply want to work. They want to pay taxes. They want to raise their American kids here. They want to raise a family. They want to participate in the same American Dream that welcomed my great-grandparents when they came to this country.

The House Republicans' principles on immigration reform were an important step forward. I applaud them. They were promising. There was nothing in those principles that was mutually inconsistent with a Democratic desire to secure our borders, create a law enforcement environment where we know who is here, and make sure that we can have a compassionate approach to uniting families.

Nearly a year ago, the New Democrat Coalition Immigration Task Force released detailed principles, as well, on comprehensive immigration reform. I am proud to say that, last October, Democrats and Republicans joined together to introduce a bipartisan bill, H.R. 15, on comprehensive immigration reform. The bill creates jobs, reduces our deficit, secures our borders, and reflects our values as Americans. Yet, to date, the only immigration vote in this Congress that the House has had was a vote to defund the deferred action, or DACA, program, which allows DREAMers to finally get to work and pay taxes to make our country stronger, and instead subjected DREAMers to deportation at taxpayer expense.

We can and we must do better, Madam Speaker, and this rule and this bill simply don't do it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, at this time, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Weston, Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), a member of the Financial Services and Budget Committees. He is not just the author of the bill; he is an awesome and outstanding new Member of Congress.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding.

Madam Speaker, just to be clear, the bill that is before the House today is not a repeal bill of the CFPB. It is a modification, a reform package to the CFPB. So when my colleagues and friends across the aisle talk about how there will be no consumer protection, that is absolutely false. We just want to make sure the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau works better and is more responsive to the American people.

So I want to talk about a few of the things that this bill does. The first thing is it moves the Director of the CFPB over to a bipartisan commission of five. Now, I know my friends across the aisle have taken issue with this. However, when, under Dodd-Frank, the CFPB was originally envisioned by House Democrats and the former chairman Barney Frank, they didn't have a single director; they actually had a commission. When ELIZABETH WARREN, now Senator WARREN, envisioned this package, it wasn't a director; it was a commission. So now that my friends across the aisle take issue with the reform package that has a commission and not a director, it was their original idea. So let's not play partisan politics. Let's join together on points of agreement, and this is one of them.

Another concern, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is not responsive to Congress because it doesn't get its funding from Congress. It doesn't go through the appropriations process, which gives us great oversight here in the House. Their funding comes from the Federal Reserve. We think it is appropriate, when you have an agency that is so powerful and so unaccountable, that we give the elected Members of the American people power to say how much money they should have and how they should use it. We don't have that ability right now. And who on God's green Earth says that we should take power away from Congress and let them set their own budgets?

Going to the point of unaccountability, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau sets their own pay. Where in the free-market system does any employee tell the employer, This is what you are going to pay me; I am setting my own pay? That is what they do at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. And all we say is we, the Congress, the elected representatives of the American people, we should set the pay of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

These are commonsense reforms that actually work for the American people, and, frankly, it will work for the CFPB to make them far more accountable.

□ 1300

The way this bill is set up, not the bill, the law, the way the law is set up, big banks on Wall Street, the very big

banks that caused the financial crisis, they are actually able to go and have consumer financial protection rules reviewed by FSOC, and if FSOC thinks that the rule as petitioned by big banks can create systemic risk, the rule can be overturned. So big banks on Wall Street, they get a voice. They get to go: This is bad for us; overturn the rule.

If you come from rural Wisconsin, where we only have small community banks and credit unions, and you see one of our small financial institutions going to FSOC and saying, Hey, this rule is bad for us, the small banks and credit unions, please overturn the CFPB rule, they are going to laugh them out of FSOC. They don't have a voice. Small financial institutions, credit unions, and small banks don't have a choice to go to FSOC and have a ruled overturned by the CFPB.

The way the law was written and the way it has been implemented, they have given a big, loud voice to Wall Street banks but have shut out the small community banks and credit unions that are all over America, the very banks and institutions that lend money to our families, the very institutions that our small businesses on Main Street America, they go to and ask, Will you give me a loan so I can expand my business, maybe create an extra job or two in America? Those are the ones that have been shut out in the review process by the CFPB.

That doesn't work for consumers. That doesn't hurt consumers. That actually helps consumers, and that helps small town America.

I think one of the most important portions of this reform bill—and again, it is a reform bill; it is not a repeal bill—is what we do in regard to data. America has recently learned that the NSA is collecting phone data and information on them and keeping it. Now Americans have said, Listen, I am okay with AT&T or Verizon, whoever my phone company is, that they have my records. But the American people have never given the American government permission to take their phone records, and when they heard about it, they were outraged. They were outraged.

I know my friends on the other side of the aisle are supportive of this expansive NSA, they are supportive of a big government taking information on Americans, but most Americans say, no, we don't want that kind of relationship between the American citizenry and our government. Just like the NSA, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is collecting financial data on the American citizenry. They are collecting information on almost 1 billion credit cards. I will say that again. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is collecting data and information on almost 1 billion credit cards, and I would ask, Do you think they have asked permission of the

American people to take their financial data? Absolutely not.

All we ask for in this reform bill is, if you want to take America's financial information and you say that you are here to protect the American citizenry, why don't you ask them? Ask if you can take it because I guarantee I know what they are going to say. They are going to say: No way. I am okay with my bank having this information, my credit union having this information, but I will be darned if I want some agency that says they are here to protect me to collect my financial information and my financial records.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 4 minutes to the gentleman.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, collecting information from the American people and their phone records is one thing, knowing who you call and when you call them. It is something far different, Mr. Speaker, when you see how they spend, where they spend, when they spend. If you want to know about America, take their financial records.

So all we say in this reform package is give them a choice. If you are here to protect them, ask them and say, We want to take your financial data information; are you okay with that?

If you are here to protect the consumer, why wouldn't you ask them? We mandate, we require the CFPB to make that ask, and there is an important reason behind it, because, as many folks in this body understand, in politics, you can get a good representation of the whole by sampling data, taking a small, small segment of the whole and getting a representation of the whole body.

That is what the CFPB could do if they wanted good market data on how things are working because I do think they need data, they need information, but that is not what they are doing. They are not sampling; they are taking almost a billion credit cards and information from those.

Mr. Speaker, they don't keep that information for a month, they don't want to keep it for a year; they want to keep your financial data for over 10 years. They want to keep your financial data for over 10 years. This is unacceptable, and for my colleagues across the aisle to say that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is only protecting consumers and there is no need for reform is a misstatement. There is plenty of room for reform in a very powerful, very unaccountable agency that is accessing financial information from Americans in a way that they would find unacceptable.

So as we debate this rule, I hope that my friends across the aisle will see the pure-hearted, spirited effort that has been made to actually make the CFPB

more effective and more accountable to the consumer.

Mr. POLIS. Before I further yield, I want to clarify: the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is already prohibited from collecting personally identifiable information in the course of its market-monitoring responsibilities to make sure that American consumers are not taken advantage of.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY).

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, how quickly some forget. When Congress created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, we did so on behalf of every constituent unfairly defrauded during the financial crisis.

As a Cook County commissioner in 2007, I remember the financial crisis and the damage it did to Chicago's community. I remember when your credit card rate was about how well you could read fine print, not how regularly you paid your bill. I remember when auto loan financing could be based on a whim, not on your credit history, and when home buyers were pushed into loans no one could ever expect them to repay. I remember when it was open season on our veterans, when a whole industry was made out of defrauding our returning sons and daughters.

I also remember how many of my colleagues characterized the creation of the CFPB, calling it a bureaucratic behemoth that would devastate credit markets and make lending impossible. Yet here we are today, with a growing economy and a vibrant credit market. Only now, we do it with fair practices, protecting American consumers and treating them with dignity.

So I reject this attempt today to undermine the CFPB and the progress we have made. We simply cannot afford to return to the free-for-all that existed pre-crisis. H.R. 3193 is either a bad case of congressional amnesia or an attack on the most important financial reform of a generation. Either way, it is ill-sighted, and I urge my colleagues to defeat this effort.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding me this time.

I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3193. Congress created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in response to a regulatory system that couldn't keep pace with the needs and the entities that it oversaw. The system was neither agile enough nor properly equipped for protecting consumers. The financial crisis exposed subprime lending practices that preyed on the most vulnerable consumers. It uncovered obscene credit card contracts that put working families underwater. It found student loans that left our next generation more worried

about their interest rates than about changing the world.

The list goes on.

The CFPB was our answer to these and prospective concerns. It is the only independent agency that is tasked with protecting consumers, our constituents. Free from the political melee, this watchdog focuses on making sure that markets are fair and players follow the rules.

The CFPB may not be perfect. Undoubtedly, missteps may occur. That is why the agency is subject to regular audits and why the government maintains ways of addressing flawed rules.

I am willing and eager to work with my colleagues to improve the CFPB to ensure that the American people are properly protected, but that is not what this bill does. This bill scraps the intention of the agency and re-exposes our families and our students to the same unfair and undue risks which necessitated the agency's creation in the first place.

I urge my colleagues to use this agency to help protect their constituents and to address their concerns. Remember your constituents when you vote today. I ask my colleagues to join in opposition to this measure and the underlying bill.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding to me.

I am hearing the arguments from across the aisle about how the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is protecting consumers and protecting America from unfair practices and risks in the financial sector, but I would challenge my friends on the other side of the aisle to tell me how is that mission of protecting consumers diluted if we go from a single payer to a commission, which was originally their idea. How is this diluted if we go to a pay scale set by Congress and not by themselves? That doesn't impact their ability to work on consumer protection issues.

Why are consumer protection issues impacted if we give a similar and same voice to small community banks and credit unions, the same that they have given in this bill to big Wall Street banks? You are still protecting consumers. There is nothing in here that prohibits the CFPB's ability to do their job.

Finally, how are we hurting consumers by making sure that the CFPB asks them first before they get their information?

I guess I haven't heard those comments being made. I am hearing a lot of platitudes, a lot of comments at 30,000 feet that have nothing to do with the reform package that is here in the House today. I would enjoy hearing my friends across the aisle talk about what

is actually in the bill. It is not immigration; it is protecting consumers from the CFPB, and they are bringing up issues that aren't relevant.

One other issue I want to clarify, which is in regard to personally identifiable information. Two points: information has been very clearly made to us that, one, the CFPB is not following the directive of the statute; and, number two, the amount of information that the CFPB has, the quantity, the amount, it is easily reverse engineered, simply re-engineered to find out who the individual is. So if I have your ZIP Code plus four, your date of birth, your age, all this information, I might not have your name, but in an instant I can get your name because I have all the data I need to do just that. That is not protecting consumers.

If you want to have a debate about protecting consumers and having an agency that is accountable to Congress, I would love to have that debate, but when we bring up issues that aren't in the bill, it is pretty hard to have an honest and fair conversation about that.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. DUFFY is correct that immigration reform is not in the bill or the rule. It should be, but it is not. We have another motion for something that should be in the bill, but is not.

Mr. Speaker, last week we provided the House two opportunities to consider flood insurance reform, a bipartisan measure that now has almost 200 cosponsors, but unfortunately, it was denied. Not only does this bill not have immigration reform, it also does not have flood insurance reform.

Today, we are offering Members another chance to put aside party politics and do something that is important for the American people. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the bill that would delay flood insurance premium hikes and provide relief to thousands of American families.

To discuss this proposal, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Colorado for yielding me the time. I rise to encourage all of our colleagues to vote "no" on the rule, "no" on the previous question, and "no" on the underlying bill.

□ 1315

It has been 2 weeks since the Senate passed a bipartisan fix to the exorbitant rise in flood insurance rates across the country, but it has been particularly dismaying that in the past 2 weeks the GOP-controlled House has not taken up the Senate-passed bill or the House version to provide some relief for hardworking families across the country. Because there has been no action, we are asking today that all

Members come together to vote "no" on the previous question so we can take up the flood insurance fix bill.

Many of us have been working in a bipartisan way for much longer than 2 weeks. For many months, we have had bipartisan proposals here in the House, but for some reason the GOP leadership has been resistant to bringing up this bipartisan solution.

I have offered an amendment on every piece of legislation passing through the Rules Committee since November for a flood insurance fix, but, again, the Republicans refused to make it in order. So, without any scheduling of a bill yet, we have to resort to going to the previous question.

If you take a step back, flood insurance reform was very well-intentioned. The reform bill was passed in 2012, intended to make the flood insurance trust fund solvent. Especially after Superstorm Sandy, the flood insurance trust fund that is the backstop to economic security for many families was insolvent, so we came together and passed a reform bill. The problem is it hasn't been implemented in the right way.

FEMA has actually implemented it in an irrational way. It is not affordable, and they have problems with mapping. What this does is it creates a very troublesome path to eventual solvency of the trust fund. People are not going to be able to pay into the trust fund like they should.

So what is happening? Families are facing exorbitant, unconscionable increases, depressed home values, an inability to buy or sell a home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Here is another concern. You remember how difficult it was for the GOP House to actually provide emergency aid when Superstorm Sandy hit? 179 Republicans voted against the emergency aid. So that makes it even more important that we fix the flood insurance trust fund so that it is there for families who need it.

Last week, I pointed out that many are very skeptical that the Republicans in Congress will act in support of the middle class, in support of small businesses across America. Well, I ask my friends on the other side of the aisle to prove them wrong. Let's come together. Vote "no" on the previous question, and let's move the flood insurance fix.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to follow up on my good friend and colleague from Florida's comments on behalf of homeowners in

south Florida and around the Nation who are trying to maintain affordable flood insurance coverage, and I urge the House leadership to bring the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act to a vote today.

Through the National Flood Insurance Program, millions of homeowners benefit from the ability to purchase affordable coverage, including thousands of south Florida families.

While I understand the need to keep the national flood program financially stable, we must do so while ensuring that these families can afford the coverage on their homes or they won't have coverage. Surging premiums destabilize our recovering housing market and they cause uncertainty for homeowners. The system cannot withstand these increases, and we must act to fix it.

I want to thank my colleagues in the Senate who, in a bipartisan way, passed this legislation, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who make up the 207 bipartisan cosponsors here in the House of Representatives who want to pass this bill into law. This is essential. We can't allow this to go on.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's homeowners can't afford to wait any longer. We need to defeat the previous question and vote on this bipartisan agreement today.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentlewomen from Florida who bring up this issue again. We spoke about this issue last week, how it is actually a \$24 billion problem to the taxpayer. It is also equally a very difficult lift financially on the problems that it is creating to homeowners who live in flood areas.

As was noted last week, FEMA did not complete their job. We have known about this. This is not a new issue. The numerous Members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, are trying very diligently to work on this and have been.

I want to acknowledge the work that has been put in by both these Members and others—including the gentleman from Florida, Judge HASTINGS—who sit on the Rules Committee, including the gentlemen and gentlewoman that sit on the Rules Committee from Florida. There are a total of 4 people out of 13 on the Rules Committee that live in Florida.

This is a nationwide problem wherever those people live, predominantly along coastal areas. We are working on it. But it is a \$24 billion problem that was not addressed by the Senate—not addressed. What we are trying to do is to work with the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. HENSARLING, as well as the ranking member and the committee on getting an answer.

As I have stated to people numerous times, I do appreciate not only them

keeping this issue in the forefront, but it is something that we must address in the Rules Committee. We intend to do that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding. I thank my colleagues from Florida for being on the floor, and I rise to urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so that instead we can call up a bipartisan bill to alleviate the anxiety of millions of homeowners in flood-prone areas that their flood insurance premiums won't become simply unaffordable.

Should we do any less? Twice already we have had the votes in this House to bring up this bill, a companion of which passed the Senate with a bipartisan vote of 68–32 on January 30. There is no reason why this bill wouldn't pass overwhelmingly.

Once again, partisan politics has wedged itself into Congress' best intentions and the potential for achieving results. It is surprising that Republican Members from flood-prone districts have twice voted to block this bill from coming to the floor and to deprive their constituents of the assistance they need and the reassurance they deserve.

Sometimes party asks too much. Sometimes party asks for votes which will hurt your constituents. Rise above party and vote for your people. We should not repeat the overwhelming delay that occurred in supplying assistance in response to Superstorm Sandy. After that storm, the Republican leadership blocked Congress from taking action on emergency disaster funding for more than 90 days.

The continued obstruction of this bipartisan flood insurance bill is an unfortunate continuation of that same trend of letting partisanship get in the way of doing what is right. I know there are many of our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle that want to do what is right for their constituents. Do not let party regularity dissuade you from doing the right thing.

I appeal to them, Mr. Speaker, to support their constituents, not their party, by setting partisanship aside, working with us to defeat the previous question, and allowing the House to vote on the Grimm-Waters legislation, a bipartisan piece of legislation that will make sure homeowners don't find themselves under water in more ways than one.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the previous question, what does that mean? Our constituents, Mr. Speaker, must be watching. What is Mr. HOYER talking about the previous question? What is all this talk about the previous question?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

It is simply a vote by which it says that, if the previous question is not approved, we can offer the bipartisan legislation to give the relief that is so desperately needed now, not 90 days from now—now. So defeat this previous question.

And my Republican colleagues, if you care about your flood-ravaged and flood-risk constituents, vote "no" on the previous question.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I do appreciate the distinguished gentleman from Maryland coming down. Once again, I would tend to not just acknowledge what the gentleman is asking for, but I will speak to it.

The problem is that we have to worry about the solvency of the program. The program is some \$24 billion in the red right now. Not addressing its solvency just to give some new program life rather than fixing it correctly is where we politely disagree.

We believe that the ability we have in this Congress with this issue is to do it right where it is in the best interest of the people back home that I care about, that every Member of this body cares about, but also the financial integrity to the taxpayer. The national debt is a tremendous national embarrassment, and we are not going to just waive a \$24 billion that will become a \$50 billion problem. That is why we are trying to address it the way we are.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I share my friend's view that we need to be worried about the solvency of our Nation. We haven't done such a good job at that. We are, by the way, going to have a bill on the floor pretty soon which won't do much for that either, somewhat irresponsibly, in my view.

But the solvency that I am worried about right now is the guy who lives in a \$190,000 home with his family and has got a \$25,000 premium facing him yearly, annual premium. It is going to make him move out of his home. But the problem he is going to have is nobody is going to buy his home. We need to act.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA).

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Colorado for yielding.

I want to recognize precisely what the gentleman from Maryland was talking about.

I would like to urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so we can get to this important issue.

I appreciate the gentleman from Texas' understanding of this. But I want to talk about the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which is a bipartisan bill that would delay crippling premium increases that are affecting people throughout south Florida and throughout the country, and I want to talk about specific people.

Mr. Speaker, because of rising flood insurance rates, people are literally walking away from their homes. I recently spoke to Derek and Robin Menard. They had an increase because the property owner of where they rent put it on their bill, and so they could not afford to remain in south Florida because it just got too expensive. After 9 years of calling south Florida home, they were forced to move away. They were forced to find jobs where they had moved to in Pennsylvania. They had to pull their little daughter, Millie, out of school, and she had to change friends and neighborhood.

Mr. Speaker, this is not right. While I recognize the gentleman from Texas wants to solve this, we have a bipartisan bill that was passed out of the Senate. We can pass this out now and then get to working on this problem before we hurt more people, before we force more people to move away from their community, their friends, their loved ones, due to these exorbitant insurance rates.

So, for this reason, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can pass a bipartisan bill that makes common sense and provides a solution and much-needed relief to policymakers.

□ 1330

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I don't consider common sense or the right thing to do a \$24 billion irresponsibility, which is, once again, what the Democrat Party is pushing today on the floor of the House of Representatives.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I have to acknowledge that I am a little disheartened that my friends across the aisle are encouraging the defeat of a rule that would bring a vote to protect consumers from having the CFPB collect financial data on them. I know my friends want to talk about flood insurance, and we are, no doubt, going to have that day to have that conversation, and it is important; but the bottom line today—the conversation today—is that we protect consumers from having their information collected on them just like the NSA is collecting phone records on Americans.

Let's stand together. Let's protect the middle class. Let's protect small

community banks and financial institutions. That is the vote today. Stand with us. Let's move the ball forward for hardworking middle class families who want to keep their information and their data to themselves, and let's move forward at a date soon to be acknowledged on flood insurance.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this great country of ours has weathered hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and fires. Now our families in Florida and across the Nation are confronting a man-made crisis, created unintentionally by past acts of this Congress.

An economic storm is brewing. Just ask my constituents, the Woodlaws, who live in a modest home in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea. They have paid off their mortgage and pay \$2,400 a year in flood insurance. Because of Congress' past actions, they now face a \$12,000 bill for the same coverage that they cannot afford and are one flood away from financial disaster. Our constituents like the Woodlaws are facing skyrocketing jumps in flood insurance premiums unless we act now and take up the bipartisan Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Mr. Speaker, a storm is brewing.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my colleague on the Rules Committee.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank my friend.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to first say and credit the chairman of the Rules Committee for having addressed this problem. He has spoken about it to me and to others. The same holds for my cochair of the Florida delegation, VERN BUCHANAN. All of us on the Florida delegation, minus one person, are supportive of this particular measure.

Here is an opportunity then for us to defeat the previous question and bring this matter up now. Enough already of continuing to discuss it. We have had ample time to deal with this problem. Don't forget: Florida, among other States, is a donor-state in this business.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close.

I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman from Colorado and the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, what we can do is really do our work and pass comprehensive immigration reform to deal with the pain of so many in this country.

I do believe that we should defeat the previous question so that my constituents in Texas, along the coastline, can stop paying \$8,000 in flood insurance. It is absolutely absurd. A bill has passed. We are ready to go.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we discuss H.R. 3193, which wants to undo the corrections that we made to save America's jobs, homes, life savings, and pensions when we reformed Wall Street. We believe in the capitalistic system. We just don't believe in the abuse of the capitalistic system. The Consumer Protection Agency that has been put in place to help consumers with credit, credit cards, and other matters dealing with their financial needs is now being impeded by this legislation.

What do we have to say to speak for the people of the United States? This bill effectively defunds the CFPB.

What we want to do is to continue the consumer protection board, continue the leverage that it has given to protect consumers. I have actually heard from consumers who have said, Thank you; we now have a board that will hear our voices and that will express our concerns with what kind of treatment we are getting from financial agencies.

Let's move on behalf of the American people now, not on behalf of special interests.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think it has been clear—and we actually have some bipartisan agreement here—about what this bill lacks. This bill does not do anything about hundreds of people sneaking across our southern border every day. It does nothing to reunite American families. It does nothing to end over 2 million deportations that have occurred during the Obama administration. It also does nothing to address the imminent hikes in flood insurance that many Americans face, including Americans in my home State of Colorado, if Congress fails to act.

So what does this bill do that has preempted Congress instead of dealing with illegal immigration? instead of dealing with flood insurance?

It creates additional Federal Government bureaucracy. It takes one person's job and turns it into a commission of five people who will endlessly debate things rather than decide things.

What if one is sick and what if there are four at work and it is deadlocked 2-2, and then the other one comes in and one is missing because the appointment is held up? Do we really need to have more government regulators in charge of this Federal agency, Mr. Speaker?

That is exactly what this bill does. One person can do the job.

How many companies in this country are run by a panel of five co-CEOs? I

don't know of a single one. Why would we want to run a Federal agency like that?

The gamesmanship that we are doing in this House, while there are important issues like illegal immigration and flood insurance, is at a serious cost to the American people. The Senate passed a bipartisan immigration reform bill last June. The House hasn't dedicated a single minute of legislative floor time to an immigration reform bill.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with the extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question so we can deal with one of these pressing issues that my colleagues from Florida and other States have made a compelling case for here on the floor of the House today in order to address flood insurance. I also urge a "no" vote on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues from the Democratic Party for coming and for, once again, offering their ideas about flood insurance. That is not part of the bill. I would simply reply to them, as I have previously, that the Senate-offered compromise or the Senate-offered language spends \$900 million more but does not take care of the \$24 billion problem, which is red ink that the taxpayer would pick up, which harms the solvency of the program.

Why have a government program that runs in the red \$24 billion and then goes to \$50 billion?

That is not what we are going to do. We are going to come up with an answer in the House of Representatives, and I expect it to be done quickly.

Today, we are talking about the CFPB, and Americans have witnessed firsthand the negative effects of the CFPB. We have looked at how this administration and one agency cannot only gather records but literally control a marketplace. I believe that what you have heard today lends us to understand that a balance of the CFPB is what is important. We have brought five distinctly different bills to bear here, one of them saying that we should not have employees of the CFPB who are paid well outside of normal government standards, where even an intern who serves for this CFPB makes over \$51,000.

Mr. Speaker, what Republicans are trying to do is to balance the piece of legislation that passed this House with President Obama, with Speaker

PELOSI, with Senator REID. We are trying to offer a balance to that on behalf of the consumer, on behalf of a legislative process where Members of Congress and the Financial Services Committee have an opportunity to work with any administration, not just with the Democrats, on what the policy of the CFPB would be. Secondly, we think it is wrong that 900 million financial records are taken without notice given to a consumer. We think that is not just an overreach; we think that is an abuse of power. When the government unilaterally has 900 million records, I would have to ask why.

So I support the rule. "Yes" on the rule. "Yes" on the underlying legislation.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 475 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

Sec. 5 Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

Sec. 6. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3370.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT
REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject be-

fore the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1400

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING
REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 25) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 25

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING
REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

Paragraph (6)(B) of section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by striking "and for fiscal year 2023" and by inserting " , for fiscal year 2023, and for fiscal year 2024"

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF REDUCED ANNUAL
ADJUSTMENT OF RETIRED PAY FOR
MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES
UNDER THE AGE OF 62 UNDER THE
BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013
WHO FIRST BECAME MEMBERS
PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2014.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1401a(b)(4) of title 10, United States Code, as added by section 403(a) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-67) and amended by section 10001 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(G) MEMBERS COVERED.—This paragraph applies to a member or former member of an armed force who first became a member of a uniformed service on or after January 1, 2014."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on December 1, 2015, immediately after the coming into effect of section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and the amendments made by that section.

SEC. 3. TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM.

Section 1898 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii) is amended—

(1) by amending the heading to read as follows: "TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM";

(2) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish under this title a Transitional Fund for Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Reform (in this section referred to as the 'Fund') which shall be available to the Secretary to provide funds to pay for physicians'

services under part B to supplement the conversion factor under section 1848(d) for 2017 if the conversion factor for 2017 is less than conversion factor for 2013.”;

(3) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “during—” and all that follows and inserting “during or after 2017, \$2,300,000,000.”; and

(4) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “from the Federal” and all that follows and inserting “from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, President Washington once said:

The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive veterans of earlier wars were appreciated by our Nation.

There is no doubt that we appreciate the service and sacrifice of each generation of veterans, from our original veterans, patriots, to those who landed at Normandy during World War II, to present. We as Americans and as lawmakers are forever in debt to the dedication of our military men and women who bore the pain of battle, physically and emotionally.

While we stand here in this Chamber each day and pledge our allegiance to the American flag that they defend, while we are able to act as a democratic body freely elected by the people thanks to their sacrifices, sometimes simple appreciation isn't enough. We have a chance today to treat our veterans with the honor they deserve by ensuring that they are fully compensated for their service during retirement, while also addressing other concerns facing our Nation.

Today we will take up the legislation under consideration to ensure that all servicemen and -women who are enlisted prior to January 1 of this year will receive the full cost of living adjustments in retirement before and after the age of 62. Furthermore, this bill also ensures our seniors will have access to the health care services they depend on through Medicare.

For too long, the relationship between doctor and patient has been strained by the confusion and instability of a well-intentioned but

unaddressed problem with the Medicare program itself, known as the sustainable growth rate or SGR. A component of this legislation works to ensure that seniors are able to receive the care they depend on from the physicians who know them, while also guaranteeing that those physicians are fairly compensated by Medicare through a fund until long-term reform of the SGR is achieved this spring. In doing so, this legislation provides much-needed stability for the medical community by ensuring that physicians have the predictability in billing they need to further their practice and to focus on their patients.

By taking up and passing this legislation in bipartisan fashion, we can address areas of critical concern, while working together to make sure we are also being fiscally responsible. This legislation provides a necessary offset that is in the same vein of the bipartisan budget agreement this Chamber passed just over a month ago.

The American people expect us to make the tough decisions that help them in their daily lives, be it a military veteran looking to secure his retirement after a lifetime of duty and commitment, to the senior making sure their next doctor's visit is free from any undue stress, or ensuring that physicians can further their passion of serving their community.

This legislation provides a path forward for our Nation and this body in addressing their concerns. I urge full bipartisan support of this legislation and encourage the whole House to consider the important needs that the bill addresses.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

There are a number of problems with this piece of legislation. One of the biggest ones is just the process of it. This has been dropped on us at the absolute last minute. In fact, on a bill that has profound impacts on the budget in a number of different areas, we just, moments ago, received a broad outline of a score of how it is going to impact that budget—moments ago. We did not have time to consider this legislation adequately to figure out what impact it was going to have on the budget, but there are a couple of things we do know about it that creates a major problem.

Yes, in the short-term, this pleases two constituency groups. It pleases veterans, and it pleases doctors by giving them the money that they want. But what was not mentioned in the speech talking about this bill in favor of it is how it is paid for. It is paid for by adding another year to sequestration.

Now, there are a couple of interesting things about this. First of all, that is 8 years from now. We have heard nothing

but, from the other side of the aisle, about how government is spending too much money, about how the deficit and the debt are out of control, and yet here we have up-front money being spent on the promise that 8 years from now we will cover those costs. And what is worse, 8 years from now, the way we are going to cover those costs is through sequestration, across-the-board cuts that will cut other entitlement, other mandatory spending programs. So we are really simply robbing one group of deserving people to pay another group of deserving people. That is hardly responsible and hardly helpful.

There are a couple of other specific aspects of this that I want to mention from the Department of Defense standpoint, focusing now just on the portion that addresses the cost of living reduction.

I want to make sure we understand what exactly that cost of living reduction was. In the military, if you serve 20 years, you can retire at that point with your full pension, which is basically half of your pay at that point. This bill took, for those people between the ages of 42 and 62, working age, and reduced their COLA by 1 percent. It didn't reduce the pension. It reduced how much that pension would be increased by each year by 1 percent.

Now, I don't deny that that is a hit and a cost, but what is it offsetting?

The Pentagon has to pay this cost, or at least a portion of this cost. They have to pay—the old bill, and again, I am just getting the new score. But in the old bill, it was roughly \$700 million a year that DOD had to take out of their operating budget and put in to paying for this pension. So, by doing this, we are taking roughly \$700 million a year out of the Pentagon budget.

What does that mean? What it means is a further blow to readiness. Now, Republican and Democratic members of the Armed Services Committee have rightly screamed that we are cutting readiness to the point where we are not training our forces to prepare to fight the fight that we ask them to fight.

Now, the gentleman made an excellent point that, basically, what is going to make people want to sign up for the military? And he mentioned making sure that we take care of our veterans. I certainly think that is an issue. And I will tell you, for the last 10 years we have increased the GI Bill. We have increased pay every single year. We have made dramatic increases in combat pay. I applaud this Chamber for the bipartisan way in which they have taken care of our military veterans. But one other major issue that is going to determine whether or not people want to join the military and stay in it is whether or not we train them and prepare them for the fight we are going to ask them to do. And what the consequences of this are going to be is it is another blow to that.

If you are a pilot, you will not have enough fuel or enough fixed equipment to train as often as you need to. If you are an infantryman, you will not have the bullets to practice as much as you need to. Doing this creates the one thing that everyone has said we don't want, and that is a hollow force, a force that exists but is not trained to fight the fight that we ask them to do.

In fact, there is a great and compelling story told by the chairman of the Armed Services Committee in an argument for why readiness is important, and that was the Korean war, and those were the troops that we sent over in the initial effort to stop the North Koreans. Those troops were not trained, and men died because they were not trained and they were not prepared for a battle that we sent them into.

So we are robbing one portion of the Pentagon budget to pay another, and I think we are robbing precisely the portion that we can least afford to rob. And I don't think there is anything noble about standing up and taking money away from the readiness that is going to train our troops to fight fights that we, as politicians, send them to fight.

Now, I will say, on the SGR fix and the doc fix, that is a short-term problem, and we need to deal with it. Step aside. I would be very, very happy to pay for that, and I support that very strongly.

I do not like the pay-for. Personally, I would be more than willing to raise taxes or cut spending in other places other than to, once again, go back to the sequester option and also to kick it out 8 years from now.

This is an irresponsible bill that approaches very, very real problems. But make no mistake about it. You can stand up and talk about what you are paying for, whom you are giving the money to, but I do hope people will address whom you are taking the money from. You are taking the money from other recipients of mandatory spending by doing sequester again. And as importantly, you are taking the money away from the readiness accounts that will train our troops so that they are able to fight, so that we will hopefully not do the one thing that I think would be utterly unconscionable, and that is to send troops to a battle that we have not prepared them for.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), though she is in support of the bill.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman, and I thank the manager of this legislation.

I thank our chairman, our ranking member of the Armed Services Com-

mittee, for his consistent diligence on acting on behalf of the men and women in the United States military, and certainly those who have already served.

I, for one, will associate myself with the disappointment of the offset that has been offered in this legislation. No one likes sequester.

I will add an additional point of contention is that this Nation is not broke. Economists have said over and over again that we are not broke. We can fully fund and should fund our military as it relates to preparedness. That is part of protecting the homeland, which I serve on the Homeland Security Committee.

□ 1415

Then of course we all have tried to deliberate on what we can do best for our doctors under what we call the SGR, or the doctor fix. Let me just say this as I rise to support this legislation, because I do come from Texas, and I do interact with veterans across the Nation and others.

As painful as the extending out of the sequester to 2024 was, I just want to offer this thought. First of all, as I have argued—and I hope maybe the light will come on that we are not broke, that we will rid ourselves of the sequester and begin to budget fully to provide investment in our people.

So, the reason for advocating is, as I go home every weekend, and throughout the week when I am in the district I will run into military personnel and/or veterans, to speak about the impact that this would have on them, their families. Certainly I believe that this was one that needs to be corrected, and I would like to see us working fairly across the board, that we find a way to respond to the high numbers that this costs, and as well to work with those with optional ideas. I hope before 2024 we have no sequester. As my good friend has indicated, it is a poor way of managing our budget.

Let me also say, because of the many low-income areas and the physicians that I have interacted with, who indicate how difficult it is to serve my low-income patients or my patients that are elderly, that the doctor fix is crucial for the 18th Congressional District in providing health care for those who are in need, particularly those who are elderly.

So, as we look askance at how this has been formulated—and I know that it is one that has come to us—but I would hope that we would do this fix this time, Mr. Speaker, and then work to undo the offset so that we can help seniors and doctors.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so if the gentleman has no further speakers I will close.

I yield myself the balance of my time just really to drive home one point on the Armed Services' side of the equation, and that is the impact that personnel costs are having on the Department of Defense. They are an increasing, growing part of our defense budget in large part because we have been very, very generous with people who serve in the military in terms of pay, benefits, and retirement, but as everyone who serves on the Armed Services Committee knows, increasing personnel costs squeezes out other portions of the budget.

I have talked a lot about readiness. I think that is incredibly important, but also procurement, making sure that the men and women who serve in the military have the equipment that they need to fight the fight. We can have a great military where everyone is very well paid, the benefits go on forever, but they don't have the equipment or the training necessary to fight.

I will tell you, every single expert, right, left, middle, wherever, who studies this question, we just had four prominent think-tanks spanning that spectrum come out with a study on the future of the Department of Defense budget. Every single one of those experts has said that if we do nothing to rein in personnel costs, that is precisely the force that we will have; it will be hollow. It will not have the equipment, and it will not have the training to do what it is that we ask them to do.

Now, we may not think that the 1 percent cut that was done here in the COLA is the best way to go. I can entertain that argument. I certainly understand veterans who were promised this, who expect to receive it. If it is not that, what is it? What is on the table? All we have done in this Chamber is said no, no, no to every effort the Department of Defense has put out there to try to rein in this spending, to try to rein in this spending, as I said, so that we can have a military that lives up to what we want it to live up to. This is a very, very real issue.

Once again, we are punting it and completely ignoring it, completely unaddressed by supporters of this bill. They are just addressing this narrow area, making the broader problem worse.

As I said in the beginning, also, once again, adding sequester back in the lexicon for another year. This is not a solution to any problem, other than a series of political ones. We have just too many difficult choices to make to simply rely on politics with every bill that we bring up here. We have got to make some hard choices. This bill doesn't do it. It punts once again in every conceivable way. It simply makes the problems worse.

I know it is not going to happen, but I would nonetheless urge this body to oppose this bill and make some responsible choices, actually make choices as

to what to do with the budget instead of continually punting on every difficult decision that comes before us. I assure you, this will not be the last one by any stretch of the imagination.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is always responsible to keep promises made to our Nation's veterans. What is before the House today is an extension of current policy that was passed in overwhelming bipartisan fashion right here in this Chamber less than 2 months ago.

In addition, it does protect the promises that the Nation has made to our veterans. So, I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of the bill, to care for those who have borne the battle, and to send that message to all who can hear it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, due to heavy snow in Oregon, and the associated cancellation of flights out of the State, I am unable to be present for the vote on S. 25. I plan to vote in favor of S. 25. I voted against the Murray-Ryan Budget that put in place the unacceptable cuts to military retirement cost of living adjustments (COLAs). These cuts would have reduced annual COLA for military retirees by 1 percent every year until the service member turns 62. This could be as much as an \$83,000 cut over the lifetime of a typical enlisted member who retires after 20 years of service. It is unconscionable that Congress would try to balance the budget on the backs of our military retirees, and I am glad that S. 25 prevents COLA cuts from going into place for all current military retirees and future retirees who are currently serving.

I am also pleased that S. 25 sets aside some funding for preventing Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) cuts to Medicare and TRICARE reimbursements for doctors. I voted against the creation of the faulty SGR formula in 1997 and have fought to fix it ever since. Unfortunately, instead of fixing the SGR Congress has delayed it year after year. This means that if Congress fails to act by March of this year, doctors would face a cut of approximately 27% in their Medicare and TRICARE reimbursements. This is not acceptable. I am hopeful that Congress will use the funds set aside by S. 25 to help pay for a permanent fix to the SGR rather than another delay.

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, while I support the effort to fix the cut to veterans' pensions included in S. 25, I am staunchly opposed to extending sequestration cuts to Medicare. Given that the cut to veterans' pensions is due to occur many years before the sequestration extension, I am supporting this bill, with the hope that Congress will undo this additional extension of sequestration cuts to Medicare. Again, let me state clearly: I oppose extending sequestration cuts to Medicare, and I will be working to convince the Senate to find an alternative way to fund the fix to veterans' pensions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 25, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 475;

Adopting House Resolution 475, if ordered; and

Suspending the rules and passing S. 25.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3193, CONSUMER FINANCIAL FREEDOM AND WASHINGTON ACCOUNTABILITY ACT; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM FEBRUARY 13, 2014, THROUGH FEBRUARY 24, 2014; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 475) providing for consideration of the bill (3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; providing for proceedings during the period from February 13, 2014, through February 24, 2014; and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 222, nays 195, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 58]

YEAS—222

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Amash | Griffith (VA) | Pittenger |
| Bachmann | Grimm | Pitts |
| Bachus | Guthrie | Poe (TX) |
| Barletta | Hall | Pompeo |
| Barr | Hanna | Posey |
| Barton | Harper | Price (GA) |
| Benishek | Harris | Reed |
| Bentivolio | Hartzler | Reichert |
| Bishop (UT) | Hastings (WA) | Renacci |
| Black | Heck (NV) | Ribble |
| Blackburn | Hensarling | Rice (SC) |
| Boustany | Herrera Beutler | Rigell |
| Brady (TX) | Holding | Roby |
| Bridenstine | Hudson | Roe (TN) |
| Brooks (AL) | Huelskamp | Rogers (AL) |
| Brooks (IN) | Huizenga (MI) | Rogers (KY) |
| Broun (GA) | Hultgren | Rogers (MI) |
| Buchanan | Hunter | Rohrabacher |
| Buchon | Hurt | Rokita |
| Burgess | Issa | Rooney |
| Byrne | Jenkins | Ros-Lehtinen |
| Calvert | Johnson (OH) | Roskam |
| Camp | Johnson, Sam | Ross |
| Cantor | Jordan | Rothfus |
| Capito | Joyce | Royce |
| Carter | Kelly (PA) | Runyan |
| Chabot | King (IA) | Ryan (WI) |
| Chaffetz | King (NY) | Salmon |
| Coble | Kingston | Scalise |
| Coffman | Kinzinger (IL) | Schock |
| Cole | Kline | Schweikert |
| Collins (GA) | Labrador | Scott, Austin |
| Collins (NY) | LaMalfa | Sensenbrenner |
| Conaway | Lamborn | Sessions |
| Cook | Lance | Shimkus |
| Cotton | Lankford | Shuster |
| Cramer | Latta | Simpson |
| Crawford | LoBiondo | Smith (MO) |
| Crenshaw | Long | Smith (NE) |
| Culberson | Lucas | Smith (NJ) |
| Daines | Luetkemeyer | Smith (TX) |
| Davis, Rodney | Lummis | Southerland |
| Denham | Marchant | Stewart |
| Dent | Marino | Stivers |
| DeSantis | Massie | Stockman |
| DesJarlais | McAllister | Stutzman |
| Diaz-Balart | McCarthy (CA) | Terry |
| Duffy | McCaul | Thompson (PA) |
| Duncan (SC) | McClintock | Thornberry |
| Duncan (TN) | McHenry | Tiberi |
| Ellmers | McKeon | Tipton |
| Farenthold | McKinley | Turner |
| Fincher | McMorris | Upton |
| Fitzpatrick | Rodgers | Valadao |
| Fleischmann | Meadows | Wagner |
| Fleming | Meehan | Walberg |
| Flores | Messer | Walden |
| Forbes | Mica | Walorski |
| Fortenberry | Miller (FL) | Weber (TX) |
| Fox | Miller (MI) | Webster (FL) |
| Franks (AZ) | Miller, Gary | Wenstrup |
| Frelinghuysen | Mullin | Westmoreland |
| Gardner | Mulvaney | Whitfield |
| Garrett | Murphy (PA) | Williams |
| Gerlach | Neugebauer | Wilson (SC) |
| Gibbs | Noem | Wittman |
| Gibson | Nugent | Wolf |
| Gingrey (GA) | Nunes | Womack |
| Gohmert | Nunnelee | Woodall |
| Goodlatte | Olson | Yoder |
| Gowdy | Palazzo | Yoho |
| Granger | Paulsen | Perry |
| Graves (GA) | Pearce | Petri |
| Graves (MO) | Perry | |
| Griffin (AR) | Petri | |

NAYS—195

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Andrews | Brownley (CA) | Clay |
| Barber | Bustos | Cleaver |
| Barrow (GA) | Butterfield | Clyburn |
| Bass | Capps | Cohen |
| Beatty | Capuano | Connolly |
| Becerra | Carney | Conyers |
| Bera (CA) | Carson (IN) | Cooper |
| Bilirakis | Cartwright | Costa |
| Bishop (GA) | Cassidy | Courtney |
| Bishop (NY) | Castor (FL) | Crowley |
| Blumenauer | Castro (TX) | Cuellar |
| Bonamici | Chu | Cummings |
| Brady (PA) | Cicilline | Davis (CA) |
| Braley (IA) | Clark (MA) | Davis, Danny |
| Brown (FL) | Clarke (NY) | DeGette |

Delaney	Kuster	Price (NC)	[Roll No. 59]	DelBene	Kuster	Polis
DeLauro	Langevin	Quigley		Deutch	Langevin	Price (NC)
DelBene	Larsen (WA)	Rahall	AYES—223	Dingell	Larsen (WA)	Quigley
Deutch	Larson (CT)	Rangel		Doggett	Larson (CT)	Rahall
Dingell	Lee (CA)	Richmond	Amash	Doyle	Lee (CA)	Rangel
Doggett	Levin	Roybal-Allard	Bachmann	Duckworth	Levin	Richmond
Doyle	Lipinski	Ruiz	Bachus	Edwards	Lipinski	Roybal-Allard
Duckworth	Loeb sack	Ruppersberger	Barletta	Ellison	Loeb sack	Ruiz
Edwards	Lofgren	Ryan (OH)	Barr	Engel	Lofgren	Ruppersberger
Ellison	Lowenthal	Sánchez, Linda	Barton	Enyart	Lowenthal	Ryan (OH)
Engel	Lowe y	T.	Benisek	Eshoo	Lowe y	Sánchez, Linda
Enyart	Lujan Grisham	Sanchez, Loretta	Bentivolio	Esty	Lujan Grisham	T.
Eshoo	(NM)	Sanford	Bilirakis	Farr	(NM)	Sanchez, Loretta
Esty	Luján, Ben Ray	Sarbanes	Bishop (UT)	Farr	Luján, Ben Ray	Sarbanes
Farr	(NM)	Schakowsky	Black	Foster	(NM)	Schakowsky
Fattah	Lynch	Schiff	Blackburn	Frankel (FL)	Lynch	Schiff
Foster	Maffei	Schneider	Boustany	Fudge	Maffei	Schneider
Frankel (FL)	Maloney,	Schrader	Brady (TX)	Gabbard	Maloney,	Schrader
Fudge	Carolyn	Schwartz	Bridenstine	Gallo	Carolyn	Schwartz
Gabbard	Maloney, Sean	Schwarz	Brooks (IN)	Garamendi	Maloney, Sean	Scott (VA)
Gallo	Matheson	Scott (VA)	Broun (GA)	Garcia	Matheson	Serrano
Garamendi	Matsui	Serrano	Buchanan	Grayson	Matsui	Sewell (AL)
Garcia	McCarthy (NY)	Sewell (AL)	Bucshon	Green, Al	McCarthy (NY)	Shea-Porter
Grayson	McCollum	Shea-Porter	Burgess	Green, Gene	McCollum	Sherman
Green, Al	McDermott	Sherman	Byrne	Grijalva	McDermott	Sinema
Green, Gene	McGovern	Sinema	Calvert	Hahn	McGovern	Sires
Grijalva	McIntyre	Sires	Camp	Hahn	McIntyre	Slaughter
Gutiérrez	McNerney	Slaughter	Cantor	Hastings (FL)	McNerney	Smith (WA)
Hahn	Meeks	Smith (WA)	Capito	Heck (WA)	Meeks	Speier
Hanabusa	Meng	Speier	Carter	Higgins	Meng	Swalwell (CA)
Hastings (FL)	Michaud	Swalwell (CA)	Cassidy	Holt	Michaud	Takano
Heck (WA)	Miller, George	Takano	Chabot	Honda	Miller, George	Thompson (CA)
Higgins	Moore	Thompson (CA)	Chaffetz	Horsford	Moore	Thompson (MS)
Himes	Moran	Thompson (MS)	Coble	Hoyer	Moran	Tierney
Holt	Murphy (FL)	Tierney	Coffman	Huffman	Murphy (FL)	Titus
Honda	Nadler	Titus	Cole	Jeffries	Nadler	Tonko
Horsford	Napolitano	Tonko	Collins (GA)	Johnson (GA)	Napolitano	Tsongas
Hoyer	Neal	Tsongas	Collins (NY)	Johnson, E. B.	Neal	Van Hollen
Huffman	Negrete McLeod	Van Hollen	Conaway	Jones	Negrete McLeod	Vargas
Jackson Lee	Nolan	Vargas	Cook	Kaptur	Nolan	Veasey
Jeffries	O'Rourke	Veasey	Cotton	Keating	O'Rourke	Vela
Johnson (GA)	Owens	Vela	Cramer	Kelly (IL)	Owens	Velázquez
Johnson, E. B.	Pallone	Velázquez	Crawford	Kennedy	Pallone	Visclosky
Jones	Pascrell	Visclosky	Crenshaw	Kilmer	Pascrell	Walz
Kaptur	Payne	Walz	Culbertson	Kind	Payne	Wasserman
Keating	Pelosi	Wasserman	Daines	Kirkpatrick	Pelosi	Schultz
Kelly (IL)	Perlmutter	Schultz	Davis, Rodney		Perlmutter	Waters
Kennedy	Peters (CA)	Waters	Denham		Peters (CA)	Waxman
Kildee	Peters (MI)	Waxman	Dent		Peters (MI)	Welch
Kilmer	Peterson	Welch	DeSantis		Peterson	Wilson (FL)
Kind	Pocan	Wilson (FL)	DesJarlais		Pocan	Yarmuth
Kirkpatrick	Polis	Yarmuth	Diaz-Balart		Polis	

NOT VOTING—14

Aderholt	Gosar	Pastor (AZ)
Amodei	Hinojosa	Pingree (ME)
Campbell	Israel	Rush
Cárdenas	Latham	Scott, David
DeFazio	Lewis	

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Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. GALLEGRO changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 58, had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 223, noes 193, answered “present” 1, not voting 14, as follows:

NOES—193

Andrews	Bustos	Clyburn
Barber	Butterfield	Cohen
Barrow (GA)	Capps	Connolly
Bass	Capuano	Conyers
Beatty	Carney	Cooper
Becerra	Carson (IN)	Costa
Bera (CA)	Cartwright	Courtney
Bishop (GA)	Castor (FL)	Crowley
Bishop (NY)	Castro (TX)	Cuellar
Blumenauer	Chu	Cummings
Bonamici	Cicilline	Davis (CA)
Brady (PA)	Clark (MA)	Davis, Danny
Bralley (IA)	Clarke (NY)	DeGette
Brown (FL)	Clay	Delaney
Brownley (CA)	Cleaver	DeLauro

Griffin (AR)	Pittenger
Grimm	Pitts
Guthrie	Poe (TX)
Hall	Pompeo
Hanna	Posey
Harper	Price (GA)
Harris	Reed
Hartzler	Reichert
Hastings (WA)	Renacci
Heck (NV)	Ribble
Hensarling	Rice (SC)
Herrera Beutler	Rigell
Holding	Roby
Hudson	Roe (TN)
Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (AL)
Hultgren	Rogers (KY)
Hunter	Rogers (MI)
Hurt	Rohrabacher
Issa	Rokita
Jenkins	Rooney
Johnson (OH)	Ros-Lehtinen
Johnson, Sam	Roskam
Jordan	Ross
Joyce	Rothfus
Kelly (PA)	Royce
King (IA)	Ryunan
King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Kingston	Salmon
Kinzinger (IL)	Sanford
Kline	Scalise
Labrador	Schock
LaMalfa	Schweikert
Lamborn	Scott, Austin
Lance	Sensenbrenner
Lankford	Sessions
Latta	Shimkus
LoBiondo	Shuster
Long	Simpson
Lucas	Smith (MO)
Luetkemeyer	Smith (NE)
Lummis	Smith (NJ)
Murchant	Smith (TX)
Marino	Southerland
Massie	Stewart
McAllister	Stivers
McCarthy (CA)	Stockman
McCauley	Stutzman
McClintock	Terry
McHenry	Thompson (PA)
McKeon	Thornberry
McKinley	Tiberi
McMorris	Tipton
Rodgers	Turner
Meadows	Upton
Meehan	Valadao
Messer	Wagner
Mica	Walberg
Miller (FL)	Walden
Miller (MI)	Walorski
Miller, Gary	Weber (TX)
Mullin	Webster (FL)
Mulvaney	Wenstrup
Murphy (PA)	Westmoreland
Neugebauer	Whitfield
Noem	Williams
Nugent	Wilson (SC)
Nunes	Wittman
Nunnelee	Wolf
Olson	Womack
Palazzo	Woodall
Paulsen	Yoder
Pearce	Yoho
Perry	Young (AK)
Petri	Young (IN)

Duckworth	Edwards	Ellison	Engel	Enyart	Eshoo	Esty	Farr	Fattah	Foster	Frankel (FL)	Gallo	Gabbard	Garcia	Grayson	Green, Al	Green, Gene	Grijalva	Gutiérrez	Hahn	Hanabusa	Hastings (FL)	Heck (WA)	Higgins	Himes	Holt	Honda	Horsford	Hoyer	Huelskamp	Huffman	Jackson Lee	Jeffries	Johnson (GA)	Johnson, E. B.	Jones	Kaptur	Keating	Kelly (IL)	Kennedy	Kildee	Kilmer	Kind	Kirkpatrick
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ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Brooks (AL)

NOT VOTING—14

Aderholt	Gosar	Pastor (AZ)
Amodei	Hinojosa	Pingree (ME)
Campbell	Israel	Rush
Cárdenas	Latham	Scott, David
DeFazio	Lewis	

□ 1501

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 59, had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 25) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 326, nays 90, answered “present” 1, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 60]
YEAS—326

Amash	Duncan (SC)	LaMalfa
Andrews	Duncan (TN)	Lamborn
Bachmann	Ellmers	Lance
Bachus	Enyart	Langevin
Barber	Eshoo	Lankford
Barletta	Esty	Latta
Barr	Farenthold	Lipinski
Barrow (GA)	Farr	LoBiondo
Beatty	Fincher	Loeb
Benishek	Fitzpatrick	Loebsack
Bentivolio	Fleischmann	Loftgren
Bera (CA)	Fleming	Long
Billirakis	Flores	Lowenthal
Bishop (GA)	Forbes	Lowey
Bishop (NY)	Fortenberry	Lucas
Bishop (UT)	Foster	Luetkemeyer
Black	Fox	Lujan Grisham
Blackburn	Franks (AZ)	(NM)
Bonamici	Gabbard	Lummis
Boustany	Galego	Lynch
Brady (TX)	Garamendi	Maffei
Braley (IA)	Garcia	Maloney,
Bridenstine	Gardner	Carolyn
Brooks (AL)	Garrett	Maloney, Sean
Brooks (IN)	Gerlach	Marchant
Broun (GA)	Gibbs	Marino
Brown (FL)	Gibson	Masie
Brownley (CA)	Gingrey (GA)	Matheson
Buchanan	Gohmert	McAllister
Buchon	Goodlatte	McCarthy (CA)
Burgess	Gowdy	McCarthy (NY)
Bustos	Granger	McCaul
Butterfield	Graves (GA)	McClintock
Byrne	Graves (MO)	McHenry
Calvert	Green, Al	McIntyre
Camp	Green, Gene	McKeon
Cantor	Griffin (AR)	McKinley
Capito	Griffith (VA)	McMorris
Capps	Grimm	Rodgers
Capuano	Guthrie	Meadows
Carney	Gutiérrez	Messer
Carson (IN)	Hall	Mica
Carter	Hanna	Michaud
Cassidy	Harper	Miller (FL)
Castor (FL)	Harris	Miller (MI)
Castro (TX)	Hartzler	Miller, Gary
Chabot	Hastings (FL)	Moore
Chaffetz	Hastings (WA)	Mullin
Chu	Heck (WA)	Murphy (FL)
Cicilline	Hensarling	Murphy (PA)
Clark (MA)	Herrera Beutler	Neal
Cleaver	Higgins	Neugebauer
Coble	Himes	Noem
Coffman	Hinojosa	Nolan
Cohen	Holding	Nunes
Cole	Horsford	Nunnelee
Collins (NY)	Hudson	O'Rourke
Conaway	Huizenga (MI)	Olson
Connolly	Hultgren	Owens
Cook	Hunter	Palazzo
Cooper	Hurt	Pascrell
Costa	Issa	Paulsen
Cotton	Jackson Lee	Pearce
Courtney	Jenkins	Perlmutter
Cramer	Johnson (GA)	Perry
Crawford	Johnson (OH)	Peters (CA)
Crenshaw	Johnson, Sam	Peters (MI)
Cuellar	Jordan	Peterson
Culberson	Joyce	Petri
Daines	Keating	Pittenger
Davis, Rodney	Kelly (PA)	Pitts
Delaney	Kennedy	Poe (TX)
DelBene	Kildee	Polis
Denham	Kilmer	Pompeo
Dent	Kind	Posey
DeSantis	King (IA)	Price (GA)
Deutch	King (NY)	Price (NC)
Diaz-Balart	Kingston	Qigley
Dingell	Kirkpatrick	Rahall
Doggett	Kline	Rangel
Duckworth	Kuster	Reed
Duffy	Labrador	Reichert
		Renacci

Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rooney
Ryan (OH)
Salmon
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions

Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tsongas
Turner
Upton

Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—90

Barton
Bass
Becerra
Blumenauer
Brady (PA)
Cartwright
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clyburn
Collins (GA)
Conyers
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
DeLauro
DesJarlais
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Fattah
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Grayson
Grijalva
Miller (MI)
Nader
Napolitano
Negrete McLeod
Nugent

Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huffman
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Kinzinger (IL)
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meehan
Meeke
Meng
Miller, George
Moran
Mulvaney
Nadler
Napolitano
Negrete McLeod
Nugent

Pallone
Payne
Pelosi
Pocan
Ribble
Rokita
Roybal-Allard
Ryan (WI)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanford
Schakowsky
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Serrano
Shimkus
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stutzman
Thompson (CA)
Tonko
Velázquez
Visclosky
Waters
Waxman
Wilson (FL)
Wolf

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Sanchez, Loretta

NOT VOTING—14

Aderholt
Amodei
Campbell
Cárdenas
DeFazio

Frelinghuysen
Gosar
Israel
Latham
Lewis

Pastor (AZ)
Pingree (ME)
Rush
Scott, David

□ 1509

Ms. KAPTUR changed her vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York changed her vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resigna-

tion as a member of the Committee on the Budget:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 22, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, Due to my recent appointment to the House Judiciary Committee, I hereby resign from the House Committee on the Budget.

Sincerely,

DAVID N. CICILLINE,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRMEN AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS RELATING TO SLEEP DISORDERS

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3578) to ensure that any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder is adopted pursuant to a rulemaking proceeding, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3578

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRMEN AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS RELATING TO SLEEP DISORDERS.

[(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation may implement or enforce a requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment (including consideration of all possible treatment alternatives) of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder only if the requirement is adopted pursuant to a rulemaking proceeding.]

[(b) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to a requirement that was in force before November 1, 2013.]

[(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following definitions apply:]

[(1) AIRMAN.—The term “airman” has the meaning given that term in section 40102(a) of title 49, United States Code.]

[(2) AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER.—The term “air traffic controller” means a civilian employee of the Department of Transportation described in section 2109 of title 5, United States Code.]

[(3) SLEEP DISORDER.—The term “sleep disorder” includes obstructive sleep apnea.]

SECTION 1. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRMEN AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS RELATING TO SLEEP DISORDERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Transportation may, consistent with accepted medical standards and practices, implement or enforce a requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment (including consideration of all possible treatment alternatives) of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder—

(1) in the case of an airman, only if the requirement is adopted pursuant to a rulemaking proceeding; and

(2) in the case of an air traffic controller, only if the Federal Aviation Administration meets its obligations pursuant to chapter 71 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) *APPLICABILITY.*—Subsection (a) shall not apply to a requirement that was in force before November 1, 2013.

(c) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) *AIRMAN.*—The term “airman” has the meaning given that term in section 40102(a) of title 49, United States Code.

(2) *AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER.*—The term “air traffic controller” means a civilian employee of the Department of Transportation described in section 2109 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) *SLEEP DISORDER.*—The term “sleep disorder” includes obstructive sleep apnea.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

□ 1515

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 3578.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3578.

Let me begin by thanking some of my colleagues—first and foremost, Congressman LARSEN, also Congressman BUCSHON, LIPINSKI, and GRAVES—for their help and support in introducing this very important bill.

Before I explain the bill, I would like to enter into the RECORD letters of support for H.R. 3578.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3578 addresses the medical certification process for pilots and air traffic controllers as it relates only to sleep disorders.

Currently, pilots and controllers are required to be medically certificated by the FAA at varying intervals. The duration, as well as the type of medical certification, depends on the type of activity they are seeking to perform—airline pilot, private pilot, et cetera—and all other factors, such as age. Regardless, pilots and controllers undergo a thorough medical review process, and the FAA ultimately decides whether or not to issue them a medical certification. Further, there are no certain medical conditions that the FAA automatically deems as disqualifying. Currently, pilots with one or more of those conditions, including sleep apnea, are required to seek a special certificate, which is issued at the sole discretion of the FAA and only if the applicants can prove they will not endanger public safety. Neither process is perfect, but it is a process that works.

In November of 2013, the FAA announced a proposal to significantly and arbitrarily modify the medical requirements for airmen who might be at risk of having a sleep disorder, such as sleep apnea, even in the absence of any clinical evidence. The FAA’s proposal would effectively assume overweight pilots have a sleep disorder based solely on their body mass index and would require them to prove otherwise at their own expense. It is a scenario of being guilty before proven innocent. The potential cost to these pilots could be thousands of dollars.

The FAA proposal, announced without any input from the stakeholders, is neither reasonable nor effective. However, health issues can arise unexpectedly, which is why I have always supported reasonable, effective, and proactive efforts to improve aviation safety; but the FAA’s action related to sleep disorders was carried out behind closed doors, with no input from stakeholders, and based upon controversial assumptions. While I applaud the FAA for seeking stakeholder input recently, it is too little, too late.

Safety is my top priority as chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee. That is why the legislation we are considering today, H.R. 3578, does not prohibit the FAA from implementing new medical certification requirements for sleep disorders, but it does require the FAA, in the case of pilots, to conduct an open rulemaking process and, in the case of air traffic controllers, to use a process established under current Federal employment law.

Finally, it is important to note that H.R. 3578 does not change the FAA’s medical certification process or otherwise prevent the agency from responding to new medical issues in a timely manner. This legislation applies only to proposed changes to the medical certification process for sleep disorders. In addition, the rulemaking process required by this legislation does not apply to the enforcement of requirements providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of pilots and controllers for sleep disorders in force prior to November 1, 2013.

H.R. 3578 is a bipartisan bill that is supported by a wide range of stakeholders, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

H.R. 3578
Industry Supporters:
Air Line Pilots Association
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Airlines for America
Allied Pilots Association
Coalition of Airline Pilots Association
Experimental Aircraft Association
Federal Aviation Administration Managers Association
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
Helicopter Association International
National Agricultural Aviation Association

National Air Traffic Controllers Association

National Air Transportation Association
National Business Aviation Association
NetJets Association of Shared Aircraft Pilots

Recreational Aviation Foundation
Southwest Airlines Pilots Association

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3578.

I want to thank Chairman LOBIONDO for bringing this issue to the attention of the committee and for working hard to bring it to the floor so quickly.

This bill would require the Federal Aviation Administration to go through a rulemaking process if it chooses to propose and implement new pilot medical certification requirements for sleep apnea.

Under current law, in order for a pilot to be certificated, every pilot is screened by an aviation medical examiner to ensure he is safe and capable of piloting an aircraft. If a pilot is diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea or with any other disqualifying medical condition, that pilot must obtain a “special issuance” medical certificate from the FAA to keep flying.

Last November, the FAA abruptly announced changes to the medical certification process as it pertains only to sleep apnea. The new policy would require all airmen with a body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or more to undergo new testing and evaluation requirements for obstructive sleep apnea in order to maintain their medical certificates.

General aviation groups and pilot unions have raised concerns that the FAA’s proposed policy changes could impose significant undue costs on thousands of airmen without an adequate opportunity for the public to comment on the relative safety merits of these new requirements.

H.R. 3578 would ensure transparency and would require the FAA to initiate a rulemaking if it chooses to implement a new pilot medical certification requirement for sleep apnea. This bill would not prohibit the FAA from implementing new medical certification requirements, but the rulemaking process will provide the opportunity for all interested parties to comment on any proposed changes. So I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3578.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES), who has been a big help on this issue.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, as a general aviation pilot myself, I was shocked when the FAA Air Surgeon, Dr. Fred Tilton, announced a forthcoming guidance to require additional testing for pilots, as was mentioned, with the arbitrary numbers of a BMI of 40 and a neck size of 17 inches.

Not only did he indicate in December that the FAA would move forward with this new guidance on sleep apnea, but that it would challenge Congress by saying:

If Congress passes a law to force industry consultation, we will be compliant; but until they do so, we will move forward with our guidance.

Today, Congress is acting against the FAA's egregious assumption that these pilots pose a safety risk if untreated. When it comes to the general aviation community's safety record, there is simply no data or evidence to suggest that sleep apnea—or any other medical issue for that matter—is the cause behind general aviation accidents. In fact, most of these accidents happen as a result of weather. GA pilots know that, every time they get into a plane, they are taking their own lives into their hands as well as the lives of others. So, naturally, pilots are not going to knowingly put themselves into an unsafe situation.

What is so absurd about this process is just the medical certification in general. The FAA requires GA pilots—or any pilot for that matter—to go through certification every 2 years for a third-class medical and certification every year for a first- or a second-class medical, but there is nothing in that process that guarantees a pilot's fitness to fly within that time period. It is up to the pilot to determine his fitness to fly himself or herself, and he or she knows best.

General aviation supports 1.2 million jobs, and it contributes \$150 billion annually to the GDP. There are 223,000 general aviation aircraft out there serving 19,000 small and regional airports. It accounts for 27 million flight-hours, and it serves 166 million passengers every year. It is more important than most people realize, and adding burdensome regulations like the FAA is proposing on sleep apnea do nothing but discourage further participation, at least in general aviation.

This rule would also have some dramatic effects on commercial aviation, which is also facing a pilot shortage in and of itself. Based on these arbitrary benchmarks, a pilot is going to be required, as was pointed out, to get further examinations and sleep tests, which is going to slow the process down that much more.

The outcry from the pilot community, both in general aviation and in commercial, has led to the introduction of this bill, H.R. 3578. It requires the FAA to go through the normal rulemaking process, which allows for public comment and requires them to analyze the impact of the regulation. The FAA should follow the rules, plain and simple. That is all we are asking. They should listen to pilots and take their viewpoints into account.

I want to thank Chairman LOBIONDO and all of the others for sponsoring this

piece of legislation and for joining me to make sure the FAA goes through the proper channels in issuing this regulation.

Similar legislation addressing sleep apnea for truckers was passed by both the House and Senate last fall, and it was signed by the President. I hope my House colleagues will join me in supporting this similarly commonsense piece of legislation.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HANNA).

Mr. HANNA. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3578, which would require the FAA to conduct a formal rulemaking process for sleep apnea certifications for pilots and air traffic controllers.

As a member of both the Small Business Committee and the Transportation Committee and as a pilot, I am deeply concerned that complex Federal regulations and bureaucracy are hurting America's aviation industry.

When deemed absolutely necessary, new FAA rules should follow a transparent and open process that includes strong oversight and input from all stakeholders. The proposed sleep apnea regulation was a broad administration guidance with no oversight or input. Furthermore, this is yet another example of the administration's regulating in search of a problem.

According to the Civil Aviation Medical Association, there is no scientific evidence that sleep apnea has compromised aviation safety. According to yesterday's Washington Post, the number of small planes flying across this country has fallen by nearly 200,000 since 1980. The production of single-engine airplanes has fallen twentyfold to below 700 per year.

We need to ensure that any regulations help, not hinder, the aviation industry in growing and prospering. Across the Nation, nearly 1.2 million workers depend on the general aviation industry. This is especially true in rural upstate New York. I encourage the FAA to ensure that we promote safety in a way that is consistent with growing our vital aviation industry and so that it makes sense in the real world.

H.R. 3578 would require the FAA to follow a proven and transparent process when issuing rules, so I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from

Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON). I thank him for his help on this issue.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bill.

Less than 6 months ago, the House passed my bill, which requires the Department of Transportation to address the issue of sleep apnea for truck drivers through a rule and not guidance, potentially saving the industry \$1 billion. Unfortunately, our Nation's pilots and air traffic controllers are facing a similar arbitrary guidance issued by the FAA, and we have brought a bill to the floor to protect them.

As a doctor, I know firsthand that sleeping disorders are incredibly serious and can be very dangerous. However, I also know that you can't diagnose any patient by a set of arbitrary guidelines and stereotypes. Like any major disease, it can only be diagnosed through proper testing and conversation with a doctor. Issuing guidance based on nonmedical factors on this issue for pilots and air traffic controllers will cause doctors to order unnecessary tests, driving up the costs of health care and potentially affecting our Nation's airline travelers.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on this piece of legislation.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I do not have any more speakers, and I am prepared to close when Mr. LARSEN is finished.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to again ask my colleagues to support this legislation. It is bipartisan. We have worked hard to get it here quickly, and we appreciate people supporting this.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again thank my colleague Mr. LARSEN and colleagues who were interested in this issue.

I would like to reiterate that this bill is about transparency and about working with stakeholders, two areas in which the Federal Government desperately needs to improve. I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3578, a bill to ensure new and revised requirements for screening, testing, or treatment of airman or air traffic controller sleep disorders.

As the former chair of the House Homeland Security Committee Subcommittee on Transportation Security I am in strong support of this bill. This bill is a commonsense measure to address sleep disorder conditions that airman and air traffic controllers may be experiencing.

Under the bill the Secretary of Transportation can follow consistent acceptable medical standards and practices, to implement or

enforce actions that provide for the screening, testing, or treatment; including consideration of all possible treatment alternatives for sleep disorders.

Sleep disorders are a serious matter that requires Congressional action to save lives and improve medical knowledge and best practices to assist those who suffer from a wide range of conditions.

There are 40 million people, or about 5 percent of the population, in the United States who suffer from chronic sleep disorders. It is estimated that sleep disorders cost U.S. employers about \$18 billion in productivity due to sleep loss issues.

Further it is estimated that about 62 percent of all adults in the United States experience sleep problems a few nights each week.

During any year, about 30 percent of all adults suffer from insomnia. In addition, only 29 percent of adults report getting the required amount of sleep each night.

At least 37.9 percent of adults report unintentionally falling to sleep during the day once in the past month. The annual number of fatal car crashes associated with falling asleep at the wheel is 1,550. The number of non-fatal crashes associated with falling asleep is 40,000.

Sleep disorders can occur due to medical conditions such as excessive drowsiness, fibromyalgia or narcolepsy and low thyroid function.

Drowsiness in the context of sleep disorders is more serious than when the average person feels drowsy or sleepy during the day. We can usually deal with that feeling by walking around, consuming a hot beverage or distracting themselves with other mentally stimulating activity.

The excessive drowsiness experienced as a sleep disorder is a feeling of abnormally needing to sleep during the day. People experiencing excessive drowsiness may fall asleep in inappropriate situations or at inappropriate times.

Fibromyalgia is a common syndrome that can lead to sleep disorders. Fibromyalgia is a syndrome in which a person has long-term, body-wide pain and tenderness in the joints, muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues. Fibromyalgia has also been linked to fatigue, sleep problems, headaches, depression, and anxiety.

Narcolepsy is more widely known as a nervous system disorder that can cause a sufferer to fall into an uncontrolled sleep nearly instantaneously. The exact cause of narcolepsy is unknown.

In some patients, narcolepsy is linked to reduced amounts of a protein called hypocretin, which is made in the brain. The reason why narcolepsy can lead to less production of this protein is unknown.

Researchers believe that low levels of a protein called hypocretin may be an underlying cause of narcolepsy—a disorder that makes people fall asleep during the day. Pharmaceutical companies are now looking for drugs that will replenish the lost hypocretin.

Emmanuel Mignot, of Stanford University Medical School, California, and his colleagues identified that low levels of hypocretin in patients with narcolepsy, their study appear in the September issue of *Nature Medicine*.

There is no cure for narcolepsy and symptoms include an uncontrollable desire to sleep during in the day, sudden loss of muscle tone, and paralysis. Narcolepsy is diagnosable as early as ages 15 to 25, and those affected by the disorder must find ways to cope with illness by changing their work and eating habits to achieve a level of normal behavior.

There is far too little research that answers the hard questions about sleep disorders which impact airmen and air traffic controllers as well as millions of people in the United States.

I ask my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 3578.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3578, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

□ 1530

SMALL CAP LIQUIDITY REFORM ACT OF 2013

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3448) to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3448

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. LIQUIDITY PILOT PROGRAM FOR SECURITIES OF CERTAIN EMERGING GROWTH COMPANIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 11A(c)(6) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78k-1(c)(6)) is amended to read as follows:

“(6) LIQUIDITY PILOT PROGRAM FOR SECURITIES OF CERTAIN EMERGING GROWTH COMPANIES.—

“(A) QUOTING INCREMENT.—Beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2014, the securities of a covered emerging growth company shall be quoted using—

“(i) a minimum increment of \$0.05; or

“(ii) if, not later than 60 days after such date of enactment, the company so elects in the manner described in subparagraph (D)—

“(I) a minimum increment of \$0.10; or

“(II) the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(B) TRADING INCREMENT.—In the case of a covered emerging growth company the securities of which are quoted at a minimum increment of \$0.05 or \$0.10 under this paragraph, the Commission shall determine the increment at which the securities of such company are traded.

“(C) FUTURE RIGHT TO OPT OUT OR CHANGE MINIMUM INCREMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—At any time beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2014, a covered emerging growth company the securities of which are quoted at a minimum increment of \$0.05 or \$0.10 under this paragraph may elect in the manner described in subparagraph (D)—

“(I) for the securities of such company to be quoted at the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph; or

“(II) to change the minimum increment at which the securities of such company are quoted from \$0.05 to \$0.10 or from \$0.10 to \$0.05.

“(ii) WHEN ELECTION EFFECTIVE.—An election under this subparagraph shall take effect on the date that is 30 days after such election is made.

“(iii) SINGLE ELECTION TO CHANGE MINIMUM INCREMENT.—A covered emerging growth company may not make more than one election under clause (i)(II).

“(D) MANNER OF ELECTION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—An election is made in the manner described in this subparagraph by informing the Commission of such election.

“(ii) NOTIFICATION OF EXCHANGES AND OTHER TRADING VENUES.—Upon being informed of an election under clause (i), the Commission shall notify each exchange or other trading venue where the securities of the covered emerging growth company are quoted or traded.

“(E) ISSUERS CEASING TO BE COVERED EMERGING GROWTH COMPANIES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—If an issuer the securities of which are quoted at a minimum increment of \$0.05 or \$0.10 under this paragraph ceases to be a covered emerging growth company, the securities of such issuer shall be quoted at the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(ii) EXCEPTIONS.—The Commission may by regulation, as the Commission considers appropriate, specify any circumstances under which an issuer shall continue to be considered a covered emerging growth company for purposes of this paragraph after the issuer ceases to meet the requirements of subparagraph (L)(i).

“(F) SECURITIES TRADING BELOW \$1.—

“(i) INITIAL PRICE.—

“(I) AT EFFECTIVE DATE.—If the trading price of the securities of a covered emerging growth company is below \$1 at the close of the last trading day before the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2014, the securities of such company shall be quoted using the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(II) AT IPO.—If a covered emerging growth company makes an initial public offering

after the day described in subclause (I) and the first share of the securities of such company is offered to the public at a price below \$1, the securities of such company shall be quoted using the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(ii) AVERAGE TRADING PRICE.—If the average trading price of the securities of a covered emerging growth company falls below \$1 for any 90-day period beginning on or after the day before the date of the enactment of the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2014, the securities of such company shall, after the end of such period, be quoted using the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(G) FRAUD OR MANIPULATION.—If the Commission determines that a covered emerging growth company has violated any provision of the securities laws prohibiting fraudulent, manipulative, or deceptive acts or practices, the securities of such company shall, after the date of the determination, be quoted using the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(H) INELIGIBILITY FOR INCREASED MINIMUM INCREMENT PERMANENT.—The securities of an issuer may not be quoted at a minimum increment of \$0.05 or \$0.10 under this paragraph at any time after—

“(i) such issuer makes an election under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II);

“(ii) such issuer makes an election under subparagraph (C)(i)(I), except during the period before such election takes effect; or

“(iii) the securities of such issuer are required by this paragraph to be quoted using the increment at which such securities would be quoted without regard to the minimum increments established under this paragraph.

“(I) ADDITIONAL REPORTS AND DISCLOSURES.—The Commission shall require a covered emerging growth company the securities of which are quoted at a minimum increment of \$0.05 or \$0.10 under this paragraph to make such reports and disclosures as the Commission considers necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors.

“(J) LIMITATION OF LIABILITY.—An issuer (or any officer, director, manager, or other agent of such issuer) shall not be liable to any person (other than such issuer) under any law or regulation of the United States, any constitution, law, or regulation of any State or political subdivision thereof, or any contract or other legally enforceable agreement (including any arbitration agreement) for any losses caused solely by the quoting of the securities of such issuer at a minimum increment of \$0.05 or \$0.10, by the trading of such securities at the increment determined by the Commission under subparagraph (B), or by both such quoting and trading, as provided in this paragraph.

“(K) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2014, and every 6 months thereafter, the Commission, in coordination with each exchange on which the securities of covered emerging growth companies are quoted or traded, shall submit to Congress a report on the quoting and trading of securities in increments permitted by this paragraph and the extent to which such quoting and trading are increasing liquidity and active trading by incentivizing capital commitment, research

coverage, and brokerage support, together with any legislative recommendations the Commission may have.

“(L) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) COVERED EMERGING GROWTH COMPANY.—The term ‘covered emerging growth company’ means an emerging growth company, as defined in the first paragraph (80) of section 3(a), except that—

“(I) such paragraph shall be applied by substituting ‘\$750,000,000’ for ‘\$1,000,000,000’ each place it appears; and

“(II) subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D) of such paragraph do not apply.

“(ii) SECURITY.—The term ‘security’ means an equity security.

“(M) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this paragraph, the Commission may—

“(i) make such adjustments to the pilot program specified in this paragraph as the Commission considers necessary or appropriate to ensure that such program can provide statistically meaningful or reliable results, including adjustments to eliminate selection bias among participants, expand the number of participants eligible to participate in such program, and change the duration of such program for one or more participants; and

“(ii) conduct any other study or pilot program, in conjunction with or separate from the pilot program specified in this paragraph (as such program may be adjusted pursuant to clause (i)), to evaluate quoting or trading in various minimum increments.”.

(b) SUNSET.—Effective on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, section 11A(c)(6) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78k-1(c)(6)) is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) and the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CARNEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 3448, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3448, the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2013. This bill, approved by a vote of 57-0 in the Financial Services Committee last year, represents yet again another bipartisan and commonsense effort by the House to promote small business capital formation.

I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) for all of his hard work and leadership in bringing this very important piece of legislation to the floor. I also would like to thank Mr. CARNEY from Delaware for all of his hard work and support for this legislation as well.

What are we talking about here?

Today, many small, publicly traded companies are finding it more and more difficult to attract investor demand and trading liquidity for their stocks. As a result, these companies may have trouble obtaining the investor capital they need for their companies to grow and create jobs.

H.R. 3448 would begin to address this liquidity crunch by testing, through a pilot program, whether increasing the minimum trading increment, also called the ‘tick’ size, for certain emerging growth company stocks, or EGCs, from a penny to 5 cents or 10 cents would promote liquidity by incentivizing market makers and other investors to trade these stocks, and by concentrating this trading interest around fewer price points.

All of this may sound like a lot of Wall Street and stock market jargon, but at its core this bill is a simple bill aimed at helping small American companies obtain the capital that they need from investors so that they can grow their businesses.

What the bill does is leave most of the details of designing and administering the tick size pilot program to the experts at the SEC. As a result, the SEC should have the discretion it needs to devise a pilot program that reflects the views of all market participants and interested parties, and that generates the maximum amount of deep and useful data on how different tick sizes impact trading liquidity in small-cap stocks.

By first establishing a temporary pilot program, this bill will ensure that any potential and permanent changes to tick sizes that may be done sometime in the future will be done only in a thoughtful, incremental, and data-driven manner.

The data generated from this pilot program may also be useful into how other aspects of the stock market work, but on this point, let me be clear. This bill is focused on improving small business capital formation. This is not a bill to reform the fundamental structure of U.S. equity markets, nor is it intended to be a substitute for a more detailed, holistic review by the SEC of how these markets work.

Ultimately, there are no guarantees that a tick size pilot program will achieve the desired results and that the benefits of any future action on tick sizes will outweigh the cost, but we should all be agreed that this commonsense approach will help small businesses grow. It is worth trying, and we need many more like it.

Again, I will conclude by saying that this bill was approved by the Financial Services Committee 57-0. In addition, many market participants, as well as SEC Chair White; at least two of her colleagues, Commissioners Gallagher and Piowar; and the SEC’s Advisory Committee on Small and Emerging

Companies, have all vocally supported the concept of a tick size pilot program.

So I hope that this legislation will serve as a final push forward getting this tick size program forward and moving off the ground. I urge my colleagues to, again, promote small business capital formation by passing H.R. 3448, and I urge my friends over in the Senate to take up this bill immediately as well.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3448. I would like to thank Mr. GARRETT, chairman of the Capital Markets Subcommittee. Particularly, I would like to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) for his good work on this piece of legislation. I certainly enjoyed working with him on it.

I particularly want to applaud Mr. DUFFY for his willingness to address concerns raised by stakeholders, members of the committee, and those we heard from during the hearing on this bill. I appreciate his commitment to working in a bipartisan way in developing good and workable policy in this legislation.

As has been already said, the purpose of our bill is really pretty simple. We know that small businesses are the engine of job creation in this country. We want to encourage investors to take a closer look at small businesses and invest in them so that they can continue to grow and create jobs once they have gone public.

In my home State of Delaware, as a corporate center, we have a lot of people who spend a lot of time paying attention to corporate formation and corporate governance. In a former life as the State secretary of finance and as Lieutenant Governor, I worked with a lot of these people. They have been following the trends over the past 10 years, and they have seen and observed the decline in IPOs and the changes in the growth of emerging growth companies after going public.

That is why last year I worked with my colleague, Mr. FINCHER from Tennessee, on a provision in the JOBS Act that created an onramp for companies to go public. The bill has already been credited with helping fuel the recent uptick we have seen in the initial public offerings, which is very good for job growth in this economy. H.R. 3448 builds on that work by helping companies grow after their IPO.

Our hope, as has been described, is that increasing the increments that stocks trade in will draw more attention to these small emerging growth companies. We hope that brokers will spend more time and resources researching these companies and, ultimately, encourage greater investment in them. This increased coverage from

brokers and analysts will help small companies grow and create jobs.

We have heard concerns about some unintended consequences that increased tick size could have, which is why this bill instructs the SEC to conduct a pilot program to better examine the effects and effectiveness of larger spreads. Additionally, this bill gives the SEC the flexibility to implement a pilot program in a way that will produce the best information on how to proceed afterwards.

Thanks to members and staff on both sides of the aisle working closely together, we were able to come up with a bill that makes sense and that addresses the concerns that we heard from other members, from stakeholders, and from the Financial Services Committee hearing that we had.

The four amendments accepted in the committee were all consistent with our original objective. Each improved the bill based on input that we received from members and stakeholders.

This bill is truly a bipartisan effort. As Mr. GARRETT pointed out, it passed out of the committee on a 57-0 vote. As with any piece of legislation, once we got into the weeds, it turned out to be a little bit more complicated than we initially thought, but the end result is a good product that Members on both sides of the aisle can support.

I want to close by again thanking Mr. DUFFY and his staff for their hard work and for working together with us and involving us in the discussions about the particulars of this bill.

I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 3448, the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2013.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), the prime sponsor of this legislation and the gentleman who has been the driving force behind this idea.

Mr. DUFFY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding time.

As both you and the gentleman from Delaware mentioned, it is pretty remarkable that on the Financial Services Committee, a committee which comes together and doesn't always agree on the particulars of every debate that we have, that this bill came out with a vote of 57-0, moving it forward, which I think underscores the fact that there was a lot of work put in on the front end, making sure we were working out the kinks and the concerns.

I am very appreciative of Mr. CARNEY from Delaware and all the effort and help he put in, and for Mr. GARRETT's help in making sure that we could put a package together that we can get a lot of folks to buy into.

We all realize that job creation, especially in a slower moving economy, is incredibly important. Job creation at the higher levels comes from our small

businesses, our emerging growth companies. As Mr. CARNEY earlier referenced, that is why Financial Services came together and passed a bill out of the House, along with the Senate moving it, and the President signing, the JOBS Act, which helped emerging growth companies actually get on the onramp and go public, accessing more and better capital.

What we have seen, though, are a few concerns from those small emerging growth companies that are going public that they are not as easily accessing capital as I thought they may. That is why we have come together to start a pilot program to see if we can enhance the interest and the capital and liquidity of these emerging growth companies.

It really is not very complicated, as Mr. GARRETT indicated. This is a 5-year pilot program. So if things don't go as expected, the program will end. If it goes as well as we think it may, we can continue this on permanently.

We are truly looking at small emerging growth companies—those that have revenue of less than \$750 million a year. Again, the small, fast-growing companies. It is a small space of the market. It is only 2 percent of trading on and off exchanges.

There has been a lot of debate as we have done this about what is an appropriate model to use when we increase the tick size. Do we do a trade-at, a quote-at, midpoint matches? A lot of people came to us with a lot of different ideas. All of us realized there is a larger debate going on right now that involves our "dark pools" and our exchanges.

To be very clear, no one here who worked on this legislation wants to impact that debate in this field. The intent of this bill is not to influence that debate at all. It is really very specifically and narrowly tailored to help small businesses as they look for additional capital to grow and create more jobs.

That is why we have given the SEC the ability to set up different baskets or different segments. One can be a trade-at, one can have price improvement of a different variation, but allowing us to get good quality data that will help us make decisions as we move forward.

One other thing: companies that may not want to participate will have the option to opt out if they don't feel like this kind of a program would work for them.

I just want to say I very much appreciate the gentleman from Delaware and the chairman from New Jersey for all the effort they have put into this bill. I hope that our colleagues, after seeing the great support that we had in the committee, will support this bill today.

□ 1545

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I believe the gentleman from Delaware has

already yielded back. So, at this point, I would just like to again thank the gentleman from Delaware for his work, the gentleman from Wisconsin for his leadership on this issue.

And, also on his page, I saw written in a large number was the magic number 57-0. I hope that does send a resounding message over to the other body, to the Senate, to do as they have not been doing for the last 14 months, which is to take up some of these good job-creation bills, a bill that helps promote jobs and small businesses in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3448, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 540, PATRICIA CLARK BOSTON AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-351) on the resolution (H. Res. 478) providing for consideration of the bill (S. 540) to designate the Air Route Traffic Control Center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the "Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center", and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 540, PATRICIA CLARK BOSTON AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 478 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 478

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 540), to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the "Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center". All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the na-

ture of a substitute consisting of the text of sections 1 through 3 of Rules Committee Print 113-37 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and Minority Leader or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. House Resolution 475 is amended in section 2 by striking "February 13, 2014" and inserting "February 12, 2014".

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 478 provides a closed rule for the consideration of S. 540.

Now, if you heard the Clerk read S. 540, you might not have understood why we were here today. He read it exactly as it is drafted in the title, but we are here today to move a clean debt ceiling.

Now, I won't tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I am excited about being down here today. I am excited to be carrying the rule, because I believe this is the way that regular order ought to operate. But I came here, as you did, Mr. Speaker, and as so many of my colleagues did on the other side of the aisle, to try to move the needle, to try to move the needle on Federal spending, to try to move the needle on the borrowing that is going on from our children and our grandchildren.

We talk so often back home, Mr. Speaker, about raising taxes. In fact, so many folks in this Chamber have signed a pledge to say I will never raise taxes on the American people, and I admire that sentiment. But, Mr. Speaker, when we have a vote to raise the debt ceiling, debt that has to be paid, we are, in effect, raising taxes on the American taxpayer.

Now, it is not a surprise to anyone in this Chamber. I sit on the Budget Committee. Anyone who has looked at the budget understands that we don't have enough revenue to pay our bills.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have the great pleasure of being on the Republican Study Committee as chair of their

Budget and Spending Task Force. I had an opportunity last year to offer the most conservative budget offered in this Chamber—the most conservative budget offered in this Chamber—and we had to continue borrowing money as far as the eye can see.

When RAND PAUL was elected to the United States Senate among much fanfare—lots of conservatives across the country looking to RAND PAUL for guidance, and rightfully so—he dropped a budget in the United States Senate, the most conservative budget introduced at that time in Washington, D.C., balanced the budget in 3 years by abolishing agency after agency after agency, sentiments that I happen to agree with wholeheartedly but know that we don't have the votes to achieve, and even that budget required borrowing money from our children and our grandchildren for the next 3 years.

So it is not a happy day that we are here, Mr. Speaker. The happy day, I would argue, was back in August of 2011. I was a young freshman Member, Mr. Speaker. I remember it because it was the kind of vote that you ran for Congress to take. We were here, and the news commentators were back and forth; is it the right deal? Is it the wrong deal? JOHN BOEHNER and President Barack Obama engaged in debate at the White House night after night after night, and suddenly, a deal was reached.

Now, as has been my experience in my 3 years in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, the term "a deal has been reached" 100 percent of the time means what ROB WOODALL wanted didn't happen. It is funny how that works out. I get one voice out of 435, and so when I have to send my Speaker down to the White House and negotiate with not just one President but 100 more Senators, I don't get what I wanted.

But what I did get in August of 2011, Mr. Speaker, was an agreement that, if we raised the debt ceiling, if we agreed to further encumber our children and our grandchildren, as everyone in this Chamber knows that the current laws of the books require us to do, we would take a step, a \$2 trillion step to try to make sure that we didn't have to raise the debt ceiling again.

It didn't contain what anybody thought was the 100 percent right plan, Mr. Speaker, but it was a proposal that we could come together around—not just we Republicans; not we, the House of Representatives; not we, Capitol Hill, with the Senate; but we, the elected representatives of the American people, from the White House to the U.S. House to the United States Senate.

We have come 2½ years, Mr. Speaker, and we have done some amazing things. I created No Budget, No Pay last year, for example, Mr. Speaker, which attached an increase in the debt ceiling

to the requirement that we pass a budget out of this House and that they pass a budget out of the Senate, allowing us to come together to produce the first budget this institution has seen since I have been elected to the Congress, the first one. Not the first House-passed budget—we do that every year; it is our responsibility; of course we do—but the first one with which we found agreement with the Senate and received a Presidential signature.

Mr. Speaker, the debt limit is a constant reminder of the imbalance of America's taxing and spending. We have a spending problem in this Nation. Everyone in this Chamber knows it. And the debt ceiling is an opportunity for us to come together and find solutions.

And try as hard as he might, Mr. Speaker, when the Speaker of this United States House dug deep to try to find those answers, he could find none. Not that there were no answers out there—of course there are—but there were not answers out there that could receive the approval of this body, the approval of the Senate, and the signature of the President.

I have to ask why, because there is not a man or woman who is going to come into this Chamber today who does not know that we need to take steps to address the problem. And dadgummit, Mr. Speaker, there is not a man or woman in this Chamber who doesn't know we have the ability to do it, because we have done it before—not 100 years ago, not 50 years ago, but just 3 years ago, with largely the same folks that are here today.

That is not what this rule is bringing to the Floor today, but what it is bringing to the Floor is a clean debt ceiling resolution. This should be a day on which we are coming together around solutions to that longer-term spending problem, but we find ourselves here today simply trying to bring America back from an economic brink the likes of which not a single Member of this Chamber wants America to see.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago it appeared as though the crises that had come to define this Congress maybe were coming to an end. In a rare show of bipartisanship, Democrats in the Senate and Republicans in the House passed a budget compromise that set the spending levels for the next 2 years. As was clear at the time of its passage, the bipartisan budget agreement authorized spending well beyond the current debt limit. Despite that fact, 166 members of the majority voted to authorize the spending and to increase the Nation's debt. At that time, a

member of the majority declared that passing the legislation would be the responsible thing to do, and, indeed, it was.

Now, today, we are going to find out whether that moment of responsibility was an aberration or a sign of things to come. The majority has a simple choice today. We understand they don't have the votes to pass this. And the Democrats, as they have been on so many other things we have tried to get to the floor, are more than willing to do our part for our country because that, Mr. Speaker, is why we were elected to come here.

The majority has a choice today: act responsibly and pay the country's bills which they voted for, some of them, or trigger another economic panic by threatening default.

For decades, up till about 2011, which was just held up as a landmark here, no matter which party was in charge, Congress always raised the debt ceiling without hesitation or pause. In the years that I have been here, there was never any notion of having to pay a ransom to get the side that you were not on to do what its duty called for. But in recent years, the majority doubts the seriousness of this responsibility and dared the global financial system to punish them for their malfeasance.

Although we need no reminder, in 2011, the majority of this Chamber demanded ransom in exchange for an increase in the debt ceiling. The self-inflicted wound that followed sparked the most volatile week for the financial markets since 2008, when we had the financial crisis, and resulted in the credit rating agency Standard & Poor's downgrading our Nation's credit rating for the first time in history. And for what? Some notion that they didn't have to meet their responsibility.

In the years since, the majority has continued to play this dangerous game of political hostage taking that hurts our economy, and even caused a 16-day government shutdown. And that shutdown, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the people of America, took \$24 billion out of our economy for absolutely nothing.

Even when it has been clear that there is only one way out of a self-inflicted crisis such as the government shutdown, the majority pursued an approach that can be summarized as "only when we have tied ourselves in legislative knots, only when we have thrown the economy into turmoil, only after we have frightened employers from hiring and given global investors pause, we will do the right thing," as we are doing today.

□ 1600

This irresponsible approach has particularly drawn the ire of the American people and dragged the approval ratings of the House of Representatives to historic lows. Today I urge the major-

ity to follow the lead of the Democrat leadership, my colleagues, and me and do the right things first instead of last.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on today's rule—and that, by itself, is wonderful for me to do; it feels good—and the underlying legislation so that we can honor the commitments this Congress has made and protect the full faith and credit of the United States. We are charged to do no less.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I would mention to my friend from New York that if she has no further requests for time, I am prepared to close.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

As I have said, the question before us today is a simple one: Are we going to pay the country's bills or will the United States become a deadbeat nation? This is not a question of increasing our Nation's spending. That question was answered when 166 Members of the majority voted to spend beyond the Nation's debt ceiling by passing the bipartisan budget agreement just a few weeks ago.

Today is simply a matter of paying our bills when they come due, as real Americans do, and we should follow suit. So when this is coming due, we hope after today, we will be able to pay ours.

For our part, my Democratic colleagues and I are ready to do the right thing—and have been for some time—by increasing our Nation's debt ceiling and protecting the full faith and credit of the United States of America. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on today's rule and the underlying legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am one of those Members the gentlelady from New York referenced, one of those Members who voted in favor of an appropriations bill that funds the government for this year. In fact, I have voted for the House-passed budget and the Republican Study Committee budget in each and every year that I have been in this institution. What is unique about those votes, Mr. Speaker, is they absolutely understand that we are going to have to spend money that we don't have, but they take steps to make the problem better instead of worse.

I want to take issue with what my friend from New York said about a raising of the debt ceiling with absolutely no strings attached as being the responsible thing to do. It is absolutely not. It is the worst-case scenario.

Now, I am going to have colleagues on the floor today, Mr. Speaker, who are petrified of what happens if we don't do this today. They are petrified that even though we know we can come together and find a solution forward, find a solution that makes the problem better instead of worse, they are petrified that they do not have a willing

partner in the President or with the Senate. So unless they vote to pass this bill today, America faces default, and that is an awful box, an awful box that my friends have painted.

I want to read a few quotes, Mr. Speaker. I think words matter. This is from 2006, as a young Senator Barack Obama faced a debt limit increase in the United States Senate, and he said this—and I just want to point out, because my friend from New York talked about the obviousness of this vote, how clearly this is the right thing to do, just to raise the debt ceiling to whatever amount folks would like.

Here is what Senator Barack Obama said in 2006. He said: The fact that we are even here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. Leadership means the buck stops here. Instead, Washington is shifting the burdens of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren.

Then-Senator Barack Obama goes on, Mr. Speaker. He said: America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. America deserves better. Therefore, I intend to oppose this effort to increase America's debt limit.

I don't have to say it very often, Mr. Speaker, but when the President is right, he is right. This was an opportunity to come together and one that we searched for, searched for.

There is not a man or woman in this town who wants to find a path forward more than our Speaker, JOHN BOEHNER, does. There is no one who has sweated to find that opportunity more than our Speaker has. Yet without a willing partner in the White House or the Senate, it can't happen.

The same here, Mr. Speaker, 2006. Then-Senator JOE BIDEN says this: The President's budget plans will bring our debt to \$11.8 trillion at the end of the

next 5 years. This is a record of utter disregard for our Nation's financial future.

Mr. Speaker, \$11.8 trillion is what JOE BIDEN was concerned about. That number reached \$16 trillion within that same time period.

He goes on: It is a record of indifference to the price our children and grandchildren will pay to redeem our debt when it comes due. History will not judge this record kindly. My vote against the debt limit increase cannot change the fact that we have incurred this debt already and will, no doubt, incur more. It is a statement that I refuse to be associated with, the policies that brought us to this point.

Mr. Speaker, 2010, then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen said this: Our national debt is our biggest national security threat. Not terrorism, not al Qaeda, not a rogue nation, but our debt.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to deal with our debt. If it was easy, we wouldn't have the debt to begin with. It is hard, but I have seen us come together to fix it before. A \$2 trillion worth of difference we came together to make 3 years ago, not even. Yet today, we find ourselves unable to find that path.

Mr. Speaker, with the indulgence of my friend from New York—I would very much appreciate it—I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON).

I thank my friend from New York.

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank both my friend on the majority side and my friend on the minority side for allowing me this unusual procedure.

I do rise in support of the rule. I am going to vote for the rule. But, Mr. Speaker, I am going to oppose the underlying bill on the debt ceiling.

I have brought some materials that have been prepared by the Congress-

sional Research Service with materials that were provided by the Office of Management and Budget that show in the fiscal year that we are now engaged, mandatory spending is 62 percent of the total budget, and interest on the debt is over 6 percent. Those two combined are two-thirds of all total spending, mandatory spending and interest on the debt.

It is not going to get any easier, Mr. Speaker, to solve this problem by passing so-called clean debt ceilings that don't address the underlying problem. I understand the problems governing on the majority side, and I understand the issues with the Presidency and the Senate being controlled by the Democrats. I understand that.

But I couldn't walk into a bank in Ennis, Texas, today and say, I owe you \$300,000 right now, but I want to borrow another \$200,000. They would want to know what plan I had to repay the money I had already borrowed, and they would want to know how giving me another \$200,000 would actually be the appropriate thing to do.

What we are doing on the underlying bill, Mr. Speaker, with this so-called clean debt ceiling is simply saying, we want to borrow—I am not sure how much it is—probably 600 or \$700 billion, where we already owe \$17 trillion. We have no plan to repay the money we have already borrowed and certainly have no plan to repay the money we are going to borrow.

So my comment today is, this Congress should be addressing this problem in a bipartisan fashion today. We will be back here in March of next year. We will have the same debate. So I will be voting "no" later this evening.

I do thank my good friend from Georgia and my good friend from New York for allowing me to speak.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OUTLAYS SINCE FY1984, VARIOUS MEASURES

[Data from FY2014 OMB Public Budget Database]

	fy1984	fy1985	fy1986	fy1987	fy1988	fy1989	fy1990	fy1991	fy1992	fy1993	fy1994	fy1995	fy1996	fy1997
Gross Domestic Product (Billions)	3844.4	4146.3	4403.9	4651.4	5008.5	5399.5	5734.5	5930.5	6242	6587.3	6976.6	7341.1	7718.3	8211.7
GDP Price Index	0.5986	0.618	0.6323	0.6492	0.67	0.696	0.7216	0.749	0.7685	0.7854	0.802	0.819	0.8348	0.8502
Population	2.36E+08	2.38E+08	2.40E+08	2.42E+08	2.45E+08	2.47E+08	2.50E+08	2.52E+08	2.55E+08	2.58E+08	2.60E+08	2.63E+08	2.65E+08	2.68E+08
Outlays, in \$Billions:														
Discretionary Outlays	379.5	415.8	438.5	444.2	464.4	488.9	500.6	533.3	533.8	539.7	541.4	544.8	532.8	547.1
Defense (function 050)	228.1	253.1	273.8	282.6	290.9	304.1	300.2	319.7	302.6	292.4	282.3	273.6	266.0	271.7
Non-Defense (all other)	151.4	162.7	164.7	161.6	173.5	184.8	200.4	213.6	231.2	247.3	259.1	271.2	266.8	275.4
Mandatory	361.3	401.0	415.8	421.3	448.2	485.9	568.1	596.5	648.4	670.9	717.4	738.9	786.8	810.1
Net interest	111.1	129.5	136.0	138.6	151.8	168.9	184.4	194.4	199.3	198.7	203.0	232.2	241.0	244.0
Total	852	946	990	1,004	1,064	1,144	1,253	1,324	1,382	1,409	1,462	1,516	1,561	1,601
Constant FY2013 dollars (billions, using CDP price index, FY2014 OMB projections):														
Discretionary Outlays	750	796	820	809	820	831	821	842	822	813	799	787	755	761
Defense (function 050)	451	485	512	515	514	517	492	505	466	440	416	395	377	378
Non-Defense (all other)	299	311	308	295	306	314	329	337	356	373	382	392	378	383
Mandatory	714	768	778	768	791	826	931	942	998	1,011	1,058	1,067	1,115	1,127
Net Interest	220	248	255	253	268	287	302	307	307	299	299	335	342	340
As % of GDP:														
Discretionary Outlays	9.9%	10.0%	10.0%	9.5%	9.3%	9.1%	8.7%	9.0%	8.6%	8.2%	7.8%	7.4%	6.9%	6.7%
Defense (function 050)	5.9%	6.1%	6.2%	6.1%	5.8%	5.6%	5.2%	5.4%	4.8%	4.4%	4.0%	3.7%	3.4%	3.3%
Non-Defense (all other)	3.9%	3.9%	3.7%	3.5%	3.5%	3.4%	3.5%	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	3.7%	3.7%	3.5%	3.4%
International (fcn 150)	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Mandatory	9.4%	9.7%	9.4%	9.1%	8.9%	9.0%	9.9%	10.1%	10.4%	10.2%	10.3%	10.1%	10.2%	9.9%

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OUTLAYS SINCE FY1984, VARIOUS MEASURES—Continued

[Data from FY2014 OMB Public Budget Database]

	fy1984	fy1985	fy1986	fy1987	fy1988	fy1989	fy1990	fy1991	fy1992	fy1993	fy1994	fy1995	fy1996	fy1997
Net Interest	2.9%	3.1%	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%	3.2%	3.0%	2.9%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%
As Share of Total Outlays:														
Discretionary Outlays	44.5%	43.9%	44.3%	44.2%	43.6%	42.7%	40.0%	40.3%	38.6%	38.3%	37.0%	35.9%	34.1%	34.2%
Defense (function 050)	26.8%	26.7%	27.6%	28.1%	27.3%	26.6%	24.0%	24.1%	21.9%	20.7%	19.3%	18.0%	17.0%	17.0%
Non-Defense (all other)	17.8%	17.2%	16.6%	16.1%	16.3%	16.2%	16.0%	16.1%	16.7%	17.5%	17.7%	17.9%	17.1%	17.2%
Mandatory	42.4%	42.4%	42.0%	42.0%	42.1%	42.5%	45.3%	45.0%	46.9%	47.6%	49.1%	48.7%	50.4%	50.6%
Net Interest	13.0%	13.7%	13.7%	13.8%	14.3%	14.8%	14.7%	14.7%	14.4%	14.1%	13.9%	15.3%	15.4%	15.2%

	fy1998	fy1999	fy2000	fy2001	fy2002	fy2003	fy2004	fy2005	fy2006	fy2007	fy2008	fy2009	fy2010	fy2011	fy2012	fy2013	fy2014	fy2015
Gross Domestic Produce (\$billions)	8663	9208.4	9821	10225.3	10543.9	10980.2	11676	12428.6	13206.5	13861.4	14334.4	13960.7	14348.8	14929.4	15547.4	16202.7	17011.4	17936.1
GDP Price Index	0.861	0.8724	0.8897	0.9106	0.9257	0.9446	0.9685	1	1.034	1.0646	1.0893	1.1033	1.1145	1.1379	1.1588	1.183	1.2054	1.2283
Population	2.70E+08	2.73E+08	2.82E+08	2.85E+08	2.88E+08	2.90E+08	2.93E+08	2.96E+08	2.98E+08	3.01E+08	3.04E+08	3.07E+08	3.09E+08	3.12E+08	3.14E+08	3.16E+08	3.19E+08	3.21E+08
Outlays, in \$billions:																		
Discretionary Outlays	552.0	572.1	614.6	649.0	733.9	824.3	895.0	968.5	1,016.7	1,041.6	1,134.9	1,237.5	1,347.2	1,347.1	1,286.1	1,257.9	1,241.9	1,232.0
Defense (function 050)	270.2	275.5	294.9	306.0	348.9	405.0	454.0	493.6	520.0	547.8	612.5	656.7	688.9	699.4	670.5	651.5	618.3	603.6
Non-Defense (all other)	281.7	296.7	319.7	343.0	385.0	419.4	441.0	474.9	496.7	493.7	522.4	580.8	658.3	647.7	615.6	606.5	623.7	628.4
Mandatory	859.3	900.0	951.4	1,007.7	1,106.0	1,182.5	1,237.5	1,319.4	1,411.8	1,449.9	1,594.9	2,093.2	1,913.7	2,025.9	2,030.6	2,204.3	2,312.9	2,422.6
Net Interest	241.2	229.8	222.9	206.2	170.9	153.0	160.3	183.9	226.6	237.1	252.7	186.9	196.2	230.0	220.4	222.7	223.0	253.6
Total	1,652	1,702	1,789	1,963	2,011	2,160	2,293	2,472	2,655	2,729	2,983	3,518	3,457	3,603	3,537	3,685	3,778	3,908
Constant FY2013 dollars (billions, using GDP price index; FY2014 OMB projections:																		
Discretionary Outlays	758	776	817	843	938	1,032	1,093	1,146	1,163	1,157	1,233	1,327	1,430	1,400	1,313	1,258	1,219	1,187
Defense (function 050)	371	374	392	398	446	507	555	584	595	609	665	704	731	727	684	651	607	581
Non-Defense (all other)	387	402	425	446	492	525	539	562	568	549	567	623	699	673	628	606	612	605
Mandatory	1,181	1,220	1,265	1,309	1,413	1,481	1,512	1,561	1,615	1,611	1,732	2,244	2,031	2,106	2,073	2,204	2,270	2,333
Net Interest	331	312	296	268	218	192	196	218	259	264	274	200	208	239	225	223	219	244
As % of GDP:																		
Discretionary Outlays	6.4%	6.2%	6.3%	6.3%	7.0%	7.5%	7.7%	7.8%	7.7%	7.5%	7.9%	8.9%	9.4%	9.0%	8.3%	7.8%	7.3%	6.9%
Defense (function 050)	3.1%	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.3%	3.7%	3.9%	4.0%	3.9%	4.0%	4.3%	4.7%	4.8%	4.7%	4.3%	4.0%	3.6%	3.4%
Non-Defense (all other)	3.3%	3.2%	3.3%	3.4%	3.7%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	3.6%	3.6%	4.2%	4.6%	4.3%	4.0%	3.7%	3.7%	3.5%
International (fcn 150)	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
Mandatory	9.9%	9.8%	9.7%	9.9%	10.5%	10.8%	10.6%	10.6%	10.7	10.5%	11.1%	15.0%	13.3%	13.6%	13.1%	13.6%	13.6%	13.5%
Net Interest	2.8%	2.5%	2.3%	2.0%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%
As Share of Total Outlays:																		
Discretionary Outlays	33.4%	33.6%	34.4%	34.8%	36.5%	38.2%	39.0%	39.2%	38.3%	38.2%	38.1%	35.2%	39.0%	37.4%	36.4%	34.1%	32.9%	31.5%
Defense (function 050)	16.4%	16.2%	16.5%	16.4%	17.4%	18.7%	19.8%	20.0%	19.6%	20.1%	20.5%	18.7%	19.9%	19.4%	19.0%	17.7%	16.4%	15.4%
Non-Defense (all other)	17.1%	17.4%	17.9%	18.4%	19.1%	19.4%	19.2%	19.2%	18.7%	18.1%	17.5%	16.5%	19.0%	18.0%	17.4%	16.5%	16.5%	16.1%
Mandatory	52.0%	52.9%	53.2%	54.1%	55.0%	54.7%	54.0%	53.4%	53.2%	53.1%	53.5%	59.5%	55.4%	56.2%	57.4%	59.8%	61.2%	62.0%
Net Interest	14.6%	13.5%	12.5%	11.1%	8.5%	7.1%	7.0%	7.4%	8.5%	8.7%	8.5%	5.3%	5.7%	6.4%	6.2%	6.0%	5.9%	6.5%

Source: CRS calculations based on FY2014 budget submission data from OMB.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank the gentleman. And again, I thank the gentleman from New York as well.

Mr. Speaker, we don't have these opportunities very often. I would posit to my colleagues that if really the right answer is to pass clean debt ceilings whenever the debt needs to be increased, I would wonder why it is we don't just repeal the debt ceiling altogether. If this isn't a moment for us to come together, if this isn't a moment for us to do those things that have to be done, if this isn't a moment that focuses like a laser the American people on what the consequences are of the decisions we make today, I don't know what would be. This is our best opportunity.

I could not be more grateful to my friends on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, for coming together to make some of those things possible. In fact, that great day in August of 2011 that I talk about, that wasn't possible with Republican votes. Turning the dial on spending to the tune of \$2 trillion, that wasn't possible with just Republican votes. That was a bipartisan

effort. That was a collaborative effort that makes a difference for our children and our grandchildren, and it is one of which I hope we are both proud.

The men and women who are going to come to the floor of the House today to cast their vote are all going to be men and women who are deeply concerned about the future of this country. Now, some of those men and women are going to look into their hearts, and they are going to look at what default would mean to the Nation. They are going to believe earnestly that because we cannot find a partner in the Senate or in the White House to negotiate on solving the problem, that the only step left to take is either to default or not, and with a heavy heart, they are going to vote to raise the debt ceiling.

There are other men and women in this body, Mr. Speaker, who are going to come to the floor today for this vote, and they are going to say, Default is a terrible, terrible, terrible even threat to make, but if we do not find a way to curb the growth of Federal spending, default is not a question

of if; it is a question of when. It is a question of when.

There is not a budget in Washington, D.C., that stops the borrowing next year or 2 years from now or even 10 years from now. There is not one, and the most conservative budgets we have don't have enough votes to pass. If not today, when?

Now, I think the votes have been counted. The decisions have been made, Mr. Speaker. Folks have been grappling with this issue in their hearts and with their constituents. Mr. Speaker, I plead with you to play that role in this debate so that when this decision confronts us again—not if, but when—we take advantage of that to do the hard things that must be done.

I say to my friends on the other side of the aisle—and I know I speak for a large plurality of our Members on this side of the aisle—challenge me to do those things that are hard. Give me that vote to take that so enrages the right flank that I get sent home in the next primary, but I had a chance to do something that mattered while I was here.

Folks didn't leave their families to come and just cast a ballot to keep things going on the way they are going on, Mr. Speaker. They came from both sides of the aisle to make a difference. The path that we are on with spending and revenue is a path that is unsustainable to the tune of \$17.3 trillion today and a path that is unsustainable to the tune of hundreds of trillions of dollars tomorrow.

The economic demise of this country on that path is not if, but when, but we have the ability right here in this Chamber to make that difference. We have the ability right here in this Chamber to look our children and our grandchildren in the eye and say, When I had that voting card for that brief time, I did everything I did to make a difference.

We have been on a streak here, Mr. Speaker, of coming together in surprising ways to achieve things that I thought could not be done. I hope we make deficit reduction in this next budget cycle that same bipartisan priority. I believe we can surprise even ourselves with the amount that can be accomplished.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1615

PATRICIA CLARK BOSTON AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 478, I call up the bill (S. 540) to designate the Air Route Traffic Control Center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the "Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center," and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 478, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of sections 1 through 3 of Rules Committee Print 113-37 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

S. 540

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act".

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply for the pe-

riod beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on March 15, 2015.

(b) SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO OBLIGATIONS ISSUED DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.—Effective March 16, 2015, the limitation in effect under section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall be increased to the extent that—

(1) the face amount of obligations issued under chapter 31 of such title and the face amount of obligations whose principal and interest are guaranteed by the United States Government (except guaranteed obligations held by the Secretary of the Treasury) outstanding on March 16, 2015, exceeds

(2) the face amount of such obligations outstanding on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. RESTORING CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONAL DEBT.

(a) EXTENSION LIMITED TO NECESSARY OBLIGATIONS.—An obligation shall not be taken into account under section 2(b)(1) unless the issuance of such obligation was necessary to fund a commitment incurred pursuant to law by the Federal Government that required payment before March 16, 2015.

(b) PROHIBITION ON CREATION OF CASH RESERVE DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall not issue obligations during the period specified in section 2(a) for the purpose of increasing the cash balance above normal operating balances in anticipation of the expiration of such period.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on S. 540.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The last time I stood on the floor to talk about a "clean" debt limit increase, I did so to prove that we could do better. It was an effort to implore my Democrat colleagues in the House and the Senate to heed the warnings of the President's own fiscal commission, also known as the Simpson-Bowles Commission, which clearly noted how our economy and hardworking taxpayers would suffer under the mountain of debt Washington was racking up.

My position is unchanged. I remain as committed as ever to grappling with our debt; to making the tough decisions to reform, improve, strengthen, and protect our entitlement programs; and, most importantly, to getting this economy back on track so hardworking taxpayers start seeing their pay go up and those in need of a job can find one. In fact, that work is underway at the Ways and Means Committee where we posted for public comment bipartisan proposals to reform Medicare and Social Security so that they are viable

for seniors and taxpayers, not only today but well into the future.

Regrettably, over the last 3 years, Democrats have hardened their position. The President, Senate Democrats, and House Democrats will not even entertain a discussion—let alone a negotiation—over what reforms we can make along with a debt limit increase. They have become unyielding. Democrats are totally adamant: extend the debt limit or default. That is the position of today's Democrat Party: don't negotiate, don't reach out across the aisle, ignore the past, which clearly shows the debt limit typically passes with other reforms.

Mr. Speaker, I remember serving when Bill Clinton was President. Those were different times. Despite our different opinions, we were able to find common solutions for the American people. We balanced the budget, reformed our Nation's welfare laws, and helped break the cycle of dependency by placing an emphasis on work. Today, Democrats openly cheer that their health care law will lead to less work.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed the Democrats have walked away from the table, and I am disappointed we are not engaged in a more serious debate today. But as disappointed as I am, I cannot, in good conscience, let the Democrats' refusal to engage lead to a default. For that reason, and that reason alone, I will vote "yes" today.

But today's legislation is hardly a solution to our looming debt crisis. That is why the Ways and Means Committee will continue to carefully review and advance policies that not only reform our entitlement programs, providing greater protection for seniors and greater savings for hardworking taxpayers, but also policies that will create a stronger economy with more jobs and higher wages for workers. It is only through a combination of such policies that we can truly solve this problem.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from Michigan, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, for his responsible commitment to vote for this bill today. I wish I could say that a majority of his party was going to be responsible and vote for this bill today, but I cannot.

First, I am pleased that the Republican Party seems to be shedding at least part of its extremist Tea Party ideology in the prevailing belief of holding the Nation hostage to meet the whims of a select few.

Now, I would just like to take a moment to explain what the House is and is not voting on today. We are voting today to ensure that our country can pay the bills we have already incurred—not new bills, old bills, so that

Social Security checks can continue to be mailed, so that doctors serving Medicare patients will be reimbursed for their services, so that veterans' pensions and compensation will be paid out, and so income tax refund checks will continue to be processed and paid out.

What we are not voting for—what we are not voting for—we are not voting for a bill to spend money. Our Republican colleagues will argue that this bill allows the Federal Government to continue to borrow and, therefore, spend more money. They say tax revenues come in and even more goes out in spending for government services and programs, services and programs that we all agree benefit our mutual constituents.

So what is the alternative the Republicans would offer instead? My Republican colleagues would offer default, because not supporting this bill would mean you support default and defaulting on our Nation's debt. Default would mean taxpayer dollars would still come into the government. We would still collect. The IRS would still collect taxes, but no money would go out. There would be no services or programs that benefit our constituents; they would be shut down.

Do you all remember how angry the country was during the Republican shutdown of our government when military death benefits were not paid? That would only be magnified under a default led by the Republican side of the aisle. Not only would there be no death benefits, there would be no veterans' benefits at all, and no money for VA hospitals, doctors, and nurses. And a default wouldn't just affect our military and our veterans. There would be no funds for food inspectors, no Pell grants, no air traffic controllers or any other government service because of the default.

Let's be clear. If you liked the Republican-engineered shutdown of our government, you will love the default the Republicans who would vote "no" today would perpetuate on the American public.

This is a debt that the Republican caucus helped create. You own a portion of this debt. The American people are watching this vote. They are confounded, once again, that the majority of the majority will vote to default. The overwhelming majority of the minority will vote not to default. I ask the American people, which party is the responsible party? The answer is clear. The Democratic Party will be responsible today. We will vote overwhelmingly for this bill not to default on our Nation's debt, not to raise interest rates on our constituents, and not to raise the cost of money for the government to borrow, either.

I yield as much time as the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) may consume.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, let me thank Mr. CROWLEY for recognizing me, and I want to pursue the themes that he has offered a moment ago.

I listened to the gentleman from Georgia earlier speaking of debt in the years out. That has nothing to do with the argument that is being applied on this floor. This is about the basic arithmetic of the credit card that arrives at a family's doorstep for a variety of costs. This is about paying for the war in Iraq, which I was opposed to but I believe we still have an obligation to pay for, including the 1 million new veterans that were created that are currently straining our VA system.

In addition, this is a vote about paying for the tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 that continued right through 2010 based upon the mistaken notion, the theology that was applied, suggesting that, in fact, tax cuts pay for themselves.

This is about a turnaround of a projected surplus of \$5 trillion that instead became ongoing deficits and debt noted for the ill-conceived policies that many of our friends on the other side embraced under the hubris of suggesting that you can have it all.

When else in American history, when else have we embraced the idea enunciated not long ago by the former majority leader of the Republican Party who suggested that it was patriotic in a time of war to cut taxes? Lincoln and Roosevelt certainly didn't embrace that position. You can't have it all.

What was desirable by the Republican Party during those years was essentially this: they were going to score political points on the issue of the debt ceiling. They were going to hold the debt ceiling hostage for isolated issues that placated a minority of the majority.

Now, I know most of the Republicans that have come to the floor today, and I want to tell you, my knowledge of them is they are very responsible when it comes to budgeteering, but they are caught by a minority of their majority who now dictate the outcome of where many of those positions go. So the result of the last standoff we had over the debt ceiling was that our debt was downgraded. America's credit rating in the world was downgraded. Look at the strength of the American dollar today. Why is it in that position? I have never been anywhere where the world doesn't say: We honor the American dollar.

The point that I offered a moment ago is the following: they were prepared to default on that debt for the purpose, again, of isolated, strident political views that are outside of the mainstream. Job creation? It was held hostage. Fewer jobs were created than at any time since the Great Depression. That is not an opinion; that is a fact.

Now, this behavior was unacceptable, and the American people said so. You

pay for what you spend. Raising the debt ceiling ensures that we will not be a deadbeat nation in the eyes of the world nor in the eyes of our own citizenry.

Not long ago, we passed an omnibus spending bill.

Incidentally, because of the breakdown in the regular order here, the idea that we used to spend according to the 12 to 13 appropriations bills that guided us every year, it was known as the regular order where Members had a chance to amend spending bills in committee and then on the floor, I must tell you that is a quaint reservoir of thought these days. Now we wrap it all up, and the same people that could say, Well, I am going to pass the omnibus spending bill to take care of favored spending, and then say, Well, I am not going to vote to raise the debt ceiling, the argument is anachronistic.

So I support this measure having voted against the Bush tax cuts, having voted against the war in Iraq, and having voted against most of the policies that got us into this. But this is about the full faith and credit of the United States, and it should be embraced by this entire body.

Mr. CROWLEY. I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California, NANCY PELOSI, the leader of the Democratic Caucus in the House.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank him for his leadership on this important issue to him. To Mr. LEVIN and members of the Ways and Means Committee, thank you for making clear what the stakes are in this vote on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, the 14th Amendment of our Constitution declares:

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, shall not be questioned.

That has always been the standard upheld and advocated by House Democrats.

In each of my conversations with Speaker BOEHNER, I have conveyed the unwavering support of the House Democratic Caucus for a clean bill to lift the debt ceiling. That means no goodies for one side or the other. There is nothing you could add to it that would say, Okay, since it is something I like, then I don't mind if it isn't clean. I said to the Speaker, Even if you added something that I cared about a great deal, that our Caucus cared about a great deal, that does not make it right because the full faith and credit should be unquestioned, and it is not negotiable.

I thank the Speaker for giving us this opportunity. This is really important to bring legislation to the floor that is consistent with the intent of the Constitution and with the best interests of the American people. Well, I tell you this, we have heard from all kinds of leaders of finance, from the

boardroom to the kitchen table. The boardroom tells us, the conference table then writes to us and says: We urge you to again take the necessary steps to preserve our Nation's financial standing in the world and help ensure that the American recovery continues in its current path toward restored prosperity by the uncertainty as to whether or not we will incur an historic default in raising the debt ceiling.

□ 1630

I wish to submit the full letter to the RECORD with the signatories who represent the captains of industry and finance in our country.

More important than that, as important as that is, our global standing in the world, more important to each and every person in our country is what Mr. NEAL spelled out: what this means to you. If you are a consumer with a credit card, if we did not take this action today, interest rates could skyrocket, making it harder for families to get loans, and for small businesses to invest, spend and hire. Again, on your kitchen table as you pay the bills each month, you would have higher interest rates for your mortgage, your car payments, your student loans, and your credit card bills. Higher interest rates once again on small business loans that are used to pay employees or expand business. Significant blows would come to 401(k)s as a result of the stock market reaction to our not lifting the debt ceiling. Credit markets could freeze. The value of the dollar would be negatively impacted.

So there is a great deal at stake in this vote today. Again, at the time when we have to lift the debt ceiling, it is appropriate to have a discussion of spending priorities, of budgets that should be a statement of our values; but there should be no question that those debates would be something that would not just be a debate, but be a barrier to lifting the debt ceiling. That is why I am grateful to the Speaker and the Republican leadership for giving this House this opportunity to act in a way that is consistent with the Constitution.

When this measure passes today, Congress will state unequivocally that the full faith and credit of the United States of America is not in doubt. I thank my Democratic colleagues for never wavering from this position and standing firm on behalf of all Americans. I thank once again the Speaker for giving us this opportunity to associate ourselves and support the Constitution and the American people.

JANUARY 30, 2014.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, The undersigned associations representing a broad swath of the nation's business community and sectors serving tens of millions customers, businesses and investors, respectfully urge you to raise the federal debt limit without delay.

While we firmly believe that the time is long overdue for the Administration and the Congress to come together and develop long-term solutions to our very real fiscal challenges, defaulting on the nation's debt obligations should not be an option for policymakers to consider. Should the President and Congress fail to work together and raise the debt limit in a timely fashion, the Treasury will be unable to meet government obligations coming due which would trigger a series of events that would inevitably lead to American taxpayers paying more to finance our debt. Even a short-term failure to fulfill our obligations would seriously impair market operations and could have significant consequences to our fragile economic recovery. When Congress last debated this matter in the fall of 2013, markets clearly signaled the potential negative affects through increased interest rates and weakened investor demand for U.S. assets.

We urge you to again take the necessary steps to preserve our nation's financial standing in the world and help ensure that the American economy continues on its current path toward restored prosperity by eliminating the uncertainty as to whether or not we will incur an historic default and raising the debt ceiling.

Thank you for considering our urgent request. We look forward to working with you to advance this and other critical legislation.

Signed,

American Bankers Association, American Insurance Association, U S Chamber of Commerce, Consumer Bankers Association, Financial Services Forum, Financial Services Roundtable, Independent Community Bankers of America, Investment Company Institute, Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Budget Control Act was signed into law on August 2. On August 5, Standard & Poor's downgraded the United States credit rating and did so because:

The downgrade reflects our opinion that the fiscal consolidation plan that Congress and the President recently agreed to falls short of what, in our view, would be necessary to stabilize the government's medium-term debt dynamics.

There have been some speakers who have come to this floor who said we were downgraded because of brinksmanship. We were downgraded because there were those of us who wanted to see some approach to fiscal responsibility in our debt limit negotiations.

Clearly, that is revisionist history, and the facts bear out. Standard & Poor's own quote was it was because we didn't go far enough, not because we tried to address our medium term and long-term debt.

So this reinforces my point. We can't be satisfied with just increasing the debt limit. I realize that is where we are today, and as I have said, I will vote for this legislation, but as another speaker has said, they have viewed this as nonnegotiable, and what we really need to do is reach across the aisle and work together to find long-term solutions to both our medium term and

long-term debt obligations so that these programs, like Medicare and Social Security, these valuable programs that serve many of our citizens, are not only viable and there today, but there well into the future.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would inquire as to the time remaining on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 21 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 25½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, we have been adamant about a clear, clean debt ceiling vote, and now it is happening. It should have happened the last time, and because of the Republican position, a high price was paid—jobs were lost, 120,000; the stock market plunged nearly 20 percent; and economic growth was slowed significantly. So this time around, we are going to do the right thing.

The gentleman from Michigan, my colleague, the chairman of the committee talked about working together, and I want to close by suggesting now with this vote in terms of the debt ceiling, we have cleared the deck. Let us now take up the other issues of major importance to the people of this country, and one of them is unemployment insurance.

As we stand here today, isolated maybe by the walls around this Chamber, but I hope not, 1.7 million people have lost every dime of their unemployment insurance, the long-term unemployed. All right, we are clearing the decks. Now let's pay attention to the business of the American people in addition to full faith and credit. We should not be leaving here with 1.7 million Americans out in the cold because too many people in this institution haven't been willing to listen to their stories. Listen and act.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York and I thank the gentleman from Michigan.

Let me start by saying this issue ought not to be subject to debate. America, the greatest land on the face of the Earth, and one of the most successful economic countries in history, ought to pay its bills. I can't believe there is any American who thinks that America should or would welch on that which it owes. That is not a very sophisticated argument. I can make a more sophisticated argument, but when it comes down to it, that is the issue: will America pay its bills? Will it give confidence to the investor community? Will it give confidence to the

business community? Will it give confidence to our own citizens? Indeed, will we give confidence to the world that the world's leader can manage its own affairs responsibly?

I want to join Leader PELOSI in congratulating the Speaker for bringing this bill to the floor. He brings it to the floor because he knows, as I have just said, there is no alternative for America but to pay its bills. He brings it to the floor because he knows that if he doesn't, the business community is going to think that the majority party in this House cannot manage the affairs of the United States of America in a responsible fashion. Lamentably, he brings it to the floor, apparently, with some doubts as to whether or not those who have elected him Speaker will follow him in taking a responsible path.

My presumption is, although I don't know, is that the gentleman who chairs the Ways and Means Committee will vote for this. My presumption is Mr. CANTOR, the majority leader, will vote for this. My presumption is that Speaker BOEHNER will vote for this. My presumption is based upon the fact that they have represented that there is not an alternative that is a responsible one.

I doubt that there are many people on this floor who have urged us to pursue a big deal more than I have. I voted against the last budget agreement, otherwise known as Ryan-Murray, because I thought it was too small and did not move us toward fiscal responsibility and sustainability in the magnitude that it should have.

Having said that, however, there is no alternative to pay the bills that we have incurred, that the House, the Senate, and the President on behalf of the American people have incurred, and because we are a great Nation, we will certainly not wince on our debts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield an additional 3 minutes to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. So we come to this time with not many people on the floor, although we have demagogued this issue in the past. We, both sides. Let's be clear. On our side, we said that the Republicans cut revenues; therefore, they were responsible for the debt. On their side, they say Democrats spent money and invested money; and, therefore, they are responsible for the debt.

The fact of the matter is we were all responsible for the debt. The fact of the matter is under the Reagan administration, when I came to Congress, we substantially increased the national debt, and we could only do so with Ronald Reagan's signature. Then under George Bush the first, we substantially increased the debt. We could only do so with George Bush's signature. Under Bill Clinton, we brought the debt down for 4 years running, and we ran surpluses for the next 4. Of course, Repub-

licans were in the House and in charge for 6 years. So it was a team effort, if you will, and we had a budget surplus.

Then in the second Bush administration, we substantially increased the budget deficit. We had two wars, and we paid for none; trillion dollar-plus in additional deficit, many trillions over time.

So, my friends, we come to the floor today to do the only responsible alternative available to us, but that does not mean that anybody who votes for this believes that it is not critically important for us to have America on a fiscally sustainable path.

The Business Roundtable has urged us to pass this bill. As Leader PELOSI quoted, the Chamber of Commerce said not to do so will put our country and our economy at risk. Yet, I fear there are going to be apparently a significant number of people who will come and vote "no," vote "no" on paying America's bills; vote "no" on giving confidence to the international community that America is in fact able to manage its affairs.

There ought to be no debate, as I said, when it comes to making sure that we pay our bills on time, the bills Congress has incurred. As I said, the Business Roundtable was quoted as saying:

Urgent action is required on the part of Congress in order to prevent a default.

In fact, they said if we defaulted, every American, all 315-plus million, would feel the negative effects. Why would anybody vote against such a bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. I will conclude because my friend is running out of time. This is not a partisan vote and should not be viewed as such. Republicans and Democrats have voted to protect the American people, provide for the national defense, and provide for the general welfare of our country pursuant to our constitutional responsibilities. Having done so, there is no responsible alternative but to pay our bills. That is what this vote is about. Let's show the courage, the wisdom, the common sense to do just that. Vote "yes."

□ 1645

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I point out to my friends on the other side that, in recent memory, there have been seven instances where debt limits were part of other major pieces of legislation. For example, in the first Bush administration, there was a Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Act; in the Clinton administration, there was the Reconciliations Act, as well as the Contract with America Advancement Act; in the Obama adminis-

tration, there was stimulus, Pay-As-You-Go, Budget Control Act. This has happened seven times in recent history.

What is different? Why can't it happen now? Well, the difference is that you had both parties willing to come together and negotiate major pieces of legislation that would help to address the short-term, medium-term, and long-term drivers of our debt. What we have now is a very open admission that it is absolutely nonnegotiable. There is a straight increase in the debt limit without any legislation, even though this happened seven times in the past.

So I would just say that debt limit increases are often parts of larger pieces of legislation and it would not be unusual. And it is, I think, a sad day when the other side has a take-it-or-leave-it approach and is unwilling to come together with the Republicans to find a way to bring other legislation to the floor that will help address the drivers of our debt.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), ranking member of the Financial Services Committee.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, once again, it is the House Democrats who are required to take the important action to protect our Nation's well-being. Today, most House Republicans will once again refuse to stand behind the full faith and credit of the United States, threatening an economic catastrophe for all Americans.

When Republicans pushed our Nation to the brink of default last year, refusing to increase the debt limit, businesses, large and small, began to cut back by slowing spending and hiring. Consumer confidence fell faster than at any other time since the financial crisis in 2008. Potential home buyers didn't buy homes. But despite these warnings, House Republicans still want to push us to default, and the consequences would be disastrous.

The value of our 401(k)s and IRAs would plummet, significantly hurting those saving for retirement. For consumers, a default would make credit cards, mortgages, and student and automobile loans all more expensive. Default would lead to a U.S. credit rating downgrade, making it harder for new businesses to hire new employees and our cities and States to finance schools, hospitals, roads, and bridges.

Mr. Speaker, the American people cannot afford another round of Republican recklessness. Everyone from Wall Street CEOs to conservative economists agree: we need to honor our debts.

I and my Democratic colleagues will once again do what is necessary. I urge the Republicans to put Americans before ideology and support this legislation to raise the debt ceiling.

Mr. CAMP. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA).

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, today the U.S. Congress is doing its job 5 days after forcing the Treasury to resort to extraordinary measures to finance our government and 3 legislative days before an unprecedented default.

This marks the fourth time in the last 3 years that we have been pushed right to the brink of default. Everyone outside of this Chamber knows we would have and should have lifted the debt ceiling long before we arrived at this point.

I am glad to see that once again we have been able to do our most basic job, but we need to stop playing these political games with our economy, our stability, and our reputation. We should not be forced to wonder, year after year, if we are going to be able to decide to meet our obligations. We should guarantee that the only time we debate spending is during spending debates.

I would ask my colleagues to help me reform this process and install a permanent fix that would end their brinkmanship surrounding the debt limit. That is why I have introduced two bills that allow the debt limit to be raised unless a supermajority of Congress votes to block them. This would permanently shift the rule of Congress to disapproving debt ceiling increases instead of being forced to approve them.

My approach has been introduced in the other Chamber by Senators SCHUMER, BOXER, and HIRONO. It has been endorsed by a growing chorus of economists and outside thought leaders.

Today, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" to lift the debt limit with me today. I also ask my colleagues to join me in pursuing permanent, necessary reforms for tomorrow so we can eliminate the futile hostage-taking.

Mr. CAMP. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as I have listened to debate on the floor of the House, I have seen that Members are coming from all regions of the United States, which means that, in fact, this will be impacting all of our constituents. So I would hope Republicans would join the Democrats who will vote by and large, almost near 100 percent, to do what the Federal Reserve former Chairman Ben Bernanke said is to avoid a government shutdown. And perhaps even more so, a failure to raise the debt limit could have very serious consequences for the financial market and for the economy.

More importantly, it will cost student loans much more to our young aspirants who are attempting to develop an expertise to contribute to this soci-

ety. A longer default could increase payments by \$2,000 of 531,327 Texas students who rely on loans to go to college. Mr. Speaker, I don't want to do that.

Higher interest rates for mortgages and auto loans and student loans and credit cards—Mr. Speaker, I don't want to do that.

Families' retirement savings and 401(k)s dropping as the stock market plummets, reminding us of about 4 years ago when we had one of the worst plummets that we have ever experienced during the last administration.

3.4 million veterans not receiving their disability—I know we do not want to do that.

Ten million Americans not receiving their Social Security check on time in just the first week—we cannot do that.

Drug reimbursements under Medicare stopping and doctors and hospitals not getting paid—I know the Members of Congress will not and do not want to do that.

So, a clean debt ceiling is the only direction, but we have some other options. We can do this in a bipartisan manner. We can have the Democrats standing tall as they have advocated for a clean debt ceiling, but we can join with our partners and we can acknowledge the fact that the government is not broke. We can invest in infrastructure.

As my colleague, Congressman LEVIN, has said, we can ensure that we extend the unemployment insurance and provide for education and provide for research and development. We can build this country. It is time now to vote for a clean debt ceiling and do it together so that we can invest in America.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Does the gentleman from Michigan have any additional speakers?

Mr. CAMP. I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close as well, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, I appreciate all of my colleagues coming down to the floor this afternoon to speak in favor of this proposed bill.

I do think it is noteworthy to point out that only the gentleman from Michigan has come down to speak on behalf of the majority today and ably, I should say, he is voting for this bill, and I appreciate his support. But I notice that no one took time in opposition on the other side of the aisle. Maybe they just don't really care as much about this issue as we thought they did.

But the reality is, as I have said before, every vote against this bill is a vote for default. The Republican colleagues have an answer for that. They have a plan. They intend to default

some day so they have a plan. They have a bill they call the Full Faith and Credit Act. We call it the "Pay China First Act" because what it does is it says, in the event of a default, we will pay those people who own our bonds, we will pay foreign governments first, and everyone else gets put down to the bottom of the barrel. But they have a plan; the Republicans have a plan in the case that we default.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I think it is totally irresponsible to even have had a debate on this floor on a bill that would determine the payments of our debt in lieu of default. I think it is irresponsible. The fact that we have had this man-made brinkmanship is irresponsible. Once again, the Republican Party and their caucus is showing that they are not responsible enough to be ruling and to be governing here in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We have heard a lot of talk about how our Nation must pay its bills. But one major reason we are in this position is an unpaid for trillion-dollar stimulus bill that did not increase economic growth, did not create jobs, and simply added to our debt.

I know there are some on the other side who want to keep on spending no matter what the impact is on our credit rating. While I believe that we must increase our debt limit, I am clearly not satisfied that there are no provisions that would help us address the long-term drivers of this debt.

But I will say that it is disappointing the Democrats have walked away from the table. It is disappointing that we are not engaged in a more serious debate today, a debate about policy and how we rein in what really has become runaway debt.

But as I have said, as disappointed as I am in that, I cannot in good conscience let the Democrats' refusal to engage lead to a default. I will vote "yes" on this legislation today. But it is hardly a solution to our looming debt crisis. That is why the Ways and Means Committee will continue to move forward on reforming Medicare and Social Security, as we have, with bipartisan proposals that are in legislative form, published for the public to view on our Web site.

We will move forward on tax reform, one that will help grow our economy, create jobs, and help address our debt crisis by a stronger, more vibrant economy that will provide opportunities for individuals to get work, increase their wages, and provide for themselves and their families.

I hope that Democrats will join me in these efforts. I believe it is only through a combination of those policies can we really get to the true solutions to this very significant problem

facing our country. While this is a short-term solution to prevent what I think is essential that we do prevent, a default, it is not enough. As I have said, there is so much more to do.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, the debt ceiling suspension expired last week, and Secretary Lew says that Treasury will only be able to ensure that the U.S. meet its commitments through Feb. 27. Sadly, some in the House Majority still find it difficult to accept that Congress should actually pay its bills, buying into the myth that not raising the debt ceiling will somehow slow government spending.

My colleagues fail to acknowledge that the deficit, as CBO recently reported, fell by more than a third in the first three months of FY14, and CBO predicts it will continue to shrink and stabilize at around 4% of GDP. Last week, the Business Roundtable lamented that Congress's inaction fosters continued uncertainty, increases borrowing costs, and dampens hiring.

The Speaker told reporters that he does not want to play chicken again with the full faith and credit of the United States. So let's have a clean vote on the debt ceiling and put this behind us. It's time to roll up our sleeves and tackle the real challenges facing our nation and start putting people back to work.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the rule for the debt ceiling increase.

You may recall that two years ago the Nation's credit rating was downgraded for the first time ever because of politicized negotiations and the initial failure to reach an agreement—and now we risk that and more because an odd lot of members in this body and one, perhaps two in our bicameral twin, wish on the American people out of some misguided principle.

Refusing to raise the debt ceiling poses a cataclysmic danger to the stability of our markets and the economic security of our middle class and complete devastation for the poor.

I agree with President Obama that the full faith and credit of the United States is non-negotiable. The United States has been the worldwide standard bearer for many years and many other nations have been comfortable holding our paper but now our preeminent financial status is in jeopardy.

As former Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke stated last year: "A government shutdown, and perhaps even more so a failure to raise the debt limit, could have very serious consequences for the financial markets and for the economy . . ."

The Federal Government's statutory debt limit currently stands at a sum near \$16.699 trillion; and it needs to be increased.

I ask what we tell the people of China and Japan, who each own over one trillion in U.S. treasury securities. Or Singapore which owns \$80 billion.

We have enjoyed the status for many years now of hearing the phrase: "the flight to Treasuries," from financiers and investment analysts from around the world. This is something we should not and cannot take for granted.

And I ask what about the Seniors and Baby Boomers who literally count on the Social Se-

curity Trust Fund for their retirement—because while our international image and reputation are incredibly important, Mr. Speaker, the largest single holder of Treasury Securities is the Trust Fund.

The American people are not just owed government bonds—this Congress—and you—owe them peace of mind—let us vote on the debt limit—post haste.

Here are some of those consequences if we do not raise the debt ceiling and pay our nation's bills:

A debt limit increase simply allows Treasury to pay the bills for spending Congress has already approved and does not add one cent to the debt.

House Democrats agree with President Obama that the full faith and credit of the United States is non-negotiable.

HIGHER MORTGAGE COSTS

If a default were to increase mortgage interest rate spreads by as much as they did when Republicans threatened default in 2011—0.7 percentage points—the average homebuyer will pay an extra \$100 a month. [Treasury Department]

This would cost 582,829 Texas residents, who took out a home mortgage or refinanced their existing mortgage last year, \$36,000 over the life of a typical 30 year home loan.

LOST RETIREMENT SAVINGS

American workers retirement accounts—pension funds, 401(k) plans, and Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)—are at risk with a government default as much of them are invested in the stock market.

Private pension balances were 26 percent lower than they would have been if House Republicans had not threatened to default in July 2011. [The American Society of Pension Professionals and Actuaries]

If a default caused retirement assets to shrink that much again, it will drop the average American's 401(k) by \$15,000 and the average IRA by almost \$23,000.

And the cost would be worse for workers nearing retirement—dropping an average near-retirement worker's 401(k) more than \$37,000.

A Republican debt default would put at risk the retirement plans of 4,473,000 Texans.

SENIORS MAY NOT GET THEIR MONTHLY SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKS

Fifty-eight million Americans, including seniors, widows, disabled workers and children, rely on Social Security to make ends meet every month.

If Republicans force default, more than 10 million Americans will not get their Social Security on October 23. On November 1, Social Security is scheduled to pay another 26 million Americans.

A Republican debt default would hurt 3,657,907 residents in Texas who rely on their earned Social Security benefits.

DISABLED VETERANS MAY NOT RECEIVE THEIR PENSIONS

Nearly 4 million disabled veterans receive monthly payments in recognition of their service and their sacrifice.

If Republicans force default, they will not receive their benefits on November 1:

299,877 Texas veterans receive disability compensation.

24,984 very poor and disabled veterans in Texas receive a pension to live on.

STUDENT LOANS WILL COST SIGNIFICANTLY MORE

Even a brief default might increase the cost of college.

For a freshman who starts school in 2014 and takes out the maximum annual student loan, their student loan costs are estimated to jump by about \$1,000, increasing loan payments by 10 percent. [The Institute for College Advancement and Success (TICAS)]

A longer default could increase payments by \$2,000 for the 531,327 Texas students who rely on loans to go to college.

DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS MAY NOT GET PAID FOR TAKING CARE OF AMERICANS WITH MEDICARE

More than a million doctors and hospitals that take care of Medicare beneficiaries have submitted bills for services they already provided. If Republicans force a default and Treasury is unable to pay them, they may not be able to continue caring for the 3,187,332 disabled workers and seniors in Texas.

Higher interest rates for mortgages, auto loans, student loans, and credit cards. Higher interest rates and less access to business loans needed to finance payrolls, build inventories, or invest in equipment & construction.

Families' retirement savings in 401(k)s dropping as the stock market plummets.

3.4 million veterans not receiving disability benefits.

10 million Americans not receiving their Social Security check on time in just the first week.

Drug reimbursements under Medicare stopping, and doctors and hospitals not getting paid.

Mr. Speaker, let's get to work together on behalf of the American people and pass a clean CR an raise the debt limit—now! The people expect nothing less, and time is of-the-essence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 478, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on passage of S. 540 will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 3448.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 201, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 61]

YEAS—221

Andrews	Bishop (GA)	Braley (IA)
Barber	Bishop (NY)	Brown (FL)
Bass	Blumenauer	Brownley (CA)
Beatty	Boehner	Bustos
Becerra	Bonamici	Butterfield
Bera (CA)	Brady (PA)	Calvert

Camp Hinojosa
 Cantor Holt
 Capps Honda
 Capuano Horsford
 Carney Hoyer
 Carson (IN) Huffman
 Cartwright Israel
 Castor (FL) Issa
 Castro (TX) Jackson Lee
 Chu Jeffries
 Cicilline Johnson (GA)
 Clark (MA) Johnson, E. B.
 Clarke (NY) Kaptur
 Clay Keating
 Cleaver Kelly (IL)
 Clyburn Kennedy
 Coble Kildee
 Cohen Kilmer
 Collins (NY) Kind
 Connolly King (NY)
 Conyers Kirkpatrick
 Cooper Kuster
 Costa Langevin
 Courtney Larsen (WA)
 Crowley Larson (CT)
 Cuellar Lee (CA)
 Cummings Levin
 Davis (CA) Lipinski
 Davis, Danny LoBiondo
 DeFazio Loeb sack
 DeGette Lofgren
 Delaney Lowenthal
 DeLauro Lowey
 DelBene Lujan Grisham
 Dent (NM)
 Deutch Lujan, Ben Ray
 Dingell (NM)
 Doggett Lynch
 Doyle Maffei
 Duckworth Maloney,
 Edwards Carolyn
 Ellison Maloney, Sean
 Engel Matsui
 Enyart McCarthy (CA)
 Eshoo McCarthy (NY)
 Esty McCollum
 Farr McDermott
 Fattah McGovern
 Fitzpatrick McIntyre
 Foster McKeon
 Frankel (FL) McNerney
 Fudge Meehan
 Gabbard Meeks
 Gallego Meng
 Garamendi Michaud
 Garcia Miller, Gary
 Grayson Miller, George
 Green, Al Moore
 Green, Gene Moran
 Grijalva Murphy (FL)
 Grimm Nadler
 Gutiérrez Napolitano
 Hahn Negetre McLeod
 Hanna Nolan
 Hastings (FL) Nunes
 Hastings (WA) O'Rourke
 Heck (WA) Owens
 Higgins Pallone
 Himes Pascrell

NAYS—201

Amash Capito
 Bachmann Carter
 Bachus Cassidy
 Barletta Chabot
 Barr Chaffetz
 Barrow (GA) Coffman
 Barton Cole
 Benishek Collins (GA)
 Bentivolio Conaway
 Bilirakis Cook
 Bishop (UT) Cotton
 Black Cramer
 Blackburn Crawford
 Boustany Crenshaw
 Brady (TX) Culberson
 Bridenstine Daines
 Brooks (AL) Davis, Rodney
 Brooks (IN) Denham
 Broun (GA) DeSantis
 Buchanan DesJarlais
 Bucshon Diaz-Balart
 Burgess Duffy
 Byrne Duncan (SC)

Payne Graves (MO)
 Pelosi Griff in (AR)
 Perlmutter Griffith (VA)
 Peters (CA) Guthrie
 Peters (MI) Hall
 Peterson Harper
 Pingree (ME) Harris
 Pocan Hartzler
 Polis Heck (NV)
 Price (NC) Hensarling
 Quigley Herrera Beutler
 Rahall Holding
 Rangel Hudson
 Reichert Huelskamp
 Richmond Huizenga (MI)
 Rogers (KY) Hultgren
 Roskam Hunter
 Roybal-Allard Hurt
 Royce Jenkins
 Ruiz Johnson (OH)
 Runyan Johnson, Sam
 Ruppertsberger Jones
 Ryan (OH) Jordan
 Ryan (OH) Joyce
 Sánchez, Linda Kelly (PA)
 T. King (IA)
 Sanchez, Loretta Kingston
 Sarbanes Kinzinger (IL)
 Schakowsky Kline
 Schiff Labrador
 Schneider LaMalfa
 Schrader Lamborn
 Schwartz Lance
 Scott (VA) Lankford
 Serrano Latta
 Sewell (AL) Long
 Shea-Porter Lucas
 Sherman Luetkemeyer
 Shimkus Lummis
 Sinema Marchant
 Sires Marino
 Slaughter Massie
 Smith (NJ) Matheson
 Smith (WA) McAllister
 Speier McCaul
 Swalwell (CA)
 Takano Aderholt
 Thompson (CA) Amodei
 Thompson (MS) Campbell
 Tierney Cárdenas
 Titus
 Tonko
 Tsongas
 Valadao
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Neal Schultz
 Waters
 Waxman
 Welch
 Wilson (FL)
 Wolf
 Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Gosar Rush
 Latham Scott, David
 Lewis
 Pastor (AZ)

□ 1727

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. PETERSON, Ms. SPEIER, and Mr. MCINTYRE changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SMALL CAP LIQUIDITY REFORM ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3448) to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 412, nays 4, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 62]
 YEAS—412

Amash Deutch
 Andrews Diaz-Balart
 Bachmann Dingell
 Bachus Doggett
 Barber Doyle
 Barletta Duckworth
 Barr Duffy
 Barrow (GA) Duncan (SC)
 Barton Duncan (TN)
 Bass Edwards
 Beatty Ellison
 Becerra Ellmers
 Benishek Engel
 Bentivolio Enyart
 Bera (CA) Eshoo
 Bilirakis Esty
 Bishop (GA) Farenthold
 Bishop (NY) Farr
 Bishop (UT) Fattah
 Black Fincher
 Blackburn Fitzpatrick
 Blumenauer Fleischmann
 Bonamici Fleming
 Boustany Flores
 Brady (PA) Forbes
 Brady (TX) Foster
 Braley (IA) Foxx
 Bridenstine Frankel (FL)
 Brooks (AL) Franks (AZ)
 Brooks (IN) Frelinghuysen
 Broun (GA) Fudge
 Brown (FL) Gabbard
 Brownley (CA) Gallego
 Buchanan Garamendi
 Bucshon Garcia
 Burgess Gardner
 Bustos Garrett
 Butterfield Gerlach
 Byrnes Gibbs
 Calvert Gibson
 Camp Gingrey (GA)
 Cantor Gohmert
 Capito Goodlatte
 Capps Gowdy
 Capuano Granger
 Carney Graves (MO)
 Carson (IN) Graves (MO)
 Carter Green, Al
 Cartwright Green, Gene
 Cassidy Griffin (AR)
 Castor (FL) Griffith (VA)
 Castro (TX) Grijalva
 Chabot Grimm
 Chaffetz Guthrie
 Chu Gutiérrez
 Cicilline Hahn
 Clarke (NY) Hall
 Clay Hanabusa
 Cleaver Hanna
 Clyburn Harper
 Coble Harris
 Coffman Hartzler
 Cohen Hastings (FL)
 Cole Hastings (WA)
 Collins (GA) Heck (NV)
 Collins (NY) Heck (WA)
 Conaway Hensarling
 Connolly Herrera Beutler
 Conyers Higgins
 Cook Himes
 Cooper Hinojosa
 Costa Holding
 Cotton Holt
 Courtney Honda
 Cramer Horsford
 Crawford Hoyer
 Crenshaw Hudson
 Crowley Huelskamp
 Cuellar Huffman
 Culberson Huizenga (MI)
 Cummings Hultgren
 Daines Hunter
 Daines (CA) Hurt
 Davis (CA) Israel
 Davis, Danny Issa
 DeFazio Jackson Lee
 DeGette Jeffries
 Delaney Jenkins
 DeLauro Johnson (GA)
 DelBene Johnson (OH)
 Denham Johnson, E. B.
 Dent Johnson, Sam
 DeSantis Jordan
 Joyce
 Kaptur
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kelly (PA)
 Kennedy
 Kildee
 Kilmer
 Kind
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kinzinger (IL)
 Kirkpatrick
 Kline
 Kuster
 Labrador
 LaMalfa
 Lamborn
 Lance
 Langevin
 Lankford
 Larsen (WA)
 Larson (CT)
 Latta
 Lee (CA)
 Lee (CA)
 Levin
 Lipinski
 LoBiondo
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren
 Long
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lucas
 Luetkemeyer
 Lujan Grisham
 Lummis
 Lynch
 Maffei
 Maloney, Sean
 Maloney, Carolyn
 Maloney, Sean
 Matsui
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCarthy (NY)
 McCollum
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McNerney
 Meehan
 Meeks
 Meng
 Michaud
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller, Gary
 Miller, George
 Moore
 Moran
 Murphy (FL)
 Murphy (PA)
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 Negetre McLeod
 Neugebauer
 Noem
 Nolan
 Nugent
 Nunes
 Nunnelee
 O'Rourke

Olson	Royce	Thompson (CA)
Owens	Ruiz	Thompson (MS)
Palazzo	Runyan	Thompson (PA)
Pallone	Ruppersberger	Thornberry
Pascrell	Ryan (OH)	Tiberi
Paulsen	Ryan (WI)	Tierney
Payne	Salmon	Tipton
Pearce	Sánchez, Linda	Titus
Pelosi	T.	Tonko
Perlmutter	Sanchez, Loretta	Tsongas
Perry	Sanford	Turner
Peters (CA)	Sarbanes	Upton
Peters (MI)	Scalise	Valadao
Peterson	Schakowsky	Van Hollen
Petri	Schiff	Vargas
Pingree (ME)	Schneider	Veasey
Pittenger	Schock	Vela
Pitts	Schrader	Velázquez
Pocan	Schwartz	Visclosky
Poe (TX)	Schweikert	Wagner
Polis	Scott (VA)	Walberg
Pompeo	Scott, Austin	Walden
Posey	Sensenbrenner	Serrano
Price (NC)	Sessions	Walorski
Quigley	Sewell (AL)	Walz
Rahall	Shea-Porter	Wasserman
Rangel	Sherman	Schultz
Reed	Shimkus	Waters
Reichert	Shuster	Waxman
Renacci	Simpson	Weber (TX)
Ribble	Sinema	Webster (FL)
Rice (SC)	Sires	Welch
Richmond	Slaughter	Wenstrup
Rigell	Smith (MO)	Whitfield
Roby	Smith (NE)	Williams
Roe (TN)	Smith (NJ)	Wilson (FL)
Rogers (AL)	Smith (TX)	Wilson (SC)
Rogers (KY)	Smith (WA)	Wittman
Rogers (MI)	Southerland	Wolf
Rohrabacher	Speier	Womack
Rokita	Stewart	Woodall
Rooney	Stivers	Yarmuth
Ros-Lehtinen	Stutzman	Yoder
Roskam	Swalwell (CA)	Yoho
Ross	Takano	Young (AK)
Rothfus	Terry	Young (IN)

NAYS—4

Fortenberry	McClintock
Jones	Stockman

NOT VOTING—15

Aderholt	Davis, Rodney	Pastor (AZ)
Amodel	Gosar	Price (GA)
Campbell	Grayson	Rush
Cárdenas	Latham	Scott, David
Clark (MA)	Lewis	Westmoreland

□ 1735

Mr. POE of Texas changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 62 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR AIRMEN AND AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS RELATING TO SLEEP DISORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 3578) to ensure that any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder is adopted pursuant

to a rulemaking proceeding, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: “A bill to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.”

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF JOHN FAHEY AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 28) providing for the appointment of John Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 28

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of Roger W. Sant of the District of Columbia, on October 24, 2013, is filled by the appointment of John Fahey of the District of Columbia. The appointment is for a term of 6 years, beginning on the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third

time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF RISA LAVIZZO-MOUREY AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 29) providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 29

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of Patricia Q. Stonesifer of Washington, DC, on December 21, 2013, is filled by the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey of Pennsylvania. The appointment is for a term of 6 years, beginning on the later of December 22, 2013, or the date of enactment of this joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be in Washington on Monday, February 10, 2014, for votes because of events in our district. If I would have been here I would have voted as follows:

On passage of H.R. 2431, the National Integrated Drought Information Systems Reauthorization Act, rollcall No. 55, I would have voted “yea.”

On passage of H. Res. 447, a House resolution supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, rollcall No. 56, I would have voted “yea.”

On approval of the Journal, rollcall No. 57, I would have voted “no.”

ADJOURNMENT FROM TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014, TO FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2014

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the

House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Friday, February 14, 2014.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 25

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a concurrent resolution and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 81

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill, S. 25, the Secretary of the Senate shall amend the title so as to read: "To ensure that the reduced annual cost-of-living adjustment to the retired pay of members and former members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62 required by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 will not apply to members or former members who first became members prior to January 1, 2014, and for other purposes."

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 540

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a concurrent resolution and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 82

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill, S. 540, the Secretary of the Senate shall amend the title so as to read: "To temporarily extend the public debt limit, and for other purposes."

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1762

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1762, the Biennial Budgeting and Appropriations Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 417

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor from House Resolution 417.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING THE WISSAHICKON SKATING CLUB AND THE MERRITTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the skaters and families, current and past, of the Wissahickon Skating Club in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania, and the Merritton Athletic Association in St. Catharines, Ontario.

This weekend marks the 50th anniversary of the Wissahickon Skating Club—Merritton Athletic Association Hockey Exchange. For five uninterrupted decades, these organizations have taken turns hosting players and families for a weekend of festivities surrounding a youth hockey tournament. It is understood to be the longest uninterrupted exchange of its type in international competition.

Mr. Speaker, this tournament brings back special memories for me. As a youth, I can recall the bus rides to Canada and the warm hospitality of the families who welcomed my brothers and me into their homes. It was and remains more than a hockey game. It represents the genuine affection Americans and Canadians have for each other, expressed through the rich tradition of friendly competition and the great game of ice hockey.

Mr. Speaker, the 50th anniversary of this very special engagement will be celebrated this weekend in Philadelphia. I hope this wonderful tradition continues with similar enthusiasm for the children of the children who will compete.

□ 1745

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, people all over the world will be celebrating Valentine's Day, a day of romance when we express our gratitude to the ones we love. We look forward to our chocolate, our candy, our flowers, and our cards.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, the women in our lives deserve more—equal pay for equal work. When our mothers, our daughters, our sisters put in a hard day of labor, they should receive the dignity and equity that they earn. Fair pay is the best gift we could give women and the families they cherish.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Internal Revenue Service on Monday issued final regulations regarding the treatment of volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel under the employer mandate provision of the President's health care law, the Affordable Care Act. The agency determined that volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel will not be treated as full-time employees under the law, which I was pleased to hear.

Over 97 percent of Pennsylvania's fire departments and 90 percent nationwide are served by community volunteers. Today, by protecting these organizations from being defined as employers, they will no longer be forced to provide health insurance to their volunteers or face the threat of penalty, which would be devastating.

As a firefighter and EMS volunteer since 1983, I joined friend and colleague from Pennsylvania, Congressman LOU BARLETTA, along with numerous colleagues in the House, to force action from the IRS on this matter.

While this decision is long overdue, it is the right one. Our local emergency volunteer organizations now have the certainty knowing they will have the money to keep our communities safe. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this is just a small fix to a massive law that is imposing economic harm on millions of businesses and families. Our work remains.

CHARLES DARWIN

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the birth of Charles Darwin 205 years ago tomorrow and to call attention to a resolution I have introduced with a number of other Members marking his birthday as ceremonial Darwin Day.

Through his work, Darwin discovered that the drive for survival of each species produces an evolution by natural selection. This discovery fundamentally changed our understanding of the

world. It paved the way for innumerable advancements in the fields of medicine, technology, and education. Without his recognition that natural selection enables increasing complexity, our comprehension of the world around us would be vastly poorer.

To me, Charles Darwin represents much more than a discovery or a theory. He represents a way of thinking, a philosophy. His approach to life and to the world around him should be celebrated as much as his discoveries. It was his thirst for knowledge and his scientific approach that led to new truths that enabled him to uncover the theory of evolution. This lesson is as valuable as the discovery he made and the explanations he gave.

Thinking like a scientist is all too absent from our public dialogue, and this is why we should continue to celebrate Darwin as a master of clear, evidence-based thinking. We, in this House, would do well to emulate his vision and his thinking, and I urge my colleagues to join me in marking Darwin Day.

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF FLIGHT 3407

(Mr. COLLINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, on February 12, 2014, we honor the fifth anniversary of the crash of Flight 3407 in Clarence Center, New York, and remember the 50 men and women and the one unborn child who died that tragic night.

As Erie County executive, I was on the scene following the crash, and witnessing the grief of the victims' families will remain with me forever. Flight 3407 families had their loved ones ripped away in such a horrible and preventable accident, but with grace and courage, these families turned their loss into a crusade to make the skies safer for all of our families. Against very steep obstacles, Flight 3407 families prevailed and forced Congress to pass legislation requiring airlines to put well-trained pilots in every cockpit.

On the fifth anniversary, we remember those who died that night and extend our gratitude to their families for fighting to make sure their loved ones did not die in vain.

BREAST CANCER MORBIDITY RATES

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday in Memphis at 10 o'clock, I will be holding the first of a series of health forums on issues of importance to the

people of the Ninth District. The one on Thursday will be on the racial difference in breast cancer morbidity. A New York Times story told of a study which showed that African American women have a greater likelihood than Caucasian women of dying from breast cancer in Memphis than any other city. We will have a panel to discuss it and try to find ways to have people get mammograms, change their diets, and see their physicians.

Under the Affordable Care Act, you don't have to pay a copay or a deductible to get preventative care. The Affordable Care Act could reverse that morbidity difference in Memphis. People need to get their mammograms.

People can go to community health centers that have been funded through the Affordable Care Act to get mammograms, watch their diet, and reverse this horrible trend. I encourage people to come to the Church Health Center on Union at 10 o'clock Thursday morning in Memphis to learn about this problem.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BAHRAIN

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in solidarity with the people of Bahrain as they mark the third anniversary of the February 2011 popular protest. More than 200,000 people took to the streets to demand basic human rights and government protection.

Sadly, this anniversary will not be one of celebration. Rather than seeing a move toward reform, systematic human rights abuses and restrictions continue, and freedom of association and expression have been curtailed drastically. Human rights defenders are jailed for life for peacefully calling for reform, while police officers convicted of torturing a prisoner to death are allowed to walk free.

As home to the 5th Fleet and thousands of U.S. servicemembers, the U.S. has an obligation to call on the government of Bahrain to enact meaningful reforms and adhere to its international human rights commitments. In the midst of increasing instability, it is time for the U.S. to hold its ally accountable and consider a contingency plan for a removal of the 5th Fleet.

MARRIAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DESANTIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to visit with

you this evening. I know many of my colleagues would like to visit about a very, very important topic; and that is the topic of marriage. We are currently in the midst of National Marriage Week, which is a global effort with 16 other countries to promote marriage.

I think we are going to hear tonight, Mr. Speaker, some very important information on how important marriage is to our culture, to our families, to our society and, most importantly, in my mind, to our children.

So first I would like to yield to the Congresswoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) to speak on this topic.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative HUELSKAMP for sponsoring this important topic this evening on National Marriage Week.

It is fitting and proper that we would set aside this period of 1 hour to focus on the institution that is the fundamental grounding institution of the United States of America. There are various units of government. We, here, are in the well of the greatest deliberative body that the world has ever known, the House of Representatives. That is at the Federal Government level. We have 50 State governments here in the United States. We have numerous county governments and numerous cities across the United States, but the fundamental institution, the fundamental unit of government is the family unit, and the family unit begins with husband and wife.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't a creation of the Republican Party. Marriage isn't a creation of Western civilization or of the United States of America. Marriage, as an institution, was created by none other than the Creator of mankind itself, a Holy God, the God of the Bible, and it is stated very clearly in the book of Genesis that after God created man and woman, He then created the institution of marriage, and He created it for a very simple reason: it is because God had a plan for man in the future, and that was through the propagation of the human race.

So as we are here talking about marriage this evening, my colleagues who will be joining us on this floor, we are here not to condemn anyone. My parents were married and then were divorced and then were remarried again, and that is a story that is repeated not just in America but in families across the world.

We are here not to condemn tonight because even though God creates an institution like marriage, and even though men and women can mess up and not necessarily fulfill what God had hoped for—God says He hates divorce, but it does happen—God is also the god of a second chance, and He gives people that opportunity, once again, to go back into a relationship.

So an institution that is meant for our good, it is one that, in fact, has been for good. It is good for man, good

for woman, but most of all, good for the children that come from that union.

My husband and I are thankful that we have been blessed with five biological children. We have been privileged to serve as foster parents to 23 wonderful foster children. But you see, Mr. Speaker, without the umbrella and the protective element of marriage, that is the greatest security blanket that any child could ever know, to know that in their life, there is a mom or there is a dad that is crazy about them.

Many, many women raise children on their own in this country. Many men are raising children on their own. But we know that it is this fundamental institution of marriage that is the bedrock institution of this land, and so we are here tonight, as imperfect and filled with mistakes as we are—again, not condemning. We are here to lift up and support and encourage this wonderful gift given to us by the Creator but given to us for our good and for the building up of this country.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Congresswoman BACHMANN, I appreciate your leadership on so many issues. One of the inspiring parts of your life, to me, is you and your husband's efforts as foster parents. You have stories to share about the many children. Acting as a family, mom and dad to these kids, it sure must have made a difference in their lives.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Well, it really is something, and we had seen another couple in our church that were serving as foster parents. That is really what induced us to take on foster parenting. Our hearts broke when we saw the lives of some of these kids, and we knew we weren't perfect people. We knew we didn't have the perfect marriage, but we thought we could offer something into the lives of these kids.

One thing my husband said is, every child needs to know that at least one person is committed to them and at least one person is crazy about them. It isn't to take away from the foster children's biological parents. Families go through rough patches. Families have challenges. Marriages have challenges. Nothing is perfect, and we are not standing up here saying any of us are perfect because we aren't, but what we do know is that a perfect God created a pretty good institution, and that is marriage, and that is the one thing that we felt that we could offer to our foster children.

□ 1800

We are an example of two very imperfect people in an imperfect home, but we were able to offer that model of what God had created, and that is bringing man and woman together, because we each, we are two whole people, but when we come together in marriage, we are stronger than two people together. So it is a very unique, three-stranded cord.

So I thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. As you know, there are many parts of the country where we are short of foster parents, foster families. If there is one thing you can say to a couple considering that, what would your advice be?

Mrs. BACHMANN. I would say think about it. It is not for everyone. But if you don't think you can do it—we didn't before we were foster parents. We took in one child, a beautiful girl. We took her from a homeless shelter, and we had the experience. It was good. We got a phone call from an agency, would we take another? We thought, okay, we will take another. And then we got a phone call, would we take another? And we took another. We got a phone call, would we take another? At that point, we didn't have enough places around the dining room table, so we blew out a wall and made the dining room bigger. And we just kept taking children into our home.

What we found—it was amazing. What I would say to parents is you will be amazed how your heart can expand. And it is all good, so I just encourage people to consider being foster parents.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Congresswoman BACHMANN, I appreciate your leadership both personally and here in Congress. So thank you for your time this evening.

Next, I would like to yield to a colleague, a freshman from California. I might remind the body that five Justices on our U.S. Supreme Court apparently didn't think California voters should decide some issues of marriage. But Congressman DOUG LAMALFA is becoming a leader here in Congress on that issue. I would like to yield to him and his thoughts on the issue of marriage, families, and protecting our children.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP) leading on this very important topic here tonight, especially given that this is, indeed, International Marriage Week culminating on February 14, Valentine's Day. I am also very pleased that my valentine is actually in town with me here for a few days, and it really, really picks you up because coming from California to the east coast does have its challenges in doing this job and doing it well.

That is really what the institution of marriage is. Your mate is your rock and your support when you are in a role like this, or whatever it is. It doesn't have to be this. It can be any job, or what she is doing at home, when your spouse is at home taking care of family, kids, and all that, you being a rock for them, too.

It is that partnership which is what marriage is. It was perfectly designed by God. It is the part where mankind gets involved where things can get a little messy. And so through prayer, through sticking to it, the institution

of marriage is one that is a rock. It is kind of like—what is it?—a Nebraska defense years ago; you bend but you don't break.

That is what that bond of marriage is supposed to be. It is supposed to keep together. Yes, you have some tough days and you have some tough times, whether they are financial or there are things in your life, a stressful job or somebody makes mistakes in their marriage. That bond is what keeps you together. It is sad that in this day and age the sacred institution of marriage has been cheapened so much by you see what is going on in Hollywood, what you see with easy, no-fault divorce, that it makes it where people believe that maybe there is just an easy way out of this.

That is certainly not to say that people shouldn't have an out for a bad, bad marriage, an abusive marriage, but it also needs to be not taken lightly before you enter into it. So a successful blueprint, you will hear time and time again—there are statistics on it—is that if you, in your life, finish school, finish school, whether it is high school, trade school, college, grad school, whatever it is, grow up. Be a little bit mature before you enter this institution, then seek the bonds of marriage, then have kids. If you do it in that order, the percentages, the odds of being successful for you, your spouse, your life, and your kids—you create kids. You bring kids into the world. You have a responsibility, a big one, to help set them on a positive course.

I have heard stats before that kids coming from a marriage, a family with a father and a mother in the same home, have like a 70 percent better chance of being successful, of getting through their life, with getting through school, moving on, being supported to where it goes.

So the institution has so much good going for it. Indeed, it is one created by God and recognized by the Founders and is a cornerstone of this Nation's forming. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it says right above you on the podium there, "In God we trust." This is important trust we have in upholding marriage.

My colleague mentioned that being from California we do some strange things out there sometimes. But, you know, amazingly, in California, two different propositions in the State of California passed, prop. 22 and then proposition 8, by the people of California, affirming that marriage is, indeed, one man and one woman. If you open the floodgates to other ideas, other concepts, you don't know where it ends. Multiple marriages? Same-sex marriage? There are so many things that are not what the institution is supposed to be about, indeed, an institution created by God, and it is supposed to be held up and respected by men and women.

Indeed, it is an important responsibility. It is a decision you make not

lightly because it is a lifetime decision—at least, it is supposed to be. For me and my wife, we just celebrated 25 years this year. We are proud of that statistic, but even more so grateful for the institution and what it means for our kids and the stability this institution brings for them and for a nation, one nation under God.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. I thank you, Congressman.

The gentleman from California raises some incredibly important points; number one, the personal aspect of marriage; also, the social aspect of marriage, particularly for our children.

I appreciate the efforts of voters in California. I apologize that a few Justices decided to attempt to overrule folks in California on this issue.

Next, I would like to turn towards a gentleman from Texas who has rapidly become a leader on this issue as well, and that is Congressman RANDY WEBER.

RANDY, could you share with us some of your thoughts about marriage and its impact as we celebrate National Marriage Week?

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, TIM HUELSKAMP, for the opportunity to speak out today in support of marriage and also what I am going to call unmarriage, and we will talk a bit more on that later.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, children are the only thing God can use to make adults, so we had better give Him a ready supply.

I would submit to those of us who are following this and listening that marriage has been the strong foundation of our culture and our society. Our government recognizes marriage because of the benefits it extends to our society. A healthy marriage creates stability, and it creates security, Mr. Speaker. A healthy marriage ensures a committed relationship with a mom and a dad to raise, to teach, and to instill values in those children.

A change in attitude towards marriage over the past several decades has been slowly corrupting our marriage culture. But it is important that we continue to recognize the important institution that is marriage and allow the conversation on its public policy interest to continue in the States.

This past week, sadly, Eric Holder, the Attorney General, has once again thwarted the Constitution, thwarted the separation of powers, and thwarted the popular will of the people when he announced that the Department of Justice—and I use the word loosely—would extend recognition of same-sex marriages nationwide, including my beloved Texas that has adopted a constitutional amendment to define marriage as a union between one man and one woman for our specific public-policy interests. We adopted that in Texas by over 76 percent of the vote in 2005.

Last summer, as we know, Congressman, you have already referred to it, the Supreme Court made yet another mistake. The Federal definition of marriage in the Defense of Marriage Act, or DOMA, was ruled unconstitutional in the United States v. Windsor case. As a result of the vagueness contained in that decision, Federal agencies began developing interagency guidance that surpasses the limits set by our very own Constitution, set by the Supreme Court, and set by Congress. While some of those agencies are referring to State law, Mr. Speaker, in determining a couple's marital status based on where the couple resides, called the State of domicile, other Federal agencies are using the State of celebration or where a couple is married when they enforce Federal laws.

This latter practice is unconstitutional. Agencies do not have the authority to create law and, therefore, agencies, which are following “the State of celebration” in determining the recognition of marriage, they undercut State laws and inherently influence the debate within the borders of those States.

That is why I have introduced the State Marriage Defense Act. This act solves that problem. It provides that a marriage will not be recognized by the Federal Government if it is not recognized by the State in which the person lives, aka, the State of domicile. Every American's marital status in the eyes of the Federal Government would be the same as in the eyes of the State where he or she lives. That would simplify the law and do away with the confusion on the part the Federal agencies at least in that one regard.

So again, I have introduced the State Marriage Defense Act of 2014, which simply provides that a relationship will not be recognized as a marriage by the Federal Government if it is not recognized by the State in which that certain person lives. That is it in a nutshell.

My bill, the State Marriage Defense Act of 2014, is a states' rights bill. We in Texas don't want other States telling us—or the Federal Government for that matter—telling us how we should live, and we don't intend to tell them how they should live.

And now about what I call “unmarriage.” Federal Government: leave marriage alone and leave it to the individuals who live in, contribute to, and build families at the local level. Federal Government: divorce yourselves from this notion of dictating to the States. That needs to be an unmarriage.

I have been married to the prettiest gal this side of the Atlantic, TIM, for 37 years, and she is my girlfriend of 39 years. I understand that marriage is a commitment. It is a tremendous institution, and it undergirds our very society. I am glad to participate in Na-

tional Marriage Week and to stand up and fight for states' rights.

I am RANDY WEBER, and there you have it.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Thank you, Congressman WEBER.

I have one follow-up question to try to determine in your mind exactly where do you think our Attorney General and the administration believes they have the authority to determine exactly what a marriage is? Can you explain that to me, Congressman?

Mr. WEBER of Texas. You know, I wish I could, TIM. Sadly, I think they have gone around the Constitution, gone around the Supreme Court, and gone around the Congress. I would say we have a constitutional crisis on our hands because here is an administration that is out of control, an Attorney General that is out of control, and, sadly for the executive branch, for someone who taught constitutional law, that is a scary notion to me because I can just assure you that I have read the Constitution many times over, and I don't have a clue where they get the authority, other than people have been silent and not stood up against that kind of what I would call “want to be kingship.”

So I hope that enough people stand up and say enough is enough, get back to the basics and back to the Constitution. Again, as I said, unmarry this notion that the Federal Government has got to be in on our everyday lives.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Thank you for your leadership. I appreciate your efforts on the State Marriage Defense Act. I am a cosponsor of that, and I encourage my colleagues to take a close look at that. It is not just the issue of marriage; it is the issue of who makes the decisions. As the author of the Kansas Marriage Amendment in 2005, I believe Kansans should decide that and Texans should decide that, not five unelected Justices here in our Nation's capital.

So, thank you, RANDY, for your efforts.

Next, I would like to yield to a Congressman from New Jersey. Congressman SCOTT GARRETT has been a critical leader on many issues of the home, the heart, marriage, family, and fiscal responsibility. It has been my honor to serve with Congressman GARRETT.

I yield the gentleman from New Jersey as much time as he might consume, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1815

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and for leading this Special Order this evening in recognition of what week we are in, Celebrating Marriage Week, and recognizing the very importance that marriage has to our society.

Our society it can be said is built on four pillars: marriage, family, church, and the government, and today, we are

faced with the reality that one of these pillars is crowding out and attempting to change the makeup of the other three. We have seen that some of our government's policies have discouraged traditional family marriage and traditional family structure as well, but I believe our government has an obligation to support policies that support marriage and support the American dream.

One of the most positive influences on a society is a strong family structure. Marriage itself is essential. It is essential to society, and it is essential to our American country and the American Dream. What I say is not ideology; what I say is data-driven. It is verified by the facts that marriage alone stands as a strong social fabric, a stronger economy, and a better future for our children. See, individuals who are part of a marriage household, a married household, are more likely to overcome disadvantaged backgrounds. They are less likely to live in poverty. Married individuals are more likely to earn more money, to save more money, and are less likely to be in debt. See, marriage is not only important for the economic health of our Nation, but it is also important for future generations as well. Children are more likely to succeed not only if they come from a married household, but the chances of prosperity, and this is interesting, are greater even further if they are raised in a community, a neighborhood, if you will, that shares the value of marriage. Children who come from a married household, to give one statistic, are 82 percent less likely to live in poverty and are more likely to gain a college education and succeed in society.

What is most essential to child is it is not only imperative for a child to be raised in a two-parent household, but it is also important for children to be raised, as I said a moment ago, in a community that values marriage and values family. Children who are raised in that sort of community will have higher rates of upward social mobility. I would note, to truly address some of the issues that Congress here tries to address, such as child poverty, we must address the root causes of those problems, and we must then acknowledge a solution to those problems as well.

So if you want to encourage economic growth, reduce poverty and ensure a prosperous Nation for future children, our government must encourage a strong family structure.

I said once before that this is not ideology-driven, this is data-driven. Why do I say that? Well, if you want to try to answer the question of what are the factors that are preventing, for example, poor children from getting ahead, for mobility, we have data to support it. There is an important new Harvard study that looks at the best data on mobility in America that just came out

recently. The name of that study is "Where is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States." It is a long title, but basically a study that came out of Harvard by economist Raj Chetty, and some of these colleagues over in Berkeley as well.

What they did was to dive down into the numbers, if you will, to see what are the characteristics most likely to predict mobility for lower-income children. This Harvard study asked which factors are the strongest predictors of upward mobility in various situations. In other words, which are the factors you can look to to see what is it that will bring children in poverty situations to a higher level. They went through all of the various factors you might imagine, but of all of the factors most predictive of economic mobility in America, one that clearly stands out above the rest is family structure, meaning what we are talking about here today, marriage.

I will quote from the study, if I may:

The strongest and most robust predictor is the fraction of children with single parent.

In other words, the strongest indicator of where they are going to have a problem with social mobility, in other words the indicator that says what is most likely to suppress or to keep children from being able to rise up and increase their stature in the community, to be able to go to college, get a job and support themselves and be productive in society, in short, live the American Dream, is whether or not they come from single-family households or whether they come from a married situation:

Children of married parents also have higher rates of upper mobility if they live in communities with fewer single parents.

Why do I say that? Well, again, what this recognizes is it is not just an isolationist situation, it is not just if you alone are married; it depends on whether or not you live in a neighborhood or you live in a community where everyone else around you is married, too. If you do, then you are a fortunate child because you live in a situation where you are more likely to be able to say: My future is good; my future is one where I am going to be able to prosper. My future is one where I will probably be able to move out of my current economic situation and do better.

So those two factors: it is whether you come from single parents or married parents, and also whether you live in a community where people around you are all single or people around you are all married.

So I think it is interesting. It is also interesting that this study comes not from some university that you might think of as being more conservative, but coming from Berkeley and Harvard, I guess we consider the source.

In closing, a lot of research, including some new research from Brookings

Institution, shows what has already been shown, the first point, and that is to say if you are married, you have a better chance of rising up the economic ladder. This study now adds the additional feature of the community aspect.

My third point, what we are saying here tonight, is not ideology-driven at all. What I am referring to is a data-driven decision that we can make as Members of Congress. As a recent author pointed out, we just had the President of the United States standing before us saying that we must be a data-driven Congress and a data-driven government, and I agree with him. The data is now out there. The data shows to increase opportunity in America, to increase upward mobility in America, to sustain the American Dream, people of all races and people of all income levels have a far better chance if they come from a married family and a married community as well. So to understand this and have government have an effect on civil society, we must understand these parameters, and I applaud the gentleman for bringing this very important issue to the floor tonight.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. I thank the gentleman. You do indicate one study, but clearly what we do have are decades and decades of research, and obviously personal experience as well, on how important marriage is to reducing poverty, reducing crime. The number one single factor is the situation of marriage, and the gentleman from New Jersey has brought some additional issues as far as community.

We sit in this body and hear from the President and others: What can we do for the children? I wonder, it was about a year ago, and we have the President of France in our Nation as we speak, and there were more than 1 million French marching recently to say marriage is important. Were they saying marriage was important for them? Partly, but they were saying it is most important for the children. If you want to help the children, I beseech you, the research is clear. The Congressman has identified a study, and study after study exists, if you want to help reduce poverty, if you want to help self-esteem, let's help encourage marriage.

I appreciate your leadership on this.

Next, I yield to a freshman, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO). Again, this is National Marriage Week. It is close to Valentine's Day, and I hope you have gotten your Valentine gift for your sweetheart.

Mr. YOHO. I thank my colleague, Mr. HUELSKAMP from the great State of Kansas, for holding this Special Order on the sanctity, the institution of marriage. Marriage, as we have heard, is the bedrock, the foundation of a society, and a strong society is necessary for a strong community. Strong communities are needed for strong States,

and thus, they form a strong Nation. We have heard over and over again the different aspects people have brought out.

Sociologists talk about how the family unit, a husband and wife, are the basic building blocks for a strong family, which is essential for strong communities. It has been proven over and over again, the family unit, people will have higher grades, higher economics when they come out of school. We toured several Head Start programs in our district, and I have asked the teachers over and over again: What percentage of the people are at the poverty level? It is 90–95 percent. My next question is: What percentage of the students here are from single-parent households? It is 85–95 percent all the time. That just shows you the importance of marriage.

Marriage is an institution passed down through thousands of years of human history. The three great religions, and others, recognize the importance of a marriage, and it has gone through the test of time and it has been understood to be the union of a man and a woman. It is sanctified by God, and it is interesting to note that children only come from the union of one-half of a DNA strand from a female and one-half of a DNA strand from a father. That is nature's law; that's God's law.

February is the month of lovers with Valentine's Day this coming Friday, February 14. February 14 is also the anniversary of my wife and I. I met her in the fourth grade, my fourth-grade sweetheart, Carolyn. This February 14 marks the 39th anniversary of Carolyn and I, and I am so proud of that fact. Somebody asked me today, What are you most proud of? I said, My marriage to my wife. We believe in a traditional marriage. We tend to stay that way. I just want to say: Thank you, dear. I love you, and happy anniversary.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. I thank the Congressman. I appreciate your compelling personal story. It is a story shared by millions of other Americans. It is something of the heart. We mentioned as well, it is not just of the heart and the home; it is for our community and the entire country.

The President and I can disagree on a number of things, but in 2008 there were some words that I think are clearly on the mark in terms of some items we have been discussing today. In his 2008 Father's Day address, the President said:

We know the statistics: that children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime, nine times more likely to drop out of school, and 20 times more likely to have behavioral problems or run away from home or become teenage parents themselves.

Without the institution of marriage, without particularly the institution of fatherhood, and we are facing a crisis

epidemic of fatherlessness in this country, the President and I agree. It has an impact. It has an impact on every child. The lack of marriage and the lack of stability and the declining awareness of marriage hurts our children and hurts our society.

It reminds me of a story that I believe was in Dr. James Dobson's book on raising up boys, and I do have two boys myself. He noted some years ago executives of a greeting card company decided to do something special for Mother's Day. So in a Federal prison, they set up a table inviting any inmate who desired to send a free card to his mom. The lines were long, and they had to make another trip to the factory to get more cards. Due to the success of the event, they said let's do the same thing on Father's Day, but this time, this time, no one came. Not one prisoner felt the need to send a card to his dad. Many had no idea who their fathers even were or how important it was.

So those who are listening, whether you are fathers or mothers or looking at that, recognize that even though this society, even though Hollywood will tell us it is all about you, it is not. It is all about someone else. It is all about that child. They need a father, they need a mother.

No one can be perfect. I have four kids myself, and I am reminded of that every day, oftentimes by my daughters themselves, but we are not asking for perfection, we are just asking for that time, that time to promote marriage and to spend the time with your spouse.

□ 1830

If you are not married and you have children, look at getting married. That will stabilize and bring many things to your children.

This is National Marriage Week. This is an opportunity here in our Nation not only to talk about marriage, but talk about its impacts, talk about how its loss has hurt our society. I firmly believe that we could spend endless amounts of money up here, and occasionally we do that, but you cannot replace the family, you cannot replace daddy, you cannot replace mommy. We can do our best. We can help our neighbors.

But as we debate the definition of marriage where we have a Court that on the one hand in June says we are going to let the States decide kind of unless you are in California, and then on the other hand there is a Federal definition or a State definition, at the end of the day it is all about how important marriage is. Marriage predates government. We might like to redefine it.

In 1856, the Republican Party had a number of things in their platform. One is very important. They demanded a free Kansas. Being a Kansan, we ap-

preciated that and entered as a free State a few years later.

They also wanted to face numerous other things, including the twin evils of slavery and barbarism. They were talking about the issues of irregular marriage and the issues of traditional marriage and how important it was and still is to society.

I appreciate many of my colleagues that joined us here tonight. But most importantly, I want to just speak again to moms and dads and spouses. Marriage can be tough, it really is, but God is calling you to do everything you can. It is just not you and your spouse. There is a third person in your marriage. God would like to bless and protect that marriage and give you many fruitful days ahead.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time on the special hour during National Marriage Week. I appreciate folks that are listening—my colleagues. Feel free to tweet out the message to encourage that. We can do many great things up here we think in Washington, D.C., but oftentimes it is that one little thing we can do for our neighbors and for our spouses as we celebrate Valentine's Day this week.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2012, ATTACK ON BENGHAZI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) for 30 minutes.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for recognizing me for 30 minutes to speak on a topic, no matter where I go or what I speak on or if I am being interviewed somewhere, I am not the only one, it is other Members of Congress, too. This isn't a Republican issue. This is a bipartisan issue that Republicans and Democrats, Mr. Speaker, confront wherever we go across the United States. I think that it has to do with the fact that Americans cannot countenance the fact that, when we had people who are serving us in harm's way, it appears that the United States of America, in one of the rarest occasions that anyone can recall, wasn't there for those who were serving us on foreign lines.

What I am speaking of, Mr. Speaker, is the night of September 11, 2012, what is known as "Benghazi." People still say to us, Mr. Speaker—again, Republicans and Democrats alike, because this is clearly a bipartisan issue. They say to us, when will we get the definitive report on Benghazi? When will we get some answers on what happened on that night, September 11, 2012? Because no American citizen should go and

serve her country and not be protected by the Nation that sent her there.

Those who were killed that evening: Ambassador Chris Stevens, the first American ambassador to be killed in 30 years in the line of duty; Sean Smith, who was there that evening with our ambassador; and then also two men who gave their lives trying to protect our ambassador, Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods. They weren't on the scene very long when they finally arrived in Benghazi.

The Senate intelligence report that came out said that perhaps 15 minutes had lapsed by the time they arrived on the scene until they were murdered by a sophisticated mortar fire on the roof of the annex.

Well, let's go back a little bit, Mr. Speaker. Let's take a look of what we know to be true so far.

We have had two reports that have been issued. One is from the Senate Intelligence Committee. I commend every American to go to the Senate Intelligence Committee Web site and download that report, read it for yourself, share it with your friends, share it with your family, and you will be shocked at what you find in these findings.

The media didn't pick it up. The report came out, it is true. It was reported in the media, it is true, that there had been a report, but what the findings said about the lack of management and the lack of accountability coming out of the White House and the State Department, quite literally coming to the very doorstep of the President of the United States and of the Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is shocking, and shocking is the fact that to this day there have virtually been no firings at the State Department for what happened at Benghazi, despite the fact of the report that was issued by the Senate Intelligence Committee and despite the fact that this week the House Foreign Affairs Committee issued another report after another investigation of what occurred at Benghazi. You see, there was a report, Mr. Speaker, that was issued prior to this one. It was the Benghazi Accountability Review Board.

It is very curious that this Benghazi Accountability Review Board failed to interview the senior-most decision-makers in the Department of State. The facility in Benghazi, the compound where Chris Stevens and Sean Smith lost their lives, that particular compound is managed by the State Department; it is run by the State Department.

I would like to go over some of the findings this evening. In the minutes that we have together, I would like to go over some of the findings that were issued in this report. As I urge my fellow citizens in the United States to go

to the Senate Intelligence Committee and read the damning report and the conclusions of that report, I also encourage my fellow citizens to go to the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs and download the report that was just issued this week also on Benghazi. The report is entitled, Mr. Speaker, Benghazi: Where is the State Department Accountability? Majority Staff Report, House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee is a Representative from the State of California, Mr. ED ROYCE. Mr. ED ROYCE said in September of 2013, the State Department cannot have a culture of accountability if no one, literally no one, is held accountable for the mismanagement and poor leadership of the Accountability Review Board it self-identified. In other words, a report which, in my mind, Mr. Speaker, was woefully inadequate in investigating Benghazi, what we will call the ARB, the Accountability Review Board, even that report said there were deficiencies in accountability at the State Department. We know there was woeful inadequacy, and this is something that has to be addressed.

I call on members of the media, Wake up. Take a look at what the American people want to know, and that is answers, answers about what led up to the night of September 11, 2013, in Benghazi. Were there alerts? Were there reports? Did we have any idea that this tragedy was going to occur? Absolutely we do. That is what this report shows from the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

What happened that night? What did the President of the United States do? Why is it that the media has absolutely no curiosity when it comes to where the President of the United States was that evening when the battle ensued? It actually wasn't evening. In Washington, D.C., it was 3:40 in the afternoon.

In the election that occurred in 2008, there were two Democrat candidates. There was Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama who were vying to become the nominee of the Democrat Party. One particular commercial was aired by Hillary Rodham Clinton. It was famously called "the 3 a.m. commercial," and the question that the ad asked is: Who would be the person that you want to answer the phone at 3 in the morning if a call comes for a tragedy?—inferring a foreign policy tragedy.

Well, the call did come, unfortunately, tragically, but it didn't come at 3 in the morning. It came at 3 in the afternoon. To be precise, Mr. Speaker, that call came in at 3:40 in the afternoon from a desperate security officer in Benghazi inside the U.S. compound who picked up the phone and made a call to the desk that he was to report

to. That call immediately was transferred to the appropriate channels. Literally, Mr. Speaker, within minutes of the attack on the compound in Benghazi the President of the United States was informed not only that our American compound was under attack in what can only be called one of the greatest hellholes of the world, but he was also informed that our ambassador went missing and other Americans, as well.

What would a Commander in Chief do? What did our Commander in Chief do? I don't know. As a Member of Congress, I don't know where our Commander in Chief was that night. I don't know as a Member of Congress what our Commander in Chief was doing that night.

I do know, again, in 2008 Hillary Rodham Clinton said she would be the individual who should appropriately take that call. She was the Secretary of State at that time on September 11, 2012. Where was the Secretary of State? She was here in Washington, D.C. What did she do when that phone call came in? She has testified before the United States Congress and answered questions.

But let's take and review again, for the few moments that we have, what this report states about that infamous evening. To understand anything this tragic, Mr. Speaker, we need to understand the context of the time. That is what this report begins to lay out, the context.

We know that in 2011, in May, our brave United States Special Forces took out the menace and the head of the al Qaeda organization, Osama Bin Laden. We are extremely grateful for the work that they did.

But despite that blow to al Qaeda's network, al Qaeda wasn't done, and al Qaeda still isn't done today. Al Qaeda's influence continued to spread, and it spread well beyond Afghanistan and well beyond Pakistan. It had spread into the area of northern Africa.

There is a disturbing trend that occurred in Libya. There was a concern led by our President of the United States, Barack Obama. He stated that the United States needed to unilaterally go in to Libya and begin bombing.

The leader of Libya was a man named Muammar Qadhafi. He had been the head of Libya for a number of years. He is not a good actor. He is not someone that the United States would consider a friend. As a matter of fact, we had discovered that Qadhafi was hoping to start a nuclear program in Libya. Events ensued and that program was stopped.

Qadhafi changed his ways, so to speak, and Qadhafi actually became a partner in fighting the global war on terror and was, in fact, jailing Islamic terrorists in parts of Libya. Qadhafi was acting in this manner, and yet at that time, President Obama felt that he needed to go in and bomb Qadhafi.

I severely disagreed with President Obama at the time, Mr. Speaker. This was the wrong action for the United States to take. President Obama didn't come to this body. He didn't seek permission from the United States Congress to declare war on Libya, Libya which had not declared war on the United States. But President Obama literally sent in United States airplanes and began bombing Libya.

At the time, Mr. Speaker, I was running to become President of the United States. At that time, I stated I was unalterably opposed to President Obama's policy. We should not be bombing in Libya, Mr. Speaker. That is what I said at the time. Why? Because we already knew that, especially in the eastern part of Libya, this was the number one area where people were recruited, terrorists were recruited, to come and kill American soldiers in Iraq. This was also training grounds and training camps for al Qaeda and other terrorist forces in eastern Libya.

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You see, Mr. Speaker, if President Obama went forward—I said at the time—and bombed Libya and created instability, the question would be: Who would take over for Muammar Qadhafi? Who would fill the leadership void? The only competing power structure was of terrorist forces. Arguably—I said at the time, Mr. Speaker—we could even conceivably see al Qaeda come in to fill the void.

Libya is a nation that is not a poor nation. They have oil revenues that finance that country. I was there recently, speaking with the prime minister and with the head of the justice ministry and also with the foreign affairs ministry. This is a nation that has a great deal of infrastructure, particularly in the Tripoli area, and there are revenues that have come in.

So, if the United States were to go in, as President Obama wanted to do and did, in fact, do in Libya, we could see that there would be bombing, destabilization and that there would be a fight for power. We could see terrorist elements come in, those elements that would be in line with the goals and objectives of al Qaeda, and we could see oil revenues used and go into the pockets of those engaged in terror in order to continue to finance global terrorist activities.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this is exactly what has happened in this region. That is what President Obama's foreign policy in Libya led to—to terrorists being on the march—and that is the context of the time that led up to that infamous night, September 11, 2012.

In that disturbing trend that was occurring in Libya after a near total collapse after President Obama's ill-timed and unfortunate bombing in Libya, in June of 2012, there were nearly 1,000

Islamist militants who had converged on the courthouse in downtown Benghazi. They came in one night with 150 to 200 vehicles. For 2 days, they had a rally that was sponsored by the terrorist organization known as Ansar al-Sharia. This was in June of 2012, just a few months before September 11.

After this major rally that occurred and also in June of 2012, an improvised explosive device—what we call an "IED"—blew a hole in the wall that surrounded this very same compound where Chris Stevens was tragically murdered on September 11. So, in June, there was a terrorist explosion that occurred just months before the attack on our compound, but that was the second explosion and attack that occurred on our compound. That was the second attack on that compound.

Did we have notice? We absolutely had notice prior to that time with that second attack.

Elsewhere in Benghazi, the United Kingdom—our closest ally and intelligence English-speaking partner—shuttered their office. Their staff withdrew after a rocket-propelled grenade attacked the British Ambassador's convoy and two security officers were injured. It wasn't just the U.K. that pulled out of Benghazi, Mr. Speaker. The United Nations pulled out, and the International Red Cross pulled out. The U.S. flag was one of the only Western flags that remained flying in Benghazi.

Did we know? Did Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton know? Did President Barack Obama know that Benghazi was in a terribly precarious state leading up to his reelection in the fall of 2012? Absolutely, they knew what a precarious situation this was, because it was our U.S. intelligence agencies that did their jobs.

What have the investigations shown? U.S. intelligence agencies did their jobs. They extensively warned not only President Obama but also Secretary of State Hillary Clinton that there was a deteriorating security environment in eastern Libya, including the expanding operation of al Qaeda in that region and that it mounted a significant risk to United States' personnel and to United States' facilities.

You see, this is the first question that needs to be addressed:

Did the President of the United States know this was a volatile situation? The answer is, undoubtedly, "yes."

Did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have ample warning? Did she know that this was a real concern that Benghazi could potentially be under attack? The answer is, without a doubt, absolutely, yes, she did.

As a matter of fact, it was Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, herself, who stated in testimony before Congress that she well understood and was certainly aware of this reporting by our

intelligence community as well as the fact that extremists claiming to be affiliated with al Qaeda were active in the area in Benghazi. Still, after the United Kingdom pulled out and left, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made the decision that the United States would remain. After the United Nations pulled out, Secretary of State Clinton made the decision the United States would remain. After the International Red Cross pulled out, Secretary of State Clinton made the decision the United States and our Ambassador would stay and remain in a facility that was not secure to vulnerable attacks.

As a matter of fact, the United States taxpayers paid for hundreds of analytical reports that were done and completed by our intelligence services that provided strategic warning that militias and terrorists and affiliated groups had not only the capacity but the intent to strike the United States and Western facilities and personnel in Libya. They could, in fact, do that. In fact, we even had a report that was entitled in June of 2012: "Libya terrorists now targeting U.S. and Western interests."

Could we have been any more clear? Could the Intelligence Committee have been any more clear? They issued a bulletin to our President and to our Secretary of State, "Libya terrorists now targeting U.S. and Western interests," and still they made the decision that our vulnerable facility would remain open.

What happened?

Before and after these attacks, a lieutenant colonel in our military named Andrew Wood appealed to Washington for added security in Benghazi. He knew. He was a military man. Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Wood led a U.S. military team. He asked for supplemental diplomatic security in Libya, and he recommended that the State Department consider pulling out of Benghazi altogether after the U.K. left and the U.N. left and the International Red Cross left—but his warnings weren't heeded. In fact, tragically, his warnings went unheeded.

Despite the growing danger in Libya, State Department officials in Washington denied the request made by Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Wood. When Andrew Wood said that we should get out of Benghazi, he was told no. He said, If we are going to stay in Benghazi, at least add more security. Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Wood was denied. He was told, No, we are not going to give you more security in Benghazi. In fact, they took away security in Benghazi. This was after the compound was attacked with an IED explosive device. This was after a rocket-propelled grenade was fired at the British Ambassador's convoy and the U.K. left and the International Red Cross left.

Numerous incidents—in fact, 16 different terror incidents—occurred in 2012. Despite the pleas from the military for more security, Secretary of State Clinton, as the Secretary of State, did not give in to those requests. The President of the United States did not give in to the requests for additional security, and yet our Ambassador remained on that infamous night of September 11, 2012, without adequate security. It was a tragic loss of life, I believe a preventable loss of life.

What is even worse from that consequence, if there can be anything worse than this loss of life, is that that very action emboldened America's enemies. Our adversaries saw what we did. In the midst of this heightened terrorist activity, they saw we did nothing to protect our Ambassador. When they killed our Ambassador that night, they saw exactly how the United States responded. We did not have military on the ground.

I am not faulting our military. Mr. Speaker, what I am faulting and what I am suggesting is that the President of the United States and the Secretary of State, despite ample warning, did not put the United States military on high alert in this volatile region. What other region of the Earth besides Afghanistan would have had this level of violence on that particular night, especially after there were already protests going on in nearby Cairo and especially after threats had been made by terrorists of retaliatory actions in the Libya region?

It is shocking to me, Mr. Speaker—shocking—that the President of the United States, despite this knowledge, failed to do anything in response to the pleas for additional security or, at a minimum, pull our Ambassador out of that region. Yes, we have answers. We have answers, and we still have more questions.

Committee members on the Foreign Affairs Committee demanded that appropriate State Department officials be held accountable for these decisions, as they rightly should, so that these mistakes wouldn't be repeated, yet neither the White House nor the State Department has stepped up to the responsibility. Instead, the accountability review board, which did the first review, was seriously deficient. It failed to even comment on the actions of our Secretary of State Hillary Clinton or of the most senior officials in the State Department.

Now, why is this? Could it be because Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, herself, selected four out of the five review members?

You see, isn't it convenient, Mr. Speaker, when it is our Secretary of State who gets to decide who sits on her own accountability review board, overlooking the actions of what happened on that infamous night? She selected four out of the five who sat on that phony review board.

Those are my words, no one else's.

So, when she is selecting four out of five of those who are going to review potentially her actions, is it any wonder then, Mr. Speaker, that this accountability review board, if that is what you want to call it, decided: "We don't think that we will even interview Secretary of State Clinton. We don't think we need to talk to her. We don't think we need to talk to any of the senior decisionmakers in the State Department. Oh, no." So they chose to bypass even interviewing those who were the decisionmakers.

Mr. Speaker, that sounds a lot to me like the IRS, after this terrible scandal that is going on in the IRS. Where they appear to be, in a corrupt manner, trying to deny to conservative tea party organizations their tax-exempt status, the IRS also decided not to interview any of the victims.

How can you have an investigation of the IRS when they don't even interview the victims? How can you have an accountability review board if you don't even interview the decisionmakers in the State Department, including the Secretary of State and her top advisors?

This is embarrassing, if it weren't even more tragic, because, again, we are talking about the unprecedented loss of life of four Americans, including our Ambassador.

Secretary of State Clinton, herself, championed the United States' going into Libya going back to as early as 2011. She testified before the committee that she was engaged in the issues relating to the deteriorating threat environment in Libya.

That is pretty interesting, Mr. Speaker. You see, both Hillary Rodham Clinton—the Secretary of State—and President Obama believed that the United States of America unilaterally needed to go into Libya and start bombing.

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That was their agreed-upon decision, and when the chips were down and when the threat environment was deteriorating in Libya and Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Wood said, Hey, we've got a problem here in Benghazi and we've got to either pull out or we have to have more security, the Secretary of State and those who serve under her don't heed those warnings. Not only do they not pull out of Benghazi, but they don't give the increased security that was required to keep the Americans who were serving us safe. When they do that, then that is a problem.

What is an additional problem, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that at the State Department not one employee was fired or even missed a paycheck over what happened in Benghazi. I would imagine, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of Americans that don't know that; that despite this tragedy, despite this lack

of accountability, of anyone being held responsible—Oh, yes, we heard that there were four people who were going to lose their jobs. My foot, Mr. Speaker. Four people didn't lose their jobs at the State Department. Two were reassigned, one retired, and another one had another similar situation. No one was fired. No one even missed a paycheck.

What we need to do, Mr. Speaker, is listen to the good commonsense of the American people who are demanding answers.

What in the world happened in this lead-up before Benghazi?

We need to hold the Secretary of State and the President accountable for what they knew and why they failed to make the important commonsense decisions that any Commander in Chief should make.

We need to ask that second question. What in the world was the President of the United States doing that night when the attack happened in Benghazi? For over 8 hours, Americans were under attack and no one came to their aid or assistance, other than those who were at the annex who came and were willing to lay down their lives, and those who came from Tripoli. It took them hours and hours, but they were finally able to come to assist their comrades in arms.

Then also the third question that needs to be addressed, Mr. Speaker, is this: What happened after that night in Benghazi? Why did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, why did President Barack Obama continue to force the false fiction that there was a video that no one saw was the cause for a spontaneous outbreak that led to the deaths of these four Americans in Benghazi?

We have listened to people who were on the ground in Benghazi. They stated overwhelmingly that this attack was not spontaneous. It was planned. Yet for weeks afterwards, the President of the United States, as late as September 25, when he went to the United Nations, made a statement—this was after four Americans were killed—the President of the United States said this at the U.N.:

The future does not belong to those who insult the prophet.

Those were his words.

We need to get answers. Again, I encourage the American people, Mr. Speaker, to read this valuable report issued this week on Benghazi by the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today until 5 p.m. on account of weather conditions in Oregon.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for February 10 and 11.

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for February 10 and 11 on account of attending to family acute medical care and hospitalization.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1954. An act to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce; in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, February 14, 2014, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4743. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Volusia County, FL, et al.); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4744. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations (Venango County, Pennsylvania, All Jurisdictions); [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4745. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a report on Minority Depository Institutions 2013 Report to Congress; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4746. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Air Canada of Saint Laurent, Canada; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4747. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the performance report for the Generic Drug User Fee Amendments for FY 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4748. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the performance report as required by the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act for FY 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4749. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting fiscal year 2013 Performance Report to Congress for the Animal Generic Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4750. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting fiscal year 2013 Performance Report to Congress for the Prescription Drug User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4751. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Evaluation Findings — Performance Improvement 2013-2014 report; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4752. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2013 performance report for the Biosimilar User Fee Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4753. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Consent Decree Requirements [EPA-R05-OAR-2012-0650; FRL-9905-54-Region 5] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4754. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Section 110(a)(2) Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R03-OAR-2013-0675; FRL-9905-62-Region 3] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4755. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards [EPA-R03-OAR-2013-0492; FRL-9905-63-Region 3] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4756. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Title V Operating Permit Program; State of Iowa [EPA-R07-OAR-2013-0483; FRL-9905-21-Region 7] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4757. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Changes to Dispute Procedures [EPA-HQ-OARM-2013-0705; FRL-9803-9] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4758. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Dinotefuran; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0755; FRL-9402-8] received January 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4759. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National

Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to transnational criminal organizations that was declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 24, 2011; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4760. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Libya that was declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4761. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-273, "Omnibus Health Regulation Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4762. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting three reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4763. A letter from the Director, Mississippi River Commission, Department of the Army, transmitting a copy of the annual report in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act, for the Mississippi River Commission covering the calendar year 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b(j); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4764. A letter from the Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting the Commission's Annual Sunshine Act Report for 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4765. A letter from the Secretary, Postal Service, transmitting the Service's report, as required by Section 3686(c) of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4766. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting a letter regarding the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4767. A letter from the Regulations Officer, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Environmental Impact and Related Procedures [Docket No.: FHWA-2013-0007] (RIN: 2125-AF48) (RIN: 2132-AB05) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4768. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0635; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-081-AD; Amendment 39-17720; AD 2013-26-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4769. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshift Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0575; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-21-AD; Amendment 39-17718; AD 2013-26-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4770. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Alexander Schleicher, Segelflugzeugbau Gliders [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0019; Directorate Identifier 2013-CE-045-AD] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4771. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0095; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-197-AD; Amendment 39-17699; AD 2013-25-03] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4772. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Environmental Impact and Related Procedures [Docket No.: FHWA-2013-0007] [FHWA RIN: 2125-AF48] [FTA RIN: 2132-AB05] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4773. A letter from the FMCSA Regulatory Ombudsman, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Patterns of Safety Violations by Motor Carrier Management [Docket No.: FMCSA-2011-0321] (RIN: 2126-AB42) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules, House Resolution 478. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (S. 540), to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the "Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center", and for other purposes (Rept. 113-351). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MILLER of Florida (for himself, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. FLORES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 4031. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HALL (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 4032. A bill to exempt from Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 certain water transfers by the North Texas Municipal Water District and the Greater Texoma Utility Authority, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself and Mr. MULVANEY):

H.R. 4033. A bill to provide relocation subsidies for the long-term unemployed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4034. A bill to enhance homeland security by improving efforts to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from an attack with a weapon of mass destruction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, Foreign Affairs, and Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. McDERMOTT (for himself and Mr. LATHAM):

H.R. 4035. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries coordinated care and greater choice with regard to accessing hearing health services and benefits; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4036. A bill to prohibit the Central Intelligence Agency from using an unmanned aerial vehicle to carry out a weapons strike or other deliberately lethal action and to transfer the authority to conduct such strikes or lethal action to the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 4037. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to training and rehabilitation for veterans with service-connected disabilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 4038. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make certain improvements in the information technology of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs to process claims more efficiently, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COSTA (for himself, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mr. FARR):

H.R. 4039. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to take actions to provide additional water supplies and disaster assistance to the State of California due to

drought, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Energy and Commerce, Agriculture, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. STOCKMAN):

H.R. 4040. A bill to promote and ensure delivery of high quality special education and related services to students with visual disabilities or who are deaf or hard of hearing through instructional methodologies meeting their unique learning needs; to enhance accountability for the provision of such services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RUSH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CLAY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. HAHN, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. PITTS, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. TONKO, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. WATERS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. BASS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. JEFFRIES):

H.R. 4041. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Freedom Riders, collectively, in recognition of their unique contribution to Civil Rights, which inspired a revolutionary movement for equality in interstate travel; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. WOMACK):

H.R. 4042. A bill to require a study of appropriate capital requirements for mortgage servicing assets for nonsystemic banking institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROTHFUS:

H.R. 4043. A bill to suspend the debt ceiling temporarily, to hold the salaries of Members of a House of Congress in escrow if the House of Congress does not agree to a budget resolution or pass regular appropriation bills on a timely basis during a Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4044. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the child tax credit for 2 years; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. BARBER, Ms. BASS, Mr. BECERRA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CHU, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. COURTNEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. HAHN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. HOYER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JONES, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LOWEY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCALISTER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. POCAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCHOCK, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SIREN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATERS, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4045. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Rhode Island Regiment, in recognition of their dedicated service during the Revolutionary War; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 4046. A bill to strike provisions that prohibit the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy from studying the legalization of marijuana, that require the Director to oppose any attempt to legalize marijuana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 4047. A bill to protect 10th Amendment rights by providing special standing for State government officials to challenge proposed regulations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4048. A bill to direct the Federal Trade Commission to promulgate regulations prohibiting mobile applications from accessing certain content and functions of a mobile device when such applications are not actively in use unless the user is provided with a disclosure of such access and grants affirmative express consent to such access; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4049. A bill to amend the Act to provide for the establishment of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in the State of Wisconsin, and for other purposes, to adjust the boundary of that National Lakeshore to include the lighthouse known as Ashland Harbor Breakwater Light, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HECK of Washington (for himself and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 4050. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for alternate means of proof of period of military service for purposes of the interest rate limitation; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 4051. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to establish a competitive grant program for renewable fuel infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 4052. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a standard home office deduction; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD:

H.R. 4053. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish standards for the provision of mammograms at health care facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. NORTON (for herself, Mr. FARR, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT):

H.R. 4054. A bill to make supplemental appropriations to provide additional funds to Americorps for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4055. A bill to establish the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Commission; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PETERS of Michigan (for himself and Mr. LANKFORD):

H.R. 4056. A bill to reduce the operation and maintenance costs associated with the Federal fleet by encouraging the use of remanufactured parts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. PETERS of Michigan:

H.R. 4057. A bill to authorize funding for construction of U.S. Customs and Border Protection customs plazas at land ports of entry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition

to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LANKFORD:

H.J. Res. 110. A joint resolution granting the consent of Congress to the Health Care Compact; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HARPER:

H. Con. Res. 81. Concurrent resolution providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 25; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. HARPER:

H. Con. Res. 82. Concurrent resolution providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 540; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself and Ms. HANABUSA):

H. Con. Res. 83. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha I; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Ms. CHU):

H. Con. Res. 84. Concurrent resolution honoring and praising the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on the occasion of its 105th anniversary; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. MASSIE, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. TERRY, Mr. AMASH, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. JONES, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. LANCE, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. COOK, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. FLORES, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. STEWART, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. BENISHEK):

H. Res. 476. A resolution strongly supporting the restoration and protection of State authority and flexibility in establishing and defining challenging student academic standards and assessments, and strongly denouncing the President's coercion of States into adopting the Common Core State Standards by conferring preferences in Federal grants and flexibility waivers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. SARBANES):

H. Res. 477. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that

the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should work within the framework of the United Nations process and in good faith with Greece to achieve longstanding United States and United Nations policy goals by finding a mutually acceptable name that must apply for all internal and international uses (*erga omnes*), for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HAHN, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. MORAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HOLT, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CHU, Mr. HONDA, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. CLEAVER):

H. Res. 479. A resolution recognizing the 20th anniversary of the Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ENGEL:

H. Res. 480. A resolution honoring the Hudson River School Painters for their contributions to the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. WATERS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Ms. CHU):

H. Res. 481. A resolution recognizing the significance of Black History Month; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. CHU, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. KILMER, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. BERA of California, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Ms. MENG, and Mr. SABLAN):

H. Res. 482. A resolution recognizing the significance of the 67th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and supporting the goals of the Japanese American, German American, and Italian American communities in recognizing a National Day of Remembrance to increase public awareness of the events surrounding the restriction, exclusion, and incarceration of individuals and families during World War II; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. TONKO, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. ESTY, Mr. HOLT, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr.

ROHRBACHER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CARDENAS, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. ROYCE):

H. Res. 483. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Engineers Week; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER:

H. Res. 484. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of March 16, 2014, through March 22, 2014, as National Young Audiences Arts for Learning Week; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4031.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. HALL:

H.R. 4032.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mr. CARDENAS:

H.R. 4033.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 1.

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 4034.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Section 8, clause 18: "The Congress shall have Power. . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4035.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4036.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article 1, Section VIII, Clause 1, "The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States . . ." In addition, Article I, Section VIII, Clause 14 provides, "To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces." Lastly, Article I, Section VIII, Clause 16 states "The Congress shall have Power To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be em-

ployed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress."

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 4037.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 4038.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 4039.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 7 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4040.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 (relating to the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States).

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 4041.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4042.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROTHFUS:

H.R. 4043.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4044.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 4045.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 4046.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CULBERSON:

H.R. 4047.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article III, Section 2, Clause 1 & the Tenth Amendment.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4048.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: "To regulate Commerce with foreign nations, and among several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution: "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4049.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17 of the Constitution: "To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of Particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Armaments, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings;"

By Mr. HECK of Washington:

H.R. 4050.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 4051.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 1

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico

H.R. 4052.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, located at section 8, clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD:

H.R. 4053.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: "The Congress shall have Power To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof"

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4054.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4055.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PETERS of Michigan:

H.R. 4056.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. PETERS of Michigan:

H.R. 4057.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. LANKFORD:

H.J. Res. 110.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 10, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution:

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace,

enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 20: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 24: Mr. DENHAM, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 38: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 60: Ms. SPEIER, Mr. KEATING, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 164: Mr. MEEKS and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 184: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 292: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 401: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 422: Mr. GARDNER.

H.R. 445: Mr. MAFFEI.

H.R. 455: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 460: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 498: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 506: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 519: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 521: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 522: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. SALMON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 533: Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 611: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 654: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 669: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 685: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 718: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 809: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 831: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 855: Ms. KELLY of Illinois and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 863: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 875: Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 883: Mr. STEWART and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 920: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 988: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 1010: Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico.

H.R. 1015: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 1020: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 1074: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1076: Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 1084: Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SERRANO, and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 1091: Mr. LAMALFA and Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 1125: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 1173: Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1179: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 1229: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Ms. CHU.

H.R. 1252: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 1281: Ms. SCHWARTZ.

H.R. 1312: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 1339: Ms. BROWNLEY of California and Mr. VISLOSKEY.

H.R. 1354: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1362: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 1423: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 1428: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 1507: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 1518: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 1528: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. OWENS, Mrs. BACHMANN, and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 1551: Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1590: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 1630: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1731: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1739: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.

H.R. 1750: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 1761: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 1770: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 1851: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 1861: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 2053: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 2078: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 2123: Mr. CROWLEY and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 2130: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2229: Mr. CARDENAS.

H.R. 2291: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 2452: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 2479: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 2499: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 2504: Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 2536: Mr. BERA of California.

H.R. 2548: Mr. BERA of California and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 2575: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. BARROW of Georgia.

H.R. 2694: Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 2702: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 2804: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 2822: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2839: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 2870: Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 2911: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 2959: Mr. CARTER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. McCLINTOCK, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 2985: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 2996: Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 3040: Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 3086: Mr. HALL, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. MARINO, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. McCLINTOCK, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. COOK, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. ENYART, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 3105: Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 3118: Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 3135: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3155: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 3179: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 3211: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. WOMACK.

H.R. 3308: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 3344: Mr. BERA of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 3361: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 3370: Mr. DOYLE and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 3372: Mr. WELCH, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3384: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3395: Mr. BARBER.

H.R. 3398: Mr. NUGENT, Ms. MENG, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. PITTINGER, and Ms. SHEA-POR-TER.

- H.R. 3401: Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 3410: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 3413: Mr. GARDNER and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 3461: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 3463: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 3485: Mr. YODER.
H.R. 3511: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 3532: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 3541: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 3544: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 3546: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. ENYART, Mr. FARR, and Mr. HORSFORD.
H.R. 3556: Mr. POLIS.
H.R. 3635: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3658: Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 3672: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 3676: Ms. SPELER.
H.R. 3712: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 3717: Mrs. WALORSKI and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 3725: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3726: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 3740: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 3743: Mr. GIBSON.
H.R. 3771: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3788: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 3793: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 3829: Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3847: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
- H.R. 3851: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 3855: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. DAINES.
H.R. 3857: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 3864: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3865: Mr. PERRY and Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 3877: Ms. ESHOO and Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 3899: Mr. HORSFORD and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 3902: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 3921: Mr. GARCIA, Mr. DELANEY, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 3930: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. COFFMAN, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 3933: Mr. POMPEO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 3972: Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 3973: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3978: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3979: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. BARBER, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 3982: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 3985: Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 3991: Mr. DAINES and Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 3992: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 3993: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 3996: Mr. JONES, Mr. CRAWFORD, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 4001: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 4006: Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. YOHO, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 4008: Mr. LATTA, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
- H.R. 4012: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. MULLIN.
H.R. 4026: Mr. VARGAS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. NORTON, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.J. Res. 56: Mr. KILMER.
H. Con. Res. 36: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H. Res. 19: Ms. ESHOO.
H. Res. 36: Mr. BYRNE and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
H. Res. 59: Mr. POCAN.
H. Res. 302: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
H. Res. 365: Mr. HIMES.
H. Res. 418: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MENG, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H. Res. 425: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H. Res. 428: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H. Res. 442: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H. Res. 456: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. ADERHOLT, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H. Res. 467: Mr. MCGOVERN.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

- H.R. 1762: Ms. GRANGER.
H. Res. 417: Mr. PERRY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO HON. WILLIAM ENGLE
III

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of eastern Kentucky's toughest leaders, both in and out of the courtroom, Chief Circuit Judge for Kentucky's Thirty-Third Judicial Circuit, the Honorable William Engle III, upon his upcoming retirement.

Judge Engle made a profound impression on Kentucky's Perry County when he first won a special election in 2004 to take the bench. He was determined to restore dignity and honor to the court that was mired by countless drug-related cases. One year earlier, our region was dubbed the nation's "Painkiller Capital," and Judge Engle was determined to implement changes that could save the lives of people who entered his courtroom, and curb the tide of prescription drug abuse in Eastern Kentucky.

Fulfilling his pledge, Judge Engle established a Drug Court in Perry County in 2005, volunteering his own time to oversee the program. Drug Courts are designed to reduce the relapse rate of drug abusers and drug-related crime through substance abuse education, treatment, drug-testing, and counseling. With strict oversight, four participants made it to the first graduation ceremony in 2006. Since then, some 60 people have successfully graduated from this impressive treatment-alternative program in Perry County. Additionally, Judge Engle had the foresight to partner with a local workforce center to help Drug Court participants re-enter the workforce and build a career. His work has helped restore thousands of dollars in child support payments, as well as restitution and fines owed by the individuals. Most importantly, dozens of families have been transformed through the program and at least eleven drug-free babies have been born, giving them all a wonderful new beginning.

As he passes the gavel, Judge Engle leaves behind a legacy of fortitude in the law, yet humility in his service. His wisdom and passion will undoubtedly be sought after as the people of Perry County choose his successor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a champion for drug-free communities, the Honorable William Engle III. I wish him all the best in the years to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
WISSAHICKON SKATING CLUB
AND THE MERRITTON ATHLETIC
ASSOCIATION

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the skaters and families, current and past, of the Wissahickon Skating Club in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania and the Merritton Athletic Association in St. Catharines, Ontario. This third weekend in February marks the 50th anniversary of the Wissahickon Skating Club—Merritton Athletic Association Hockey Exchange. For five decades without interruption, the organizations have taken turns hosting players and even entire families in their homes for a long weekend of festivities. The exchange culminates in a youth hockey tournament for which trophies are awarded to the victorious teams. It is understood to be the longest uninterrupted exchange of its type in international competition.

This tournament would not be possible without the vision of former Wissahickon hockey coach Walter Jewell and Merritton Athletic Association President, Walter Baum. Walter Jewell had been taking hockey teams to Canada since 1962. Looking to start his own tournament with a team from Canada, the Merritton Athletic Association was recommended to him. In November of 1964, the Merritton Athletic Association and Walter Baum received a letter written by Walter Jewell from the Wissahickon Skating Club seeking to arrange an exchange trip between the two organizations.

In March 1965 two teams from the Wissahickon Skating Club arrived as guests of the Merritton Athletic Association. The first games were a Pee Wee-Bantam double-header, taking place at the Thorold Arena in St. Catharines, Ontario, the home of the Merritton Athletic Association. The tournament trophies for this exchange were donated by the Wissahickon Skating Club for the Bantam level and the Kaupp Electric Trophy for the pee wee level. Each organization was victorious that weekend with the Merritton Pee Wees accepting the Kaupp Electric Trophy and the Wissahickon Bantams taking home the Bantam Trophy. No one had any idea at the time that 49 exchanges were to occur without ever missing a single year.

Mr. Speaker, this tournament brings back special memories for me. As an 11-year-old I can recall the adventurous bus ride, for the first of numerous visits to Canada, and the warm hospitality of the Greenough and Isherwood families who welcomed my older brother Mike and me into their homes. We visited Niagara Falls, learned how a cargo ship navigates a river lock and walked the floor of a

paper mill, all the while growing closer to the same boys we would be skating against that evening. Lifetime bonds were formed. It was then and still remains so much more than a hockey game. It represents the warm and genuine affection Americans and Canadians have for each other and it is expressed through the rich tradition of friendly competition and the great game of ice hockey. The friendship endures through generations as fathers are reunited watching their sons skate on the same ice they remember playing on as children.

The 50th anniversary of this very special engagement of camaraderie and sportsmanship will be celebrated the weekend of February 13–15, 2014 in Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia. The two "Walters" would be proud of their legacy. I hope that this wonderful tradition can continue for the children of the children who will compete on this special 50th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE 12TH ANNUAL
BLACK HISTORY MONTH BRUNCH
HOSTED BY THE GENESEE DISTRICT
LIBRARY

HON. DANIEL T. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Genesee District Library as they celebrate their 12th Annual Black History Month Brunch on Saturday, February 8th in Flint, Michigan.

Formed in 2002, this Black History Month Brunch has become a staple in our community, and is regarded as one of Genesee County's signature events. A portion of the proceeds raised will go to support the Genesee District Library's Summer Reading Program.

During this special Black History Month Brunch, the Genesee District Library will honor Carolyn Nash, Retired Executive Director, Genesee District Library; Louis Hawkins, Community Relation Administrator, HealthPlus of Michigan; Lawrence E. Moon, Owner, Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home; and Bruce Bradley, CEO/Founder, Tapology, all for their unwavering commitment and significant contribution to our community. The event will also feature a performance from four-time Grammy Award and Academy Award winning vocalist, Regina Belle.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Genesee District Library for providing this opportunity for the community to join hands, recognize, and celebrate the contribution of local African Americans. This event captures the essence of Black History Month, and inspires residents to celebrate all year long.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

HONORING 2013 FELLOWS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF INVENTORS

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 143 inventors who will soon be recognized at the United States Patent and Trademark Office and inducted as the 2013 Fellows of the National Academy of Inventors by the United States Deputy Commissioner of Patent Operations, Andrew Faile. In order to be named as a Fellow, these men and women were nominated by their peers and have undergone the scrutiny of the NAI Selection Committee, having had their innovations deemed as making significant impact on quality of life, economic development and welfare of society. Collectively, this elite group holds more than 5,600 patents.

The individuals making up this year's class of Fellows include individuals from 94 research universities and non-profit research institutes spanning not just the United States but also the world. This group of inductees touts 26 presidents and senior leadership of research universities and non-profit research institutes, 69 members of the National Academies, five inductees of the National Inventors Hall of Fame, six recipients of the National Medal of Technology and Innovation, two recipients of the National Medal of Science, nine Nobel Laureates, and 23 AAAS Fellows, among other major awards and distinctions.

The contributions made to society through innovation are immeasurable. I commend these individuals, and the organizations that support them, for the work that they do to revolutionize the world we live in. As the following inventors are inducted, may it encourage future innovators to strive to meet this high honor and continue the spirit of innovation.

The 2013 NAI Fellows include:

Patrick Aebischer, Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne; Rakesh Agrawal, Purdue University; Dimitris Anastassiou, Columbia University; David E. Aspnes, North Carolina State University; Michael Bass, University of Central Florida; David J. Bayless, Ohio University; Kurt H. Becker, New York University; Carolyn R. Bertozzi, University of California, Berkeley; Rathindra N. Bose, University of Houston; David E. Briles, The University of Alabama at Birmingham; Richard D. Bucholz, Saint Louis University; Mark A. Burns, University of Michigan; Anne K. Camper, Montana State University; Lisa A. Cannon-Albright, The University of Utah; Charles R. Cantor, Boston University; Dennis A. Carson, University of California, San Diego; Carolyn L. Cason, The University of Texas at Arlington; David M. Center, Boston University; Vinton G. Cerf, National Science Foundation; Stephen Y. Chou, Princeton University.

Christos Christodoulatos, Stevens Institute of Technology; Benjamin Chu, Stony Brook University; Aaron J. Ciechanover, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology; Graeme M. Clark, The University of Melbourne; Leon N. Cooper, Brown University; Carlo M. Croce, The Ohio State University; William W.

Cruikshank, Boston University; Brian T. Cunningham, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Jerome J. Cuomo, North Carolina State University; Narendra Dahotre, University of North Texas; William S. Dalton, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center; Rathindra DasGupta, National Science Foundation; Paul L. DeAngelis, The University of Oklahoma; William F. DeGrado, University of California, San Francisco; Peter J. Delfyett, University of Central Florida; Lawrence J. DeLucas, The University of Alabama at Birmingham; Steven P. DenBaars, University of California, Santa Barbara; Joseph M. DeSimone, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Spiros S. Dimolitsas, Georgetown University; Michael P. Doyle, The University of Georgia.

James A. Dumesic, University of Wisconsin-Madison; David A. Edwards, Harvard University; T. Taylor Eighmy, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville; John G. Elias, University of Delaware; Ronald L. Elsenbaumer, The University of Texas at Arlington; Todd S. Emrick, University of Massachusetts Amherst; Liang-Shih Fan, The Ohio State University; Nariman Farvardin, Stevens Institute of Technology; Henry C. Foley, University of Missouri System; Ophir Frieder, Georgetown University; Fred H. Gage, Salk Institute for Biological Studies; Tillman U. Gerngross, Dartmouth College; George W. Gokel, University of Missouri-St. Louis; Clifford M. Gross, University of South Florida; Robert H. Grubbs, California Institute of Technology; Theodor W. Hänsch, Max-Planck-Institut für Quantenoptik Germany; Jeffrey H. Harwell, The University of Oklahoma; Jason C. Heikenfeld, University of Cincinnati; Benjamin S. Hsiao, Stony Brook University; Stephen D. Hsu, Michigan State University.

Lonnice O. Ingram, University of Florida; Tatsuo Itoh, University of California, Los Angeles; S. Sitharama Iyengar, Florida International University; Richard Jove, Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute of Florida; Biing-Hwang Juang, Georgia Institute of Technology; Vistasp M. Karbhari, The University of Texas at Arlington; Joachim B. Kohn, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; George P. Korfiatis, Stevens Institute of Technology; Michael R. Ladisch, Purdue University; David C. Larbalestier, Florida State University; Cato T. Laurencin, University of Connecticut; Kam W. Leong, Duke University; Frank L. Lewis, The University of Texas at Arlington; Ping Liang, University of California, Riverside; Charles M. Lieber, Harvard University; Stephen B. Liggett, University of South Florida; Dennis C. Liotta, Emory University; Dmitri Litvinov, University of Houston; Michael R. Lovell, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Richard J. Mammone, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Michael A. Marletta, The Scripps Research Institute; Edith Mathiowitz, Brown University; Krzysztof Matyjaszewski, Carnegie Mellon University; Constantinos Mavroidis, Northeastern University; Robert M. Metcalfe, The University of Texas at Austin; Gary K. Michelson, Twenty Million Minds Foundation; Robert H. Miller, Case Western Reserve University; Chad A. Mirkin, Northwestern University; Samir Mitragotri, University of California, Santa Barbara; Shanta M. Modak, Columbia University; Marsha A. Moses, Harvard University; Ferid Murad, The George Washington University; Hameed Naseem, University of Arkansas;

Laura E. Niklason, Yale University; Santa J. Ono, University of Cincinnati; Sethuraman Panchanathan, Arizona State University; P. Hunter Peckham, Case Western Reserve University; Gholam A. Peyman, Tulane University; Glenn D. Prestwich, The University of Utah; Stephen R. Quake, Stanford University.

Dabbala R. Reddy, Carnegie Mellon University; Zhifeng Ren, University of Houston; Darrell H. Reneker, The University of Akron; John A. Rogers, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Bernard Roizman, The University of Chicago; Arye Rosen, Drexel University; Joseph C. Salamone, University of Massachusetts Lowell; W. Mark Saltzman, Yale University; Yoshiaki Sato, Kaatsu International University; Martin Schadt, Nanjing University; Vern L. Schramm, Yeshiva University; Sudipta Seal, University of Central Florida; Venkat Selvamanyam, University of Houston; Weiheng Shih, Drexel University; Mary Shire, University of Limerick, Ireland; Henry I. Smith, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; George F. Smoot III, University of California, Berkeley; Thomas C. Südhof, Stanford University; Subra Suresh, Carnegie Mellon University; Theodore F. Taraschi, Thomas Jefferson University.

Arthur J. Tipton, Southern Research Institute; Satish S. Udpa, Michigan State University; Kathryn E. Uhrich, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; Akos Vertes, The George Washington University; Vitaly J. Vodyanoy, Auburn University; John N. Vournakis, Medical University of South Carolina; Jay S. Walker, Cornell University; David R. Walt, Tufts University; Donald P. Weeks, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Sherman M. Weissman, Yale University; James E. West, The Johns Hopkins University; Wayne C. Westerman, University of Delaware; George M. Whitesides, Harvard University; H. Kumar Wickramasinghe, University of California, Irvine; David J. Wineland, National Institute of Standards and Technology; Carl T. Wittwer, The University of Utah; Jerry M. Woodall, University of California, Davis; Mark S. Wrighton, Washington University in St. Louis; James J. Wynne, University of South Florida; Ralph T. Yang, University of Michigan; Frederic Zenhausern, The University of Arizona; Shuguang Zhang, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Harald zur Hausen, German Cancer Research Center.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall votes 55–56. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on rollcall votes 55 and 56.

HONORING ADA LUCILLE WILLIAMS UPON THE OCCASION OF HER 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the accomplishments of a virtuous woman, a professional homemaker, positive role model, counselor, proud mother, grandmother of nineteen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren, Ada Lucille Williams on the occasion of her 90th Birthday.

Ada Lucille Williams was born on February 29, 1924, in Vicksburg, Mississippi to her proud parents, Robert and Flora (Bass) Williams. Raised by her maternal grandmother, Hettie Bass, Ada grew up in the segregated South. She often recounts the life and struggles of African Americans during this time, noting that she and other black children walked to school, while white children rode past them on the school buses. Black children were responsible for purchasing their own books, while white children were provided with school books by their district. It was then she learned the valuable lessons about team work. She shared her textbooks with other children who were not fortunate enough to have them. This was an early lesson in creatively making ends meet.

Ada married the late James Louis Williams on September 2, 1942. They had nine children. Lucille and James migrated from Vicksburg to Niagara Falls, New York. Lucille joined the New Hope Baptist Church where she participated in the Missionary Society. Besides raising her children and grandchildren, Lucille participated in the March of Dimes, Muscular Dystrophy campaigns, and the Center Avenue Parent Teachers Association.

Affectionately called, "Ma Williams," she is a founding member of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, where she serves as Church Mother, Kitchen Committee Chairperson, Missionary Society President, Youth Choir Advisor, willing worker and provider of religious instruction.

Ada's favorite Scripture is Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Her devotion to serving others is inspired by her deep spirituality.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing me a few moments to honor this special lady, an incredible citizen who commits her life to the betterment of others. I am thankful for Ada's many years of service to the community and I wish her many more good and prosperous years.

COMMEMORATING NORMAN AND NORMA BURMAH'S 83 YEARS OF MARRIAGE

HON. VANCE M. McALLISTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. McALLISTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pride and pleasure to commemorate

Norman and Norma Burmah on the occasion of their 83rd wedding anniversary.

Norman and Norma were introduced at the "Roof Garden Dance Hall" in New Orleans during a performance by the legendary Louis Armstrong, and were married on January 26, 1931.

Inspired by their Creole heritage, Norman and Norma created a livelihood by starting a successful catering business. They were blessed with two children, six grandchildren, and thirteen great grandchildren. They have stood steadfast in their faith over the years, still beginning each day in prayer. Norma's love for parties and traveling is what she claims have kept her young at heart. They enjoy the simple things in life: old movies, game shows, watching the New Orleans Saints and entertaining guests at their home. Until 2005, the Burmahs lived in New Orleans, where they met, until they sadly lost their home in Hurricane Katrina. The Burmahs now reside in Marksville, LA, and continue to exemplify a strong character of dedication, compassion and devotion to one another.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Norman and Norma Burmah, the longest married couple in Louisiana, as they celebrate 83 years of dedication to one another which serves as an inspiration to all.

[From the Louisiana Family Forum]

Introduced by a close friend, Norman and Norma Burmah met at the "Roof Garden Dance Hall" in New Orleans during a live performance by Louis Armstrong playing their theme song "What a Wonderful World." They were married shortly thereafter on January 26, 1931, and the two have remained inseparable. "Maw" and "Paw," as their family fondly calls them, begin each day in prayer. Norma claims that she's a "young 98" and continues to prove this through her love for parties and her independent trip to France only years ago. Norma has never driven a day in her life! However, Norman is not shy of his achievements adding that he drove until he was 97 and rode his first jet-ski at 92! While he's a student of politics, football and game shows, she's a fan of "Lawrence Welk" and enjoys old movies. They created a livelihood together, operating a thriving catering business inspired by their Creole heritage.

They lived in New Orleans until 2005, and, to this day, they both remain deeply devoted New Orleans Saints fans! After tragically losing their home during Hurricane Katrina, the Burmahs moved to Marksville, La. At 97 years of age, Norman proudly purchased their new home where they independently live along with their prize Rooster, "Jindal."

They have been blessed with a healthy family consisting of two children, six grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

OHIO'S WILLIAM McCULLOCH LED THE 1964 CIVIL RIGHTS ACT 50 YEARS AGO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late William Moore McCulloch, a Republican Member of Congress

from Ohio, for his extraordinary work on the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Fifty years ago on February 10, 1964, the House of Representatives passed what would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by a vote of 290 to 130.

This landmark piece of legislation outlawed discrimination against race, ethnicity, gender, and religious minorities. I believe this was the most important piece of American domestic legislation in 20th Century America, as it protected fundamental civil rights and ensured equal opportunities for all Americans.

McCulloch was born in 1901, in Holmes County, Ohio. Despite being raised working on his family's farm and attending local rural schools, he studied at the College of Wooster before earning a law degree from Ohio State University College in 1925.

Following graduation, McCulloch moved to Florida to practice constitutional law for a year. This period of his life was crucial in developing his passion for overhauling civil rights legislation, as he saw the effect of the oppressive Jim Crow "separate but equal" racial segregation laws firsthand. This experience fueled his passion for civil rights, and his belief that the Constitution guaranteed equal rights for all Americans. In 1932, McCulloch was elected to the State House of Representatives. From here, his determination to outlaw discrimination began to manifest itself.

For example, he supported the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in its drive to end segregated seating in restaurants in Piqua. I am inspired by his work here, as this was a risky political move in such a rural, white, middle class, and conservative region of Ohio. Nevertheless, his desire to dismantle institutionalized discrimination outweighed everything else, and African Americans and all Americans are better off for it.

In 1947, he was elected to Congress from Ohio's fourth Congressional district. It is important to note that McCulloch only had a small number of African American constituents—roughly 2.7 percent. His determination to protect American civil rights regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or religion was due to his intrinsic desire to achieve equality, and not his own political agenda. He focused purely on doing what was right for the people of the United States. I find encouragement in this, and believe more of us in Congress can learn from McCulloch's example.

However, McCulloch's work in civil rights didn't stop in Piqua, Ohio. He was the ranking Republican member of the House Judiciary Committee in the early 1960s, and used this to ensure civil rights legislation was introduced to the House. In 1963, President Kennedy called for legislation that removed discrimination, and increased protection for the right to vote. McCulloch personally met with the Kennedy Administration, and the two parties confirmed their joint commitment to a bipartisan civil rights bill. Despite his position as a Republican minority Member, he was determined to ensure the Civil Rights Act's passage through the House. He worked tirelessly with the Kennedy Administration and House Democrats for the bill. McCulloch's work was instrumental, and led to President Kennedy's declaration of "Without him, it can't be done".

The legislation passed the House on February 10, fifty years ago. Later after a 54-day filibuster, the bill passed in the Senate. The Civil Rights Act became law with President Johnson's signature. Like Kennedy, Johnson recognized McCulloch's significant involvement in the Civil Rights Act, and stated he was "the most important and powerful political force" in passing the legislation.

Despite his position as a minority Republican member in the House Judiciary Committee, McCulloch worked across party lines to pass legislation that guaranteed equal rights for all. I am inspired by this, and believe we can all learn something from McCulloch's efforts. He was willing to cooperate with the Democratic majority, including the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, in a time when there was a desperate need for anti-discrimination legislation and positive social change. I hope we can all follow in William McCulloch's example, and commit to finding bipartisan solutions to the issues facing our country. He was a proud son of Ohio.

CONGRATULATING RICHARD ROBB
ON HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Richard Robb on his 90th birthday, which he celebrated on January 19th, and to thank him for his tireless service to our nation.

During World War II, Mr. Robb served in the U.S. Navy at Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and the Marshall Islands. He was a crew member on the USS *Stockton*, a destroyer that sunk the Japanese I-8 submarine which was responsible for numerous war crimes and atrocities.

Following his military service, Mr. Robb continued to devote himself to defending the lives of others. He served 22 years as a sergeant and later a detective in the Sarasota Police Department in Sarasota, Florida.

Since moving to Western North Carolina, Mr. Robb and his wife, Cate, have been active participants in the Macon County Republican Party. They still attend every event and have served crucial roles in Election Day operations to serve the voters of the 11th District. In 2012, they received the "Golden Elephant" award for their exemplary lives of service.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire 11th District of North Carolina, I congratulate Mr. Robb on his milestone 90th birthday and thank him for his service to Western North Carolina and our nation.

RECOGNIZING GRADUATING SENIOR
BUFFALO STATE BENGALS
BASKETBALL PLAYERS, CHRIS
CASTREN AND JUSTIN MITCHELL

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two members of the senior class at

Buffalo State College, Chris Castren and Justin Mitchell. Both students are members of the men's varsity basketball team at Buffalo State and will graduate this spring. I commend Chris and Justin for their dedication to academics and athletics and congratulate them at the culmination of their college careers.

Chris Castren hails from Voorheesville, New York, where he attended the regional public high school. Upon graduation, Chris will have earned a degree in Elementary Education. On the basketball team, he excelled playing guard.

Justin Mitchell is a native of Buffalo, and graduated from Bishop Timon-St. Jude High School in South Buffalo, New York. At Buffalo State, he pursued a degree in Sociology and held the position of forward on the team.

Participating in collegiate athletics while enrolled as a full time student is notoriously demanding. In spite of the unique challenges faced by student athletes, Chris and Justin have excelled during their time at Buffalo State. They have shown extreme discipline in balancing both commitments and are leaders to their peers and teammates. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these exceptional Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. Their work ethic, determination, and spirit will ensure their success, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO HANNAH BLYTH
AND THE UNI-CAPITOL WASH-
INGTON INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, for decades the United States has worked closely with Australia on issues of great importance to our two nations. Australia has stood stalwartly as a friend of the United States and remains one of our closest allies today. Last year I worked with the Department of Commerce to organize a trade mission of Connecticut companies to Australia. As part of the trip planning, I was pleased to work closely with Australia's Ambassador to the United States, Kim Beazley, who joined me on a visit to Connecticut last spring. As Australia and the United States increase export and defense collaboration in the coming years, we must continue to strengthen our bilateral relationship with Australia.

Fifteen years ago, a program launched to place Australian students in offices in our Nation's Capital. Since that time, the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program has delivered to the United States some of Australia's best and brightest to serve as interns in a variety of federal agencies, congressional offices, and committees.

During my first term in Congress, I was privileged to welcome Anthony Bremmer to my office, and since then my office has hosted Jehane Sharah and Niall O'Shea. When the

opportunity arose again to participate in the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program, I immediately agreed to welcome another Australian "ambassador." Once again, my office and I have been pleased with the positive contributions of Hannah Blyth, who was placed in our office. She has attended meetings and briefings, assisted my staff with various research initiatives, and helped serve my constituents of the Second District of Connecticut. Prior to coming to the United States, Hannah worked for the Parliament of New South Wales as a Policy and Project Officer. With an avid interest in American politics and international relations, Hannah hopes to grow her experience and knowledge of the American political landscape during her time in my office. Hannah is truly an exceptional ambassador for the people of Australia.

Hannah's participation in this program has provided her with new opportunities and experiences that only the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program could provide. While in the program Hannah has attended events at the Australian Embassy, met with State Department and USAID officials, and toured the United Nations headquarters in New York with the Australian Mission to the U.N. A well-rounded graduate student, Hannah will be receiving a Master's degree in U.S. Studies from the University of Sydney's United States Studies Centre when she graduates later this year.

Many of my colleagues have also been privileged to welcome students like Hannah to their offices. This year, 14 students from 10 Australian universities all across Australia are serving in offices in Washington, helping foster a new generation of understanding and shared experiences between our two nations. Launched by former Congressional staffer Eric Federer, the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship program has now delivered 156 Australian student interns over the past 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all of my colleagues to open their doors to students from around the world so that they can share in our great democracy. Similarly, I would encourage American university students to seek established and creative ways to connect with their counterparts around the globe. I ask my colleagues to join with me in recognizing the contributions of the Uni-Capitol Internship Program and to once more thank Hannah Blyth for her dedication and hard work.

H.R. 3590, H.R. 2954 AND H.R. 3964

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last week, I voted against three bills designed to weaken important environmental laws and roll back protections for our wilderness areas, parks, and wildlife.

Many of my constituents love Oregon's public lands and use them for hiking, hunting and fishing. They value efforts to conserve and responsibly manage these lands. H.R. 3590, the "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act," will not, however, ensure responsible management and access. Rather, it

contained measures to roll back important environmental laws, to curb public engagement in management decisions and limit the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to appropriately regulate toxic lead in ammunition.

I joined a number of my colleagues in offering an amendment to H.R. 3590 to ensure the Secretary of the Interior maintains the authority to consider climate change when making decisions regarding conservation and recreational activities on public lands. I was disappointed that this amendment failed, and I will continue to use every opportunity to elevate the importance of climate change.

H.R. 2954, the misleadingly named "Public Access and Lands Improvement Act," also weakens protections for wildlife conservation at treasured places like Yellowstone National Park, the Grand Tetons and Cape Hatteras.

Finally, H.R. 3964, the "Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act," will do nothing to help with serious drought conditions in California and overrides state and federal protections for wildlife and water quality. The bill sets a dangerous precedent by favoring certain water interests over others, disrupting the State's ongoing efforts to bring people together to find long-term, science-based solutions to manage this severe water crisis.

Our precious natural resources and public lands face serious challenges when it comes to climate change, recreation management, and fish and wildlife conservation. Unfortunately, these bills did nothing to alleviate those problems.

RECOGNIZING SUPER BOWL XLVIII CHAMPIONS, THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary talent, teamwork, and success of the Super Bowl XLVIII champions the Seattle Seahawks today, February 11, 2014.

The Seattle Seahawks finished the 2013 season with a remarkable 43–8 win over the Denver Broncos at Super Bowl XLVIII. This is the franchise's first championship team since their introduction into the National Football League in 1976. They ended their season with a 13–3 record and the number one defense in the league.

The Seahawks defense showed they were a dominant force all season and especially during the Super Bowl. All season the offense performed admirably battling through injuries and powerful opposing defensive lines. Their indomitable spirit was shown at its finest when it counted the most, February 2nd in the Super Bowl.

Seattle demonstrated exactly the teamwork and proactive spirit that we Pacific Northwesters take such pride in. The "12th Man" has shown the ultimate teamwork setting world noise records in the process of supporting their Seattle Seahawks. The team's preparation, determination, and true partnership with

the fans led them to dominate the Denver Broncos, ending the game with a final score of 43–8.

Coach Pete Carroll has been an inspirational leader rebuilding the Seahawks and strengthening team unity. He has also been instrumental working with youth in our communities through A Better Seattle, a partnership to help create a culture of safety and inclusion, while reducing violence in our communities.

I am pleased that, in addition to Coach Carroll, there are so many players from my hometown sports team that have Charitable Foundations. Their passion for giving back to their community exemplifies the spirit of the Pacific Northwest.

Mr. Speaker, I again offer my appreciation for the community spirit of Seattle Seahawks and congratulations for an outstanding and entertaining 2013 season and look forward to their 2014 season. Go Hawks.

RECOGNIZING GRADUATING SENIOR BUFFALO STATE BENGALS BASKETBALL PLAYERS, MARY CAIN, KALA CRAWFORD, KELLY KELL, STACI MCELROY, AND BIANCA SMILEY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize five outstanding members of the senior class at Buffalo State College, Mary Cain, Kala Crawford, Kelly Kell, Staci McElroy and Bianca Smiley. As members of the Buffalo State women's basketball team, these students are known as leaders among their peers and teammates. I commend these young women for their dedication to academics and athletics and congratulate them on the completion of their college careers.

Hailing from Niagara Falls, New York, Mary Cain attended Niagara Catholic High School and majored in Health & Wellness. During her years on the basketball team, Mary played the position of guard.

Kala Crawford enrolled at Buffalo State coming from her hometown of Middle Springs, New York and as a graduate of Saratoga Springs High School. Kala played guard for the Buffalo State Bengals and will be earning a degree in Business.

During her time at Buffalo State, Kelly Kell played guard and studied Public Communication. Her hometown is Port Ewen, New York, and she attended Kingston High School.

Staci McElroy traveled to Buffalo State from Saratoga Springs, New York, and graduated from Saratoga Springs High School. On the team, she played guard, and off the court, studied Psychology.

A graduate of Sweet Home High School and native of Amherst, New York, Bianca Smiley played forward at Buffalo State. She will be earning her degree in Criminal Justice this year.

Balancing the responsibilities demanded of student athletes is a true challenge, and each of these students handled the test with dignity

and grace. As an alumnus of Buffalo State, I will be proud to call them fellow alumni.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for allowing my colleagues to join me in recognizing these extraordinary Buffalo State Bengals and in congratulating them as they obtain their undergraduate degrees. Their dedication and drive will propel them to success, and I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

HONORING MR. GARREN MIMS, SR.

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a special man, Mr. Garren Thomas Mims, Sr., a native of my hometown of New Orleans, Louisiana. I especially wish to congratulate him on becoming the 99th King of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure Club. It is my distinct privilege to recognize him here today for this accomplishment.

Mr. Mims has been an active and loyal member of the Zulu Social Aid & Pleasure Club since 1995. During his time in Zulu Mr. Mims has held and served in a variety of leadership offices. He has also been an active member of several committees and takes special pride in Zulu's community activities committee, in particular the Toys For Tots program. However, his service is not limited to his activity in Zulu. He also enjoys volunteering in his community and serves as a parishioner at his family church, Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church. The church's annual fundraiser for the St. Jude Center holds a special place in Mr. Mims' heart. His community service serves as an inspiration and we are grateful to him for his continued commitment.

In addition to his activity in Zulu, Mr. Mims is a dedicated family man. As a lifelong resident of New Orleans, Mr. Mims is deeply rooted within his community. He is a proud graduate of McDonogh #35 Senior High School and Southern University. For the past 19 years, he has been married to Mrs. Georgette Anita Mims. Mr. and Mrs. Mims are the proud parents of three children: Garren Mims, Jr., Gabrielle Mims, and Gabriel Mims. This year, he will get a chance to share the honor and joy of being Zulu royalty with his wife, as Mrs. Mims will reign alongside him as the 78th Queen of Zulu. This will be a special time for the family, and we are very proud of him. The commitment that Mr. Mims shows to his family and his community is an example to all of us. The hard work and dedication of Mr. and Mrs. Mims to improving the community and raising a strong family gives us hope and promise for the future of our city.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Mr. Garren Mims, Sr., on his coronation as the 99th King of Zulu and wish him a successful reign as King Zulu, 2014.

HONORING ALEXANDER M. MOYER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alexander M. Moyer. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alex planted prairie grasses and placed gravel in a water runoff guide at Park Hill High School in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alexander M. Moyer for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

REINTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND GREECE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to reintroduce legislation to address the long-standing name dispute between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Greece. This House Resolution urges the FYROM to work within the framework of the United Nations process with Greece to achieve longstanding United States and United Nations policy goals of resolving the name dispute and encourages the United States to work with its NATO allies to uphold previous NATO Summits decisions, with regard to the enlargement issue.

As founder and co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, this is of tremendous importance to me. I believe the United States must send a strong message, supporting a solution to the name issue and to encourage the FYROM and Greece to reach a mutually acceptable solution as soon as possible.

Historical and archaeological evidence shows that the ancient Macedonians were Greek. Macedonia is a Greek name that has designated the northern area of Greece for 2,500 years. In 1944, the name of the Skopje region was changed to Macedonia as part of Tito's imperialist campaign to gain control of the Greek province of Macedonia.

Both NATO and the White House have repeatedly emphasized their support for the

unanimous decision made at the NATO Bucharest Summit in 2008 (and reiterated at NATO Summits in Strasbourg/Kehl in 2009 and Lisbon in 2010) that an invitation would be extended once a mutually acceptable solution to the name dispute has been reached. As the United States and its NATO allies consider the future of NATO and possible changes in membership, the United States must abide by this decision. Otherwise, any move by the United States that shows support for extending NATO membership to the FYROM, before a resolution is reached in the name dispute, might be misinterpreted by the government in Skopje as a sign for further intransigence. This would eventually derail the ongoing negotiations, thus undermining U.S. interests in the Western Balkan region.

This resolution urges the FYROM to work within the framework of the United Nations process and in good faith with Greece to achieve longstanding United States and United Nations policy goals of resolving the name dispute. The resolution also encourages the United States to work with its NATO allies to uphold previous NATO Summits decisions, with regard to the enlargement issue and extend an invitation to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue has been reached.

IN MEMORIAM OF MICHAEL DALE GARRETT

HON. DAVID B. MCKINLEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Michael Dale Garrett, a Firefighter and EMT-I with the Nutter Fort Volunteer Firefighter Department, who lost his life serving in the line of duty on February 1, 2014.

Michael, or "Mikey" as he is known by his family, attended South Harrison High School, Alderson-Broaddus College and was scheduled to graduate from Fairmont State University in May with an associate's degree in emergency services. Michael's life was serving others as a first responder. He started when he was only a teenager and had experience and knowledge beyond his 28 years. He trained other firefighters and EMT personnel and was proud of his work.

Michael's passion in life was helping others. Every call he took meant the potential for danger but he did his job as a professional up until his last call. His sense of humor and smile will be remembered by his family and friends. The Nutter Fort Fire Department wants to stress that he died a hero, doing what he loved and lived for.

I offer my condolences to his family, friends, colleagues and all those who knew Michael Garrett. We honor his memory and his dedicated service to others.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the birthday of Frederick Douglass, I introduce a bill that would establish a Bicentennial Commission to study ways that the Federal Government might honor and celebrate the life of Douglass during the bicentennial anniversary of his birth in 2018.

Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in 1818 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He learned basic reading skills from his mistress and continued to teach himself and other slaves to read and write despite the risks he faced, including death. After two attempts, Douglass successfully escaped from slavery to New York and became an anti-slavery lecturer and abolitionist. He went on to serve in several administrations, including as a close advisor to President Abraham Lincoln, U.S. Marshal of the District of Columbia under President Rutherford B. Hayes and District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds under President James Garfield. In 1889, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Frederick Douglass to be the U.S. minister to Haiti. He was later appointed by President Ulysses S. Grant to serve as secretary of the commission of Santo Domingo.

Douglass dedicated his life to achieving justice for all Americans. He lived in the District of Columbia for 23 of his 57 years as a free man and was deeply committed to obtaining equal congressional voting and self-government rights for District of Columbia residents. His home, Cedar Hill, was established as a National Historic Site, in Anacostia in Southeast Washington, DC and his statue in the U.S. Capitol is a gift from the almost 650,000 American citizens of the District of Columbia.

My bill would simply establish a commission to examine ways the Federal Government can honor Douglass during the bicentennial anniversary of his birth, including the issuance of a Frederick Douglass bicentennial postage stamp, the convening of a joint meeting or joint session of Congress for ceremonies and activities relating to Frederick Douglass, a rededication of the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, and the acquisition and preservation of artifacts associated with Frederick Douglass. The Commission would report its findings and recommendations to Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 25TH PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY OF REV. DR. KENNETH L. SAUNDERS, SR.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Saunders,

Sr. on his 25th Pastoral Anniversary. As the pastor of North Stelton A.M.E. Church, Rev. Saunders continues to provide outstanding spiritual leadership to the Piscataway community.

Rev. Saunders was ordained Itinerant Elder of the A.M.E. Church in 1977 and became pastor of Bright's Temple A.M.E. Church in Warwick, Bermuda. Immediately prior to his service as pastor of North Stelton A.M.E. Church, Rev. Saunders served at Bethel A.M.E. Church in Madison, New Jersey. During the 11 years at Bethel A.M.E., Rev. Saunders oversaw the growth of the church from 7 congregants to 375.

In addition to his service to North Stelton A.M.E. Church, Rev. Saunders is an active member of his community. He has served as a member of the New Jersey State Parole Board, a Councilman-at-Large and Police Chaplain in Piscataway and has been recognized for his many contributions to the community.

Rev. Saunders was born in Jersey City, New Jersey and worshipped at Mt. Pisgah A.M.E. Church as a child. He was honorably discharged from the United States Army, which he joined after high school. He also worked for the United States Postal Service and enrolled in the Newark College of Engineering before entering the ministry. Rev. Saunders has been married to Sis. Shirley Harris for over 35 years and together they have a son, Kenneth, Jr.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in celebrating the 25th Pastoral Anniversary of Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Saunders, Sr. His leadership, service and dedication to the church and community are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

HONORING WILLIAM A. RYAN IV

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize William A. Ryan IV. Will is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Will has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Will has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Will has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Will organized and completely renovated the Girl Scouts storage facility at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Additionally, I am proud to say Will has been accepted into the United States Military Academy Class of 2018. I am sure he will serve his country with the same dedication as fellow north Missourians and West Point graduates, Generals John J. Pershing and Omar Bradley.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending William A. Ryan IV for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of Amer-

ica and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP OF DR. WANDA COOK-ROBINSON AS SUPERINTENDENT OF SOUTHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a local education leader in Metropolitan Detroit, Dr. Wanda Cook-Robinson, the superintendent of Southfield Public Schools for the last seven years. In recognition of the profound impact of her leadership on the quality of public education in Southfield, Dr. Cook-Robinson was honored in 2013 as the Michigan Superintendent of the Year by the Michigan Association of School Administrators.

Dr. Cook-Robinson became the superintendent of Southfield Public Schools in 2006—directly serving the community she has called home for the last 30 years. She brought with her a wealth of knowledge and experience in the realm of public education as an instructor for both graduate and undergraduate education classes at Grand Valley State University, Marygrove College, and Wayne State University, as well as a tenure of service as Assistant Superintendent for Student Performance and Human Resources for the Oakland County Intermediate School District.

The constant theme of Dr. Cook-Robinson's term has been promoting collaboration with staff and community stakeholders across all sectors of Southfield to fully leverage the maximum educational experience for her students. Among the fifty-two active partnerships Southfield Public Schools has engaged in on Dr. Cook-Robinson's watch, is the Revolution Read program which has brought together local elected officials, the higher education sector, and small businesses with the goal of having every Southfield Public Schools student reading at grade level by the end of their fifth grade year. It is a program that has already seen success as reading scores on state assessments improved in the program's second year. Dr. Cook-Robinson has also overseen the Southfield Public Schools' accreditation in the AdvancED program of the North Central Association Commission, which requires high academic standards to obtain—a distinction that had been achieved by only five other school districts in Michigan at that time. Additionally, Dr. Cook-Robinson has been directly involved with the creation of high school preparatory academies for Southfield students, providing a uniquely tailored small-class-size environment for students as they transition from middle school to high school in the eighth and ninth grades.

For her outstanding record at the forefront of leadership in the public education sector, Dr. Cook-Robinson has been recognized by many organizations. She has been honored by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.'s Southfield Alumnae Chapter as its Educator of the Year,

and has been named a Distinguished Educator by the Wayne State University College of Education Alumnae Chapter. Dr. Cook-Robinson remains an active leader across a number of local organizations including the Southfield Community Foundation, Wayne State University Board of Visitors, the Oakland University Department of Educational Leadership and the Southfield Area Chamber of Commerce, where she continues to build partnerships that are providing Southfield Public School students the tools they need to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, as we continue to move into a future where knowledge is an increasingly critical component to our nation's enduring prosperity, providing a world class education that prepares our youth to meet this demand is crucial. The work of educators, like Southfield Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Wanda Cook-Robinson, is key part of the continuing success of the Greater Detroit region, the State of Michigan and our Nation. I congratulate Dr. Wanda Cook-Robinson on her achievements and know that as she transitions to new responsibilities at the Oakland Intermediate School District, that she will continue to play a vital role in preparing our youth to meet the challenges and demands of our changing world.

HONORING ELAINE POMEROY MCKELLAR

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the exceptional life of Ms. Elaine Pomeroy McKellar, devoted wife, mother, sister, friend and colleague. With her passing on January 8, 2014, we look to the outstanding quality of her life's work to improve the social welfare of individuals and families as well as the countless lives she touched over the course of her career in social work and advocacy.

Born on August 3, 1944 in Thomasville, Georgia, she and her family moved to Valley City, North Dakota following World War II, where she grew up with her three younger siblings Linda, Earl, and Glenn. Mrs. McKellar received her Bachelor of Science in Social Work from the University of North Dakota, and obtained her Masters in Social Work (MSW) at the Washington University in St. Louis.

After completing her studies, Mrs. McKellar headed to the San Francisco Bay Area determined to work in the progressive political climate and change-oriented environment. While she walked on the front lines advocating for fair wages and walking a picket line for the United Farm Workers, she met her husband Larry McKellar. They had one son, Dominic McKellar.

She started her career off in the 1970s at Catholic Social Services in San Francisco. She primarily worked on foster care services and with youth transitioning out of the foster care system. She later went to the Children's Home Society as the Coordinator of Emergency Foster Care Family and recruitment, a non-profit agency serving children and families through critical child welfare services.

In the late 1980s, Mrs. McKellar's career took her to Bay View Hunters Point Foundation, where she helped to implement elementary school mental health programs with her experience and expertise in social welfare. Following her experience at the Bay View Hunters Point Foundation, Mrs. McKellar worked at the UCSF Medical Center at Mount Zion through a Robert Wood Johnson grant and provided critical mental health services to children victimized by domestic violence.

In April 2005, Mrs. McKellar came to work in my Oakland District Office. While initially starting as a part-time caseworker, she quickly rose to become the Senior Caseworker managing the casework services. She had spent the past 8 years providing outstanding constituent services to the residents of the 13th Congressional District. Mrs. McKellar's experience as a social worker was an asset to my office, as her institutional knowledge and expertise in social welfare easily allowed her to work closely with federal agencies and handle sensitive situations with the upmost professionalism and ease. She was committed to ensuring that my constituents received timely responses from agencies, often going above and beyond what was required.

Mrs. McKellar worked closely with veterans and constituents with issues relating to Social Security and Medicare. Her many contributions to the office have not gone unnoticed. For 5 years, she was responsible for organizing An Artistic Discovery, an annual Congressional high school art competition aimed at encouraging students to express themselves through the arts. Mrs. McKellar worked tirelessly to build relationships with high school art teachers and community stakeholders, which helped to successfully grow the event. In 2012 and 2013, Mrs. McKellar worked closely with staff from Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER's office to host the Veterans' Fix-It Event, an event to address the backlog in veterans' claims and cases with the Oakland VA Regional Office.

On a personal note, Elaine was an exemplary example of a public servant. She demonstrated the highest ethical standards and truly embodied the social work code of ethics in all aspects of her life. She will be deeply missed.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District salutes and honors an outstanding individual and dedicated public servant, Mrs. Elaine Pomeroy McKellar. Her invaluable service to improving the lives of the underrepresented and underserved will live on in the endless legacy of her life's work. I offer my sincerest condolences to her many loved ones, friends and colleagues she touched over the course of her incredible life. May her soul rest in peace.

CELEBRATING THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF GENERAL ROBERT SHOEMAKER

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 90th birthday of General Robert

Shoemaker, U.S. Army, Retired. Through a lifetime dedicated to service, General Shoemaker continues to make extraordinary contributions to both the security of his nation as well as to improving the quality of life in Central Texas.

He was born February 18, 1924 and grew up in eastern Michigan. Following graduation from West Point in 1946, General Shoemaker was commissioned in the Infantry. His brave service of nearly 40 years in both the 1st and 2nd Infantry Divisions as well as the 82nd Airborne Division saw numerous tours of duty in Vietnam, various commands, as well as achieving the elite status of Army Aviator. General Shoemaker rose to the highest levels of the military and was promoted to four star general and led the U.S. Army Forces Command. Known as FORSCOM, this command consists of more than 750,000 soldiers, nearly 90 percent of the Army's combat power, and provides expeditionary, campaign-capable land forces to combatant commanders. Under his steady leadership, FORSCOM held fast and true to its motto as "Freedom's Guardian."

Bringing to life Patton's maxim "the soldier is also a citizen," General Shoemaker settled in the Fort Hood, TX area following his 1982 retirement and began the next chapter of his life of extraordinary service. Knowing firsthand of the importance of education to military communities, he worked tirelessly to establish Texas A&M University—Central Texas near Fort Hood. He served eight years as an elected Bell County, TX Commissioner. Important civic organizations sought his tremendous leadership skills and General Shoemaker served as President and advisor to numerous entities, including the 1st Cavalry Division Association, the Heart of Texas Council of the Boy Scouts, and the Fort Hood Chapter of the United Way. The same commitment to excellence General Shoemaker brought to the Army he also brought to his beloved community.

Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have made a difference in the world. General Robert Shoemaker doesn't have that problem. His patriotism, citizenship, and commitment to service reflect the very best values of Central Texas. Let February 18 continue to be a celebration of one of our nation's heroes who devoted his life to keeping us free and making America a beacon of hope in the world. Along with his friends, family, and loved ones, I wish him both a happy 90th birthday and all the best in the years ahead.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,258,824,690,537.53. We've added \$6,631,947,641,624.45 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.6 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could

have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CONGRATULATING ASCAP ON 100 YEARS OF PROTECTING SONGWRITERS AND COMPOSERS

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, on its milestone 100th birthday.

In February of 1914, a group of prominent American music creators and publishers met at the Hotel Claridge in New York to discuss a noble idea: a society that would champion and protect the rights of music writers and publishers by licensing the public performance of their music. The result was ASCAP, officially formed 100 years ago as of this Thursday, February 13th.

ASCAP's earliest members included John Philip Sousa, Irving Berlin and James Weldon Johnson—enormously important songwriters and composers of the early 20th century, and still beloved by Americans today. Since then, ASCAP's membership has grown exponentially. It currently has nearly 500,000 creators and publishers of music of all genres, and licenses the public performance of more than nine million musical works.

The society's membership includes countless musical luminaries past and present, from Duke Ellington to Katy Perry, George Gershwin to Jay Z, Leonard Bernstein to Beyoncé, Marc Anthony to Brad Paisley, Henry Mancini to Hans Zimmer. Equally important, ASCAP also represents many thousands of writers whose names we might not recognize, but whose music we love.

As a long-time member of the House Judiciary Committee, I can attest to ASCAP's commitment to protecting the creative and economic rights of its members, and to working with lawmakers to build a viable future for professional songwriters and composers. ASCAP is always willing to come to Washington with guitars in hand, to remind us that every music creator is a small business owner who helps drive the US economy as they provide the soundtrack to our lives.

I can also attest to the important cultural and economic contributions made by the 3,500 ASCAP members in my congressional district. ASCAP members write the music for Broadway musicals; compose the theme songs and scores for the many movies and TV shows filmed in Manhattan and Brooklyn; and write the musical compositions performed by many New York recording artists. They are an integral part of the cultural and economic fabric of my district.

ASCAP's centennial comes at a critical juncture for music and copyright. The modes of music consumption are changing rapidly, and the future for songwriters has never been less clear. While ASCAP is uniquely positioned to help its members navigate this uncertain future, it is also hampered by a regulatory structure that has not evolved along with the music

landscape. That antiquated regulatory structure prevents ASCAP from licensing new services in ways that balances the needs of music creators, licensees and consumers. Those rules need to be updated so that, in its second century, ASCAP can continue to enable songwriters to enrich our culture and uplift our souls while feeding their families and paying the rent.

For 100 years now ASCAP has been at the forefront of the global music industry, nurturing new music talent and licensing every new music distribution platform, all in the name of protecting the songwriters, composers and publishers that call ASCAP home. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing its contributions and wishing ASCAP a second century as remarkable as its first.

HONORING JOSHUA D. MCPHERSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Joshua D. McPherson. Josh is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Josh has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Josh has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Josh has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Josh installed a bench and placed landscaping rock at Park Hill Christian Church in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Joshua D. McPherson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING KEVIN MCCORMICK

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kevin McCormick.

Kevin recently retired from his position as District Manager of the North Broward Social Security Administration office, where he has worked tirelessly for 40 years.

Throughout his career, his hard work and dedication have been recognized through awards such as the Regional Commissioner's Citation and an individual Commissioner's Citation. Kevin also took the time to both mentor others and serve as an instructor and a recruiter.

In honor of his tireless work to help our seniors, I am pleased to recognize Kevin McCormick and to thank him for his service to our

country. I wish him good health and a peaceful retirement.

DAIMLER ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Daimler Trucks North America for being named an Environmental Steward by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

This award, which goes to "an organization that has demonstrated environmental leadership through its commitment to exemplary environmental performance beyond what is required by regulations," was given for its environmental performance at its Cleveland, N.C. plant, which builds Freightliner trucks. Only 16 facilities in North Carolina have achieved this recognition.

Daimler Trucks was recognized for eliminating hazardous wastewater sludge and reducing energy usage by 43 percent since 2008. The board also cited the facility's elite status as one of the nation's few manufacturing plants to send "zero waste" to landfills and noted Daimler's "commitment to continual improvement."

Mr. Speaker, we are proud to have this great facility in North Carolina's fifth district and I thank Daimler Trucks North America for its exceptional environmental stewardship.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 10, 2014, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: "yes" on rollcall vote No. 55 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2431, as amended); "yes" on rollcall vote No. 56 (on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to H. Res. 447, as amended); and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 57 (on approving the journal).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I attended the funeral of a slain deputy sheriff in Utah on Feb. 2, 2013 and missed rollcall votes on H.R. 3590, The Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act of 2013, as well as votes on amendments to that bill.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on all of the amendments. I also would have voted "no" on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions.

Most importantly, I would have voted "yes" on final passage of the bill.

RECOGNIZING THE GATEWAY
FOUNDATION

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Gateway Foundation on its renewed accreditation by The Joint Commission. Since 1968, the Gateway Foundation's Alcohol & Drug Treatment Centers have helped thousands of individuals and their families formulate comprehensive and cost-effective treatment plans to battle addiction. Gateway's unique treatment approach, which focuses on both the mind and body, has allowed them to help individuals struggling with addiction lead full and healthy lives.

The Joint Commission is the leading accrediting organization for hospitals and behavioral healthcare organizations. To achieve accreditation, healthcare organizations like the Gateway Foundation have to be thoroughly assessed by health care professionals. The evaluation is based on a series of areas including how the organization educates its clients on treatment risks and options, whether or not the organization provides a safe treatment environment and how well the organization monitors a client's condition before, during, and after treatment. The Gateway Foundation excelled in these fields, receiving the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval.

The Joint Commission evaluation included 11 Gateway locations throughout Illinois, including several in Chicago, one in Aurora, and one in Springfield. It also ensured that thirty of Gateway's alcohol and drug treatment programs targeting men, women, and teens, will be available for the next three years to those in need.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of the Gateway Foundation, and to congratulate them on receiving accreditation from The Joint Commission for their commitment to providing high-quality care and treatment.

HONORING ALEXANDER M.
FORBES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alexander M. Forbes. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous

merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alex repainted parking lines at Christ Temple North Church in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alexander M. Forbes for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA MULROY
ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize Patricia Mulroy on her retirement after twenty-five years of tireless work for Nevada and the Colorado River as General Manager of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA).

For over a quarter century, Pat Mulroy has been a dedicated partner in protecting and preserving the Colorado River Basin for varying interests. She is a determined advocate for the water needs of what once was a sleepy railroad town called Las Vegas. This was no easy task; she represented the driest state in the Nation with the smallest allocation from the River. Yet Clark County, where Las Vegas is located, grew from 900,000 in the early 1990's to 2.7 million during her tenure at SNWA. Under Mulroy's leadership, this community embraces water conservation as their primary means of finding "new" water.

It has been said that the ultimate measure of a man or woman is not where he or she stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he or she stands at times of challenge and controversy. Despite the challenges, she has been involved in almost every major water policy development on the Colorado River since the 1980's, including the historic 2007 Colorado River Interim Guidelines for Lower Basin Shortages. But perhaps, her closing act may be the most important of them all. In December 2013, Pat helped negotiate Minute 319 to the 1944 Treaty with Mexico—a momentous binational agreement to guide future management of the Colorado River through 2017.

The Colorado River Basin is better today thanks to the work of Pat Mulroy. As she leaves SNWA to take on new challenges, I want to express my deep appreciation for her contributions to the Colorado River Basin, for her dedication to her community, and for inspiring a new generation of women leaders in water.

My best wishes to Pat, and continued success on behalf of the people in the Colorado River Basin. I ask that all of my colleagues join me to honor Pat for her years of public service.

HONORING NATIONAL VOICES FOR
EQUALITY, EDUCATION AND EN-
LIGHTENMENT

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor National Voices for Equality, Education and Enlightenment (NVEEE), an organization from my district, on receiving a \$25,000 grant from the first-ever Be a STAR (Show Tolerance and Respect) Initiative.

The Be a STAR program, cofounded by the WWE and the Creative Coalition, recognizes projects that help encourage respect and tolerance among our nation's schoolchildren, and NVEEE has certainly earned this distinction.

NVEE is a non-profit organization located in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, whose mission is to prevent bullying, violence, and suicide. This grant will be used to fund the Peace Ambassadors program and train young leaders in South Florida to serve as advocates to prevent bullying in their schools and communities.

Once again, I am proud to congratulate NVEEE on their efforts to empower our children and create a climate of acceptance, and I look forward to their continued success.

COMMENDING SAINT LEO UNIVER-
SITY ON ITS 125TH ANNIVER-
SARY

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Saint Leo University in Pasco County on their 125th anniversary. Back in 1889, Saint Leo was first founded as a college by the Benedictine Monks and was the first Catholic college in Florida. The Florida legislature granted their charter on June 4, 1889.

Saint Leo opened their doors in 1890 and started with a first class of 32 students. They focused on establishing a liberal arts education curriculum.

From its humble beginnings, Saint Leo College grew and in 1999 Saint Leo College became Saint Leo University. Today, Saint Leo University serves over 16,000 students with students from all 50 States, the District of Columbia and more than 60 countries.

Saint Leo University has been a longtime supporter of our Nation's active duty soldiers. In 1973, Saint Leo began offering degree programs on military bases. Saint Leo today is one of the largest providers of higher education to active duty military with an extensive online program. GI Jobs & Military Advanced Education magazine recognized Saint Leo University as one of the Nation's most military-friendly institutions.

I want to congratulate Saint Leo University for its service to our community during the past 125 years and look forward to it being around for another 125 years. I yield back the balance of my time.

IN HONOR OF THE VOLUNTEERS
WHO SERVED THANKSGIVING
DINNER TO VETERANS ON THE
USS "NEW JERSEY"

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the volunteers who served Thanksgiving dinner to homeless veterans on the USS *New Jersey* this past November.

These patriotic South Jersey citizens expressed their appreciation and gratitude those who have selflessly served in our armed services by taking time on Thanksgiving Day to give back to serve dinner to homeless veterans.

For that reason Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to submit the names of the volunteers for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Dominick M. Carella, Bob Catando, Amber Louise Clark, Chenay Baxter Clark, Cadet Sophie-Leigh Clark, Malik Cobb Jr., Robert Day, Victoria Day, Jacqueline Dorosky, John Dorosky, Alexis Dowgin, Kyle Dowgin, Min Elders, Chris Fuller, Christopher Jonathan Gruberg, Gerard Harkins, Joseph Hawes, Matthew Hawes, the Hegarty family, Justin Henderson, James Dallas Hoeffe, Deborah Johnson, Kelly Johnson, Ginelle Joseph, Jordan Kelley, Austin Kelley, Julie Keys, Bernadette N. Kirkland, Elijah Kirkland, Jan Maurice Kirkland, Keith Kirkland, Nzinga Kirkland, Justin Casey Lamanna, Chloe Madison, Carole Magowan, Steven Magowan, Chase Miller, Joanne Mooney, Martin Mooney, Kayla Phillips, Madison Phillips, Angelo D. Pizzullo Jr., Pamela Pratt, Alyssa Rivers, Alison Rivers, Luis Daniel Marchena Del Rosario, Joseph Rubino, Amanda Saini, Elizabeth Saini, Kenneth Aaron Smith, Sam Snyder, Susan Stefencavage, Donna Stein, Robert Stein, Beth T. Suckiel, Tatiana Swain, Kaori Takasu, Ty Takasu, Carson Wallace, Charles Wallace III, Kay Walcott-Henderson, and Johanne Wells.

Mr. Speaker, these volunteers exemplify the patriotic character of the citizens of South Jersey. As elected officials it is our duty to match their patriotism—by enacting laws that provide mental health support and other benefits to veterans, so that those who risk their lives on our behalf never become homeless.

MARCY KAPTUR'S UKRAINIAN
ROOTS

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to an article that recently appeared in the Toledo Blade that describes the family heritage of our colleague and friend, the Honorable MARCY KAPTUR. Ms. KAPTUR represents Ohio's 9th Congressional District, is the dean of the Ohio delegation, and is the senior-most woman in the House.

As this extraordinary article points out, Congresswoman KAPTUR's interest in the current

situation in Ukraine is influenced by her grandparents who were born in Ukraine and immigrated to America in the early 1900s.

Last night, the House passed a resolution supporting "the Ukrainian people's struggle to build an independent, democratic, and strong Ukraine that is free from foreign meddling."

Ohioans are very proud of our family heritage as I am a son of Irish and Italian immigrants. MARCY KAPTUR is proud of her Ukrainian heritage and I am honored to serve with her in the House.

I submit an article from the Toledo Blade by Tom Troy.

KAPTUR'S UKRAINE ROOTS RUN DEEP
BEHIND THE SCENES, CONGRESSMAN
ENCOURAGES DEMOCRACY

U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D., Toledo) looks over family pictures on her desk. Miss Kaptur's grandparents were both born in Ukraine, and she worries about that nation's future. She plans to bring some Ukrainian farmers here on a trade mission this month.

During her 30 years as the representative of Ohio's 9th Congressional District, U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur has carried on a love affair.

The object of her affections is Ukraine, the former Soviet socialist republic that was the land of her grandmother and grandfather's birth.

"It has been a lifelong interest because, as our mother used to say, our children know the history of our family," Miss Kaptur, 67, said last week of herself and her brother Stephen, 61, who lives with her in West Toledo. As Ukraine—a giant eastern European nation famed for its fertile farmland—roils in political unrest, Miss Kaptur has been working behind the scenes to encourage democracy to flourish.

The Toledo Democrat said she has made at least a dozen trips to Ukraine over the last four decades, and she is cochairman of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus.

In recent months the country has exploded into demonstrations, triggered by outrage at Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich's decision to end negotiations to join the European Union and turn to Russia to help it pay off a crippling debt. Some see the revolutionary movement as a step toward true independence that started when Ukraine broke off from the Soviet Union in 1990.

Miss Kaptur was the co-sponsor of a resolution that passed Wednesday in a House committee calling the Ukraine leadership to a higher standard, and to support rights of assembly. Whether it will come up for a vote in the full House is not known.

"As the co-chair of the Ukraine caucus I have met with literally hundreds of Ukrainian leaders, existing leaders, emerging leaders, presidents, ambassadors, farmers. The Ukrainian embassy knows about our caucus," Miss Kaptur said.

As the Ukrainian military begins making sounds about intervening in the unrest, Miss Kaptur said she hopes that if it does, it exercises restraint.

"The point is there has been a lot of interaction [with the United States], training at the highest level," she said. "The kind of bloodshed that is historic in that region hasn't happened and I hope it won't."

Miss Kaptur as an infant sits in her Grandmother Teofila Swiecicki Rogowski's lap while her mother, Anastasia Rogowski, stands. During college, the representative 'worshipped' her hard-working grandparents, who emigrated from Ukraine in the early 1900s.

The realignment of Miss Kaptur's 9th Congressional District in 2012 to snake along Lake Erie all the way from Toledo to Cleveland has been widely decried as gerrymandering designed to achieve Republican goals of squeezing as many Democrats into as few districts as possible.

But one upshot has been the linkage of one of Congress's most Eastern European-focused lawmakers with communities that have a lot of Eastern European immigrants and their descendants.

The district now contains the Cuyahoga County city of Parma, which has a large Ukrainian-American population. Miss Kaptur is also a founder and co-chairman of the Polish and Hungarian congressional caucuses.

Her mother's family was Polish living in modern-day Ukraine.

Miss Kaptur's grandmother Teofila Swiecicki Rogowski and Grandfather John Rogowski emigrated from Ukraine early in the 1900s.

"Then it was czarist Russia. They were not allowed to graze their one cow on the open field and could not feed themselves," Miss Kaptur said.

Over the years, as their homeland was devastated by political and military rivalries, including a famine brought on by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and invasion by the Nazis, they lost all contact with family members in Ukraine. Her grandmother took in wash, and worked in the Commodore Perry and Willard hotels to earn money, while her grandfather, a carpenter, struggled to find work.

"When I was in college I worshipped her and her husband," Miss Kaptur said. She wanted to take her grandmother back to Ukraine and find the town they came from, Burtyn, but her grandmother was afraid, she said. Teofila died in 1970.

In 1973, Miss Kaptur—then a planner for the city of Toledo—and her mother, the former Anastasia Rogowski, drove into Soviet Ukraine, where they found her grandmother's brother, a former inmate of Stalin's gulag political prison system for 20 years.

"He was not allowed to travel out of his area because he was viewed as an enemy of the state," Miss Kaptur said. He was released from the gulag in 1952, but lost his brother to the camps. Her great-uncle's crime: He had offered aid to a wounded Kulak, a member of the property-owning farming class that was being driven into extinction by Stalin. They had the only car in the dusty town, and were the only guests in the hotel, which had no curtains but a listening device. They had sent word to relatives that they would be at the hotel if anyone wanted to meet them. They were on their third day with no visitors when they heard activity in the lobby.

Miss Kaptur's great-uncle Casmierz Swiecicki was a former inmate in Joseph Stalin's prison system for 20 years. "We learned the desk clerk had been denying to the woman visitor that any foreigners were staying in the hotel, despite her repeated attempts to contact us," Miss Kaptur said.

She said the moment that she finally met her grandmother's brother, Casmierz Swiecicki, was an emotional one. "There stood this tall man and I looked at him and gasped because he held his hands the same way that our grandmother did. He looked at my mother and said, 'are you my sister?' We just wept," Miss Kaptur said. They gave him an orange. "That began the moment when we began to unlock the history of what happened," she said. They met more family members in a return trip two years later.

Andy Fedynsky, resident scholar at the Ukrainian Museum and Archives in Cleveland, said Miss Kaptur has actively supported Ukraine since her first term in 1983. He said that year she played a leadership role in passing a bill to create a commission on the Ukraine famine, which was widely denied.

"This commission was set up and did a thorough job establishing there was a famine, it was planned, 7 million people were deliberately starved to death," Mr. Fedynsky said. He said Miss Kaptur testified that the victims included her own family.

"She said, 'Don't tell me this never happened. I know it happened because my ancestors endured it,'" Mr. Fedynsky said. The commission "made a huge difference in Ukraine historiography."

Miss Kaptur and others worked to get President Obama to include a Ukraine reference in his State of the Union speech last week, which he did. The President said, "In Ukraine, we stand for the principle that all people have the right to express themselves freely and peacefully and to have a say in their country's future."

"I have been meeting with Ukrainians on a regular basis. We are planning a trade mission for farmers to bring them to Ohio in February," Miss Kaptur said.

She has a picture of herself meeting a year and a half ago with one of the opposition leaders when he was in Washington.

She said she was in Ukraine in 2013 while on her way to Poland to be awarded an honorary citizenship—her father's family was from Poland—when she feared that Ukraine was slipping backward. "I left very, very worried. I saw how much more difficult their life had become. I was deeply worried about what I saw—greater poverty among older women, farmers that I've known."

Ironically to the girl whose grandmother had only wanted to raise money in order to buy a piece of land on which to graze their cow, Ukrainian farmland is being bought up by oligarchs.

"There was a real sense that democracy was slipping away. Then all of this has happened. The people of Ukraine have stood up, and we should stand with them," Miss Kaptur said.

HONORING JACOB E. LEE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob E. Lee. Jacob is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jacob has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jacob has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jacob replaced a gate at Harvester's Community Garden in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacob E. Lee for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for

his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF MASTER SERGEANT SHAWN EDWARDS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Master Sergeant Shawn Edwards, a constituent of mine from Opelika, Alabama. MSgt Edwards is retiring June 1st from the United States Air Force after over 20 years of service.

MSgt Edwards began his career as a Security Forces member. He was responsible for guarding our nation's highest priority weapons. He spent ten years in this position with assignments in Grand Forks Air Force Base, Izmir Air Station in Turkey; and Kirtland Air Force Base. In 2003, he re-trained into the contracting career field. He has been responsible for the purchase and acquisition of supplies, services and construction to support the needs of the installation at which he is serving. As a contractor, he has served at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ramstein Air Base and Hurlburt Field. MSgt Edwards has also served his country in deployments to Camp Victory, Iraq, Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan and Thumrait, Oman.

MSgt Edwards has served his country with honors for over 20 years. Some of these awards include: the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with four devices, the Air Force Achievement Medal with two devices, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Medal with one device, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal with one device, the Iraq Campaign Medal with one device, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal with one device and the NATO Medal.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Master Sergeant Shawn Edwards for his tireless dedication to serving America. His service to our state and country is an inspiration. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING POLK STATE COLLEGE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Polk State College on the occasion of its 50 year anniversary.

Polk State College, the first higher education institution in Polk County, was established in 1964. The college enjoyed early success, enrolling 1,200 students in its first se-

mester. Its continued growth necessitated construction of a larger, permanent campus. Ground was broken in 1966 on the shores of Lake Elbert, and within a decade, the campus had expanded to accommodate the growing student population and academic program offerings.

Today, Polk State College serves more than 20,000 students of which 95% are Polk County residents. It is a multi-campus institution offering four-year degrees, including a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management. Further expansions are planned for Polk State in 2014, including the Polk State Center for Public Safety in Winter Haven.

I applaud Polk State College for their commitment to education and invaluable contributions to our community. Go Eagles! As their motto declares, Polk State College is "the perfect place to soar."

HONORING SIX OUTSTANDING GRADUATES TO RECEIVE FULBRIGHT AWARDS

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor six outstanding graduates in Florida's 22nd District who have been selected to receive prestigious Fulbright awards to study, lecture, teach, or conduct research abroad during the 2013–2014 academic year. All of them were selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.

The awardees are the following: Asma Aftab of the University of Miami, Jack Armstrong of Broward Community College, Anne Fertig of Rollins College, Debra Reyes-Brannon, also of Rollins College, Alicia Richardson of Florida State University, and Usar Suragam of Florida Atlantic University.

These individuals are continuing a tradition of international exchange and mutual understanding that began in 1946, when Congress established the Fulbright Program. I would like to congratulate them on such a remarkable accomplishment and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors abroad.

THE SENSIBLE ESTATE TAX ACT OF 2014

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Sensible Estate Tax Act of 2014. This legislation offers a thoughtful, comprehensive approach to reforming our estate tax system that is supported by voters across all income levels. As America comes out of one of the worst recessions in its history, this Congress must carefully consider all sources of revenue that are not only effective, but fair

and equitable. This estate tax embodies those values.

The past decade of failed tax policies have killed jobs and resulted in significant income and wealth disparity in this country. The promise and strength of America lies in a system that benefits everyone. These tax policies have steered us away from this promise and crippled the American economy. The middle class continues to shrink as more and more wealth flows to the top—and this country's current tax system makes this unfairness worse. The current estate tax policy is the poster child for the unfairness we all see.

That is why I am introducing this legislation. This bill will bring the estate tax back to the rates and exemptions from before the Bush tax cuts—a time when this country experienced continued prosperity and budget surpluses.

Specifically, the Sensible Estate Tax Act of 2014 will return the top marginal rate to 55% and lower the exemption for individuals to \$1 million. Estate tax loopholes are also addressed, including a 10-year minimum on grantor retained annuity trusts, limitations on the generation skipping transfer trust exemption, and rules for consistent basis reporting.

Succeeding financially in life is a wonderful American right and the families of wealthy people should benefit from that good fortune. But no one gets wealthy on their own. Financial success for any American is achieved by using the roads, schools, and public services that all Americans pay for. It is only fair that they reinvest in the country that provided them with so much opportunity.

RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF LAKE COUNTY RISING TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because Lake County, Illinois is rising. Lake County has joined One Billion Rising around the world to stand up for justice, equality and women's rights.

This initiative started two years ago because the United Nations reported that one-in-three women will be victims of rape or other gender-based violence in their lifetimes.

That tragic statistic is simply unacceptable. That is why the global community has joined together to rise up to end this violence and work towards equality and justice for all.

This February 14th, one billion, in more than 200 countries, will rise, and I am most proud that Lake County will join this historic effort and rise up for justice.

One Billion Rising celebrates the empowerment of women and girls around the world, bringing people together in a joyous expression of freedom and strength.

Around the world, one billion people stood up last year and danced in support of justice. And true justice must include all facets of life: at home; at work; before the law; and everywhere else in society.

Every woman and girl deserves the freedom and confidence to live free, absent of fear.

Perhaps the single most effective tool in this campaign for justice is education. Education is how we improve our lives, and how we help others improve theirs. Education allows women and girls throughout the world to rise up and achieve their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, these committed men and women of Lake County have shown an inspiring dedication and resolve to stand for justice. I thank everyone involved in this year's celebration for their work and for showing that Lake County is strong, Lake County is committed, Lake County is rising!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to have my votes recorded on the House floor on Monday, February 10, 2014. Winter weather in the Midwest delayed my flight out of Minneapolis. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 2431 (rollcall No. 55), in favor of H. Res. 447 (rollcall No. 56), and in favor of the Journal Vote (rollcall No. 57).

HONORING SCOTT DANIEL BYBEE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Scott Daniel Bybee. Scott is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 177, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Scott has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Scott has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Scott has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Scott planned and led his troop in a tree-planting project in conjunction with the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Scott Daniel Bybee for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING VFW POST 7327 AND THE 2014 AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Springfield Veterans of Foreign

Wars Post 7327 and the recipients of its 2014 Annual Awards.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars, VFW, traces its beginnings to 1899 when veterans of the Spanish American War established local organizations to bring awareness to their service and to advocate for veterans' retirement benefits and improved medical care. Annually, the nearly 2 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliaries contribute more than 8.6 million hours of volunteerism in the community, including participation in Make A Difference Day and National Volunteer Week.

With approximately 700 Comrades and 150 Ladies Auxiliary members, the Springfield VFW Post 7327 stands out for the depth of its commitment to our community. Often called "The Friendliest VFW Post in Virginia," Post 7327 has one of the most aggressive ADOPT-A-UNIT programs in the entire VFW organization to support our service members stationed overseas. VFW Post 7327 visits the VA hospital at least quarterly; bringing along goodie bags for our Wounded Warriors. Each Thanksgiving and Christmas, VFW Post 7327 adopts military families in need through the USO and provides them with meal baskets for each holiday, gifts for children, commissary cards for the parents, and a Christmas party where the children can meet Santa and receive a gift-filled stocking. The Ladies Auxiliary members collect, sort, and distribute more than 2,000 pieces of clothing each month to various charitable organizations. VFW Post 7327 is a strong supporter of local youth organizations including the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Little League Baseball that contribute greatly to the education and well-being of our children.

Each year, VFW Post 7327 bestows awards to local students who have submitted outstanding essays on a theme and to local citizens in recognition of their extraordinary actions and dedication. I am honored to enter the names of the following 2014 honorees into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Voice of Democracy:
Winner: Sebrina Hess.
2nd Place: Tirzah Sheppard.
3rd Place: Nicia Grier-Spratley.
Patriot's Pen:
Winner: Aubrey Taradash.
2nd Place: Madelynn Cerami.
3rd Place: Skyler Foley.
Fire Fighter of the Year: Anthony Shaffer.
EMS of the Year: Sean Wetjen.
Police Officer of the Year: PFC James L. Thur.

Teachers of the Year: Aaron Tagert, Silverbrook Elementary; Jennie Lindner, South County High School.

I would also like to recognize the following sponsors of the VFW's Recycled Rides Program that provided an automobile to a needy soldier at Fort Belvoir: Progressive Insurance, Enterprise Car Rental, Refinish Solutions, Tan Auto Body, LKO Northern Virginia, and Jerry's Collision Repair.

Finally, I wish to thank the following sponsors of the 2013 VFW Thanksgiving/Christmas Program which provided food and gifts to 14 needy military families at Fort Belvoir. The sponsors of this program were Hilltop Golf Club, Olympians Family Restaurant, Safford Dodge of Springfield, Frizzles Salon and Spa, Residence Inn Marriott of Springfield, Northern

Virginia Surgical Center, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Women's Club of Springfield, Springfield Optimist Club.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the 2014 Awardees and in thanking the members, Ladies Auxiliary, program sponsors, and supporters of VFW Post 7327 for their continued service to our country and our community.

CONGENITAL HEART DEFECT AWARENESS WEEK

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week, which is February 7–14, 2014.

Congenital Heart Defects affect nearly two million Americans and are considered one of the most common birth defects within the United States. Each year approximately forty thousand babies are born in the United States with Congenital Heart Defects, while many remain undiagnosed for months or even years after birth. This dangerous condition can cause sudden cardiac death if left undiagnosed, which is especially harmful in young adolescent athletes who unknowingly suffer from this defect.

This week not only serves to raise awareness of Congenital Heart Defects to increase screenings and funding for research, it serves as a dedication to the millions of Americans diagnosed with Congenital Heart Defects, the challenges their families face, and for the families of those who have sadly lost loved ones to this condition.

HONORING GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY'S 225TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Georgetown's 225th anniversary. Founded in 1789 by Bishop John Carroll of Maryland, Georgetown stands as the oldest Jesuit and Catholic University in the United States. For over 225 years Georgetown has educated young scholars of all ages and backgrounds, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to make a difference in the world. What began as a two story old brick building has now become one of the finest universities in the country and I celebrate the University's founding.

Bishop Carroll, in his "Proposals for Establishing an Academy at George-Town, Potowmack River, Maryland," envisioned an institution which gave "undivided attention . . . to the cultivation of virtue, and literary improvement." On January 23rd, 1789 he received the first deed for the land that became the campus of Georgetown University. Then in 1815 President James Madison signed an Act of Congress granting a federal charter to "The

College of Georgetown in the District of Columbia." Only the U.S. Military Academy had received a federal charter prior to Georgetown. In 1850 the first Catholic Medical School was established and 20 years later Father Patrick Healy, who was born a slave, became the first African American president of a major American university. Much later in 1919 the university added the Walsh School of Foreign Service, of which I am a proud alumnus.

For over two centuries Georgetown has grown and evolved along with the Nation; today, it is home to students from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands and the Northern Marianas as well as from 141 countries around the globe. At the university's Centennial Anniversary a speaker noted, "It has taken a century to develop our country into a mighty nation and a united people. The same century has developed the college founded by John Carroll into a great and prosperous university, fully competent to hold her place among the universities of the world." This statement still holds true today and Georgetown stands as one of the most highly ranked educational institutions in the world.

In recent years, research at Georgetown has led to important breakthroughs such as the development of a vaccine against the human papillomavirus, and efforts are being made to improve the Nation's capacity to identify and track the outbreak of diseases. The campus has been home to renowned faculty including the late U.N. Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick and the late Carroll Quigley whom, Georgetown alum Bill Clinton quoted in his first inaugural address.

Today, fifteen Members of the House of Representatives hold Georgetown degrees including our colleague the Honorable JOHN DINGELL, who holds two Georgetown degrees and is the longest serving Member of Congress in the Nation's history. It is a distinct privilege to serve in this body with esteemed colleagues who also studied at Georgetown.

Mr. Speaker, I know they, in particular, share my pride in recognizing the 225th anniversary of the university's founding and look forward to a bright future for our alma mater.

THANK YOU, LORA HOBBS

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, I am very grateful for the opportunity to recognize Lora Hobbs, a committed staff member for the Second Congressional District of South Carolina. After serving the great state of South Carolina for more than two and a half years, Lora is leaving the office to join the office of Congressman BRADLEY BRYNEE of Alabama's First Congressional District as a legislative assistant.

Lora, is a native of Laurens, South Carolina, and joined the office in August of 2011 as a staff assistant after recently graduating from the University of South Carolina. Her tremendous leadership skills allowed her to transition quickly and become the legislative correspondent.

It is with sincere gratitude that I would like to thank Lora for her dedicated staff work. I have no doubt that the people of lower Alabama will benefit significantly from her expertise. I wish Lora all the best in future endeavors and look forward to hearing of her continued success.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

HONORING U.S. CAPITOL POLICE
SERGEANT CLINTON HOLTZ

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of U.S. Capitol Police Sergeant Clinton Holtz. Sergeant Holtz served this Congress every day, working to keep us safe, willing to put his life on the line. But he was more than a police officer. He was a beloved son and brother. He had an exciting career before joining the police force, playing professional basketball across the globe, and he was also my friend. Sergeant Holtz was always ready with a kind word or a funny story; willing to swap stories with an old cop like me. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends as they mourn him. He will be greatly missed but always remembered.

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER
HABERLAND FOR RECEIVING
THE 2013 CRITICAL LANGUAGE
SCHOLARSHIP

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Christopher Haberland, a resident of Herndon, Virginia, who is a recipient of the 2013 Critical Language Scholarship.

The Critical Language Scholarship Program was established in 2006 by the Department of State as part of an effort to train American young people in languages that are critical to our nation's global interests. For three months, attendees are immersed in an intensive cultural environment that teaches a new language, new culture, and new sense of self. The CLS program is remarkably competitive; in 2013 nearly 4,000 students from around the country applied, but only 597 were accepted. Due to his impressive academic success, I am proud to say that Christopher Haberland was one of those chosen.

Participants in the Critical Language Scholarship Program do more than simply enrich their own understanding and appreciation of a foreign culture. Their deep understanding of these critical regions ensures that our nation has capable individuals that can work on issues vital to the interests of the United States. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the service of Christopher Haberland, and in wishing him heartfelt congratulations on his achievements.

TRIBUTE TO MEREDITH OCKMAN

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Meredith Ockman, recipient of the Palm Beach County National Organization for Women (NOW) Blood, Sweat, and Tears Award and tireless advocate for justice and equality.

Meredith, who currently serves as Vice President for Florida NOW, has truly dedicated her career to community service. She has worked with Compass: The Gay and Lesbian Community Center of the Palm Beaches to teach safe sex education, and has bravely defended women seeking abortion care from harassment and intimidation.

Her impact includes grassroots advocacy as well. She organized participants for the March for Women's Lives, and has served NOW in several capacities, including as Legislative Director for Florida NOW and President of Palm Beach County NOW.

With her limited spare time, Meredith volunteers with several organizations and is the President of the Women's Health Foundation of South Florida. In honor of her tireless efforts on behalf of South Florida women, I am pleased to recognize Meredith Ockman for her amazing achievements and wish her continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for votes on Monday, February 10, 2014.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 55, and "yea" on rollcall vote 56, and "nay" on rollcall vote 57.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRO-
MOTING NATIONAL SERVICE AND
REDUCING UNEMPLOYMENT ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Promoting National Service and Reducing Unemployment Act, to address one of the greatest workforce tragedies resulting from today's economy—our unemployed young people—and to spur economic growth and alleviate strain on state and local governments. This tragedy is not only hurting our young people, it is costing our government \$25 billion each year through lost tax revenue and other costs. While over 10.4 million Americans are unemployed, my bill targets the 3.8 million young people who have not had a fair chance to ever use their high school and college education, which this nation has strongly urged them to get.

What is particularly disappointing is the high unemployment rate for young people who heeded our advice to graduate from high school and college, only to try to enter the workforce in the worst economy in generations. The total unemployment rate was 7.3 percent compared to 16.3 percent for young adults aged 16 to 24 even during the recent summer. Hundreds of thousands now compete for unpaid internships wherever they can find them. By significantly expanding AmeriCorps, my bill, without needing a new administrative structure or bureaucracy, would allow unemployed young people to earn a stipend sufficient to support themselves and to obtain work experience and secure a good work history to help them obtain future employment. The net cost of the expansion would be low, because these young people would be providing urgently needed local services that are being dropped or curtailed because of federal, state, and local budget cuts, such as after-school programs, tutoring, and assistance for the elderly.

The bill would significantly expand job opportunities for young people who have played by the rules but find themselves unemployed in this economy. It would increase the number of participants in the AmeriCorps State and National program from approximately 78,000 to 500,000 full-time participants. Participants receive a living allowance, which most find sufficient to meet their basic needs, and are also eligible for an education award equal to the value of a Pell grant, for school-loan forbearance, health care benefits and child care assistance. By expanding the program, we would reduce the number of unemployed young people, provide them with the work skills and experience they would not get while unemployed, and help cash-strapped states and local governments provide services that they would otherwise have to cut.

For some time, it has been clear that policies to address today's unusually stubborn unemployment need to be targeted in order to be effective. Without significant targeting, young graduates will continue to face their first years as adults without jobs and with no way to acquire work experience. They deserve better. I ask my colleagues to support this urgently needed targeted assistance for young, unemployed Americans.

IN HONOR OF THE 60TH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY OF REVEREND
BILL LAWSON AND MRS. AU-
DREY LAWSON

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the 60th wedding anniversary of two respected and revered individuals, Reverend Bill Lawson and Mrs. Audrey Lawson. Married January 28, 1954, while Reverend Lawson was attending Central Baptist Theological Seminary. The Lawsons are pillars of the Houston community, who have reared four successful children.

In 1962, Reverend Lawson alongside his first-lady Mrs. Lawson founded the Wheeler

Avenue Baptist Church with just thirteen members. Reverend Lawson went on to serve as Senior Pastor at the church for 42 years before retiring to focus on his work in the community, through the William A. Lawson Institute for Peace and Prosperity (WALIPP).

Mr. Speaker, I am blessed to have the opportunity to pay tribute to two individuals who have so selflessly and faithfully served their community. They are exemplars for all those who aspire to greatness through service and mentorship of others. I pray that God will grant them many more years of love and happiness.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL ACCREDITED
ACH PROFESSIONAL DAY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Tuesday, February 11, as National Accredited ACH Professional (AAP) Day. This day highlights the importance of the AAP credential, as well as celebrates the achievements and contributions of AAPs nationwide.

The AAP credential is the standard of excellence in ACH payments competency. AAPs are recognized payments industry experts on subjects ranging from the NACHA Operating Rules to sound risk management practices, and as such, are highly regarded by financial regulators and examiners. They play a key role in the individual organizations they serve and the greater industry as a whole, imparting knowledge and supporting practices that help ensure continued confidence in ACH payments and the safety, security, and reliability of the ACH Network.

The ACH Network, administered by NACHA—The Electronic Payments Association, provides for the efficient exchange of direct account-to-account payments for consumers, businesses, and governments. Annually, it processes more than 21 billion electronic payments—including more than 5 billion Direct Deposit transactions—totaling almost \$37 trillion. Through their expertise, AAPs help safeguard the quality of the ACH Network and the billions of transactions that flow through it. To be awarded the AAP credential, individuals must pass a comprehensive exam, which is administered by NACHA each fall. The exam tests an individual's knowledge of a variety of subjects including the NACHA Operating Rules, the ACH Network and other payments systems, technical and operational ACH requirements, risk management, and payments-related regulations. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the more than four thousand AAPs nationwide by recognizing today as National Accredited ACH Professional Day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize passage this week of three impor-

tant pieces of legislation: H.R. 2431, the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2013; S. 25, the vehicle which included the military retiree COLA fix and SGR bill; and H.R. 3448, the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act. Additionally, I would like to make clear that I would have opposed S. 540, the Debt Limit Extension. Unfortunately, I was not able to vote on final passage of these important bills because of much needed hip replacement surgery. I guess I'm finally being paid back for playing rugby all through college and dental school.

H.R. 2431, National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2013, is important legislation that will provide critical benefits for ranchers, waters users and local communities allowing them to better prepare and respond to extreme drought conditions that are continuing to plague the West as well as rural communities.

S. 25 reverses the cost of living adjustment (COLA) cuts for working-age military retirees that was found in the Bipartisan Budget Act. I voted against the flawed Bipartisan Budget Act because it increased spending levels by \$45 billion in one year and \$63 billion over the course of two years. To pay for those increases, the Bipartisan Budget Act erased various, if not all, spending cuts from the Budget Control Act which passed back in 2011. Additionally, the Bipartisan Budget Act reduced the annual retirement COLA for working age military retirees by one full percentage point. I found this provision to be completely unacceptable and don't believe we should be balancing our budget on the backs of our veterans. As S. 25 repeals this provision that penalizes our military retirees and includes a payfor, I would have supported this legislation.

H.R. 3448, the Small Cap Liquidity Reform Act of 2013 is important legislation that establishes an optional liquidity pilot program which will benefit the securities of small emerging growth companies.

Finally, I want to reiterate that I would have opposed S. 540, the Debt Limit Extension. Back in 2011, we reached an understanding that if we're going to raise the debt ceiling and not jeopardize the nation's credit, then we need to attach reforms to each debt ceiling increase so that we reduce the need to constantly raise the debt ceiling and we start living within our means. This increase violates those principles. Although some like to call this a "clean" debt ceiling increase, there is nothing clean about borrowing another trillion dollars; this is as messy as it gets and the term "clean" is propaganda as far as I'm concerned. The bottom line is that our nation has a spending addiction—it's past the point of a problem—when we must continually raise the debt ceiling to accommodate our dangerous spending habits. At what point does it stop? How is it possible that we couldn't include a single reform in this legislation? I don't want our country to default but I wouldn't have voted to give the President a blank check. The federal government will collect an estimated \$3 trillion in taxes from October 1, 2013 until September 30, 2014. We do have the ability to live within our means and it's time we make the hard decisions necessary to make that happen.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted in support of these three important

bills with a "yea" vote on rollcall Numbers 55, 60 and 62. I would have opposed increasing the debt ceiling and voted "nay" on rollcall Numbers 61.

IN HONOR OF THE NOMINATION OF
RENEE PATRON FOR LEUKEMIA
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Renee Patron for being nominated for Leukemia Woman of the Year, an award given by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Ms. Patron earned her bachelor's degree in communications with a minor in marketing from Eastern University in St. Davids, PA. During her time at college, a friend of hers named Dina Innella suffered from leukemia. Selflessly, Ms. Patron cared for Ms. Innella during her time of need. While she didn't expect any recognition for her kindness, another friend nominated her through the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to recognize her dedication.

After college, Ms. Patron went on to become a successful small business owner, opening Events by Renee. She is the programming and event co-chair for the Public Relations Society of America, in addition to being a founding member of a Philadelphia women's networking group called Femfessionals. In her free time, she volunteers with the Big Brothers Big Sisters Philadelphia chapter and with the Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Patron is a role model for her kindness and sacrifice. I join all of South Jersey in thanking Ms. Patron for her dedication and wish her best in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE BELLEVUE
DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Bellevue Downtown Association on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. This non-profit organization is made up of pas-

sionate community members and has played a key role in creating the flourishing downtown that the citizens and businesses of Bellevue, Washington enjoy today.

Over the last 40 years, Bellevue has been transformed into a thriving business center that is home to roughly 1,300 businesses and 45,000 workers. I am confident that this rapid economic development would not have been possible without the work of the Bellevue Downtown Association, as their efforts have made this area an inviting location for both businesses and residents.

In particular, much of Bellevue's growth as a rising entertainment and cultural scene in the area is largely bolstered by the Association's impressive lineup of annual events. From a jazz festival and summer concert series, to the Eastside's largest Fourth of July celebration, the Bellevue Downtown Association's efforts have made downtown Bellevue more than just a great location to do business, but an appealing, culturally diverse place to live as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration that I recognize the work of the Bellevue Downtown Association. Without its voice and hard work, downtown Bellevue would not be the economic and cultural center that it has become today.

HONORING REVEREND PAM
CAHOON

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of my constituents, Reverend Pam Cahoon, who has steadfastly fought against hunger and injustice her entire life. When Reverend Cahoon was in elementary school, she convinced her mother to pack extra lunches so her classmates could have something to eat.

Since that time, her impact on Palm Beach County has been extraordinary. As executive director of Christians Reaching Out to Society Ministries (CROS), an organization working to end hunger in our community, she managed to increase the budget by more than 50 times the amount available when she first joined CROS. Under her leadership, CROS has served more than 85,000 meals, given out more than 28,000 after-school snacks, and provided more than 16,000 lunches for stu-

dents to take home to provide meals over the weekend. She will retire on February 20th after spending 35 years as the Executive Director of CROS.

Additionally, Reverend Cahoon helped to bring Habitat for Humanity to our area and helped create the Palm Beach County food bank. She has also served on the Palm Beach County Council on Child Abuse and Neglect and served on the board of many other community organizations and coalitions.

Reverend Pam Cahoon is truly an exceptional woman. She received her Masters of Divinity from Emory University, and she has three children and four grandchildren. I am pleased to recognize the Reverend for all of her accomplishments and wish her good health and a peaceful retirement.

RECOGNIZING GRACE MENG FOR
RECEIVING THE 2013 CRITICAL
LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Grace Meng, a resident of Vienna, Virginia, who is a recipient of the 2013 Critical Language Scholarship.

The Critical Language Scholarship Program was established in 2006 by the Department of State as part of an effort to train American young people in languages that are critical to our nation's global interests. For three months, attendees are immersed in an intensive cultural environment that teaches a new language, new culture, and new sense of self. The CLS program is remarkably competitive; in 2013 nearly 4,000 students from around the country applied, but only 597 were accepted. Due to her impressive academic success, I am proud to say that Grace Meng was one of those chosen.

Participants in the Critical Language Scholarship Program do more than simply enrich their own appreciation of a foreign culture. Their deep understanding of these critical regions ensures that our nation has capable individuals that can work on issues vital to the interests of the United States. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the service of Grace Meng, and in wishing her heartfelt congratulations on her achievements.

SENATE—Wednesday, February 12, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, to whom we must give an account for all our powers and privileges, guide the Members of this body so that they will be faithful stewards of Your will. Open their minds and hearts to know and do Your bidding. Teach them to rely on Your strength and to serve You with honor. Lord, help them to discover in their daily work the joy of a partnership with You. As they learn to find delight in Your presence, plant within the soil of their hearts a desire to glorify You. May they rest and wait patiently for You, the author and finisher of their faith, embracing Your precepts and walking in Your path.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY)

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MARKEY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Repub-

lican leader, we will be in a period of morning business until 11 o'clock this morning. Republicans will control the first half and Democrats the final half.

At 11 a.m. this morning the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar Nos. 525, 595, 527, and 529. These are all extremely important nominations. At 11:30 this morning there will be up to four rollcall votes on the confirmation of these nominations.

We also hope to consider the debt limit legislation, military retirement pay, and, hopefully, additional nominations today.

RESTORING EARNED PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I just mentioned, today we hope we can act on two vital pieces of legislation. On this side of the aisle, as we say, we are ready to move. We want to move to a measure to restore earned retirement pay to our Nation's heroes—retirees of the U.S. armed services. Dozens of major veterans organizations have written us in support of this legislation which was passed by the House of Representatives yesterday.

I commend the sponsors of the Senate bill to restore veterans' pensions—Senators PRYOR, SHAHEEN, HAGAN, and BEGICH, among others—forcing Republicans in the House and the Senate to take this issue very seriously and take it seriously now. Without their leadership we would never have reached a compromise that protects our Nation's heroic veterans and reached it so quickly. The Senate's unanimous vote on Monday to move forward with the bill to restore veterans' pensions forced the House to understand that we are serious about this and secured a resolution that protects veterans.

DEBT CEILING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is encouraging that some of my Republican colleagues seem to be regaining their grip on sanity this week. Republicans have shown a willingness to compromise to restore veterans' hard-earned pensions. A few reasonable Republicans were willing to join Democrats to avert a catastrophic default on our Nation's obligations—a default that would have thrown our economy into a tailspin and damaged this Nation's standing in the world.

I commend Speaker BOEHNER for doing the right thing. He voted for this, and he had enough Republican votes to get it done. I have said often that he has a difficult job—if not the

most difficult, certainly one of the most difficult jobs in Washington, especially when we look at the caucus he has to deal with. I am pleased he has come to the realization that the full faith and credit of this country is not a hostage to be held for political gain.

Unfortunately, Republicans on this side of the Capitol are forcing us to jump through procedural hoops to alleviate the threat of a default. I can't imagine that they are doing that, but they are.

Every reputable economist acknowledges that defaulting on our bills would devastate the economy and waste the past 5 years of recovery. The recovery is good, but it is not great. We can do a lot better.

According to a report by the non-partisan Peterson Institute, when Republicans forced us to the brink of default 2 years ago, it cost our economy \$150 billion in productivity and 750,000 jobs. This is not some leftwing blog that is saying this; this is a non-partisan institute that is well respected—it will cost our economy \$150 billion in productivity and 750,000 jobs. Scary.

The reason I am a little concerned is because it was just a few months ago that Republicans in the House, by a two-thirds majority, voted to keep the government closed after having been closed for 16 days and voted to default on our Nation's debt. So I hope the Senate is not going to follow that tea party-driven action that was done in the House just a short time ago.

Financial industry leaders have warned Congress again and again that even the threat of default ripples through the economy, and today there is the threat of a default. We have Republican Senators saying they are going to filibuster the debt ceiling. We can't default on our obligations. It is too bad that a few Senate Republicans would threaten a filibuster on this critical legislation. It is critical, and it is crucial. However, I am hopeful Senate Republicans won't force the economy to wait for weeks or even days for a resolution. We should wrap this up today.

So I hope we can vote and vote soon. The markets all over the world are watching to see what we do in the Senate. The House did the right thing. I believe many of my Republican colleagues would like to be reasonable—I really do believe that—if they weren't so beholden and afraid of the tea party overlords. I am hopeful that a more bipartisan, commonsense approach—one that favors collaboration over hostage taking—will prevail this year.

Congress should be striding from accomplishment to accomplishment, not staggering from crisis to crisis as they force us to do. If we spent more time working together and less time running out the clock on procedural hurdles and Republican filibusters, we might actually get legislation done in the Senate.

So I hope we can continue to cooperate and collaborate this year and to deliver results for Americans looking for action instead of the constant gridlock we have had.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in morning business, and pending the arrival of the Republican leader, I will pause and then ask unanimous consent to return to my statement at that time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MASS ATROCITIES IN SYRIA

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to appeal to the conscience of my colleagues and my fellow citizens about the mass atrocities that the Assad regime is perpetrating in Syria. When the images and horrors of this conflict occasionally show up on our television screens, the impulse of many Americans is to change the channel. But we must not look away. We must not divert our eyes from the suffering of the Syrian people, for if we do, we ignore, we sacrifice that which is most precious in ourselves—our ability to empathize with the suffering of others, to share it, to acknowledge through

our own sense of revulsion that what is happening in Syria is a stain on the collective conscience of moral peoples everywhere.

I appeal to my colleagues not to look away from the images I will show. I want to warn all who are watching these are graphic and disturbing pictures, but they are the real face of war and human suffering in Syria today—a war our Nation has the power to help end but which we are failing to do.

These images are drawn from a cache of more than 55,000 photographs that were taken between March 2011 and August 2013 by a Syrian military policeman, whose job it was to document the horrors the Assad regime committed against political prisoners in its jails. This individual eventually defected to the opposition along with his photographs, which were meticulously reviewed and verified by three renowned international war crimes prosecutors and a team of independent forensic experts. They compiled their findings in a report late last month that provides direct evidence that the Assad regime was responsible for the systematic abuse, torture, starvation, and killing of approximately 11,000 detainees in what amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity. These are just a few of those pictures and far from the most disturbing.

I urge every Member of Congress and the American people to read the full report, which can be found on both cnn.com and theguardian.com. Although only a handful of these gruesome images have been released publicly, the authors have provided their own startling commentary on what they reveal.

David Crane, the first chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the man responsible for indicting former Liberian President Charles Taylor for crimes against humanity, stated that many of the photographs show groupings of bodies in ways that “looked like a slaughterhouse.” Crane characterized the Syrian Government as a “callous, industrial machine grinding its citizens” that is guilty of “industrial-age mass killing.”

Professor Sir Geoffrey Nice, lead prosecutor in the case against former Yugoslav President Milosevic at The Hague, reported that the systematic way the bodies were cataloged and the effort given to obscure the true causes of death leads one to “reasonably infer that this is a pattern of behavior” for Assad’s forces.

But perhaps most chilling of all, Sir Desmond de Silva, who also served as a chief prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, stated that the emaciated bodies revealed in these pictures are “reminiscent of the pictures of those who were found still alive in the Nazi death camps after World War II.”

Yesterday, in a hearing of the Committee on Armed Services, I asked the

Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, whether these photographs, which clearly depict ghastly crimes against humanity, are authentic. The Director said he has “no reason to doubt” their authenticity. The United Nations is now doing its own assessment of these images, and all of us should fully support that. It is important to have the broadest possible validation of these images, and I am confident the U.N. team will validate them. After all, does anyone seriously believe the Assad regime does not have the means, motive, and opportunity to murder 11,000 people in its prisons?

Indeed, this kind of inhumane cruelty is a pattern of behavior within the Syrian Government. According to a detailed U.N. report issued at the end of January, Assad’s forces have systematically, as part of their doctrine, used children as human shields and threatened to kill the children of opposition members if they did not surrender. The U.N. also detailed the arrest, detention, torture, and sexual abuse of thousands of children by government forces. I will spare you the remaining details, as they are unspeakable, but again I urge you to read the entire report which can be found on the Web site of the United Nations.

I also recommend that my colleagues read of the war crimes that Human Rights Watch has been documenting. They have reported, for example, on how Syrian authorities have deliberately used explosives and bulldozers to demolish thousands of residential buildings, and in some cases entire neighborhoods, for no military reason whatsoever, just as a form of collective punishment of Syrian civilians.

Human Rights Watch researchers have also documented the toll of the Syrian Government’s airstrike campaign against Aleppo and Damascus and, in particular, the regime’s use over the past few months of what has become known as “barrel bombs.” For my colleagues who are not aware of them, barrel bombs are oil drums or other large containers packed with explosives, fuel, shrapnel, glass, and all manner of crude lethal material. Their sole purpose is to maim, kill, and terrorize as many people as possible when they are indiscriminately dropped from Syrian Government aircraft on schools and bakeries and mosques and other civilian areas. In one stark video of a barrel bomb’s aftermath, a man stands in front of a child’s body and cries out: Oh God, we have had enough. Please help us.

These are just some of the many reasons our Director of National Intelligence referred to the Syrian crisis yesterday as “an apocalyptic disaster.” With more than 130,000 people dead, after more than one-third of the Syrian population has been driven from their homes, no truer words were ever spoken.

But this apocalyptic disaster in Syria is no longer just a humanitarian tragedy for one country, it is a regional conflict and an emerging national security threat to us. The regime's war crimes are being aided and abetted by thousands of Hezbollah fighters and Iranian agents on the ground, as well as Russian weaponry that continues to flow into the Assad government, even as Russia works with us to remove the Assad regime's chemical weapons, a truly Orwellian situation.

The conflict in Syria is devastating its neighbors. Lebanon is suffering from increasing bombings and cross-border attacks by both the Syrian government and opposition fighters in response to Hezbollah's role in the fighting. Unofficial estimates suggest that half of Lebanon's population will soon be Syrian refugees. Similar estimates suggest that Syrian refugees now represent 15 percent of the population in Jordan, which is straining to manage the social instability this entails. Turkey has been destabilized. Perhaps most worrisome of all, the conflict in Syria is largely to blame for the resurgence of Al Qaeda in Iraq, which has grown into the larger and more lethal Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, which now possesses a safe haven that spans large portions of both countries. Nowhere is this more threatening or more heartbreaking than in Fallujah, the Iraqi city where hundreds of U.S. troops were killed and wounded fighting to rid it of the terrorists and extremists, but where the black flags of Al Qaeda now hang above the city.

The sanctuary that Al Qaeda now enjoys, thanks to the crisis in Syria, increasingly poses a direct threat to U.S. national security and that of our closest allies and partners. The Secretary of Homeland Security, Mr. Jeh Johnson said, "Syria is now a matter of homeland security." The Director of National Intelligence has referred to the Al Qaeda sanctuary in Syria and Iraq as "a new FATA"—the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan where Al Qaeda planned the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Indeed, Director Clapper has warned that Al Qaeda affiliated terrorists in Syria now aspire to attack the homeland. If the September 11 attacks should have taught us anything, it is that global terrorists who occupy ungoverned spaces and seek to plot and plan attacks against us can pose a direct threat to our national security.

This was Afghanistan, September 10, 2001. That is what top officials in this administration are now warning us that Syria is becoming today. The conflict in Syria is a threat to our national interest, but it is more than that. It is and should be an affront to our conscience.

Images such as these should not be just a source of heartbreak and sympathy, they should be a call to action.

It was not too long ago, just a few months after the revolution in Syria began, that President Obama issued his Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities. In it he stated, "Preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States."

He went on to say:

Our security is affected when masses of civilians are slaughtered, refugees flow across borders, and murderers wreak havoc on regional stability and livelihoods.

Last year, speaking at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the President said:

Too often, the world has failed to prevent the killing of innocents on a massive scale. And we are haunted by the atrocities that we did not stop and the lives we did not save.

Just last September in his address to the U.N. General Assembly, President Obama said this:

[T]he principle of sovereignty is at the center of our international order. But sovereignty cannot be a shield for tyrants to commit wanton murder, or an excuse for the international community to turn a blind eye. While we need to be modest in our belief that we can remedy every evil, while we need to be mindful that the world is full of unintended consequences, should we really accept the notion that the world is powerless in the face of a Rwanda, or Srebrenica? If that's the world that people want to live in, they should say so, and reckon with the cold logic of mass graves.

That was our President. That was the President of the United States. I agree with every word of what he said. But how are we to reconcile these stirring words with the reality of these images from Syria? How do we explain how the leader of the free world, who says that it is the moral obligation of the United States to do what we can to prevent the worst atrocities in our world, is not doing more to stop the atrocities that are occurring every single day in Syria?

Where is that President Obama today? Where is the President Obama who spoke so movingly of the moral responsibilities that great power confers? Where is the President Obama who has said he refuses to accept that brutal tyrants can slaughter their people with impunity, while the most powerful nation in the history of the world looks on and stands by? Where is the recognition that the "cold logic of mass graves" is right there, right in front of us, Syria, today?

Yet our government is doing what we have sadly done too often in the past. We are diverting our eyes. We try to comfort our guilty consciences by telling ourselves that we are not doing nothing, but it is a claim made in bad faith, for everyone concedes that nothing we are doing is equal to the horrors we face.

We are telling ourselves that we are too tired and weary to get more involved; that Syria is not our problem;

that helping to resolve it is not our responsibility. We are telling ourselves that we have no good options, as if there are ever good options when it comes to foreign policy in the real world. We are telling ourselves that we might have been able to do something at one point, but that it is too late now, as if such words from a leader of the world's only global power will be any comfort to the Syrian mother who will lose her child tomorrow.

We are telling ourselves what Neville Chamberlain once told himself about a different problem from hell in an earlier time; that is, and I quote Neville Chamberlain, "a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing." Where is our outrage? Where is our shame?

It is true that our options to help in the conflict in Syria were never good, and they certainly are worse and fewer now. But no one should believe that we are without options, even now, and no one should believe that doing something meaningful to help in Syria requires us to rerun the war in Iraq. That is an excuse for inaction. That is not a question of options or capabilities; it is a question of will.

These images of the human disaster in Syria haunt me. They should haunt all of my colleagues and all Americans. But what haunts me even more than the terror unfolding before our eyes in Syria is the thought that we will continue to do nothing meaningful about it, and how that deadens our national conscience, how it calls into question the moral sources of our great power and the foundations of our global leadership, and how many years from now an American President will stand before the world and the people of Syria, as previous Presidents have done after previous inaction in the face of mass atrocities in far away lands, and say what all of us know to be true right now: That we could have done more to stop the suffering of others. We could have used the power we possess, limited though it may be; we could have exercised the options at our disposal, imperfect though they may be, and we could have done something. It is to our everlasting embarrassment that we did not.

That future President will apologize for our current failure. Shame on us if we let history repeat itself that way.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I very much appreciate Senator MCCAIN's stunning delivery on this horrible situation going on in Syria.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a unanimous consent request just to get us through the day. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding lack of receipt of the papers if they have not

arrived from the House, it be in order for the majority leader or his designee to move to concur in the House amendment to S. 25 at 1:30 p.m. today; if the message has arrived prior to 1:30 p.m., then the Chair lay before the body the message from the House at 1:30 p.m. and I then be recognized to move to concur in the House amendment to S. 25; that there be up to 30 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with all of the above occurring with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are going to have up to four votes starting at 11:30 a.m., and then at 1:30 p.m. we will come back and finish some other business today. We hope to have a lot of votes today. I am aware, as I mentioned last night, we are following the storm on an hourly basis, and we should know within the next few hours how accurate the reports of the snowstorm—good or bad—will be.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, fairly recently, the President of the United States nominated a candidate to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. His name is Debo Adebile. I am here this morning to explain to my colleagues why I believe that Mr. Adebile is a very bad choice to run the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department.

To make my case clear, I need to start with a story of a slain Philadelphia police officer. His name was Daniel Faulkner. This is a picture of Daniel Faulkner. It is important to tell his story. It is a story that begins 32 years ago. Many people have never heard this story, others have perhaps forgotten, since it was some time ago.

But the fact is that Danny Faulkner can no longer speak for himself and

those who have tried to speak for him have often been drowned out by some powerful and wealthy voices that have had a political agenda and that have perversely defended his killer rather than the memory of Daniel Faulkner.

The story begins late at night on December 9, 1981. It was actually in the early morning hours that 25-year-old Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner stopped a car that was driving in Philadelphia. The driver got out of the car and began to assault Officer Faulkner. The driver's brother Mumia Abu-Jamal was watching the incident from across the street. When he saw what was happening and as Officer Faulkner attempted to handcuff the driver of the car, Abu-Jamal ran up to the car and shot Officer Faulkner in the back. As Officer Faulkner was falling, he got off a shot, but the shot did not seriously wound Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Officer Faulkner then collapsed on the ground. While he was lying on the ground, helpless, defenseless, and severely wounded, Mumia Abu-Jamal stood over him and pumped four more bullets into him, including five bullets to the face, which killed Danny Faulkner on the spot.

Abu-Jamal himself was quickly apprehended. There were police who were on the next block over, and they got there almost immediately. They arrested Mumia Abu-Jamal. They took him to the hospital because he had been wounded, and while he was at the hospital he bragged about the fact that he had just shot a police officer and stated that he hoped the police officer would die.

Given these facts, Mumia Abu-Jamal's guilt was never in any serious question. There was a trial. There were four eyewitnesses to the shooting. There were three other witnesses who heard Mumia Abu-Jamal brag about the murder he had committed while he was in the hospital. In addition, there was ballistic and forensic evidence that made his guilt completely obvious to everyone. So it was not surprising that a jury took only 3 hours to convict Mumia Abu-Jamal after the trial occurred. It took them a further 2 hours to sentence him to death.

Then, instead of allowing Daniel Faulkner's young 24-year-old widow and his extended family to grieve in peace, a group of political opportunists decided this would be the case they would use to launch a campaign to further their political agenda. They fabricated a whole set of claims that Mumia Abu-Jamal was somehow framed. They spread lies about the trial. They organized a rally. Amazingly, what they were doing was portraying Mumia Abu-Jamal as a victim when, in fact, he was unquestionably a cold-blooded murderer.

It was part of a bigger campaign to turn Abu-Jamal into a celebrity and

use him by those who had an agenda to attack America's criminal justice system. Unfortunately, to a large extent it worked. Abu-Jamal the murderer became somewhat of a celebrity in certain Hollywood circles. In Paris, they even named a street after him, and there were plenty of high-priced lawyers who lined up to volunteer their time to jump on this cause and to file endless series of appeals in a case that was an open-and-shut case. This, of course, among other things, had the effect of forcing Danny Faulkner's widow to relive this tragedy, this disaster for her, time after time, for decade after decade.

This gross abuse of justice, this travesty of justice had been going on for nearly three decades when in 2009 the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, or the LDF, decided to volunteer its time, considerable resources, and its donor funds to join in this fray, to join in this travesty, initially as an amicus to the trial and then as co-counsel.

The President's nominee to run the Civil Rights Division, Mr. Debo Adebile, was the person responsible for the LDF's decision and its behavior in this outrageous set of circumstances. At the time, he was the LDF's director of litigation, and, as Mr. Adebile told our own Senate Judiciary Committee during his testimony, he "supervised the entire legal staff" at LDF. That was 18 lawyers. He was also, if one looks at the LDF's site, responsible for "providing leadership and coordination regarding both litigation and non-litigation legal advocacy" and was also, according to the LDF's own description, "responsible for LDF's advocacy both in the courts of law and in the court of political opinion." So all of the legal, public, and political actions LDF was taking, it was taking under the direction, the supervision, and the authority of Mr. Adebile.

It is important to understand this. There is a very clear legal principle that a supervising lawyer has the responsibility for the actions undertaken by the lawyers who report to him. That is the case in these circumstances, as well as the fact that the LDF openly acknowledges this.

What is it that the LDF lawyers then did in the circumstances of this case? When they should have been pursuing their historic role of providing the truth and justice for American people, they were advancing neither cause.

It is also important to point out that this was never a case of a criminal deserving a legal defense. Criminals do deserve appropriate legal counsel in their defense. The fact is that the trial had occurred decades ago. Abu-Jamal had multiple high-cost lawyers volunteering their time. He had plenty of lawyers. He didn't need more lawyers. What Mr. Adebile did was he decided to join a political cause. That is what he decided to do. That is what this was

all about. In my view, by doing so he demonstrated his own contempt for and, frankly, a willingness to undermine the criminal justice system of the United States.

Under Mr. Adegbile's oversight, the LDF spread misinformation about the trial, about the circumstances, and about the jury. He promoted division and strife among the American people and blocked justice for Danny Faulkner and Danny Faulkner's family. These LDF lawyers promoted the myth that Mumia Abu-Jamal was somehow a heroic political prisoner and that he was framed. In fact, he was a coward and an unrepentant murderer.

Under Mr. Adegbile's oversight, in January 2011 the LDF issued a press release decrying what I quote as the "grave injustices embodied" in Abu-Jamal's case.

In May 2011 two of the lawyers reporting to Mr. Adegbile traveled to France for a rally on behalf of this murderer Mumia Abu-Jamal. One of these LDF lawyers said she was "overjoyed" that Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence was suspended but bemoaned the fact that he would not have a new trial so he could be set free.

Another LDF lawyer described Abu-Jamal as "people who are innocent" but "will continue to be put to death in America." Later, the same lawyer would falsely state that there was an absence of forensic evidence tying Abu-Jamal to Officer Faulkner's death. The fact is that there was forensic evidence. There were four eyewitnesses to the murder, and there were three witnesses to the subsequent bragging by Abu-Jamal about the murder.

At another rally again celebrating this murderer, one of the LDF lawyers supervised by Mr. Adegbile gushed: "It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal." This attorney went on to say: "And there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the Legal Defense Fund, that the justice system has completely and utterly failed Mumia Abu-Jamal."

I have to say I agree the justice system failed, but the justice system failed Danny Faulkner, not Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Now we are faced with a situation where an individual who was directly responsible for some of these terrible injustices that have been done in the wake of Danny Faulkner's murder has been nominated to a high-ranking position in the Justice Department. The Civil Rights Division is an extremely important division in the Justice Department. The head of this division plays a very important role. And what is his responsibility? According to the division's Web site, the Civil Rights Division "fulfills a critical mission in upholding the civil and constitutional rights of all individuals." Of course, this requires that the head of the Civil

Rights Division have an absolute commitment to truth and to justice.

I do not believe Mr. Adegbile's nomination is consistent with the goal of promoting truth and justice in America. I do not believe Mr. Adegbile's nomination is consistent with respect for America's legal system and rule of law. I do not believe Mr. Adegbile's nomination is consistent with justice for the family of Officer Danny Faulkner or for anyone else who cares about the law enforcement community across this country. For these reasons, I will oppose Mr. Adegbile's nomination to head the Civil Rights Division, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent to proceed on my leader time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has that right.

The Senator is recognized.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Yesterday President Obama was asked about the administration's latest ObamaCare delay. Instead of finally explaining to the American people why he believes certain employers would get ObamaCare exemptions while the middle class should not, he just doubled down again on the same old talking points. It is truly disappointing.

I wish he would finally agree to work with Republicans on a way to replace ObamaCare with bipartisan reforms that could help the middle class and those who are hurting the most because this much is now perfectly clear: ObamaCare is not working the way the administration promised. It is hurting the middle class, it is eliminating incentives to work in the middle of a jobs crisis, and it will lower overall compensation—things such as salaries, wages, and benefits for the American people—with those who earn the least potentially the most negatively impacted of all.

ObamaCare is a law that is not fair, and this is essentially true for many of those it purports to help. For all the disruption and pain, it is a law that will still leave 31 million Americans uninsured at the end of the day. That is why it is not surprising when we hear that nearly 90 percent—9 out of 10—of the new enrollees in ObamaCare exchange plans are actually folks who were already insured, many of them simply shifting from plans they liked to more expensive plans the government thinks they should have. This leads so many Americans to ask: What was the point? What was the point of ObamaCare?

For months the folks in my State have watched the administration hand

out exemption after exemption to its friends and waiver after waiver to the politically connected. They are left to think, how is that fair? More than one-quarter of a million Kentuckians received notice last year that their health insurance plans would be canceled because of ObamaCare. Kentuckians lost plans they liked and wanted to keep. Many realized that they wouldn't be able to afford new coverage or that new plans wouldn't cover the doctors and hospitals they have come to know and trust or that massively increased premiums and deductibles would radically alter the ways they lived and worked.

So while I am sure the folks who conceived the law meant well, this much seems perfectly clear by now: Trying to run folks' lives from hundreds of miles away is not the way to help. It is often the way to make things worse.

Kentuckians are capable of making the decisions that worked best for them, for their own medical needs and financial situations. I am sure there is some think-tank report that might disagree. I know there is no end to well-paid Washington bureaucrats with "better ideas," but people do not want Washington's enlightened judgment ruling over their lives.

ObamaCare is what you get when you put decisions that belong in the hands of the middle class in the hands of the government class. You get 2,700 pages of law that lead to 20,000 pages of rules and regulations. You get a Web site that doesn't work as a symbol of a law that won't work. You get a maze of bureaucracies and government contractors with indecipherable acronyms—CMS, CCHIO, CGI, QSSI—that seem to exist to obscure accountability when things go wrong. You get decisions that are based upon the needs of a political calendar rather than what it will take to get the job done.

Worst of all, we hear stories from Kentuckians such as this one from a woman who was about to lose her plan and was shopping on the exchange. She said:

I can't afford the options that have been made available to me. I make too much money to qualify for any "help" from the ACA but I don't make enough to afford paying double what my premium is now. To get a plan that is "comparable" to what I have now, I will have to pay about \$12,000 a year in premiums alone.

You hear stories like the one Rebecca Stuart recently shared with President Obama himself. She told the President that she had to change health insurance plans even though she liked her old plan—and that she was having "a panicked experience" trying to get consistent answers about whether her 10-year-old son would continue being able to see his specialist under ObamaCare.

This isn't right. I know the President can't be unmoved by these stories, so I am calling on President Obama to

move to the center. I am saying it is time to start over on health care—to replace ObamaCare with real bipartisan reforms that can actually help the people who need it, because a plan such as ObamaCare that costs this much, that hurts this many Americans, and that still fails to achieve its principal goal at the end of the day just won't work.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

PROTECTING SCHOOLCHILDREN

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak briefly about a bill I have introduced. This is a bill that is about protecting our kids in schools. As the father of three young kids, I share the feeling I suspect every parent has: There is no higher priority than making sure our children are safe. We can't personally provide that security all day everywhere at all times, and so we want to make sure the places our kids go are as safe as they can be. Our kids obviously spend a great deal of time at school, and so we want our schools to be the safest environment they can be. And it turns out there is more we can do.

I have a bill—it is a bill I have introduced with Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia—a bipartisan bill that is going to help provide greater security for kids in our schools. My immediate inspiration for introducing this bill came from a tragic story that originated in Pennsylvania. It is a story that begins at a school in Delaware County. One of the schoolteachers, it turns out, had molested several boys and had raped one. The prosecutors never felt they had enough evidence to actually mount a case against him, but the school knew what had happened so they dismissed the teacher. But unbelievably, to me, although they dismissed him, they also gave him a letter of recommendation he could take with him as he applied—where do you think—to other schools. Because that is what these predators do—they look to be in an environment where they can find more victims. That is exactly what this guy did, and he managed to get another teaching job in West Virginia.

This episode ends in 1997, when that teacher—who by then was a school principal—raped and murdered a 12-year-old boy named Jeremy Bell. So justice has caught up with that teacher. He has since been apprehended, charged, tried, and convicted, and he is now serving a jail sentence for murder. But that was all too late for Jeremy Bell.

Unfortunately, Jeremy Bell's story is not unique. I was at a YMCA in Chester County, PA, a few weeks ago. Our district attorney there, Tom Hogan—the district attorney for Chester County—

told me a very disturbing story. They are doing an investigation of the Coatesville School District for alleged financial mismanagement. That is what the investigation was about. But in the course of the investigation, they discovered there are numerous school employees who are felons.

He couldn't reveal many details because it is an ongoing investigation even now, but he was able to share one story. It is a story of a Victor Ford, who was an employee. He had been convicted three times for felony drug dealing. In 2009 he was hired as a special education classroom aide and a seventh grade boys basketball coach. In 2010 he raped a young girl—not at this school. Later, he resigned from the school and has since pled guilty to corruption of minors.

This is appalling, and it is so completely unacceptable anywhere in America. So I have introduced a bill that has broad bipartisan support. In fact, it is a bill that has passed the House unanimously. This should not be controversial.

This bill would insist that schools conduct proper criminal background checks for both existing and prospective employees and that these background checks be repeated periodically. There are five States that don't require any check at all, according to a GAO report, and my State of Pennsylvania requires it only for new hires but never relooks at people who may have been working for the school for many years.

This bill also requires the background check for a criminal history be done for any employee who is going to come into contact with kids, so not just teachers. It could be a coach, a contractor, or anybody who is going to interact with children. There are 12 States that have no such provisions.

The bill would also require a more thorough background check. Some States check their own State's database for criminal activity but they do not look at the FBI's database or a national record of criminality. Our bill would require that.

The bill would forbid knowingly passing on a letter of recommendation to a predator. It is shocking that even has to be contemplated, but it has occurred. Sometimes there is this feeling of, well, let's just make the problem someone else's problem. So it does happen, but it is outrageous and appalling, and it needs to be forbidden. Our bill would do that.

The bill would preclude the possibility of hiring people ever convicted of a violent sexual crime against a child, whether that is a misdemeanor or a felony and a number of other violent felonies, including homicide, child abuse, neglect, crimes against children, including pornography and other serious crimes, and other felonies if they have been committed within the previous 5 years.

The enforcement mechanism basically is to withhold Federal funding for schools in States that refuse to do an appropriate check to make sure our kids are safe. This is just common sense and it has broad bipartisan support.

Again, I thank Senator JOE MANCHIN for being my cosponsor on this legislation. It is called the Protecting Students from Sexual and Violent Predators Act. It is S. 1596. Again, it passed the House unanimously. But this is more than just a piece of legislation. This is a moral imperative. This is something we know we can do to make our schools safer for our kids, and I think we should do just that.

I am engaged in discussions with some of my colleagues. I hope this will not be controversial and that we will soon get to the point where we can pass this by unanimous consent or hotline this so we get this done. As I said, it has already passed the House. As soon as we pass this bill, it will go to the President and it will be signed into law. I hope my colleagues will join me in this effort and we will be able to get it done soon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Nebraska.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. JOHANNIS. Madam President, I rise today to speak again about the President's health care bill—ObamaCare. Monday of this week was another milestone for ObamaCare. It marked yet another admission by the President that the health care law is unworkable as written.

So what happened? On Monday, unilaterally, the administration decided to delay the employer mandate for 1 year once again. This time around the delay is for employers with 50 to 99 employees. It is amazing to me, and it is completely contradictory, that one day the President is behind the podium talking about how great this law is and the next day he is erasing the very text he supports.

The administration had nearly 4 years to implement the major provisions of the law, yet the President finds it necessary to literally rewrite the law with delay after delay after delay. On one hand, I am pleased the President recognizes the grievous harm being done by this legislation. I appreciate that he recognizes the harm is too great to leave it in place. But all he is doing is delaying the pain until after the elections, which is unfair to American families.

The truth is further delays don't solve the problem; they extend the pain. Reports certainly indicate we have only seen the tip of this iceberg.

Last week, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office dealt yet another

blow to ObamaCare. The CBO estimates there will be about 2½ million fewer full-time workers in 10 years than if this law had not passed. These new figures are nearly three times greater than the CBO's already dismal analysis back in the day when the law was being debated before its passage.

I found it remarkable back when we were debating this law—when unemployment was hovering around 10 percent—that any of my colleagues would support any bill that would cost hundreds of thousands of jobs. Now we are learning the truth and it is even worse. It is three times as bad. CBO says the law's subsidies and taxes reduce incentives to work. Is that what this Congress should be about? And their report asserts the cost of the employer mandate penalty will be passed on to workers in the form of lower wages or other compensation.

A number of Nebraskans have reached out to me. An individual from eastern Nebraska shared this:

I work part time and I have had my hours cut from 30 to 28 hours due to ObamaCare last April. My employer implemented it early to be sure I did not exceed 30 hours in the year 2013. Even with the delay in the mandate, they have stuck to the 28 hours for part time help. The loss to me is about \$150 a month and it sure has hurt our budget. My employer's hands are tied as they would have to pay health care for employees with 30 hours or more or pay a fine if not offering health care. This ObamaCare is a job killer. I keep hoping I will wake up and this will all have been a bad dream.

Another Nebraskan from the north-east corner of the State wrote to me and said:

My wife just left my office in tears. She worked for the city for over 10 years. She is, or rather was, a 34 hour a week employee who was informed that she is having her hours cut back to 29 as a result of the Affordable Care Act. To many those 5 hours per week may not seem like much but to our family it will result in a huge loss. We currently have 3 children, including one daughter who is a senior getting ready to graduate and go to college. As a family we pretty much live "hand to mouth" with our income and this reduction in hours, which I'm sure seems "minor" to a lot of folks, is a huge blow to my family. The thing that pains me most is the impact it is going to have on our daughter's decision about college, that one thing alone is so unfair. She should not, on the cusp of choosing her path in life, have to be put in the position—over 5 hours of work—of delaying or altering her life plans. In a world where we tend to be futurists—always talking about the importance of education and the next generation being the future—it just doesn't seem right that I have to look my daughter in the eyes tonight and have a discussion about how 5 hours may alter her future.

These are heartbreaking stories about Americans who want to work but their government has gotten in their way. We are seeing smaller paychecks and 2.5 million fewer full-time equivalent jobs.

We all remember this law's primary marketing pitch was that it would pro-

vide coverage for tens of millions of uninsured Americans, but CBO now estimates 31 million Americans will likely be without health insurance in 2024—roughly 1 of 9 Americans—and 6 to 7 million Americans won't get coverage through their employers who otherwise would have. This is according to CBO.

Let me say that again. Six million to 7 million fewer Americans will not get health insurance from their employer under ObamaCare compared to no bill at all.

So ObamaCare has been counterproductive, to say the least. It is hardly a good return on investment, considering this law cost over \$2 trillion and raised taxes by about \$1 trillion.

I appreciate and support goals to help our most vulnerable Americans receive access to health care, and I support reforms which will increase competition and lower costs, such as expanding health savings accounts and not reducing them. I appreciate the opportunity to work on reforms which allow insurers to compete across State lines and allowing small businesses to pool together to create a broader pool to be insured at lower rates. These solutions would produce results.

But a 2,700-page bill packed full of perverse incentives and negative consequences which hurt workers, increase taxes, and costs trillions is not what Americans want. That is why I am committed to shielding Americans from the harmful effects of ObamaCare. We must repeal this law and build on the alternative solutions which have been proposed by Republicans to help our American families.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

ASKING CONFIRMATION

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I have a quick notification.

We have two judges on the calendar from Arkansas, Calendar No. 565 and 570. I just alert the Senate that, at the proper time, I plan to ask unanimous consent to confirm these en bloc, and I have very strong reasons why they need to get done before we go to recess.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REED. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the time until 11:15 a.m. be equally divided between myself and the Senators from Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, and both Senators from Connecticut; that at the conclusion of these remarks I be recognized to speak for an additional 3 minutes; and then following my remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Mr. REED. Madam President, what has made America strong is we have provided opportunities for individuals to develop their talents. Previous generations of Americans have recognized this, and invested in higher education accordingly.

During President Lincoln's time, the Federal Government invested in establishing a system of public colleges throughout the Nation. After World War II, we opened the doors of postsecondary education to our returning veterans under the GI bill. As part of the War on Poverty, we enacted the Higher Education Act with the idea that no American should be denied the ability to go to college because their family lacked the ability to pay for college.

Senator Pell, my predecessor, with the creation of the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant—later named the Pell grant in his honor—made the promise of a college education real for millions of Americans.

As part of the student aid programs, we invested in offering low-cost loans to create opportunity, spur innovation, and grow our economy. Our student loan programs were originally seen as an investment, not a profit center or even a cost-neutral proposition.

Today, our student aid investment aid has been stood on its head. The Congressional Budget Office estimates we will be generating revenue from student loans through 2024. Student loan debt has become a serious threat to our ladder of opportunity—our pathway to progress for this generation.

That is what brings me and my colleagues to the floor today. We must turn the tide because too many students are drowning in debt, and it has threatened to hold back a new generation of young Americans just when they would be forming a household, buying cars or starting a business.

As student loan repayment plans stretch out over 20 years or more, this generation will still be paying off student loans when it comes time to send their own children to college and perhaps while also taking care of their parents in their senior years.

The bottom line is we know borrowers are struggling. We know the government could play a more constructive role in helping them and enacting reforms to increase fairness and transparency in this process.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York recently reported that delinquency rates on student loan debt are increasing even as we see decreases in delinquency rates for other types of household debt.

The cohort default rates for student loans have been increasing. For borrowers who entered repayment in 2010,

14.7 percent had defaulted by 2013, up from 13.4 percent for those who began repayments in 2009. It is essential borrowers know about their repayment options. That is why Senator DURBIN's Student Loan Borrower Bill of Rights Act is so important and why I am proud to be a cosponsor of his legislation.

But changing the trend of growing debt and rising defaults is more than a student loan servicing issue. We have to provide a real avenue to allow individuals straining under the weight of the estimated \$1.2 trillion in student loan debt—many with loans carrying an interest rate of 6.8 percent or higher—an opportunity to refinance those loans at a lower interest rate. The GAO just reported that on loans made between 2007 and 2012, the Federal Government is estimated to make \$66 billion. Clearly, borrowers are paying more than they should, and we have to address these college costs.

But we also have to deal with the issue of giving colleges and universities their incentive, their skin in the game, to ensure they carefully review their students' loans; that they direct students to the lowest cost and the lowest possible amount of loans; that they do this in a way which will make them truly responsible and conscious of the debt which is accumulated by students. I have been working on legislation to require that.

So I commend Senators DURBIN, WARREN, and others for what they are doing to deal with this issue.

Madam President, I yield the floor for my other colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I thank Senators DURBIN and REED for their extraordinary leadership on this important issue. I also rise today to talk about the crushing burden which student debt places on our college students and on our economy, and I call on Congress to address it.

The core facts are well known to every family in America. In recent decades, college costs have skyrocketed. Adjusted for inflation, a young person today pays 300 percent of what their parents paid just 30 years ago. For millions of young people, the only way to cover this tuition cost is to take on huge debt. The average student loan balance among 25-year-olds who borrow has grown by 91 percent in just 10 years. Total outstanding student loan debt stands at a staggering \$1.2 trillion, and it is getting bigger every single day.

The problem is made worse by the Federal student loan program, with high interest rates which will produce obscene profits for the government. The GAO recently projected the government will bring in \$66 billion in profits on its Federal student loans made between 2007 and 2012—profits

which would make a Fortune 500 CEO proud.

This exploding debt is crushing our young people. More than one third of borrowers under the age of 30 have been delinquent for more than 90 days.

This exploding debt is also dragging down our economy. With monthly loan bills which can easily exceed a mortgage payment, it is no surprise that home ownership among 30-year-olds has declined steeply. Last spring the Federal Reserve raised concerns that rising student debt could threaten our overall economic growth.

Tying students to a lifetime of financial servitude as a condition of getting an education does not reflect our values. These students didn't go to the mall and run up charges on a credit card. They worked hard, and they learned new skills which will benefit this country, help us build a stronger middle class, and help us build a stronger America. They deserve our support. They don't deserve to be buried in debt.

To reverse this trend of student borrowing, we need to bring down the cost of college. That will not be easy, and it will require everyone—the government, higher education institutions, and the students themselves—to do far more than they do now.

I am committed to working with Chairman HARKIN and my colleagues on the Senate HELP Committee to find ways to meaningfully reduce college tuition, and I am working closely with many of my colleagues, including Senators DURBIN, REED, SCHUMER, GILLIBRAND, MURPHY, and BROWN, who are all intensely focused on this issue.

But our need to reduce the cost of college must not blind us to the urgency of addressing the massive debt already crushing our young people. The pressure is building, and we must act to provide real relief to our students and young graduates now.

In the coming weeks I will join with my colleagues to introduce legislation to do just that—legislation which will allow eligible borrowers with high-interest loans to refinance at interest rates which are at least as low as those currently being offered to new borrowers in the Federal student loan program.

The idea is pretty simple. When interest rates are low, homeowners can refinance their mortgages and big corporations can swap more expensive debt for cheaper debt. Even State and local governments have refinanced their debts. But a graduate who took out an unsubsidized loan before July 1 of this year is locked into an interest rate of nearly 7 percent. Older loans run 8 percent, 9 percent, and even more.

Last year Congress agreed those interest rates were much too high, so they lowered them significantly for this year's borrowers. But that change

does nothing for the millions who are trapped under the old high-interest-rate loans. Refinancing those old loans would lower interest rates to 3.8 percent for undergraduate loans. The savings would vary, of course. For a recent graduate who borrowed the maximum, payments would drop by as much as \$1,000 a year, and total interest could be cut nearly in half. For those who have even older loans, those with graduate school loans, and those with loans from private lenders, the savings would be even higher.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I agree with my colleague from Massachusetts. She said it exactly right, as will the other Senators who are going to speak on this issue today. I urge Congress to work immediately to tackle the mountain of student debt which is crippling the lives of young people and weighing down an entire generation.

The Federal Student Loan Refinancing Act, which I wrote to address the growing economic burden facing our graduates and their families, basically affords a graduate the same right to refinance their loans as already provided to homeowners, corporations, and even governments. This legislation would lower interest rates on refinancing student loans to 4 percent, saving borrowers thousands of dollars which would otherwise be spent purchasing a home or a car or even starting a new business.

In New York State and across the Nation, we are facing a student loan debt crisis. Student loan debt is at \$1.2 trillion nationwide. Americans now owe more on their student loans than they do on their credit cards or car loans, holding back our economy and our economy's growth. Tens of millions of young people who graduated college and are securing their first job are not starting their careers on even ground. They are starting them under water, and they have a hard time staying afloat when juggling all their bills.

A New York student who borrows to pay for college now graduates with an average of more than \$27,000 in student loan debt, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. When someone owes upwards of \$30,000 in debt before even earning the first paycheck, it is no wonder young people are falling further behind on their payments.

Providing graduates with the ability to refinance their student debt—Federal loans particularly—would lead to the personal savings of \$14.5 billion nationwide in the first year alone, according to the Center for American Progress report. A higher education remains the clearest path to our middle

class. When we price young people out of college, we all pay the price. Keeping a high-quality education in New York affordable is simply the right thing to do. That is why refinancing Federal student loans should be one of Congress's top priorities for college students.

The magnitude of the problem requires leadership and the solution is right in front of us. Now is the time to act. Our Nation's students, graduates, and families cannot afford further delay.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank my colleagues Senator JACK REED of Rhode Island, Senator ELIZABETH WARREN of Massachusetts, and Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York for joining us on the floor this morning to talk about the student debt crisis and college affordability.

I don't think this is just another issue. I think this is a defining issue. Imagine, if you will, what has happened to America since we have called into question the intrinsic value of owning a home. That used to be built into our culture, the notion that if you could get beyond the rental stage and actually buy a home was a smart and good investment in terms of your neighborhood, your community, and your State.

The mortgage crisis that we went through was a shock to many people. They paid too much for their homes. They found themselves facing foreclosure and short sales, and the basic premise has been challenged. There is more rental property now. People are hedging their bets on the issue of home ownership.

Now take one of the other pillars of our basic American values, and that pillar is: You will never go wrong with more education. I learned that at an early age, and luckily my mom and dad—with limited educational experience on their own part—pushed me forward into college and into law school and to finish. They believed that at the end of the day, I would be better off. Of course, statistics bear that out.

Now comes the new challenge. The increasing cost of higher education has driven many families and students deeply into debt. In many cases, it is impossible for them to pay back their debt.

Senator REED says it is transformative. There are young people who have literally had their lives dramatically changed because of debt. The basic premise is called into question: Is higher education worth the money? I didn't think I would ever see that as a legitimate topic for debate in America, but it turned out to be a cover on Time magazine.

This is not just a matter of the pundits and politicians talking about it.

Average people, working families are talking about it. That is why we are coming to the floor. We hope to expand our numbers more and more, and I hope some of the Republicans will join in this conversation about what to do when it comes to student debt and the crisis it is creating.

Millions of Americans pursue a college education hoping they will realize the American dream, but as college tuition, textbooks, and fees skyrocket students are paying more and more for education and taking on greater debt to pay for it. Sixty-eight percent of the class of 2012 graduated with some debt. For those students the average debt was \$27,850 a year. For students who attended for-profit schools, the average debt was close to \$40,000, which deserves a special part of this topic of conversation when we talk about the cost of higher education.

Americans now collectively hold more than \$1.2 trillion in student debt—more than Americans hold in credit card debt. This has surpassed credit card debt in America. It goes way beyond higher education. It goes into a question about personal credit, chances for mobility, and the future of students who sign for these bone-crushing debt loans.

In his recent State of the Union Address, President Obama said he wants to work with Congress to see how we can help Americans who feel trapped by this crushing debt. Several of us are stepping forward and accepting the President's challenge. I hope more Members will do so as well.

Late last year Senators REED, WARREN, BOXER, and myself introduced the student loan borrower bill of rights to spell out in basic terms the rights of student borrowers and their families in interacting with Federal and private lenders, loan servicers, and schools. It is amazing to me that when it comes to mortgage debt there are laws dictating what you need to be told. When it comes to student debt, there are not nearly the protections. Younger people who are making these life-changing decisions about debt deserve to know everything they face and what they are getting into.

I met a young woman in Chicago recently named Hannah Moore. She thought she did the right thing. She started off her higher education by going to community college. She was told that was affordable and close to home. Do that first. She did it and then she made a fatal error.

After 2 years at a community college, she enrolled at the Harrington College of Design in Chicago. If you go to their Web site, you will be dazzled with the beauty of this school, the faculty, and all the opportunities. Hannah Moore was dazzled, but this for-profit school ended up becoming a debt pit for her life.

After she had exhausted all of her Federal loans and started taking out

private loans at the Harrington College of Design, she graduated with a debt of \$124,000, and she could not find a job. At one point she was working three part-time jobs to pay \$800 a month on this debt from this for-profit school.

Her Federal loan payments are manageable because the Federal program at least allows her to make payments based on income, but the private loans this school lured her into—thanks to interest and fees—now amount to \$110,000. Her servicer on these loans refuses to work with her to find repayment alternatives. She sinks deeper and deeper every day into debt.

This poor young woman thought she was doing the right thing by going to school. Today she is so deeply in debt she can't even dream of buying a house or a car. Her father had to come out of retirement to help her pay off the loans at this for-profit school, the Harrington College of Design.

Unfortunately, she wasn't protected with the bill of rights, which I have introduced and is being cosponsored by my colleagues who have spoken today, which would have told her don't apply for a private loan until you have exhausted your government loans.

Government loans have lower interest rates and are more manageable. Government loans can be consolidated and in some cases forgiven, depending on the job you take. She was not told that. She was lured into a debt trap by a school that just wanted to rake in Federal dollars at her expense. This is going to standardize policies, such as how payments are applied to principal and interest so borrowers benefit instead of banks.

Under the current situation, many students paying back their loans find that the money is going to the higher interest loans and not to the lower interest loans; it is not being transferred to their benefit.

The bill requires servicers to have a servicemember and veteran liaison. Veterans are often victims of these notorious for-profit schools and other lenders. We also require students to be told of all of their options, including Federal loans which have better terms and repayments. Students often have no other choice but to take out loans to pay for their college education, but this bill says borrowing money for college doesn't mean you give up your power over your money and your debt.

I also want to mention something most people don't know. In bankruptcy court in America today there are only a handful of debts that cannot be discharged in bankruptcy court: taxes, child support, alimony, and government and student loans.

A few years ago, the for-profit industry and private loan industry engineered into these bankruptcy discharge laws protection for their own debt. What does it mean? It means if you go to a for-profit school and take out a

private loan, you are literally burdened with that for a lifetime. The grounds for discharging a student loan debt are some of the strictest and toughest in America. Students who sign up for this debt ought to know they are in it until it is paid and that can mean for a lifetime.

The Wall Street Journal reported some time ago on a grandmother co-signing a student loan for her granddaughter. The granddaughter defaulted, and the lender decided to levy on the grandmother's Social Security payments. That is how outrageous this has become. Sadly, these students don't realize when they sign on the dotted line at ages 19, 20, and 21, they are signing on for a debt that can trail them for a lifetime.

That has to change. We have to follow Senator REED's lead. Senator JACK REED has said: These colleges have to have some skin in the game. If they are going to lure students into student loans well beyond their ability to repay, let that college and university bear some of the responsibility for repayment too. I think that is only reasonable.

I thank my colleagues for bringing forth this issue. I thank Senator WARREN. Her partnership in this effort is especially important. Because of her background in law and finance she is an important part of this conversation.

We are not going to end with this speech on the floor today by each of us. Once a week we are going to continue to bring together those in our caucus—and I hope in the Republican caucus—who believe we have to address the student debt crisis and come up with a reasonable way for students to pay for an education that is reasonably priced.

To have these students burdened with the student loan debtor prison is unacceptable in America today. It is time for us, as a Congress, to address this issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I would like to speak for another minute about the issue of refinancing student loans. This is real money back in the pockets of people who invested in their education; real money will help young people find a little more financial stability as they work hard to build their futures, real money that says America invests in those who get an education.

We don't need to add a single dime to our deficit to pay for this plan. Right now this country essentially taxes students by charging high interest rates that bring money into the government while at the same time we give away far more money through a Tax Code riddled with loopholes and let the wealthiest individuals and corporations avoid paying a fair share. We can close those loopholes and put the money directly into refinancing student loans.

We can start with the Buffett rule, a rule that would limit tax loopholes for the wealthy and ensure that billionaires pay at least as much as their secretaries. For every new dollar we bring in by stitching this loophole, it can go directly into reducing the cost of student loans for our students. Dollar for dollar we can invest in billionaires or we can invest in our students. This is about opportunity.

Our country should offer a helping hand to young people who are working hard to try to build a future, not a handout to billionaires who have already made it. Refinancing student loans will not fix everything that is broken in the higher education system, but it is a huge step forward.

I was the first person in my family to graduate from college. I went to a commuter college where the tuition was \$50 a semester. I went to a public law school where I got a great education. I was able to do that because I grew up in a country that chose investing in kids over investing in billionaires. I believe in that America, and I believe in what we can do when we work together to build opportunities for everyone who busted their tail to get an education.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, again I compliment my colleagues Senator DURBIN, Senator WARREN, and Senator GILLIBRAND on their commitment to reinvigorating our higher education policy and doing it in an efficient and cost-effective way so the future generation of students are not so burdened that they cannot essentially rise up, buy a home, start a family, and do the things that my generation took for granted because there was strong support for higher education at every level of government.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Mr. REED. Madam President, before I leave the floor, I wish to turn to another key issue that requires urgent action; that is, the renewal of unemployment benefits for millions of people. It has now been 46 days since unemployment insurance expired for many job seekers. Today their ranks have swollen to about 1.8 million Americans, including 20,000 veterans who have lost their emergency unemployment insurance benefits.

Getting Americans back to work and accelerating job growth should be Congress's top priority—our No. 1 job. We all understand the answer to this is having a situation where there are not three applicants for each job, but there is a good job for each applicant, and we have more to do.

In the meantime we have to address the crisis for these families who have worked hard all of their lives. They only qualify for unemployment insur-

ance if they lost a job through no fault of their own and are looking for work. But in that search, it is difficult. And it is certainly difficult to get by, pay the rent, put gas in the car, keep a cell phone operating, to take a call from a potential employer when we cut off the modest benefits of roughly \$350 a week.

Doing this has historically been a bipartisan endeavor. We have all recognized in our communities, regardless of where they are located in this country, people who have worked hard, who are struggling and need assistance to make the transition from unemployment back to reemployment. I am particularly troubled today by the way some people are commenting about the unemployed, suggesting they don't have the backbone, the character to work; that this is a great deal for them, getting \$300 a week. When, in fact, one of the obvious points, to me, at least, of this crisis of unemployment is it is not just young, entry-level workers; too often, it is middle-aged individuals who have done extremely well in their lives and now, for the first time, are coming into unemployment situations because of technology, because of changes in the workforce. They are good people, and they deserve our support. But, instead, they are being mischaracterized, dismissed, and ignored—perhaps the most dangerous aspect of this attitude.

We were only one Republican vote short of breaking a filibuster that would allow us, at least temporarily, to help out these people. I thank all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have worked very conscientiously, consistently, and thoughtfully on this critical matter. If one more of our colleagues can recognize the need to do this, then we can do it, and we should do it.

We are, I believe, on the verge of addressing the issue of military COLA reductions. That is something important we have to do, but let me point out, that does not go into effect until December 2015. There is no veteran who has lost his or her COLA yet, but there are 1.8 million Americans, and growing, who have already lost their extended unemployment insurance benefits. So the immediacy of this problem is compelling, and we have to deal with it.

We have never turned our back when long-term unemployment was so significant. We have always stood up and said, we will help you. We have also been willing to make changes to the program. In fact, in 2012, I was part of a conference committee that made significant reforms in the unemployment system. One reform was to cut back the weeks from 99 to 73. We provided to States the ability to have innovative programs in terms of putting people in jobs, in terms of making sure a job search was being thoroughly conducted by recipients. These reforms have been made. What we have asked for is a short extension of the program, and I

think that is what we should be asking for at this juncture. But as we progress and as we get close to the point where the 3 months has expired, I think we have to think more about what are we going to do in the long run, because we are still going to have millions of people who do not have work.

We have, I think—and it has been demonstrated by these folks—Members on both sides who want to get this done. We need one more vote to procedurally move forward. I hope we can get that vote.

With that, I yield back the remainder of our time. I believe, under the prevailing UC, that we will now go into executive session.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 7 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you. I will yield the floor if some people wish to speak in executive session on the nominations.

THE DEFICIT

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, in the Budget Committee yesterday, on which I am the ranking Republican, Director Elmendorf of the Congressional Budget Office gave us the report and his projections for next year and what the consequences and financial situation will be for our country as he projects it. When I asked him about his projections for economic growth, he acknowledged they have been way too high over the last several years, and that has been disappointing. Our growth has not reached the level we want to it reach. He projects now a lower growth rate than he had been projecting for the next 10 years.

Let me share with my colleagues, as we vote on these matters on which we want to help veterans and we want to help the unemployed—and we can do that but we have to remember who we are, what we are doing, and how we got here. We virtually doubled the deficit in the last 10 years in the United States of America—added to the total debt of the United States of America. Deficits are going down over the last couple of years, and will for 1 more year, according to Mr. Elmendorf, but then will begin an inexorable rise to nearly a \$1 trillion deficit at the end of 10 years from today. The interest we paid—and he testified to this; it is in his report—the interest we paid last year on the total debt of the United States, even with the extraordinarily low interest rates, was \$230 billion—an amazing amount of money.

We have a group testifying right now about the highway bill. They would like to see more money spent on our

infrastructure and highways. From the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Donohue, and Mr. Trump, to the top union leader, they all agree we need to spend more on highways.

Last year, the interest we paid on the debt, according to Dr. Elmendorf, was \$230 billion. That is a stunning figure. It is half the total of the budget for the Defense Department. But let me tell my colleagues what he said that is most troubling. Projecting a modest increase in interest rates over the next 10 years and the increased deficits we will see, Mr. Elmendorf predicted last year that 10 years from now, the 1-year interest payment will be \$830 billion.

We are having a dispute to try to get—not cut—the veterans retirement, and we should not cut veterans retirement, the way this was done. It would cost \$6 billion over 10 years. Do we see the difference? We are paying \$230 billion. If we pay at that rate for 10 years, that would be \$2.3 trillion. But we are not going to be paying at \$230 billion a year. By the time we get to the tenth year, according to Mr. Elmendorf, we will be spending \$890 billion on the interest on the debt we have accumulated in the United States of America through reckless spending, so much of it producing very little benefit for anybody in the long term, and we cannot continue this. He testified that if interest rates go up 1 percent, we will pay \$1.5 trillion more on interest over 10 years than if it didn't go up 1 percent. Who knows—he acknowledged he is no seer. Interest rates, many people predict right now, would surge dramatically and may go up to some of the levels we had in 1970. If it did, this country would probably be financially destitute.

So I have to say we are not playing games here. The money of the United States needs to be managed by the elected representatives. They expect us to manage our money wisely. They expect us not to put this country at financial risk, and they have every right. They have a responsibility, actually, as citizens of this country to be angry with their Congress, to be angry with their President for running up this kind of a debt. It is not a good thing.

Earlier this year there was deep concern that the Budget Control Act that was passed on a bipartisan basis, signed by President Obama, that limited the growth in spending—didn't cut spending, but over 10 years spending would increase \$8 trillion—instead of increasing \$10 trillion. So we "saved" \$2 trillion. That was deemed too tough this year. So we had the Ryan-Murray bill that said we are going to fix some of the tight places, and we are going to avoid spending—we are going to put more money in. We are going to spend more than we agreed to, but we are not going to break the total debt situation because we are going to

raise taxes some and we are going to cut spending some. One of the cuts they came up with, in secret, without any public hearings or debate, was to cut the veterans retirement plan, and it blew up. It meant \$70- to \$150,000 for retired veterans, how much they would lose in their retirement cost of living.

I opposed that. They passed it anyway. The Democratic majority here blocked proposal after proposal, and one was to more than pay for it by reducing fraudulent income tax credit checks being illegally sent out to people who don't qualify for it. That was blocked too. So what did we have just a few days ago? We had—we have a bill that saved the veterans so they don't have to have their pensions reduced. And how would they pay for this \$6 billion in costs? Why, they wouldn't pay for it at all. There is no payment whatsoever. Actually, by voting and supporting that provision—the Pryor amendment, cosponsored by a number of Democrats—it would increase the spending of the United States above the agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have one additional minute to wrap up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. It would have added to the debt of the United States directly above the agreement we just voted on in Ryan-Murray. It set the cap on how much spending. So less than two months later, we are in here directly having to defend against a proposal that would have broken the spending agreement that was in the Ryan-Murray legislation. It is unthinkable. I can't imagine this would happen. There are so many places we could pay for this kind of restoration of veterans' retirement benefits without raising taxes and without adding to the debt.

I guess I am saying I am frustrated about the mindset of this Congress. I don't think we are focused on the threat this debt poses to America. Dr. Elmendorf told us we are on an unsustainable path and he began to discuss the danger of a fiscal crisis such as we had in 2007 because we are in such a red zone, a marginal zone of debt.

I see the majority leader and I know he is busy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 540 AND S. 25

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that following the series of votes scheduled for 11:30 this morning and the resumption of legislative session, notwithstanding

the previous order, the time until 1:45 be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that at 1:45 this afternoon the Chair lay before the body the message from the House to accompany S. 540; that following reporting of that message the majority leader or his designee be recognized to move to concur in the House amendment to S. 540; that if a cloture motion is filed on the motion to concur, the Senate immediately proceed to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540; that upon disposition of the House message to accompany S. 540, the Chair lay before the body the House message to accompany S. 25, with the remaining provisions of the previous order remaining in effect, with the debate time modified to be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to the vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 25; that if cloture is not invoked on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540, the Chair lay before the body the House message to accompany S. 25, with the remaining provisions of the previous order remaining in effect with the exception of the debate time which will now be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to the vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 25.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF TINA S. K Aidanow TO BE COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE

NOMINATION OF DANIEL BENNETT SMITH TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH)

NOMINATION OF CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

NOMINATION OF CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Tina S. Kaidanow, of the District of Columbia, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large; Daniel Bennett Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research); Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be United States Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; United States Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank; and Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes for debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, it is my hope that we do not have to use 30 minutes. But let me start off by saying I am very pleased we have three highly qualified nominees for posts at the State Department that are critical to America's national security and economic diplomacy. These nominees were voted out favorably by the Foreign Relations Committee.

Ambassador Tina Kaidanow is well qualified to serve as Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the Department of State. In a long career, most recently she served as the Deputy Ambassador at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. In Kabul

she worked on some of the most difficult and pressing terrorism issues the United States faces. She previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

Ambassador Kaidanow has shown the ability to forge the types of partnerships necessary to advance the counterterrorism objectives and national security of the United States. I hope all of my colleagues will join me in supporting her nomination.

Next is Daniel Bennett Smith, the President's nominee for Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. This is an incredibly important position as the State Department thinks about our advocacy abroad in terms of foreign policy. Having the best information on intelligence and research is critically important, and certainly playing a role as it relates to embassy security across the globe is very important.

Ambassador Smith served as the U.S. Ambassador to Greece from 2010 to 2013. He has been a career officer in the Senior Foreign Service, with the rank of Career Minister. He has served as Executive Secretary of the State Department and as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs and Deputy Executive Secretary.

If confirmed, he will advise State Department officials on the many intelligence issues the Department faces—issues that are critical to policymakers' decisions as they relate to U.S. foreign policy efforts. I urge my colleagues to support his nomination.

Finally, Catherine Ann Novelli is in a unique opportunity to help us, particularly with our economic diplomacy abroad. With over three decades of experience in the public and private sectors, including at senior levels at Apple and in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Ms. Novelli has shown a deep personal commitment to public service. She will bring tremendous private sector skills, understanding of the interagency process, and knowledge of international economic issues to her role as the most senior economic official at the State Department and as an Alternate Governor to the important multilateral development banks that are a big part of our efforts abroad.

Ms. Novelli's experience at the USTR coordinating trade and investment policy for Europe, the Middle East, and northern Africa and the leading role she played in many of the most important U.S. trade negotiations of the last 25 years make her an ideal candidate to lead the State Department's engagement in our country's most ambitious trade agenda in generations.

One thing I find particularly important—as I always advocate questions on international intellectual property rights and other elements that are important to the United States, which

leads the world in innovation—our private sector is facing tougher international competition. The world’s serious environmental threats and a changing energy landscape are also elements of those challenges.

We are fortunate to have someone with Ms. Novelli’s expertise in promoting trade and investment and her intimate knowledge of the support needed to ensure our private sector remains globally competitive. She is the right person to oversee the State Department’s efforts to increase commerce, open markets, and support the rights of workers. I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

These are three very important, critical positions, and I look forward to the Senate confirming these individuals.

With that, Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time on both sides, including the 2 minutes prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON K Aidanow Nomination

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Tina S. Kaidanow, of the District of Columbia, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large?

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 30 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Cooms	Hirono
Ayotte	Corker	Hoeven
Baldwin	Cornyn	Inhofe
Barrasso	Crapo	Isakson
Begich	Cruz	Johanns
Bennet	Donnelly	Johnson (SD)
Blumenthal	Durbin	Johnson (WI)
Blunt	Enzi	Kaine
Booker	Feinstein	King
Boozman	Fischer	Kirk
Boxer	Flake	Klobuchar
Brown	Franken	Landrieu
Burr	Gillibrand	Leahy
Cantwell	Graham	Lee
Cardin	Grassley	Levin
Carper	Hagan	Manchin
Casey	Harkin	Markey
Chambliss	Hatch	McCain
Coats	Heinrich	McCaskill
Cochran	Heitkamp	McConnell
Collins	Heller	Menendez

Merkley	Risch	Thune
Mikulski	Roberts	Toomey
Moran	Rubio	Udall (CO)
Murkowski	Sanders	Udall (NM)
Murphy	Schatz	Vitter
Murray	Schumer	Walsh
Nelson	Scott	Warner
Paul	Sessions	Warren
Portman	Shaheen	Whitehouse
Pryor	Shelby	Wicker
Reed	Stabenow	Wyden
Reid	Tester	

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn Rockefeller

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SMITH NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Smith nomination.

The Senator from California

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise to support the nomination of Ambassador Daniel Bennett Smith to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research.

I am not aware of any opposition to this nominee and so look forward to a strong vote of confirmation by my colleagues. I am also pleased that the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research, known as INR, will continue to have strong leadership by a respected senior member of the foreign service.

The INR Bureau is a small, but effective entity within the U.S. intelligence community. In fact, it only has approximately 200 analysts, but it has a very strong reputation for independent and unbiased analysis. Its intelligence professionals include those from the foreign service and the civil service, including many who have decades of experience in the topics they cover.

These analysts are prized for the intelligence value they provide to senior State Department officials, to include the Secretary and his team, ambassadors, and the men and women who work the country desks.

INR also brings the State Department’s knowledge and viewpoint to discussions and debates within the intelligence community, helping to ensure that intelligence decisions are informed by diplomatic requirements and information gained by our embassies around the world.

In the past several years, INR has perhaps become best known for its dissents from some of the main points in the flawed intelligence reports that led to the war in Iraq. Unfortunately, those dissents were marginalized in key intelligence products and not provided adequate scrutiny. As a result, I can tell my colleagues that members of the intelligence committee pay special attention to dissenting voices in the intelligence community, and always to the views of INR.

The primary mission of this Bureau is to provide intelligence to policymakers at the State Department. INR is one of the three all-source analytic

agencies within the intelligence community, along with the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency.

INR also ensures that intelligence operations and sensitive intelligence-related law enforcement activities are consistent with U.S. foreign policy. The Assistant Secretary for INR is therefore the conduit between the intelligence community and the State Department to ensure that our intelligence activities and the conduct of our foreign policy are coordinated and aligned.

In sum, the Assistant Secretary for INR is both an independent leader of an intelligence community agency and the Secretary of State’s point person on intelligence matters.

Ambassador Smith is well-qualified to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. He has served for 30 years as a Foreign Service officer and in a variety of positions at the State Department. Most recently he was Ambassador to Greece (from 2010 to 2013).

Ambassador Smith has also served as Executive Secretary of the State Department, Principal Deputy Secretary for Consular Affairs, and in overseas posts in Bern, Istanbul, Ottawa, and Stockholm. He is a career officer in the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Career Minister.

The Intelligence Committee approved Ambassador Smith by voice vote on January 16, with unanimous support. A month earlier, on December 17, 2013, the committee held an open hearing on his nomination. After Ambassador Smith was voted out of our committee, the Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on his nomination on January 28.

Ambassador Smith has had a long and distinguished career at the State Department that will serve him well in this position. I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Ambassador Daniel Bennett Smith to be Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. COATS. We yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Shall the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Daniel Bennett Smith, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Intelligence and Research)?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 31 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Hatch	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boozman	Hirono	Risch
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Fischer	Merkley	Whitehouse
Flake	Mikulski	Wicker
Franken	Moran	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn Rockefeller

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. The next vote will be the last in this series of votes. The next one we will do by voice vote, and then we will start a series of votes at 1:45. There could be as many as 11 votes, so everybody cinch up their vests, and we will see what happens.

VOTE ON NOVELLI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the first Novelli nomination.

Who yields time? Who yields time?

Mr. VITTER. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Mr. CRAPO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be United States Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for a term of five years; United States Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank for a term of five years?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 32 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Hatch	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boozman	Hirono	Risch
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Burr	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Johanns	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Chambliss	King	Shelby
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Lee
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Fischer	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Moran	

NOT VOTING—3

Coburn Rockefeller Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON NOVELLI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the second Novelli nomination.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Catherine Ann Novelli, of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment)?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will immediately be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 1:45 is equally divided.

The Senator from Arkansas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 565 and 570; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Reserving the right to object—and I will object—I wish to remind my colleagues of a couple important points.

First, over the last several weeks some of my colleagues in the majority have expressed frustration because some of the nominees they support haven't been brought up for a final vote. I must say this is quite surprising to me.

As everyone knows, late last year the Senate Democrats invoked the so-called nuclear option. The stated reason for doing so of course was to strip the minority of our ability to stop any judicial or executive nominees on the floor. In fact, just before invoking the so-called nuclear option, here is what the majority leader said about it:

The change we propose today would ensure executive and judicial nominations an up or down vote on confirmation—yes or no.

The rule change will make cloture for all nominations other than the Supreme Court a majority threshold vote—yes or no.

Of course, 52 Democrats voted to take this unprecedented step, which tossed aside two centuries of Senate history and tradition, even though this President has an outstanding record of getting his nominations confirmed. In fact, prior to the President's attempt to fill the DC Circuit with judges they didn't need, the Senate had confirmed 215 of the President's judicial nominees, rejecting only 2. That is more than a 99-percent approval rating of the President's nominees.

Notwithstanding that record, however, the majority voted to cut the minority out of the process on the floor. I note there was bipartisan opposition to what the majority leader tried to accomplish. Three Democrats voted against it. I have to give credit to the Senator from Arkansas who has made this unanimous consent to be one of those who thought the minority should not be cut out of the process.

The bottom line is that under the precedent 52 Democrats voted to establish, the majority leader now can bring up at any time these nominations for a vote on the floor whenever he decides

to do it. If he did, the nominees would be confirmed within no more than 2 hours of debate.

So the minority simply has no ability to stop anyone from getting a vote. There is no filibuster of any nominees anymore, which is the whole point of what the majority chose to do in November.

I object to this unanimous consent and respectfully suggest that any Senator—including the Senator from Arkansas—discuss the matter with the one individual who has the ability to bypass the minority in that matter, and that happens to be the one Senator who is the majority leader of the Senate.

I do object, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I wish to respond and further explain.

We have two judges pending on the calendar right now. In the sequence of judges to be considered, they are No. 2 and No. 7; one is Timothy Brooks and the other is James Moody.

Tim Brooks was nominated by the White House in June and came out of the Judiciary Committee in October. Jay Moody was nominated by the White House in July and came out of the Judiciary Committee in November.

On the Federal bench in Arkansas district court level, we have eight judges. We now have two vacancies. I don't wish to be dramatic and declare a judicial emergency, but certainly people should understand we are only working at 75 percent horsepower right now and we need to get these judges confirmed forthwith.

Yesterday, I stood at my desk and notified the Senate I was going to make this request. I did not receive an objection, as far as I know—unless maybe a staff person talked to a staff person. But I never heard of any objection.

It is bad enough to have 25 percent of our judiciary in Arkansas which needs to be filled, but the real urgency for this is a matter of State law. James Moody is an elected State court judge. He is an elected trial court judge. Under Arkansas law, this is a non-partisan position. Our filing deadline for the 2014 election cycle opens on the 24th of February and it goes to March 3.

So here is the problem: Today is February 12. We are about to have a snowstorm tonight and the next few days and next week we are on recess. We come back on February 24. The filing period will already be open in Arkansas. I wish I could tell Judge Moody: Don't worry about it; you are going to be confirmed when we get back. The way things have worked around here recently, I can't give him that guarantee. I can't give him my word. I can't tell him: Judge, don't file for reelection.

Just go ahead and wait and trust that this is going to happen. I can't do that under the circumstances. So he is in limbo.

There are other lawyers and judges in Arkansas who want to run for his position. There is a domino effect in the local judiciary and local bar about this.

Under Arkansas State law, once he files, he cannot get his name off the ballot. These are nonpartisan elections. If they were party elections, he could go to the State party and they could handle it through their primary process or through their rules or whatever. But that is not the case here. There is no party to go to. Once he files and his name is on the ballot, he is on the ballot, and that is a big problem. This is causing a lot of problems back home.

There is no principle involved here. There is no reason why these two judges should be held over. They should have been done at the end of last year. I asked my colleagues to help me do that; I was told no.

We need to get these judges done now so we don't create this problem in Arkansas. Both of these judges are very well qualified. They have all the credentials the American Bar Association looks at. As far as I know, every lawyer in Arkansas is unanimously for both. In fact, I heard my colleague Senator BOOZMAN of Arkansas tell the Republican leader last week: MITCH, if you were picking these judges yourself, you couldn't pick any two better judges.

That is a paraphrase, but that is in effect what he said, and it is true. These are noncontroversial judges. Both these judges should be confirmed now so we don't cause this problem in Arkansas.

I yield the floor, but I will continue to push for these nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I see the good Senator from New Mexico is here. I am willing to defer to the Senator if time is an issue for him. If it is not, I will proceed.

MILITARY COLA

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise to speak on the issue of the military COLA. This is a cost-of-living adjustment for our military retirees. In the budget agreement, the COLA was reduced for military retirees by 1 percent until they reached age 62, and then the COLA is restored. I am opposed to this provision in the budget, and I have since cosponsored legislation to fix it, meaning fully reinstating the COLA for our military retired.

The bill we are considering and voting on later today fixes the COLA prob-

lem. It reinstates the COLA in full, and that is good. That is what I want to do, and that is what I believe the vast majority of Members in this body on both sides of the aisle want to do. We should pass the bill, and I believe this afternoon we will.

The bill we have been considering this week fixed the COLA problem and restored the cost-of-living adjustment for our military retirees, but it did not cover the cost of doing so. The cost of the legislation is about \$6.8 billion over a 10-year period, which, of course, is the Congressional Budget Office's scoring period. We can cover that cost, and we should. We have the deficit and the debt. We have to address our deficit and debt. We have to make sure we are paying for things, and we can absolutely do that in this case. In fact, we put forward amendments to do just that.

The first amendment I joined in putting forward was one led by Senator KELLY AYOTTE, the Senator from New Hampshire. Her amendment fully covers the cost of fixing the COLA. The way it works is it covers the cost by simply requiring that the additional child tax credit statute is properly enforced. I will explain that.

This amendment will require families with children who apply for the additional child tax credit must have Social Security numbers for those children. This is a simple straightforward enforcement provision to ensure the law is followed. Why wouldn't we make sure the law is enforced? After all, I believe that is an important part of our job.

In fact, I also believe the Treasury Department supports this enforcement provision as well, and I would wish to cite from a recent inspector general's report.

In 2011, the Treasury Department's Inspector General reported that individuals who were not authorized to work in the U.S. received billions by claiming the ACTC, and several news investigations found troubling instances of abuse of this tax credit. In just one example, according to a 2012 news report, an undocumented worker in Indiana admitted that his address was used to file tax returns by four other undocumented workers who fraudulently claimed 20 children in total—resulting in tax refunds totaling nearly \$30,000.

The Joint Committee on Taxation estimates this change would save approximately \$20 billion over 10 years. That is \$20 billion in savings over 10 years, which obviously far more than covers the \$6.8 billion cost of the COLA fix we are putting forward. Clearly that works.

I understand we have not been able to get bipartisan agreement on this pay-for, so we need to find something we can agree on because we need both Republicans and Democrats to pass this legislation to fix the COLA, and that is why I have since offered another pay-for. It is a simple 1-page

amendment that provides a pay-for for restoring the cost-of-living adjustment for our military retirees. What it does is it simply extends the provisions of the Budget Control Act—the budget we passed—for one more year, from 2023 to 2024.

I am pleased to say we will be voting on my amendment this afternoon—not because I have offered the amendment but, rather, because the leadership has agreed to offer the House version of the COLA fix. The legislation we will be voting on this afternoon has the pay-for I have just outlined. It is not identical to the amendment I have submitted, but it is very close to it. It ensures our military retirees will receive their much-deserved retirement.

I have urged my Republican colleagues in our caucus to fix this problem, and I have urged my Democratic colleagues on the Senate floor to fix this problem. I believe we will fix the cost-of-living adjustment in a bipartisan way today and restore it for our military retirees. This amendment will make sure we pay for it so we are not increasing the deficit or the debt.

As a former Governor and now as a Senator, I have had the honor and privilege to work with our military men and women. I have been to Iraq and Afghanistan. I have gotten the calls when one of our heroes makes the ultimate sacrifice. I know they put it all on the line for us.

Today I ask my fellow Senators to join with me and vote for our men and women in uniform. We need to fix the COLA for our military retired. We should support those great men and women who wear the uniform and honor and protect us and serve this Nation in the cause of liberty and freedom with their dedicated service.

Join with me and support them and vote for this legislation.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I rise today to talk about health care for veterans. This is a critical issue for many veterans who have been left behind and to the many who are not getting the care they need.

First, I want to say how important it is that we have reached an agreement to restore the cut to pensions for working-age military retirees. This cut in the cost-of-living adjustment for military retirees should never have been included in the budget bill.

Let's be clear. The bipartisan budget agreement was critical to New Mexico and our Nation because it rolled back damaging sequestration cuts—cuts that hurt our military and military families.

Working-age military retirees should not have to bear the burden. Many of

these men and women have given decades of service to our Nation. They were willing to give everything for us. They should get the benefits they have earned. From the beginning I have been working to restore this cut to their COLA benefits. I have been very happy we have a bipartisan agreement to move forward and ensure we keep our promise to them.

I come to the floor today to also talk about rural veterans and a rural veterans improvement act. I was proud to introduce this bill with Senator HELLER from Nevada earlier this week. When it comes to veterans' health care, we know there are challenges. We know we can do better, and we know we have to do better.

Over 6 million veterans live in rural areas, including approximately one-third who fought in Afghanistan and Iraq. Three million of those rural veterans receive health care through the VA. Our veterans have fought halfway around the world for our freedom. We should go the extra mile for them.

Senator HELLER and I both come from rural western States. We know the difficulties veterans face when distances are too far and choices are too few. Our legislation would do four things: improve access to mental health services, expand transportation grants, hire and retain more medical professionals in rural areas, and give Congress and the VA tools to improve the quality of rural facilities.

First, let me start with mental health care. This is crucial. Veterans are struggling when the help they need is not available or is very far away.

One of my constituents lives in a rural area in northern New Mexico. He fought in Vietnam and was diagnosed with post-traumatic distress disorder. He required therapy 2 full days a week for 2 years. This vital care probably saved his life. The VA was there for him, and he is grateful, but he had to drive to Albuquerque, over 3 hours away, to get that essential care.

The veterans in my State are clear: They need better access to treatment and more mental health options. One size does not fit all. Conventional therapy does not work for everyone. Veterans groups, such as the Wounded Warrior Project, have long supported alternative treatments and more holistic methods. Tribal governments are also working with the VA to use traditional Native American healing techniques, helping their veterans with PTSD and other diagnoses.

These veterans are in pain. They are at increased risk of suicide. Help has to be there when they need it. Our bill would enable the VA to work with non-VA fee-for-service providers for veterans with service-connected mental health issues when conventional treatment is not available or where alternative treatment is not an option.

Second, even the best health care is useless if you cannot get to it. I have

talked with many veterans in my State about this issue, and it is a big problem across New Mexico. Veterans in Carlsbad face a 6-hour drive to the VA hospital in Albuquerque, 300 miles away one way. One such veteran fought bravely in World War II. He is now in his eighties. He has to get up at 5 a.m. and make the trip to Albuquerque to see medical specialists. Sometimes he doesn't get home until midnight. Thanks to the great volunteer drivers at Southeast New Mexico Veterans Transportation Network, he is able to get there, but it is an exhausting day.

Another of my constituents recently retired to Chama, NM, a rural community in the north. He and his wife built a home there, looking forward to retirement. The VA outreach clinic was nearby, but its contract was not renewed and it closed. His only option now is the VA clinic in Espanola, 80 miles each way through the southern Rockies. When winter storms come, as they do in northern New Mexico, he may not be able to get there at all.

The VA offers transportation grants to help, but only for veterans in what they call highly rural areas with fewer than seven people per square mile, not for those in rural areas and small towns such as Chama, and the small towns in Nevada and so many other States. They need help too. The miles are just as long and the journey is just as hard.

Our bill will help by expanding VA transportation grants to include rural communities, and it will not require matching funds for grants up to \$100,000, making it easier for these communities to apply for assistance.

Third, rural VA clinics, as their private counterparts, have trouble getting staff and keeping staff. This is not news to veterans who see constant turnover of doctors and nurses and other health care professionals or who have to travel long distances to see anyone at all.

Our bill will establish a VA training program, working with university medical centers to train health care professionals, serving rural veterans at outpatient clinics. Those who complete the program and a 3-year assignment will receive a hiring preference for jobs with the Veterans Health Administration.

We also propose a pilot program for housing incentives for health care professionals to work in rural VA facilities. We are proposing that the VA streamline the hiring of military medical professionals, transitioning to the civilian world into the VA system.

Rural VA health centers have a big job. They do their best. We have to do all we can to help them to get and keep staff with incentives, training, and innovation. It is not easy, but it is essential.

Fourth, we call for a full review of VA community-based outpatient clinics in rural and highly rural areas so

we can prioritize expansions and improvements, making sure dollars are well spent and resources go as far as possible. We also call for a report to Congress on whether to add polytrauma centers in rural areas to help veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan recover from multiple major injuries such as serious burns and traumatic brain injuries.

Every day, American servicemembers wake up far from home, and every day, they stand watch. They do the job they promised to do—and not only if it is easy or only if it is convenient. We owe them the same promise. Rural veterans should not be left behind. They should get the care they need and deserve.

Again, I thank Senator HELLER for working with me on this bill. He understands the problem. He is committed to finding solutions.

Our bill is a step forward for the health and well-being of our veterans. This is about essential care, about access, about honoring our commitment to the men and women who have sacrificed so much for our community. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator DURBIN be recognized to speak immediately after me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I see Senator DURBIN on the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from New Mexico.

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2023 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk a little bit about the letters I have received and the messages we have received in the office in the last week regarding the changes we see going on in health care. There was quite a bit of discussion last week about how health care impacts the workplace, and I think a lot of misinformation is out. The Congressional Budget Office projection, as some people have alleged, does not say that 2 million more people are going to have part-time jobs. It says the equivalent

job loss because of the Affordable Health Care Act is the equivalent of 2.3 million people losing full-time jobs. That may mean that 10 million people who otherwise would have had full-time jobs have part-time jobs.

The other thing is, it is three times as big as the number that was on the table when people voted for the Affordable Care Act. At that time, the Congressional Budget Office said: If this law passes, there will be 800,000 fewer jobs than if this law does not pass. The collective impact on the economy is 800,000 fewer jobs.

Last week they said there would be 2.3 million fewer jobs—roughly three times the amount that the earlier estimate was. Similar to so many other estimates in this law, the reality of the law turns out to be different than the estimates. Surely that was an estimate that nobody wanted. I cannot imagine anybody who voted for this bill—and I did not vote for it—but I cannot imagine anybody who voted for this bill thought: That is a really great thing. We are going to lose 800,000 jobs if this bill passes. I assume they thought: The good this bill will do will offset losing 800,000 jobs.

Now we find out it is 2.3 million jobs and all kinds of information that the good that was supposedly going to be done is not what people had hoped for.

While we are talking about the workplace, I have a letter from a person who is the president of one of our community colleges in the State of Missouri. He says because of the Affordable Care Act "we have reviewed all part-time employment to ensure compliance with the Affordable Care Act . . . which defines full-time as 30 hours or more per week. Without specific guidance in converting credit hours to clock hours, we have reduced part-time faculty's teaching loads to ensure" nobody works more than 30 hours.

This is not the only letter or contact all of us have had on this topic. We know the unintended consequence of this law on the workplace is that people are now told whom they do not have to insure. State governments, community colleges, big companies all looking at a law for the first time that supposedly says whom you have to insure—though the President certainly feels he has the authority that none of us can find anywhere in the law to decide when the law is going to go into effect and when it is not—but the law says whom you have to insure, and suddenly people who for a long time have provided health care benefits because they thought it was the right thing to do or the competitive thing to do now respond to this directive from the Federal Government that says what you have to do, and that means that is all you have to do.

So all of these employees who may have worked 25 hours, 28 hours, 32 hours in the past who all got insurance

now are suddenly working less than 30 hours. I have talked to enough of these employees to know this is not because they do not want to work more; this is not because they want to make less money; this is not because they want to teach one less class; it is because the law has had that kind of impact on the workplace.

The other promises—we are going to get better coverage for less cost—surely, somebody is getting better coverage for less cost. But my guess is that is a much smaller group than the people who are losing their insurance and because of the so-called broader and better coverage have more costs.

Here is a letter from Kathy in Wentzville, MO. She says:

I carry insurance through a large corporation and my premium increased this year because the minimum standards [in the law] affect my plan.

Premiums increased by 25 percent.

She goes on, in no uncertain terms, to suggest that she does not like the Affordable Care Act or think it is affordable.

Jeff from St. Joseph said:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my family's opinion on ObamaCare. First off I would like to state that we have experienced increases in our health insurance. My employer's insurance has doubled of which I pay ½. My family's separate insurance policy has risen as well with a cancellation due in December. I have considered canceling my [own] health insurance through my employer so that I could provide for my family's [health insurance at their new rates].

This is a family that a few months ago thought they were going to be able to continue to keep what they had. They liked what they had. They thought they could afford what they had. Now they are deciding who is going to go without insurance so other people can have insurance in the family at the higher rate.

William from St. Louis, MO, says:

My insurance was canceled in December.

He says:

. . . my insurance rates have been drastically increasing each year since the law was passed.

Four years ago, I had a policy for my family with a \$500 deductible and the ability to go to any hospital/doctor in St. Louis for \$1,000 per month. Now I have a policy with a \$2,000 deductible and I can't go to [the doctor I used to go to].

He says his policy now—that does not allow him to go to the doctor he used to go to—does not cost \$1,000 a month any longer; it costs \$1,500 a month.

Ted in St. Joseph said his doctor has changed the way he does business. He says his doctor has downsized the types of plans he accepts and is moving to a customer base with higher incomes.

So Ted's doctor, according to Ted in St. Joseph, has stopped taking patients with Blue Cross/Blue Shield because of increased costs, and Ted, who by the way liked the doctor he had, now has to find another doctor who will take the coverage he can get.

Steve, in St. Joseph, and his wife are raising their 14-year-old grandson, and all three have seen their insurance costs increase—they think because of the Affordable Care Act. His grandson's policy went up \$50 a month, from \$104 to \$154. His wife's deductible went from \$1,000 per year to \$5,000 per year and her insurance costs over \$800 a month.

He goes on to say—and I thought about whether I should read this; I assume they have talked about this too. He said: "If we were to get divorced, her premium would be less than \$200 per month." I think Steve is not suggesting that he and his wife should get divorced, but he is just talking about, again, the unintended consequences. A family who is together cannot afford to have the coverage they had. Her coverage is \$800 a month, but as a substitute teacher—I believe that is what this letter says she does—her income would qualify her for a \$200-a-month policy instead of the \$800 they are paying now.

Sandy from Armstrong, MO, says she received a letter from her insurance company notifying her that her premiums were about to increase. She went on healthcare.gov to find plans she and her husband could qualify for, and the plans she found were double the premiums she had been paying.

Kelly from Farmington, MO, works in the HR department, the human resources department, at a bank. She feels healthy groups will be paying more for insurance because of the ACA and because of the expanded coverage.

Her department has received many questions, she says, about health care coverage but feels limited in how much they can tell anybody because they do not know how the new law is going to apply.

The law of unintended consequences continues to be the law that applies here. Missourians and people all over the country are contacting us and asking how much damage we are willing to do to the health care system that was working to get more people included in that system. There were ways to do this, every one of which I believe was legislatively proposed in 2009—small changes that would have made a big difference in a health care system that was working for people who were in that system. We needed to figure out the few ways to get more people in that system. Instead, we have had a dramatic impact on the best health care system in the world, and people are beginning to figure that out.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of the House message with respect to S. 25, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 497, 498, 493, 494, 495, 496, 531, and 534; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual manner prior to each vote and all votes after the first be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, with what we went through in the State of Florida in the attempts to suppress voters, you would think that with the experience of people having stood in line in order to vote for 5 to 7 hours, it would have put this issue to rest. But they are back at it again, this time in a very subtle way.

The Governor's office, through his appointed secretary of state, who is the chief elections officer, has now interpreted a statute that in a municipal election students at the University of Florida cannot early vote on campus at their student center prior to the election. The interpretation was made that it is an educational facility and does not qualify, according to the statute, on a technical reason: that it is not a government-owned conference facility, when, indeed, it is owned by the State of Florida through the university, and it is a conference facility for many conferences for outside groups as well as student groups.

No, what it is is an attempt, in the runup to the November election, to try to make it more difficult and less convenient for students to vote.

As it turns out, in this particular municipal election coming up shortly, students would have to go across town to some other location some 3 miles away, and, of course, as busy as students are, that is going to discourage them.

If they end up doing this for this special election in March, a municipal election, they are, of course, going to

try to do it for the November election when we have a statewide election for the Governor and the cabinet. Why? Well, an attempt to suppress student voters who may not be voting for the people in power who are trying to suppress their votes.

It is all the more of interest because on the ballot there will be a proposed constitutional amendment to change the State constitution to allow, by doctors, the prescription of medical marijuana, which is something that has generated interest in all sectors of society but particularly among students—another reason they want to come out to vote.

The whole idea of early voting is to try to make it more convenient for people to be able to vote, that they might not be able to vote because of a babysitter problem or a work problem on election day. But early voting, as we saw in the experience of the 2012 election—the days were shortened from 14 to 8. They cut out the Sunday before the Tuesday election. Professor Dan Smith, in doing a study at the University of Florida, found that those who availed themselves of Sunday voting were primarily Hispanics and African Americans. Indeed, attempts were made to limit the number of early voting locations within a county, and then, of those early vote locations, having a facility that was small so that you could not get in a lot of voting machines. This was another way—very subtle—of trying to suppress the vote.

So the people of Florida, naturally, were outraged, particularly when they heard stories of the 101-year-old lady who had to stay 3½ hours in order to cast her vote and the others who stayed 5 and 7 hours. They were not going to have their vote taken away from them. They stood in line. So the people were outraged.

There was an attempt to pass a new law. I will close with this. With this new law now as being interpreted, the very same suppression efforts are occurring again. We are simply not going to let this happen even if we have to call in the Justice Department.

MILITARY RETIREMENT COLA

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, while I will cast my vote this afternoon for the legislation which would replace the cost of living adjustment, COLA, reduction for military retirees, I disagree strongly with the provision to extend the arbitrary sequester cuts included with this legislation.

It is frustrating to me that Congress will fix one provision which unfairly singled out one group by singling out another.

I am pleased that we can fix the COLA adjustment that would have affected the men and women who serve in the military prior to it taking effect. However, I would have preferred that

we find a responsible way to offset the cost by identifying savings elsewhere.

I joined Senator SHAHEEN and Senator KAIN in December in introducing legislation that identified a way to pay for this fix: our proposal would close a loophole that some companies use to avoid paying U.S. taxes. Our approach would generate \$6.6 billion over 10 years to pay for the cost of un-doing the proposed cut in military pensions.

The extension of the sequester on mandatory spending for another year, which primarily hits Medicare providers such as hospitals with a two-percent across-the-board cut in payments, is a blunt and arbitrary way to find savings in Federal health care programs. It does not reward health care value, or support health care quality, nor differentiate among different geographic areas.

The across-the-board cut does nothing to reform the real long-term fiscal challenges facing our entitlement programs. Instead, it just compounds on the multitude of other cuts that hospitals and other providers are facing, creating a situation where access to care potentially will be threatened.

The vote before the Senate this afternoon shows yet again how we need to have a broader conversation on how to get a better handle on our long-term fiscal challenges. By ignoring that larger conversation, we instead are reduced to playing a game of Whac-A-Mole.

The provision which singled out military servicemembers and veterans was included in a bipartisan package which was the least we could do to ensure that we didn't repeat the stupidity of last fall's government shutdown. The overall package, the Bipartisan Budget Act, which I supported, did not touch the major levers available to fix our balance sheet. By common agreement, revenue and entitlement reforms were not part of the discussion.

This package fixed the arbitrary sequester cuts—though only on the discretionary side, and only for 2 years.

For the last 3 years, Congress—and both chambers, and both parties, bear some responsibility for this—have repeatedly taken the path of least resistance. All of us recognize that we have an enormous fiscal challenge, but there's not the collective will to make the hard decisions which will put us on a path of solvency.

Instead, we punt and we play on the margins. We continually make deep cuts in the type of programs that power economic growth—programs that train our workforce, educate our children, and support those who serve and protect our nation. We choose to put off the broader discussion about reforms which would be easier now—easier because they create a glide path toward enactment—allowing individuals, families, businesses and our state and local government partners to make re-

sponsible plans for future changes. We have avoided a conversation about our complex, bloated tax code, which promotes inefficiency and too often inhibits economic growth. By putting off the hard choices, we allow these fiscal challenges to get worse. The choices do not get any easier.

Decisions like the vote before us today are incredibly frustrating. These decisions ask us to support the repeal of a provision, which hurt one specific group, by replacing it with another provision which just places the burden on a separate group. I believe that we can do better for our military personnel, for our Medicare providers, the patients who rely on them, and for our country overall. While I will cast my vote for this bill, I remain committed to finding a way to reverse the sequester cuts we have just extended through 2024.

• Mr. COBURN. Madam President, regardless of which side one falls on the Ryan-Murray budget deal reduction in the annual COLA increase for working age military retirees, the sad fact is with the passage of this legislation we are breaking our previous promise to taxpayers to reduce the deficit. Instead of coming up with a real offset for a mere \$6.2 billion in spending, the Senate has chosen to resort to budgetary gimmicks to disguise the true cost of our politically expedient decisions, and has yet again punted the hard decisions that must be made to future generations.

By offsetting real and immediate spending with a promise of future spending reductions with the extension of sequestration cuts to Medicare through 2024, beyond the 10-year budget window, the savings from this budget trick will not materialize and taxpayers will not be made whole. By passing this legislation, we are sending a signal that this body does not have the fortitude to lead as our constituents have chosen us to do—to take on the sacred cows like military compensation that must be part of the national conversation about our spending and reform.

As we prepare to pass this legislation, every Member of this body would do well to consider these words by former Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen: "The most significant threat to our national security is our debt." We best honor the sacrifice of our military veterans and realize a more safe and secure future by keeping our promise to reduce the national debt. By refusing to come up with a real offset to pay for the repeal of the COLA cut, the Senate is undermining our veterans, our country, and our future. •

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

DEFICIT REDUCTION

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I rise today to talk for a short period of time about the magnitude of our budget, debt, and deficit. Against the backdrop of a debt ceiling increase, Members of both parties are going to today, likely, repeal one of the deficit reduction measures included in the bipartisan budget agreement that was approved less than 2 months ago. How do we convey to the Nation the seriousness about solving the debt crisis when at the first sign of political pressure we repeal one of the deficit reduction measures?

As we all know, the Ryan-Murray budget deal included modest reductions in some spending programs over the next 10 years in order to increase discretionary spending caps in fiscal years 2014 and 2015. I voted against this agreement because I thought the spending cuts did not go far enough. I do not think we are treating our debt and deficit seriously enough.

Second, I have been down that road of trading spending increases today for spending cuts later many times. It does not work. We have seen that play before. We know how it ends. Year after year Members of Congress simply refuse to stick to the budget discipline we said we would stick to. Exhibit 1 is before us today. The Congress is about to undo—in fact, repeal—one of those provisions, as I mentioned.

It is important to note that the cost-of-living adjustment that will be repealed—or the reform that will be repealed was a cost-of-living adjustment—a COLA—for military retirees resulting in less than a 1-percent reduction for working-age military retirees. That is 1 percent. It stopped far short of the elimination of COLA requirements for retirees under the age of 62 that the Simpson-Bowles Commission recommended.

Certainly our veterans deserve the utmost respect and generous retirement pay. However, it has been reported that regardless of age, members of our armed services could easily, in some instances, receive retirement and health benefits for 40 years or more.

Some of my colleagues have suggested that failing to support measures to repeal the COLA reduction is tantamount to turning our backs on veterans. This is untrue. This is a mischaracterization of the issue at hand. I think we all know that. The U.S. military is at a crossroads. Fast-growing retirement pay and health benefits are threatening to displace investments in the readiness of our Armed Forces.

I encourage my colleagues to take a hard look at the fiscal mess we face before we vote to roll back one of the few deficit reduction measures the President and Congress have agreed to. Our fiscal situation is serious. We cannot ignore that forever.

This problem will continue to get worse. Yes, we ought to be reforming entitlement programs so they will be around for future beneficiaries, veterans and others, but for goodness' sake, when deficit reduction measures get signed into law, surely at some point we need to stand by them.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TEMPORARY DEBT LIMIT EXTENSION ACT

Mr. REID. I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate a message from the House with respect to S. 540.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate a message from the House which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

S. 540

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 540) entitled "An Act to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the 'Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center'", do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act".

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall not apply for the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on March 15, 2015.

(b) *SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO OBLIGATIONS ISSUED DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.*—Effective March 16, 2015, the limitation in effect under section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall be increased to the extent that—

(1) *the face amount of obligations issued under chapter 31 of such title and the face amount of obligations whose principal and interest are guaranteed by the United States Government (except guaranteed obligations held by the Secretary of the Treasury) outstanding on March 16, 2015, exceeds*

(2) *the face amount of such obligations outstanding on the date of the enactment of this Act.*

SEC. 3. RESTORING CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONAL DEBT.

(a) *EXTENSION LIMITED TO NECESSARY OBLIGATIONS.*—An obligation shall not be taken into account under section 2(b)(1) unless the issuance of such obligation was necessary to fund a commitment incurred pursuant to law by the Federal Government that required payment before March 16, 2015.

(b) *PROHIBITION ON CREATION OF CASH RESERVE DURING EXTENSION PERIOD.*—The Secretary of the Treasury shall not issue obligations during the period specified in section 2(a) for the purpose of increasing the cash balance

above normal operating balances in anticipation of the expiration of such period.

Mr. REID. I move to concur in the House amendment, and I have a cloture motion at the desk.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Debbie Stabenow, Elizabeth Warren.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Debbie Stabenow, Elizabeth Warren.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 540 shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS.) Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 67, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 33 Leg.]

YEAS—67

Baldwin	Harkin	Murphy
Barrasso	Hatch	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johanns	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Kirk	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Landrieu	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Levin	Thune
Corker	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	McConnell	Warren
Flake	Menendez	Whitehouse
Franken	Merkley	Wyden
Gillibrand	Mikulski	
Hagan	Murkowski	

NAYS—31

Alexander	Graham	Risch
Ayotte	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Heller	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Scott
Burr	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Paul	
Fischer	Portman	

NOT VOTING—2

Chambliss Coburn

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 67, the nays are 31. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 34 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Franken	Markey
Begich	Gillibrand	McCaskill
Bennet	Hagan	Menendez
Blumenthal	Harkin	Merkley
Booker	Heinrich	Mikulski
Boxer	Heitkamp	Murphy
Brown	Hirono	Murray
Cantwell	Johnson (SD)	Nelson
Cardin	Kaine	Pryor
Carper	King	Reed
Casey	Klobuchar	Reid
Coons	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Donnelly	Leahy	Sanders
Durbin	Levin	Schatz
Feinstein	Manchin	Schumer

Shaheen
Stabenow
Tester
Udall (CO)

Udall (NM)
Walsh
Warner
Warren

Whitehouse
Wyden

of section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and the amendments made by that section.

Udall (NM)
Vitter
Walsh

Warner
Warren
Whitehouse

Wicker
Wyden

NAYS—43

Alexander
Ayotte
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Coats
Cochran
Collins
Corker
Cornyn
Crapo
Cruz
Enzi
Fischer

Flake
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johanns
Johnson (WI)
Kirk
Lee
McCain
McConnell
Moran

Murkowski
Paul
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rubio
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Thune
Toomey
Vitter
Wicker

Section 1898 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii) is amended—

(1) by amending the heading to read as follows: “TRANSITIONAL FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE (SGR) REFORM”;

(2) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish under this title a Transitional Fund for Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Reform (in this section referred to as the ‘Fund’) which shall be available to the Secretary to provide funds to pay for physicians’ services under part B to supplement the conversion factor under section 1848(d) for 2017 if the conversion factor for 2017 is less than conversion factor for 2013.”;

(3) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “during—” and all that follows and inserting “during or after 2017, \$2,300,000,000.”; and

(4) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “from the Federal” and all that follows and inserting “from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund.”.

Mr. REID. I move to concur in the House amendment to S. 25 and ask for the yeas and nays on that motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mr. REID. We yield back on this side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 35 Leg.]

YEAS—95

CONVEYING CERTAIN FEDERAL FEATURES OF THE ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Chair lays before the Senate a message from the House with respect to S. 25, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: S. 25

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 25) entitled “An Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes.”, do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF DIRECT SPENDING REDUCTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024.

Paragraph (6)(B) of section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) is amended by striking “and for fiscal year 2023” and by inserting “, for fiscal year 2023, and for fiscal year 2024”.

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF REDUCED ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RETIRED PAY FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES UNDER THE AGE OF 62 UNDER THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013 WHO FIRST BECAME MEMBERS PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 2014.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1401a(b)(4) of title 10, United States Code, as added by section 403(a) of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-67) and amended by section 10001 of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(G) MEMBERS COVERED.—This paragraph applies to a member or former member of an armed force who first became a member of a uniformed service on or after January 1, 2014.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on December 1, 2015, immediately after the coming into effect

Alexander
Ayotte
Baldwin
Barrasso
Begich
Bennet
Blumenthal
Blunt
Booker
Boozman
Boxer
Brown
Burr
Cantwell
Cardin
Casey
Cochran
Collins
Coons
Corker
Cornyn
Crapo
Cruz
Donnelly
Durbin
Enzi
Feinstein
Fischer
Franken

Gillibrand
Graham
Grassley
Hagan
Harkin
Hatch
Heinrich
Heitkamp
Heller
Hirono
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johanns
Johnson (SD)
Johnson (WI)
Kaine
King
Kirk
Klobuchar
Landrieu
Leahy
Lee
Levin
Manchin
Markey
McCain
McCaskill
McConnell

Menendez
Merkley
Mikulski
Moran
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Nelson
Paul
Portman
Pryor
Reed
Reid
Risch
Roberts
Rockefeller
Rubio
Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Scott
Sessions
Shaheen
Shelby
Stabenow
Tester
Thune
Toomey
Udall (CO)

Carper
Chambliss

NAYS—3

Coats
Flake

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF KEVIN W. TECHAU TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA

NOMINATION OF ANDREW MARK LUGER TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

NOMINATION OF ROBERT L. HOBBS TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

NOMINATION OF GARY BLANKINSHIP TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

NOMINATION OF AMOS ROJAS, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

NOMINATION OF PETER C. TOBIN TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

NOMINATION OF ANTHONY LUZZATTO GARDNER TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

NOMINATION OF ROBERT A. SHERMAN TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk reported the nominations of Kevin W. Techau, of Iowa, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa; Andrew

Mark Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota; Robert L. Hobbs, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Texas; Gary Blankinship, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Texas; Amos Rojas, Jr., of Florida, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Florida; Peter C. Tobin, of Ohio, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio; Anthony Luzzatto Gardner, of New York, to be Representative of the United States of America to the European Union; and Robert A. Sherman, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Portuguese Republic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, at the conclusion of the vote, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Minnesota be recognized for up to 1 minute, the Senator from Georgia up to 7 minutes, the senior Senator from Rhode Island for up to 2 minutes, and that I be recognized thereafter, subject to the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Kevin Techau on his nomination as the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa.

U.S. attorneys hold a very important position in our system of justice. They are charged with upholding the law and, consequently, must possess impeccable legal skills and superior knowledge. Additionally, it is just as important that U.S. attorneys be committed to justice, fairness, due process and equal protection. I am confident that Mr. Techau understands the importance of the job he is about to undertake and has the skills, perseverance, and sense of justice necessary to make the most of his new position.

There is no question that Mr. Techau is highly qualified to be a U.S. attorney. He gained extensive law enforcement and managerial experience as head of Iowa's Department of Public Safety and Department of Inspections and Appeals under then Governor Tom Vilsack. He also has broad criminal justice and trial experience, including as an assistant Federal public defender in Iowa, as a staff judge advocate in the U.S. Air Force and Iowa National Guard, and in private practice. That experience will serve him well in his new position.

Mr. Techau has also demonstrated over the course of his career his commitment to public service, strong leadership, excellent judgment, and integrity. He will vigorously and fairly enforce the law, and I am certain that Mr. Techau will continue his dedication to justice.

Mr. Techau is a person of truly outstanding intellect and character, and I

wholeheartedly congratulate him—as well as his wife, Stephanie, and two children—on his nomination as the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to share a few words of support of Kevin Techau to be U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Iowa. Mr. Techau received his undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa in 1981, and his J.D. from the University of Iowa in 1984. Mr. Techau also has a distinguished military career. He served in the U.S. Air Force as a judge advocate from 1985 until 1992. While serving in the base legal office he provided legal counsel on a broad array of issues, including Federal laws, employment law, medical malpractice claims and criminal prosecution.

As a circuit defense counsel, he served as lead attorney in major felony cases in European and eastern United States circuits representing U.S. Air Force airmen in court-martial cases involving charges brought under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Mr. Techau joined the Iowa National Guard in 1993 and served until 2011.

In 1992, Mr. Techau joined the firm of Grefe & Sidney in Des Moines, IA. As an associate attorney, the primary focus of his practice was in civil litigation. From 1996 until 1999, Mr. Techau served as a Federal public defender for Iowa. His practice as a public defender was both at the trial and appellate level, and he has tried cases in the U.S. Federal Courts for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Techau was appointed to the position of director of inspections and appeals for Iowa in 1999, and in 2002 was appointed as commissioner of public safety for Iowa.

Since 2007, he has been associate general counsel at American Equity Investment Life Insurance Company. There he handles litigation management for the company. Throughout his career, Mr. Techau has demonstrated his commitment to serving the people of Iowa and the United States.

Finally, let me just add that I have known the Techau family for decades and I know Mr. Techau personally. He has even been a running partner of mine from time to time. He is a man of fine character and commitment. I believe he will serve as U.S. attorney with distinction and honor. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Kevin W. Techau, of Iowa, to be United States Attorney for the Northern District of Iowa?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON LUGER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota is now recognized for 1 minute.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in support of Andrew Luger. I thank my colleagues for the work they have done to make sure Minnesota has a U.S. attorney in place. I want to particularly thank Leader REID and Senator MCCONNELL, the two leaders, for their work, as well as Senator FRANKEN. The two of us put together a nonpartisan recommendation coming from the committee, and we are very glad the President took that recommendation and recommended Andrew Luger, with his vast criminal prosecution experience as well as his civil experience.

I also thank Senator GRASSLEY for his work as well as Senator CORKER. Minnesota has gone 2½ years without a full-time U.S. attorney, as our U.S. attorney was doing the job as ATF Director at the same time, and the over 100 people who work at the U.S. attorney's office in Minnesota truly deserve a leader.

I thank my colleagues for their support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Andrew Mark Luger, of Minnesota, to be United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HOBBS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Robert L. Hobbs, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Texas?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BLANKINSHIP NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Gary Blankinship, of Texas, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Texas?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON ROJAS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Amos Rojas, Jr., of Florida, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Florida?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON TOBIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Peter C. Tobin, of Ohio, to be United States Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will now be notified of the Senate's action.

The motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that S. 1963 be returned to the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, two nominations remain to be disposed of.

Mr. REID. Are we in executive session?

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume executive session.

VOTE ON GARDNER NOMINATION

Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Anthony Luzzatto Gardner, of New York, to be Representative of the United States of America to the European Union?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SHERMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Robert A. Sherman, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Portuguese Republic?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. As with the previous nominations, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate now resumes legislative action.

The majority leader.

MEASURE RETURNED TO THE CALENDAR—S. 1963

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that S. 1963 be returned to the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to calendar No. 301, S. 1982.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, as we leave Washington for about 10 days, I wish to leave some suggestions in President Obama's suggestion box.

There has been a lot of commentary about income inequality, needing to raise the minimum wage, needing to create more jobs, and the President talked about doing these things with the stroke of a pen in his office because of an uncooperative legislative branch. I want to suggest four things the President himself could do to immediately initiate job creation, opportunity, and a more robust economy for the United States of America.

First, trade promotion authority. The President said in his remarks in his State of the Union speech he was for trade promotion authority. We need him to get with the Democratic majority in the Senate to bring TPA to the floor of the Senate.

A history lesson: In the 1990s, a Republican Congress gave Democratic President Bill Clinton trade promotion authority for fast track. America's exports and imports grew exponentially, jobs were created, and America became a robust trading partner around the world with countries all over the world. That has expired. We need to give it to President Obama.

We have three pending opportunities: The Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, and the African Growth and Opportunity Act, all of which are pending negotiations between now and 2015, and all of which will generate jobs, trade, and opportunity for the United States of America.

Please, Mr. President, demand from the Senate that you get TPA and you get it now.

Secondly is Keystone. We have all heard a lot about Keystone, but I want to reiterate, now that the State Department has for the fifth time signed off on the Keystone Pipeline, why are we denying America the oil and petroleum it needs and instead acceding ourselves to the nation of China?

America has the opportunity to become the most independent energy country in the world. It is critical the Keystone Pipeline be built to create jobs and to see that we continue to control the generation of petroleum and energy in our country and become a net seller rather than a gross importer, which we have been for many years in the past.

The Keystone Pipeline makes sense for the unions, makes sense for business, makes sense to America, and America does a better job environmentally of treating petroleum and refining it than any country in the world,

particularly China. It ought to come to America, and the President can do that with the stroke of a pen.

Third, GSE reform. Our government-sponsored entities Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae continue to do business, but they languish from a lack of attention. We need to reform those two entities so we can have a robust housing market for a middle America.

If you have enough money to pay cash for a house in America today, you can do that. If you are on the low end and want an FHA loan, you can get that. But if you are in middle America—if you are one of those Americans we all talk about wanting to help—there is not enough mortgage money available because there is no government-sponsored entity to guarantee the paper to guarantee the capital to flow into America.

If you want to get the unemployment rate down from 6.4 to 5 percent, which all of us want, there is one way to do it; that is, bring back a robust housing market, which still does not exist in the United States today.

Fourth, talk to PATTY MURRAY and TOM HARKIN. TOM HARKIN is the chairman of our Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. PATTY MURRAY is the chairman of the subcommittee I serve on in terms of labor, and let's get the Workforce Investment Act, which for 6 years has languished in terms of continuation and renewal, renewed and reauthorized. Let's get it done. The work is done. We are this close. We just need an impetus from the White House to tell the Congress to go ahead and get it done and send it.

I appreciate what the President said he is going to do with JOE BIDEN. I think JOE BIDEN is a tremendous Vice President and he does a great job, but we don't need to recreate the wheel. Congress has done the work on WIA. It is time to pass it and it is time for the President to sign it.

TRIBUTE TO BOBBY COX

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a great Georgian, a personal friend of mine, and a great baseball player in the history of our country: Bobby Cox, No. 6, former third baseman for the New York Yankees, third baseman for the Atlanta Braves, manager of Toronto's Blue Jays when they won a World Series, and for 14 consecutive seasons he took the Atlanta Braves to a playoff. Five of those seasons he took them to the National League Championship and one of those seasons he took them to win the World Series against the Cleveland Indians.

Bobby Cox was voted into Baseball's Hall of Fame and will be sworn in at Cooperstown, NY, on June 27 of this year. Bobby Cox is an icon in baseball and a great human being. He set many records, such as the following: 2,085 victories with the Atlanta Braves, best in Braves history; overall record of 2,413 wins and 1,930 losses. The Braves won

more games with Cox, 1,725 in a 19-season span, than any other team in baseball; 15 divisional crowns, 5 pennants, and he holds the record for the most ejections of any manager in the history of baseball.

The reason that is a positive story is this: Bobby Cox fought for his players. He knew how to motivate a crowd, he knew how to get on an umpire's back, and he knew how to turn the team bench around. His 132nd ejection took place in November of 2007 during one of the playoff games when he went out and argued a third called strike against his star player Chipper Jones. Two innings later the Braves came back and rallied and won. In large measure, it was Bobby's fighting for his players that made the difference.

But Bobby Cox also fights for Georgia. His work with the Dreams of Recovery Foundation, which Cindy Donald founded for those who are paraplegic and quadriplegic in Georgia, has been a miracle. Bobby gives his time and effort all the time to help those who are less fortunate.

He also continues to help the Atlanta Braves, who will soon be moving from downtown Atlanta to my home county of Cobb County, in Marietta, GA.

I pay tribute and give thanks to Bobby Cox for all he has given to our State and recognize him for the achievement of being sworn into Baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Best of luck, Bobby, for many more years to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first, I wish to thank my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE for yielding me 2 minutes.

We are leaving here with major unfinished business. We have not extended unemployment benefits for 1.8 million Americans. They are getting to be increasingly desperate. They need this assistance as they continue to look for work in a very difficult time.

I think it is interesting, if not ironic, that the pay-for mechanism that was instead used to pay for the appropriate adjustment of the military retirees' COLA was the same pay-for mechanism we had proposed to use to extend these benefits for up to several months, almost 1 year. Yet many of my colleagues on the other side rejected that, saying that was inappropriate.

We have to come back. We will come back. We have to deal with unemployment insurance. We have to find a way, both sides, to come together and find a way to provide modest assistance for these Americans who are struggling to find work in a market where there are up to three applicants for every job.

With that, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator BOOZMAN precede me in recognition on the floor for such time as he may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arkansas.

RESTORING THE MILITARY COLA

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, in last year's budget agreement our retired servicemembers were unjustly targeted to bear the burden of irresponsible spending. Balancing the budget on the backs of our servicemembers is a reckless move which violates the responsibility we have to those who wear our Nation's uniform, which is why I voted against the budget agreement.

Numerous Arkansans have reached out to me urging Congress to correct these misguided cuts. I have been encouraging my colleagues to restore these cuts at the earliest opportunity in order to provide certainty for our military retirees' financial future. I, working with others in this body, have worked hard to bring this to a vote.

Yesterday, the House took action. I am pleased to be able to stand here today and tell those Arkansans and all veterans that the Senate has followed suit and corrected this injustice.

However, we must continue working to fully repeal the section of the Bipartisan Budget Act which reduces retirement pay for those who enlist after January 1, 2014. Any changes which Congress may consider to our military compensation system should be done in a thoughtful and responsible manner in the context of a broader compensation system.

I supported this bill before the Senate today to restore the full cost of living adjustment for those enlisted prior to 2014, but I will continue working to fully repeal this cut which singles out current military enlistments to bear the burden of wasteful Washington spending. We need to right this wrong so our veterans, servicemembers, and their families have one less thing to worry about. However, this overwhelmingly bipartisan vote today was certainly a step in the right direction.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this marks the 58th consecutive week we have been in session where I have come to the floor to seek to wake up this Congress to the threat of climate change.

Carbon pollution from the burning of fossil fuels is altering the climate. The

consensus around this fact within the scientific community—and in fact the reality-based community—is overwhelming.

Since the industrial revolution, humans have dumped 2 trillion metric tons of carbon dioxide into the air and oceans—and counting. The EPA estimates that in 2011, the United States alone emitted more than 5.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide.

We know the concentration of carbon in the atmosphere is higher than it has been in the history of mankind. We know that when we put more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, it warms up the planet. This has been understood science since Abraham Lincoln was President.

We know the ocean absorbs 90 percent of the excess heat and 30 percent of the carbon in the air. As water warms, it expands, and sea levels go up. This is called the law of thermal expansion. We know that when carbon dissolves in water, it increases the levels of carbonic acid in the water. This is a law of chemistry. We know from simple measurements that seawater is acidifying at a rate we haven't seen at any time in the past 50 million years. We are a species of homo sapiens who have been on the planet for a little over 200,000. So 50 million takes us back a way.

When we put these things together, and then look at things like 37 straight years with a global temperature above the 20th century average, sea level up 10 inches in Newport, RI, oyster spat killed off by acidic water in Washington State, shorter seasons for ski resort operators and longer seasons for wildfire fighters, our climate is changing. The scientific debate is long settled, and public awareness of the crisis is growing stronger and even across party lines.

Outside these walls of Congress, which have been barricaded by lies and special interest propaganda, Americans of all stripes, including more and more responsible Republican voices, acknowledge the threat of climate change and call for responsible solutions. Yet Congress remains trapped behind a barricade of polluting special interest influence. Republicans in Congress refuse to get serious.

It wasn't always this way. Conservation of this land's natural resources used to be a core value of the Republican party, and protecting future generations' natural birthright from plundering by special-interest industry was a cornerstone of Republican leadership. This month actually marks the anniversary of a milestone in that kind of American leadership.

On February 1, 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt established the U.S. Forest Service. Fed up with the cronism and bureaucracy that defined

the weak existing conservation programs, he dissolved the Bureau of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture and transferred management of the 63 million acres of national forests under the Department of the Interior to the new Forest Service.

Roosevelt resented the “malefactors of great wealth,” as he called them, the timber and mining interests whose “selfish and shortsighted greed,” he called it, “seeks to exploit [our natural resources] in such fashion as to ruin them, and thereby to leave our children and our children’s children heirs only to an exhausted and impoverished inheritance.”

Roosevelt not only knew how to say the right thing, he knew how to say it well.

Pictured here is Teddy Roosevelt looking across the vast expanse of Mogollon Rim in Arizona, one of the many forests transferred to the newly created Forest Service. With the President is Gifford Pinchot, a prime advocate of the Forest Service. As its first Chief, Pinchot restructured and professionalized the management of the national forests. During Roosevelt’s Presidency, the Federal forest system grew by nearly 130 million acres. In total, he extended protection to an additional 230 million acres of our Nation’s land.

Roosevelt said:

We have become great in a material sense because of the lavish use of our resources, and we have just reason to be proud of our growth. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils shall have been still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers.

Today, some of these long-cherished American forests, grasslands, and landscapes are under assault due to climate change.

In July 2010, the Forest Service issued its “National Roadmap for Responding to Climate Change.” Specifically, the Forest Service report says:

Most of the urgent forest and grassland management challenges of the past 20 years, such as wildfires, changing water regimes, and expanding forest insect infestations, have been driven, in part, by a changing climate. Future impacts are projected to be even more severe.

Our Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, which I chair with Congressman WAXMAN, hosted a roundtable of firefighters and State and Federal foresters. Here is what Dave Cleaves, the Forest Service’s Climate Change Advisor, told us:

So what have we been seeing? . . . The length of the fire season increasing by more than 60 days over the last 10 years, the annual area burned by wildfire increasing more than four times what it was in the 1970s; the portion of the area burned by large fires has gone up two to seven times, so most of that increase in acreage has been because of the large fires, and the extreme part of the distribution of fires.

. . . So we have a big issue on our hands, it’s an ecological issue, it’s an economic issue, it’s a social issue, and dealing with it means we have to understand it better and understand some of the related challenges.

Shown here is the devastation from the largest rim fire in the Sierra Nevada range in recorded history. The healthy forest is shown 2 years prior to the fire on the left, while monitoring right before the fire showed a sudden decline in the health of the forest caused by the western pine beetle killing ponderosa pine and making the forest vulnerable to burning. This is a beetle that is killed off by cold weather. So where it can infest forests is limited by cold weather and altitude, of course, because it gets colder at higher altitudes.

With climate change, the territory of the infestation has expanded, and we see this change from a healthy forest to this. When it turns to this, it can burn. On the right we see the charred and unrecognizable landscape. Although we cannot definitively attribute any single fire to climate change, according to a 2012 comprehensive science report for the U.S. forest sector, increased temperature and drought can increase frequency and magnitude of fires and amplify insect and pathogen outbreaks which affect forest health. For example, Montana’s deep freezes used to kill off the pine bark beetle. Today, that beetle kills millions of acres of trees across the American West.

President Roosevelt issued a warning a century ago:

One distinguishing characteristic of really civilized men is foresight. We have to, as a nation, exercise foresight for this nation in the future; and if we do not exercise that foresight, dark will be the future.

Have we heeded Roosevelt’s warning? We can clearly foresee the devastation climate change will bring. Yet many modern Republicans, particularly those in Congress, are aligning themselves with the polluters and deniers to manufacture doubt about the science and fight any limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

Roosevelt, a Republican, had foresight to protect the natural resources we relay on, but his once great party has lost track of his ideals. Democrats and Republicans should be working with President Obama to implement his climate action plan to reduce carbon pollution. But when the Environment and Public Works Committee recently held an oversight hearing on the President’s plan, what did we get from our Republican colleagues? Flat-out climate denial—the polluter party line.

Theodore Roosevelt, the great Republican conservationist, stood up to polluting special interests. He was, in the name of the recent book, “The Wilderness Warrior.”

Today, too many Republicans in Congress have joined polluting corporate special interests in their war on the

wilderness. Perhaps they should listen to another Roosevelt. Theodore Roosevelt IV is the great-grandson of the 26th President, and he is still a Republican. He wants his fellow Republicans to return to the values of his great-grandfather.

It seems to be beyond the scope of many on the right to say, for instance, that species extinction, as a result of unrestrained human activity, is immoral and undefensible; that our refusal to seriously engage in a global effort to address climate change is unethical and imprudent.

There are such clear warnings. The facts speak for themselves. The denial position has shown itself to be nonsense, a sham. Yet in Congress we sleepwalk on. Every day more and more Americans realize the truth, and they increasingly want this Congress to wake up. They know that climate change is real.

It is time to wake up and to do the work necessary to combat climate change. It is time for us to heed the words of President Theodore Roosevelt:

Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children’s children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance.

Let us wake up.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 564, 570, 566, and 567—these are district court judges for the District of Connecticut, the Eastern District of Arkansas, the Northern District of California, and the Northern District of California—that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, as everyone

knows, last year our friends on the other side of the aisle invoked the so-called nuclear option. The stated reason was to strip the minority of any ability to stop any executive or judicial nominees on the floor. But, in fact, prior to the President's attempt to fill up the DC Circuit Court with judges they didn't need, the Senate actually had a very good record of confirming the President's judicial nominees, 215 to 2.

Now the majority leader would like to short-circuit the process which was put in place as a result of the nuclear option and seek to get confirmation of these judicial nominees by unanimous consent. My hope would be that the majority leader would choose to reverse the partisan rules change so we can go back to the bipartisan cooperative process which resulted in more than 200 Obama judges being confirmed.

Absent that, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I appreciate my friend's understanding of what has happened, and we will have further conversations about this.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY ALKER MEYER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 564.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

Harry Reid, Sherrod Brown, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Robert Menendez, Christopher A. Coons, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich, Amy Klobuchar, Dianne Feinstein, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Bernard Sanders, Barbara Boxer, Brian Schatz,

Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Benjamin L. Cardin, Michael F. Bennet.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The question is on the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES MAXWELL MOODY, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 570.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES DONATO TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 566.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to executive session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF BETH LABSON FREEMAN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 567.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District

Judge for the Northern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Is the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, now pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed is pending.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act.

Harry Reid, Bernard Sanders, Tom Harkin, Brian Schatz, Mary L. Landrieu, Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Tim Kaine, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Joe Donnelly, Jon Tester, Barbara Boxer, Richard Blumenthal, Sherrod Brown, Barbara A. Mikulski.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum required under

rule XXII be waived and that the cloture vote on the motion to proceed occur following the disposition of the Freeman nomination and the resumption of legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, 1 year ago today, the Senate came together in the best tradition of the Chamber to pass the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, including the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, with a strong bipartisan vote. It marked the culmination of years of collaboration with survivors and the victim services professionals who work with them every day. It also marked an historic step to protect all victims, regardless of their immigration status, their sexual orientation or their membership in an Indian tribe. As I have said countless times on the floor of this Chamber, "a victim is a victim is a victim," and the bill the Senate passed 1 year ago today was a reflection of that truth.

In passing this historic VAWA reauthorization, the Senate showed that we still can act in a bipartisan way and put crime victims above politics. Senators CRAPO and MURKOWSKI were steadfast partners in that effort and listened to the call from thousands of survivors of violence and law enforcement by supporting a fully-inclusive, lifesaving bill.

In the year since its passage, the important changes we made to the Violence Against Women Act have made lives better. The new nondiscrimination provisions included in the law are ensuring that all victims, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have access to lifesaving programs and cannot be turned away. I was discouraged by the opposition of some to these inclusive provisions last year, especially when the research so

clearly underscored the need to update the law to protect the most vulnerable populations. I am proud, however, that after all was said and done, we stayed true to our core value of equal protection and these provisions were enacted.

We also made vital improvements to the law to address the epidemic of violence against Native women. Three out of five Native women have been assaulted by their spouses or intimate partners. On some reservations, Native American women are murdered at a rate more than 10 times the national average. Think about those statistics for a minute. They are chilling. Native women are being brutalized and killed at rates that shock the conscience. We simply could not continue to ignore this ongoing and devastating violence, and I am proud that as a country we said "enough."

A key provision in the Leahy-Crapo bill, now law, recognizes tribes' special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction to prosecute non-Indian offenders who commit acts of domestic violence against an Indian on tribal land. This provision also faced strong opposition by some but we held firm in the belief that a tribal government should be able to hold accountable those who commit these heinous crimes against its people on its land. I was so proud when voices from around the country—Indian and non-Indian—joined our message that this was a VAWA to protect all victims and refused to give in. With their unified support, we beat back efforts to strip out this critical provision. That is why I was particularly pleased to see the launch of the new pilot project last week in which three tribes—the Umatilla, the Pascua Yaqui, and the Tulalip—will begin to exercise this authority we fought so hard to protect. I ask unanimous consent that a recent Washington Post article highlighting this project be printed in the RECORD.

Other key provisions of the new law include funding to help law enforcement and victim service providers reduce domestic violence homicides, including in my home State of Vermont. It is leading to more investigation and prosecution of rape and sexual assault crimes and a greater focus on these issues on college campuses. It is also helping eliminate backlogs of untested rape kits to help those victims receive justice and security promptly.

Unfortunately, one provision that was not included in the final VAWA bill was a modest increase in the number of U visas available to immigrant victims of domestic violence and other crimes. These visas are an important law enforcement tool that encourages immigrant victims to report crime, making us all safer. I reluctantly agreed to remove this provision and instead ensured its inclusion in the comprehensive immigration reform bill the Senate passed last year. As the House

considers ways to move on that important issue, I urge them to include an increase in U visas so that all victims of domestic violence will be protected.

The Violence Against Women Act is an example of how the Federal Government, in cooperation with State and local communities, can help solve problems. By providing new tools and resources to communities all around the country, we have helped bring the crimes of rape and domestic violence out of the shadows. There is much we can learn from that effort as we consider legislation that should similarly rise above politics.

After the Senate passed the bill last year, I mentioned a tragic incident that had just occurred. A man shot and killed two women waiting to pass through metal detectors at a courthouse, where he was stalking another victim. Two male police officers also were struck by bullets but were saved by their bulletproof vests. At that time, I urged this body to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program so that more of our law enforcement officials can be protected. Sadly, a year later, that effort remains incomplete.

Before I came to the Senate, I spent years in local law enforcement and have great respect for the men and women who protect us every day. When I hear Senators say that we should not provide Federal assistance, we should not help officers get the protection they need with bulletproof vests, or that we should not help the families of fallen public safety officers, I strongly disagree.

In our Federal system, we can help and when we can, we should help. That is what programs like the Violence Against Women Act are all about. Despite our different political perspectives, most of us came to the Senate with the goal of helping people. We must be able to find common ground to do that. I hope that this body can again come together to protect the American people and support law enforcement like we did 1 year ago today when we passed the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 8, 2014]

NEW LAW OFFERS PROTECTION TO ABUSED
NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN

(By Sari Horwitz)

WHITE EARTH NATION, MINN.—Linda Davidson. Lisa Brunner remembers the first time she saw her stepfather beat her mother. She was 4 years old, cowering under the table here on the Ojibwe reservation, when her stepfather grabbed his shotgun from the rack. She heard her mother scream, “No, David! No!”

“He starts beating my mother over the head and I could hear the sickening thud of the butt of the shotgun over her head,”

Brunner said. “Then he put the gun back on the rack and called her a bitch. He slammed the bedroom door and sat down on the squeaky bed. And then I heard the thud-thud of his cowboy boots as he laid down, squeaking again, and he went to sleep.”

There were many more beatings over the years, Brunner said. Twenty years later, she said, she was brutally assaulted by her own husband on this same Indian reservation, an enormous swath of Minnesota prairie that has seen its share of sorrow for generations.

An estimated one in three Native American women are assaulted or raped in their lifetimes, and three out of five experience domestic violence. But in the cases of Brunner and her mother, the assailants were white, not Native American, and that would turn out to make all the difference.

Lisa Brunner of the Ojibwe tribe in Minnesota speaks on the cycle of sexual violence Native American women, including herself, have faced.

For decades, when a Native American woman has been assaulted or raped by a man who is non-Indian, she has had little or no recourse. Under long-standing law in Indian country, reservations are sovereign nations with their own police departments and courts in charge of prosecuting crimes on tribal land. But Indian police have lacked the legal authority to arrest non-Indian men who commit acts of domestic violence against native women on reservations, and tribal courts have lacked the authority to prosecute the men.

President Obama, joined by Vice President Biden, members of women’s organizations, law enforcement officials, tribal leaders, survivors, advocates and members of Congress, signs the Violence Against Women Act in March.

Last year, Congress approved a law—promoted by the Obama administration—that for the first time will allow Indian tribes to prosecute certain crimes of domestic violence committed by non-Indians in Indian country. The Justice Department on Thursday announced it had chosen three tribes for a pilot project to assert the new authority.

While the law has been praised by tribal leaders, native women and the administration as a significant first step, it still falls short of protecting all Indian women from the epidemic of violence they face on tribal lands.

The new authority, which will not go into effect for most of the country’s 566 federally recognized Indian tribes until March 2015, covers domestic violence committed by non-Indian husbands and boyfriends, but it does not cover sexual assault or rape committed by non-Indians who are “strangers” to their victims. It also does not extend to native women in Alaska.

Proponents of the law acknowledge that it was drawn narrowly to win support in Congress, particularly from Republican lawmakers who argued that non-native suspects would not receive a fair trial in the tribal justice system.

For their part, native women say they have long been ill-served by state and federal law. U.S. attorneys, who already have large caseloads, are often hundreds of miles away from rural reservations. It can take hours or days for them to respond to allegations, if they respond at all, tribal leaders say. Native women also have to navigate a complex maze of legal jurisdictions.

“There are tribal communities where state police have no jurisdiction and federal law enforcement has jurisdiction but is distant and often unable to respond,” said Thomas J.

Perrelli, a former associate attorney general who was one of the administration’s chief proponents of the amendment. “There are tribal communities where the federal government has no jurisdiction but state law enforcement, which has jurisdiction, does not intervene. And there are still other tribal lands where there is a dispute about who, if anyone, has jurisdiction. All of this has led to an inadequate response to the plight of many Native American women.”

More than 75 percent of residents on Indian reservations in the United States are non-Indians. In at least 86 percent of the reported cases of rape or sexual assault of American Indian and Alaska native women, both on and off reservations, the victims say their attackers were non-native men, according to the Justice Department.

‘NOT ENROLLED’

The loophole in the American Indian justice system that effectively provides immunity to non-Indians is the story of a patchwork of laws, treaties and Supreme Court decisions over generations.

At the root of the confusion about Indian jurisdiction is the historical tension over Indian land. As American settlers pushed Native Americans off their tribal lands and then renegotiated treaties to guarantee tribes a homeland, large areas of the reservations were opened for white families to homestead.

That migration led to the modern-day reservation, where Indians and non-Indians often live side by side, one farm or ranch home belonging to a white family, the next one belonging to an Indian family. It is a recipe for conflict over who is in charge and who has legal jurisdiction over certain crimes.

“The public safety issues in Indian country are so complicated,” said Deputy Associate Attorney General Sam Hirsch, one of the Justice Department officials who focus on tribal justice issues. “No one would have ever designed a system from scratch to look like the system that has come down to us through the generations.”

Over the past 200 years, there have been dramatic swings in Indian-country jurisdiction and the extent of tribal powers.

In 1978, in a case widely known in Indian country as “Oliphant,” the Supreme Court held that Indian tribes had no legal jurisdiction to prosecute non-Indians who committed crimes on reservations. Even a violent crime committed by a non-Indian husband against his Indian wife in their home on the reservation—as Brunner said happened to her on the White Earth Nation reservation—could not be prosecuted by the tribe.

The court said it was up to Congress to decide who had that authority.

“We are not unaware of the prevalence of non-Indian crime on today’s reservations, which the tribes forcefully argue requires the ability to try non-Indians,” the court said. “But these are considerations for Congress to weigh in deciding whether Indian tribes should finally be authorized to try non-Indians.”

Congress took no action for 35 years.

As a result, native women who were assaulted were often told there was nothing tribal police could do for them. If the perpetrator was white and—in the lingo of the tribes—“not enrolled” in the tribal nation, there would be no recourse.

“Over the years, what happened is that white men, non-native men, would go onto a Native American reservation and go hunting—rape, abuse and even murder a native

woman, and there's absolutely nothing anyone could do to them," said Kimberly Norris Guerrero, an actress, tribal advocate and native Oklahoman who is Cherokee and Colville Indian. "They got off scot-free."

In 2009, shortly after taking office, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. was briefed by two FBI agents on the issue of violence on Indian reservations.

They told him about the soaring rates of assault and rape and the fact that on some reservations, the murder rate for native women is 10 times the national average.

"The way they phrased it was, if you are a young girl born on an Indian reservation, there's a 1-in-3 chance or higher that you're going to be abused during the course of your life," Holder said in an interview. "I actually did not think the statistics were accurate. I remember asking, 'check on those numbers.'"

Officials came back to Holder and told him the statistics were right: Native women experience the highest rates of assault of any group in the United States.

"The numbers are just staggering," Holder said. "It's deplorable. And it was at that point I said, this is an issue that we have to deal with. I am simply not going to accept the fact it is acceptable for women to be abused at the rates they are being abused on native lands."

MEASURING TAPE

Diane Millich, left, joins Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. and Deborah Parker, vice chairwoman of the Tulalip Tribes of Washington state, at the bill-signing ceremony in March.

Diane Millich grew up on the Southern Ute Indian reservation, nestled in the mountain meadows of southwestern Colorado. When she was 26, she fell in love and married a non-Indian man who lived in a town just beyond the reservation.

Not long after they were married, Millich's husband moved in with her and began to push and slap her, she said. The violence escalated, and the abuse, she said, became routine. She called the tribal police and La Plata County authorities many times but was told they had no jurisdiction in the case.

One time after her husband beat her, Millich said, he picked up the phone and called the sheriff to report the incident himself to show that he couldn't be arrested, she said. He knew, she said, there was nothing the sheriff could do.

"After a year of abuse and more than 100 incidents of being slapped, kicked, punched and living in terror, I left for good," Millich said.

The brutality, she said, increased after she filed for a divorce.

"Typically, when you look backwards at crimes of domestic violence, if less serious violence is not dealt with by the law enforcement system, it leads to more serious violence, which eventually can lead to homicide," said Hirsch, the deputy associate attorney general.

One day when Millich was at work, she saw her ex-husband pull up in a red truck. He was carrying a 9mm gun.

"My ex-husband walked inside our office and told me, 'You promised until death do us part, so death it shall be,'" Millich recalled. A co-worker saved Millich's life by pushing her out of the way and taking a bullet in his shoulder.

It took hours to decide who had jurisdiction over the shooting.

Investigators at the scene had to use a measuring tape to determine where the gun was fired and where Millich's colleague had

been struck, and a map to figure out whether the state, federal government or tribe had jurisdiction.

The case ended up going to the closest district attorney. Because Millich's husband had never been arrested or charged for domestic abuse on tribal land, he was treated as a first-time offender, Millich said, and after trying to flee across state lines was offered a plea of aggravated driving under revocation.

"It was like his attempt to shoot me and the shooting of my co-worker did not happen," Millich said. "The tribe wanted to help me, but couldn't because of the law. In the end, he was right. The law couldn't touch him."

SECTION 904

Last year, Millich and other American Indian women came to Washington to tell their stories to congressional leaders. They joined tribal leaders in lobbying for the passage of the 288-page reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, which included language proposed by the Justice Department that for the first time would allow tribal courts to prosecute non-Indians who assaulted native women on tribal lands. It would also allow the courts to issue and enforce protective orders, whether the perpetrator is Indian or non-Indian.

Opponents of the provision, known as Section 904, argued that non-native defendants would not be afforded a fair trial by American Indian tribes. In the case of Alaska, the Senate excluded Native Alaskan women because of especially complicated issues involving jurisdiction.

At a town hall meeting, Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa) said that "under the laws of our land, you've got to have a jury that is a reflection of society as a whole."

"On an Indian reservation, it's going to be made up of Indians, right?" Grassley said. "So the non-Indian doesn't get a fair trial."

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Tex.), another opponent, said the Violence Against Women Act was "being held hostage by a single provision that would take away fundamental constitutional rights for certain American citizens."

The bill passed the Senate last February but was held up by House Republicans over Section 904. They argued that tribal courts were not equipped to take on the new responsibilities and non-Indian constituents would be deprived of their constitutional rights without being able to appeal to federal courts.

"When we talk about the constitutional rights, don't women on tribal lands deserve their constitutional right of equal protection and not to be raped and battered and beaten and dragged back onto native lands because they know they can be raped with impunity?" Rep. Gwen Moore (D-Wis.) argued on the floor.

Underlying the opposition, some congressmen said, was a fear of retribution by the tribes for the long history of mistreatment by white Americans.

With the support of Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.), a member of the Chickasaw Nation, the House accepted the bill containing Section 904 on a vote of 229 to 196. On March 7, President Obama signed the bill with Millich, Holder and Native American advocates at his side.

The Justice Department has chosen three Indian tribes—the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona, the Tulalip Tribes of Washington state and the Umatilla tribes of Oregon—to be the first in the nation to exercise their new criminal jurisdiction over certain crimes of domestic and dating violence.

"What we have done, I think, has been game-changing," Holder said. "But there are still attitudes that have to be changed. There are still resources that have to be directed at the problem. There's training that still needs to go on. We're really only at the beginning stages of reversing what is a horrible situation."

Lisa Brunner and her daughter, Faith Roy, fold clothes at home on the White Earth Indian reservation in Minnesota.

SLIVER OF A FULL MOON

Last summer, several Native American survivors of domestic violence from around the country put on a play, "Sliver of a Full Moon," in Albuquerque. The play documented the story of the abuse and rape of Native American women by non-Indians and the prolonged campaign to bring them justice.

Using the technique of traditional Indian storytelling, Mary Kathryn Nagle, a lawyer and member of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma, wove together their emotional tales of abuse with the story of their fight to get Washington to pay attention.

Millich and Brunner played themselves, and actors played the roles of members of Congress, federal employees and tribal police officers who kept answering desperate phone calls from abused native women by saying over and over again, "We can't do nothin'." "We don't have jurisdiction," and "He's white and he ain't enrolled."

Brunner portrayed herself in a play that told the story of the abuse and rape of Native American women by non-Indians and the campaign to bring them justice.

By that time, Brunner's intergenerational story of violence and abuse had taken a painful turn. Her youngest daughter, 17, had been abducted by four white men who drove onto the reservation one summer night. One of them raped her, Brunner said.

It was the real-life version of author Louise Erdrich's acclaimed fictional account of the rape of an Ojibwe woman by a non-Indian in her 2012 book, "The Round House." In both the real and the unrelated fictional case, the new congressional authority would not give the tribe jurisdiction to arrest and prosecute the suspects, because they were not previously known to the victim.

Last week, inside her home on the frigid White Earth Nation, which was dotted by vast snowy cornfields and hundreds of frozen lakes, Brunner brought out a colorful watercolor she had painted of three native women standing in the woods under a glowing full moon. The painting was the inspiration for the title of Nagle's play, she said, but it's also a metaphor for the new law.

"We have always known that non-Indians can come onto our lands and they can beat, rape and murder us and there is nothing we can do about it," Brunner said. "Now, our tribal officers have jurisdiction for the first time to do something about certain crimes."

"But," she added, "it is just the first sliver of the full moon that we need to protect us."

GI EDUCATION BENEFITS FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I introduced a bill this week that would fix a small problem with the Post-9/11 GI bill that is creating big problems for some servicemember and veteran families.

In 2010, SFC Angela Dees sent her son, Christopher Webb, to the University of Illinois at Chicago after receiving approval from DOD that she could

transfer her GI benefits to pay for his education.

Dees first enlisted in the Army in 1998. At the time, she was married, and Christopher was her stepson. But after a divorce, she went to court and obtained sole legal custody, raising him from a 2-year-old into a young man. Since she never formally adopted him he was legally considered her ward.

But no matter how you slice it, Angela Dees is Chris's mother, and he is her son.

But halfway through Chris's first year at UIC, he received a letter from the VA telling him that he could no longer use his mother's GI benefits. The letter explained that he needed to repay the first year's benefits, \$30,000.

What happened?

It turns out they were caught in a bureaucratic wrinkle with enormous implications for this family. Foster children and legal wards like Chris are considered dependents by the Department of Defense, but not by the VA.

Servicemembers can pass along their GI Bill benefits to their spouses or children if they re-up for 4 more years. So Angela did that. In good faith, she signed an Army contract for 4 more years so that she could give her son a college education.

But the left hand of government did not know what the right hand of government was doing. So when it came time for the VA to pay Chris's tuition bill, VA said no. In their case, neither of them had the money to repay the VA, so Chris had to drop out of school and get a job in order to pay it back.

According to DOD, at least 25 students are in the same boat—approved by DOD, they enrolled in school only to have their benefits revoked by the VA when the bill came due.

It is an expensive bureaucratic nightmare for these families, and it should be fixed.

The Post-9/11 GI bill is the most comprehensive education benefits package for servicemembers since 1944. It was the first time we granted servicemembers the opportunity to transfer some or all of their earned benefits to family members.

But in this small way it is clear that the benefit does not match our intent.

The GI Education Benefits Fairness Act, S. 2014, will fix that.

This bill is very simple: it will align the definition of an "eligible child" at the DOD and the VA so that wards and foster children also qualify, and it will offer retroactive payment to those whose benefits were revoked because of the original discrepancy.

The bill has the support of many veteran and military advocacy groups: the Military Officers Association of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, Student Veterans of America, the National Military Family Association, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Association

of the United States Navy, and the Foster Parent Association of America.

In the House, Representatives BILL FOSTER and CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS are leading a companion bill in a bipartisan effort.

These servicemembers have made good on their obligations to our country. And the GI Education Benefits Fairness Act allows us to make good on the promises we have made to them.

I hope my colleagues will join me in support of this important bill.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to discuss the circumstances many unemployed families face.

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and now face serious financial consequences.

Many families are having trouble paying the rent or their mortgage, or they are struggling to buy necessities for their children.

On February 6, the Senate voted, again, to try to extend unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed who are down on their luck.

But we still fell one vote short. We needed one more Republican.

I hope one of my colleagues on the Republican side will join us soon to get that legislation over the top and help folks who have been hurting since the first of the year. Getting this benefit extended is only one of the problems that unemployed families have faced in my State.

Thousands of unemployed Floridians have had their benefits delayed by flaws in the State's new automated unemployment system.

The website is called "Florida CONNECT."

But ironically it has left many Floridians disconnected.

We started hearing about some of the problems people were facing soon after the website was launched late last year.

When I started hearing about these reports, I asked U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez to investigate.

And I am pleased to report that the Department of Labor is now working with the State to sort out who should be getting their checks.

I am told most of the people who were stuck in this mess have either started getting the benefits they deserve or have received a letter directing them to a human being they can talk to and resolve possible problems with their applications.

I trust that the State of Florida will hold anyone responsible for that flawed website completely accountable for this mess.

In the meantime I hope that we here in the Congress will do our part to help folks that are down and out and pass the extension of benefits for long-term unemployed.

THE SOCHI OLYMPICS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as we speak, the 22nd Winter Olympics are well under way in Sochi, Russia.

Let me first congratulate the organizers on a fantastic opening ceremony. It really was something to see the depth and breadth of Russia's rich history and culture on display for the entire world to admire.

The Olympics put a powerful spotlight on Russia—a spotlight Russia's president has so vigorously sought. But just as this attention is educating the world about Russia's invaluable contributions to music, science, and sport, it is also highlighting the gaps between Russia's previous commitment to fundamental freedoms and the reality on the ground.

There is no question that in recent years we have seen Russia move towards a less open, less pluralistic society. But we cannot lose hope yet. Change is possible and Russia's beleaguered but tenacious civil society offers much hope for the future. We continue to expect Russia's leadership to uphold basic and universal human rights. Now there are other countries where the situation is much worse, but Russia is a powerful global example and should be committed to upholding fundamental freedoms much like Germany or the United Kingdom, its European neighbors. But unlike those governments, Russia's current leadership wantonly violates international commitments and seems bent on trying to redefine a settled consensus on the universality of human rights. We cannot let that go unchallenged.

Much has been said about Russia's 2013 law prohibiting so-called gay propaganda. Some have pointed to the fact that this law enjoys widespread public support while others have faintly condemned it and worried that Western pressure could be counterproductive. Let's stop negotiating with ourselves here and tell it like it is. And it is really quite simple: this law infringes on the rights to free speech, association, and assembly. These rights are not American rights, they are human rights, and they are universally shared and universally binding. Russia acknowledged as much in myriad international commitments. And this law is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg when it comes to fundamental freedoms in Russia.

In recent days it has been fashionable to change the colors of your website or make other symbolic gestures of solidarity with Russia's LGBT community. I applaud this and have done as much myself, but let's not kid ourselves or rest on our laurels. It takes little courage to swap an avatar on Twitter or to use a coded phrase in a statement and it is going to take a lot more to change the world for the better. As important as these symbols of solidarity are, let's not confuse them with the steady and

sustained activism that will be necessary to highlight human rights abuses in Russia long after the flame goes out in Sochi.

I have heard much speculation of a further crackdown in Russia after the Olympic spotlight fades, and I would note that the ongoing unrest in Ukraine is watched with great interest from Russia. While the Kremlin appears nervous at the prospects of renewed demonstrations at home or the success of any grassroots uprising on its borders, many in Moscow and St. Petersburg appear envious that the Ukrainian protests have shown staying power and the ability to pry concessions from the ruling elite. I worry that if anything could provoke a crackdown inside Russia post-Sochi, a turn of events in Ukraine could well prove that trigger and I urge the administration to double-down on its efforts to head off further violence. That is why I introduced the Global Human Rights Accountability Act, which would ensure human rights abusers from anywhere in the world are denied entry into the United States and barred from using our financial institution.

Finally, let me commend our current and outgoing ambassador to the Russian Federation, Dr. Michael McFaul, for a job well done. Dr. McFaul served with distinction in a tough post at a tough time and did a fantastic job of representing our country's openness and "can do" spirit. He will be missed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

PURITAN BACKROOM

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and honor the Puritan Backroom in Manchester, a beloved New Hampshire restaurant that celebrates its 40th anniversary this month. The Backroom has earned its place as one of the Granite State's most popular family restaurants, serving up delicious dishes for four decades.

Today, the Backroom is part of a tradition of outstanding hospitality that dates back for nearly a century in New Hampshire's Queen City. In 1917, Arthur Pappas and Louis Canotas, who immigrated to the United States from Greece, opened an ice cream and candy shop on Hanover Street. They started a restaurant the following year, the first of several in Manchester and beyond. In 1938, Pappas and Canotas opened an ice cream stand on Daniel Webster Highway, later adding a candy shop and a restaurant. In February 1974, the Puritan Backroom served its first meal, and it is now a fourth generation family business.

There is something for everyone on the menu at the Backroom—from fresh seafood, to prime rib, to their sauté specials.

The restaurant is perhaps most famous for its fried chicken tenders,

which come with duck sauce, and can be ordered in a few different ways—regular, coconut, buffalo or spicy. Or, you could get them broiled in the Backroom's special sauce. Or, you could have chicken tenders parmigiana or chicken tenders cacciatore.

For dessert, you can not beat the Backroom's homemade ice cream. On hot summer nights, it is not unusual to see customers lined up in front of the ice cream stand, eager to choose from among dozens of flavors. You will find the standard offerings—vanilla and chocolate—alongside Backroom favorites, including: Baklava, Moose Tracks, and Mudslide. Speaking of mudslides, they're also on the drink menu, and the Backroom was once recognized for being the top buyer in the Nation of Baileys Irish Cream.

The Puritan Backroom is more than just a restaurant. It is part of the heart and soul of Manchester, NH. It is a place for friends to meet and enjoy a meal. And it is a place for families to celebrate special occasions. I know that my family always looks forward to heading to the Backroom, where we know we will see familiar and friendly faces.

The family ownership, management and staff of the Backroom have made this special restaurant a true New Hampshire treasure. The Backroom sets the standard for excellence in hospitality in the Granite State, and I am so proud to join citizens across our State in congratulating the Puritan Backroom on its 40th anniversary. •

ASCAP'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

• Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the centennial of ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

When ASCAP's founders gathered in a New York hotel 100 years ago, they could not have imagined what the future held in store for the music industry, and the central role their organization would play in the music community. ASCAP's membership has grown to include more than ½ million songwriters, composers, and publishers. Among these are some of America's most beloved musical talents, but ASCAP is also home to thousands of lesser known musicians who inspire and delight us.

ASCAP licenses nearly 9 million musical works. The royalties ASCAP collects on behalf of its members, and the additional resources it provides, empower thousands of musicians to follow their lifelong passion for music while providing for themselves and their families. ASCAP is truly an invaluable resource both for songwriters and composers as well as the music loving community they serve.

Over the years, ASCAP has been a tireless advocate for strong intellectual property protections. It continues

to be at the forefront of the movement for sensible intellectual property laws that can keep pace with changes in technology, all the while serving the interests of both music creators and consumers in the digital age.

It is critically important that both music creators and consumers have certainty about the relevant legal rules and protections. Yet, the current regulatory regime that governs ASCAP's operations may need to be updated to keep pace with innovations in how music is created, shared, and enjoyed. An updated legal regime is important not only for the musicians that make up ASCAP's membership, but also for the continued enjoyment of all their listeners among the American people. As Congress contemplates reforming our country's copyright law, it is my hope that this and other related issues will be given careful consideration.

I invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing ASCAP's 100 years of tireless advocacy on behalf of songwriters, composers, and publishers, and wish them 100 more years of great music and success. •

REMEMBERING MICHAEL ANGELO OLIVERIO, SR.

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of a dear friend and a remarkable West Virginian who was taken from us on February 5, 2014. Michael Angelo Oliverio, Sr. was a dedicated public servant, an inspiring educator and a passionate civic leader who was respected and admired by all who knew him. He led an extraordinary life that will always be remembered in the hearts of the countless individuals whose lives he touched.

The son of an Italian immigrant shepherd, Mike was born and raised in the town of Carolina in Marion County, just a few miles down the road from my hometown of Farmington. Like many other families in North Central West Virginia, our families' ancestors both originated from the same town in Italy, San Giovanni in Fiore. Our shared heritage was truly a special aspect of our family friendship.

Mike lived a life of unprecedented success both professionally and personally. He graduated from Monongah High School, Fairmont State College, West Virginia University, and also received postgraduate education from the University of Virginia, College of St. Thomas, Minnesota, and George Washington University.

He was a tireless advocate for the disabled community, which was recognized not only in West Virginia but on a national level. As the president of the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association and also president of the National Rehabilitation Association International Advocacy Group for Persons with Disabilities, he met with Congress and Presidents Carter and

Ford to promote laws for persons with disabilities.

With a heart of gold, Mike passionately served his community, his State and his country. He served for more than 10 years as the Monongalia County clerk, served as chairman of the Community Advisory Committee, and vice chairman on the national board of the American Heart Association.

Genuinely committed to improving the lives of all West Virginians, Mike helped start the Kennedy Correctional Center and founded the Ronald McDonald House. He also designed and facilitated the building of a memorial honoring fathers and President John F. Kennedy in Star City called "A Father's Love."

Additionally, he served as chairman of the Fairmont State University Board of Advisors, the Klingberg Development Center Advisory Committee, North Central West Virginia Goodwill Board, People Aware of Children Exceptional (PACE), West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival, and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church.

During his life, Mike received many awards for his incredible works—of which he was most proud, Mike received the National Nathan Hale Award for Patriotism and the F. Ray Power Award for Administration State Director Internationally.

Promoting his family's cultural history and Italian heritage was one of Mike's greatest passions. He made West Virginia and Calabria, Italy, sister states and conducted the twinning process joining Clarksburg and San Giovanni in Fiori, Italy. He also initiated an exchange program with students from the University of Calabria and Fairmont State University. He was rightly awarded the International Award for Achievement and Humanity in Rome, Italy.

Mike took many trips to Italy throughout his life, but there was one trip in particular I know he cherished most. Dubbed "The Oliverio Boys Tour," Mike traveled to the homeland in 2009 with his three sons, Joe, Mike, and Frank; his brother, John; and his cousins, Jason, Maryn, and Nate.

During the trip they were blessed to spend time with relatives and friends in the region and experience the authentic Italian traditions, passion and food. As they walked the streets, natives knew the Americans were in town and that Mike Oliverio had brought his family. They were hosted by many of Mike's second and third cousins, including Mario Oliverio, who had recently been elected President of the Region. It was very important to him to travel around Italy together as a family and to explore their roots. I know it was a special memory he held close to his heart.

Mike was not only reputable and accomplished in his public life, but he was also an unparalleled example of a

dedicated family man—a devoted husband, a proud father, and a wonderful grandfather. Much of his success he credited to his late wife, Julia, who supported him in all of his endeavors. His children are accomplished and respected throughout our state.

I will never forget a special dinner my wife, Gayle, and I shared at the Governor's Mansion in 2007 with Mike, Julia, and their family—Joe, Paula, Alyssa, Mary, Christina, Maria, Mike, Melissa, Frank, Amy, Julia, Aunt Teresa Gabriele, and a family friend, Jessica Faulkenberry. It was just two weeks before Julia lost her life to ovarian cancer and we were celebrating her birthday. I remember being touched by the love shared within their family and the strength they had in one another. You see, the Oliverios personify the power of families—working hard, supporting one another, and standing together when times get tough.

Anyone who knew Mike Oliverio can tell about his incredible ability to inspire each person he encountered to live a life of purpose. Personally, I have lost a dear friend and mentor. And although he will be forever remembered for his many years of service, he will also be remembered as a loving father, grandfather, and friend. He was truly a local legend in our State, and though he will be greatly missed, his legacy will always live on.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:17 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

S. 25. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes.

S. 540. An act to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the "Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center".

The message further announced that the House has passed the following joint resolutions, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 28. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of John Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 29. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 81. Concurrent resolution providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 25.

H. Con. Res. 82. Concurrent resolution providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 540.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3448. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks.

H.R. 3578. An act to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 3448. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2024. A bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4659. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Live Birds and Poultry, Poultry Meat, and Poultry Products From a Region in the European Union; Technical Amendment" ((RIN0579-AD45) (Docket No. APHIS-2009-0094)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 10, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4660. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Chlorantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances” (FRL No. 9905-56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4661. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “D-mannose; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance” (FRL No. 9905-44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4662. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Thiram; Pesticide Tolerances” (FRL No. 9904-22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4663. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Linuron; Pesticide Tolerances” (FRL No. 9905-22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4664. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Bacillus thuringiensis CryIF Protein in Soybean; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance” (FRL No. 9905-59) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4665. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fenpropidin; Pesticide Tolerances” (FRL No. 9904-31) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4666. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General William M. Fraser III, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4667. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Robert W. Cone, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4668. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4669. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to assistance provided by the Department of Defense (DoD) for sporting events during calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4670. A communication from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4671. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4672. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4673. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board’s semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4674. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Extension of Exemptions for Security-Based Swaps” (RIN9235-AL17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4675. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4676. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, (2) two reports relative to vacancies in the Department of the Treasury, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4677. A communication from the Administrative Specialist, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Regulations Governing Definitive United States Savings Bonds, Series EE and HH; Regulations Governing Definitive United States Savings Bonds, Series I; Regulations Governing Securities Held in TreasuryDirect” (31 CFR Parts 353, 360, and 363) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4678. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Energy Conservation Program: Compliance Date for the De-

humidifier Test Procedure” (RIN1904-AD06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4679. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for External Power Supplies” (RIN1904-AD06) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4680. A communication from the Regulatory Liaison, Office of Natural Resources Revenue, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendments to ONRR’s Service of Official Correspondence” (RIN1012-AA14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4681. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Nonroad Technical Amendments” (FRL No. 9905-35-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4682. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Allen, Greene, Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Vigo Counties; 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets” (FRL No. 9906-50-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4683. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Colorado; Construction Permit Program Fee Increases; Construction Permit Regulation of PM 2.5; Regulation 3” (FRL No. 9903-94-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4684. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the New Source Review (NSR) State Implementation Plan (SIP); Standard Permit for Oil and Gas Facilities and Standard Permit Applicability” (FRL No. 9906-60-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4685. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Finding of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plans Required for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)” (FRL No. 9906-80-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4686. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plan; State of Colorado Second Ten-Year PM 10 Maintenance Plan for Telluride" (FRL No. 9906-35-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4687. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances" (FRL No. 9903-70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4688. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to Test Methods and Testing Regulations" (FRL No. 9906-23-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4689. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Consumer Product Policy Statement; Revision" (NRC-2010-0292) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4690. A communication from the Acting Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Introduction—Part 2, Standard Review Plan for the Review of Safety Analysis Reports for Nuclear Power Plants: Light-Water Small Modular Reactor Edition" (NUREG-0800) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4691. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Maximum Civil Money Penalty Amounts; Civil Money Penalty Complaints" (Docket No. FDA-2014-N-0113) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4692. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program" (RIN1840-AD13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4693. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Community Services Block Grant (CCSBG) Program Report for Fiscal Year 2010"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4694. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) annual report on Drug Shortages for Calendar Year 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4695. A communication from the Chairman of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Buy American Act Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4696. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on National HIV Testing Goals; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4697. A communication from the Chair, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Evaluating Job Applicants: The Role of Training and Experience in Hiring"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4698. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-273, "Omnibus Health Regulation Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4699. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-188); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4700. A communication from the Chief of the Office of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Arms, Ammunition and Implements of War and Machine Guns, Destructive Devices, and Certain Other Firearms; Extending the Term of Import Permits" (RIN1140-AA42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4701. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Agency, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of Four Synthetic Cannabinoids Into Schedule I" (Docket No. DEA-385) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4702. A communication from the Secretary, Judicial Conference of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report of the Proceedings of the Judicial Conference of the United States"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4703. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, "2012 Impact and Effectiveness of Administration for Native Americans (ANA) Projects: Report to Congress"; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC-4704. A communication from the Human Resources Specialist (Executive Resources), Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, (3) three reports relative to a vacancy in the Small Business Administration, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4705. A communication from the Executive Secretary, Medicare-Eligible Retiree Health Care Board of Actuaries, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2013 Report of the Department of Defense Medicare-Eligible Retiree Health Care Fund

(MERHCF); to the Committee on Armed Services.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2017. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to ensure that voters in elections for Federal office do not wait in long lines in order to vote; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2018. A bill to provide for the use of hand-propelled vessels in Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and the National Elk Refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. 2019. A bill to reauthorize and update certain provisions of the Secure Water Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 2020. A bill to set forth the process for Puerto Rico to be admitted as a State of the Union; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2021. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the incentives for the production of biodiesel; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER:

S. 2022. A bill to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2023. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. LEE):

S. 2024. A bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage; read the first time.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2025. A bill to require data brokers to establish procedures to ensure the accuracy of collected personal information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2026. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the

Paralympic Games; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 2027. A bill to authorize an additional district judgeship for the district of Idaho; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2028. A bill to amend the law relating to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2029. A bill to use amounts provided for the Fund for the Improvement of Education to establish a pilot program that supports year-round public elementary schools and secondary schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHATZ (for himself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2030. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. BALDWIN:

S. 2031. A bill to amend the Act to provide for the establishment of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in the State of Wisconsin, and for other purposes, to adjust the boundary of that National Lakeshore to include the lighthouse known as Ashland Harbor Breakwater Light, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2032. A bill to require mobile service providers and mobile device manufacturers to give consumers the ability to remotely delete data from mobile devices and render such devices inoperable; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. LANDRIEU:

S. 2033. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. LEVIN):

S. Res. 355. A resolution calling on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of Afghan detainees, carry out its commitments pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding governing the transfer of Afghan detainees from the United States custody to Afghan control and to uphold the Afghan Rule of Law with respect to the referral and disposition of detainees; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 356. A resolution designating February 13, 2014, as “\$2.13 Day”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. Res. 357. A resolution expressing concern of undemocratic governance and the abuse of the rights of individuals in Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. Res. 358. A resolution commending the Seattle Seahawks for winning Super Bowl XLVIII and the 12th Man for their critical support; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID:

S. Res. 359. A resolution to constitute the majority party’s membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 313

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 489

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 633

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 633, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for coverage under the beneficiary travel program of the Department of Veterans Affairs of certain disabled veterans for travel in connection with certain special disabilities rehabilitation, and for other purposes.

S. 635

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 641

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of

S. 641, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, and other programs, to promote education in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 896

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 896, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and wind-fall elimination provisions.

S. 1022

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1022, a bill to amend title 46, United States Code, to extend the exemption from the fire-retardant materials construction requirement for vessels operating within the Boundary Line.

S. 1070

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1070, a bill to make it unlawful to alter or remove the unique equipment identification number of a mobile device.

S. 1208

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1208, a bill to require meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes.

S. 1235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1235, a bill to restrict any State or local jurisdiction from imposing a new discriminatory tax on cell phone services, providers, or property.

S. 1468

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1468, a bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes.

S. 1599

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1599, a bill to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap

and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1981

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1981, a bill to provide that the rules of the Federal Communications Commission relating to preserving the open Internet and broadband industry practices shall be restored to effect until the date when the Commission takes final action in the proceedings on such rules that were remanded to the Commission by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

S. 1999

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1999, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2009

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2009, a bill to improve the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs to veterans in rural and highly rural areas, and for other purposes.

S. 2011

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2011, a bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

S.J. RES. 20

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a

cosponsor of S.J. Res. 20, a joint resolution proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 350

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 350, a resolution designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

AMENDMENT NO. 2732

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2732 intended to be proposed to S. 1963, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2023. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, when it comes to understanding the influence of big money donors on congressional and presidential campaigns, the numbers don't lie. In 2012, the top 32 donors to super PACs spent as much money as every single small donation to President Obama and Governor Romney combined. The top 32 donors to super PACs spent as much money as every single small donation to President Obama and Governor Romney combined. That means 32 individuals contributed as much as 3.7 million Americans. In 2012, candidates from both the House and Senate raised the majority of their funds from large donations of \$1,000 or more. Forty percent of all contributions to Senate candidates came from donors who maxed out at the \$2,500 contribution limit, representing just .02 percent of the American population. The amount of money special interest lobbies, wealthy donors, corporations and super PACs are willing to spend to shape policy has grown exponentially since Citizens United and it is expected to increase.

This dramatic increase in spending tells us that special interests are not

going to be shy about saying to Members of Congress: If you vote against our interests, we will spend millions to make sure you never get a chance to vote again. That is a terrible reality for many Members of Congress who are trying to make honest decisions about policy. It is an even worse statement about our democracy.

I think it is time for fundamental reform of the way we finance congressional elections. We need a system that allows candidates to focus on their constituents, their districts, and their States, instead of fundraising. We need a system that encourages ordinary Americans—the candidates I call mere mortals—to make their voices heard with small, affordable donations to candidates of their choice.

That is why I am introducing the Fair Elections Now Act. The Fair Elections Now Act will dramatically change the way campaigns are financed in America. This bill lets candidates focus on the people they represent, regardless of whether these people have wealth or whether they are going to attend big money fundraisers. Fair elections candidates would be in the policy business, regardless of what policies are preferred by the special interests.

I thank Senators BOXER, BROWN, CARDIN, FRANKEN, GILLIBRAND, HARKIN, HEINRICH, KLOBUCHAR, LEAHY, MARKEY, MENENDEZ, MERKLEY, MURPHY, SANDERS, SHAHEEN, and WARREN for joining me in this effort.

The Fair Elections Now Act will help restore public confidence in congressional elections. It provides qualified candidates for Congress with grants, matching funds, and vouchers from the Fair Elections Fund to replace campaign fundraising that now relies largely on lobbyists, wealthy donors, corporations, and other special interests. In return, participating candidates would agree to limit their campaign spending to amounts raised from small-dollar donors plus the amounts provided from the Fair Elections Fund.

There are three stages for Senate candidates under this bill. To participate, candidates would first need to prove their viability by raising a minimum number and amount of small-dollar qualifying contributions from in-State donors. Once a candidate qualifies, that candidate must limit the amount raised from each donor to \$150 per election.

For the primary, participants would receive a base grant that would vary in amount based on the population of the State that the candidate seeks to represent. Participants would also receive a 6-to-1 match for small-dollar donations up to a defined matching cap. The candidate could raise an unlimited amount of \$150 contributions if needed to compete against high-spending opponents.

For the general election, qualified candidates would receive an additional

grant, further small-dollar matching, and vouchers for purchasing TV advertising. The candidate could continue to raise an unlimited amount of \$150 contributions if needed. Instead of spending so much time courting donors and super PACs, fair elections candidates would have an incentive to spend their time with the middle-class Americans they want to represent. Candidates would have an incentive to seek small donations, and citizens would have an incentive to donate.

Under the Fair Elections Now Act, the average citizen would know their small donation of \$150 would be converted to a \$900 donation through the 6-to-1 fair elections match. They would also be eligible for a refundable tax credit. The Fair Elections Now Act would establish the “My Voice Tax Credit” to encourage individuals to make small donations to campaigns. The maximum refundable amount for the tax credit would be \$25 for individuals and \$50 for joint filers. To ensure the tax credit targets small donors, it is only available to individuals who do not contribute more than \$300 to a candidate or political party in any given year.

Our country faces major challenges. Everybody knows we need to reduce the deficit, modernize our energy policy, create good-paying jobs, reform the Tax Code, and many other things. What many people may not know is that at every turn, there are high-powered special interests fighting each and every one of these proposals. It is difficult for Members of Congress not to pay attention to the concerns of these special interests when the Members have to raise money for their own campaigns.

This bill would change the whole ball game. It would reduce the influence of these special interest lobbyists and wealthy donors. As a result, the bill would enhance the voice of average Americans.

Let me be clear. I honestly believe the overwhelming majority of the people serving in political life are good, honest people, and I believe Senators and Congressmen are guided by the best of intentions. But we are stuck in a terrible system. The perception is that politicians are corrupted because of all the big money we each have to raise. Whether it is true or not, that perception and the loss of trust that goes with it makes it incredibly difficult for the Senators to solve tough problems. That is why so many Americans have Congress in such low regard. This problem—the perception of pervasive corruption—is fundamental to our democracy, and we need to address it.

Fair elections is not a farfetched idea. Fair election systems are already at work in cities and States around America. Similar programs exist and are working well in jurisdictions throughout the country from Maine to

Arizona. These programs are bringing new faces and new ideas into politics, making more races more competitive, and dramatically reducing the influence of special interests.

The vast majority of Americans agree it is time to fundamentally change the way we finance political campaigns. Recent polling shows that 75 percent of Democrats, 66 percent of Independents, and 55 percent of Republicans support fair elections-style reform. The Fair Elections Now Act is supported by numerous good government groups, former Members of Congress from both parties, prominent business leaders, and even some lobbyists. Everyone is entitled to a seat at the table, but no one is entitled to a special seat, or maybe the only seat. The Fair Elections Now Act will reform our campaign finance system so Members of Congress can focus on implementing policies in the best interests of the people who sent them to Washington.

The Presiding Officer just finished a campaign, and I know, having visited with her in her home State, she worked hard. I am in the midst of a reelection campaign myself. I know I am working hard. A lot of time is being spent on the telephone, raising money from a lot of generous people.

I say in politics there are millionaires and the mere mortals. I am in the second category, and that means I can't write a check to cover the cost of a campaign. I have to hope enough people want to support me in my effort. With those contributions I will be buying media—primarily television, radio, Internet advertising, some mailings—and paying for a headquarters and volunteers. It is expensive in a big State such as Wisconsin or Illinois.

In the Citizens United era, where the traditional campaigns I just described are frankly not even close to the reality of what candidates face, one incumbent Democratic Senator now up for reelection has had over \$8 million spent against her in her home State with negative advertising that has gone on for months—for months. It is being paid for by some very wealthy billionaires. These billionaires, in this case the Koch Brothers, spent, I believe, \$248 million of their own money in the last election cycle. They are, in fact, a political party to themselves. They decide the candidates they support, which, coincidentally, are all in the other political party, and they invest huge sums of money in those election efforts. Make no mistake. We are raising money on the Democratic side too, but not nearly to the numbers we see on the other side.

This business of politics is being swamped with money in amounts and levels we have never seen before. What it means is that if an incumbent or even a challenger wants to have a viable campaign, they spend more and

more time raising money if they can't write a personal check to cover it—and most of us can't. So instead of being back in my State, working on issues that are important in the Senate, I spend a lot of time fundraising. We have become so used to it. It is like the frog in the pot of water on the stove that may not sense the increase in temperature until the water is boiling and it is too late. We are in that same predicament. We are watching, election after election, the cost of campaigns go through the roof. It discourages good people from engaging in the political process. It makes small contributors feel as though they are such small peanuts that nobody even notices.

We have to change that whole concept. I am reluctant to say this, but so far, this campaign finance reform bill is only being cosponsored by Members of one political party. I have tried for years to get Republican support for campaign finance reform. The only Republican Senator who would ever join me was Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania, who ultimately changed political parties on me—not on me, but changed political parties and then I didn't have bipartisan sponsorship.

The point I am getting to is this should be a bipartisan issue. I have no doubt that in a limited campaign with limited expenditures, I would still have enough money to get my message out in Illinois, and I am sure my opponent would, too. That would be a godsend, in sparing me and whomever from raising a lot of money, and a relief to the voters who get sick and tired of the political advertising that swamps the screens in the closing days of a campaign.

Fair elections now is an effort to move in that direction. It is a new concept, but it is one we should look at honestly. We can clean up the election campaigns in America. We can be responsive to the needs of our constituents. We can further the goals of our democracy and do it in a fashion that is affordable and allows mere mortals to compete.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2023

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Fair Elections Now Act”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Subtitle A—Fair Elections Financing Program

Sec. 101. Findings and declarations.

Sec. 102. Eligibility requirements and benefits of Fair Elections financing of Senate election campaigns.

Sec. 103. Prohibition on joint fundraising committees.

Sec. 104. Exception to limitation on coordinated expenditures by political party committees with participating candidates.

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

Sec. 201. Broadcasts relating to all Senate candidates.

Sec. 202. Broadcast rates for participating candidates.

Sec. 203. FCC to prescribe standardized form for reporting candidate campaign ads.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Sec. 301. Petition for certiorari.

Sec. 302. Filing by Senate candidates with Commission.

Sec. 303. Electronic filing of FEC reports.

TITLE IV—PARTICIPATION IN FUNDING OF ELECTIONS

Sec. 401. Refundable tax credit for Senate campaign contributions.

TITLE V—REVENUE PROVISIONS

Sec. 501. Fair Elections Fund revenue.

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 601. Severability.

Sec. 602. Effective date.

TITLE I—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

SUBTITLE A—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING PROGRAM

SEC. 101. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.

(a) **UNDERMINING OF DEMOCRACY BY CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PRIVATE SOURCES.**—The Senate finds and declares that the current system of privately financed campaigns for election to the United States Senate has the capacity, and is often perceived by the public, to undermine democracy in the United States by—

(1) creating a culture that fosters actual or perceived conflicts of interest by encouraging Senators to accept large campaign contributions from private interests that are directly affected by Federal legislation;

(2) diminishing or appearing to diminish Senators' accountability to constituents by compelling legislators to be accountable to the major contributors who finance their election campaigns;

(3) undermining the meaning of the right to vote by allowing monied interests to have a disproportionate and unfair influence within the political process;

(4) imposing large, unwarranted costs on taxpayers through legislative and regulatory distortions caused by unequal access to lawmakers for campaign contributors;

(5) making it difficult for some qualified candidates to mount competitive Senate election campaigns;

(6) disadvantaging challengers and discouraging competitive elections; and

(7) burdening incumbents with a preoccupation with fundraising and thus decreasing the time available to carry out their public responsibilities.

(b) **ENHANCEMENT OF DEMOCRACY BY PROVIDING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.**—The Senate finds and declares that providing the option of the replacement of large private campaign contributions with allocations from the Fair Elections Fund for all primary, runoff, and general elections to the Senate would enhance American democracy by—

(1) reducing the actual or perceived conflicts of interest created by fully private financing of the election campaigns of public officials and restoring public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the electoral and legislative processes through a program which allows participating candidates to adhere to substantially lower contribution limits for contributors with an assurance that there will be sufficient funds for such candidates to run viable electoral campaigns;

(2) increasing the public's confidence in the accountability of Senators to the constituents who elect them, which derives from the program's qualifying criteria to participate in the voluntary program and the conclusions that constituents may draw regarding candidates who qualify and participate in the program;

(3) helping to reduce the ability to make large campaign contributions as a determinant of a citizen's influence within the political process by facilitating the expression of support by voters at every level of wealth, encouraging political participation, and incentivizing participation on the part of Senators through the matching of small dollar contributions;

(4) potentially saving taxpayers billions of dollars that may be (or that are perceived to be) currently allocated based upon legislative and regulatory agendas skewed by the influence of campaign contributions;

(5) creating genuine opportunities for all Americans to run for the Senate and encouraging more competitive elections;

(6) encouraging participation in the electoral process by citizens of every level of wealth; and

(7) freeing Senators from the incessant preoccupation with raising money, and allowing them more time to carry out their public responsibilities.

SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 431 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“TITLE V—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

“SUBTITLE A—GENERAL PROVISIONS

“SEC. 501. DEFINITIONS.

“In this title:

“(1) **ALLOCATION FROM THE FUND.**—The term ‘allocation from the Fund’ means an allocation of money from the Fair Elections Fund to a participating candidate pursuant to section 522.

“(2) **BOARD.**—The term ‘Board’ means the Fair Elections Oversight Board established under section 531.

“(3) **FAIR ELECTIONS QUALIFYING PERIOD.**—The term ‘Fair Elections qualifying period’ means, with respect to any candidate for Senator, the period—

“(A) beginning on the date on which the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1); and

“(B) ending on the date that is 30 days before—

“(i) the date of the primary election; or

“(ii) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

“(4) **FAIR ELECTIONS START DATE.**—The term ‘Fair Elections start date’ means, with respect to any candidate, the date that is 180 days before—

“(A) the date of the primary election; or

“(B) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed

by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

“(5) **FUND.**—The term ‘Fund’ means the Fair Elections Fund established by section 502.

“(6) **IMMEDIATE FAMILY.**—The term ‘immediate family’ means, with respect to any candidate—

“(A) the candidate’s spouse;

“(B) a child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, or half-sister of the candidate or the candidate’s spouse; and

“(C) the spouse of any person described in subparagraph (B).

“(7) **MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.**—The term ‘matching contribution’ means a matching payment provided to a participating candidate for qualified small dollar contributions, as provided under section 523.

“(8) **NONPARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.**—The term ‘nonparticipating candidate’ means a candidate for Senator who is not a participating candidate.

“(9) **PARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.**—The term ‘participating candidate’ means a candidate for Senator who is certified under section 515 as being eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund.

“(10) **QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.**—The term ‘qualifying contribution’ means, with respect to a candidate, a contribution that—

“(A) is in an amount that is—

“(i) not less than the greater of \$5 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

“(ii) not more than the greater of \$150 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531;

“(B) is made by an individual—

“(i) who is a resident of the State in which such Candidate is seeking election; and

“(ii) who is not otherwise prohibited from making a contribution under this Act;

“(C) is made during the Fair Elections qualifying period; and

“(D) meets the requirements of section 512(b).

“(11) **QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTION.**—The term ‘qualified small dollar contribution’ means, with respect to a candidate, any contribution (or series of contributions)—

“(A) which is not a qualifying contribution (or does not include a qualifying contribution);

“(B) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

“(C) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the greater of—

“(i) \$150 per election; or

“(ii) the amount per election determined by the Commission under section 531.

“SEC. 502. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established in the Treasury a fund to be known as the ‘Fair Elections Fund’.

“(b) **AMOUNTS HELD BY FUND.**—The Fund shall consist of the following amounts:

“(1) **APPROPRIATED AMOUNTS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Amounts appropriated to the Fund.

“(B) **SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING APPROPRIATIONS.**—It is the sense of the Senate that—

“(i) there should be imposed on any payment made to any person (other than a State or local government or a foreign nation) who has contracts with the Government of the United States in excess of \$10,000,000 a tax equal to 0.50 percent of amount paid pursuant to such contracts, except that the aggregate tax for any person for any taxable year shall not exceed \$500,000; and

“(ii) the revenue from such tax should be appropriated to the Fund.

“(2) **VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.**—Voluntary contributions to the Fund.

“(3) **OTHER DEPOSITS.**—Amounts deposited into the Fund under—

“(A) section 513(c) (relating to exceptions to contribution requirements);

“(B) section 521(c) (relating to remittance of allocations from the Fund);

“(C) section 533 (relating to violations); and

“(D) any other section of this Act.

“(4) **INVESTMENT RETURNS.**—Interest on, and the proceeds from, the sale or redemption of, any obligations held by the Fund under subsection (c).

“(c) **INVESTMENT.**—The Commission shall invest portions of the Fund in obligations of the United States in the same manner as provided under section 9602(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(d) **USE OF FUND.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The sums in the Fund shall be used to provide benefits to participating candidates as provided in subtitle C.

“(2) **INSUFFICIENT AMOUNTS.**—Under regulations established by the Commission, rules similar to the rules of section 9006(c) of the Internal Revenue Code shall apply.

“SUBTITLE B—ELIGIBILITY AND CERTIFICATION

“SEC. 511. ELIGIBILITY.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—A candidate for Senator is eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for any election if the candidate meets the following requirements:

“(1) The candidate files with the Commission a statement of intent to seek certification as a participating candidate under this title during the period beginning on the Fair Elections start date and ending on the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period.

“(2) The candidate meets the qualifying contribution requirements of section 512.

“(3) Not later than the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate files with the Commission an affidavit signed by the candidate and the treasurer of the candidate’s principal campaign committee declaring that the candidate—

“(A) has complied and, if certified, will comply with the contribution and expenditure requirements of section 513;

“(B) if certified, will comply with the debate requirements of section 514;

“(C) if certified, will not run as a nonparticipating candidate during such year in any election for the office that such candidate is seeking; and

“(D) has either qualified or will take steps to qualify under State law to be on the ballot.

“(b) **GENERAL ELECTION.**—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for a general election or a general runoff election unless the candidate’s party nominated the candidate to be placed on the ballot for the general election or the candidate otherwise qualified to be on the ballot under State law.

“SEC. 512. QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—A candidate for Senator meets the requirement of this section if, during the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate obtains—

“(1) a number of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

“(A) the sum of—

“(i) 2,000; plus

“(ii) 500 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

“(2) a total dollar amount of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

“(A) 10 percent of the amount of the allocation such candidate would be entitled to receive for the primary election under section 522(c)(1) (determined without regard to paragraph (5) thereof) if such candidate were a participating candidate; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(b) **REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO RECEIPT OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.**—Each qualifying contribution—

“(1) may be made by means of a personal check, money order, debit card, credit card, or electronic payment account;

“(2) shall be accompanied by a signed statement containing—

“(A) the contributor’s name and the contributor’s address in the State in which the contributor is registered to vote; and

“(B) an oath declaring that the contributor—

“(i) understands that the purpose of the qualifying contribution is to show support for the candidate so that the candidate may qualify for Fair Elections financing;

“(ii) is making the contribution in his or her own name and from his or her own funds;

“(iii) has made the contribution willingly; and

“(iv) has not received any thing of value in return for the contribution; and

“(3) shall be acknowledged by a receipt that is sent to the contributor with a copy kept by the candidate for the Commission and a copy kept by the candidate for the election authorities in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election.

“(c) **VERIFICATION OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS.**—The Commission shall establish procedures for the auditing and verification of qualifying contributions to ensure that such contributions meet the requirements of this section.

“SEC. 513. CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.

“(a) **GENERAL RULE.**—A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if, during the election cycle of the candidate, the candidate—

“(1) except as provided in subsection (b), accepts no contributions other than—

“(A) qualifying contributions;

“(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

“(D) matching contributions under section 523; and

“(E) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 524;

“(2) makes no expenditures from any amounts other than from—

“(A) qualifying contributions;

“(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

“(D) matching contributions under section 523; and

“(E) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 524; and

“(3) makes no expenditures from personal funds or the funds of any immediate family member (other than funds received through qualified small dollar contributions and qualifying contributions).

For purposes of this subsection, a payment made by a political party in coordination with a participating candidate shall not be treated as a contribution to or as an expenditure made by the participating candidate.

“(b) CONTRIBUTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PACS, ETC.—A political committee of a participating candidate which is not an authorized committee of such candidate may accept contributions other than contributions described in subsection (a)(1) from any person if—

“(1) the aggregate contributions from such person for any calendar year do not exceed \$150; and

“(2) no portion of such contributions is disbursed in connection with the campaign of the participating candidate.

“(c) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be treated as having failed to meet the requirements of this section if any contributions that are not qualified small dollar contributions, qualifying contributions, or contributions that meet the requirements of subsection (b) and that are accepted before the date the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1) are—

“(1) returned to the contributor; or

“(2) submitted to the Commission for deposit in the Fund.

“SEC. 514. DEBATE REQUIREMENT.

“A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if the candidate participates in at least—

“(1) 1 public debate before the primary election with other participating candidates and other willing candidates from the same party and seeking the same nomination as such candidate; and

“(2) 2 public debates before the general election with other participating candidates and other willing candidates seeking the same office as such candidate.

“SEC. 515. CERTIFICATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 days after a candidate for Senator files an affidavit under section 511(a)(3), the Commission shall—

“(1) certify whether or not the candidate is a participating candidate; and

“(2) notify the candidate of the Commission’s determination.

“(b) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may revoke a certification under subsection (a) if—

“(A) a candidate fails to qualify to appear on the ballot at any time after the date of certification; or

“(B) a candidate otherwise fails to comply with the requirements of this title, including any regulatory requirements prescribed by the Commission.

“(2) REPAYMENT OF BENEFITS.—If certification is revoked under paragraph (1), the candidate shall repay to the Fund an amount equal to the value of benefits received under this title plus interest (at a rate determined by the Commission) on any such amount received.

“SUBTITLE C—BENEFITS

“SEC. 521. BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For each election with respect to which a candidate is certified as a participating candidate, such candidate shall be entitled to—

“(1) an allocation from the Fund to make or obligate to make expenditures with respect to such election, as provided in section 522;

“(2) matching contributions, as provided in section 523; and

“(3) for the general election, vouchers for broadcasts of political advertisements, as provided in section 524.

“(b) RESTRICTION ON USES OF ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—Allocations from the Fund

received by a participating candidate under sections 522 and matching contributions under section 523 may only be used for campaign-related costs.

“(c) REMITTING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 45 days after an election in which the participating candidate appeared on the ballot, such participating candidate shall remit to the Commission for deposit in the Fund an amount equal to the lesser of—

“(A) the amount of money in the candidate’s campaign account; or

“(B) the sum of the allocations from the Fund received by the candidate under section 522 and the matching contributions received by the candidate under section 523.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a candidate who qualifies to be on the ballot for a primary runoff election, a general election, or a general runoff election, the amounts described in paragraph (1) may be retained by the candidate and used in such subsequent election.

“SEC. 522. ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall make allocations from the Fund under section 521(a)(1) to a participating candidate—

“(1) in the case of amounts provided under subsection (c)(1), not later than 48 hours after the date on which such candidate is certified as a participating candidate under section 515;

“(2) in the case of a general election, not later than 48 hours after—

“(A) the date of the certification of the results of the primary election or the primary runoff election; or

“(B) in any case in which there is no primary election, the date the candidate qualifies to be placed on the ballot; and

“(3) in the case of a primary runoff election or a general runoff election, not later than 48 hours after the certification of the results of the primary election or the general election, as the case may be.

“(b) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall distribute funds available to participating candidates under this section through the use of an electronic funds exchange or a debit card.

“(c) AMOUNTS.—

“(1) PRIMARY ELECTION ALLOCATION; INITIAL ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 67 percent of the base amount with respect to such participating candidate.

“(2) PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amount the participating candidate was eligible to receive under this section for the primary election.

“(3) GENERAL ELECTION ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to the base amount with respect to such candidate.

“(4) GENERAL RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the base amount with respect to such candidate.

“(5) UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a primary or general election that is an uncontested

election, the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund to a participating candidate for such election in an amount equal to 25 percent of the allocation which such candidate would be entitled to under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

“(B) UNCONTESTED ELECTION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, an election is uncontested if not more than 1 candidate has campaign funds (including payments from the Fund) in an amount equal to or greater than 10 percent of the allocation a participating candidate would be entitled to receive under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

“(d) BASE AMOUNT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the base amount for any candidate is an amount equal to the greater of—

“(A) the sum of—

“(i) \$750,000; plus

“(ii) \$150,000 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(2) INDEXING.—In each even-numbered year after 2015—

“(A) each dollar amount under paragraph (1)(A) shall be increased by the percent difference between the price index (as defined in section 315(c)(2)(A)) for the 12 months preceding the beginning of such calendar year and the price index for calendar year 2014;

“(B) each dollar amount so increased shall remain in effect for the 2-year period beginning on the first day following the date of the last general election in the year preceding the year in which the amount is increased and ending on the date of the next general election; and

“(C) if any amount after adjustment under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of \$100, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$100.

“SEC. 523. MATCHING PAYMENTS FOR QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall pay to each participating candidate an amount equal to 600 percent of the amount of qualified small dollar contributions received by the candidate from individuals who are residents of the State in which such participating candidate is seeking election after the date on which such candidate is certified under section 515.

“(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate payments under subsection (a) with respect to any candidate shall not exceed the greater of—

“(1) 400 percent of the allocation such candidate is entitled to receive for such election under section 522 (determined without regard to subsection (c)(5) thereof); or

“(2) the percentage of such allocation determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(c) TIME OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall make payments under this section not later than 2 business days after the receipt of a report made under subsection (d).

“(d) REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each participating candidate shall file reports of receipts of qualified small dollar contributions at such times and in such manner as the Commission may by regulations prescribe.

“(2) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report under this subsection shall disclose—

“(A) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate;

“(B) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate from a resident of the State in which the candidate is seeking election; and

“(C) the name, address, and occupation of each individual who made a qualified small dollar contribution to the candidate.

“(3) FREQUENCY OF REPORTS.—Reports under this subsection shall be made no more frequently than—

“(A) once every month until the date that is 90 days before the date of the election;

“(B) once every week after the period described in subparagraph (A) and until the date that is 21 days before the election; and

“(C) once every day after the period described in subparagraph (B).

“(4) LIMITATION ON REGULATIONS.—The Commission may not prescribe any regulations with respect to reporting under this subsection with respect to any election after the date that is 180 days before the date of such election.

“(e) APPEALS.—The Commission shall provide a written explanation with respect to any denial of any payment under this section and shall provide the opportunity for review and reconsideration within 5 business days of such denial.

“SEC. 524. POLITICAL ADVERTISING VOUCHERS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall establish and administer a voucher program for the purchase of airtime on broadcasting stations for political advertisements in accordance with the provisions of this section.

“(b) CANDIDATES.—The Commission shall only disburse vouchers under the program established under subsection (a) to participants certified pursuant to section 515 who have agreed in writing to keep and furnish to the Commission such records, books, and other information as it may require.

“(c) AMOUNTS.—The Commission shall disburse vouchers to each candidate certified under subsection (b) in an aggregate amount equal to the greater of—

“(1) \$100,000 multiplied by the number of congressional districts in the State with respect to which such candidate is running for office; or

“(2) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(d) USE.—

“(1) EXCLUSIVE USE.—Vouchers disbursed by the Commission under this section may be used only for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements relating to a general election for the office of Senate by the participating candidate to which the vouchers were disbursed, except that—

“(A) a candidate may exchange vouchers with a political party under paragraph (2); and

“(B) a political party may use vouchers only to purchase broadcast airtime for political advertisements for generic party advertising (as defined by the Commission in regulations), to support candidates for State or local office in a general election, or to support participating candidates of the party in a general election for Federal office, but only if it discloses the value of the voucher used as an expenditure under section 315(d).

“(2) EXCHANGE WITH POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A participating candidate who receives a voucher under this section may transfer the right to use all or a portion of the value of the voucher to a committee of the political party of which the individual is a candidate (or, in the case of a participating candidate who is not a member of any political party, to a committee of the political party of that candidate's choice) in

exchange for money in an amount equal to the cash value of the voucher or portion exchanged.

“(B) CONTINUATION OF CANDIDATE OBLIGATIONS.—The transfer of a voucher, in whole or in part, to a political party committee under this paragraph does not release the candidate from any obligation under the agreement made under subsection (b) or otherwise modify that agreement or its application to that candidate.

“(C) PARTY COMMITTEE OBLIGATIONS.—Any political party committee to which a voucher or portion thereof is transferred under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall account fully, in accordance with such requirements as the Commission may establish, for the receipt of the voucher; and

“(ii) may not use the transferred voucher or portion thereof for any purpose other than a purpose described in paragraph (1)(B).

“(D) VOUCHER AS A CONTRIBUTION UNDER FECA.—If a candidate transfers a voucher or any portion thereof to a political party committee under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) the value of the voucher or portion thereof transferred shall be treated as a contribution from the candidate to the committee, and from the committee to the candidate, for purposes of sections 302 and 304;

“(ii) the committee may, in exchange, provide to the candidate only funds subject to the prohibitions, limitations, and reporting requirements of title III of this Act; and

“(iii) the amount, if identified as a ‘voucher exchange’, shall not be considered a contribution for the purposes of sections 315 and 513.

“(e) VALUE; ACCEPTANCE; REDEMPTION.—

“(1) VOUCHER.—Each voucher disbursed by the Commission under this section shall have a value in dollars, redeemable upon presentation to the Commission, together with such documentation and other information as the Commission may require, for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

“(2) ACCEPTANCE.—A broadcasting station shall accept vouchers in payment for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

“(3) REDEMPTION.—The Commission shall redeem vouchers accepted by broadcasting stations under paragraph (2) upon presentation, subject to such documentation, verification, accounting, and application requirements as the Commission may impose to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the voucher redemption system.

“(4) EXPIRATION.—

“(A) CANDIDATES.—A voucher may only be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on the day before the date of the Federal election in connection with which it was issued and shall be null and void for any other use or purpose.

“(B) EXCEPTION FOR POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES.—A voucher held by a political party committee may be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on December 31st of the odd-numbered year following the year in which the voucher was issued by the Commission.

“(5) VOUCHER AS EXPENDITURE UNDER FECA.—The use of a voucher to purchase broadcast airtime constitutes an expenditure as defined in section 301(9)(A).

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) BROADCASTING STATION.—The term ‘broadcasting station’ has the meaning given

that term by section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934.

“(2) POLITICAL PARTY.—The term ‘political party’ means a major party or a minor party as defined in section 9002(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 9002 (3) or (4)).

“SUBTITLE D—ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

“SEC. 531. FAIR ELECTIONS OVERSIGHT BOARD.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Federal Election Commission an entity to be known as the ‘Fair Elections Oversight Board’.

“(b) STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall be composed of 5 members appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, of whom—

“(A) 2 shall be appointed after consultation with the majority leader of the Senate;

“(B) 2 shall be appointed after consultation with the minority leader of the Senate; and

“(C) 1 shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the members appointed under subparagraphs (A) and (B).

“(2) QUALIFICATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The members shall be individuals who are nonpartisan and, by reason of their education, experience, and attainments, exceptionally qualified to perform the duties of members of the Board.

“(B) PROHIBITION.—No member of the Board may be—

“(i) an employee of the Federal Government;

“(ii) a registered lobbyist; or

“(iii) an officer or employee of a political party or political campaign.

“(3) DATE.—Members of the Board shall be appointed not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

“(4) TERMS.—A member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of 5 years.

“(5) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Board shall be filled not later than 30 calendar days after the date on which the Board is given notice of the vacancy, in the same manner as the original appointment. The individual appointed to fill the vacancy shall serve only for the unexpired portion of the term for which the individual's predecessor was appointed.

“(6) CHAIRPERSON.—The Board shall designate a Chairperson from among the members of the Board.

“(c) DUTIES AND POWERS.—

“(1) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall have such duties and powers as the Commission may prescribe, including the power to administer the provisions of this title.

“(2) REVIEW OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—After each general election for Federal office, the Board shall conduct a comprehensive review of the Fair Elections financing program under this title, including—

“(i) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(11);

“(ii) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(10);

“(iii) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512 to qualify for allocations from the Fund;

“(iv) the amount of allocations from the Fund that candidates may receive under section 522;

“(v) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523;

“(vi) the amount and usage of vouchers under section 524;

“(vii) the overall satisfaction of participating candidates and the American public with the program; and

“(viii) such other matters relating to financing of Senate campaigns as the Board determines are appropriate.

“(B) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW.—In conducting the review under subparagraph (A), the Board shall consider the following:

“(i) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Board shall consider whether the number and dollar amount of qualifying contributions required and maximum dollar amount for such qualifying contributions and qualified small dollar contributions strikes a balance regarding the importance of voter involvement, the need to assure adequate incentives for participating, and fiscal responsibility, taking into consideration the number of primary and general election participating candidates, the electoral performance of those candidates, program cost, and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

“(ii) REVIEW OF PROGRAM BENEFITS.—The Board shall consider whether the totality of the amount of funds allowed to be raised by participating candidates (including through qualifying contributions and small dollar contributions), allocations from the Fund under sections 522, matching contributions under section 523, and vouchers under section 524 are sufficient for voters in each State to learn about the candidates to cast an informed vote, taking into account the historic amount of spending by winning candidates, media costs, primary election dates, and any other information the Board determines is appropriate.

“(C) ADJUSTMENT OF AMOUNTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Based on the review conducted under subparagraph (A), the Board shall provide for the adjustments of the following amounts:

“(I) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(11)(C);

“(II) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(10)(A);

“(III) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512(a)(1);

“(IV) the base amount for candidates under section 522(d);

“(V) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523(b); and

“(VI) the dollar amount for vouchers under section 524(c).

“(ii) REGULATIONS.—The Commission shall promulgate regulations providing for the adjustments made by the Board under clause (i).

“(D) REPORT.—Not later than March 30 following any general election for Federal office, the Board shall submit a report to Congress on the review conducted under paragraph (1). Such report shall contain a detailed statement of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Board based on such review.

“(d) MEETINGS AND HEARINGS.—

“(1) MEETINGS.—The Board may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Board considers advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

“(2) QUORUM.—Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for purposes of voting, but a quorum is not required for members to meet and hold hearings.

“(e) REPORTS.—Not later than March 30, 2017, and every 2 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration a report documenting, evaluating, and making recommendations relating to the administrative implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this title.

“(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Each member, other than the Chairperson, shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the minimum annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) PERSONNEL.—

“(A) DIRECTOR.—The Board shall have a staff headed by an Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be paid at a rate equivalent to a rate established for the Senior Executive Service under section 5382 of title 5, United States Code.

“(B) STAFF APPOINTMENT.—With the approval of the Chairperson, the Executive Director may appoint such personnel as the Executive Director and the Board determines to be appropriate.

“(C) ACTUARIAL EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—With the approval of the Chairperson, the Executive Director may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.

“(D) DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.—Upon the request of the Chairperson, the head of any Federal agency may detail, without reimbursement, any of the personnel of such agency to the Board to assist in carrying out the duties of the Board. Any such detail shall not interrupt or otherwise affect the civil service status or privileges of the Federal employee.

“(E) OTHER RESOURCES.—The Board shall have reasonable access to materials, resources, statistical data, and other information from the Library of Congress and other agencies of the executive and legislative branches of the Federal Government. The Chairperson of the Board shall make requests for such access in writing when necessary.

“(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this subtitle.

“SEC. 532. ADMINISTRATION PROVISIONS.

“The Commission shall prescribe regulations to carry out the purposes of this title, including regulations—

“(1) to establish procedures for—

“(A) verifying the amount of valid qualifying contributions with respect to a candidate;

“(B) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the raising of qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the use of personal funds by participating candidates;

“(D) monitoring the use of allocations from the Fund and matching contributions under this title through audits or other mechanisms; and

“(E) the administration of the voucher program under section 524; and

“(2) regarding the conduct of debates in a manner consistent with the best practices of States that provide public financing for elections.

“SEC. 533. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES.

“(a) CIVIL PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.—If a candidate who has been certified as a participating candidate under section 515(a) accepts a contribution or makes an expenditure that is prohibited under section 513, the Commission shall assess a civil penalty against the candidate in an amount that is not more than 3 times the amount of the contribution or expenditure. Any amounts collected under this subsection shall be deposited into the Fund.

“(b) REPAYMENT FOR IMPROPER USE OF FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Commission determines that any benefit made available to a participating candidate under this title was not used as provided for in this title or that a participating candidate has violated any of the dates for remission of funds contained in this title, the Commission shall so notify the candidate and the candidate shall pay to the Fund an amount equal to—

“(A) the amount of benefits so used or not remitted, as appropriate; and

“(B) interest on any such amounts (at a rate determined by the Commission).

“(2) OTHER ACTION NOT PRECLUDED.—Any action by the Commission in accordance with this subsection shall not preclude enforcement proceedings by the Commission in accordance with section 309(a), including a referral by the Commission to the Attorney General in the case of an apparent knowing and willful violation of this title.”

SEC. 103. PROHIBITION ON JOINT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEES.

Section 302(e) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) No authorized committee of a participating candidate (as defined in section 501) may establish a joint fundraising committee with a political committee other than an authorized committee of a candidate.”

SEC. 104. EXCEPTION TO LIMITATION ON COORDINATED EXPENDITURES BY POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES WITH PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(d) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 441a(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking “in the case of” and inserting “except as provided in paragraph (5), in the case of” and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5)(A) The limitation under paragraph (3)(A) shall not apply with respect to any expenditure from a qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund’ means a fund established by the national committee of a political party, or a State committee of a political party, including any subordinate committee of a State committee, for purposes of making expenditures in connection with the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), that only accepts qualified coordinated expenditure contributions.

“(C) In this paragraph, the term ‘qualified coordinated expenditure contribution’ means, with respect to the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), any contribution (or series of contributions)—

“(i) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

“(ii) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed \$500 per election.”

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

SEC. 201. BROADCASTS RELATING TO ALL SENATE CANDIDATES.

(a) LOWEST UNIT CHARGE; NATIONAL COMMITTEES.—Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “to such office” in paragraph (1) and inserting “to such office, or by a national committee of a political party on behalf of such candidate in connection with such campaign;” and

(2) by inserting “for pre-emptible use thereof” after “station” in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1).

(b) PREEMPTION; AUDITS.—Section 315 of such Act (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively and moving them to follow the existing subsection (e);

(2) by redesignating the existing subsection (e) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(d) PREEMPTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), and notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (b)(1)(A), a licensee shall not preempt the use of a broadcasting station by a legally qualified candidate for Senate who has purchased and paid for such use.

“(2) CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND CONTROL OF LICENSEE.—If a program to be broadcast by a broadcasting station is preempted because of circumstances beyond the control of the station, any candidate or party advertising spot scheduled to be broadcast during that program shall be treated in the same fashion as a comparable commercial advertising spot.

“(e) AUDITS.—During the 30-day period preceding a primary election and the 60-day period preceding a general election, the Commission shall conduct such audits as it deems necessary to ensure that each broadcaster to which this section applies is allocating television broadcast advertising time in accordance with this section and section 312.”

(c) REVOCATION OF LICENSE FOR FAILURE TO PERMIT ACCESS.—Section 312(a)(7) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 312(a)(7)) is amended—

(1) by striking “or repeated”;

(2) by inserting “or cable system” after “broadcasting station”; and

(3) by striking “his candidacy” and inserting “the candidacy of the candidate, under the same terms, conditions, and business practices as apply to the most favored advertiser of the licensee”.

(d) STYLISTIC AMENDMENTS.—Section 315 of such Act (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by striking “the” in subsection (e)(1), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), and inserting “BROADCASTING STATION.—”;

(2) by striking “the” in subsection (e)(2), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), and inserting “LICENSEE; STATION LICENSEE.—”;

(3) by inserting “REGULATIONS.—” in subsection (f), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), before “The Commission”.

SEC. 202. BROADCAST RATES FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)), as amended by subsection (a), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.—In the case of a participating candidate (as defined under section 501(9) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971), the charges made for the use of any broadcasting station for a television broadcast shall not exceed 80 percent of the lowest charge described in paragraph (1)(A) during—

“(A) the 45 days preceding the date of a primary or primary runoff election in which the candidate is opposed; and

“(B) the 60 days preceding the date of a general or special election in which the candidate is opposed.

“(4) RATE CARDS.—A licensee shall provide to a candidate for Senate a rate card that discloses—

“(A) the rate charged under this subsection; and

“(B) the method that the licensee uses to determine the rate charged under this subsection.”

SEC. 203. FCC TO PRESCRIBE STANDARDIZED FORM FOR REPORTING CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ADS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall initiate a rulemaking proceeding to establish a standardized form to be used by broadcasting stations, as defined in section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(f)(1)), to record and report the purchase of advertising time by or on behalf of a candidate for nomination for election, or for election, to Federal elective office.

(b) CONTENTS.—The form prescribed by the Commission under subsection (a) shall require, broadcasting stations to report to the Commission and to the Federal Election Commission, at a minimum—

(1) the station call letters and mailing address;

(2) the name and telephone number of the station’s sales manager (or individual with responsibility for advertising sales);

(3) the name of the candidate who purchased the advertising time, or on whose behalf the advertising time was purchased, and the Federal elective office for which he or she is a candidate;

(4) the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person responsible for purchasing broadcast political advertising for the candidate;

(5) notation as to whether the purchase agreement for which the information is being reported is a draft or final version; and

(6) the following information about the advertisement:

(A) The date and time of the broadcast.

(B) The program in which the advertisement was broadcast.

(C) The length of the broadcast airtime.

(c) INTERNET ACCESS.—In its rulemaking under subsection (a), the Commission shall require any broadcasting station required to file a report under this section that maintains an Internet website to make available a link to such reports on that website.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

SEC. 301. PETITION FOR CERTIORARI.

Section 307(a)(6) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 437d(a)(6)) is amended by inserting “(including a proceeding before the Supreme Court on certiorari)” after “appeal”.

SEC. 302. FILING BY SENATE CANDIDATES WITH COMMISSION.

Section 302(g) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 432(g)) is amended to read as follows:

“(g) FILING WITH THE COMMISSION.—All designations, statements, and reports required to be filed under this Act shall be filed with the Commission.”

SEC. 303. ELECTRONIC FILING OF FEC REPORTS.

Section 304(a)(11) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434(a)(11)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “under this Act—” and all that follows and inserting “under this Act shall be required to maintain and file such designation, statement, or report in electronic form accessible by computers.”;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “48 hours” and all that follows through “filed electronically” and inserting “24 hours”; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (D).

TITLE IV—PARTICIPATION IN FUNDING OF ELECTIONS

SEC. 401. REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT FOR SENATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to refundable credits) is amended by inserting after section 36B the following new section:

“SEC. 36C. CREDIT FOR SENATE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this subtitle an amount equal to 50 percent of the qualified My Voice Federal Senate campaign contributions paid or incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year.

“(b) LIMITATIONS.—

“(1) DOLLAR LIMITATION.—The amount of qualified My Voice Federal Senate campaign contributions taken into account under subsection (a) for the taxable year shall not exceed \$50 (twice such amount in the case of a joint return).

“(2) LIMITATION ON CONTRIBUTIONS TO FEDERAL SENATE CANDIDATES.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to any taxpayer for any taxable year if such taxpayer made aggregate contributions in excess of \$300 during the taxable year to—

“(A) any single Federal Senate candidate, or

“(B) any political committee established and maintained by a national political party.

“(3) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—No credit shall be allowed under this section to any taxpayer unless the taxpayer provides the Secretary with such information as the Secretary may require to verify the taxpayer’s eligibility for the credit and the amount of the credit for the taxpayer.

“(c) QUALIFIED MY VOICE FEDERAL SENATE CONTRIBUTIONS.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘My Voice Federal Senate campaign contribution’ means any contribution of cash by an individual to a Federal Senate candidate or to a political committee established and maintained by a national political party if such contribution is not prohibited under the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971.

“(d) FEDERAL SENATE CANDIDATE.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘Federal Senate candidate’ means any candidate for election to the office of Senator.

“(2) TREATMENT OF AUTHORIZED COMMITTEES.—Any contribution made to an authorized committee of a Federal Senate candidate shall be treated as made to such candidate.

“(e) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a taxable year beginning after 2017, the \$50 amount under subsection (b)(1) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

“(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

“(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, determined by substituting ‘calendar year 2016’ for ‘calendar year 1992’ in subparagraph (B) thereof.

“(2) ROUNDING.—If any amount as adjusted under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of \$5, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$5.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 6211(b)(4)(A) of such Code is amended by inserting “36C,” after “36B.”

(2) Section 1324(b)(2) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting “36C,” after “36B.”

(3) The table of sections for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 36B the following new item:

“Sec. 36C. Credit for Senate campaign contributions.”

(c) FORMS.—The Secretary of the Treasury, or his designee, shall ensure that the credit for contributions to Federal Senate candidates allowed under section 36C of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section, may be claimed on Forms 1040EZ and 1040A.

(d) ADMINISTRATION.—At the request of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Federal Election Commission shall provide the Secretary of the Treasury with such information and other assistance as the Secretary may reasonably require to administer the credit allowed under section 36C of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as added by this section.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2016.

TITLE V—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND REVENUE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after chapter 36 the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

“Sec. 4501. Imposition of tax.

“SEC. 4501. IMPOSITION OF TAX.

“(a) TAX IMPOSED.—There is hereby imposed on any payment made to a qualified person pursuant to a contract with the Government of the United States a tax equal to 0.50 percent of the amount paid.

“(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount of tax imposed under subsection (a) for any calendar year shall not exceed \$500,000.

“(c) QUALIFIED PERSON.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘qualified person’ means any person which—

“(1) is not a State or local government, a foreign nation, or an organization described in section 501(c)(3) which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a), and

“(2) has contracts with the Government of the United States with a value in excess of \$10,000,000.

“(d) PAYMENT OF TAX.—The tax imposed by this section shall be paid by the person receiving such payment.

“(e) USE OF REVENUE GENERATED BY TAX.—It is the sense of the Senate that amounts equivalent to the revenue generated by the tax imposed under this chapter should be appropriated for the financing of a Fair Elections Fund and used for the public financing of Senate elections.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapter of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 36 the following:

“CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contracts entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 601. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act and amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendment to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected by the holding.

SEC. 602. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Except as otherwise provided for in this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on January 1, 2017.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 355—CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN TO CEASE THE EXTRA-JUDICIAL RELEASE OF AFGHAN DETAINEES, CARRY OUT ITS COMMITMENTS PURSUANT TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING GOVERNING THE TRANSFER OF AFGHAN DETAINEES FROM THE UNITED STATES CUSTODY TO AFGHAN CONTROL AND TO UPHOLD THE AFGHAN RULE OF LAW WITH RESPECT TO THE REFERRAL AND DISPOSITION OF DETAINEES

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. LEVIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 355

Whereas, on March 9, 2012, Afghan General Abdul Rahim Wardak and United States Marine General John Allen signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the United States reaffirmed its commitment to transfer Afghan nationals detained by the United States Armed Forces at the Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP) to Afghanistan, provided that the Government of Afghanistan establish an administrative detention regime under its domestic law and comply with its international obligations with respect to due process;

Whereas, on March 25, 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Afghanistan called for the creation of an Afghan Review Board (ARB) to convene under Afghan law to determine the disposition of all Afghan detainees;

Whereas, in the event of a dispute over the disposition of detainees, the March 2013 Memorandum of Understanding also commits the Government of Afghanistan to exchange views and information between the Minister of Defense and the Commander of United States Forces, Afghanistan before any detainee is released;

Whereas the Government of Afghanistan has announced the imminent release of 65 dangerous individuals from the DFIP without referral to the Afghan justice system, despite evidence showing these detainees have engaged in violent crimes against the Afghan people and under protest from United States Forces, Afghanistan;

Whereas detainees from this group of 65 are directly linked to attacks wounding or killing 32 United States or Coalition Forces and attacks wounding or killing 23 Afghan National Security Forces or Afghan civilians;

Whereas the United States Government has declassified and provided hundreds of pages of evidence and investigative leads to the ARB;

Whereas the Justice Center in Parwan has successfully adjudicated more than 3,000 criminal cases of individuals who committed acts of terror against Coalition Forces, Afghan National Security Forces, and the people of Afghanistan;

Whereas there is a legitimate force protection concern for the lives of Coalition Forces and Afghan National Security Forces if any disputed individual is released, since the primary weapon of choice is the improvised explosive device, which also poses a significant threat to Afghan civilians;

Whereas there is evidence that some detainees already released by the ARB have rejoined the fight against Coalition Forces;

Whereas, despite evidence to the contrary, President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai stated the prisoners set to be released are innocent and must be released;

Whereas releasing the dangerous detainees deprives the people of Afghanistan of their day in court and undermines the rule of law in the country;

Whereas the release of detainees under these conditions is not authorized, and the ARB is performing an extra-judicial function, contrary to the rule of law in Afghanistan; and

Whereas this extrajudicial action harms the prospective Bilateral Security Agreement between the United States and Afghanistan for post-2014 United States military presence in the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) insists President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai honor the terms included in the Memorandum of Understanding, dated March 25, 2013;

(2) insists that if the Afghan Review Board (ARB) will not follow the conditions set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding, that the ARB shall be dismantled and the National Directorate for Security (NDS) and Afghan prosecutors shall determine how to handle the remaining detainees;

(3) urges close and continuing communication between the Minister of Defense and the Commander of United States Forces, Afghanistan prior to the release of any detainee;

(4) urges the Government of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of detainees and instead refer the dangerous individuals and the remainder of the ARB cases for prosecution at the Justice Center in Parwan or for investigation by the NDS; and

(5) calls on the Secretary of State to consider the Government of Afghanistan's adherence to existing detainee memoranda of

understanding in implementing the certification requirements for assistance for Afghanistan under section 7044(3) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2014 (division K of Public Law 113-76).

SENATE RESOLUTION 356—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 13, 2014, AS “\$2.13 DAY”

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 356

Whereas \$2.13 per hour is the Federal minimum wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) as a cash wage under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) (referred to in this preamble as the “Federal minimum wage for tipped employees”);

Whereas when the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee was established in 1966, such wage was linked to the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1));

Whereas while the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee increased in 2009, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee has not changed in more than 20 years;

Whereas in the 1980s, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee reached 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee, and in 2014, the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee is only 29 percent of the \$7.25 per hour Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee;

Whereas tipped employees work in many occupations, including working as restaurant servers, airport attendants, hotel workers, valets, and salon workers;

Whereas \$2.13 per hour is such a low wage that tipped employees are dependent on the discretionary contributions of consumers for the majority of their income;

Whereas 7 States have 1 minimum wage for both tipped employees and covered nonexempt employees, and the restaurant industry has continued to thrive in such States;

Whereas in States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee that is higher than \$2.13 per hour, the poverty rate for tipped employees is lower than the poverty rate for tipped employees in States without such a higher minimum wage for tipped employees;

Whereas restaurant servers have a poverty rate that is 3 times that of the general workforce and are nearly 2 times more likely to depend on the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) than the general workforce;

Whereas States with a minimum wage for a tipped employee of \$2.13 per hour have a poverty rate for employees of color that is nearly double that of States with the highest minimum wage for a tipped employee;

Whereas women account for 66 percent of all tipped employees and 71 percent of restaurant servers;

Whereas 1/3 of tipped employees are parents who work hard to support their families;

Whereas the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that from 2008 to 2018, the food preparation and serving sector, as defined by the Bureau, would add more than 1,000,000 jobs;

Whereas such food preparation and serving sector has the lowest median wages of the top 20 growth sectors; and

Whereas raising the Federal minimum wage for a tipped employee would provide hardworking people in the United States with more just wages, lift families in the United States out of poverty, and provide economic security to tipped employees in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate designates Thursday, February 13, 2014, as “\$2.13 Day”; and

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that the cash wage that an employer is required to pay a tipped employee (as defined in section 3(t) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203(t))) under section 3(m) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 203(m)) should be increased to 70 percent of the Federal minimum wage for a covered nonexempt employee under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)).

SENATE RESOLUTION 357—EXPRESSING CONCERN OF UNDEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND THE ABUSE OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS IN UKRAINE

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. RISCH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 357

Whereas the political crisis that has engulfed Ukraine reflects the people’s desire for a democratic state which rejects corruption and abides by the rule of law;

Whereas Ukraine is a participating State of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and has made commitments to respect the human rights of its citizens;

Whereas, in 2009, Ukraine joined the European Union’s Eastern Partnership initiative, pledging to uphold the shared values of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine committed to judicial and electoral reforms to align with those of the European Union in preparation for the signing of an Association Agreement with the European Union;

Whereas, on Thursday, November 21, 2013, Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich announced that Ukraine would not sign an Association Agreement with the European Union, causing thousands of Ukrainians to assemble in Kiev’s Maidan Square in peaceful protest;

Whereas, on November 30 and December 11, 2013, Ukrainian paramilitary police used excessive force against peaceful demonstrators in Kiev’s Maidan Square;

Whereas, on January 16, 2014, the parliament of Ukraine passed anti-protest legislation restricting the right to peaceful assembly and the exercise of free speech, constraining independent media, and inhibiting the operation of nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas it is unclear whether these measures were passed legally, or have subsequently been entirely repealed;

Whereas, on January 20, 2014, Freedom House stated it is “deeply concerned by Ukrainian authorities’ targeted violence against journalists during public protests in Kiev—demonstrations spurred by President Viktor Yanukovich’s signing into law measures that tightly limit public protests, among other rollbacks on freedom”;

Whereas, on January 22, 2014, the actions of authorities in Ukraine resulted in the death of two protestors, including one who was “brutally beaten by two riot police officers,” according to Amnesty International;

Whereas, on January 30, 2014, Freedom House stated that “at least five Euromaidan activists are still reported missing, some since November 30, 2013 when anti-government demonstrations intensified”;

Whereas there are substantiated reports of kidnappings, including the abduction and torture of opposition activist Dmitrii Bulatov, and evidence of police brutality carried out against protesters and other activists, and the Ukrainian nongovernmental organization EuroMaidan SOS claims that as many as 27 people may be missing;

Whereas, on January 31, 2014, Human Rights Watch found that “Ukrainian police assaulted and injured dozens of journalists and medical workers while trying to disperse street fighters and protesters in Kiev” and called upon the international community to “press Ukraine to investigate serious human rights violations and prosecute those responsible in accordance with international due process standards”;

Whereas, on January 31, 2014, Freedom House reported that “more than 40 journalists have been injured covering the demonstrations” and that “[m]any of the reporters were attacked while wearing visible identification of their status as journalists”;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine has continued to intimidate and use violence against journalists and others expressing political opinions critical of the current government; and

Whereas, on January 7, 2014, the United States Senate passed a resolution expressing support for the people of Ukraine in light of public resistance to President Yanukovich’s decision not to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the President should increase democracy and human rights programming in Ukraine to the extent possible;

(2) the United States Government should immediately review security assistance funding for any organization in Ukraine involved in repressive efforts that violate the civil or human rights of the people of Ukraine;

(3) the United States Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) should utilize the resources and mechanisms of the OSCE to monitor and address human rights concerns, including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and Representative on Freedom of Media (RFM);

(4) the United States Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council should address Ukraine appropriately to bodies such as the United Nations Human Rights Council;

(5) the Department of State should immediately consider the imposition of targeted sanctions, including visa bans and asset freezes, against the perpetrators of state-sanctioned violence in Ukraine against peaceful protesters, journalists, and other members of civil society;

(6) the United States Government should urge authorities in Ukraine to locate missing persons and release all political prisoners, including former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and hold perpetrators of extra-legal measures accountable;

(7) the United States Government should work closely with the European Union to strengthen and support its efforts in Ukraine; and

(8) the United States Government endorses the statement of the European Union's Council on Foreign Affairs of February 10, 2014, which stated, "A new and inclusive government, constitutional reform bringing back more balance of powers, and preparations for free and fair presidential elections would contribute to bringing Ukraine back on a sustainable path of reforms."

SENATE RESOLUTION 358—COMMENDING THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL XLVIII AND THE 12TH MAN FOR THEIR CRITICAL SUPPORT

Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 358

Whereas on February 2, 2014, the Seattle Seahawks won Super Bowl XLVIII with a commanding 43-8 victory over the Denver Broncos;

Whereas Super Bowl XLVIII is the first Super Bowl Championship won by the Seahawks franchise;

Whereas Seahawks coach Pete Carroll is only the third coach in the history of football to win both a Super Bowl in the National Football League (NFL) and a National Championship in college football;

Whereas Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson is the third-youngest starting quarterback to win the Super Bowl;

Whereas the Seahawks had a 13-3 record for the 2013 regular season, giving the Seahawks the best regular season record in the National Football Conference and tying them with the Broncos for the best regular season record in the NFL;

Whereas in December 1984, the Seahawks retired the number 12 in honor of their fan base, who are among the loudest, proudest, and most impactful group of fans in sports, which is known as "the 12th Man";

Whereas the 12th Man is critical to the home field advantage of the Seahawks at CenturyLink Field, holds a world record for crowd noise at 137.6 decibels, and has twice triggered measurable earthquakes on the Richter Scale;

Whereas the Seahawks have the top-ranked defense in the NFL, led by an unstoppable defensive line and cornerback Richard Sherman and the "Legion of Boom" secondary;

Whereas Seattle linebacker Malcolm Smith was named Most Valuable Player (MVP) of Super Bowl XLVIII after making several key plays, including a 69-yard interception return for a touchdown in the second quarter;

Whereas Smith is the first defensive player to be named Super Bowl MVP since Super Bowl XXXVII;

Whereas the Seahawks defense contributed to a Broncos safety that was the fastest score in Super Bowl history and helped the Seahawks hold the lead throughout the game despite the Broncos having the highest-scoring offense in NFL history;

Whereas Super Bowl XLVIII was the most-watched television show in United States history, with an average audience of 111,500,000 people tuning in;

Whereas Seahawks owner Paul G. Allen and team coaches, staff, players, and all of their families and supporters should be commended for their dedication to supporting communities throughout the State of Washington with generous charity and advocacy work on behalf of those less fortunate; and

Whereas on February 5, 2014, 700,000 fans packed the streets of Seattle to celebrate the Seahawks victory: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates—

(A) the Seattle Seahawks for their victory in Super Bowl XLVIII, the first National Football League championship brought home to the Pacific Northwest;

(B) Seahawks owner Paul G. Allen and the Seahawks coaching, management, and support staff;

(C) the Seahawks 12th Man, for being among the most loyal and loudest sports fans in the world; and

(D) the Denver Broncos and quarterback Peyton Manning on a historic season; and

(2) requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to—

(A) Seahawks owner and Chairman Paul G. Allen;

(B) Seahawks President Peter McLoughlin; and

(C) Seahawks Executive Vice President of Football Operations and Head Coach Pete Carroll.

SENATE RESOLUTION 359—TO CONSTITUTE THE MAJORITY PARTY'S MEMBERSHIP ON CERTAIN COMMITTEES FOR THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS, OR UNTIL THEIR SUCCESSORS ARE CHOSEN

Mr. REID submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 359

Resolved, That the following shall constitute the majority party's membership on the following committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: Ms. Stabenow (Chairman), Mr. Leahy, Mr. Harkin, Mr. Brown, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Bennet, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Donnelly, Ms. Heitkamp, Mr. Casey, Mr. Walsh.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION: Mr. Rockefeller (Chairman), Mrs. Boxer, Mr. Nelson, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Pryor, Mrs. McCaskill, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. Begich, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Schatz, Mr. Markey, Mr. Booker, Mr. Walsh.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES: Ms. Landrieu (Chairman), Mr. Wyden, Mr. Johnson of South Dakota, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Sanders, Ms. Stabenow, Mr. Udall of Colorado, Mr. Franken, Mr. Manchin, Mr. Schatz, Mr. Heinrich, Ms. Baldwin.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS: Mrs. Boxer (Chairman), Mr. Carper, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Whitehouse, Mr. Udall of New Mexico, Mr. Merkley, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Booker, Mr. Markey.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE: Mr. Wyden (Chairman), Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Schumer, Ms. Stabenow, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Nelson, Mr.

Menendez, Mr. Carper, Mr. Cardin, Mr. Brown, Mr. Bennet, Mr. Casey, Mr. Warner.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Schumer (Chairman), Mrs. Feinstein, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Udall of New Mexico, Mr. Warner, Mr. Leahy, Ms. Klobuchar, Mr. King, Mr. Walsh.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Ms. Cantwell (Chairman), Mr. Levin, Ms. Landrieu, Mr. Pryor, Mr. Cardin, Mrs. Shaheen, Mrs. Hagan, Ms. Heitkamp, Mr. Markey, Mr. Booker.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS: Mr. Tester (Chairman), Mr. Johnson of South Dakota, Ms. Cantwell, Mr. Udall of New Mexico, Mr. Franken, Mr. Begich, Mr. Schatz, Ms. Heitkamp.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING: Mr. Nelson (Chairman), Mr. Casey, Mrs. McCaskill, Mr. Whitehouse, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Manchin, Mr. Blumenthal, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Donnelly, Ms. Warren, Mr. Walsh.

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE: Ms. Klobuchar (Vice Chairman), Mr. Casey, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Heinrich, Mr. Pryor.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2741. Mr. REID (for Mr. NELSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1254, to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

SA 2742. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

SA 2743. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, supra.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2741. Mr. REID (for Mr. NELSON) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1254, to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 2, line 25, insert "and Prevention" after "Centers for Disease Control".

SA 2742. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care; as follows:

Beginning on page 2, line 9, strike "important" and all that follows through line 2 on page 3, and insert the following: "importance of both—

"(A) being humane and compassionate; and
"(B) providing technical expertise."

SA 2743. Mr. REID (for Mr. BOOKER) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 350, designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care; as follows:

In the first whereas clause of the preamble, strike "as reflected" and all that follows through "their families".

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014 at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate office building, to conduct a hearing entitled, "MAP-21 Reauthorization: The Economic Importance of Maintaining Federal Investments in our Transportation Infrastructure."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014 at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Fisheries Treaties and Port State Measures Agreements."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Extreme Weather Events: The Costs of Not Being Prepared."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "The Indian Law and Order Commission Report: 'A Roadmap for Making Native America Safer.'"

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on February 12, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The Report of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board on Reforms to the Section 215 Telephone Records Program and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 10 a.m.,

to conduct a hearing entitled "Bipartisan Support for Improving U.S. Elections: An Overview from the Presidential Commission on Election Administration."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room 428A Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING AND THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet for a joint hearing during the session of the Senate on February 12, 2014, to conduct a hearing entitled "In Search of a Second Act: The Challenges and Advantages of Senior Entrepreneurship," in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building beginning at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Maj. Leslie L. Semrau, a U.S. Air Force officer, who is currently serving as my defense legislative fellow this year, be granted floor privileges for the duration of S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 597, 598, 601, 602, 603, with the exception of COL Mark A. Baird and COL Robert W. Stanley II; and Nos. 604, 605, with the exception of COL Andrew E. Salas; No. 606, with the

exception of BG Jon K. Kelk; and Nos. 607, 608, 609, 610, and 611, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force and Army; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Brad R. Carson, of Oklahoma, to be Under Secretary of the Army.

William A. LaPlante, Jr., of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. William D. Cobetto

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Bart O. Iddins

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Colonel Roy-Alan C. Agustin
Colonel Robert G. Armfield
Colonel Dieter E. Bareihs
Colonel Mitchel H. Butikofer
Colonel Mark D. Camerer
Colonel Douglas A. Cox
Colonel Stephen L. Davis
Colonel Eric T. Fick
Colonel Keith M. Givens
Colonel Paul H. Guemmer
Colonel Gregory M. Guillot
Colonel Gregory M. Gutterman
Colonel Darren E. Hartford
Colonel David W. Hicks
Colonel Brian T. Kelly
Colonel David A. Krumm
Colonel Peter J. Lambert
Colonel Evan M. Miller
Colonel Thomas E. Murphy
Colonel David S. Nahom
Colonel Mary F. O'Brien
Colonel Stephen W. Oliver, Jr.
Colonel Scott L. Pleus
Colonel John T. Rauch, Jr.
Colonel Christopher M. Short
Colonel Kirk W. Smith
Colonel Mark E. Weatherington
Colonel Stephen C. Williams

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Colonel Dennis J. Gallegos
Colonel David D. Hamlar, Jr.

Colonel John S. Tuohy

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be brigadier general

Colonel Paul D. Jacobs
Colonel Timothy P. O'Brien

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brigadier General Cassie A. Strom
Brigadier General Kenneth W. Wisian

The following Air National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brigadier General Daryl L. Bohac
Brigadier General Robert M. Branyon
Brigadier General Michael B. Compton
Brigadier General James E. Daniel, Jr.
Brigadier General Matthew J. Dzialo
Brigadier General Richard N. Harris, Jr.
Brigadier General Worthe S. Holt, Jr.
Brigadier General Gary W. Keefe
Brigadier General David T. Kelly
Brigadier General Donald A. McGregor
Brigadier General Robert L. Shannon, Jr.
Brigadier General Robert S. Williams

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be major general

Brigadier General Christopher J. Bence
Brigadier General Jack L. Briggs, II
Brigadier General David J. Buck
Brigadier General Thomas A. Bussiere
Brigadier General Stephen A. Clark
Brigadier General Stephen T. Denker
Brigadier General John L. Dolan
Brigadier General Michael E. Fortney
Brigadier General Peter E. Gersten
Brigadier General Gina M. Grosso
Brigadier General Jerry D. Harris, Jr.
Brigadier General Daryl J. Hauck
Brigadier General John M. Hicks
Brigadier General John P. Horner
Brigadier General James R. Marrs
Brigadier General Lawrence M. Martin, Jr.
Brigadier General John K. McMullen
Brigadier General Bradford J. Shwedo
Brigadier General Jay B. Silveria
Brigadier General Linda R. Urrutia-Varhall
Brigadier General Jacqueline D. Van Ovest
Brigadier General Mark W. Westergren

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Paul W. Tibbets, IV

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. David D. Halverson

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 624, 3037, and 3064:

To be brigadier general, judge advocate general's corps

Col. Stuart W. Risch

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE—C-PN

PN1303 AIR FORCE nomination of Teresa G. Paris, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1304 AIR FORCE nomination of Joel K. Warren, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1305 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning JEFFREY P. TAN, and ending CRISTALLE A. COX, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1306 AIR FORCE nominations (17) beginning ROBERT D. COXWELL, and ending SCOT L. WILLIAMS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1328 AIR FORCE nominations (14) beginning THERESE A. BOHUSCH, and ending JAMES A. STEPHENSON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1331 AIR FORCE nominations (49) beginning RICHARD T. BARKER, and ending IAN P. WIECHERT, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1333 AIR FORCE nominations (77) beginning JENARA L. ALLEN, and ending DERRICK A. ZECH, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1334 AIR FORCE nominations (123) beginning ERIN E. ARTZ, and ending TODD K. ZUBER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1336 AIR FORCE nominations (276) beginning ADAM L. ACKERMAN, and ending KRISTEN P. ZELIGS, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

IN THE ARMY—C-PN

PN1307 ARMY nomination of David W. Bryant, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1308 ARMY nominations (14) beginning JOSEPH B. BERGER, III, and ending WILLIAM D. SMOOT, III, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1337 ARMY nominations (29) beginning JOSEPH A. ANDERSON, and ending D011695, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1338 ARMY nominations (67) beginning VICTOR M. ANDA, and ending JOSHUA A. WORLEY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1339 ARMY nominations (159) beginning TRACY K. ABENOJA, and ending DANIEL J. YOURK, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1340 ARMY nominations (185) beginning HARRIS A. ABBASI, and ending DAVID M. ZUPANCIC, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1360 ARMY nominations (2) beginning STEPHEN E. FORSYTH, JR., and ending ERIC J. FRYE, which nominations were re-

ceived by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 16, 2014.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, with the concurrence of Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 561; that there be 20 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of that time the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDING THE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2013

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 248.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1254) to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Nelson amendment which is at the desk be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2741) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 2, line 25, insert "and Prevention" after 2 "Centers for Disease Control".

The bill (S. 1254), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1254

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013."

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA RESEARCH AND CONTROL ACT OF 1998.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment

to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (16 U.S.C. 1451 note).

SEC. 3. INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS AND HYPOXIA.

Section 603(a) is amended—

(1) by striking “the following representatives from” and inserting “a representative from”;

(2) in paragraph (11), by striking “and”;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (13);

(4) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following:

“(12) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and”;

(5) in paragraph (13), as redesignated, by striking “such”.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA PROGRAM.

The Act is amended by inserting after section 603 the following:

“SEC. 603A. NATIONAL HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA PROGRAM.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Under Secretary, acting through the Task Force, shall establish and maintain a national harmful algal bloom and hypoxia program, including—

“(1) a statement of objectives, including understanding, detecting, predicting, controlling, mitigating, and responding to marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events; and

“(2) the comprehensive research plan and action strategy under section 603B.

“(b) PERIODIC REVISION.—The Task Force shall periodically review and revise the Program, as necessary.

“(c) TASK FORCE FUNCTIONS.—The Task Force shall—

“(1) coordinate interagency review of the objectives and activities of the Program;

“(2) expedite the interagency review process by ensuring timely review and dispersal of required reports and assessments under this title;

“(3) support the implementation of the Action Strategy, including the coordination and integration of the research of all Federal programs, including ocean and Great Lakes science and management programs and centers, that address the chemical, biological, and physical components of marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(4) support the development of institutional mechanisms and financial instruments to further the objectives and activities of the Program;

“(5) review the Program’s distribution of Federal funding to address the objectives and activities of the Program;

“(6) promote the development of new technologies for predicting, monitoring, and mitigating harmful algal bloom and hypoxia conditions; and

“(7) establish such interagency working groups as it considers necessary.

“(d) LEAD FEDERAL AGENCY.—Except as provided in subsection (h), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall have primary responsibility for administering the Program.

“(e) PROGRAM DUTIES.—In administering the Program, the Under Secretary shall—

“(1) promote the Program;

“(2) prepare work and spending plans for implementing the research and activities identified under the Action Strategy;

“(3) administer merit-based, competitive grant funding—

“(A) to maintain and enhance baseline monitoring programs established by the Program;

“(B) to support the projects maintained and established by the Program; and

“(C) to address the research and management needs and priorities identified in the Action Strategy;

“(4) coordinate and work cooperatively with regional, State, tribal, and local government agencies and programs that address marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(5) coordinate with the Secretary of State to support international efforts on marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia information sharing, research, prediction, mitigation, control, and response activities;

“(6) identify additional research, development, and demonstration needs and priorities relating to monitoring, prevention, control, mitigation, and response to marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, including methods and technologies to protect the ecosystems affected by marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(7) integrate, coordinate, and augment existing education programs to improve public understanding and awareness of the causes, impacts, and mitigation efforts for marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(8) facilitate and provide resources to train State and local coastal and water resource managers in the methods and technologies for monitoring, preventing, controlling, and mitigating marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(9) support regional efforts to control and mitigate outbreaks through—

“(A) communication of the contents of the Action Strategy and maintenance of online data portals for other information about harmful algal blooms and hypoxia to State, tribal, and local stakeholders; and

“(B) overseeing the development, review, and periodic updating of the Action Strategy;

“(10) convene at least 1 meeting of the Task Force each year; and

“(11) perform such other tasks as may be delegated by the Task Force.

“(f) NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES.—The Under Secretary shall—

“(1) maintain and enhance the existing competitive programs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration relating to harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(2) carry out marine and Great Lakes harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events response activities;

“(3) establish new programs and infrastructure, as necessary, to develop and enhance critical observations, monitoring, modeling, data management, information dissemination, and operational forecasts relevant to harmful algal blooms and hypoxia events;

“(4) enhance communication and coordination among Federal agencies carrying out marine and freshwater harmful algal bloom and hypoxia activities and research;

“(5) to the greatest extent practicable, leverage existing resources and expertise available from local research universities and institutions; and

“(6) increase the availability to appropriate public and private entities of—

“(A) analytical facilities and technologies;

“(B) operational forecasts; and

“(C) reference and research materials.

“(g) COOPERATIVE EFFORTS.—The Under Secretary shall work cooperatively and avoid duplication of effort with other offices, centers, and programs within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, other agencies on the Task Force, and States, tribes, and nongovernmental organizations concerned with marine and freshwater issues to coordinate harmful algal bloom and hypoxia (and related) activities and research.

“(h) FRESHWATER.—With respect to the freshwater aspects of the Program, the Administrator, through the Task Force, shall carry out the duties otherwise assigned to the Under Secretary under this section, except the activities described in subsection (f).

“(1) PARTICIPATION.—The Administrator’s participation under this section shall include—

“(A) research on the ecology and impacts of freshwater harmful algal blooms; and

“(B) forecasting and monitoring of and event response to freshwater harmful algal blooms in lakes, rivers, estuaries (including their tributaries), and reservoirs.

“(2) NONDUPLICATION.—The Administrator shall ensure that activities carried out under this title focus on new approaches to addressing freshwater harmful algal blooms and are not duplicative of existing research and development programs authorized by this title or any other law.

“(i) INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVATION SYSTEM.—The collection of monitoring and observation data under this title shall comply with all data standards and protocols developed pursuant to the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (33 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.). Such data shall be made available through the system established under that Act.”.

SEC. 5. COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH PLAN AND ACTION STRATEGY.

The Act, as amended by section 4 of this Act, is further amended by inserting after section 603A the following:

“SEC. 603B. COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH PLAN AND ACTION STRATEGY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Under Secretary, through the Task Force, shall develop and submit to Congress a comprehensive research plan and action strategy to address marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia. The Action Strategy shall identify—

“(1) the specific activities to be carried out by the Program and the timeline for carrying out those activities;

“(2) the roles and responsibilities of each Federal agency in the Task Force in carrying out the activities under paragraph (1); and

“(3) the appropriate regions and subregions requiring specific research and activities to address local, State, and regional harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

“(b) REGIONAL FOCUS.—The regional and subregional parts of the Action Strategy shall identify—

“(1) regional priorities for ecological, economic, and social research on issues related to the impacts of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(2) research, development, and demonstration activities needed to develop and advance technologies and techniques for minimizing the occurrence of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia and improving capabilities to detect, predict, monitor, control,

mitigate, respond to, and remediate harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(3) ways to reduce the duration and intensity of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, including deployment of response technologies in a timely manner;

“(4) research and methods to address human health dimensions of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(5) mechanisms, including the potential costs and benefits of those mechanisms, to protect ecosystems that may be or have been affected by harmful algal bloom and hypoxia events;

“(6) mechanisms by which data, information, and products may be transferred between the Program and the State, tribal, and local governments and research entities;

“(7) communication and information dissemination methods that State, tribal, and local governments may undertake to educate and inform the public concerning harmful algal blooms and hypoxia; and

“(8) roles that Federal agencies may have to assist in the implementation of the Action Strategy, including efforts to support local and regional scientific assessments under section 603(e).

“(c) UTILIZING AVAILABLE STUDIES AND INFORMATION.—In developing the Action Strategy, the Under Secretary shall utilize existing research, assessments, reports, and program activities, including—

“(1) those carried out under existing law; and

“(2) other relevant peer-reviewed and published sources.

“(d) DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTION STRATEGY.—In developing the Action Strategy, the Under Secretary shall, as appropriate—

“(1) coordinate with—

“(A) State coastal management and planning officials;

“(B) tribal resource management officials; and

“(C) water management and watershed officials from both coastal States and non-coastal States with water sources that drain into water bodies affected by harmful algal blooms and hypoxia; and

“(2) consult with—

“(A) public health officials;

“(B) emergency management officials;

“(C) science and technology development institutions;

“(D) economists;

“(E) industries and businesses affected by marine and freshwater harmful algal blooms and hypoxia;

“(F) scientists with expertise concerning harmful algal blooms or hypoxia from academic or research institutions; and

“(G) other stakeholders.

“(e) FEDERAL REGISTER.—The Under Secretary shall publish the Action Strategy in the Federal Register.

“(f) PERIODIC REVISION.—The Under Secretary, in coordination and consultation with the individuals and entities under subsection (d), shall periodically review and revise the Action Strategy prepared under this section, as necessary.”.

SEC. 6. REPORTING.

Section 603 is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(j) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date the Action Strategy is submitted under section 603B, the Under Secretary shall submit a report to Congress that describes—

“(1) the proceedings of the annual Task Force meetings;

“(2) the activities carried out under the Program, including the regional and sub-regional parts of the Action Strategy;

“(3) the budget related to the activities under paragraph (2);

“(4) the progress made on implementing the Action Strategy; and

“(5) any need to revise or terminate research and activities under the Program.”.

SEC. 7. NORTHERN GULF OF MEXICO HYPOXIA.

Section 604 is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 604. NORTHERN GULF OF MEXICO HYPOXIA.

“(a) INITIAL PROGRESS REPORTS.—Beginning not later than 12 months after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, and biennially thereafter, the Administrator, through the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force, shall submit a progress report to the appropriate congressional committees and the President that describes the progress made by activities directed by the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force and carried out or funded by the Environmental Protection Agency and other State and Federal partners toward attainment of the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008.

“(b) CONTENTS.—Each report required under this section shall—

“(1) assess the progress made toward nutrient load reductions, the response of the hypoxic zone and water quality throughout the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin, and the economic and social effects;

“(2) evaluate lessons learned; and

“(3) recommend appropriate actions to continue to implement or, if necessary, revise the strategy set forth in the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008.”.

SEC. 8. GREAT LAKES HYPOXIA AND HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.

Section 605 is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 605. GREAT LAKES HYPOXIA AND HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS.

“(a) INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Task Force, in accordance with the authority under section 603, shall complete and submit to the Congress and the President an integrated assessment that examines the causes, consequences, and approaches to reduce hypoxia and harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes, including the status of and gaps within current research, monitoring, management, prevention, response, and control activities by—

“(1) Federal agencies;

“(2) State agencies;

“(3) regional research consortia;

“(4) academia;

“(5) private industry; and

“(6) nongovernmental organizations.

“(b) PLAN.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013, the Task Force shall develop and submit to the Congress a plan, based on the integrated assessment under subsection (a), for reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia and harmful algal blooms in the Great Lakes.

“(2) CONTENTS.—The plan shall—

“(A) address the monitoring needs identified in the integrated assessment under subsection (a);

“(B) develop a timeline and budgetary requirements for deployment of future assets;

“(C) identify requirements for the development and verification of Great Lakes hypoxia and harmful algal bloom models, including—

“(i) all assumptions built into the models; and

“(ii) data quality methods used to ensure the best available data are utilized; and

“(D) describe efforts to improve the assessment of the impacts of hypoxia and harmful algal blooms by—

“(i) characterizing current and past biological conditions in ecosystems affected by hypoxia and harmful algal blooms; and

“(ii) quantifying effects, including economic effects, at the population and community levels.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In developing the plan, the Task Force shall—

“(A) consult with State and local governments and representatives from academic, agricultural, industry, and other stakeholder groups;

“(B) consult with relevant Canadian agencies;

“(C) ensure that the plan complements and does not duplicate activities conducted by other Federal or State agencies;

“(D) identify critical research for reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia events and their effects;

“(E) evaluate cost-effective, incentive-based partnership approaches;

“(F) utilize existing research, assessments, reports, and program activities;

“(G) publish a summary of the proposed plan in the Federal Register at least 180 days prior to submitting the completed plan to Congress; and

“(H) after submitting the completed plan to Congress, provide biennial progress reports on the activities toward achieving the objectives of the plan.”.

SEC. 9. APPLICATION WITH OTHER LAWS.

The Act is amended by adding after section 606 the following:

“SEC. 607. EFFECT ON OTHER FEDERAL AUTHORITY.

“Nothing in this title supersedes or limits the authority of any agency to carry out its responsibilities and missions under other laws.”.

SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS; CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Act, as amended by section 9 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 607 the following:

“SEC. 608. DEFINITIONS.

“In this title:

“(1) ACTION STRATEGY.—The term ‘Action Strategy’ means the comprehensive research plan and action strategy established under section 603B.

“(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Administrator’ means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(3) HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM.—The term ‘harmful algal bloom’ means marine and freshwater phytoplankton that proliferate to high concentrations, resulting in nuisance conditions or harmful impacts on marine and aquatic ecosystems, coastal communities, and human health through the production of toxic compounds or other biological, chemical, and physical impacts of the algae outbreak.

“(4) HYPOXIA.—The term ‘hypoxia’ means a condition where low dissolved oxygen in aquatic systems causes stress or death to resident organisms.

“(5) PROGRAM.—The term ‘Program’ means the national harmful algal bloom and hypoxia program established under section 603A.

“(6) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the

Northern Mariana Islands, any other territory or possession of the United States, and any Indian tribe.

“(7) **TASK FORCE.**—The term ‘Task Force’ means the Inter-Agency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia under section 603(a).

“(8) **UNDER SECRETARY.**—The term ‘Under Secretary’ means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

“(9) **UNITED STATES COASTAL WATERS.**—The term ‘United States coastal waters’ includes the Great Lakes.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 603(a) is amended by striking “(hereinafter referred to as the ‘Task Force’)”.

SEC. 11. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.

The Act, as amended by section 10 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 608 the following:

“SEC. 609. INTERAGENCY FINANCING.

“The departments and agencies represented on the Task Force may participate in interagency financing and share, transfer, receive, obligate, and expend funds appropriated to any member of the Task Force for the purposes of carrying out any administrative or programmatic project or activity under this title, including support for the Program, a common infrastructure, information sharing, and system integration for harmful algal bloom and hypoxia research, monitoring, forecasting, prevention, and control. Funds may be transferred among the departments and agencies through an appropriate instrument that specifies the goods, services, or space being acquired from another Task Force member and the costs of the goods, services, and space. The amount of funds transferrable under this section for any fiscal year may not exceed 5 percent of the account from which the transfer was made.”.

SEC. 12. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

The Act, as amended by section 11 of this Act, is further amended by adding after section 609 the following:

“SEC. 610. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Under Secretary to carry out sections 603A and 603B \$20,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018.

“(b) **EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.**—The Under Secretary shall ensure that a substantial portion of funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) that are used for research purposes are allocated to extramural research activities. For each fiscal year, the Under Secretary shall publish a list of all grant recipients and the amounts for all of the funds allocated for research purposes, specifying those allocated for extramural research activities.”.

PROVIDING A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 25

PROVIDING A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF S. 540

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of H. Con. Res. 81 and H. Con. Res. 82 en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolutions by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 81) providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 25.

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 82) providing a correction in the enrollment of S. 540.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolutions en bloc.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolutions be agreed to en bloc and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolutions (H. Con. Res. 81 and H. Con. Res. 82) were agreed to en bloc.

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY FOR COMPASSIONATE PATIENT CARE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 350 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 350) designating February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Booker amendment to the resolution, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the resolution, as amended, be agreed to; the Booker amendment to the preamble, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2742) was agreed to, as follows:

Beginning on page 2, line 9, strike “important” and all that follows through line 2 on page 3, and insert the following: “importance of both—

“(A) being humane and compassionate; and
“(B) providing technical expertise.”.

The resolution (S. Res. 350), as amended, was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2743) was agreed to, as follows:

In the first whereas clause of the preamble, strike “as reflected” and all that follows through “their families”.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 350

Whereas National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care promotes national awareness of the importance of compassionate and respectful relationships between health care professionals and their patients;

Whereas on February 14 of each year, medical professionals and students stand in soli-

arity to support compassion in health care as expressed by Dr. Randall Friese, triage physician at the University of Arizona Medical Center, who stated that the most important treatment he provided to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords after she was shot on January 8, 2011, was to hold her hand and reassure her that she was in the hospital and would be cared for;

Whereas physicians, nurses, and all other health care professionals are charged with practicing medicine as both an art and a science;

Whereas an awareness of the importance of compassion in health care encourages health care professionals to be mindful of the need to treat the patient rather than the disease;

Whereas scientific research reveals that when health care professionals practice humanistically and demonstrate the qualities of integrity, compassion, altruism, respect, empathy, and service, their patients have better medical outcomes; and

Whereas February 14th would be an appropriate day to designate as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care and for health care students and professionals to celebrate by performing humanistic acts of compassion and kindness toward patients, families of patients, and health care colleagues: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 14, 2014, as National Solidarity Day for Compassionate Patient Care;

(2) recognizes the importance and value of a respectful relationship between health care professionals and their patients as a means of promoting better health outcomes; and

(3) encourages all health care professionals to be mindful of the importance of both—

(A) being humane and compassionate; and
(B) providing technical expertise.

COMMENDING THE SEATTLE SEAHAWKS FOR WINNING SUPER BOWL XLVIII

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 358.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 358) commending the Seattle Seahawks for winning Super Bowl XLVIII and the 12th Man for their critical support.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 358) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

MAJORITY PARTY COMMITTEE
APPOINTMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to S. Res. 359.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows: A resolution (S. Res. 359) to constitute the majority party's membership on certain committees for the One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, or until their successors are chosen.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 359) was agreed to.

(The resolution is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST
TIME—S. 2024

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand S. 2024 is at the desk and due for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows: A bill (S. 2024) to amend Chapter 1 of Title 1 United States Code with regard to the definition of marriage and spouse for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulations of marriage.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for a second reading of the bill, but for the purpose of placing the bill on the calendar under rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for a second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREE—
H.R. 3080

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SANDERS be appointed as a conferee to H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, February 13, through Monday, February 24, the majority leader and Senators WARNER and LEVIN be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENTS AUTHORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that not withstanding the upcoming recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, boards, conferences or inter-parliamentary conferences authorized by law, concurrent action of the two Houses or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 113-76, the appointment of the following individuals to be members of the National Commission on Hunger: Ricki Barlow of Nevada, Cherie Jamason of Nevada, and Dr. Mariana Chilton of Pennsylvania.

UPON RETURN

Mr. REID. When the Senate returns, it will address a number of important nominations, the comprehensive veterans bill, extension of unemployment insurance benefits, sexual assault in the military, and others.

On unemployment insurance, I am going to be very clear. This issue is not going to go away. We are one Republican vote away from restoring this lifeline; 1.7 million Americans, including 22,200 Nevadans, depend on this lifeline, and we are not going to let them down.

ORDERS THROUGH MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 24, 2014

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn and convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business conducted on the following dates and times; that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session on Friday, February 14, at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, February 18, at 10:30 a.m., and Friday, February 21, at 10:30 a.m.; and that the Senate adjourn on Friday, February 21, until 2 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2014; that on Monday, following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that Senator KING of Maine be recognized to deliver Washington's Farewell Address, under the previous order; that upon the conclusion of the read-

ing, the majority leader be recognized and then the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that at 5 p.m. the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 564, the Meyer nomination, with the time until 5:30 p.m. equally divided and controlled in the usual form prior to the cloture vote on the Meyer nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The next rollcall vote will be on Monday, February 24, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY,
FEBRUARY 14, 2014 AT 10:30 A.M.

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:46 p.m., adjourned until Friday, February 14, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TODD A. BATTA, OF IOWA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, VICE BRIAN T. BAENIG, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MARIA CANCIAN, OF WISCONSIN, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FAMILY SUPPORT, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, VICE CARMEN R. NAZARIO.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

D. NATHAN SHEETS, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, VICE LAEL BRAINARD, RESIGNED.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

MARK SOBEL, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS, VICE MARGRETHE LUNDSAGER, RESIGNING.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FRANCIS XAVIER TAYLOR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYSIS, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, VICE CARYN A. WAGNER, RESIGNED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE
HUMANITIES

R. JANE CHU, OF MISSOURI, TO BE CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE ROCCO LANDESMAN, RETIRED.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

JULIA AKINS CLARK, OF MARYLAND, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS. (REAPPOINTMENT)

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

VICTORIA REGGIE KENNEDY, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE A GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 8, 2016, VICE CAROLYN L. GALLAGHER, TERM EXPIRED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. NATHANIEL S. REDDICKS

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE

OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JAMES C. WITHAM

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. KEVIN W. MANGUM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. HERBERT R. MCMASTER, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. GUSTAVE F. PERNA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JAMES C. MCCONVILLE

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. ROBERT E. SCHMIDLE, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COLONEL JULIAN D. ALFORD
COLONEL NORMAN L. COOLING
COLONEL KARSTEN S. HECKL
COLONEL WILLIAM M. JURNERY
COLONEL TRACY W. KING
COLONEL MICHAEL E. LANGLEY
COLONEL CHRISTOPHER J. MAHONEY
COLONEL AUSTIN E. RENFORTH
COLONEL PAUL J. ROCK, JR.
COLONEL JOSEPH F. SHRADER

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JAN E. TIGHE

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 12, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ROBERT L. HOBBS, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

GARY BLANKINSHIP, OF TEXAS, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

AMOS ROJAS, JR., OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

PETER C. TOBIN, OF OHIO, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

KEVIN W. TECHAU, OF IOWA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF IOWA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

ANDREW MARK LUGER, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TINA S. KAIDANOW, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE.

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER-

NATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CATHERINE ANN NOVELLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT).

ANTHONY LUZZATTO GARDNER, OF NEW YORK, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE EUROPEAN UNION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY.

ROBERT A. SHERMAN, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC.

DANIEL BENNETT SMITH, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

BRAD R. CARSON, OF OKLAHOMA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

WILLIAM A. LAPLANTE, JR., OF MARYLAND, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM D. COBETTO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. BART O. IDDINS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COLONEL ROY-ALAN C. AGUSTIN
COLONEL ROBERT G. ARMFIELD
COLONEL DIETER E. BAREIHS
COLONEL MITCHEL H. BUTKOFER
COLONEL MARK D. CAMERER
COLONEL DOUGLAS A. COX
COLONEL STEPHEN L. DAVIS
COLONEL ERIC T. PICK
COLONEL KEITH M. GIVENS
COLONEL PAUL H. GUEMMER
COLONEL GREGORY M. GULLOT
COLONEL GREGORY M. GUTTERMAN
COLONEL DARREN E. HARTFORD
COLONEL DAVID W. HICKS
COLONEL BRIAN T. KELLY
COLONEL DAVID A. KRUMM
COLONEL PETER J. LAMBERT
COLONEL EVAN M. MILLER
COLONEL THOMAS E. MURPHY
COLONEL DAVID S. NAHOM
COLONEL MARY F. O'BRIEN
COLONEL STEPHEN W. OLIVER, JR.
COLONEL SCOTT L. PLEUS
COLONEL JOHN T. RAUCH, JR.
COLONEL CHRISTOPHER M. SHORT
COLONEL KIRK W. SMITH
COLONEL STEPHEN C. WILLIAMS
COLONEL MARK E. WEATHERINGTON

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COLONEL DENNIS J. GALLEGOS
COLONEL DAVID D. HAMLAR, JR.
COLONEL JOHN S. TUOHY

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COLONEL PAUL D. JACOBS
COLONEL TIMOTHY P. O'BRIEN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIGADIER GENERAL CASSIE A. STROM
BRIGADIER GENERAL KENNETH W. WISIAN

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIGADIER GENERAL DARYL L. BOHAC

BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT M. BRANTON
BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL B. COMPTON
BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES E. DANIEL, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL MATTHEW J. DZIALO
BRIGADIER GENERAL RICHARD N. HARRIS, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL WORTH S. HOLT, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL GARY W. KEEFE
BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID T. KELLY
BRIGADIER GENERAL DONALD A. MCGREGOR
BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT L. SHANNON, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT S. WILLIAMS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIGADIER GENERAL CHRISTOPHER J. BENCE
BRIGADIER GENERAL JACK L. BRIGGS II
BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID J. BUCK
BRIGADIER GENERAL THOMAS A. BUSSIÈRE
BRIGADIER GENERAL STEPHEN A. CLARK
BRIGADIER GENERAL STEPHEN T. DENKER
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN L. DOLAN
BRIGADIER GENERAL MICHAEL E. FORTNEY
BRIGADIER GENERAL PETER E. GERSTEN
BRIGADIER GENERAL GINA M. GROSSO
BRIGADIER GENERAL JERRY D. HARRIS, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL DARYL J. HAUCK
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN M. HICKS
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN P. HORNER
BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES R. MARRS
BRIGADIER GENERAL LAWRENCE M. MARTIN, JR.
BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN K. MCMULLEN
BRIGADIER GENERAL BRADFORD J. SHWEDO
BRIGADIER GENERAL JAY B. SILVERIA
BRIGADIER GENERAL LINDA R. URRUTIA-VARHALL
BRIGADIER GENERAL JACQUELINE D. VAN OVOST
BRIGADIER GENERAL MARK W. WESTERGREN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. PAUL W. TIBBETS IV

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. DAVID D. HALVERSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624, 3037, AND 3064:

To be brigadier general, judge advocate general's corps

COL. STUART W. RISCH

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF TERESA G. PARIS, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATION OF JOEL K. WARREN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JEFFREY P. TAN AND ENDING WITH CRISTALLE A. COX, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROBERT D. COXWELL AND ENDING WITH SCOT L. WILLIAMS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH THERESE A. BOHUSCH AND ENDING WITH JAMES A. STEPHENSON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RICHARD T. BARKER AND ENDING WITH IAN P. WIECHERT, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JENARA L. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH DERRICK A. ZECH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ERIN E. ARTZ AND ENDING WITH TODD K. ZUBER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ADAM L. ACKERMAN AND ENDING WITH KRISTEN P. ZELIGS, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF DAVID W. BRYANT, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSEPH B. BERGER III AND ENDING WITH WILLIAM D. SMOOT III, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JOSEPH A. ANDERSON AND ENDING WITH D011695, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH VICTOR M. ANDA AND ENDING WITH JOSHUA A. WORLEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TRACY K. ABENOJA AND ENDING WITH DANIEL J. YOURK, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH HARRIS A. ABBASI AND ENDING WITH DAVID M. ZUPANCIC, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND AP-

PEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH STEPHEN E. FORSYTH, JR. AND ENDING WITH ERIC J. FRYE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 16, 2014.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 13, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's Record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 20

3 p.m.
 Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
 To receive a briefing on those who have disappeared in Turkmenistan's prisons over the past ten years.
 CHOB-122

FEBRUARY 25

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Christine E. Wormuth, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Policy, Brian P. McKeon, of New York, to be Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Policy, David B. Shear, of New York, to be Assistant Secretary for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, and Eric Rosenbach, of Pennsylvania, to be Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense, all of the Department of Defense.
 SD-G50

2:30 p.m.
 Committee on the Judiciary
 Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights
 To hold hearings to examine reassessing solitary confinement II, focusing on the human rights, fiscal, and public safety consequences.
 SD-226

FEBRUARY 27

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine United States Strategic Command and United States Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SD-G50

2:30 p.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To resume closed hearings to examine responses to questions from the open session on current and future worldwide threats to the national security of the United States.
 SVC-217

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Subcommittee on Water and Power
 To hold hearings to examine S. 1419, to promote research, development, and demonstration of marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy technologies, S. 1771, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon, S. 1800, to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets, S. 1946, to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations, S. 1965, to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services, S. 2019, to reauthorize and update certain provisions of the Secure Water Act, and H.R. 1963, to amend the Water Conservation and Utilization Act to authorize the development of non-Federal hydropower and issuance of leases of power privileges at projects constructed pursuant to the authority of the Water Conservation and Utilization Act.
 SD-366

MARCH 5

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SH-216

2:30 p.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
 To hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SR-222

MARCH 6

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command and United States Africa Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SD-G50

MARCH 11

2:15 p.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
 To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.
 SR-222

MARCH 13

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SD-G50

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SD-G50

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SD-G50

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.
 Committee on Armed Services
 To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
 SD-106

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

SENATE—Friday, February 14, 2014

The Senate met at 10:30 and 2 seconds a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 14, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LEVIN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2014, AT 10:30 A.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 18, 2014.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:30 and 34 seconds a.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 18, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, February 14, 2014

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. UPTON).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 14, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable FRED UPTON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Reverend William Gurnee, John Paul II Seminary, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

All powerful Lord, as our Nation struggles through the difficulty of winter, we realize that there are forces greater than ourselves. In all things, we are more successful when we humble ourselves before You and each other.

Bless those who have been adversely affected by ice, snow, and cold. May the kindness of strangers and goodness of all Americans quickly restore our Nation to wholeness and holiness.

Bless the Members of this Chamber. May those who serve in this body continue to do so with honor, patience, and genuine care for all Members. Give them wisdom, give them joy in their office, and give them the lasting memory that they have served their country well.

We ask all this in Your Holy Name.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 475, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

SPEAKER BOEHNER: Nearly twenty four years ago, the people of New Jersey's First Congressional District afforded me the opportunity, responsibility and honor of serving as their Representative in the United States House of Representatives. I am profoundly thankful and forever humbled by the trust they have placed in me.

I am writing to inform you that, effective February 18, 2014, I will be resigning as a Member of the United States Congress.

The House has always been a place of high energy and healthy division, and it remains so today. But we have always shared the common belief that it is the spirit of the American people and Constitution we live by that makes our country great.

I am proud to have served with members of both parties, Democratic and Republican, liberal and conservative in what has been one of the greatest honors of my lifetime.

Sincerely,

ROBERT E. ANDREWS,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

Lt. Governor KIM GUADAGNO,
New Jersey Department of State, 225 W. State Street, P.O. Box 300, Trenton, NJ.

DEAR LT. GOVERNOR GUADAGNO: I hereby resign as a Member of the United States Congress, effective February 18, 2014.

Nearly twenty-four years ago, the people of New Jersey's First Congressional District afforded me the opportunity, responsibility and honor of serving as their Representative in the United States House of Representatives. I am profoundly thankful and forever humbled by the trust they have placed in me.

Sincerely,

ROBERT E. ANDREWS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 4(d) of House Resolution 5, One Hundred Thirteenth Congress, and section 1(k)(2) of

House Resolution 895, One Hundred Tenth Congress, I transmit to you notification that Bryson Morgan has signed an agreement not to be a candidate for the office of Senator or Representative in, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to, the Congress for the purpose of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 until at least three years after he is no longer a member of the board or staff of the Office of Congressional Ethics.

A copy of the signed agreement shall be retained by the Office of the Clerk as part of the records of the House.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 12, 2014 at 4:03 p.m.:

That the Senate agreed to House amendment to the text of the bill S. 540

That the Senate agreed to House amendment to the text of the bill S. 25

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 14, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 14, 2014 at 9:56 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 81

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 82

Appointments:
National Commission on Hunger.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 12, 2014 at 11:37 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1068
Appointments:
Board of Visitors of the United States Air Force Academy.
Board of Visitors of the United States Merchant Marine Academy.
With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS AND
JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills and joint resolutions of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 25. An act to ensure that the reduced annual cost-of-living adjustment to the retired pay of members and former members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62 required by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 will not apply to members or former members who first became members prior to January 1, 2014, and for other purposes.

S. 540. An act to temporarily extend the public debt limit, and for other purposes.

S.J. Res. 28. Providing for the appointment of John Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 29. Providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 475, the House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, February 18, 2014.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Tuesday, February 18, 2014, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4774. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program [Docket ID: ED-2013-OPE-0066] (RIN: 1840-AD13) received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4775. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4776. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations: Changes to Authorized Officials and the UK Defense Trade Treaty Exemption; Correction of Errors in Lebanon Policy and Violations; and Publishing Recent Changes to Parts 120, 127, and 128 in Final Form (RIN: 1400-AD49, 1400-AC37, and 1400-AC81) received January 29, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4777. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations: Changes to Authorized Officials and the UK Defense Trade Treaty Exemption; Correction of Errors in Lebanon Policy and Violations; and Publishing Recent Changes to Parts 120, 127, and 128 in Final Form (RIN: 1400-AD49, 1400-AC37, and 1400-AC81) received January 31, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4778. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Zimbabwe that was declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 899. A bill to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-352, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, The Committees on the Budget, Rules, and the Judiciary discharged from further consideration. H.R. 899 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. GRIFFIN of

Arkansas, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RENACCI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. BASS, and Mr. LANDEVIN):

H.R. 4058. A bill to prevent and address sex trafficking of youth in foster care; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHNEIDER:

H.R. 4059. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to create a grant program for governmental and other nonprofit organizations that support startup businesses in formation and early growth stages by providing entrepreneurs with resources and services to produce viable businesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself,

Mr. BACHUS, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 4060. A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to specify when bank holding companies may be subject to certain enhanced supervision, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4061. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the estate and gift tax; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4062. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the income exclusion for discharge of qualified principal residence indebtedness, to provide exclusions from income for certain payments under the National Mortgage Settlement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself and Mr.

RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4063. A bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to direct the Secretary of Labor to develop performance measures for individuals who receive entrepreneurial training as a part of any workforce investment activity, to create requirements for providers of workforce investment activities that offer entrepreneurial training, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SCALISE (for himself and Mrs.

BROOKS of Indiana):

H.R. 4064. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the individual health insurance mandate not apply until the employer health insurance mandate is enforced without exceptions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SERRANO:

H.R. 4065. A bill to require mobile service providers and mobile device manufacturers to give consumers the ability to remotely delete data from mobile devices and render such devices inoperable; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (for himself

and Mr. SARBANES):

H. Res. 485. A resolution expressing support for "National One Love Day"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY
STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 4058.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. SCHNEIDER:

H.R. 4059.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4060.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests lies in Article 1, Section 7, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which allows for every bill passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate and signed by the President to be codified into law; and therefore implicitly allows Congress to repeal any bill that has been passed by both chambers and signed into law by the President.

Additionally, the Constitution grants to Congress the explicit power to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT:

H.R. 4061.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. MCDERMOTT:

H.R. 4062.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 4063.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. SCALISE:

H.R. 4064.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 13

By Mr. SERRANO:

H.R. 4065.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation is introduced pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution, which states that that "The Congress shall have power . . . To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes." In addition, this legislation is introduced pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution, which states that Congress shall have the power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof."

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 164: Mr. BARBER and Ms. CHU.
 H.R. 207: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
 H.R. 310: Mr. GIBSON.
 H.R. 515: Mr. CICILLINE.
 H.R. 543: Mr. BERA of California.
 H.R. 685: Mr. CICILLINE.
 H.R. 946: Mr. LUCAS.
 H.R. 1173: Mr. WELCH.
 H.R. 1176: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
 H.R. 1201: Mr. RIGELL.
 H.R. 1286: Mr. MAFFEI.
 H.R. 1343: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
 H.R. 1386: Mr. LUCAS.
 H.R. 1508: Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. TSONGAS, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. COPFMAN, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
 H.R. 1563: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 1708: Ms. BORDALLO.
 H.R. 1709: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 1710: Mr. GRIJALVA.
 H.R. 1750: Mr. GOHMERT.
 H.R. 1761: Mr. GARAMENDI.
 H.R. 1953: Mr. RIGELL.
 H.R. 1978: Mr. CICILLINE.
 H.R. 2000: Mr. VEASEY.
 H.R. 2028: Mr. GARCIA, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 2109: Mr. MEEKS.
 H.R. 2415: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
 H.R. 2509: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
 H.R. 2535: Mr. TERRY.
 H.R. 2575: Mr. AMASH.
 H.R. 2591: Mr. GRAYSON.
 H.R. 2737: Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 2743: Mr. JONES.
 H.R. 2797: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
 H.R. 2866: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. SCHOCK, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BARR, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, and Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 2869: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 3335: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 3370: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. ESTY, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. HAHN, Ms. TITUS, Mr. HOYER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3461: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 3462: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 3471: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 3494: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 3513: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 3658: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 3662: Mr. HUFFMAN and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3673: Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 3690: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 3708: Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.

H.R. 3712: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. CHU, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MAFFEI, and Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 3793: Ms. MENG and Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico.

H.R. 3826: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 3840: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 3865: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, and Mr. YODER.

H.R. 3979: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 3997: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 4008: Mr. JONES.

H.R. 4019: Ms. SINEMA, Mr. PETERS of California, and Mr. FOSTER.

H.J. Res. 110: Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H. Res. 442: Mr. PERRY and Mr. HALL.

H. Res. 468: Ms. EDWARDS and Mr. SCHIFF.

H. Res. 476: Mr. CHAFFETZ, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, and Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H. Res. 479: Mr. HUFFMAN.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS— ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petition:

Petition 6 by Mr. HONDA on House Resolution 459: YVETTE D. CLARKE, MIKE QUIGLEY, and WM. LACY CLAY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUCCESS NORTH DALLAS

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Success North Dallas as they recently celebrated twenty-five years of success.

Founded in 1988, Success North Dallas started with merely fourteen select individuals. Under the leadership of William M. Wallace, Success North Dallas was created as a high-level connecting and mentor group, providing a forum to support business development and leadership. Over the past twenty-five years, they have met monthly, growing and maturing into an integral part of the North Texas business community. Success North Dallas has provided a forum for key business leaders, bringing together high-profile speakers from city, state, and federal government, major domestic and international corporate executives, and distinguished visionaries to discuss and share their respective businesses. I commend Success North Dallas for fostering and nurturing seventy businesses in North Texas, largely contributing to the region's success in economic development. I am grateful for the positive work Success North Dallas has done to expand and develop the business community in North Dallas.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in expressing our heartiest congratulations and best wishes to Success North Dallas for another twenty-five years of continued success.

HONORING MRS. WILMA GREEN'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. MARKWAYNE MULLIN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my constituent, Mrs. Wilma Green, who celebrated her 100th birthday on February 12, 2014.

Mrs. Green is an Oklahoma native. Her father, Neely Factory, was a Deputy United States Marshall. She has been and continues to be an inspiration to all of her family and friends.

She has been an active member of the community for her entire life, a foster mother to many, and a trusted child caretaker for working parents. She has also received numerous community and religious awards.

Mrs. Green is the kind of person who makes Oklahoma great. I am fortunate to be able to represent her, and I wish her all the best on this special day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues join me in celebrating Mrs. Wilma Green's 100th birthday, and the many years to come.

UNITED STATES OLYMPIANS FROM THIRD DISTRICT OF COLORADO TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the athletes from my home district in Colorado that are competing in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. With their dedication, passion, and spirit, these 15 men and women are a fine example of the best of our nation, and they serve as a model for young people around the world. To formally acknowledge their distinction and excellence, I stand to recognize these athletes from Colorado's 3rd district:

Competing in Skiing: Aaron Blunck, Bobby Brown, David Chodounsky, Lyman Currier, Simi Hamilton, Keri Herman, Gus Kenworthy, Heidi Kloser, and Torin Yater;

Competing in Snowboarding: Arielle Gold, Taylor Gold, and Justin Reiter;

Competing in Nordic Combined: Todd Lodwick and Bryan Fletcher;

And competing in the Biathlon: Lanny Barnes.

I am especially proud and honored to have watched one of these fine Coloradans carry the U.S. flag high in the Opening Ceremony of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Todd Lodwick, competing in the Nordic Combined, has inspired athletes from around the U.S. since he began his Olympic career in Lillehammer in 1994. I could not think of a more deserving U.S. athlete to display our flag on this world stage. While I stand to specifically honor the athletes of our Olympic delegation who hail from my home district, I would like to thank every member of Team USA for their continued contribution to their sports and communities.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to recognize each of these fine athletes. I rise today to thank them for inspiring so many people and congratulate each of them on their truly amazing careers representing the best of America.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DAVID GOLLAHER, PRESIDENT AND CEO, THE CALIFORNIA HEALTHCARE INSTITUTE

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Dr. David Gollaher, Co-Founder and

President of the California Healthcare Institute on his twenty-one years of service to CHI as its fearless leader and tireless advocate for the California Life Sciences.

I met David in 1993 when I was first elected to Congress and David was launching CHI. We forged a true partnership from that time forward to promote biotechnology and assure a vibrant industry which holds such promise for the people of our country and the world.

David has a long and storied career in promoting science in the U.S. Before founding CHI in 1993, he was a senior executive at Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation. Earlier in his career, he served on the faculties of Harvard University, University of California, San Diego, the Graduate School of Public Health at SDSU, and the Overseas School of Rome. He is an award-winning historian of science and medicine, and has written three books and numerous articles in the fields of health policy, the economics of biomedical research and development, bioethics and the history of medicine.

David's leadership at CHI filled a critically important role in educating the public, including Members of Congress, on the importance of innovation and investment in the life sciences. From the creation of a pathway for the approval of biosimilars, to reforms at the FDA to improve patient safety and access to new therapies, David has been my friend, wise counsel, and partner. He will be missed at CHI, and his extraordinary accomplishments will remain his legacy. I shall miss the finest partner I've had and he will always remain the gold standard for his magnificent work and informed advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in paying tribute to Dr. David Gollaher for his exceptional leadership in championing the life sciences, biotechnology, and biomedical research and for guiding policy makers in shaping policies to improve and save the lives of countless Americans. His professionalism, trusted data, and true passion for his work has strengthened our nation and made us better for all he has contributed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to state for the record, because I was unavoidably detained with responsibilities in my district, I was unable to be present to vote on Monday, February 10, 2014. I would have voted in favor of H.R. 2431, to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System. The record drought facing California right now makes clear that reliable drought assessment and prediction information is critical. This

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

information helps communities, farms and businesses prepare and respond. I would echo my colleague, Ranking Member of the Science, Space and Technology Committee EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, that while it is crucial that we reauthorize NIDIS, we would have liked to see an even more robust authorization level for this important program.

I would also have voted in favor of H. Res. 447, supporting the democratic and European aspiration of the people of Ukraine, and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear. I am glad that so many of my colleagues also stood up for these principles of basic human rights.

DR. DAVID WELCH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and to honor the life of an extraordinary leader of the Tampa Bay community, Dr. David Welch. His remarkable career in public service and his many contributions to our community stand as a testament to his tremendous character.

Dr. Welch was born in St. Petersburg, Florida. As a young man, Dr. Welch served his country in the U.S. Army Airborne during the Korean War. After the war, Dr. Welch graduated from Florida A&M University and later obtained a doctorate in education from Nova University. Teaching was a lifelong passion for Mr. Welch, who inspired countless young minds during his time as a teacher at Gibbs Junior College and later on at St. Petersburg Vocational-Technical Institute.

Once Dr. Welch began his career, he quickly emerged as a business and community leader. He founded Welch Tax Services and Accounting which assisted numerous local entrepreneurs and helped foster a thriving business environment in downtown St. Petersburg. As Director of Fiscal Affairs at St. Petersburg Vocational-Technical Institute, he used his adept diplomatic skills to resolve the 116-day sanitation workers' strike of 1968. He would continue to employ his ability to bring people together as the co-chair of the biracial Community Alliance, an organization dedicated to relieving racial tensions in the area.

In 1981, Dr. Welch became the second African American to serve on the St. Petersburg City Council. As a three-term council member, Dr. Welch championed development projects, and was one of the driving forces behind what are today some of St. Petersburg's most prominent landmarks. His efforts were instrumental in the development of Tropicana Field, the Pier, and the Bayfront Center. Dr. Welch was also a strong supporter of municipal interest-free loans for housing which led to major renovations in St. Petersburg. His outgoing nature and diplomatic manner earned him respect and results throughout his tenure as a council member.

While working diligently as a public servant, Dr. Welch continued to remain active in education and supporting local businesses through his office. Dr. Welch was always

eager to mentor aspiring leaders and took an active interest in the youth of the community.

On September 16, 2013, Dr. Welch passed away at the age of 85. His legacy of service and leadership are an inspiration for all people throughout this great nation. His commitment to education, economic development, and equality will be forever remembered and appreciated. Mr. Speaker, I join the Tampa Bay community in thanking Dr. David Welch for his lifelong service to the State of Florida.

HONORING ROSE CONRY FOR RECEIVING THE 2014 OVERALL JAX CHAMBER'S SMALL BUSINESS LEADER OF YEAR AWARD

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Rose Conry, the Chief Executive Officer of StaffTime on receiving the 2014 overall JAX Chamber's Small Business Leader of Year Award.

StaffTime is a minority-owned staffing solutions company located in the 4th Congressional District of Florida. In addition to the Small Business Leader of the Year Award, StaffTime has also been named one of the 50 fastest growing companies of North Florida by the Jacksonville Business Journal. As historical high numbers of Americans are finding themselves unemployed for longer periods of time, I commend StaffTime for leading the temporary staffing industry and providing a full-service approach, specializing in administrative, accounting, legal and customer service positions. Established only four short years ago, StaffTime has grown to a \$2 million company employing four full-time employees with 20 consultants.

Before becoming a small business owner, Conry worked in human resources for Jacksonville Surgery Center and CSX. She earned a bachelor's degree from Jacksonville University and is currently pursuing her master's degree in human resources at Webster University. She continues to be heavily involved in the community with memberships in the Society for Human Resource Management, Leadership Jacksonville, Women Business Owners of North Florida, and JAX Chamber.

Small businesses are crucial to our nation's well being and the leaders who are paving the way during these difficult economic times need to be recognized. Conry's mission is helping connect individuals with meaningful employment; she is the American dream and she is helping others to live it as well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in this very special congressional salute to this Small Business leader, Rose Conry.

HONORING BERNEL ARTHUR RICHARDSON

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, as the Nation readies to observe the 50th Anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, I rise today to honor Mr. Bernel Arthur Richardson. Born in St. Croix, Mr. Richardson has been an activist, resident, lecturer, consultant, and economic development leader in Bronx County since 1969.

As an active member of the Civil Rights movement, Mr. Richardson understood the vital need to end the economic and political inequities facing the African-American community. After graduating from Howard University, Mr. Richardson began working alongside many of the South Bronx's renowned transformative figures to develop programs and initiatives that would create new economic opportunities for South Bronx residents.

Mr. Richardson started his public sector career in 1970 when he was appointed by Bronx Borough President Robert B. Abrams to sit as a member of the Community 3 Planning Board. His successes as a member of the Planning Board led him to become a part of the Mayor's Violence Against Women Task Force and to be asked to serve as a consultant on several citywide anti-poverty programs. He recently stepped down as Chairman of the Board at the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation but is still very active as the Executive Director of the Black United Leadership of the Bronx.

Mr. Richardson has served as a leader in my borough for many years and has helped make the Bronx a better place through his tireless efforts. As I reflect on the more than four decades of Mr. Richardson's public service to the residents of the Bronx and to the constituents of the 15th Congressional District, it fills me with hope that today's young African American leaders have mentors in the community to look to for guidance as they continue to champion social justice issues in our neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all my colleagues join me in recognizing the past, present, and future accomplishments of Mr. Bernel Richardson.

THE SERVICE OF MR. JACOB GILLISON

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Jacob Gillison, who served as office manager and scheduler in my Washington, DC office for nearly 14 years.

For over a decade, Jacob served as a member of my staff, friend, confidant, and counselor to many in what we call Team Lewis, our office family. Jacob recently joined the staff of Senator BERNIE SANDERS as the administrative director and scheduler. I would

like to congratulate him on his new position, and thank him for his many years of service to my office and constituents.

I first met Jacob many years ago when he was a member of the United States' Air Force (USAF) Air Traffic Control Field. During his nearly two decades of service in the U.S. Air Force, Jacob was recognized repeatedly for his dedication and commitment to excellence. When I learned that he was considering a transition to a different branch of government, I was pleased to invite him to join my Washington, DC staff as scheduler and office manager. If he was able to keep military planes safe and on-time, I believed he might be able to keep me and my staff on schedule.

When he joined my office, I learned even more about his total commitment to service. As a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Jacob was handpicked by the president of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. to serve as deputy assistant to the international president of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity focusing on governmental and civic affairs. In this capacity, Jacob conceptualized and coordinated "Sigma Day on the Hill," which brought local high school students to Capitol Hill to lobby on the behalf of legislation affecting high school students and their local communities. This experience enlightened and exposed young people in learning how their Congress works and inspiring them to move from the sidelines to the frontlines.

During his spare time in the evening and on weekends, Jacob advises and counsels young men in the local community. His selfless efforts did not go unrecognized as the leadership of Nu Sigma Sigma Chapter of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. voted and honored him as "Mentor of the Year 2010." As an additional testament to Jacob's long and exceptional service, the Free Masons bestowed on him their 33rd Degree, an honorary title granted to those Masons who distinguish themselves.

A native of Beaufort, South Carolina, Jacob graduated from Battery Creek High School and continued his education by earning dual Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Administration and Economics from Benedict College and an additional degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.

Over the years, I had the pleasure of visiting Beaufort, South Carolina and even attending the beautiful Gullah Festival. I was particularly proud to meet and become an honorary member of Jacob's welcoming family. He is truly a loving and dedicated family man—a proud brother, father, and grandfather. Jacob's son, Dexter, and daughter-in-law, Nikita, continue the family tradition of service as members of the U.S. Air Force. His lovely daughter, Mekala, is a high school honor roll student, ROTC member, athlete and dancer, and Jacob's handsome first grandchild, Brice, is the apple of his eye.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, I cannot say enough about how great a member of my staff and family Jacob Gillison was. I will truly miss him, his children, grandson, twin brother Esau, and brothers-in-spirit—Tyson and Glenn—but I wish him continued success in his new position and this exciting, next stage of his outstanding career.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "ACCESS TO HEARING HEALTHCARE ACT OF 2014"

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Access to Hearing Healthcare Act of 2014. This important legislation will allow Medicare beneficiaries the option of going directly to a qualified audiologist for hearing and balance diagnostic tests. Medicare presently requires that beneficiaries with hearing loss or balance disorders obtain a physician referral before seeing an audiologist.

This referral requirement differs from other federal health agencies, including the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Office of Personnel Management, which allow patients to directly access audiologists. Hearing impairment is one of the most common conditions affecting older Americans, with approximately 33 percent of adults aged 60 and over and 40–50 percent of those aged 75 and over with hearing loss. Hearing loss among senior citizens, if left untreated, can result in isolation and depression.

We need to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries can obtain audiology services in a timely manner. I ask that my colleagues support this important legislation.

HONORING THE GREATER BEACHES VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST 3270 ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 75th anniversary of the Greater Beaches Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3270.

Created in 1939, Post 3270 is Jacksonville's oldest continuous veterans organization. The First Coast is honored to have such a commendable organization that is committed to serving veterans, military families, and their communities.

The Veterans of Foreign War can trace its roots back to 1898, when the veterans of the Spanish American War and the veterans of the Philippine Insurrection joined forces and founded local organizations to secure rights and benefits for their members who returned wounded and sick after serving their country. At a time when there was no medical care or pensions, our country's heroes were often left to fend for themselves. As such, these individuals were compelled to do something about it. Taking matters into their own hands, they banded together to form what is now known as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. Starting out with only three chapters, the Veterans of Foreign War continued to grow over the years with more than 2,000,000 members today. They have been instrumental in establishing the Veteran's Administration,

creating the GI Bill for the 20th century, and developing a National Cemetery system.

I am honored to have such brave men and women in the 4th Congressional District of Florida. Not only have they served their country abroad, but they continue to serve their communities at home. Such service deserves praise and I wish them many more years of success. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in this very special congressional salute honoring the Greater Beaches Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3270.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week of February 3, 2014. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

rollcall No. 32—On final passage of H.R. 1791—"yea";
rollcall No. 33—On final passage of H.R. 357—"yea";
rollcall No. 34—Motion on ordering the previous question on the rule—"nay";
rollcall No. 35—H.Res.470—"nay";
rollcall No. 36—On ordering the previous question on the rule—"nay";
rollcall No. 37—H.Res.472—"nay";
rollcall No. 38—DeFazio Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 39—Holt Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 40—On motion to recommit with instructions on H.R. 3590—"yea";
rollcall No. 41—On final passage of H.R. 3590—"nay";
rollcall No. 42—Napolitano Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 43—Matsui Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 44—Bera Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 45—Capps Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 46—Huffman Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 47—McNerney Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 48—Peters (CA) Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 49—On the motion to recommit with instructions on H.R. 3964—"yea";
rollcall No. 50—On final passage of H.R. 3964—"nay";
rollcall No. 51—Grijalva Amendment—"yea";
rollcall No. 52—Labrador Amendment—"nay";
rollcall No. 53—On the motion to recommit with instructions on H.R. 2954—"yea";
rollcall No. 54—On final passage of H.R. 2954—"nay."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on rollcall vote No. 60

on an amendment to S. 25 to clarify that the reduction in the cost of living adjustment for military retirees applies only to those members or former members of an armed force who became a member of a uniformed service on or after January 1, 2014. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted "aye" and ask consent that my statement be included in the RECORD.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 56—H. Res. 447—Supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine, and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, had I been present, I would have voted "yes";

on rollcall No. 57—JOURNAL—On Approving the Journal, had I been present, I would have voted "yes";

on rollcall No. 58—H. Res. 475—On Ordering the Previous Question, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, providing for proceedings from Feb. 13, 2014—Feb. 24, 2014, had I been present, I would have voted "yes";

on rollcall No. 59—H. Res. 475—On Agreeing to the Resolution, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, providing for proceedings from Feb. 13, 2014—Feb. 24, 2014, had I been present, I would have voted "yes";

on rollcall No. 60—S. 25—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal features of the electric distribution system to the South Utah Valley Electric Service District, and for other purposes, had I been present, I would have voted "yes";

on rollcall No. 61—S. 540—On Passage to designate the air route traffic control center located in Nashua, New Hampshire, as the Patricia Clark Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center, had I been present, I would have voted "no"; and

on rollcall No. 62—H.R. 3448—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide for an optional pilot program allowing certain emerging growth companies to increase the tick sizes of their stocks, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING DR. JEFFREY
LEVENSON FOR HIS WORK WITH
SURGICAL EYE EXPEDITIONS

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Jeffrey Levenson for his good will and compassion for his work with Surgical Eye Expeditions.

As a practicing ophthalmologist for over 30 years, Dr. Levenson has dedicated his career to giving the gift of sight. At the age of 51, Dr. Levenson underwent cataract surgery to restore his own vision loss. Realizing firsthand the devastation of vision loss, Dr. Levenson reached out to California-based Surgical Eye Expeditions, a nonprofit humanitarian organization that recruits volunteer ophthalmologists to perform free, sight-restoring surgery throughout the world.

In 2009 Dr. Levenson traveled to Peru for his inaugural trip performing multiple cataract surgery. Since then, he and his wife, Dr. Ilene Levenson, have traveled to Honduras, El Salvador, and Mexico performing multiple surgeries for those less fortunate. In a typical week long trip the ophthalmologists are able to perform 20 cataract surgeries. While we are fortunate here in the U.S. to have the latest specialized technology and equipment for cataract surgery, Dr. Levenson had to rely on a low-tech approach that he learned by watching other ophthalmologists online. And while this may have been more difficult to perform, Dr. Levenson has given the gift of sight to many patients that thought they would never see again. And with their appreciation his patients have thanked him in different ways, one from Peru giving him a goat and in El Salvador, two live chickens.

Dr. Levenson has served our local community with pride, working with the Riverside Park Surgery Center, Baptist Health and St. Vincent's HealthCare in Jacksonville. In addition Dr. Levenson has worked with the Vision is Priceless Council, a volunteer nonprofit in Jacksonville that provides free vision and glaucoma screenings, eye-care education, and injury prevention. The Council's Cared Vision Program, "Gift of Sight," provides cataract surgery for 20 people a year who are completely blind and unable to afford the surgery. Dr. Levenson serves as the Council's Medical Advisor and donates more than 100 services to the Cared Vision Program all while regularly volunteering at vision clinics throughout the community.

Jacksonville is honored to have such an amazing humanitarian as a part of our community. The gift of sight is priceless and I commend Dr. Levenson on his compassion and his work to help those in need both at home and abroad. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and Members of the House to join me in this very special congressional salute honoring Dr. Jeffrey Levenson.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND
DEDICATED SERVICE OF THE
HONORABLE RAY WILSON

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and dedicated service of the Honorable Ray Wilson of Northwest Florida. Mr. Wilson was Okaloosa County's longest serving sheriff, and he is known throughout the area for his intelligence, his unwavering commitment to fairness and upholding the law, and his determination to serve and improve his community. All of Northwest Florida mourns his passing.

Mr. Wilson was born in Campton, Florida, and was a lifelong resident of Okaloosa County. After graduating from high school and serving in the United States Army, Mr. Wilson returned to his native Okaloosa County and decided to run for sheriff. Law enforcement was in his blood, as his father, Lester Wilson was the Crestview Chief of Police. At the age of 28, Ray Wilson was elected, becoming the youngest sheriff in Florida history.

Despite his young age, Mr. Wilson's astuteness and commitment to service were immediately evident. He genuinely loved serving his community and had an extremely successful 20-year career. Thanks to this kind of determination, he helped lead a truly first-class sheriff's department that made Okaloosa County a safer place for all residents and visitors. In fact, Mr. Wilson's impact on the history of Okaloosa County was so strong that he was bestowed a Civic Leader Award by the sheriff's department in 2012, more than 35 years after leaving his post.

In addition to his service and leadership in law enforcement, Mr. Wilson was a man of great faith and a minister of the Gospel. He was also a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress it is an honor for me to recognize the life and service of the Honorable Ray Wilson. My wife Vicki and I send our prayers and condolences to his wife, Virginia; children, Stuart, Scott, and Sharon; his six grandchildren; and numerous great- and great-great-grandchildren.

HONORING O'CYNTHIA WILLIAMS

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Black History Month and to recognize the important contributions made by African-Americans to my congressional district in The Bronx. African-Americans have made countless contributions to and sacrifices for this great nation, and nowhere is this more visible than in New York City.

As the Representative of the Fifteenth Congressional District of New York, I have had the

opportunity and pleasure to get a firsthand account of the work and contributions of Ms. O'Cynthia Williams to our community, and I am proud to recognize her hard work and dedication to The Bronx.

Known throughout New York City as a champion for education equity, Ms. Williams has dedicated her professional life to developing reforms and initiatives that improve the quality of education at New York City's public schools. As a mother of six New York City Public School educated children, she has very keen understanding of what a quality public school education is.

As a Parent Leader & Organizer with the New York City Coalition for Educational Justice, and a founding member of the United Parents of Highbridge, Ms. Williams has dedicated countless hours to traveling across New York City and educating parents on the importance of parent engagement, parent leadership development training, and how to make principals and teachers more accountable.

Last year, Ms. Williams won an important victory for a neighborhood in my district. While working alongside the United Parents of Highbridge, her dream of establishing Highbridge's first middle school came to fruition. The Highbridge Green School, the Bronx's first "green" school, opened its door at the start of the 2013-2014 school year. For the first time in the history of this part of my district, the young men and women of Highbridge will no longer have to travel across several neighborhoods in order to get to their middle school. And Ms. Williams played a vital role in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Ms. O'Cynthia Williams, an important advocate for a better future for children in The Bronx and throughout New York City.

CONGRATULATING KEITH ELLIOTT WASHINGTON

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Keith Elliott Washington for accomplishing his goal of visiting all seven continents.

I first met Keith a few years ago and he expressed his deep passion in politics and his interest in the needs of the American people.

I applaud him on completing a mission which began 18 years ago, when he first visited Senegal in 1996. This was his first visit outside of North America.

On February 2, 2010 at 12:00 p.m., Keith visited Antarctica and achieved his dream of visiting the last continent. I congratulate him for his determination to complete this personal milestone.

IN HONOR OF CHRISTI MYERS, ABC13 HEALTH CHECK

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a reporter who has dedicated her career to our health.

As Chairman of the House Ways & Means Health Subcommittee, I pay special attention when Christi Myers comes on my screen, because if there is something new to know in medicine, we all learn it from Christi. Today we are all wondering what we will do when she retires from Houston's ABC 13 at the end of this month. We may all need a "health check" to cope with the shock.

Christi Myers' work in the medical community has set the gold standard. Recognized with a regional Emmy for the story of an infant who now has a piece of his young father's liver, Christi's work has earned more than a 100 awards, including a National Award for Excellence from the Epilepsy Foundation of America, honors from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, the Harris County Medical Society, the Harris County Pharmacy Association, Houston Press Club, Texas Public Health Association, Texas Medical Association, the Texas AP Broadcasters, and so many more.

Christi Myers can also just as easily cover a story on toxic waste or nomadic herders in the Russian Arctic. In 1989, the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston honored her for reports that helped secure the freedom of a Soviet Jewish family. That's making a real difference. Something Christi is famous for.

Christi's inside look at military medicine during the first days of the Iraq war took us inside operating rooms where American casualties received life saving treatment.

Some of her colleagues call her Dr. Myers because she simply is that good. We can't begin to tally the lives she may have helped save by informing us of new health treatments and cures. If we live to be 100, it's a good bet it's thanks to tips she has provided.

Christi Myers is a rare reporter, having reported at KHOU, KPRC and KTRK, for over three decades. February 28th is our last opportunity to catch her reports before she devotes herself fulltime to her family. I'd just like to close with a simple "Thank you, Christi."

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT ENFINGER

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and dedicated service of Mr. Franklin Roosevelt Enfinger. Uncle Frank was a loving husband and father, successful businessman and an integral part of the Northwest Florida community. He was known throughout the area for his gregarious nature,

sense of humor, and willingness to help family, friends, and strangers alike. He truly touched the lives of all of those who were blessed to know him.

A native Northwest Floridian, Uncle Frank grew up in Pace, Florida and attended Chumuckla School, where he graduated in 1951. After graduating from high school, he served our Nation with honor and distinction in the United States Air Force before embarking on a long and successful career in business. Uncle Frank developed his business acumen working at Air Products for 20 years, and after leaving Air Products he became a serial entrepreneur. Over the years, he owned and operated numerous successful businesses in the area, before retiring in 1995.

Uncle Frank was also truly devoted to both faith and family. He was an active member of Wallace Baptist Church, and together with his wife of 62 years, Aunt Gwen, he raised four children and was a loving grandfather of ten and great-grandfather of ten.

Mr. Speaker, to some Uncle Frank will be remembered as a successful business leader; to others, a kind-hearted friend and neighbor always willing to lend a helping hand; and to his family, he will always be remembered as a true family man. On behalf of the United States Congress, my wife Vicki and I send our prayers and deepest condolences to Aunt Gwen; our cousins, Frankie, Anne, Darrell, and Denise; and their ten grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Uncle Frank will truly be missed.

HARRISBURG AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) as they celebrate 50 years of providing educational opportunities to the people of Central Pennsylvania.

HACC was established on February 14, 1964 as the first community college in Pennsylvania, with its inaugural class of 426 students matriculating on September 21st of that year. Originally housed at the former Harrisburg Academy site on Front Street, the College purchased a 157-acre tract in Wildwood Park, and in April of 1966 broke ground on the \$3.5 million building project, eventually moving to this new campus in 1967. As the student body grew, HACC continued to add buildings and gained the first accreditation for a Pennsylvania community college from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Campuses opened and expanded in Gettysburg, Lancaster, Lebanon, and York, and off-site learning locations, as well as a robust Virtual Campus were established.

Today, HACC is the largest community college in Pennsylvania, with almost 22,000 degree-seeking and thousands more non-degree seeking students enrolling each semester. The college offers nearly 200 associate degree, certificate, and diploma programs. Approximately one third of students go on to continue

their education and pursue a bachelor's degree at a four year college or university. The college also offers workforce development programs in fields such as allied health; law enforcement and security; and technology and trades, giving students the chance to receive affordable training for a specific career. As of 2011, the College had graduated more than 46,467 students in a variety of majors.

Mr. Speaker, Harrisburg Area Community College is the sole institution of its kind serving the Central Pennsylvania region. Therefore, I commend all the students, teachers and other members of the HACC community who have helped this academic institution grow and flourish over the past 50 years.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. ARMY CORPS OF
ENGINEERS CIVILIAN DEPUTY
COY MILLER

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the distinguished career of Coy Miller, Civilian Deputy of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, upon the occasion of his retirement. Mr. Miller's entire career is comprised of public service, dedication, and devotion to the Huntington Engineer District and the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division.

After beginning his service to the Federal Government in 1978, Mr. Miller spent many years working throughout the Huntington District to develop and improve its waterways. As a result of his talent and valuable contributions, Coy was promoted to Civilian Deputy in 2003, and in the eleven years since he has been a consistent source of outstanding leadership and vision. Collaborative problem solving, discipline, and enthusiasm are just a few hallmarks of Mr. Miller's unique leadership style, which enable his team to provide the highest professional standards in delivering flood risk management for our communities and navigation solutions for our waterways.

While serving as Civilian Deputy with the Huntington District, Coy has completed numerous projects that positively impact an untold number of West Virginia residents and businesses. Under his leadership, he successfully championed the Huntington District as the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division's Dam Safety Production Center, as well as established the district as the USACE's Dam Safety Modification Mandatory Center of Expertise. In addition, he oversaw the completion of two massive navigation projects: the Marmet Locks and Dam in Kanawha County and the Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam in Mason and Cabell County, West Virginia.

Recently, Coy's hard work was instrumental in obtaining USACE funding to implement renovations to the Huntington District's Federal Building in the city's downtown business district. The Huntington District also attributes Coy with its great achievements in financial performance, securing obligation values exceeding six hundred million dollars in the past three years alone.

I have had the opportunity to work closely with Coy and have always appreciated his in-

sight and willingness to share his wisdom with me for the betterment of the Second Congressional District as well as the State of West Virginia. It has been an honor to work with such a professional and I hope our paths cross again after his much deserved retirement.

Coy Miller resides in Barboursville, West Virginia with his wife, Janeese. Together they have two sons. Mr. Miller is an active member of his community and is heavily involved in his church, Antioch Missionary Baptist, where he serves as deacon, Sunday school teacher, Team Youth Director, and Team Church Camp Director.

Mr. Speaker, the State of West Virginia, our neighboring states, and indeed, the United States of America owe Coy Miller a tremendous debt of gratitude for his many years of dedicated service. I am honored to call him a friend and fellow West Virginian.

THE HOMEOWNERS TAX FAIRNESS
ACT

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Homeowners Tax Fairness Act. In 2012, the 49 state attorneys general announced that they had completed negotiations with the country's five largest mortgage servicers to settle claims arising from mortgage fraud and wrongful foreclosures. The settlement, which amounts to over \$25 billion, is the largest settlement this country has seen since the 1998 Master Tobacco Settlement.

This historic settlement will allow hundreds of thousands of distressed homeowners to stay in their homes through enhanced loan modifications and principal reduction, and it will also provide payments to victims of unfair foreclosure practices. Unfortunately, under current law, those settlement payments would subject the homeowners and servicemembers who receive them to additional tax burdens. For instance, homeowners receiving relief in the form of mortgage debt forgiveness and direct cash payments for wrongful foreclosure could be subject to Federal income tax. Moreover, additional tax would be owed on the payments made to servicemembers who were wrongfully foreclosed on while deployed overseas.

To prevent that injustice, the Homeowners Tax Fairness Act would extend the exclusion for debt forgiveness on a primary residence and exclude the relief payments from income for homeowners and servicemembers. This bill also considers the particularly egregious actions taken by the five largest banks in violation of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. Over the past three years, the five largest servicers violated the law and wrongfully foreclosed or overcharged mortgage interest on servicemembers, many of whom were deployed overseas in combat zones. Accordingly, the Homeowners Tax Fairness Act not only excludes this relief from income to servicemembers, but denies these banks the ability to deduct these payments from their Federal income taxes.

The estimated 1.7 million homeowners eligible to benefit from this settlement deserve to receive the full benefit of this relief—relief that was negotiated in good faith by the States, the banks, and the Federal Government. Collecting Federal income tax on relief for struggling homeowners is not only bad policy, but is simply the wrong thing to do.

As we move forward from one of the worst recessions in American history, we must be vigilant and provide as much help to the American people as possible. This bill will do just that, and will ensure that our homeowners and servicemembers get every bit of relief they deserve.

HONORING KELLIE TERRY

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Black History Month this year, I am honored to reflect on the everyday contributions African-Americans have within my district in Bronx County.

Creating sustainable change within the environmental justice movement is a daunting task that takes years of consistency, perseverance, and support. I would like to pay homage to the Bronx's premier leader in environmental justice, Ms. Kellie Terry. For more than a decade she has committed countless hours towards ensuring the South Bronx is free from harmful environmental elements and factors. Her work and her dedication to helping others has improved the lives of many of my constituents.

A native of The Bronx's Highbridge neighborhood, Kellie has always demonstrated a deep commitment to helping others. That commitment began early, as indicated by her participation in the "Take Charge Be Somebody" youth group, and her graduation with honors from the College of the Holy Cross. Since that time, Kellie has been devoted to public service.

As the Executive Director of THE POINT Community Development Corporation, Kellie has established a culture of leadership development that goes beyond the traditional youth development program. THE POINT is a non-profit organization dedicated to youth development and the cultural and economic revitalization of the Hunts Point section of the South Bronx. The young men and women who work and participate at THE POINT learn how culture, the environment, food, and economics all play a critical role in transforming their neighborhood.

Kellie Terry's leadership has been recognized by The Bronx Chamber of Commerce, El Diario/La Prensa NY, and the New York City Council. She is currently the Board Chair of The New York City Environmental Justice Alliance, the Board Chair of The Bronx River Alliance, and is a candidate for a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning at Pratt Institute.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Kellie Terry for her selfless, dutiful commitment to the residents of Hunts Point, and for her tireless efforts in making

The Bronx a place that is more livable for all residents.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF DOUG VOLLMER, ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 14, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, March 14 will mark the end of the long and distinguished career of Douglas K. Vollmer, Associate Executive Director for Government Relations, for Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). Doug has spent nearly 35 years overseeing the congressional relations activities of PVA. His uncompromising leadership has advanced the cause of America's paralyzed veterans. In addition, his work on disability civil rights for all Americans highlighted a career which reflected the mission of his organization to provide opportunities that maximize the independence of its members.

Doug is a native of Toledo, Ohio. He attended Northwestern University and received his undergraduate degree in 1967. Upon graduation, Doug entered the U.S. Navy and was commissioned in May 1968. Doug went on to serve with the River Patrol Forces and as a liaison officer with elements of the 5th Special Forces in the Republic of Vietnam from November 1968 to October 1969. He then spent 20 months serving on the staff of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence for the Pacific

Fleet (CINCPACFLT). Following his service in the U.S. Navy, Doug received his Masters Degree from the University of Hawaii and pursued post-graduate studies at the University of Maryland.

During his career at PVA, Doug has been involved with a broad range of issues affecting both the veterans' community and the larger community of people with disabilities. Since being named the PVA's Associate Executive Director for Government Relations in 1989, he has been involved in the passage of some of the most monumental legislation to be considered by the United States Congress including passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and healthcare eligibility reform for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He was instrumental in the battle to make Washington's Metro system accessible to wheelchair users; the fight to ensure access to commercial aircraft for people with disabilities; efforts to ensure fair housing policy became a reality for those in need; and he always played a leadership role in defining the VA's budgetary needs for America's disabled veterans every year. Doug's involvement in legislative issues for veterans with spinal cord injury and dysfunction resulted in numerous advancements in the areas of health care, benefits, and vocational rehabilitation. His unwavering commitment to assist both service connected and non-service connected PVA members was the hallmark of Doug's service to the PVA, and it reflected his belief that "a veteran is a veteran." As a result, thousands of veterans—disabled and non-disabled—and their families benefited from his work.

Since he began working for PVA, he has seen the VA grow from a regular federal agency to a cabinet-level department which enabled his advocacy for veterans to be recognized at the highest level of government. His

close relationships with other leaders in the veterans and disability communities have been well established over the years and he has been a highly valued resource for policy makers at the executive level across the government and non-profit world.

His long career of dedicated service is truly worthy of praise. As an executive at PVA, he created an environment for his subordinates that encouraged creative thinking, individualism, and productive team work. As the longest serving staff member at PVA, Doug has been the anchor for 15 PVA Presidents. He wrote hundreds of congressional testimonies and represented the organization at the White House, on Capitol Hill, and across the country. Notably, it was Doug who mentored his late friend Gordon Mansfield as PVA's Executive Director. Gordon went on to become the Deputy Secretary and Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, following service as the Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, as well as the Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Doug's impact on veterans—particularly those who have experienced spinal cord injury or disorder—and their families cannot truly be measured.

Doug and Scottie, his wife of nearly 44 years, live in Washington, DC. They have one son, Zachary, who also lives and works in Washington, DC.

The legacy that he leaves can be seen in the vast advancements in medical care provided by the VA and the fact that the United States is the world leader in access for all people with disabilities. Doug Vollmer has lived a life that truly has made a difference. For that, we are sincerely grateful.

SENATE—Tuesday, February 18, 2014

The Senate met at 10:30 and 1 second a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from Michigan.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 18, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LEVIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY,
FEBRUARY 21, 2014, AT 10:30 A.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until Friday, February 21, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:30 and 27 seconds a.m., adjourned until Friday, February 21, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 18, 2014

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ROONEY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 18, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS J. ROONEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Reverend William Federici, The United Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Most loving, and most gracious God, we come before You this day knowing that You are with us in the story of this time and this age, knowing that You are with us, guiding us, sustaining us, and nurturing us with the gift of Your steadfast love. You are with us today in this place, this House, which represents the dreams and visions of so many.

We pray that that wisdom, justice, and compassion may guide every Member and every member of their staff.

May this House's deliberations and actions be taken in the spirit of respect for our diversity and differences. May this Nation be knit together as one.

May we hold one another true to the covenant of freedom and justice for all.

May we be peaceful.

May we be safe.

May we be grateful.

All this we ask in the presence of and with the power of Divine love, which sustains and transforms all.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 475, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS), the whole number of the House is 431.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 18, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 18, 2014 at 10:15 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1254.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1254. An act to amend the Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology; in addition, to the Committee on Natural Resources for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 475, the House stands adjourned until 11 a.m. on Friday, February 21, 2014.

Thereupon (at 2 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, February 21, 2014, at 11 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4779. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's FY 2013 annual performance report to Congress required by the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act of 2002; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4780. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Export Administration Regulations: Editorial Clean-up or References to Foreign Trade Regulations [Docket No.: 130829771-3771-01] (RIN: 0694-AF97) received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4781. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4782. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting two reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4783. A letter from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting notification that the Administration is in compliance with the Government in the Sunshine Act for calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4784. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revised Jurisdictional Thresholds for Section 7A of the Clayton Act received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4785. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revised Jurisdictional Thresholds for Section 8 of the Clayton Act received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4786. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0634; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-023-AD; Amendment 39-17725; AD 2014-01-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4787. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Modification of the Dallas/Fort Worth Class B Airspace; TX [Docket No.: FAA-2012-1168; Airspace Docket No.: 07-AWA-3] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. CAMP: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 3865. A bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1996; with an amendment (Rept. 113-353). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. WHITFIELD (for himself, Mr. LATTA, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. MATHE-SON):

H.R. 4066. A bill to modify the efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. JENKINS:

H.R. 4067. A bill to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4068. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MARINO (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H.R. 4069. A bill to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. WHITFIELD:

H.R. 4066.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Ms. JENKINS:

H.R. 4067.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. JONES:

H.R. 4068.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, the reported bill is authorized by Congress' power to "provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. MARINO:

H.R. 4069.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution. The Constitution's Necessary and Proper Clause allows Congress to enact laws when reasonably related to the regulation of commerce.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 755: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.

H.R. 792: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 1528: Mr. WALDEN.

H.R. 1579: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1801: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 2037: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 2073: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 2429: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 2632: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 2767: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 2870: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 2939: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 2998: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 3413: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 3426: Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 3529: Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. FLORES, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 3530: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 3543: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 3658: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 3663: Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 3708: Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 3905: Ms. BASS and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 3912: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 3954: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 3973: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 3979: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.

H.R. 3987: Mr. CASSIDY.

H.R. 3997: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 4008: Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 4012: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia.

H.R. 4015: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 4041: Ms. CHU, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 4058: Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 4064: Mr. CASSIDY.

H. Con. Res. 78: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H. Res. 425: Mr. JONES.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of Rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

69. The SPEAKER presented a petition of The Board of Chosen Freeholders, Toms River, New Jersey, relative to a letter asking the Congress to support Senate Bill 1846; to the Committee on Financial Services.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING BRUNO PERINO FOR BEING AWARDED THE FRENCH LEGION OF HONOR MEDAL

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding constituent who is a courageous veteran of World War II, Mr. Bruno Perino. Mr. Perino has been awarded the French Legion of Honor Medal for his bravery in helping to liberate France as a rifleman in the 45th Division of the U.S. Army. The Legion of Honor was established by Napoleon Bonaparte on May 19, 1802 and is the highest decoration in France.

Bruno Perino, a native of Chicago's Chinatown neighborhood, was drafted into the United States Army at the young age of 18 and survived countless attacks by the Germans and singlehandedly captured a German officer and his soldiers in Alsace-Lorraine. Shortly after the brave capture, Bruno Perino was injured by enemy fire that took the lives of half of his battalion. Bruno was treated by his own brother, Joe Perino, just two years his senior, at the field hospital. He quickly recovered and entered the battlefield again under General Patton.

Throughout all the bloodshed and loss of soldiers and friends, Bruno Perino remained humble and devotional, keeping his faith with him and praying daily. After the war was over, Bruno returned to Chicago and was honorably discharged with many decorations, including three Bronze Stars.

Today, Bruno Perino is married with three children and blessed with nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He is retired from the City of Chicago. His family, friends, and colleagues are truly blessed to know such a fine example of faith and devotion.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Bruno Perino for his outstanding courage and bravery, and his service to our Nation. And I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Perino and his family, and congratulate him on being made a Knight of the Legion of Honor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely regret that, due to unavoidable flight delays, I was unable to vote on Monday, February 10, 2014. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted "yes" on all three bills considered that day. They were:

(1) H.R. 2431—The National Integrated Drought Information Systems Reauthorization

Act; H. Res. 447—Supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, as amended. (2) Journal vote.

A TRIBUTE TO NOAH KATZ OF WHITEFISH BAY, WISCONSIN

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and honor a young student from my district, Noah Katz, who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in his community. Noah Katz, who hails from Whitefish Bay, was named one of the top honorees in Wisconsin by the 2014 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program. This is an annual honor conferred on the most impressive student volunteers in each state and the District of Columbia.

Mr. Katz is being recognized for his work and leadership with the organization "Boxes of Love." The organization has 183 young volunteers who bake, pack and ship treats in order to raise funds to help others. They raised more than \$63,000 and donated the funds to help build a school house through Free the Children and built a well in Kenya.

Mr. Katz should be extremely proud to have been singled out from the thousands of dedicated volunteers who participated in this year's program. I heartily applaud Mr. Katz for his initiative in seeking to make his community and the global community a better place to live, and for the positive impact he has had on the lives of others. He deserves our sincere admiration and respect. His actions show that young Americans play important roles in our communities.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards was created by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995. The mission is to not only inspire young people to volunteer, but to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions are critically important and highly valued. Over the past 19 years, the program has honored more than 100,000 young volunteers at the local, state and national level and is the nation's largest youth recognition effort based solely on community service.

Youth volunteers like Noah Katz are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow. It is extremely important that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions that these young citizens have made. Mister Speaker, I commend Mr. Katz for his work. America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future and shines because of his efforts.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF SERGEANT ROBERT L. SALES

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, the soldiers who stormed the beaches of Normandy on June 6, 1944, saw some of the most intense fighting of World War II. Among them on D-Day was Sergeant Robert L. Sales of Madison Heights, a member of the Virginia National Guard Company B, 116th Infantry. After coming under fierce attack in the first wave of the invasion, Mr. Sales made his way to the sea-wall. He was the only man from his landing craft to survive the landing and went on to continue fighting on the frontlines. Thanks to his selfless service, the citizens of France were given hope of once again living in freedom.

It was this heroic service that earned Mr. Sales the French Legion of Honor nearly 70 years after the Allied invasion. He was one of six World War II veterans to receive the French Legion of Honor directly from French President Francois Hollande at a ceremony in Arlington on February 11, 2014.

The French Legion of Honor is France's highest distinction and is presented as an expression of gratitude for aiding in efforts to liberate France from enemy forces. Those eligible for the medal must have fought in one of the major French liberation campaigns, which includes the D-Day landing at Normandy.

As a member of "The Greatest Generation," Mr. Sales joined the Virginia National Guard in 1941. The actions of Mr. Sales throughout his service in World War II also earned him America's deepest gratitude and well-deserved military honors, including the Silver Star and the Purple Heart.

As we recognize the valiant service of Mr. Sales, we are reminded of all service members who have made tremendous sacrifices and our responsibility to honor them every day. I extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Sales on becoming a Knight of the French Legion of Honor. I am grateful for his service, and the service of all of our veterans, in the defense of this great Nation.

INTRODUCING THE COMMUNITY GARDENING AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2014

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Community Gardening and Nutrition Act of 2014, legislation

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

that creates a new pilot program within AmeriCorps VISTA focusing on creating and improving access to community gardens in areas with high poverty rates.

Community gardens have been shown to be very beneficial to the communities they serve. They improve quality of life, encourage self-reliance, and reduce family food budgets—all while producing highly nutritious food for participants. Additionally, community gardens create opportunities for recreation, social interaction, exercise, education, and economic development.

Providing new avenues for nourishment like the one in this legislation has become even more important since the recent cuts of \$19 billion to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

A report released in August 2013 by the Union of Concerned Scientists concluded that if Americans ate one extra serving of fruits or vegetables daily, there would be approximately 30,000 fewer deaths from cardio-

vascular diseases and \$5 billion saved in health care costs in our nation every year. Nearly 130,000 deaths would be prevented and \$17 billion saved in medical costs if that amount was increased to an additional two and a half cups of vegetables and two cups of fruit daily. These figures highlight the importance of making healthy foods more easily available for those who would benefit from them the most.

Mr Speaker, my legislation is very straightforward. It requires the creation of at least 40 new community garden projects in both urban and rural areas suffering from high poverty rates. AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers in this program will work with members of these communities to establish new gardens, which will help to expand general anti-poverty efforts, teach basic nutrition, and help provide affordable healthy food options. Within 90 days of the completion of the program, the Director will submit to Congress a report describing the projects that were created, information about

the volunteers that were placed, and a recommendation regarding continuation and expansion of the program.

I can think of no better way to mark the 50th anniversary of the war on poverty than to rededicate ourselves to the principle of improving people's lives. We can do this by increasing access to healthy foods and fighting health crises like the obesity epidemic. Just last year, President Obama announced an expansion of the AmeriCorps program, led by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), to develop new strategies for expanding national service. This legislation could play a significant role in these efforts. The pilot program created within the Community Gardening and Nutrition Act of 2014 will help to educate about the importance of nutrition and empower Americans living in impoverished regions to be more self-reliant while increasing access to healthier foods. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation.

SENATE—Friday, February 21, 2014

The Senate met at 10:30 and 18 seconds a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 21, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable CARL LEVIN, a Senator from the State of Michigan, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. LEVIN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 24, 2014, AT 2:00 P.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2014.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:30 and 50 seconds a.m., adjourned until Monday, February 24, 2014, at 2:00 p.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, February 21, 2014

The House met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 21, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Reverend Gene Hemrick, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote: "To live without hope is to cease to live."

We pray, Lord, that our U.S. Congress will continue to be a beacon of hope, which is its greatest gift to our Nation and nations around the world. May its mission be that of replacing despondency with the cheerfulness that comes from looking forward to the next day.

May the U.S. Congress grow in hope's life-giving powers, for as St. Paul states: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen," and as Dr. Martin Luther King reminds us: "Everything that is done in the world is done by hope."

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(a) of House Resolution 475, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on the Budget:

JANUARY 28, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Please accept this letter as written notice of my resignation from my appointment to the House Committee on the Budget effective immediately.

I have been honored to serve on the Budget Committee since my first term in Congress and value the importance of the work of the Committee. I welcomed the opportunity to be a voice for my constituents as we debated the federal Budget each year. Throughout my tenure on this prestigious Committee I have been committed to ensuring that we meet our obligations to our children, our seniors, to invest in economic growth, and to do so in a balanced and responsible way. It was a privilege to be able to serve on the Budget Committee.

Thank you for your understanding of this decision and for your continued support.

Sincerely,

ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted. There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, February 21, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On February 11, 2014, pursuant to section 3307 of Title 40, United States Code, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider resolutions to authorize 17 prospectuses, including seven leases, eight alteration projects, and two capital projects, included in the General Services Administration's FY2014 Capital Investment and Leasing Program.

Our Committee continues to work to cut waste and the cost of federal property and leases. The lease resolutions approved by the Committee will save the taxpayer \$28.6 million annually or \$400 million over the terms of the leases. All alteration and capital projects approved are within amounts appropriated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. These resolutions ensure savings through shrinking the space requirements of agencies and efficiencies created through consolidation. In addition, the Committee has included space utilization requirements in each of the lease resolutions to ensure agencies are held to appropriate utilization rates.

I have enclosed copies of the resolutions adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on February 11, 2014.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Enclosures.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES, VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized to implement energy and water retrofit and conservation measures in Government-owned buildings during fiscal year 2014, at a proposed cost of \$5,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES
VARIOUS BUILDINGS**

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU14

FY2014 Project Summary

GSA proposes the implementation of energy and water retrofit and conservation measures, as well as high performance energy projects, in Government-owned buildings during fiscal year 2014.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested\$35,000,000

Program Summary

GSA proposes the implementation of energy and water retrofit and conservation measures, as well as high performance energy projects, in Government-owned buildings during fiscal year 2014.

The Energy and Water Conservation Measures Program is designed to reduce on-site energy consumption through building alteration projects or retrofits of existing buildings systems. These projects are an important part of GSA's approach to reducing energy consumption in the existing inventory to reach mandated percentage reduction goals through 2015.

Projects in Federal buildings throughout the country are currently being identified through surveys and studies. The projects to be funded will have positive savings-to-investment ratios, will provide reasonable payback periods that reflect GSA's priority of being a green proving ground of next generation technologies, and may generate rebates and saving from utility companies and incentives from grid operators. Projects will vary in size, by location, and by delivery method.

This prospectus requests authority to fund energy and water retrofit work, geothermal and other High Performance Green Building retrofit work, as well as design/construction work for new facilities that incorporate these technologies. The authority requested in this prospectus is for a diverse set of design and retrofit projects with engineering solutions to reduce energy or water consumption and/or costs.

Projects will vary in size by location and by delivery method. Typical projects include the following:

- Upgrading heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems with new, high efficiency systems including the installation of energy management control systems.
- Altering constant volume air distribution systems to variable air flow systems by the addition of variable air flow boxes, fan volume control dampers, and related climatic controls.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES
VARIOUS BUILDINGS**

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU14

- Installing building automation control systems, such as night setback thermostats and time clocks, to control HVAC systems.
- Installing automatic occupancy light controls, lighting fixture modifications, and associated wiring to reduce the electrical consumption per square foot through the use of higher efficiency lamps and use of non-uniform task lighting design.
- Installing new or modifying existing temperature control systems.
- Replacing electrical motors with multi-speed or variable-speed motors.
- Insulating roofs, pipes, HVAC duct work, and mechanical equipment.
- Installing and caulking storm windows and doors to prevent the passage of air and moisture into the building envelope.
- Providing advanced metering projects which enable building managers to better monitor and optimize energy performance.
- Providing and implementing water conservation projects.
- Providing renewable projects including photovoltaic systems, solar hot water systems, and wind turbines.
- Providing distributed generation systems.
- Drilling to install vertical and horizontal geothermal loops.
- Installing heat pumps and other types of geothermal equipment.
- Installing building insulation and seals to enhance equipment performance and reduce the size and energy consumption of geothermal and other energy-efficient equipment.
- Installing new or modifying existing green building materials.
- Installing wastewater recycling processes for use on lawns, in toilets, and for washing cars.
- Insulating roofs, pipes, HVAC duct work, and mechanical equipment.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES
VARIOUS BUILDINGS**

Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU14

- Installing other green building technologies such as hot water heat recycling, renewable heating systems, seasonal thermal storage systems, and solar air conditioning, green roofs, and cool roofs.

Justification

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58) required a 2 percent energy usage reduction as measured in BTU/GSF per year from 2006 through 2015 over a 2003 baseline. Guidance issued by the Department of Energy pursuant to this requirement states that savings anticipated from advanced metering can range from 2 to 45 percent annually when used in combination with continuous commissioning efforts. Executive Order 13423, Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management concerning energy consumption reduction, was incorporated into law as the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). Both increased the energy reduction mandates to 3 percent per year, and the Executive Order also established a water reduction mandate of 2 percent per year based on a 2007 baseline as measured in gallons/gsf.

By the year 2015, all Federal agencies are directed to reduce overall energy use in buildings they operate by 30 percent from 2003 levels and reduce overall water use by 16 percent from 2007 levels. Increased energy and water efficiency in buildings and operations will require capital investment for changes and modifications to physical systems which consume energy and water, as well as other high performance green building initiatives and infrastructure designs and retrofits.

In addition, EISA included provisions that exceed the requirements of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. One such long-term requirement is to eliminate fossil fuel-generated energy consumption in new and renovated Federal buildings by FY 2030 by achieving targeted reductions beginning with projects designed in FY 2010. Other shorter-term measures include increasing the use of solar hot water heating (to 30 percent); installation of advanced meters for steam and gas (previously only electricity was covered); and broader application of energy efficiency in all major renovations.

Approval of this FY 2014 request will enable GSA to continue to provide leadership in energy/water conservation and efficiency to both the public and private sectors.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested\$35,000,000

GSA

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**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
ENERGY AND WATER RETROFIT AND CONSERVATION MEASURES
VARIOUS BUILDINGS**

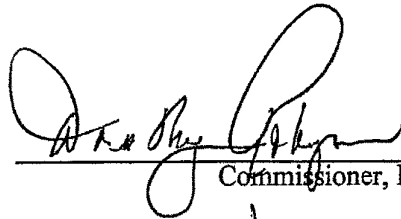
Prospectus Number: PEW-0001-MU14

Certification of Need

It has been determined that the practical solution to achieving the identified building energy and water management goals is to proceed with the energy and water retrofit and conservation work indicated above.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended:



Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved:



Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM,
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

*Resolved by the Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Rep-*

resentatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for alterations to upgrade, replace, and improve fire protection systems and life safety features in government-owned buildings during fiscal year 2014, at a proposed cost of \$30,000,000, a pro-

spectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS**

Prospectus Number: PFP-2014

FY2014 Project Summary

This prospectus proposes alterations to upgrade, replace, and improve fire protection systems and life safety features in government-owned buildings during Fiscal Year 2014.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested.....\$35,000,000

Program Summary

As part of its Fire and Life Safety efforts, GSA is currently identifying projects in Federal buildings throughout the country through surveys and studies. These projects will vary in size, location, and delivery method. The approval and appropriation requested in this prospectus is for a diverse set of retrofit projects with engineering solutions to reduce fire and life safety hazards. Typical projects include the following:

- Replacing antiquated fire alarm and detection systems that are in need of repair or for which parts are no longer available.
- Installing emergency voice communication systems to facilitate occupant notification and/or evacuation in Federal buildings during an emergency.
- Installing and/or expanding fire sprinkler systems to provide a reasonable degree of protection for life and property from fire in Federal buildings.
- Constructing additional exit stairs or enclosing existing exit stairs to ensure safe and timely evacuation of building occupants in the event of an emergency.

Justification

GSA periodically assesses all facilities using technical professionals to identify hazards and initiate correction or risk-reduction protection strategies to assure that no aspect of our buildings' design or operation presents an unreasonable risk to GSA personnel, occupant agencies, or the general public. Completion of these proposed projects will improve the overall level of safety from fire and similar risks in GSA-controlled Federal buildings nationwide.

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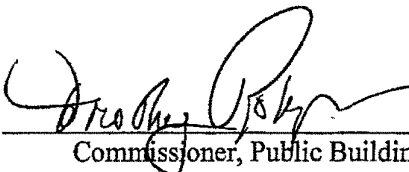
**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS**

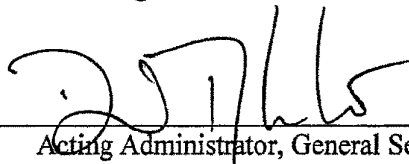
Prospectus Number: PFP-2014

Certification of Need

Over the years a number of fire protection and life safety issues have been identified that need to be addressed in order to reduce fire risk. The proposed program is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—LAFAYETTE BUILDING,
WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307,

appropriations are authorized for the second of two phases of the renovation of the Lafayette Building located at 811 Vermont Avenue, NW in Washington, DC, at a Phase II management and inspection cost of \$6,830,000 and a Phase II estimated construction cost of \$47,500,000 for a total additional authoriza-

tion of \$54,330,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
LAFAYETTE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-0026-WA14

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes the second of two phases of renovation for the Lafayette Building located at 811 Vermont Ave, NW, Washington, D.C. The building is being modernized in two phases, the first of which was funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Alterations undertaken during this phase include restoration of the lower floors and connecting the associated systems that will serve these areas with those replaced in Phase I. Upon completion, the building will house both Export-Import Bank of the United States (EX-IM) and the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). Under this renovation, both agencies will occupy more efficient space, with increased utilization.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Phase II M&I and ECC)\$54,330,000

Major Work Items

Interior construction; exterior construction; HVAC, electrical, and plumbing replacements; demolition and abatement; security upgrades; site work, and fire protection and alarm upgrades.

Project Budget

Design

Design (FY2005).....\$8,470,000
Additional Design (FY2009 ARRA)\$2,301,000
Total Design\$10,771,000

Management and Inspection (M&I)

Phase I (FY2009 ARRA)\$11,862,000
Phase II (FY2014 Request)\$6,830,000
Total M& I\$18,692,000

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)

Phase I (FY2009 ARRA)\$86,674,000
Phase II (FY2014 Request)\$47,500,000
Total ECC\$134,174,000

Estimated Total Project Cost*.....163,637,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by GSA.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS --ALTERATION
LAFAYETTE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-0026-WA14

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

Phase II (M&I and ECC)\$54,330,000

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>
Design	FY2004	FY2013
Construction		
Phase I	FY2010	FY2014
Phase II	FY2014	FY2017

Building

The Lafayette Building, is a 12-story, limestone clad, steel framed office building facing Lafayette Park and McPherson Square, and one block from the White House. It is approximately 566,000 gross square feet with a penthouse and two stories below grade including one level of structured parking in the basement that can accommodate approximately 140 cars. This office building serves as the headquarters for EX-IM and headquarter annex for VA.

The property was constructed in 1940 to serve as the headquarters of the Federal Loan Agency and its most important component, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). Lafayette has since been designated as a National Historic Landmark, largely due to the importance of the RFC and its subsidiaries in financing the wartime mobilization of American industry during World War II.

Tenant Agencies

EX-IM, and VA

Proposed Project

The proposed project is the second phase of a two phased project. Phase I (funded under ARRA) entailed the renovation of floors 8-12. During Phase I, the retail outlease tenants vacated the building, VA moved to leased swing space and EXIM moved to the lower floors. EXIM will swing back to their permanent location in the renovated space on floors 8-12 upon substantial completion.

Much of the building systems were addressed in Phase I along with restoration of the upper level floors. Phase II of the project covered by this prospectus will entail restoration of the lower floors and connecting the associated systems that will serve these areas with those replaced in Phase I. Phase II of this project will complete the renovation

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
LAFAYETTE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-0026-WA14

of floors 1-7, after which the building will be re-populated by components of VA and retail tenants.

Building amenities, including the health unit and vending area, will be relocated from the second to the first floor to increase accessibility and provide for a contiguous office floor plate. Some of the building corridors will be removed to promote an open office layout. The basement and sub-basement floors will be repartitioned to allow for the recapture of space, and provide fire separation improvements. Historic office areas will retain original elements, and historical finishes will be restored and hazardous material remediated where it would be disturbed as a result of the project.

Existing chillers and cooling towers will be replaced with modern, more efficient systems. New outside air handling units will provide for improved ventilation, and a new garage ventilation system will provide minimum code required ventilation for the underground parking garage. Three new mechanical rooms will be provided on each floor to house air handling units dedicated to horizontal air distribution.

Domestic water risers, sanitary and storm drainage systems will be completely replaced. Piping will be replaced as needed and the current steam hot water system shall be replaced with a hybrid solar/electric hot water system through a new photovoltaic system installed on the roof, further reducing energy costs.

Electrical, lighting and communications systems work includes replacing switchgear panels and back up emergency power for building life safety systems. Additional switchgear, wire closets, panel boards and network transformers will be installed along with new telecommunications infrastructure. An emergency generator will be installed to provide back-up emergency power to the new fire pump, elevators and main telecommunications room. A new building automation system will be installed. Energy efficient lighting with occupant control sensors will be installed.

The existing fire alarm system will be replaced. All automatic sprinkler piping downstream of the sprinkler floor control valve assemblies will be replaced.

The building walls and roof will be re-insulated, skylights re-glazed and reframed, and a partial green roof installed. Storm water will be harvested, filtered and reused to supply make-up water to building cooling towers and for irrigation. The building façade will be restored.

Security will include installation of blast windows as well as hardscape elements such as bollards, bollard benches and planters.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
LAFAYETTE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-0026-WA14

Major Work Items

Exterior Construction	\$8,470,000
Interior Construction	34,176,000
Electrical Replacement	16,120,000
Fire protection and Alarm Upgrades	6,010,000
HVAC Replacement	42,486,000
Plumbing Replacement	6,784,000
Special Construction/Security Upgrades	7,319,000
Demolition and Abatement	11,269,000
Site Work	<u>1,540,000</u>
Total ECC	\$ 134,174,000

Justification

The approval and appropriation of Phase II will complete the project first funded by ARRA in FY2009.

This project provides for the first major modernization since it was constructed in 1940. Many of the building systems are original and have long since exceeded their useful service life and are deficient under modern codes and standards, in addition to being undersized and under capacity for the demands of modern tenants. Maintenance of these obsolete systems is both costly and labor intensive, resulting in frequent and prolonged inconvenience to the tenants, and ineffective mission accomplishment.

Energy reduction features include improved lighting design, including the reduction of the ambient lighting design. Additional lighting energy savings will be realized through comprehensive lighting controls, to include dimming, on/off and day light harvesting and solar hot water for 30% of the hot water demand. Solar panels and/or tubes are planned at the Lafayette penthouse roof with piping and control connections to the already designed hot water system. Solar gain resistance will be increased through low emissivity film coatings at new thermal windows.

Cooling will utilize outside air temperature to provide chilled water for air conditioning systems. Water reduction will through rain harvesting tanks and waterless urinals. Further energy savings are planned through comprehensive building management system (BMS) controls, including advanced utility metering with addressable readouts at the BMS.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS --ALTERATION
LAFAYETTE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-0026-WA14

Interior renovations will provide for a more open office layout. Building amenities will be moved to provide for a contiguous office floor plate.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

Lafayette Building Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	Fiscal Year	Amount	Purpose
108-447	2005	\$8,470,000	Design
111-5 (ARRA)	2009	\$121,673,000	Phase 1 Construction and Non Construction Activites
Appropriations to Date		\$130,143,000	

Prior Committee Approvals

Lafayette Building Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	Date	Amount	Purpose
House T & I	7/21/2004	\$8,470,000	Design
Senate EPW	11/17/2004	\$8,470,000	Design

Prior Prospectus Level Projects in the Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

This project is a multi-year, multi-phased project. GSA is in the process of renovating the building; therefore, there are no other feasible alternatives.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
LAFAYETTE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-0026-WA14

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

This project is a multi-year, multi-phased project. GSA is in the process of renovating the building; therefore, there are no other feasible alternatives.

Recommendation

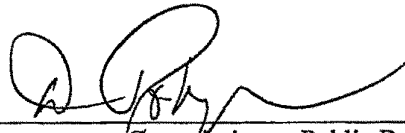
ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended:



Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved:



Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2013

Housing Plan
Lafayette Building

PDC-0026-WA14
Washington, DC

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹			Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			Total	
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	
Lafayette Building	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Veterans Affairs (VA)	23	23	6,498	6,187	4,982	1,328	1,516	151,662	2,852	34,990	189,504	189,504
GSA	452	452	100,910	7,148	17,618	452	452	7,195	6,187	1,955	15,337	15,337
Export-Import Bank	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	89,883	1,554	24,119	115,556	115,556
Building Joint Use	-	-	-	-	3,163	-	-	-	-	-	2,313	2,313
Outlease (retail)	-	-	-	-	7,830	-	-	-	-	-	5,966	5,966
Vacated VA space (ARRA renovation)	-	-	140,079	12,807	25,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	475	475	247,487	26,142	58,793	1,803	1,991	248,740	10,593	69,343	328,676	328,676
Lease Locations (VA)												
1800 G Street	990	1,178	125,770	1,326	32,209	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Techworld Plaza II	309	309	68,638	1,526	11,076	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1722 Eye Street	29	29	4,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	1,328	1,516	198,908	2,852	43,285	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1,803	1,991	446,395	28,994	102,078	1,803	1,991	248,740	10,593	69,343	328,676	328,676

Office Utilization Rate (UR)	
Current	176
Proposed	108

UR—average amount of office space per person (Lafayette Bldg only)
Current UR excludes vacant space and 23,629 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 54,723 usf of office support space

Special Space	USF
ADP	4,149
File Room	3,543
Conferences/Training	30,619
Copy Rooms	4,034
Evidence Room/Secure	462
Fitness Center	857
Food Service	2,317
Health Unit	1,079
Print Shop	2,210
Laboratory	460
Library	2,780
Lockers/Gun Storage	200
Network Operations	5,957
Reception	3,731
SCIF	980
Retail (Outlease)	5,966
Total	69,343

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Upon completion of the Lafayette renovation, 29 persons will be relocated from the 1722 Eye Street location.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—FAIRBANKS FEDERAL BUILDING
AND U.S. COURTHOUSE, FAIRBANKS, AK

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 3307, appropriations are authorized for alterations

to upgrade the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system in the Fairbanks Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse located at 101 12th Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska, at a design cost of \$1,182,000, estimated construction cost of \$10,092,000, and a management and inspection cost of \$1,083,000 for

a combined estimated total project cost of \$12,357,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FAIRBANKS FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
FAIRBANKS, AK**

Prospectus Number: PAK-0029-FA14

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes an alteration project to upgrade the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system in the Fairbanks Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse (Fairbanks FBCT) located at 101 12th Avenue, Fairbanks, AK. The extreme temperature fluctuations in Alaska in conjunction with the aging HVAC system make regulating the temperature in the office building challenging. GSA proposes alterations and replacements to the system in order to better regulate the temperature, increase safety of the occupants and better maintain the facility.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, and M&I)\$12,357,000

Major Work Items

HVAC and electrical upgrades; interior construction

Project Budget

Design	\$1,182,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC).....	10,092,000
Management and Inspection (M&I).....	1,083,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC).....	\$12,357,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule

Design and Construction

Start

FY2014

End

FY2016

Building

The Fairbanks FBCT, located at 101 12th Avenue, Fairbanks, AK was constructed in 1977 and contains approximately 101,000 rentable square feet (rsf) of space. The office building is built with a steel and glass exterior and has three stories above-grade and a basement below grade. It currently houses approximately 168 employees and has 88 outdoor parking spaces and 147 indoor parking spaces.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FAIRBANKS FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
FAIRBANKS, AK**

Prospectus Number: PAK-0029-FA14

Tenant Agencies

Judiciary, Public Defender, Department of Justice, U.S. Senate, Department of the Interior, Internal Revenue Service, GSA, Social Security Administration.

Proposed Project

The proposed project will upgrade the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system. The existing air system is not suitable for retrofit; therefore, it must be replaced with new air handling units that can deliver adequate airflow at suitable duct static pressure to all zones in the building. The upgrade will change the air system of the building from constant volume overhead delivery to variable air volume overhead delivery system. The variable air volume terminal-units will have hot water reheat capability along the perimeter of the building. The electrical upgrades are required for the new HVAC equipment to connect the device to the motor control centers.

The building cooling and heating plant will provide both hot water and chilled water to satisfy a range of temperature conditions throughout the building.

Ceiling work is required in areas of the building where the ceiling needs to be removed to install new duct work for the new HVAC system.

Major Work Items

Interior Construction	\$661,000
HVAC Upgrades	7,973,000
Electrical Upgrades	<u>1,458,000</u>
Total ECC	\$10,092,000

Justification

Fairbanks is second largest city in Alaska located in a subarctic location in the Alaskan interior. Extreme temperature ranges from a high of 80 degrees in July to lows of minus 40 degrees in January. The existing HVAC system is antiquated (built in 1975) and does not adequately provide heating, cooling, and ventilation causing significant occupant discomfort. Failure of the HVAC system in this extreme climate will significantly impact tenant agencies' ability to meet their missions, as it will render the building unoccupiable. The proposed system replacements will decrease operational costs, increase energy efficiency, increase safety of the occupants and better maintain the facility.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FAIRBANKS FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
FAIRBANKS, AK**

Prospectus Number: PAK-0029-FA14

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a single system renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FAIRBANKS FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
FAIRBANKS, AK**

Prospectus Number: PAK-0029-FA14


Recommendation

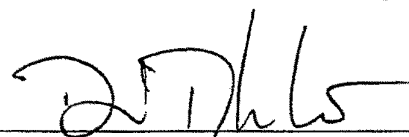
ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—EDWARD A. GARMATZ U.S.
COURTHOUSE, BALTIMORE, MD

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307,

appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to provide upgrades, repairs and replacements to the electrical system in the Edward A. Garmatz U.S. Courthouse in Baltimore, Maryland, at a design cost of \$30,000, an estimated construction cost of \$7,081,000, and a management and inspection cost of

\$810,000 for a total estimated project cost of \$7,921,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD A. GARMATZ U.S. COURTHOUSE
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-1440-NA14
Congressional District: 07

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to provide upgrades, repairs and replacements to the electrical system in the Edward A. Garmatz U.S. Courthouse in Baltimore, MD. The proposed work is necessary to ensure future building functionality and operability and to address code issues. As the Switchgear and motor control centers are original to the 1976 construction, continued delays in upgrading the electrical system puts the Garmatz Courthouse at risk. If the electrical systems were to fail, the building would not be operable and emergency leased space would have to be procured for customers to allow them to continue their mission. Given the security requirements of the Courthouse tenants this would prove extremely difficult in such a short amount of time. Currently, the aged system has lead to inefficiencies and tenants operations will continue to be interrupted as repairs of the electrical panels are quite intrusive.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC and M&I)\$7,921,000

Major Work Items

Electrical upgrades; selective demolition; construction and finishes

Project Budget

Design\$30,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)7,081,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)810,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*\$7,921,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2014	FY2016

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD A. GARMATZ U.S. COURTHOUSE
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-1440-NA14
Congressional District: 07

Building

The Edward A. Garmatz U.S. Courthouse was constructed in 1976 and is situated on a 2.5 acre parcel in downtown Baltimore, MD. The "L" shaped building has over 420,000 RSF and contains nine stories plus a basement. The building is named after U.S. Congressman Edward Alexander Garmatz, who was born in Baltimore and represented the 3rd district of Maryland from 1947-1973. The property is situated between Pratt Street and Lombard Street, with the main entrance facing Lombard Street to the north.

Tenant Agencies

Judiciary, Department of Justice, GSA

Proposed Project

The proposed project will repair, replace and retrofit three major components of the Garmatz Electrical system, the switchgear, the motor control centers and electrical distribution panelboards. The medium voltage switchgear will be refurbished, while the low voltage switchgear will be replaced. New partial discharge relays and hardware equipment will also be added. Existing network transformers and network protectors will be replaced and new power monitoring and control systems will be installed. There are 7 motor control centers in Garmatz, and all will be replaced. Ninety-seven of the existing electrical distribution panelboards will be replaced, and twenty of them will be rewired to correct current splices which are not in compliance with the National Electrical Code (NEC) requirements. Other supplementary work such as; selective demolition, construction, and finishes will be required in conjunction with the proposed scope of work for the electrical system.

Major Work Items

Electrical upgrades	\$7,081,000
Selective Demolition, Construction, and Finishes	<u>63,000</u>
Total ECC	\$7,081,000

Justification

In order to ensure building functionality and operability and to address code issues, GSA needs to undertake electrical system upgrades. If the electrical systems were to fail, building operations would be suspended and emergency leased space would need to be procured for the Court tenants. The medium and low voltage switchgear is original to the 1976 construction and several years past its useful life. GSA has concerns with the

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD A. GARMATZ U.S. COURTHOUSE
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-1440-NA14
Congressional District: 07

reliability of the switchgear. The motor control centers need to be replaced because they are undersized for the current available fault current of the building. A short circuit study showed that a potentially dangerous electrical hazard exists, especially if a fault were to occur. The electrical panelboards are not up to current code due to splicing present within the panelboards. In addition, the current setup requires de-energization of multiple panelboards to allow work to be done on a single panelboard greater additional risk and inefficiencies.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a single system renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new courthouse.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
EDWARD A. GARMATZ U.S. COURTHOUSE
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-1440-NA14
Congressional District: 07


Recommendation

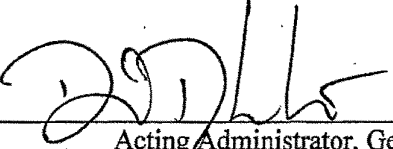
ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—GEORGE H. FALLON FEDERAL
BUILDING, BALTIMORE, MD

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for alterations

to make necessary repairs to the indoor parking garage located in the subfloors of the George H. Fallon Federal Building, located at 31 Hopkins Plaza in Baltimore, Maryland, at a design cost of \$30,000, an estimated construction cost of \$4,800,000, and a management and inspection cost of \$551,000

for a total estimated project cost of \$5,381,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
GEORGE H. FALLON FEDERAL BUILDING
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-0055-BA14
Congressional District: 07

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes an alteration project to make necessary repairs the indoor parking garage located in the subfloors of the George H. Fallon Federal Building (Fallon FB), located at 31 Hopkins Plaza, Baltimore, MD. A large piece of concrete has already fallen from the ceiling into an unoccupied parking spot and the deteriorating conditions could result in further damage to the garage, impact vehicles and result in personal injuries.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC and M&I)\$5,381,000

Major Work Items

Superstructure; interior construction; selective HVAC electrical, and fire protection system upgrades; selective demolition and sitework

Project Budget

Design	\$30,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	4,800,000
Management and Inspection (M&I).....	551,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*.....	\$5,381,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2014	FY2015

Building

The 735,726 gross square foot (gsf) Fallon FB was constructed in 1967. This steel framed high-rise building with masonry façade contains 588,838 rentable square feet (rsf) with 20 floors, and 289 inside parking spaces located in the sub-floors of the building.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
GEORGE H. FALLON FEDERAL BUILDING
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-0055-BA14
Congressional District: 07

Tenant Agencies

Internal Revenue Service, Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, Railroad Retirement Board, GSA.

Proposed Project

The proposed project involves the complete demolition and replacement of upper concrete slab, major repair of lower concrete slab and drive ramps, replacement of selected aged fire sprinkler pipe with new piping.

Due to the required removal of some of the fire sprinkler pipes during upper slab replacement, the existing fire sprinkler pipe will be replaced with new pipes.

Other supplementary work includes the removal and reinstallation of the HVAC ductwork in the impacted area during construction and the re-installation afterward, the removal, cleaning, and re-installation of all lights, the replacement of all wiring and conduits, the repainting of parking stalls, and other interior finishes.

Major Work Items

Superstructure	\$1,622,000
Interior Construction	248,000
Fire Protection Upgrades	282,000
HVAC Upgrades	317,000
Electrical Upgrades	223,000
Selective Demolition	1,079,000
Sitework	<u>1,029,000</u>
Total ECC	\$4,800,000

Justification

The Fallon Building's parking garage is in poor condition which will continue to worsen unless repairs are made to mitigate the deterioration of the garage's concrete slab and steel reinforcement. In 2010, a large piece of concrete fell from the upper slab into an unoccupied parking space. This event was the catalyst for an evaluation of the entire garage including the commissioning of a study to determine its structural integrity.

The study, completed in November of 2010, found significant wear to the concrete and exposed rebar in many spots. It was concluded that the deterioration of the concrete and

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
GEORGE H. FALLON FEDERAL BUILDING
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-0055-BA14
Congressional District: 07

steel of the upper and lower slabs was the result of water and road salt infiltration, with the damage to the upper slab exacerbated by shallow placement of the upper slab's steel reinforcement. The study also suggested that the deterioration to the upper slab, if not mitigated, would worsen and remain a life safety issue.

The study results determined and GSA analysis confirmed that the lower slab and drive ramps are in need of repair and the upper slab is too damaged to be repaired, and a full replacement of the slab is required. After construction, a waterproof membrane will be applied to prevent future water and salt infiltration. Due to the urgency of the repairs, design was undertaken immediately using minor project funds, and completed in October 2012.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years):

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
PMD-0402-BL05	R&A Ground-3 rd Floors	2005	\$46,163,000

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a single system renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
GEORGE H. FALLON FEDERAL BUILDING
BALTIMORE, MD**

Prospectus Number: PMD-0055-BA14
Congressional District: 07


Recommendation


ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—J.J. PICKLE FEDERAL BUILDING,
AUSTIN, TX

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and

alterations for modernizations, including outdated HVAC, fire alarm, electrical and plumbing systems as well as exterior improvements, at the J.J. Pickle Federal Building located at 300 East 8th Street in Austin, Texas, at a design cost of \$3,452,000, an estimated construction cost of \$33,154,000, and a management and inspection cost of \$3,655,000

for a total estimated project cost of \$40,261,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
J. J. PICKLE FEDERAL BUILDING
AUSTIN, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-0227-AU14
Congressional District: 25

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to modernize the J. J. Pickle Federal Building (Pickle FB), located at 300 East 8th Street, in Austin, TX. Alterations include modernizing outdated HVAC, fire alarm, electrical and plumbing systems as well as exterior improvements such as roof and window system replacements and plaza repairs.

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, and M&I)\$40,261,000

Major Work Items

HVAC/mechanical replacement, plumbing replacement, electrical replacement, life safety/emergency system replacement; roof replacement; interior construction; exterior construction

Project Budget

Design\$3,452,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC).....33,154,000
Management and Inspection (M&I).....3,655,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC).....\$40,261,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2014	FY2017

Building

The Pickle FB, constructed in 1964, is an approximately 275,000 gross square foot concrete building of 11 stories which includes a partially below-grade ground level and a basement level. In addition to the Federal office space provided within the building, the FB also houses a suite of rooms used by President Lyndon B. Johnson during his term of office. The significance of the suite makes the Pickle FB building eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The building is part of a master facility that includes a large plaza and is connected by an underground tunnel to the smaller Homer Thornberry Building.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
J. J. PICKLE FEDERAL BUILDING
AUSTIN, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-0227-AU14
Congressional District: 25

Tenant Agencies

Internal Revenue Service, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Congressional Offices and other smaller agencies.

Proposed Project

This project includes modernizing a number of outdated internal building systems as well as some exterior work. HVAC work includes replacement of the entire distribution system and replacing the restroom exhaust system. The window systems will be replaced with an energy efficient insulated glass that will be sensitive to the historical aspect of the building’s façade. Damaged plaster caused by window leaks will be corrected. The roof will be replaced with a more energy efficient roof system with a davit and fall protection system. The entire existing fire alarm system will be replaced. Electrical system components will be replaced. The underground storage tank for the emergency generator is over 20 years old and must be replaced. Exterior cleaning and replacement of exterior caulking and correction of cracks in the plaza slab are also part of the project. Swing space needed to accommodate tenant moves during construction is included in the project.

Because some of the Pickle FB systems proposed for upgrade function jointly with those of the neighboring Homer Thornberry Building, some of the upgrades will impact the system functionality of that building as well.

Major Work Items

HVAC/Mechanical Replacement	\$10,895,000
Exterior Construction	10,031,000
Electrical Replacement	3,696,000
Interior Construction	3,523,000
Life Safety /Emergency System Replacement	2,200,000
Plumbing Replacement	1,573,000
Roof Replacement	<u>1,236,000</u>
Total ECC	\$33,154,000

Justification

The building systems are outdated and have reached the end of their useful life. Outdated HVAC control system and related electronic components need frequent repairs and parts are no longer available. The majority of the components of the facility’s central plant are approaching the end of their useful life, thereby requiring the removal and replacement of boilers, cooling towers, and a chiller. Upgrades to the building’s exterior include roof replacement as well as

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
J. J. PICKLE FEDERAL BUILDING
AUSTIN, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-0227-AU14
Congressional District: 25

work on the windows and the plaza. The fire alarm is outdated and needs to be replaced to ensure life safety. The windows have been leaking at the Pickle building for some time, causing damage to plaster in tenant space. In addition, window glazing is extremely stained and window gaskets are near the end of their useful lives. Installation of a waterproof membrane is needed in the plaza between the Pickle and Thornberry Buildings to prevent further water infiltration. This will prevent leakage into Pickle FB office space beneath the plaza.

Additionally, replacement of the emergency generator’s aging underground storage tank used for the storage of fuel is a critical part of the project to prevent leak or tank failure which would be very costly and environmentally hazardous.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

New Construction	\$118,832,000
Alteration	\$64,883,000
Lease	\$228,464,000

The 30 year, present value cost of alteration is \$53,949,000 less than the cost of new construction, an equivalent annual cost advantage of \$3,045,000.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
J. J. PICKLE FEDERAL BUILDING
AUSTIN, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-0227-AU14
Congressional District: 25

Recommendation

ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended:



Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved:



Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

PTX-0227-AU14
Austin, TX

Housing Plan
J.J. Pickle Federal Building

April 2013

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED							
	Personnel			Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹			Personnel			Usable Square Feet (USF)				
	Office	Total		Office	Storage	Special	Office	Total		Office	Storage	Special	Total	
J. J. PICKLE FEDERAL BUILDING														
Labor Office Of Apprenticeship	4	4	434	-	-	127	4	4	434	-	-	-	127	561
Corporation For National & Community Services	31	31	4,486	-	-	81	31	31	4,486	-	-	-	81	4,567
DOD Defense Contract Audit Agency	17	17	2,447	-	-	136	17	17	2,447	-	-	-	136	2,583
DHS Immigration And Customs Enforcement (ICE)	62	62	8,797	-	-	2,140	62	62	8,797	-	-	-	2,140	10,937
DHS National Protection & Programs Directorate FPS	5	5	760	-	-	-	5	5	760	-	-	-	-	760
DHS US Secret Service	22	22	3,239	-	-	2,841	22	22	3,239	-	-	-	2,841	6,080
DHS Intelligence & Analysis	2	2	237	-	-	-	2	2	237	-	-	-	-	237
DOT Federal Highway Administration	81	81	11,554	-	-	887	81	81	11,554	-	-	-	887	12,441
House Of Representatives	4	4	522	-	-	2,161	4	4	522	-	-	-	2,161	2,683
Internal Revenue Service	603	603	74,249	3,622	7,070	84,941	603	603	74,249	3,622	7,070	84,941	8,888	13,960
Joint Use	-	-	5,072	-	-	8,888	-	-	5,072	-	-	8,888	-	13,960
National Agricultural Statistics Service	71	71	11,012	-	-	187	71	71	11,012	-	-	187	1,199	11,199
GSA	20	20	6,919	-	-	235	20	20	6,919	-	-	235	1,789	2,659
Senale	6	6	870	-	-	1,789	6	6	870	-	-	1,789	-	3,987
Vacant	-	-	3,987	-	-	-	-	-	3,987	-	-	-	-	1,199
Labor Wage And Hour Division	8	8	1,199	-	-	-	8	8	1,199	-	-	-	-	1,199
Total	936	936	135,784	3,622	26,542	165,948	936	936	135,784	3,622	26,542	165,948	26,542	165,948

Office Utilization Rate (UR)	
Current	106
Proposed	106

Office Utilization Rate (UR)	
Current	106
Proposed	106

UR—average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 26,995 sq ft of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 26,995 sq ft of office support space

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

Special Space	
ADP	1,235
Conference/Training	15,679
Fitness Center	3,209
Food Service	1,280
Health Unit	339
Holding Cells/Detention	3,361
Restrooms	1,419
Total	26,542

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
ALTERATION—THEODORE LEVIN U.S.
COURTHOUSE, DETROIT, MI

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for phase I of a multi-phase alteration project, including re-

placement of chillers, addition of fire safety stairs and freight elevator, addition of Ft. Street stair corridor, and basement loading improvements, to correct building deficiencies of the Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse located at 231 West Lafayette Boulevard in Detroit, Michigan, at a total project design cost for all phases of \$10,200,000, an estimated construction cost for Phase I of

\$19,259,000, and a management and inspection cost for Phase I of \$1,541,000 for a total authorization of \$31,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI**

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE14
Congressional District: 14

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) is proposing phase I of a multi-phase alteration project to correct serious building deficiencies of the historic Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse (Levin Courthouse), which houses the Federal Courts for the Eastern District of Michigan, located at 231 West Lafayette Boulevard in Detroit, MI. Major building systems are beyond their useful lives, inefficient, and difficult to maintain. The proposed multi-phase project will correct serious building deficiencies to ensure the long term occupancy of federal agencies by providing a safe and reliable work environment. This proposed scope (Phase I) includes replacement of chillers, addition of fire safety stairs and freight elevator, addition of Ft. Street stair corridor, and basement loading improvements (required to facilitate deliveries throughout the multi-phase project).

FY2014 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, Phase I ECC & M&I)\$31,000,000

Major Work Items

HVAC and electrical systems replacement; elevator improvements; plumbing and fire and life safety upgrades; interior construction

Project Budget

Design of all Phases (2014)	\$10,200,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	
Phase I (2014)	\$19,259,000
Phase II (TBD).....	33,986,000
Phase III (TBD).....	<u>56,770,000</u>
Total ECC	\$110,015,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	
Phase I (2014)	\$1,541,000
Phase II (TBD).....	2,728,000
Phase III (TBD).....	<u>4,557,000</u>
Total M&I	\$8,826,000

Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*.....\$129,041,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI**

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE14
Congressional District: 14

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>
Design	FY2014	FY2016
Construction	FY2014	FY2018

Building

The Levin Courthouse was constructed in 1934 in the Neo-Classical Revival style using reinforced concrete with an Indiana limestone façade. The building is 771,904 gross square feet with 631,871 rentable square feet and 19 inside parking spaces. It has 10 stories above grade with a pair of two-story penthouses and a below grade level where vehicles access the basement for deliveries, prisoner transfer to the building and judges' parking. The central core of the building opens to form a light-well from the 3rd to 10th floors. The building is located on the southeastern edge of the central portion of the central business district of Detroit. This asset is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing property to the historic district.

Tenant Agencies

Judiciary, Department of Justice, Congress-House of Representatives, GSA, U.S. Tax Court

Proposed Project

Phase I of this project includes the addition of the egress stairwell and Fort Street stair corridor, a new freight elevator, replacement of the chillers and reconfiguration of the basement loading dock area.

The proposed project, in total, includes replacement of the building's chillers, air handling units, perimeter fan coil units, fiber-board ductwork, and upgrades to the Building Automation System. The building's electrical distribution system and emergency generator will be replaced and cloth wiring will be removed throughout the building. Domestic water piping will be repaired and restrooms will be renovated to provide Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABAAS) compliance.

An egress stairwell will be added, the fire alarm will be replaced, and the sprinkler system will be extended to provide full coverage. Public and freight elevators will be replaced. The basement loading dock area will be modified to better facilitate deliveries to the building. Hazardous materials related to the scope of work will be abated.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI**

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE14
Congressional District: 14

Under future phases, temporary swing space may need to be constructed within the building for tenants to occupy while work is performed in their space. The build-out of internal swing space may potentially require the relocation of a tenant from the building into external swing space.

Major Work Items

HVAC Replacement	\$54,071,000
Electrical System Replacement	14,986,000
Elevator Improvements	12,987,000
Fire and Life Safety Upgrades	12,480,000
Interior Construction	8,757,000
Plumbing Upgrades	6,734,000
Total ECC	\$110,015,000

Justification

The historic Levin Courthouse serves as the Federal Courts for the Eastern District of Michigan. In recent years, the Courthouse has experienced electrical outages, failures of the HVAC system, elevator outages, and frequent flooding resulting from pipe ruptures, resulting in major disruptions to tenant agencies' mission execution. Major building systems are well beyond their useful lives, do not comply with current codes, and are inefficient and difficult to maintain. Fire and life safety systems are outdated and egress pathways are inadequate.

Public restrooms do not comply with accessibility requirements and the current configuration of the basement loading dock area prevents the delivery of materials during normal business hours. The building's freight elevator is undersized, which makes the transport of materials throughout the building very inefficient.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI**

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE14
Congressional District: 14

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

New Construction	\$306,203,000
Alteration	\$214,882,000
Lease	\$359,616,000

The 30 year, present value cost of alteration is \$144,735,000 less than the cost of construction, an equivalent annual cost advantage of \$8,168,000.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI**

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE14
Congressional District: 14

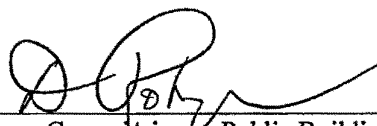
Recommendation

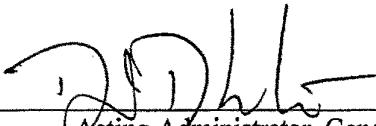
ALTERATION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

AMENDED COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
CONSTRUCTION—SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF
ENTRY, SAN YSIDRO, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the design and construction of the reconfiguration and

expansion of the existing U.S. Land Port of Entry facility in San Ysidro, California and funding in support of Phase III of the project, amending prospectus number PCA-BSC-SD-approved September 24, 2008, at a site cost of \$49,000,000, a design cost of \$22,000,000, an estimated construction cost of \$65,659,000, and a management and inspection

cost of \$12,428,000 for a total additional authorization cost of \$149,087,000, an amended prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

FY2014 Project Summary

Through amended prospectus, General Services Administration (GSA) requests additional approval for the design and construction of the reconfiguration and expansion of the existing U.S. Land Port of Entry (LPOE) facility in San Ysidro, CA and funding in support of Phase III. Completion of Phase III is requested before Phase II in order to provide connection to Mexico’s newly completed El Chaparral inspection facility.

This prospectus amends Prospectus No. PCA-BSC-SY09 approved in FY2009, to reflect an updated space requirement and real estate and construction market influences subsequent to preparation of the FY2009 prospectus. The addition of southbound inspection facilities (including canopies) and the addition of a bi-directional pedestrian processing facility (in lieu of just a walkway) to address pedestrian growth and reduce long wait times on the west side have resulted in a net increase total built area from 341,680 square feet in the FY2009 prospectus to 401,290 square feet.

FY2014 Committee Approval Requested

(Additional site, Design, ECC, M&I) \$149,087,000¹

FY2014 Appropriation Requested

(Additional site, Design, ECC, M&I) \$226,000,000²

Overview of Project

The project proposes the reconfiguration and expansion of the existing San Ysidro LPOE facility in three phases.

¹ Total approval to date equals \$582,756,000 (\$576,713,000 from previous approvals + \$6,043,000 via ARRA in 2009). Balance of approval needed for project = \$149,087,000 [\$49,000,000 (site acquisition), \$22,000,000 (design), \$65,659,000 (ECC), \$12,428,000 (M&I)].

² GSA has worked closely with DHS program offices responsible for developing and implementing security technology at the Land Ports of Entry (LPOEs). These programs include United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT), Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs), Advanced Spectroscopic Portal (ASPs) monitors, and Land Border Integration (formerly Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII), Outbound Inspection, and Port Hardening/Absconder programs. This prospectus contains the funding of infrastructure requirements for each program known at the time of prospectus development since these programs are at various stages of development and implementation. Additional funding by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) may be required to provide for as yet unidentified elements of each of these programs to be implemented at this port.

GSA

PBS

**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Phase 1 expands the capacity of the port to process northbound vehicular traffic and develops a new southbound pedestrian crossing on the east side adjacent to the historic customs house. The work involves the now completed demolition of the administration building that crossed the I-5 freeway, the 24 existing primary inspection booths, and secondary inspection facilities. It also involves construction of 46 new primary inspection booths with new canopy; a new secondary inspection area, which includes the main head house (auto building) and canopy; with development of a new north/south pedestrian facility and adjacent transit facilities on the west side of the port; and an east-west public pedestrian bridge crossing the I-5.

Phase 2 (to be funded at a future date) replaces the northbound processing buildings not demolished during the previous phase. It involves demolition of all remaining structures other than the historic port building and construction of a new administration and pedestrian processing building, a central holding facility and a connection between the pedestrian and auto facilities; renovation of the historic port building and a pedestrian plaza adjacent to the pedestrian processing building.

Phase 3 creates a new southbound connection to Mexico, with inspection facilities, which will provide 17 additional northbound primary inspection booths. It involves demolition of all structures remaining on existing private and public properties being acquired west of the existing port and east of the Virginia Avenue site; realignment of the southbound roadway to enter Mexico at the newly completed El Chaparral inspection facility; construction of southbound inspection facilities including canopies; and a covered employee parking structure.

This project will also accommodate the needs of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

GSA

PBS

**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Site Information

Additional Site To Be Acquired 23 acres

Building Area

Building (including canopies and inside parking)³401,290 gsf
 Building (excluding canopies and inside parking).....253,762 gsf
 Outside parking spaces150
 Secured outside parking spaces50
 Structured parking spaces400

Project Budget**Site Acquisition**

Site Acquisition (FY2004 and FY2008).....\$40,000,000
 Additional Site Acquisition (FY2014)49,000,000
Total Site Acquisition\$89,000,000

Design

Phase 1 (FY2004 and FY2008).....\$15,762,000
 Phase 1 (ARRA)\$536,000
 Phase 2 (FY2008)11,931,000
 Phase 2 (Future Funding Request).....14,500,000
 Phase 3 (FY2008)8,847,000
 Phase 3 (FY2014)7,500,000
Total Design\$59,076,000

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)

Phase 1 (FY2008 and FY2009).....\$204,706,000
 Phase 1C (ARRA).....4,894,000
 Phase 2 (Future Funding Request).....179,000,000
 Phase 3 (FY2014)156,500,000
Total ECC⁴\$545,100,000

Site Development Costs⁵\$286,722,000
 Building Costs (includes inspection canopies) (\$644/gsf).....\$258,378,000

³ The project may contain a variance in gross square footage from that listed in this prospectus upon measurement and review of design drawings.

⁴ ECC is broken into two parts – Site Development Costs and Building Costs

⁵ Site development costs include grading, utilities, paving and demolition of existing facilities.

GSA

PBS

AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Management and Inspection (M&I)	
Phase 1 (FY2008 and FY2009).....	\$11,054,000
Phase 1C (ARRA).....	\$613,000
Phase 2 (Future Funding Request).....	14,000,000
Phase 3 (FY2014)	<u>13,000,000</u>
Total M&I.....	\$38,667,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*.....	\$731,843,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

FY2014 Committee Approval Requested

(Additional site, Design, ECC, M&I) **\$149,087,000⁶**

FY2014 Appropriation Requested

(Additional site, Design, ECC, M&I) **\$226,000,000⁷**

Location

The site is located in San Diego, California, at 701 E San Ysidro Boulevard.

⁶ Total approval to date equals \$582,756,000 (\$576,713,000 from previous approvals + \$6,043,000 via ARRA in 2009). Balance of approval needed for project = \$149,087,000 [\$49,000,000 (site acquisition), \$22,000,000 (design), \$65,659,000 (ECC), \$12,428,000 (M&I)].

⁷ GSA has worked closely with DHS program offices responsible for developing and implementing security technology at the Land Ports of Entry (LPOEs). These programs include United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT), Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs), Advanced Spectroscopic Portal (ASPs) monitors, and Land Border Integration (formerly Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII), Outbound Inspection, and Port Hardening/Absconder programs. This prospectus contains the funding of infrastructure requirements for each program known at the time of prospectus development since these programs are at various stages of development and implementation. Additional funding by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) may be required to provide for as yet unidentified elements of each of these programs to be implemented at this port.

GSAPBS

**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Schedule

Design	FY2007	FY2017
Ph 1	FY2007	FY2009
Ph 2	FY2016	FY2017
Ph 3	FY2014	FY2015
Construction	FY2010	FY2020
Ph 1	FY2010	FY2014
Ph 2	FY2017	FY2020
Ph 3	FY2015	FY2017

Tenant Agencies

DHS - Customs and Border Protection; DHS - Immigration and Customs Enforcement; Joint Use; and USDA

Justification

The current facility, constructed in 1973, no longer effectively supports the CBP facilitation and enforcement missions. It is unsafe, undersized, outdated, unhealthy and unsightly. It neither adequately supports CBP's unified organization or other key programs, (U.S. VISIT). Public safety needs to be addressed due to the lack of circulation separation between suspected offenders and the traveling public, while federal employee safety also needs to be addressed to relocate office space from directly above public traffic lanes. The facility is inadequate to timely process visitors as is, and will be even more so as its passenger and pedestrian volumes are projected to grow significantly during the coming years. Currently, northbound vehicle wait times are routinely 45 minutes and can reach up to two hours during peak traffic periods.

The proposed expansion and configuration will improve officer safety and through-put of pedestrian and non-commercial traffic. With its huge traffic volume and high seizure, arrest and apprehension rates, San Ysidro is CBP's highest priority for new construction funding and represents the best opportunity at an LPOE to reduce threats to the nation while facilitating legitimate travel. Since submittal of the FY2009 prospectus, local real estate values have increased significantly, customer space requirements increased, and escalation in costs over time have resulted in substantial upward revision of the project budget.

GSA

PBS

**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

San Ysidro Land Port of Entry Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	Fiscal Year	Amount	Purpose
108-199	2004	\$34,211,000	Site, relocation, design
110-161	2008	\$37,742,000	Additional Site acquisition and relocation, additional design, M&I, and construction
110-161	2008	\$161,437,000 (Emergency Designation)	Additional Phase I ECC and M&I
111-8	2009	\$58,910,000	Phase I construction
111-5	2009 (ARRA)	\$6,043,000	
Appropriations to Date		\$298,343,000	

GSA

PBS

**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Prior Committee Approvals

San Ysidro Land Port of Entry Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	Date	Amount	Purpose
House T & I	7/23/2003	\$34,211,000	Site and relocation = \$25,630,000; Design = \$8,581,000
Senate EPW	7/30/2003	\$34,211,000	Site and relocation = \$25,630,000; Design = \$8,581,000
House T & I	5/23/2007	\$37,742,000	Additional Site/relocation = 8,670,000; Additional Design = \$14,822,000; M&I = \$935,000; Construction = \$13,315,000; 300-space parking garage
Senate EPW	9/20/2007	\$37,742,000	Additional Site/relocation = 8,670,000; Additional Design = \$14,822,000; M&I = \$935,000; Construction = \$13,315,000; 300-space parking garage
House T & I	9/24/2008	\$343,323,000	M&I = \$17,590,000; Construction = \$325,733,000
Senate EPW	5/21/2008	\$343,323,000	M&I = \$17,590,000; Construction = \$325,733,000
Approvals to Date*		\$582,756,000	

* Approvals to Date includes \$161,437,000 funded in 2008 via Emergency Designation; \$6,043,000 via ARRA in 2009; authorization for each is inherent in the applicable public law.

GSA

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**AMENDED PROSPECTUS - CONSTRUCTION
SAN YSIDRO U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
SAN YSIDRO, CA**

Prospectus Number: PCA-BSC-SD14
Congressional District: 51

Alternatives Considered (30 year, present value cost analysis)

GSA owns and maintains the existing facilities at this port of entry; thus no alternative other than Federal construction was considered.

Recommendation

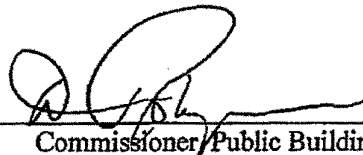
CONSTRUCTION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended:



Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved:



Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

July 2013

Housing Plan
San Ysidro Land Port of Entry

PCA-BSC-SD14
San Diego, CA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED							
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹			Total	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			Total		
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special		Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special			
San Ysidro LPO														
USDA-APHIS	2	2	124	69	10	203	2	2	586	-	-	-	-	586
Navy - Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet	-	-	302	-	-	302	-	-	65	-	-	-	-	65
DHS-Customs & Border Protection	250	250	77,161	-	11,668	88,829	350	350	76,956	-	211,616	-	465	288,572
DHS-ICE	25	25	925	2,166	157	3,248	37	37	28,615	-	-	-	-	29,080
DOI - Fish & Wildlife Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	503	-	-	-	-	503
Joint Use	-	-	249	-	389	638	-	-	1,067	-	-	-	3,307	4,374
GSA-PBS	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	281	-	-	-	-	281
Total	277	277	78,761	2,235	12,224	93,220	391	391	108,073	-	215,388	-	215,388	323,461

Special Space	USF
Laboratory	968
Vault	2,804
Fitness Center	893
Conference	6,418
Inspection Canopy	148,600
ADP	2,208
Food Service	3,877
Holding Cells	3,931
Medical Supply Storage	143
Restrooms	5,940
Sallyports/evidence/ weapon storage	26,018
Observation area (tenant floor cut)	13,588
Total	215,388

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

CONSTRUCTION—U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY,
LAREDO, TX

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for construc-

tion to expand and modernize two of the four U.S. Land Port of Entry facilities at the Port of Laredo, the Convent Street and Juarez/Lincoln facilities, in Laredo, Texas, to increase efficiency and improve safety and security for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, at an estimated construction cost of \$55,518,000 and a management and inspection

cost of \$6,168,000 for a total additional authorization cost of \$61,686,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
LAREDO, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-BSC-LA14
Congressional District: 28

FY2014 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes construction to expand and modernize two of the four U.S. Land Port of Entry (LPOE) facilities at the Port of Laredo in Laredo, Texas, the Convent Street (Laredo I) and Juarez/Lincoln (Laredo II) facilities to increase efficiency, improve safety and security for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

FY2014 House Committee Approval Requested

(ECC and M&I) \$61,686,000¹

FY2014 Senate Committee Approval Requested.....\$0

FY2014 Appropriation Requested

(ECC and M&I) \$61,686,000²

Overview of Project

There are four inspection facilities at the Port of Laredo – Convent Street (Laredo I), Juarez/Lincoln (Laredo II), Columbia (Laredo III), and World Trade Bridge (Laredo IV). This project proposes work at facilities within Laredo I and II.

Convent (Laredo I) - The proposed project will provide for the modernization of some existing facilities (historic main building) at the port, as well as expansion of the primary and secondary areas. The project will increase efficiency and improve safety and security

¹ Project for Laredo LPOE (Convent and Juarez/Lincoln) previously approved by Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. Due to reduced CBP requirements, the project costs have decreased from previous version approved by the Senate. Request House approval.

² GSA has worked closely with DHS program offices responsible for developing and implementing security technology at the Land Ports of Entry (LPOEs). These programs include United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT), Radiation Portal Monitors (RPMs), Advanced Spectroscopic Portal (ASPs) monitors, and Land Border Integration (formerly Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII), Outbound Inspection, and Port Hardening/Absconder programs. This prospectus contains the funding of infrastructure requirements for each program known at the time of prospectus development since these programs are at various stages of development and implementation. Additional funding by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) may be required to provide for as yet unidentified elements of each of these programs to be implemented at this port.

GSA

PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
LAREDO, TX

Prospectus Number: PTX-BSC-LA14
Congressional District: 28

of vehicle processing, and expedite pedestrian processing, consolidate operations and improve security and safety of pedestrian traffic.

Juarez/Lincoln (Laredo II) - This project proposes to create new vehicle processing and overcome canopy shortcomings, enlarge the undersized and overcrowded head house, expand pedestrian lanes, including a turnstile and an inspection station per lane, and create a bus inspection and privately owned vehicle (POV) inspection, and passenger processing area.

Building Area³

Convent (Laredo I)

Site Area (Government-Owned)..... 5 acres
Building (including canopies).....55,164 gsf
Building (excluding canopies).....36,555 gsf
Number of outside parking spaces.....10

Juarez/Lincoln (Laredo II)

Site Area (Government-Owned)..... 20 acres
Building (including canopies).....269,215 gsf
Building (excluding canopies).....139,425 gsf
Number of outside parking spaces.....141

³ The project may contain a variance in gross square footage from that listed in this prospectus upon measurement and review of design drawings.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
LAREDO, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-BSC-LA14
Congressional District: 28

Project Budget

Design ⁴

Convent (Laredo I) (2011).....\$2,491,000
Juarez/Lincoln (Laredo II) (2011)4,001,000
Total Design.....\$6,492,000

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)⁵\$55,518,000
Site Development Cost⁶.....\$7,217,000
Building Costs (includes inspection canopies) (\$149/gsf).....48,301,000

Management and Inspection (M&I).....\$6,168,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*.....\$68,178,000

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for emerging technologies and alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Location/Port Details

The site is located in Laredo, TX at the existing ports (Laredo I and II). Both Laredo I and II are located in the heart of the city.

(Convent Street) Laredo I – Non-commercial traffic and pedestrians

(Juarez/Lincoln) Laredo II – Only non-commercial traffic and buses. No pedestrians.

(Columbia) Laredo III – Located about 20 miles north of the city of Laredo. Commercial and non-commercial traffic, and pedestrians.

(World Trade Bridge) Laredo IV – Also located outside of the city. Handles commercial traffic only.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design	FY2012	FY2013
Construction	FY2014	FY2016/2017

⁴ Design was funded by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) from DHS-Customs and Border Protection.

⁵ ECC is broken into two parts – Site Development Costs and Building Costs

⁶ Site development costs include grading, utilities, paving and demolition of existing facilities.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
LAREDO, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-BSC-LA14
Congressional District: 28

Tenant Agencies

DHS-Customs and Border Protection, Outlease (Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission),
HHS-Food and Drug Administration, USDA-Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service,
GSA-PBS, Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration.

Justification

Convent (Laredo I) - The current facilities at the Convent LPOE are old and have not been upgraded in many years. The proposed project will provide a total interior renovation of the historic Main Building for program areas that are dramatically undersized, outdated, or currently not being housed at all, such as pedestrian processing and permit processing. The project will address code and life safety concerns and replace systems.

The top priority for this project is to make the process of moving pedestrians faster, and safer especially during extreme temperatures. Pedestrian traffic has increased substantially, with the trend expected to continue. Long-time use of this crossing has become even more important to the locals and visitors due to increased crime in Nuevo Laredo. Specifically, people are very reluctant to venture off a known route that provides a heightened sense of safety. Long pedestrian lines at peak times during the day and during the heaviest times throughout the year are also a concern. The pedestrian area does not meet handicap accessibility or life safety standards.

Juarez/Lincoln (Laredo II) - This project will improve the flow and processing of vehicle traffic through the LPOE while enhancing safety and efficiency of operations for both the inspection agencies and the traveling public. The new vehicle processing area will accommodate the increased bus traffic and enhance officer safety during inbound vehicle inspections. The current facility processes approximately 100 passenger buses each day (200 buses during holidays). The current facility was not designed to accommodate this level of bus traffic. Current port operations require POV traffic to funnel to one path between existing canopies creating backups and safety issues for staff and pedestrians, and the processing takes place in unconditioned exterior spaces. Extreme heat, which is common to this area, combined with long wait times creates uncomfortable and unsafe conditions for staff as well as travelers.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
LAREDO, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-BSC-LA14
Congressional District: 28

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

Laredo, TX Land Port of Entry Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	Date	Amount	Purpose
Senate EPW	7/25/2012	\$74,947,000	Design, Construction

Alternatives Considered

GSA owns and maintains the existing facilities at this port of entry; thus no alternative other than Federal construction was considered.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
U.S. LAND PORT OF ENTRY
LAREDO, TX**

Prospectus Number: PTX-BSC-LA14
Congressional District: 28

Recommendation

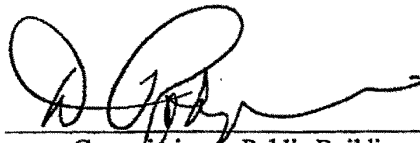
CONSTRUCTION

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

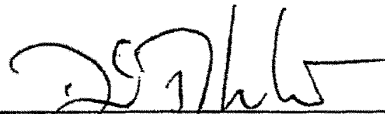
Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 4, 2013

Recommended:



Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved:



Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

June 2013

Housing Plan
U.S. Land Port of Entry

PTX-BSC-LA14
Laredo, TX

Locations	CURRENT				PROPOSED			
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹		Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)	
	Office	Total	Office	Special	Office	Total	Office	Special
Convent LPOE²								
DHS - Customs and Border Protection	50	50	11,367	0	23,876	35,243	80	80
GSA - PBS	0	0	0	0	331	331	0	0
Joint Use	0	0	1,446	0	922	2,368	0	0
Outlease	2	2	63	0	63	63	2	2
Sub Total:	52	52	12,876	0	25,129	38,005	82	82
Juarez-Lincoln LPOE³								
DHS - Customs and Border Protection	90	90	40,446	0	145,135	185,582	90	105
EHS - FDA	2	2	3,404	0	199	3,603	2	2
USDA - APHS	3	3	4,061	0	1,743	5,804	3	3
GSA - PBS MCO	2	2	636	0	365	1,001	2	2
FMCSA	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Outlease - TABC Booth	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Joint Use	0	0	887	0	550	1,437	0	0
Sub Total:	97	97	49,434	0	147,992	197,427	100	115
Total	149	149	62,310	0	173,121	235,432	182	197

Special Space	USF
Laboratory/Clinic	5,272
Holding Cell	
Sallyport/Secure Storage	15,374
Restroom/Lockers	4,128
Fitness Center	829
Conference/Training	1,730
ADP	609
Food Service	1,993
Command Room and Booth & Secure Lookout	3,030
File Storage	740
Interview Rooms	642
Kennels	2,006
Mail Room	625
Mechanical/Telephone	229
Processing Area	9,132
Shop/Equipment Storage	599
Vault	66
Vestibule	374
Inspection Canopy	150,185
Total	197,563

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Convent LPOE Proposed total square footage represents entire port (Current space minus Demolition of 19,869 USF of existing Canopy and Booth space plus New Construction).

³Juarez-Lincoln LPOE Proposed total square footage represents entire port (Current space minus Demolition of 77,526 USF of existing Headhouse and Canopy space plus New Construction).

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON,
DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 839,000 rentable square feet of space for the Department of Justice, currently located at 600 E Street, NW, 1425 New York Avenue, NW, 601 D Street, NW, and 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW in Washington, DC, at a proposed total annual cost of \$41,950,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all

tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 240 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 200 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-08-WA14

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 839,000 rentable square feet of space (RSF) for the Department of Justice (DOJ) in Washington, DC. DOJ is currently housed at 600 E Street, NW, 1425 New York Avenue, NW, 601 D Street, NW, and 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW in Washington, DC. Replacement of the current leases will enable DOJ to provide continued housing for current personnel while meeting its current mission requirements.

DOJ will improve their office utilization rate from 184 usable square feet (USF) per person to 130 USF per person and their overall utilization rate from 330 USF to 240 USF per person. The end product of improved space utilization is the prospectus proposal to house current personnel in 206,230 RSF less than the total of current occupancies.

Description

Occupant:	DOJ
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	1,045,230 (Current RSF/USF = 1.09)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	839,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF ¹ :	206,230 RSF Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	330
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	240
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	2/21/2014, 12/20/2014, 8/31/2015, and 12/31/2015
Delineated Area:	Washington, DC CEA
Number of Official Parking Spaces ² :	None
Scoring:	Operating Lease

¹ The RSF/USF at the current locations is approximately 1.09 (in aggregate); however, to maximize competition a RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

² DOJ security requirements may necessitate control of the parking at the leased location(s). This may be accomplished as a lessor-furnished service, under an operating agreement with the lessor, or as part of the Government's leasehold interest in the building(s).

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-08-WA14

Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ³ :	\$50.00
Proposed Total Annual Cost ⁴ :	\$41,950,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	\$44,139,179 Leases effective February 22, 2004; December 21, 2004; September 1, 2005; May 15, 2000

Acquisition Strategy

In order to maximize the flexibility in acquiring space to house the DOJ, GSA may issue a single, multiple award solicitation that will allow offerors to provide blocks of space able to meet the requirements in whole or in part. All offers must provide space consistent with the delineated area defined by this prospectus.

Background

The mission of the Department of Justice is to enforce the law and defend the interests of the United States according to the law; to ensure public safety against threats foreign and domestic; to provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime; to seek just punishment for those guilty of unlawful behavior; and to ensure fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans.

Justification

The current leases at 600 E Street, NW, 1425 New York Avenue, NW, 601 D Street, NW, and 1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW in Washington, DC expire on February 21, 2014, December 20, 2014, August 31, 2015 and December 31, 2015, respectively and DOJ requires continued housing to carry out its mission. The total space request reflects a reduced total space requirement that would accommodate all of the functions and personnel currently housed in these four locations. GSA will undertake the necessary interim leasing actions to achieve the space reductions proposed in this prospectus.

³ This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for negotiating this lease extension to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

⁴ Any new lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-08-WA14

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

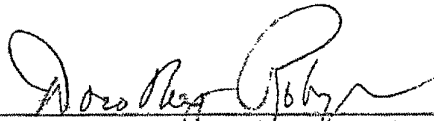
GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 30, 2013

Recommended:



Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved:



Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2013
 Housing Plan
 Department of Justice
 PDC-08-WA14
 Washington, DC

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED						
	Personnel			Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹			Personnel			Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Rate	Office	Storage	Special	Office	Storage	Special	Office	Storage	Special	Total
600 E Street NW, Washington, DC	844	844	844	136,113	19,192	83,308	261,685						
1425 New York Avenue NW, Washington, DC	571	571	571	3,191	61,474	200,778							
601 D Street NW, Washington, DC	1,348	1,348	1,348	347,700	3,905	91,736	443,341						
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC	148	148	148	43,805	500	11,542	55,847						
Proposed Lease, Washington, DC	2,911	2,911	2,911	686,803	26,788	248,060	961,651						
Total													

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	Current	Proposed
Rate	184	130

UR=average amount of office space per person
 Current UR excludes 151,097 usf of office support space
 Proposed UR excludes 106,737 usf of office support space

Overall UR ³	Current	Proposed
Rate	330	240

R/U Factor ⁴	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	961,651	1.09	1,045,230
Proposed	698,642	1.20	839,000

Special Space	USF
Conference/Training	70,191
ADP	6,104
File Room	38,605
Break Room	10,529
Legal Libraries	24,567
Mail Room	3,509
SCIF	29,150
Copy Room	10,529
Total	193,384

NOTES:

¹USF: means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel

⁴R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT,
NEW YORK, NY

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 108,000 rentable square feet of space, including 120 official parking spaces, for the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, currently located at 601 West 26th Street and One Penn Plaza in New York, New York, at a proposed total annual cost of \$7,506,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 235 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 235 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option

that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
NEW YORK, NY**

Prospectus Number: PNY-02-NY14
Congressional District: 08, 12, 14

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 108,000 rentable square feet of space (RSF) for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in New York, NY. DHS-ICE is currently housed at 601 West 26th Street and One Penn Plaza, New York, NY.

DHS-ICE will improve its office utilization rate from 198 usable square feet (USF) to 100 USF per person and its overall utilization rate from 420 USF to 235 USF per person. This will result in a 109,365 RSF space reduction in relation to its current occupancy of 217,365 RSF.

Description

Occupant:	DHS-ICE
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	217,365 (Current RSF/USF = 1.40)
Proposed Maximum RSF ¹ :	108,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.24)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	109,365 Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	420
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	235
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	12/31/2013 - 601 West 26 th Street 12/31/2021 - One Penn Plaza ²
Delineated Area:	Midtown South to Downtown New York City (North: 34 th Street, West: 12 th Avenue; East FDR Drive; South: Battery Park)
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	120
Scoring:	Operating Lease

¹ The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.40. The RSF/USF for the proposed action is 1.24. The proposed maximum RSF represents the amount needed to provide 87,215 USF.

² The Government has the right to terminate this lease, in part or whole, effective January 1, 2016 as per the lease contract.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
NEW YORK, NY**

Prospectus Number: PNY-02-NY14
Congressional District: 08, 12, 14

Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ³ :	\$58.00
Proposed Total Annual Cost ⁴ :	\$6,264,000 (Office)
	\$1,200,000 (Parking)
	\$42,000 (Antenna)
	\$7,506,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	\$12,386,000 (leases effective 1/1/2004 and 1/1/2012)

Background

Occupancy of temporary space at 601 West 26th Street was accomplished through a “friendly” condemnation taking effect until a lease was awarded on November 4, 2002. The lease removed the condemnation status of the temporary space and provided for the build-out of additional space at 601 West 26th Street to accommodate DHS-ICE agents housed at diverse locations throughout New York City subsequent to the destruction of 6 World Trade Center. The current 10-year lease became effective January 1, 2004 and expires December 31, 2013. It was executed under a blanket authorization issued immediately after September 11, 2001.

Justification

The current lease at 601 West 26th Street, New York, New York expires on December 31, 2013 and DHS-ICE requires continued housing to carry out its mission. This replacement lease will allow DHS-ICE to downsize their operation and consolidate their space by including their operation currently housed at One Penn Plaza, New York, NY.

³ This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

⁴ Any new lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS - LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
NEW YORK, NY**

Prospectus Number: PNY-02-NY14
Congressional District: 08, 12, 14

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

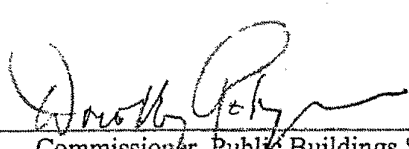
Interim Leasing

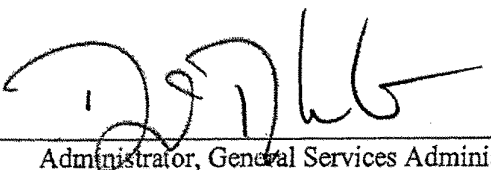
GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 30, 2013

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2013

Housing Plan
Department of Homeland Security

PNY-02-NY14
New York, NY

Locations	CURRENT				PROPOSED			
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹		Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)	
	Office	Total	Storage	Special	Office	Total	Storage	Special
601 West 26th Street, New York, NY	332	332	25,268	35,016	-	143,514	-	-
1 Penn Plaza, New York, NY	39	39	750	355	371	12,215	11,008	28,709
Proposed Lease, New York, NY	371	371	26,018	35,371	371	155,729	11,008	28,709
Total								

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	Current	Proposed
Rate	198	100

UR=average amount of office space per person
 Current UR excludes 20,755 usf of office support space
 Proposed UR excludes 10,450 usf of office support space

Overall UR ³	Current	Proposed
Rate	420	235

R/U Factor ⁴	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	155,729	1.40	217,365
Proposed	87,215	1.24	108,000

Special Space	USF
Conference	8,704
Security Check In	523
Food Service/Break Room	3,968
Mail Room	719
Computer Room	186
Restrooms	3,174
Fitness	2,641
Processing & Holding Area	868
SCIF	1,649
Secured Work Environment	6,277
Total	28,709

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel

⁴R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION, 888 FIRST STREET, NORTHEAST, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a succeeding lease of up to 504,000 rentable square feet of space for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, currently located at 888 First Street, NE in Washington, DC and another Federal agency, at a proposed total annual cost of \$25,200,000 for a lease term of up to 10 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 220 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services identifies another Federal agency as a backfill tenant consistent with the Housing Plan.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 220 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option

that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
888 FIRST STREET, NORTHEAST
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA14

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a succeeding lease of 504,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for continued occupancy of 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC, by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and to house another, to-be-determined, Federal agency. Currently FERC is housed at this location under a lease that expires on September 28, 2015, and is also housed at 1100 First Street, NE under a lease that expires on January 20, 2020.

The building at 888 First Street, NE was originally constructed as a build-to-suit facility to meet the space requirements of FERC. FERC has been the primary tenant at this location since 1995, and has a continuing need for housing to carry out its mission. GSA has a renewal option and a favorable purchase option for this facility. The purchase option is contingent upon GSA exercising the 10-year renewal option. Notification of GSA's intent to exercise the renewal option is required by March 2014. The renewal option term will commence on September 29, 2015. The purchase option must be exercised by September 28, 2025.

Description

Occupant:	FERC, Backfill Federal Tenant
Lease Type	Succeeding
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	504,000
Proposed Maximum RSF:	504,000
Reduction RSF:	30,000 RSF at 1100 First Street, NE and 84,000 RSF at Backfill Tenant Location will be vacated after 2020 consolidation into 888 First Street, NE with resulting 114,000 RSF total reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	270
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	220
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	10 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	9/28/2015
Delineated Area:	888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	None
Scoring:	Operating Lease

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
 FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
 888 FIRST STREET, NORTHEAST
 WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA14

Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ¹ :	\$50.00
Proposed Total Annual Cost ² :	\$25,200,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	\$16,293,997 (lease effective 9/29/95)

Background

FERC is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of natural gas, oil, electricity, and hydropower projects. It assists consumers in obtaining reliable, efficient, and sustainable energy services at a reasonable cost through appropriate regulatory and market means. The top initiatives that FERC is currently pursuing or considering include Smart Grid, Demand Response, Integration of Renewables, Transmission Planning, and Cost Allocation.

Justification

The main headquarters' operation for FERC is currently housed at 888 First Street, NE in Washington, DC. FERC occupies the entire commercial office space within the building through a lease that was entered into in 1993. The building was originally designed and constructed to meet FERC's space requirements. The lease went into effect on September 29, 1995 and expires on September 28, 2015. FERC requires continued housing to carry out its mission.

When GSA executed the lease at 888 First Street, NE, the contract included an unevaluated 10-year renewal option effective at lease expiration on September 28, 2015 as well as a \$20 million purchase option effective at the end of the renewal term on September 28, 2025. Although the renewal option rent will be at market, the option to acquire the building for \$20 million, or \$40 per rentable square foot, is drastically below comparable market sales of commercial office buildings in Washington, DC. GSA intends to request funding in a future fiscal year to purchase the building but must exercise the renewal option in 2015, with notice of intent provided in March 2014, to retain rights to the purchase option.

¹ This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for negotiating this succeeding lease to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

² This lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
888 FIRST STREET, NORTHEAST
WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA14

Located in the newly emerging North of Massachusetts Avenue (NOMA) submarket, 888 First Street, NE is a class "A" office building. It is located in close proximity to public transportation - both local and regional, other federal facilities, retail amenities, the interstate highway system, major arterial roadways and places of public interest in Washington, DC. It is northwest of, and across the street from, Union Station - a major intermodal and multi-modal transportation-hub serving the Atlantic coast; and proximate to the U.S. Capitol. Long-term ownership of this asset at the purchase option price is highly desirable. GSA intends to request funding in a future fiscal year for its purchase and believes that future ownership of this asset will meet a long-term need to house FERC and strengthen the Federal Buildings Fund (FBF).

GSA performed a 20-year, present value cost analysis to evaluate the benefits of exercising the renewal option, reducing FERC's space utilization in place at 888 First Street, NE, and exercising the purchase option 10 years later, versus reducing FERC's requirements to a smaller footprint at another location. The analysis evaluates the rent savings to the Government resulting from ownership at 888 First Street, NE versus continuing to pay rent to house FERC at another location. The 20-year, present value cost of reducing in place and exercising the options is \$165.7 million less than the 20-year, present value cost to relocate.

Approval of this prospectus will allow GSA to enter into a succeeding lease at 888 First Street, NE through the exercise of the 10-year renewal option. GSA proposes to improve FERC's space utilization efficiency by reconfiguring the floor layouts through a seven-phase, four-year space reduction process. GSA proposes a 59,769 rsf reduction for FERC at 888 First Street. The vacated space would then be backfilled with a to-be-determined federal tenant whose mission does not conflict with FERC.

FERC is also housed in 30,193 RSF of leased space at 1100 First Street, NE, Washington, DC. When the space reduction project is completed, GSA will consolidate 108 FERC personnel from 1100 First Street, NE into the reduced footprint at 888 First Street along with 1,607 FERC personnel currently housed there. The reduction at 888 First Street, NE, combined with the consolidation of employees at 1100 First Street, NE, will improve FERC's office utilization rate from 157 to 130 and FERC's total utilization rate from 270 to 225. FERC will fund the cost of the space reduction project and the consolidation over a four year period. The total rent savings for FERC are projected to be approximately \$4.8 million per year. When the backfill tenant takes occupancy at 888 First Street, NE, GSA projects that the building office utilization rate will decrease to 129 USF per person, and the building total utilization rate will decrease to 220.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
 FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
 888 FIRST STREET, NORTHEAST
 WASHINGTON, DC**

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA14

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

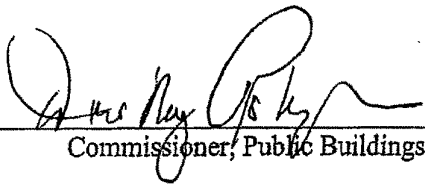
Interim Leasing

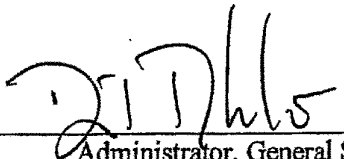
GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on January 8, 2014

Recommended: 
 Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
 Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2013

Housing Plan
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

PDC-06-WA14
Washington, DC

Locations	CURRENT				PROPOSED			
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹		Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)	
	Office	Total	Office	Storage Special	Office	Total	Storage Special	Total
888 First St. NE, Washington, DC	1,607	1,607	322,587	10,656	105,015	438,258		
1100 First St. NE, Washington, DC	108	108	23,037	2,440	25,477			
Proposed Lease, Washington, DC								
Backfill Tenant	274	274	54,726	1,857	16,712	71,295	8,856	90,678
Total	1,989	1,989	400,350	12,513	124,167	537,030	9,856	99,497

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	
Current	157
Proposed	129

UR=average amount of office space per person
 Current UR excludes 88,077 usf of office support space
 Proposed UR excludes 72,359 usf of office support space

Overall UR ³	
Current	270
Proposed	220

R/U Factor ⁴	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	537,030	1.15	617,585
Proposed	438,258	1.15	504,000

FERC Special Space		USF
Health Care		1,379
Fitness Center		4,765
EAP Office		212
Child Care		6,116
Food Service		896
File Rooms		17,251
Data Centers		6,319
Voice/Data Closets		5,335
Mail Room & Publishing		4,472
NIB Supply Store		1,410
Conference/Training		20,654
CMR Hearing Rooms		17,634
SCIF		374
Commissioners Chamber		2,624
Security Support Facilities		1,237
Total		90,678

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel

⁴R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
NATIONAL PROTECTION AND PROGRAMS DIREC-
TORATE, NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 123,000 rentable square feet of space, including 4 official parking spaces, for the Department of Homeland Security, National Protection and Programs Directorate, currently located at 1110 North Glebe Road in Arlington, Virginia, at a proposed total annual cost of \$4,797,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 173 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 173 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option

that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSAFBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
NATIONAL PROTECTION AND PROGRAMS DIRECTORATE
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Prospectus Number: PVA-06-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 123,000 rentable square feet of space for the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD). NPPD's Cybersecurity and Communications (CS&C) office is currently housed in two leases located at 1110 North Glebe Road in Arlington, Virginia.

NPPD will maintain its efficient utilization of space with a proposed office utilization rate of 74 USF and overall utilization rate of 173 USF per person.

Description

Occupant:	DHS / NPPD / CS&C
Lease Type:	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF):	115,640 (RSF/USF = 1.13)
Proposed Maximum RSF ¹ :	123,000 (RSF/USF = 1.2)
Expansion Space RSF:	None
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	173
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	173
Proposed Maximum Leasing Term:	15 years
Expiration Date(s) of Current Lease(s):	February 19, 2014; April 30, 2014
Delineated Area:	Northern Virginia
Number of Official Parking Spaces ² :	4
Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ³ :	\$39.00
Proposed Total Annual Cost ⁴ :	\$4,797,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	\$3,945,301 (leases effective 5/1/04 and 2/20/09)

¹ The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.13, however, to maximize competition an RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

² NPPD security requirements may necessitate control of the parking at the leased location. This may be accomplished as a lessor-furnished service, as a separate operating agreement with the lessor, or as part of the Government's leasehold interest in the building.

³ This estimate is for fiscal year 2014 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government.

⁴ Any new lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
NATIONAL PROTECTION AND PROGRAMS DIRECTORATE
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Prospectus Number: PVA-06-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Justification

There are currently two leases occupied by CS&C located at 1110 North Glebe Road in Arlington, Virginia. The leases expire February 19, 2014, and April 30, 2014.

CS&C is responsible for enhancing the security, resiliency, and reliability of the nation's cyber and communications infrastructure. CS&C actively engages the public and private sectors as well as international partners to prepare for, prevent, and respond to catastrophic incidents that could degrade or overwhelm these strategic assets.

CS&C works to prevent or minimize disruptions to the country's critical information infrastructure to protect the public, economy, government services, and the overall security of the United States. It does this by supporting a series of continuous efforts designed to further safeguard federal government systems by reducing potential vulnerabilities, protecting against cyber intrusions, and anticipating future threats.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA

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**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
NATIONAL PROTECTION AND PROGRAMS DIRECTORATE
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

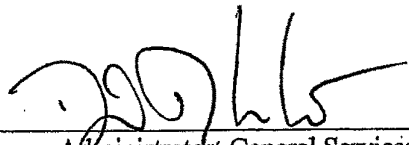
Prospectus Number: PVA-06-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on January 8, 2014

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Administrator, General Services Administration

July 2013

Housing Plan
Department of Homeland Security

PVA-06-WA14
Northern Virginia

Location	CURRENT				PROPOSED				
	Personnel	Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹	Storage	Special	Personnel	Usable Square Feet (USF)	Storage	Special	Total
11110 North Glebe Road, Arlington, VA	591	1,000	1,000	45,399	591	1,000	1,000	45,399	102,126
Proposed Lease, Arlington, VA	591	1,000	1,000	45,399	591	1,000	1,000	45,399	102,126
Total	591	1,000	1,000	45,399	591	1,000	1,000	45,399	102,126

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	Current	Proposed
Rate	74	74

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 12,260 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 12,260 usf of office support space

Overall UR ³	Current	Proposed
Rate	173	173

R/U Factor ⁴	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	102,126	1.13	113,640
Proposed	102,126	1.20	123,000

NOTES:

- ¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
- ²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
- ³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel
- ⁴R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total rsf

Special Space	USF
SCIF	39,806
Pantries	2,000
Briefing Facilities	2,093
LAN Room/Closets	1,500
Total	45,399

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY,
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION,
NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 625,000 rentable square feet of space, including 85 official parking spaces, for the Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration, currently located at 601 and 701 South 12th Street in Arlington, VA, 6354 Walker Lane in Springfield, Virginia, 1900 Oracle Way in Reston, Virginia, and 45065 Riverside Parkway in Ashburn, Virginia, at a proposed total annual cost of \$24,375,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which

is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 153 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 153 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include

in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

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**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Prospectus Number: PVA-04-WA14
Congressional Districts: 8, 11

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 625,000 rentable square feet (RSF) of space for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in the Northern Virginia. TSA is currently housed in five separate buildings in Northern Virginia: 601 and 701 South 12th Street in Arlington, 6354 Walker Lane in Springfield, 1900 Oracle Way in Reston, and 45065 Riverside Parkway in Ashburn. All except the Walker Lane space are currently leased directly by TSA and expire between March 2014 and March 2018.

TSA will improve its office utilization rate from 103 USF to 84 USF per person and its overall utilization rate from 173 USF to 153 USF per person. The end product of improved space utilization is the prospectus proposal to house current personnel in 21,859 RSF less than the total of current occupancies.

Description

Occupant:	DHS / TSA
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	646,859 (Current RSF/USF = 1.10)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	625,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF ¹ :	21,859 RSF Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	173
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	153
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	3/31/2014, 4/30/2016, 9/16/2017, and 3/31/2018
Delineated Area:	Northern Virginia
Number of Official Parking Spaces ² :	85
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ³ :	\$39.00

¹ The RSF/USF at the current locations is approximately 1.10, however, to maximize competition a RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

² TSA security requirements may necessitate control of the parking at the leased location. This may be accomplished as a lessor-furnished service, as a separate operating agreement with the lessor, or as part of the Government's leasehold interest in the building.

³ This estimate is for fiscal year 2018 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Prospectus Number: PVA-04-WA14
Congressional Districts: 8, 11

Proposed Total Annual Cost ⁴ :	\$24,375,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	\$26,169,917

Acquisition Strategy

GSA will issue a single, multiple award solicitation to allow offerors to provide blocks of space able to meet the requirements in whole or in part. All offers must provide space consistent with the delineated area defined by this prospectus. TSA has expressed a preference for co-location and that preference must be evaluated in the context of a competitive procurement that may result in one or more buildings in proximity to one another.

Background

TSA was created in 2001 as an agency within the Department of Transportation (DOT) in the wake of 9/11 to strengthen the security of the nation's transportation systems while ensuring the freedom of movement for people and commerce. Within a year, TSA assumed responsibility for security at the nation's airports and deployed a federal workforce to screen all commercial airline passengers and baggage. In March 2003, TSA transitioned from DOT to DHS. TSA employs a risk-based strategy to secure the U.S. transportation system, working closely with stakeholders in aviation, rail, transit, highway, and pipeline sectors, as well as partners in the law enforcement and intelligence communities.

Justification

The current leases housing TSA in Northern Virginia expire between 3/31/2014 and 3/31/2018, and TSA requires continued housing to carry out its mission. TSA's current multiple headquarters locations in Arlington, Springfield, Reston, and Ashburn have created administrative inefficiencies such as duplication of resources that TSA seeks to rectify through the prospectus co-location proposal, which is expected to reduce operational redundancies and foster increased efficiency. TSA has used its existing leasing authority to extend current leases as needed to coincide with commencement of the new prospectus lease.

⁴ Any new lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
 DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
 TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
 NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Prospectus Number: PVA-04-WA14
 Congressional Districts: 8, 11

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

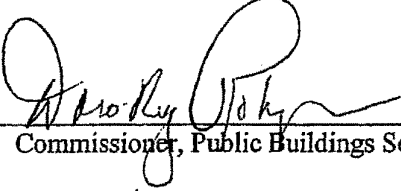
Interim Leasing

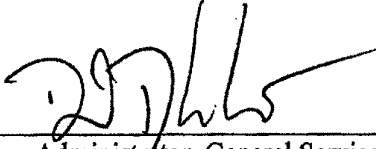
GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on January 8, 2014

Recommended: 
 Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
 Administrator, General Services Administration

PVA-04-WA14
Northern Virginia

Housing Plan
Department of Homeland Security

April 2013

Locations	CURRENT				PROPOSED			
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹		Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)	
	Office	Total	Office	Special	Office	Total	Storage	Special
601 / 701 S. 12th Street, Arlington, VA	2,933	2,933	373,981	11,532	110,666	496,179		
6354 Walker Lane, Springfield, VA	198	198	30,878	326	2,600	33,804		
1900 Oracle Way, Reston, VA	196	196	35,883	1,172	7,318	44,373		
45065 Riverside Pkwy, Ashburn, VA	67	67	7,875	240	3,831	11,946		
Proposed Lease, Northern VA	3,394	3,394	448,617	13,270	124,415	586,302	3,394	15,625
Total	3,394	3,394	448,617	13,270	124,415	586,302	3,394	15,625

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	Current	Proposed
Rate	103	84

UR=average amount of office space per person

Current UR excludes 45,932 usf of office support space

Proposed UR excludes 45,932 usf of office support space

Overall UR ³	Current	Proposed
Rate	173	153

R/U Factor ⁴	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	586,302	1.10	646,859
Proposed	520,833	1.20	625,000

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel

⁴R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

Special Space	USF
Conference/Training	47,213
Multi-use space	8,725
Food Service/Break room	6,429
File Areas	10,175
Lan Closets	6,480
Copy/Print Area	9,842
Cafeteria	7,500
SCIF/HSDN	21,458
Server Rooms	5,000
Health Unit	2,044
Fitness Center	6,920
Locker Rooms	1,840
Bldg Mail Room	2,606
Visitor Ctr/Badging	1,250
TV Studio	1,750
Credit Union	1,445
Total	140,677

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH,
SUBURBAN MARYLAND

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a new lease of up to 345,000 rentable square feet of space, including 5 official parking spaces, for the National Institutes of Health currently located at 6701 and 6705 Rockledge Drive in Bethesda, Maryland and 6100 Executive Blvd. in Rockville, Maryland, at a proposed total annual cost of \$12,075,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all

tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 170 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 170 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

Prospectus Number: PMD-01-WA14

Congressional District: 8

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a new lease of up to 345,000 rentable square feet of space for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) currently located at 6701 and 6705 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD, and 6100 Executive Blvd, Rockville, MD. The existing space is encumbered by one GSA lease and five NIH direct leases. These leases expire on February 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

NIH will improve their office utilization rate from 143 usable square feet (USF) per person to 100 USF per person and their overall utilization rate from 237 USF to 170 USF per person. The latter is consistent with the HHS 170 usf/person overall space utilization standard. The end product of improved space utilization is the prospectus proposal to house current personnel in 98,764 RSF less than the total of current occupancies.

Description

Occupant:	NIH
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	443,764 (Current RSF/USF =1.11)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	345,000 (Proposed RSF/USF =1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF ¹ :	98,764 RSF Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	237
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	170
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	2/1/2014 and 6/30/2015
Delineated Area:	Suburban Maryland – Montgomery and P George's Counties
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	5
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ² :	\$35.00
Proposed Total Annual Cost ³ :	\$12,075,000

¹ The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.11. However to maximize competition a RSF/USF ratio of 1.20 is used for the proposed maximum RSF indicated in this prospectus.

² This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

³ Any new lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

Prospectus Number: PMD-01-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Current Total Annual Cost: \$17,176,275

Acquisition Strategy

In order to maximize the flexibility in acquiring space to house NIH, GSA may issue a single, multiple award solicitation that will allow offerors to provide blocks of space able to meet the requirements in whole or in part. All offers must provide space consistent with the delineated area defined by this prospectus.

Background

The multiple Institutes and Centers (ICs) located at 6701 Rockledge Drive and 6705 Rockledge Drive are integral components of NIH's mission. The ICs housed at these locations include: Office of the Director, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the Center for Scientific Review and the National Library of Medicine. The Office of the Director is housed in 6100 Executive Boulevard.

Justification

The current leases at 6701 and 6705 Rockledge Drive in Bethesda, MD expire on June 30, 2015. The current lease at 6100 Executive Boulevard expires February 1, 2014. NIH requires continued housing to carry out its mission.

The ICs, currently located at 6701 and 6705 Rockledge Drive, will continue to need efficient transportation access to the NIH campus in Montgomery County Maryland, NIH off-campus clusters, I-270, NW Beltway Spur, including proximity to the Metrorail system. Employees rely on the NIH shuttle service and public transit to make frequent trips to the NIH campus and other clusters.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

Prospectus Number: PMD-01-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

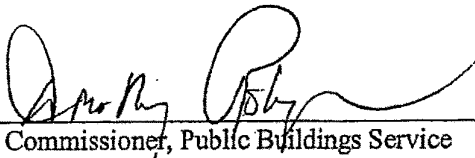
Interim Leasing

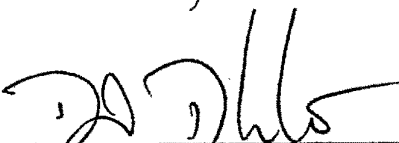
GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on January 8, 2014

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2013

Housing Plan
National Institutes of Health

PMD-01-WA14
Suburban Maryland

Locations	CURRENT			PROPOSED		
	Personnel Office	Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹ Office	Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹ Storage	Personnel Office	Usable Square Feet (USF) Office	Usable Square Feet (USF) Storage
6101 Rockledge, Bethesda, MD	974	173,955	33,271			
6705 Rockledge, Bethesda, MD	683	127,940	38,491			
6100 Executive Blvd, Rockville, MD	33	7,590	7,590			
Proposed Lease, Suburban MD	1,690	309,085	-	1,690	217,395	2,550
Total				1,690	217,395	2,550

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	
Current	143
Proposed	100

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 67,999 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 47,827 usf of office support space

Overall UR ²	
Current	237
Proposed	170

R/U Factor ⁴			
	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	400,847	1.11	443,764
Proposed	287,300	1.20	345,000

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel

⁴R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

Special Space		USF
Conference/Training		37,035
Copy Room/Work Area		10,970
Mail Room		2,040
Break Room/Food Service		3,750
File Room		3,700
High Density File		5,250
Server/Telcom		1,610
Print Shop		3,000
Total		67,355

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION LEASE—NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, SUBURBAN MARYLAND

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 194,000 rentable square feet of space, including 5 official parking spaces, for the National Institutes of Health, Office of the Director currently located at 6011 Executive Boulevard, 6100 Executive Boulevard, 6120 Executive Boulevard, and 2115 East Jefferson Street in Rockville, Maryland, at a proposed total annual cost of \$6,790,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 170 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 170 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option

that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, except that, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA

PBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

Prospectus Number: PMD-03-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Executive Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 194,000 rentable square feet (rsf) of space for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of the Director (OD), currently located at 6011 Executive Boulevard, 6100 Executive Boulevard, 6120 Executive Boulevard, and 2115 East Jefferson Street in Rockville, MD, in three GSA leases and three NIH direct leases. A small amount of space occupied by OD at the NIH campus in Bethesda MD is also part of the proposed project.

NIH will improve their office utilization rate from 168 usable square feet (USF) per person to 106 USF per person and their overall utilization rate from 239 USF to 170 USF per person. The latter is consistent with the HHS 170 usf/person overall space utilization standard. The end product of improved space utilization is the prospectus proposal to house current personnel in 56,144 RSF less than the total of current occupancies.

Description

Occupants:	NIH
Lease Type:	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF):	250,144 (Current RSF/USF=1.10)
Proposed Maximum RSF ¹ :	194,000 (Proposed RSF/USF=1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	56,144 RSF Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet /Person:	239
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	170
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	15 years
Expiration Date of Current Leases:	12/31/2013 – 11/1/2015
Proposed Delineated Area:	Suburban Maryland – Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	5

¹ The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.10, however to maximize competition a RSF/USF ratio of 1.20 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

Prospectus Number: PMD-03-WA14

Congressional District: 8

Scoring:	Operating lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate ² :	\$35.00
Proposed Total Annual Cost ³ :	\$6,790,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	\$7,782,246

Acquisition Strategy

In order to maximize flexibility in acquiring space to house NIH OD, GSA may issue a single, multiple award lease solicitation that will allow offerors to provide blocs of space able to meet these requirements in whole or in part. All offers must provide space consistent with the delineated area defined by this prospectus.

Background

The OD is a central management organization that plays an active role in shaping the research agenda and overseeing the operations of 27 NIH Institutes and Centers. The OD is an integral component of NIH's mission and is responsible for setting policy for NIH and for planning, managing, and coordinating the programs and activities of all the NIH components. Its primary function is to provide overall leadership to NIH activities in both scientific and administrative matters.

Justification

The current leases at 6011 Executive Boulevard, 6100 Executive Boulevard 2115 East Jefferson Street, and 6120 Executive Boulevard expire December 31, 2013 through November 1, 2015, and NIH OD requires continued housing to carry out its mission.

Operating in multiple locations has created administrative inefficiencies such as duplication of resources that OD seeks to rectify. Some if not all of the OD personnel may need to relocate to meet the HHS 170 usf/person space standard, presenting an opportunity to potentially co-locate personnel into no more than two locations.

²This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

³Any new lease may contain an annual escalation clause to provide for increases or decreases in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSAPBS

**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

Prospectus Number: PMD-03-WA14
Congressional District: 8

The OD will continue to need efficient transportation access to the NIH campus in Montgomery County Maryland, NIH off-campus clusters, I-270, NW Beltway Spur, including proximity to the Metrorail system. Employees rely on the NIH shuttle service and public transit to make frequent trips to the NIH campus and other clusters.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

GSA

PBS

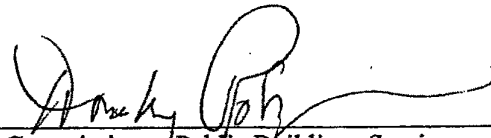
**PROSPECTUS – LEASE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SUBURBAN MARYLAND**

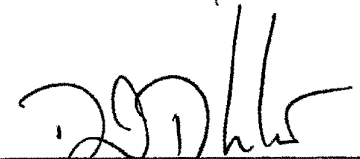
Prospectus Number: PMD-03-WA14
Congressional District: 8

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on January 8, 2014

Recommended: 
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: 
Administrator, General Services Administration

April 2013

Housing Plan
National Institutes of Health

PMD-03-WA14
Suburban Maryland

Locations	CURRENT			PROPOSED		
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF) ¹	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)
	Office	Total		Office	Total	
6011 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD	323	323	83,097	88,797		
6100 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD	148	148	30,296	38,396		
2115 East Jefferson, Rockville, MD	389	389	73,844	80,319		
6120 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD	69	69	13,675	16,215		
NHBC Building 2, Bethesda, MD	19	19	3,040	3,040		
Proposed Lease, Suburban MD	948	948	203,952	226,767		
Total						

Office Utilization Rate (UR) ²	Rate	
	Current	Proposed

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 44,869 sqft of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 28,208 sqft of office support space

Overall UR ³	Rate	
	Current	Proposed

R/U Factor ⁴	Rate	
	Current	Proposed

NOTES:

¹USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

²Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

³USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel

⁴R/U Factor = Max. RSF divided by total USF

Special Space	USF
Conference	12,385
Central Filing	4,515
High Density Files	3,450
Break Room	3,440
Copy/Print	6,673
Library	1,200
Total	30,585

There was no objection.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2(b) of House Resolution 475, the House stands adjourned until noon on Tuesday, February 25, 2014, for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

Thereupon (at 11 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House adjourned until Tuesday, February 25, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4788. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for External Power Supplies [Docket No.: EERE-2008-BT-STD-0005] (RIN: 1904-AB57) received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4789. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Metal Halide Lamp Fixtures [Docket Number: EERE-2009-BT-STD-0018] (RIN: 1904-AC00) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4790. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2009"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4791. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2010"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4792. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2011"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4793. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, "Audit of the Office of the People's Counsel Agency Fund for Fiscal Year 2012"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4794. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation (Sikorsky) Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0636; Directorate Identifier 2012-SW-065-AD; Amendment 39-17709; AD 2013-25-13] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4795. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment to Class B Airspace; Detroit, MI [Docket No.: FAA-2012-0661; Airspace Docket

No. 09-AWA-4] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4796. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Restricted Areas; Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point, NC [Docket No.: FAA-2013-1021; Airspace Docket No. 13-ASO-23] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 2804. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-354, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1423. A bill to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-355). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on the Judiciary discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2804 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SCALISE, and Mr. LATTA):

H.R. 4070. A bill to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating certain network management practices of broadband Internet access service providers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SCHRADER (for himself and Mr. MARINO):

H.R. 4071. A bill to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to provide for flood insurance policies with higher deductibles and lower rates; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BARROW of Georgia:

H.R. 4072. A bill to prohibit the use of funds appropriated to any Federal department or agency to provide technical assistance to nongovernment entities for the production of motion pictures, television shows, and other audiovisual programs; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. DAINES:

H.R. 4073. A bill to amend the Real ID Act of 2005 to repeal provisions requiring uniform

State driver's licenses and State identification cards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4074. A bill to hold war crimes suspects and Nazi war criminals accountable by encouraging foreign governments to more efficiently prosecute, extradite, deport, or accept for deportation such war crimes suspects and Nazi war criminals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself, Mr. ENYART, Ms. HAHN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H. Con. Res. 85. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued in honor of the Buffalo Soldiers; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. MENG:

H. Res. 486. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of International Mother Language Day in bringing attention to the importance of preserving linguistic and cultural heritage through education; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4070.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 protecting interstate commerce across the Internet. Additionally, we cite Clause 14 of Section 8 to make rules for the federal government.

By Mr. SCHRADER:

H.R. 4071.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BARROW of Georgia:

H.R. 4072.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DAINES:

H.R. 4073.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4074.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

- H.R. 32: Mr. DOGGETT.
 H.R. 147: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
 H.R. 713: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
 H.R. 1020: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
 H.R. 1125: Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 1250: Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CARTER, and Mr. BUCSHON.
 H.R. 1286: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
 H.R. 1304: Mr. LATTA.
 H.R. 1528: Mr. LOBIONDO.
 H.R. 1551: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 1563: Mr. GOODLATTE.
 H.R. 1573: Mr. MICHAUD.
 H.R. 1666: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
 H.R. 1726: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. GOODLATTE.
 H.R. 1869: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. SCALISE.
 H.R. 2575: Mr. STUTZMAN and Mr. RAHALL.
 H.R. 2652: Mr. O'ROURKE.
 H.R. 2907: Mr. CLEAVER.
 H.R. 2939: Ms. FUDGE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SIRES, Mr. CLAY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
 H.R. 2988: Mr. RAHALL.
 H.R. 3244: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
- H.R. 3297: Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 3400: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. CRAMER.
 H.R. 3410: Mr. GARAMENDI.
 H.R. 3493: Mr. CRENSHAW.
 H.R. 3548: Mr. BURGESS.
 H.R. 3600: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. VARGAS.
 H.R. 3658: Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MCALLISTER, and Mr. TIERNEY.
 H.R. 3698: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LATTA, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. POCAN, Mr. WHITFIELD, and Mr. RIGELL.
 H.R. 3712: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Ms. SCHWARTZ.
 H.R. 3793: Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 3877: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
 H.R. 3905: Mr. ENYART.
 H.R. 3914: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 3929: Mr. RUSH.
 H.R. 3930: Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ROSS, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. MESSER, and Mrs. BEATTY.
 H.R. 3933: Mr. LATTA.
 H.R. 3954: Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 3955: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
 H.R. 3978: Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mrs. BUSTOS.
 H.R. 3987: Mr. COLE, Mr. HOLDING, and Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 4001: Ms. KAPTUR.
 H.R. 4008: Mr. HUELSKAMP and Mr. LANKFORD.
 H.R. 4058: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
 H. Con. Res. 64: Ms. ESHOO.
 H. Res. 30: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
 H. Res. 169: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
 H. Res. 464: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. COSTA, Ms. ESTY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. HAHN, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. SCHIFF.
 H. Res. 476: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. PERRY, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. GIBSON, and Mr. PITTS.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING OFFICER DEREK
DIETER

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Officer Derek Dieter who retired from the South Bend Police Department after 39 years of service. Officer Dieter served the SBPD in multiple roles, including uniform patrol, narcotics, and twenty years in S.W.A.T.—where he spent ten years as a team leader. Officer Dieter, in addition to his law enforcement duties, also serves his community as a Councilman and Vice President of the South Bend City Council. On February 24th, he will be honored by his fellow councilmembers with a resolution for his extensive service to the South Bend Community.

Officer Dieter's work has also been recognized over 200 times by multiple interests, including the St. Joseph County Prosecutor, the Mayor, the City Council, and his fellow citizens of South Bend. In the community, Officer Dieter worked tirelessly to keep our children safe, advocating for increased security in our schools and working to keep drugs off the streets.

I am honored to recognize Officer Dieter's accomplishments and exemplary commitment to community during his service in the police department. On behalf of Indiana's Second District, I am proud to recognize Officer Derek Dieter for his 39 years of protecting the people of South Bend, and I wish him a very happy retirement.

IN HONOR OF DOMINIC JARVIS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exemplary work of Dominic Jarvis, an Australian student who has done excellent work in my office through the well established Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Programme. Dominic came to us as an Environmental Studies student from Griffith University in Queensland, Australia. A self proclaimed "pragmatic advocate in social equity and justice, environmental conservation, peace and democracy" he has been a fantastic attribute to our office here and has worked hard on the issues most important to the constituents of the Central Coast. Dominic's undeniable passion for green policy and environmentally friendly politics has been a pleasure to witness in the workplace.

We have had the opportunity to host students through this program for many years

and Dominic has done well to uphold the high caliber of work that we have come to expect from these international students. The Uni-Capitol Internship Program has done an outstanding job in providing an opportunity for political and cultural immersion for over 140 students in its 15 years of garnering cross-cultural connections and I am very proud to have been a participant in this fantastic exchange both this year and in the past. I would like to recognize the importance of these programs in creating stronger multi-cultural ties and better relationships between nations at all levels.

Mr. Speaker, Dominic has been an outstanding ambassador of Australian culture and academic prowess. He is a pleasure to have in the office and executes his duties in such a cheerful and effective manner that I am sure his absence will be stark when he returns to Australia to complete his academic pursuits. I thank him once again for the time he has spent working in our office and the mark he has left on my staff, my district, and myself.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE FALMOUTH
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce upon its one-hundredth anniversary.

The Chamber of Commerce plays an essential role in the Falmouth community, connecting local businesses and offering visitors an important perspective on much of what this beautiful Cape Cod town has to offer. Founded in 1914, the Chamber of Commerce has grown to represent many small businesses that form the backbone of Falmouth's thriving local economy. From museums and banks to churches, charities, and seaside attractions, the Chamber represents a diverse array of the organizations that help to give this community its unique character. Every day, these businesses provide vital services to the area's year-round residents and to its countless visitors. The one hundred years of hard work by the Chamber of Commerce have been essential in developing the town's vitality, a characteristic that draws so many to Falmouth every year.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce, its leaders, and the businesses and organizations it represents for their years of service to the town of Falmouth. I am certain that we will see many more great things from the Chamber in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND
DEDICATED SERVICE OF COLO-
NEL FRANK W. "BILL" MANN,
JR.

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and dedicated service of Colonel Frank W. "Bill" Mann, Jr., who passed away on Wednesday, February 19, 2014. Colonel Mann was a true American patriot, who served our Nation in three wars, and a committed community leader. All of Northwest Florida mourns his loss.

Colonel Mann was born in Bayonne, New Jersey, on May 2, 1920, and was raised in Wyoming. After graduating from Cheyenne High School, Colonel Mann joined the Wyoming National Guard, where he served in the state's cavalry before attending the University of Wyoming. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in geology and then joined the Army Air Corps.

Colonel Mann began his long and decorated career as a military aviator. During World War II, he flew numerous aircraft, including the B-24, T-13, and AT-9. He flew missions in support of the Crossroads Project nuclear tests conducted on Bikini Atoll. Colonel Mann continued his distinguished military service in the Korean War, flying numerous B-29 bombing missions and serving as the Chief of Combat Operations for the 19th Bombardment Group based at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa. Over the course of the war, the 19th Bombardment Group had flown 645 missions, 5,950 sorties, and dropped more than 52,000 tons of bombs on enemy targets, and they were awarded a Presidential Unit Citation. He continued his aviation career during Vietnam, when he flew for the inspector general.

In addition to his excellence as an aviator, Colonel Mann served in a number of important command and leadership positions during his Air Force career, including Commander of the 705th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, Director of Flight Operations at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and Commander of an Air Defense Command Radar Station at Mt. Laguna, California. During his distinguished 37-year career, Colonel Mann also earned many awards including the Bronze Star, Air Medal, and the Air Force and Army Commendation Medals.

After retiring from the Air Force in 1973, Colonel Mann and his family settled in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. As a member of the Northwest Florida community, Colonel Mann brought his experience and leadership to bear as a leader in civic society. Colonel Mann was a co-founder of the local Lions Club and a volunteer at the Chamber of Commerce. He also worked to help advocate for the military as a

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

member of the Board of Directors and President of the Fort Walton Beach Military Officers Association of America. In addition, Colonel Mann was a longtime member of the Order of Daedalians, where he worked to enroll high school youth in ROTC programs, and sponsored an annual scholarship for ROTC students. He was also served as past Flight Captain of Shangri-La Flight and was an avid and passionate member of this aviation group.

To some, Colonel Mann will be remembered as a patriot and decorated aviator; to others, he will be remembered as a civic leader and tireless advocate for members of our Armed Forces; to his family and friends he will always be remembered as a loving and devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am honored to recognize the life and service of Colonel Bill Mann. My wife Vicki and I send our prayers and deepest condolences to his wife, Marge; daughters, Cindy and Karen; grandchildren, Shannon, John, and William; and the entire Mann family.

IN HONOR OF MARILYN HUMMEL

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Marilyn Hummel who passed away peacefully in accompaniment of her family on Dec. 31, 2013. Marilyn was an old friend and a champion for environmental and social justice issues.

Marilyn was strong and unwavering in her beliefs and worked tirelessly to generously give back to her community. Her services are almost too extensive to list. She served as President of the League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County; officer in the Rural Bonny Doon Association; office manager and Executive Committee member of the Santa Cruz Group of the Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club. She was a member of the Santa Cruz County Planning Commission; and member and Chair of the Board of Commissioners of the Santa Cruz County Housing Authority. She was a joyous presence wherever she worked and touched the lives of all those in her wake.

One of Marilyn's crowning achievements was saving an isolated and fragile outcropping of the Santa Cruz Hills along with their rare and endangered species of animals.

She is survived by her husband Don and their four children: Nancy, Bill, Tom, and Chris. My heartfelt condolences and prayers go out to this family.

Mr. Speaker, Marilyn's lifetime of community service stemmed from a place of love and compassion and her vibrant energy will truly be missed.

RECOGNIZING VICTORIA HURLEY AS THE 2014 OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Victoria Hurley as the 2014 Okaloosa County, Florida Teacher of the Year. I am proud to recognize her accomplishments as an outstanding educator and the instrumental role she has played in the lives of her students.

Ms. Hurley earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Troy University. A product of the Okaloosa County, Florida school system, Ms. Hurley continues to give back to her community. Ms. Hurley has educated students at Northwood Elementary and Walker Elementary, both located in Crestview, Florida, and has served as a literacy coach. She currently teaches Intensive Reading at her alma mater, Baker School in Baker, Florida. Ms. Hurley is certified in Next Generation Content Area Reading—Professional Development (NGCAR-PD) and K-12 Reading Endorsement. She gives her colleagues and the teachers who encouraged, challenged and mentored her credit for her successful career, but it is mainly because of her passion and commitment to excellence that Ms. Hurley inspires her students to maintain a fervent interest in reading and succeed.

For over fifteen dedicated years, Ms. Hurley has taught a variety of classes with students ranging from the third to tenth grades and has participated in community and statewide projects. Among her accolades are Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year and the Disney Environmental Regional award. Famed Librarian John Cotton Dana once said, "Who dares to teach must never cease to learn." Ms. Hurley truly believes that to be an effective teacher is to be a lifelong learner, and in her spare time, she ensures that she never becomes complacent in her own professional development. Always seeking improvement, Ms. Hurley has instructed 216 hours of professional development and has earned a supplementary 438 hours of in-service credit. In addition to her teaching schedule and time spent on professional development, her service to Okaloosa County is demonstrated by her presence on many school committees and assistance in writing grants.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Hurley as the 2014 Okaloosa County Teacher of the Year. Teachers like Ms. Hurley strive to lead their students down a path of personal and academic success, and Okaloosa County is fortunate to have her as part of its community. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Victoria Hurley, and we wish her all the best.

HONORING DR. NEHEMIAH DAVIS

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Nehemiah Davis on his fiftieth anniversary as pastor of the historic Mount Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church. The church is in my hometown of Fort Worth, Texas and I am proud to represent this community in Congress. While this year marks Dr. Davis' fiftieth year as pastor of Mount Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church, I would also like to congratulate him for his installation as President of the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America.

Pastor Davis is a native Texan, born in Centerville, and received his Bachelors of Arts degree from Mary Allen College in Crockett, Texas. He also received three degrees from the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas including a Bachelor of Divinity, a Master of Divinity, and a Master of Religious Education. He is the recipient of an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Guadalupe Baptist Theological Seminary.

As a regional and civic leader, Dr. Nehemiah Davis served for as a Trustee on the Board of the Fort Worth Independent School District, held various local and national leadership positions within the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) including serving as President of the Fort Worth chapter for over 25 years, and has held a wide array of positions within the Pastor's Conference and the Minister's Conference of the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America. He currently serves as Dean of the Congress of the North Texas District Association and a teacher in the Baptist Ministers' Union of Fort Worth/ Tarrant County and Vicinity.

Pastor Davis' dedication to the church and to his community is exceeded only by his devotion to his wife Mrs. Dorothy Nell Cole and his two daughters, Carol Michelle Davis Jackson and Nina Caron Davis, who have given Dr. Davis two grandsons.

Mr. Speaker, Pastor Davis has lived a life of service to people of faith and his community. I ask my distinguished colleagues of the 113th Congress to join me in honoring Pastor Davis on his fiftieth Anniversary as Pastor of Mount Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church as well as an exemplary life of service.

DR. DAVID WELCH

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and to honor the life of an extraordinary leader of the Tampa Bay community, Dr. David Welch. His remarkable career in public service and his many contributions to our community stand as a testament to his tremendous character.

Dr. Welch was born in St. Petersburg, Florida. As a young man, Dr. Welch served his

country in the U.S. Army Airborne during the Korean War. After the war, Dr. Welch graduated from Florida A&M University and later obtained a doctorate in education from Nova University. Teaching was a lifelong passion for Mr. Welch, who inspired countless young minds during his time as a teacher at Gibbs Junior College and later on at St. Petersburg Vocational-Technical Institute.

Once Dr. Welch began his career, he quickly emerged as a business and community leader. He founded Welch Tax Services and Accounting which assisted numerous local entrepreneurs and helped foster a thriving business environment in downtown St. Petersburg. As Director of Fiscal Affairs at St. Petersburg Vocation-Technical Institute, he used his adept diplomatic skills to resolve the 116-day sanitation workers' strike of 1968. He would continue to employ his ability to bring people together as the co-chair of the biracial Community Alliance, an organization dedicated to relieving racial tensions in the area.

In 1981, Dr. Welch became the second African American to serve on the St. Petersburg City Council. As a three-term council member, Dr. Welch championed development projects, and was one of the driving forces behind what are today some of St. Petersburg's most prominent landmarks. His efforts were instrumental in the development of Tropicana Field, the Pier, and the Bayfront Center. Dr. Welch was also a strong supporter of municipal interest-free loans for housing which led to major renovations in St. Petersburg. His outgoing nature and diplomatic manner earned him respect and results throughout his tenure as a council member.

While working diligently as a public servant, Dr. Welch continued to remain active in education and supporting local businesses through his office. Dr. Welch was always eager to mentor aspiring leaders and took an active interest in the youth of the community.

On September 16, 2013, Dr. Welch passed away at the age of 85. His legacy of service and leadership are an inspiration for all people throughout this great nation. His commitment to education, economic development, and equality will be forever remembered and appreciated. Mr. Speaker, I join the Tampa Bay community in thanking Dr. David Welch for his lifelong service to the State of Florida.

IN TRIBUTE TO MR. ROBERT
WARNER

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Robert Warner for his service to the people of Connecticut and our nation. A long term resident of Vernon, Connecticut, Robert has dedicated his life to making a difference in his community, both at the local level and in service to our country.

Having known Robert personally for many years as a fellow Vernon resident, one of his greatest attributes is the generosity with which he gives his time. As a 14-year volunteer for the Meals on Wheels service, a respected

coach for girls softball, the founder of the Vernon Toastmasters Club and a deacon and active member of the Vernon First Congregational Church, Robert has always been there for those in need.

Bob also wore the uniform of our nation as a Marine during World War II. Bob saw some of the conflict's heaviest combat in the Battle of Iwo Jima and the Battle of Guam. As so many others from "The Greatest Generation," Bob has been modest about his military service—focusing instead on his fellow Marines who did not return. His quiet, strong patriotism is the ultimate manifestation of the Marine Corps motto—Semper Fidelis.

Another great attribute of Robert is the long standing commitment he holds to improving his local community. As a Republican Town Committee member, Robert has advocated for improvements to the town of Rockville and Vernon schools. His strong work ethic and willingness to work together is testament to the bipartisan respect Robert won during his time on the Town Council.

Passing his passion for people and civic duty onto the next generation, Robert's son, the Hon. MARK WARNER, who is a graduate of Rockville High School Connecticut, is today the current U.S. Senator for Virginia and was the State's 69th Governor. MARK's outstanding record as governor followed his dad's pragmatic, results-oriented approach.

Lastly Mr. Speaker, Bob Warner is devoted to his family in a way that is an example to us all. He was married to his late wife Margery for decades, and cared for her with help from his son MARK and daughter Lisa for many years. I had the privilege to get a glimpse of Bob's devotion and strength during this difficult time, and he never wavered in his care for his beloved Margery.

Congratulations to the Vernon Republican Town Committee for taking the time to honor Bob and put the spot light of a great American.

Robert Warner is a credit to his community and his country, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the lifetime dedication of Mr. Warner.

RECOGNIZING PORT SAINT LUCIE,
FL AS ONE OF THE BEST
PLACES TO RETIRE

HON. PATRICK MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the City of Port Saint Lucie, Florida for earning the rank as one of the 25 best places to retire in the United States.

For the third time since October, Forbes.com has listed Port Saint Lucie as one of the top places to live or do business, and I am delighted to recognize the recent Forbes.com list that names Port Saint Lucie as one of the 25 best places to retire in 2014.

Forbes cites excellent climate and air quality, lower cost of living, median home price, and low crime rate as their key criteria for the ranking. Just months ago, Forbes selected

Port Saint Lucie as one of the best places in the country for business and careers based on education data, job growth, and the lower cost of doing business.

In addition to Forbes, last September, Movoto.com, a national online real estate broker, claimed Port Saint Lucie as number one on their list of the 10 best places to live in Florida based again on the city's low crime rate, cost of living, and housing among other factors.

Port Saint Lucie commands national attention for its incentives for families, entrepreneurs, and international business leaders alike and a perfect balance of warm yet temperate year-round weather. As a major city on the Sunshine State's Treasure Coast in Florida's Eighteenth Congressional district, I am honored to represent Port Saint Lucie in the United States House of Representatives.

DR. CAROLYN COLLINS

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2014

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and to recognize a remarkable leader of the Tampa Bay community, Dr. Carolyn Collins. Her work as a public healthcare advocate, champion of education, and a broadcaster stand as a powerful testament to a lifetime of public service.

After graduating from Howard W. Blake High School in the Tampa Bay area in 1965, Dr. Collins earned a degree in Foods, Nutrition, and Institutional Management from Florida A&M University in 1973. She also earned a Masters of Public Administration degree in Health Services Management and Administration from Golden Gate University in San Francisco, California. Having attained these considerable academic qualifications, Dr. Collins launched a long and successful career.

Dr. Collins has been extremely active in advocacy efforts on behalf of the African American community in the Tampa Bay area. Her involvement in the Hillsborough County chapter of the NAACP stretches back to 1973. She currently serves as the Chapter President. As a Registered and Licensed Clinical Nutrition Specialist, Dr. Collins was a strong advocate for improving public health in the Tampa community. She served as a Clinical Nutrition Specialist for over 34 years at Tampa General Hospital. In addition to her professional work, she served as chair of the Employment Advisory Committee, serving the interests of over 4,000 employees at Tampa General Hospital.

Dr. Collins has also been an active voice in our community. From 1986 to 1992, she hosted her own television show, "Black Contact," broadcast on the CBS-affiliated WTVT Channel 13. She received the prestigious Creative Excellence in Business Advertising Award for her show.

Dr. Collins has been a strong supporter of improving public education. Since the 1970s, she has been actively involved in the Hillsborough County Head Start Program in a variety of different capacities. She has served as the Parent President in the past and also

represented the program as the chair of the Hillsborough County Community Action Agency Board of Directors. Inspired by the powerful effect of her own academic career, Dr. Collins has been active in all levels of the Florida A&M University alumni association for over 35

years. For 7 of those years, she served as Vice President of the National Alumni Association, and afterwards became the president of the association.

Dr. Collins has many honors to her credit, not only in her professional career but also for

her outstanding community involvement. Her example is truly an inspiration to all Americans. Mr. Speaker, I join the Tampa Bay community in thanking Dr. Carolyn Collins for her many years of selfless public service.

SENATE—Monday, February 24, 2014

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God of mystery and clarity, You are the fountain of light, and in Your light we see light. Lead our lawmakers safely to the refuge of Your choosing. Guide the Members of this body, making them faithful stewards of Your will. Give them understanding and integrity so that they may work to fulfill Your purposes. Empower them to endure hardships as good soldiers of Your kingdom, as You defend them with Your Heavenly grace. Lord, provide them with courage to face perils with total trust in You.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

READING OF WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the Senate of January 24, 1901, as amended by the order of February 10, 2014, the Senator from Maine, Mr. KING, will now read Washington's Farewell Address.

(Mr. KAINE assumed the Chair.)

Mr. KING, at the rostrum, read the Farewell Address, as follows:

To the people of the United States

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you at the same time to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country—and that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious in the outset of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself, and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me, still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise and as an instructive example in our annals that, under circumstances in which the passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his

counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that, from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts—of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common govern-

ment, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same intercourse, benefitting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort—and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value! they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt

whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations—northern and southern—Atlantic and western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations. They tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head. They have seen in the negotiation by the executive—and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate—of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic states unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a Constitution of government better calculated than your

former for an intimate Union and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations under whatever plausible character with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction; to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes

to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions, that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country, that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypotheses and opinion exposes to perpetual change from the endless variety of hypotheses and opinion; and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable; liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is indeed little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and the duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of

one part against another, fomenting occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true—and in governments of a monarchical cast patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominates in the human heart is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern, some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim

the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and

harmony with all; religion and morality enjoin this conduct, and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded and that in place of them just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambi-

tious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility

of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by justice shall counsel.

Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rival-ship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world—so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it, for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements (I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy)—I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed—in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them—conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another—that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character—that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish—that they will control the usual current of the passions or prevent our nation from run-

ning the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good, that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism—this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take—and was bound in duty and interest to take—a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which

they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

A LONGSTANDING TRADITION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I thank very much the Senator from Maine, Mr. KING, for his fluent reading of President George Washington's Farewell Address, a message to the American people at the close of his great Presidency—the first Presidency.

The annual reading of the farewell address is one of the Senate's longstanding traditions. The custom began in 1862 as a commemoration of the 130th anniversary of President Washington's birth. It was intended to boost congressional morale during the Civil War.

As then-Senator Andrew Johnson—by the way, I have a great painting of President Johnson in my office. I always tell people who come to my office to contrast that with the statue of President Johnson when he was Vice President. I have the good fortune of having Andrew Johnson's desk at the time Lincoln was assassinated. I have that beautiful piece of furniture in my office. It is stunningly beautiful. I haven't had a chance to talk about that before, so I took this opportunity.

As then-Senator Andrew Johnson of Tennessee said before the first recitation of the address:

The time has arrived when we should recur back to the days, the times, and doings of

Washington and the patriots of the Revolution, who founded the government under which we live.

In 1888—the 100th anniversary of the Constitution's ratification—the Senate then observed the ritual, and every year since 1896 the Senate has marked Washington's birthday, honored his legacy, and recurred back to those who founded the government under which we live, as we did today with the reading of Washington's Farewell Address.

As Senator KING mentioned, President Washington prepared the address with input from James Madison, America's fourth President, as well as Alexander Hamilton, the Nation's first Treasury Secretary. Similar to our Nation's founding documents, including the Constitution, the Farewell Address was a collaboration between the great minds of our country's formative years. Each year, for 118 years, the Senate selects one of its Members, alternating parties, to deliver these valdictory remarks.

I am pleased the Senator from Maine, an avid student of history—and he truly is—was able to carry on this important tradition today. Senator KING has delivered unique aspects of history to our caucus and, of course, on the Senate floor he has no parallel to his being able to pinpoint times of history. I admire him very much, as we all do.

With this bipartisan custom of honoring our Nation's founder fresh in our minds, the Senate embarks on a fresh work period today. I hope this session will be marked by a tone of cooperation. Washington's collaboration with Madison and Hamilton, among others, is proof enough that when patriots collaborate with the country's good in mind the product is vastly improved. Too often over the past few years our two parties have found themselves working at odds instead of pulling together for a common purpose. I hope to change that this work period.

In addition to considering a number of important nominations, the Senate will consider legislation that should draw overwhelming support from Members of both parties, a bill sponsored by the Senator from Vermont Mr. SANDERS which expands health care and benefits for our Nation's veterans.

I also hope Democrats and Republicans will work together to pass the child care block development grant bill this period. It is bipartisan in nature, and I think it should pass. This measure ensures working families have safe child care options, protecting both children and working parents. This bipartisan bill, as well as the veterans measure we will consider this week, will offer an opportunity for Democrats and Republicans to find common ground and work together.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 301, S. 1982. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301 (S. 1982) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, if any, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m. Senators, during this period of time, will have an opportunity to speak for up to 10 minutes.

At 5 p.m. this afternoon the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Jeffrey Meyer to be U.S. district judge for the State of Connecticut. At 5:30 p.m. there will be a cloture vote on the Meyer nomination, and there will be additional votes on nominations this evening.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2024

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding S. 2024 is at the desk and due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2024) to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Maine.

HISTORY OF WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

Mr. KING. Mr. President, it was a great privilege for me a few moments ago to read George Washington's Farewell Address for a number of reasons; one, we learned in doing a little research on this practice—which as the majority leader indicated goes back more than 100 years—that the last Senator from Maine to read President Washington's Farewell Address was Senator Ed Muskie, who read it on this

floor exactly 50 years ago. The last Senator to read before him from Maine was a freshman Senator in 1949, one Margaret Chase Smith. So if you believe that I am honored and humbled to be following in those footsteps, you would be correct. This is one of the seminal documents in American history. It really ranks with the Federalist Papers, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution itself. As the majority leader indicated, it didn't simply spring from Washington's mind. It actually has an interesting history. It was originally drafted in 1792, at the end of Washington's first term, when he intended to retire. He kept wanting to retire all the way from the end of the Revolutionary War, and the public kept calling him back into service.

The first speech in 1792 was drafted by James Madison, who was the father of our Constitution. Madison, Hamilton, and Jefferson convinced Washington that he couldn't leave at the end of his first term because there was too much going on in the country. The country was still in its very formative years, and patriotism required him to stay for a second term, which he reluctantly did.

This speech was delivered in September of 1796—at the end of Washington's second term—and was based upon the original Madison draft, edited and updated by Alexander Hamilton. I don't know about others, but I wouldn't mind having Madison and Hamilton be my ghostwriters—two of the greatest minds in American history and minds which didn't always agree about all the principles of what the country should work toward, but they agreed to work with Washington on this remarkable address.

I would like to take a moment to talk about Washington's importance. I used to teach about leadership, and one of the fundamental principles I used to pound into my students was that execution is as important as vision—that having a good idea and a concept is not enough; it has to be executed well in order to take root and actually achieve the benefits that are intended.

Washington was the execution of the vision of the Constitution. When he took office, there was no United States. There was an idea, there was a vision, there was a concept, but how it was actually put into practice was so much in the consequences of Washington's decisions on a day-to-day basis, starting with only running for two terms, starting with when they asked him what the President should be called—and, of course, in Europe it was "Your Excellency" and all these fancy titles—and he said: "Mr. President" is the proper appellation for an executive in a republican form of government. But Washington was essential to the success of this country because of his role as the person who did the executing of the vision embodied in the

Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The speech itself is amazing. In many parts, it could have been written last week. Several things come through to me very quickly.

One is his wonderful, inspiring, powerful, passionate commitment to public service. He talked about his humbleness, his patriotism, his feeling of duty in order to serve his country. Next, he is passionate about national unity, and indeed his comments foreshadow the Civil War. He talked about regional differences and the importance of unity not only to the country as a whole but as benefits to the regions themselves. He talks about the North and South and the East and the Atlantic. He is presaging the arguments of the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s that led to the attempted dissolutions of the country and passionately argued for the importance and significance not only as an abstract principle but in a very material, concrete interest, how important union was.

Of course, as one of the two Independents in this body, it would be unbecoming for me to dwell at too great length on his imprecations about the dangers of party to our society. I will let those speak for themselves. But he was very worried about what he called factions and later on in the address actually refers to them as “parties.”

He also talks about the dangers of concentration of power and the usurpation of power by one branch or another of the government—again, a fundamental principle and a realization of the important role the Constitution played in dividing powers between what he calls the segments of the government.

I think one of the aspects that comes through in this document, as it comes through in the Federalist Papers—which is the other sort of seminal explanation of how our government came to be and what the thinking is—is a brilliant in-depth understanding of human nature. He is talking to the ages in this speech. He is not talking to the politics of 1796 or the politics of 1800s or the politics of the Revolutionary War; he is talking about human nature and the tendency toward despotism, the tendency toward usurpation, the tendency toward power being accumulated in one place, and that comes through. Often he talks about human nature. I think that was one of the most important and most salient characteristics of all of the founding individuals of this country.

There is a very interesting provision on religion expressly stating that religion is part of our heritage and that morality is part of our heritage. He has an interesting image: How can an oath mean anything if religion doesn't mean anything?

Finally, there is a short but powerful passage about the importance of edu-

cation. He calls it the “general diffusion of knowledge.” That is public education. The general diffusion of knowledge means everyone, not just the elite. That is one of the secrets of America, the general diffusion of knowledge.

Of course, one that speaks to us today is his admonition to cherish the public credit and not get into debt, and if you get into debt because of a war, endeavor during peacetime to pay off the debt. I think that is something we really need to take to heart and think about, lest our debt swamp us in the future. He uses a phrase I couldn't help but emphasize when I read the speech: that we should not ungenerously throw upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. In other words, we ought to pay our own bill, and right now in this country we are not doing that.

He also has a sort of amusing passage about taxes, saying: Nobody likes taxes. They are never fun. They are always inconvenient. But they are necessary. And he talks about how the members of the government have to prepare the public for the idea that they have to pay for those expenditures that are going to be entailed in the pursuit of any governmental enterprise.

Finally, he talks about foreign entanglements, probably the most famous portion of the speech, where he talks about being neutral, the luxury we have being protected by huge oceans, and that we really should avoid foreign entanglements.

Interestingly, on that provision I went back and read the comments. Each time a Senator reads the speech, there is a leather-bound book in which they put their notes, which I am going to be doing in a few minutes. I went back and read the notes of Ed Muskie and Margaret Chase Smith. In 1949 Margaret Chase Smith wrote in her note: I wonder if we should be entering into NATO. This was indeed the first major foreign commitment of American enterprise after Washington's speech. Margaret Chase Smith obviously had second thoughts after she had read the speech here on the Senate floor in 1949.

Finally, this speech is so powerful because it is so fresh and it speaks to us today. My favorite quote from Mark Twain—and there are many, but one which I suspect I will repeat on this floor at least half a dozen times during my tenure here: History doesn't always repeat itself, but it usually rhymes. In this case, what Washington was telling us in the fall of 1796 rhymes. It helps us to think through so many of the issues which are confronting us here today and the wisdom of Washington expressing it. Remember, two of the most brilliant minds of that period—Hamilton and Madison—participated in the drafting of the speech—words well worth re-

membering, a wonderful contribution to the life of our country.

I thank the majority leader and the leadership for giving me the privilege and the honor to read the speech today on behalf of my colleagues.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

ENERGY REGULATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I spent the morning over at the Supreme Court. I was there to support the plaintiffs in a very important case against overreach by the Environmental Protection Agency. And here is why I say this case is important—not only for Kentucky but for the entire country.

First of all, it involves the all-important question of whether elections actually still matter in our country. I say that because 4 years ago President Obama tried to push far-reaching energy-regulating legislation through a Congress which was at the time completely dominated by his own party. He had a 40-seat majority in the House and he had 60 votes in the Senate. The cap-and-trade bill passed the House but did not pass the Senate. Even with then-Speaker NANCY PELOSI and a Democratic majority leader in the Senate, he just couldn't get the votes to enact the cap-and-trade bill. A Democrat-controlled Congress beat back the President's plan to radically upend energy regulation in our country. They stopped the national energy tax.

Just a few months later the American people rendered a harsh verdict on the Obama agenda in an election wipe-out which the President himself referred to as a “shellacking.” Others have described the November 2010 midterm elections as a national restraining order.

My point is that this should have been the end of the story on the President's energy regulation plan. Instead, it was just the beginning.

The President's base wasn't about to back off from divisive policies just because they couldn't achieve them legislatively. So the far-left fringe pressured the White House to push similar regulations through the back door, to achieve through Presidential fiat what they could not achieve through legislation. That, of course, is what the Obama administration has done. The administration has attempted to use statutes such as the Clean Air Act to regulate what those laws were never intended to regulate and don't even mention.

The administration itself effectively acknowledges that if it actually followed the plain language of the Clean Air Act in regulating carbon emissions, that would lead to “absurd results.” The administration itself said that if they actually followed the plain language of the Clean Air Act in regulating carbon emissions, it would lead to “absurd results.”

So here is what the Obama administration decided to do about the absurdity: just unilaterally rewrite parts of the law it didn't like, on its own, without the input of Congress—the branch of government that is supposed to write our laws. This kind of Presidential overreach should concern every Member of this body, regardless of party. From a constitutional perspective, this is a wholly troubling practice which needs to be rectified by the High Court.

But this case is about more than just constitutional theory; it is also about people's lives. Regardless of their constitutionality, the energy regulations imposed by this administration are simply bad policy. Coupled with cheaper natural gas, the administration's regulations have helped foster hardship in many of America's coal communities—hardship which has ruined lives and has hurt some of the most vulnerable people in our country.

In Kentucky these regulations have helped devastate families who haven't done anything wrong—other than to be on the wrong side of a certain set of liberals who don't seem to approve of the hard work they do to support their families.

When President Obama took office, there were more than 18,000 coal jobs in Kentucky. At last count that figure has dropped to less than 12,000—with eastern Kentucky coal employment dropping by 23.4 percent this last year alone.

Let's be clear. These regulations are unfair, and they represent the conquest of liberal elites imposing their political will on working-class Kentuckians who just want to feed their families. That is why I have filed an amicus brief in the case I was referring to. It is on behalf of the Kentuckians who are voiceless in this debate, the families that find themselves on the losing end of a “war” that has been declared on them by their own government.

I held a listening session on these EPA regulations with coal miners in December, and many of their stories were heartbreaking. Listen to what Howard Abshire of Fedscreek had to say:

I say to you, Mister President of the United States . . . We're hurting. You say you're the president of the people? Well, we're people too. No one loves the mountains . . . more than we do. We live here. We crawl between them. We get up every morning and we go on top of a mountain in a strip job in the cold rain, snow, to put bread on the table . . . Come and look at our little children, look at our people, Mr. President. You're not hurting for a job; you've got one. I don't have one.

I hope the President is listening.

As far as the Supreme Court is concerned, it now has the opportunity to end this latest abuse of the Constitution by the Obama administration. I hope the justices will make the right decision in this case. Either way, I am

going to keep fighting. I have already filed a proposal that would allow Congress to have a say in the administration's job-killing regulations.

It is time for Washington elites to think about ways to help, instead of hurt, the hard-working people of eastern and western Kentucky.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. ROBERTS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2037 are printed in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I yield the floor. It would appear we do not have a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FREE SPEECH PROTECTION

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, along with my colleagues, I have been in places across the country this past week. Most of my time was spent in Kansas, and certainly Kansans had a good opportunity to express to me some of their worries and concerns about what is going on in Washington, DC.

One of the things that has become very dominant in those conversations is the concern that this administration—Washington, DC—that the Constitution, as we learned it, as we were taught in high school government classes, does not seem to be being complied with. The concern is the constant efforts by this administration to do things unilaterally, to put in place executive orders and policies and regulations.

This has become a common conversation. It is pleasing to me that Kansans care so much about the structure of our government, the foundation that was created by the Framers of our Constitution, and they have a genuine concern that the Constitution is being violated. Often the conversation is: What are you doing about it?

The topic I want to talk about today is just one more example. This one has a reasonably positive ending, but I want to highlight something that has

transpired in Washington, DC, that started last May at the Federal Communications Commission.

I just learned about this recently, and it became much more of a common topic with knowledge across the country as a result of one of the FCC Commissioners, Ajit Pai, and his opinion piece that appeared over the past few days in national publications.

What we learned was the Federal Communications Commission was considering—in fact, considered, put in place—a program in which they were going to survey the broadcasters they regulate. They hired an outside firm, as I understand it, and questions were prepared that were going to be asked of people in newsrooms across the country.

The pilot program was organized to occur in South Carolina. Among the kinds of questions that were going to be asked in newsrooms across the country by the FCC were: What is the news philosophy of this station? Who decides which stories are covered—whether a reporter ever wanted to cover a story and was told they could not do so.

It seems to me whether you have a conservative or liberal bent or you are down the middle of the road, you ought to have great concern when the agency that regulates the broadcasters decides they want to get into the newsroom to discover how news is developed at that station. That is not part of what the mandate of the FCC is, and it ought to raise genuine concerns from those who care about free speech. It certainly raised those concerns from me.

I came back to Washington, DC, today with the intention of highlighting this issue for my colleagues, making the American people more aware of this tremendous affront to the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The good news is that Chairman Wheeler at the FCC announced just a couple days ago that this proposal, as it included questions about how news was developed, was being withdrawn.

So in part I am here to express my genuine concern about how did we get so far as for anyone at the FCC or their contractor to think this is appropriate behavior for a regulator; and, secondly, I am here to say that I am relieved and pleased that Chairman Wheeler has stepped in to withdraw those kinds of questions.

The argument was made that this is a voluntary survey, but as Commissioner Pai indicated in his opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal, it is hard to see how something the FCC is asking of a regulated broadcaster would be really considered voluntary.

The Commissioner says: Unlike the opinion surveys that many of us receive on the phone or in the mail, in which we can hang up the phone or never answer the phone or we can toss the survey into the trash, when the FCC sends someone to your station to

ask you questions about how news is developed, it is hard for you to say: I am not going to answer the question, when the FCC has control over your license.

So I am here to make certain that this kind of approach is something that is in the past. I serve on the Appropriations subcommittee that is responsible for the FCC's budget. When they come to tell us about their appropriations request, again I will thank Chairman Wheeler for withdrawing these questions, but I want to make certain there is a genuine concern on behalf of all of us in the Senate—Republicans and Democrats, whatever brand of philosophy you claim to espouse or believe, you ought to be worried when the FCC is making inroads into how news and opinion is formulated at broadcasting stations—television and radio—across the country.

So the speech I had intended to give raising this topic is only given now in part. It is my view that every American citizen has certain civic responsibilities. Not just us Members of the Senate, every American citizen's primary responsibility as a citizen is to make certain we pass on to the next generation of Americans a country in which the freedoms and liberties guaranteed by our Constitution are protected throughout the history of our Nation into the future.

So I ask my colleagues to be ever vigilant as we see an ever encroaching Washington, DC, administration, even Congress, intruding in the lives of the American citizens, particularly as it relates to their opportunities for free speech.

I will be back later in the week to talk about other intrusions by the Federal Government into free speech and political advocacy. But again, Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to be on the Senate floor today to highlight what I think would have been an egregious violation of the Constitution by one of our Federal agencies.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 1752, S. 1917

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, after consultation with Senator McCONNELL, the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 251, S. 1752; that if a cloture motion is filed on the

bill, there be 2 hours of debate on S. 1752 and S. 1917, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate immediately proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate immediately proceed to vote on the passage of the bill; that no amendments, points of order or motions be in order to the bill prior to a vote on passage; that if the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1752 is not agreed to, the bill be returned to the calendar; that upon disposition of S. 1752, the Senate immediately proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 293, S. 1917; that if a cloture motion is filed on the bill, the Senate immediately proceed to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill; that no amendments, points of order or motions be in order to the bill prior to the vote on passage; that if the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1917 is not agreed to, the bill be returned to the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, the Gillibrand and McCaskill bills that the majority leader talked about were filed as amendments to the Defense authorization bill that the Senate passed in December of last year. They each have significant bipartisan support.

The majority leader filled the tree on that bill and blocked amendments on both sides of the aisle, and therefore the Senate did not vote on these bills last year. There are hundreds of other amendments that were also blocked.

Would the Senator modify this request to include a vote, at a 60-vote threshold, on another proposal that was blocked from consideration? The Kirk amendment No. 2295 was filed to the Defense bill. It would impose additional sanctions against the government of Iran if it violates the interim agreement with the United States. Will the Senator include a vote on the Kirk amendment as part of this agreement?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the majority leader agree to the modification?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object. There is no more important national security concern today than keeping Iran from getting a nuclear weapons capability. For our own national security and for that of Israel, our ally, we are committed to stopping Iran from getting that capability.

That is why President Obama has entered into international negotiations with Iran. The Senate has a long tradi-

tion of bipartisanship on this issue, including numerous strong bipartisan votes that we put in place to initiate the very sanctions that have brought Iran to the negotiating table.

In summation, I am terribly disappointed that my Republican friends are trying to turn this vital national security concern into a partisan issue by trying to inject it into a setting where it is clearly not relevant.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MORAN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

CUBA

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor to speak about my two recent fact-finding trips to Cuba. During the first trip, which was an incredible journey across the nation of Cuba, I had conversations with Cuban citizens, farmers, doctors, nurses, students, a very broad cross section of the Cuban citizenry, also some government officials.

The second trip involved a 1-day visit to the U.S. Detention Center at Guantanamo Bay. I would like to begin with details of my first trip which took place during January's recess in the Senate. First, I wish to publicly thank Ambassador Cabanas, the Cuban—well, I guess since we do not have an embassy—he has the rank of Ambassador, but he is in charge of the Cuban interest section here. I wish to thank him and his staff personally for arranging this and overcoming a lot of difficult obstacles to make sure we could take this trip.

I guess I am the first Senator or Congressman to do this kind of a trip. First, we flew from Miami down to Santiago de Cuba. We spent 2 or 3 days in Santiago de Cuba. Then we drove from Santiago to Holguin, to Camaguey, Santa Clara and into Havana. So we traversed about 700 miles during the week's period we were there, seeing most of the entire nation of Cuba.

I have not seen—I have not been up to the Pinar del Rio out here in the western part. That is one part I have not seen. I had visited as a Senator 11 years before, but that was only in Havana. This time I wanted to see the country. I wanted to see ordinary Cubans in small towns and communities, to get a feel for what it was like in the rest of the country.

Most people just go to Havana. That is akin to going to New York City and saying you have been to America. It is not the same. There is a lot more country to Cuba, a lot more things going on than just Havana.

It is clear to me this is a time that is very important in Cuban-American relations. So I just wanted to share some of the insights I gained during my travels across this Nation of 11 million people.

As I said, I arrived in Santiago on January 17. Over the course of the week, we traveled up through the countryside. Again, I wish to thank Bernardo Toscano, a Cuban who had been in the United States I think three or four times. He had been in Washington two or three times working in their interest section and I think once or twice in New York with their interest section in New York.

So we met him. He came with us to Santiago and then served as a host and was with us all during our trip.

Bernardo—I always say, he is an Italian Cuban, Bernardo Toscano—again, another indication that there are a lot of different nationalities that people in Cuba have.

Bernardo was so gracious, so kind, so informative in taking care of things for us. He informed me that he had been to visit 20 States in the United States. So he has been to 20 States. Yet a U.S. citizen cannot go to Cuba to see Cuba. But the trip we took was fascinating. All along the way, from Santiago all up the way, we saw tour buses—tour buses with people.

They looked like North Americans, but in fact they were from England and Germany and Sweden and Canada, mostly Canada, a lot of Canadians. But there were people traveling, visiting different things. Canada right now, they have a direct flight from Toronto to Santa Clara. Then you get on a bus and go out here, to those wonderful beaches out here, which we did not visit. A lot of Canadians and a lot of Europeans go there but not Americans. I will have more to say about that.

But, again, I wish to thank so many people of Cuba, so many people I saw, for the warm welcome, the hospitality they extended to me, my wife, my traveling companions, and my staff as we traveled throughout their country.

Prior to my election—long before my election to Congress, I was a Navy pilot stationed at Guantanamo Bay for 18 months. So this was interesting to see the rest of Cuba other than just Guantanamo Bay, which is right down here. This is the Guantanamo Bay area. It is right near Santiago de Cuba.

In fact, landing at the airport in Santiago was quite interesting. One of my traveling companions I was with was a Navy pilot with me when I was stationed in Guantanamo. He is Cuban American. We remembered how we were always kind of warned when we were out flying not to get mistaken between Santiago and Guantanamo because the runways look exactly the same.

They are both east-west runways, and they are right there on the ocean.

There is a bay on both of them, and if we weren't careful, we might land on one rather than the other.

All that time that we were flying out of there we never went to Santiago—of course, we couldn't—but we used to see it as we patrolled the skies around Cuba. So now landing at Santiago was kind of an interesting flashback in time to when I was a young Navy pilot.

I wanted to get a firsthand look at the lives of ordinary people outside of Havana. Particularly, I have long advocated in this country for a strong public health infrastructure, and I wanted to examine the strengths and weaknesses of Cuba's public health system.

When we first arrived in Santiago, we went to visit the cancer hospital, which provides treatment for people from across the entire country. I found the doctors there and the leaders of that hospital to be very dedicated public servants. The institution has struggled to overcome the devastation of Hurricane Sandy, which hit Santiago very hard. Again, it would be mutually beneficial for both Cuba and the United States if we had better relations and if we had better trade relations with Cuba. They might need some medical equipment that we have, but we could also learn from them on some of the processes and procedures they use in treating cancer patients.

I was struck by one thing. This was Friday afternoon, and we were going through the hospital—yes, they have all the necessary equipment, the radiation machines and all the equipment they need to do radiation, infusion for chemotherapy. They have all of that. As I said, the hospital suffered some damage from Hurricane Sandy and that hasn't been all fixed yet—but what was interesting, as I was going through the hospital, I noticed a lot of empty beds.

As we were leaving the hospital, I said to the director: Where are all of the people? It looks like you have a lot of empty beds.

She said: Oh, it is Friday afternoon. We send them home for the weekend.

I said: Really?

She said a very interesting thing to me.

She said: Yes. You come to the hospital to get cured, but you go home to get well.

I thought about that, because not too long ago I had an instance in Des Moines, IA, where I had visited a friend of mine who was seriously ill with cancer—he has since passed away—but he wanted to leave. Literally, he wanted to leave the hospital for a Sunday meeting of the Methodist Church. He was a Methodist minister and the hospital wouldn't let him leave.

They said: If you leave, then you have to be all readmitted again through Medicare, and Medicare will cut off the payments and all of that.

There was all of this, and they wouldn't even let him leave for a few

hours to go halfway across the city to partake in an award he was supposed to receive.

I thought about that when I saw this hospital and she said: No, we send people home for the weekend and then they come back on Monday.

There are interesting things such as that that we pick up. There is a lot the two of us could learn together.

In Camaguey—we stopped in Holguin, which is also kind of a small, rural community, again with a very kind of comprehensive clinic system. As we drove on up the road to Camaguey, in Camaguey we had an interesting visit. We visited the home of Dr. Carlos Finlay. Now some people might say who is Dr. Carlos Finlay?

Dr. Carlos Finlay was the person who discovered the origin of yellow fever that is transmitted by a certain mosquito. A lot of people didn't believe him. They just did not believe him, but he persevered. Later on it was a person who is sort of famous around here—at least we know the name, Dr. Walter Reed—who, when they were building the Panama Canal, discovered that Dr. Finlay was right, it was a transmission by mosquitoes.

We were able to visit his home and there is again a whole cadre of people there doing research on other transmissions of illnesses; for example, the transmission of different diseases by mosquitoes there, but again there is a heavy focus on medical research.

When we went to Santa Clara, we visited another clinic there. They call them polyclinics. In other words, they do a lot of different things. It is sort of what we might think of in this country as a community health center—it is a community health center. Unlike our community health centers, people don't have to just go there to seek help. The community health centers, the polyclinics, go out there. They go out in very rural areas to make sure kids have their vaccinations and to make sure people have checkups.

One of the reasons they have such a low infant mortality rate—which some have said is lower than ours and is, in fact, one of the lowest in the world, and they have one of the lowest rates of mortality of children zero to 5—is because when a woman gets pregnant in Cuba, she is visited immediately. As soon as they know about it, she gets visited by a nurse; visited by health officials who put her on a better diet, make sure she doesn't smoke, provide supportive services for her during her pregnancy, and make sure there is someone there for the birth. For that child, everything is covered from the earliest time of pregnancy through early childhood.

It is a hands-on approach. It is going out serving people rather than making people come in to them. This is one of the key features of what Cuba has done. They have made the practice of

medicine a public service in all aspects. Whether one is a doctor, a surgeon, a nurse or various other health practitioners, it is a public service.

Cuba has put a great deal of emphasis on prevention, prevention of illness. In fact, I must say I was surprised in Cuba that they have gone on an antismoking campaign.

I was out one night in Santiago. We were out to dinner. We came back at about 10 at night, and I noticed a street was blocked off. There were a lot of people out there, and I asked Mr. Toscano what that was.

He asked somebody else and said: Well, in Santiago every Friday and Saturday night they block off long streets and they have festivals, street parties.

I said: I want to go there.

So we parked our car and we walked out. We didn't have any guards or anybody around us. We just walked down the street. It was a mile long. It was a long street. Late at night, we went down the street, and along the sides of the street there were people cooking foods. There were little kiosks. We even saw one whole hog on a spit being turned, people eating. There were families with kids out there and a lot of young people.

There were a lot of young people out there looking for other young people on Saturday night. There was music. Every other block had some music, and it was just kind of a wonderful atmosphere.

I noticed two things that I was looking for during my walk down and back—how many people were smoking. I counted four people were smoking. There were thousands of people up and down these streets, and I counted four people who were smoking. There may have been more, but that is all I could find.

During this entire walk, with all of these people out in the street, 10:30 at night, Saturday night, I saw one policeman, and he didn't have any firearms. He just had a stick. He just kind of walked around with a stick. There was this wonderful thing, but the idea that no one was smoking, kind of fascinated me.

But I digress. I want to talk about the community-based health system and keeping people healthy. What they have said is it is not just the doctors' offices—that is only one component of keeping people healthy—it is the entire community, the schools, the community-based approach that keeps people healthy. That is something we could learn from and do in this country.

During my visit with health care professionals, they explained that in the early 1980s Cuba moved to a comprehensive family practice model throughout the country, with doctors, nurses, and other health professionals working in teams integrated into the neighborhoods where they live and

they work. This has become the pillar of primary health care in Cuba and obviously has contributed to significant improvements in health outcomes. I think their longevity, lifespan, is now even longer than ours in the United States.

These changes and others have helped Cuba improve its health care system. There are several indicators of this. For instance, by the end of 2013, Cuba reported that its infant mortality rate had declined to 4.2 for 1,000 live births, the lowest in its history and one of the lowest in the world. By comparison, the United States had an infant mortality rate of 5.9 per 1,000 live births.

Also, over the past couple of decades, Cuba has increased the number of medical personnel it sends abroad to serve on medical missions, filling critical needs in underserved countries. There are currently nearly 44,000 Cuban medical personnel working in many countries around the world.

Last year I took a trip to Namibia and South Africa, and I saw Cuban doctors working there—actually, sometimes alongside our own doctors from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Interesting. We can work with them there, but we can't work with them here—so they do. They have sent them all over the world.

Also, in Havana I visited a very interesting place I had never heard about. It is called the Latin American School of Medicine. The Latin American School of Medicine is about 20 miles west of Havana. It was an old naval academy. Evidently, President Castro decided they didn't need a naval academy, so they closed it down and made it a medical school. Students come from not only all over Latin America but all around the world to go to medical school.

Believe it or not, there are students from America going to school in Havana—going to medical school. This blew my mind. I never heard of such a thing.

This is what I found out. In the year 2000, the Congressional Black Caucus had a trip to Havana. During that trip they met with President Castro. One of the Congressmen, BENNIE THOMPSON from Mississippi, had said something about how difficult it was for them to get people in certain areas of Mississippi. He said there were large areas in his home district that didn't have a single physician. Also, they talked about how expensive it was to go to medical school.

So President Castro invited American students to come there, and they worked it out. I think the first class started, if I am not mistaken, in 2002. I believe that was the first class. Now, believe it or not, there are 108 U.S. students going to this school.

I didn't see them all because a lot of them, during their schooling, go out

and work in hospitals, clinics, and different things such as that. I met with six of them and it was very interesting. From the left is Michael, who was from California; Nikolai from Queens in New York; Kimberly, also from northern California; Ariel was from Michigan; Olive is from Wisconsin; and Sarah is from New Mexico.

All of them are first-year students except for Sarah, who is a third-year student, watches over them, and is their tutor or their leader.

There are requirements before you go there. They have to be from an extremely low-income family and cannot afford to go to medical school. They have to be a college graduate and graduated with one of the sciences, such as biology or one of the physical sciences, something like that. So they must have graduated from college. Third, they have to agree that when they graduate they are going to come back to America and work in an underserved area.

Here is the deal: Every one of these students is going to medical school. Do you know what it costs them? Zero. Not one cent. The 108 students pay nothing. We have over 90 graduates of this school back here in America right now.

And that is another thing: Whenever we traveled over to Cuba, I went to the clinics and I talked to health people. I always asked them: What did it cost you to go to school? Do you have student debt? No. Medical school is free. There is no cost to going to medical school—none whatsoever. So here are these students, who would never be able to go to medical school and absorb that cost, getting a free medical education. So again, here is another of the things we could be working with Cuba on if we had a little better policy with Cuba.

The six students I met with are happy and grateful to have the opportunity. They were just out of their first 6 months. For the first 6 months all they do is learn Spanish—Spanish immersion. They had just finished that and they were very happy about that, and that now they would actually start studying medicine. Again, so many different things, but mainly I focused on health care and what they were doing on health care.

I also met with Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez. I had a long lunch with him, their former Ambassador to the United Nations and now their Foreign Minister. We had a long discussion about our relationship with Cuba.

He himself said it is time we have a new relationship with the United States. It is time for a new course. We can't be bound by old history. We need to make new history. I think that is what I would like to echo here; that we do have a constructive new policy between Cuba and America.

The last thing I did was to pay a visit to Mr. Alan Gross. Right here, Mr.

Alan Gross. This is my staff member, Rosemary Gutierrez, who went with us on this trip and made sure what I was hearing was correct in terms of Spanish, since I don't speak Spanish fluently. Mr. Gross, as you know, has been in prison now for over 4 years. I am hopeful he will be released soon on humanitarian grounds. I will be working with our government to engage with the Cuban Government in serious and sustained talks to resolve his situation and other related issues.

I might add what we are holding in this photo is a little chain. What he does in his spare time is he puts things together out of bottle caps, plastic bottle caps. He is now serving a 15-year prison sentence. I spent well over an hour with him. I think he is holding up pretty well, under the circumstances. Obviously, he is not very happy. Who would be happy, being locked up like that? He is confined to his room for 23 hours of the day, but he is allowed outside. He told me he walks 10,000 steps a day and does 50 pullups for an hour each day. So he makes these bracelets out of the rings from the water bottles. He also reads and watches television. He says he has television and things to read.

I know other Senators have visited with him in Havana, but it is time to bring Mr. Gross home. It is time to end this. It is time we do some dealing with the Cuban Government on his issue and on some other related issues that I don't mean to go into right now but the administration knows of which I speak. There is no reason why we can't return Mr. Gross to this country this year, and I am hopeful that will be done.

It is time to recognize that Cuba is our neighbor; that it is not only our neighbor but it is a sovereign nation and we have to work to improve on this relationship with a country 90 miles from our shore. It is obvious to visitors, the Cuban people and the American people have a great deal in common. In all my travels through Cuba, as we stopped at various places—stopped to have refreshments here and there, stopped in small communities—I noticed that every small town we went through or by had a baseball diamond or maybe two baseball diamonds. It is amazing how many people play baseball in Cuba. They have town teams, and towns will have two teams, one section of town against the other section—kids all playing baseball. Wouldn't it be great if we had some kind of relationship where some of our small baseball teams in the United States could go to Cuba and play? We know they have some pretty good players because some have come here to play in our Major Leagues.

In every place I stopped, and with all the people we talked to, I never heard one Cuban—not one—ever say a bad thing about the United States of Amer-

ica or about the American people. I never heard it. I expected some would say: You know, you are doing bad things to Cuba with your embargo and we don't like Americans for this. I expected to hear that. I never heard it. Do you know the thing I heard most often from ordinary Cubans? Where are you from? I said: I am from Iowa and I work in Washington, DC. The usual response was: Oh. Do you know my cousin so-and-so, who lives in St. Louis or my cousin so-and-so who lives here or there? It seems as though every Cuban has a cousin in America someplace. One woman said her son lives in Michigan.

There is this sense we have a lot in common, and I never felt any animosity whatsoever. It is clear we have a lot in common. We are both nations of hard-working people who want access to basic health care and a good education for our kids.

That is another thing: I didn't spend a lot of time looking at education, but it was clear to me the literacy rate in Cuba is very high. Some have said it is the highest of all the Latin American countries. I can't attest to that. But it is clear that education is a very important part of the Cuban structure.

Over the years, I have met with many Iowans, business people, diplomats who want to improve our relationship with Cuba to facilitate more trade and travel with our neighbors. Even with the limited opening with Cuba's markets, we have seen tremendous benefits from agricultural exports to Cuba from my State of Iowa and other parts of the United States. It is only our official policy that stands in the way of much greater exports of U.S. commodities and food products plus related agricultural machinery, technology, and so forth.

Here is another thing I noticed: We went through a lot of farms and we saw a lot of agriculture—mostly sugarcane, but other things too—a lot of cattle. This whole section of Cuba here, in this area of the map, is almost all cattle; livestock—goats and cattle—and other agriculture. I want to say this: This is the first and only country I have ever visited where I went out to see agricultural entities and have never seen a John Deere tractor or a John Deere implement of any kind. I can go to China. I went almost to the Tibetan border in China and saw John Deere equipment. There is John Deere equipment in Africa, John Deere equipment in Pakistan, and India. If we had better trade, I might see some more John Deere implements down in Cuba, which would be great for their productivity.

We would also benefit from a two-way trade. There are many things grown in Cuba we have appetites for, such as fruits and vegetables—fresh fruits that consumers in our country would enjoy.

Again, I think Americans really do want to change our policy. I have here

the Atlantic Council. On February 11 they released the results of their latest poll which found that 56 percent of the American people support the normalization of relations with Cuba, including 63 percent of Floridians who want to normalize relations with Cuba. I think we have had a policy of isolation for far too long. As this latest poll indicates, the American people think so too. After being in place for over 50 years, this embargo has not been effective in any way. Our policy has benefited neither the Cuban people nor the American people.

Both the United States and Cuba have recently taken steps to allow for greater travel. It is a significant step forward. The Cuban Government has eliminated its long-standing policy of requiring an exit permit and a letter of invitation for Cubans to travel abroad. This change in policy has allowed for prominent dissidents and human rights activists to travel abroad from Cuba.

Additionally, restrictions on remittances have been lifted. I think remittances now from Cuban-Americans and their families are now their second largest export or second to sugar.

The United States and Cuba have resumed low-level talks on migration, search and rescue operations, and other issues. I might mention one other. When I was in Guantanamo a week or so ago, with a group led by Senator TESTER, Captain Nettleton, who is the base commander, took me around the base. I had been stationed there, as I said, about 53 years ago, so I kind of wanted to see some of the old places. As he was driving me around, he took me up to the gate, and coming back I said: Do you ever have contact with Cubans? He said: Oh yes, we do. In fact, 2 years ago the last of the Cubans retired from working at Guantanamo. They lived in Cuba but worked on Guantanamo just until 2 years ago.

He told me that recently he went to visit the hospital in Guantanamo City. Now that is not on the map but it is right outside of Guantanamo Bay, our naval base. He went to visit the hospital there because they have a burn unit. They do not have a burn unit on Guantanamo at our facility. So they have made a handshake deal and an agreement that if we have burn victims on Guantanamo, we can take them to the hospital in Guantanamo City. Things like that are happening and are kind of opening the door, so we should build on these small but positive changes in the relationship.

The United States should abandon its policy of seeking Cuba's isolation. We should lift all restrictions on travel to Cuba. What is our justification for denying Americans the right to travel to Cuba? We should allow for all U.S. citizens wishing to go to Cuba to do so. This would expose more Cubans to our young people, our ideas and interactions.

When you go to Cuba you see a lot of Canadians, a lot of Europeans, and now Cuban-Americans can go to Cuba freely. If you are Cuban-American you can get on one of about four to seven daily flights from Fort Lauderdale, Miami, and Key West to Cuba. If you are a U.S. citizen you can't get on one of those unless you have a permit from the U.S. Government. If you are a Cuban-American, you can get on the plane and go to Cuba and come back, and more and more are doing so. As of last year, I believe Americans are now the second largest group to visit Cuba, but they are all Cuban-Americans. We have this crazy policy. If you are Cuban-American you can go to Cuba, but if you are not, you can't. Someone please explain that one to me.

It is time for us to chart a new course. Our relationship is frozen in a Cold War mentality that has not achieved its goals and made it difficult to move forward on issues that encourage more trade and travel between our two countries. Our policy also fails to promote more openness and respect for internationally recognized human rights.

Multiple layers of sanctions remain in place, making it difficult for U.S. businesses to trade with Cuba. Both the Cuban people and U.S. national interests would benefit from a modernized and sensible policy. Now is not the time to be bound and held back by history. It is time to make new history. It is time to begin a new chapter in the relations of our two countries.

I hope the Obama administration and the Cuban Government will seize this opportunity to do just that—to modernize, to move ahead, recognizing always and foremost that Cuba is a sovereign nation. They will not be dominated by America or any other country. We have to deal with them just as we do any other sovereign nation.

GUANTANAMO

I will conclude by saying I had an opportunity on a trip with Senator TESTER and two other Senators to visit the Guantanamo Bay detention center. We toured Camps 5 and 6, which house the majority of the detainees held at Guantanamo. We also had a tour of the facilities that hold high-value detainees, including Khalid Shaikh Mohamed.

Based on my own observations on my tour of Guantanamo and reports I read about previous conditions, it does appear that detainees are being treated more humanely now than previously and that conditions at Guantanamo are in line with how the detainees would be treated if they were held in the United States.

However, this trip reinforced my long-held conviction that the detention facility at Guantanamo should be closed as soon as possible. Its very existence—remote, offshore, not subject to the laws of the United States—

makes it impossible to justify its existence. That is why I introduced a bill to close the facility as far back as 2007. That is why I continue to believe Federal courts and Federal prisons are fully capable of dealing with these detainees.

The indefinite detention of hundreds of individuals—some for over 13 years at this point—has harmed our image abroad, complicated relations with friendly countries, and I think really violates the basic principles of our Constitution. It is not acceptable. And the existence of this facility cannot be justified when there is an alternative—and there is.

I am not alone in advocating for this prison's closure. Military and foreign policy officials across the political spectrum have made it clear that we must close the detention center at Guantanamo. Leaders including Colin Powell, Henry Kissinger, James Baker, Madeline Albright, Warren Christopher, Robert Gates, David Petraeus, and CIA Director John Brennan have all said closing the detention center at Guantanamo is critical to our national security.

Yet I have no illusions regarding these detainees. Some are extremely dangerous terrorists with the determination and the ability, if given the opportunity, to inflict great harm on the United States and its citizens. But, indeed, prisons in the United States are already holding many of the world's most dangerous terrorists—criminals who have been found guilty in a court of law. These include Ramzi Yousef, the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing; Zacarias Moussaoui, the 9/11 coconspirator; and Richard Reid, the Shoe Bomber. If we can successfully try these terrorists in courts and hold them in our prisons, we can do the same with the Guantanamo detainees.

In closing, I think it is long past due that we reexamine our policy toward Cuba. I call upon the Obama administration to not waste any more time. Get to it. Let's change our policy. Let's start making new history and not be detained by the old history. Secondly, it is time that we close the prison in Guantanamo.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WILLIE F. JOHNSON

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, as I have every year since I came to the Senate now 8 years ago, I rise today to commemorate Black History Month by paying tribute to a distinguished American. This year we are privileged to recognize Willie F. Johnson, a man who has enriched both the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and our Nation through civic engagement and successful entrepreneurial endeavors.

Willie Johnson's contributions both as a citizen and as the founder and chairman of PRWT Services, Inc.—one of the oldest and most significant minority-owned businesses in the United States—are a credit to both him and to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Today I am proud to share some of Willie's achievements and the examples he and PRWT have set of responsible corporate citizenship. PRWT does it all. It employs over 1,500 people, makes money for its shareholders, and still manages to give back to its community and its other stakeholders to an extent that few other for-profit companies ever achieve.

Throughout his career, Willie Johnson has remained committed to his roots in social services and has never lost sight of the importance of the social and community impact of his work. Willie Johnson's professional life stands as a testament to his values.

After graduating from Allen University in South Carolina with a degree in sociology, he earned a master's of social work from the University of Pennsylvania while serving as a house parent for the Philadelphia Development Center, a residential facility for young offenders. Willie pursued a long career in social services after graduating, working for 18 years as the regional commissioner of the Office of Social Services in the southeastern region of Pennsylvania, director of Youth Services Coordinating Office for the city of Pennsylvania, and finally as executive director of the Office of Employment and Training under the Office of the Mayor of Philadelphia. So he has served both our Commonwealth and the city of Philadelphia in that work.

After years of serving the people of Philadelphia as a social administrator, Willie's commitment to job creation led him to consider whether he might be better able to benefit his community as an entrepreneur. So in 1983 he worked with partners to found Fidelity Systems, a cable/line construction company that hired and trained local residents to lay cable and work in equipment warehouses. Through this work, Willie became acquainted with the president of the Lockheed Martin company, who was interested in using technology to help State and local governments manage their businesses.

In August of 1988 Willie joined with Paul Dandridge, Raymond A. Saulino, and William Turner to establish PRWT Services, Inc., which we now know by the acronym PRWT. PRWT received its first contract in its first year, providing parking services for the city of Philadelphia. The company would go on to secure a significant contract from Lockheed Martin, providing customer service and back-office staff to support Lockheed's technology, drawing on the workforce management expertise of Willie Johnson and his partners to better manage these resources.

Over the years, PRWT expanded to provide business process outsourcing services for a variety of industries as well as serve many State and municipal governments nationwide. During Willie Johnson's two-decade tenure as CEO, PRWT grew to employ more than 1,500 workers in eight States and the District of Columbia.

In 2001 PRWT acquired U.S. Facilities, Inc. That acquisition marked one of the first purchases of a publicly traded company by a minority-run business.

In 2008 a PRWT subsidiary became the first minority-owned manufacturer of pharmaceutical ingredients in the United States of America.

In 2008, after experiencing a 120-percent increase in revenues, PRWT made the decision to become a publicly traded and owned company. Mindful of their significant role as a successful minority-owned business, Willie and his partners made their first public offering while maintaining majority shares to ensure that the company remained minority owned and run. Willie remains chairman of PRWT's board of directors, which has maintained its leadership and minority-owned status throughout the process of diversifying.

As PRWT has expanded, Willie and his partners have maintained a focus on the community impact of their work. PRWT is generous with charitable contributions and investments and encourages its employees to volunteer and remain engaged in their communities. Willie has been just as engaged and committed to service outside of his work with PRWT. He serves on the boards of a number of national and Pennsylvania-based organizations, including the Philadelphia Tribune, which, as we all know, has been a leader of the Black press throughout its history, as well as a variety of educational institutions, including his alma mater Allen University, the Cheyney University Foundation, Girard College, and Community College of Philadelphia. Willie has contributed his significant business expertise to the boards of the African American Chamber of Commerce and the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, where he serves as a member of the executive committee. He has also continued his commitment to employment and job creation through his prior service as chair of the Transitional Work Corporation and membership on the Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation Board.

It should surprise no one that Willie Johnson and PRWT have been consistently recognized for their significant accomplishments and contributions. In the year 2001 PRWT received the U.S. Conference of Mayors Excellence in Public/Private Partnership Award. Black Enterprise Magazine has ranked PRWT in the top 100 for the past 9 years and in 2009 named them the In-

dustrial/Service Company of the Year. In that same year, 2009, Ernst & Young honored Willie as Entrepreneur of the Year in the Greater Philadelphia region.

Willie has noted that "there is something very unique about Black enterprise: most Black enterprises develop and grow within their own community and within their own region because they are depending on their relationships." It is this dedication to community engagement which is a critical part of Willie Johnson's story and the story of PRWT, and it is that community engagement and commitment that we honor today.

Willie Johnson has been a dedicated public servant, a trailblazer for Black business enterprise, and a deeply engaged citizen. Willie's path has touched the lives of many in our Commonwealth and our country. In building a world-class entrepreneurial, diversified company, while also remaining a responsible corporate citizen dedicated to community betterment, Willie and his partners have built PRWT into an example of the best corporations have to offer. So today, as we come to the end of the month that commemorates Black history, we express our gratitude for the important work Willie Johnson has done throughout his life in service to the people of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and our great Nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 12 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CUBA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, a few minutes ago the body was treated to a report by the Senator from Iowa about his recent trip to Cuba. It sounds as if he had a wonderful trip visiting what he described as a real paradise. He bragged about a number of things he learned on his trip to Cuba which I would like to address briefly.

He bragged about their health care system: Medical schools are free, doctors are free, clinics are free; their infant mortality rate may be even lower than ours.

I wonder if the Senator, however, was informed that, No. 1, the infant mortality rate of Cuba is completely calculated on figures provided by the Cuban Government. And by the way, totalitarian Communist regimes don't have the best history of accurately reporting things. I wonder if he was informed that the forecast showed that Cuba was 13th in the whole world in infant mortality. I wonder if the government officials who hosted them informed him that in Cuba there are in-

stances reported—including by defectors—that if a child only lives a few hours after birth, they are not counted as a person who ever lived and therefore don't count against the mortality rate.

I wonder if our visitors to Cuba were informed that in Cuba any time there is any sort of problem with a child in utero, they are strongly encouraged to undergo abortions, and that is why they have an abortion rate that skyrockets and some say is perhaps the highest in the world.

I also heard him talk about the great doctors they have in Cuba. I have no doubt they are very talented. I met a bunch of them. You know where I met them? I met them in the United States because they have defected. Doctors would rather drive a taxicab than be a doctor in Cuba.

I wonder if they spoke to him about the outbreak of cholera they have been unable to control or the three-tiered system of health care that exists where foreigners and government officials get health care that is much better than what is available to the general population.

I also heard him speak about baseball. I know Cubans love baseball since my parents are from Cuba and I grew up in a community surrounded by it. He talked about the great baseball players coming from Cuba, and they are. I wonder if they informed him—in fact, I bet they didn't talk about those players to him because every single one of those guys playing in the Major Leagues defected. They left Cuba to play here.

He also talked about how people would come up to him in the streets and not a single person said anything negative about America. Nobody came up to him wagging their finger, saying, you Americans and your embargo are hurting us. I am glad to hear that because everyone who wants to lift the embargo is constantly telling us that the Castros use that to turn the people against us. So obviously that is not true. I am glad to hear confirmation of what I already knew to be true.

I heard about their wonderful literacy rate and how everyone in Cuba knows how to read. That is fantastic. Here is the problem: They can only read censored stuff. They are not allowed access to the Internet. The only newspapers they are allowed to read are Granma or the ones produced by the government. I wish someone on that trip would have asked the average Cuban: With your wonderful literacy skills, are you allowed to read the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal or, for that matter, any blog? The answer is no.

It is great to have literacy, but if you don't have access to the information, what is the point of it? I wish somebody would have asked about that on that trip.

We heard about Mr. Gross, who is not in jail. He is not a prisoner. He is a hostage. In the speech I heard a moment ago, I heard allusions to the idea—he didn't say it, but I know the language. I know the code. He made the allusion that maybe there should be a spy swap. Here is the problem: Mr. Gross is not a spy. Do you know what his crime was, if that is what you can call it? He went to Cuba to hand out satellite radios to the Jewish community. We are glad to hear the Cubans are so nice to him that they let him walk 10,000 steps a day, do pullups, and build a necklace out of bottle cap tops. It is very nice that they allow him to do those things. How generous.

I wonder if anybody asked about terrorism, because Cuba is a state sponsor of terrorism. I wonder if anybody asked about the fact that just a few months ago a North Korean ship going from Cuba to North Korea was stopped in the Panama Canal, and it contained items in violation of international sanctions against the government in North Korea.

A report just came out confirming what we already knew, that North Korea has death camps and prison camps. The Cubans are allowing them to evade these sanctions. Did that come up in any of the wonderful conversations in the socialist paradise of the Caribbean? I bet it didn't.

Let me tell you what the Cubans are really good at. They don't know how to run their economy, they don't know how to build a country, and they don't know how to govern a people. What they are really good at is repression. What they are really good at is shutting off information to the Internet, radio, television, and social media. That is what they are really good at. They are not just good at it domestically, they are good exporters of these things.

Do you want to see Exhibits A, B, C, and D? I will show them to you right now. They have exported repression in real time in our hemisphere right now.

This is the first slide. This gentleman is the former mayor of a municipality in Caracas. His name is Leopoldo Lopez. This is the National Guard of Venezuela pulling him into an armored truck last week. Do you know why? He is protesting against the government. He is protesting against the Government of Venezuela, which are puppets of Havana. They are completely infiltrated by Cubans and agents from Havana. Not agents. Openly. There are foreign military affairs officials involved in Venezuela. Do you know why? Because the Venezuelan Government is giving them cheap oil—even free oil—in exchange for help in doing these sorts of repressions. He is sitting in jail right now because he is protesting against the government.

Here is the next slide. This is Genesis Carmona. She is a beauty queen and

student in a city called Valencia. She is on that motorcycle because the government in Venezuela and thugs—these so-called civilian groups that they have armed, which is another export from Cuba—shot her in the head. She died last week.

This is the government that the Cubans support, not just verbally, not just emotionally, but with training and tactics. This is what they do, and she is dead. This is her being taken on a motorcycle to the hospital where they were unable to save her life because she was shot in the head by Venezuelan security forces.

Here is another slide. Earlier I showed you Mr. Lopez. These are his supporters being hit by water cannons in the street because they are protesting against the government. This has been going on for 2 weeks. These are the allies of Cuba. Venezuela is a puppet of Cuba. This is what they do to their own people. They are using water cannons to knock people to the ground. Why? Because they are protesting the government.

Here is another slide. This is a demonstrator detained by police. Look at how they dragged him through the streets. This is in Caracas, Venezuela.

I will show another demonstrator. This is a student—by the way, these are all students in the street. This young man was also shot in the head by security forces and progovernment groups in Caracas. This happened on February 11.

This is what they do in Venezuela. This is what the allies of the Castro regime do. This is what they export. This is what they teach. This is what they support.

It doesn't stop here. Who are Cuba's allies in the world? North Korea; before he fell, the dictator in Libya; the dictator in Syria; the tyrant in Moscow. This is who they line up with. This is a wonderful paradise?

What is happening in Venezuela deserves attention in and of itself. This is happening in our own hemisphere. It is shameful that only three heads of state in this hemisphere have spoken against what is happening. It is shameful that many Members of Congress who traveled to Venezuela and are friendly with Chavez—some even went to his funeral—sit by and say nothing while this is happening in our own hemisphere. This is what the wonderful Cuban paradise government we heard about supports.

Just this morning the dictator—who calls himself the President, even though he has never been elected to anything—Raul Castro announced he is there to do whatever they need to help them do this.

I listened to the stuff about Cuba and what is happening in Venezuela, and it is very similar, not just in the repression part but the economic part. Venezuela is an oil-rich country with hard-

working people. We don't have an embargo against Venezuela. They have a shortage of toilet paper and toothpaste. Why? Because they are incompetent, and communism doesn't work. They look more and more like Cuba economically and politically every single day.

What is the first thing the Venezuelans did when this broke out? They cut off access to Twitter, Facebook, and the Internet. They ran CNN out of there. They closed down the only Colombian station. Years before they had to close down all the independent media outlets that criticized the government. Where did they learn that from? Cuba. Yet we have to listen to what a paradise Cuba is.

I wonder. How come I never read about boatloads of American refugees going to Cuba? Why have close to 1½ million people left Cuba to come here, but the only people who leave here to move there are fugitives from the law and people who steal money from Medicare and go there to hide? Why? How come no American baseball players defect to Cuba? Why don't any American doctors defect to Cuba if it is such a paradise?

He cited a poll that more Americans want normal relations with Cuba. So do I—a democratic and free Cuba. But you want us to reach out and develop friendly relationships with a serial violator of human rights that supports what is going on in Venezuela and every other atrocity on the planet? On issue after issue, they are always on the side of the tyrants. Look it up. This is who we should be opening up to? Why don't they change? Why doesn't the Cuban Government change? Why doesn't the Venezuelan Government change?

Throughout this week, I will outline proposals and ideas about what we need to do and the sanctions we should be pursuing against the individuals responsible for these atrocities.

We have sanctions against North Korea. Why? Because they have a terrorist and illegitimate government. We have sanctions against Iran. Why? Because they support terrorism and have an illegitimate government. We have sanctions against Cuba. Why? Well, you just saw why. Sanctions are a tool in our foreign policy toolbox. We, as the freest Nation on Earth, are looked to by people in this country and all around the world to stand by them in their moment of need when they clamor for liberty and human rights. They look for America to be on their side, not for America to be cutting geopolitical deals or making it easier to sell tractors to the government there. We should be clear about these things.

Here is the great news. I don't know if they get C-SPAN in Cuba. I bet the government people do. I hope you see that in America we are a free society. You are allowed to stand on the floor

and say and spread whatever you want. You think Cuba is a paradise? You think it is an example and model we should be following? You are free to say that here, in the press and anywhere you want. We are also free to come here and tell the truth. We are also free to come here and denounce the violations of human rights and brutality.

I suggest to my colleagues that the next time they go to Cuba, ask to meet with the Ladies in White. Ask to meet with Yoani Sanchez. Ask to meet with the dissidents and the human rights activists who are jailed, repressed, and exiled. Ask to meet them. I bet you will hear something very different than what you heard from your hosts on your last trip to the wonderful socialist paradise called Cuba, because it is a joke. It is a farce. I don't think we should stand by with our arms crossed and watch these things happen in our hemisphere and say nothing about them.

I will close by saying over the last week, I have tweeted about these issues. I get thousands of retweets from students and young people—until they shut them out in Venezuela—who are encouraged by the fact that we are on their side. What they want is what we have, freedom and liberty. That is what all people want.

If America and its policymakers are not going to be firmly on the side of freedom and liberty, who in the world will? Who on this planet will? If this Nation is not firmly on the side of human rights and freedom and the dignity of all people, what nation on Earth will? If we are prepared to walk away from that, then I submit to you that this century is going to be a dangerous and dark one, but I don't believe that is what the American people want from us, nor the majority of my colleagues.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the opportunity to share these thoughts.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY ALKER MEYER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

Mr. RUBIO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, this is a sad day for the Senate. What does it say about this body that after having seen so many brave survivors of sexual assault in the military walk through the halls of this Congress for over a year now, we can't even give them the decency of a debate on the reform they so deeply believe in—a reform they believe in so deeply that they have selflessly retold their stories, reliving some of the worst moments of their lives, all so, hopefully, someone else doesn't have to suffer what they did. They may not wear the uniform anymore, but no one can tell me they aren't still serving their country through their sacrifice. Yet we can't even agree to vote for moving forward to debate the issue? They deserve a vote. The men and women who serve in our Armed Forces deserve a vote.

Anyone who has been listening has heard over and over from survivors of sexual assaults in the military how the deck has been stacked against them. For two full decades the Defense Department has been unable to uphold its continued failed promises of zero tolerance for sexual assault. But when the Senate can't even agree to debate the one reform that survivors have consistently said is needed to solve this crisis, we are telling those victims the deck is stacked against them right here in the Senate as well.

Last month this Congress rushed with great speed to remove a reduction in military pensions not slated to begin until 2015—a fix I fully supported. Legislative action was swift, and it was just. But I ask: Where is the same urgency to help stem the crisis of military sexual assault—an epidemic that is happening today? How is it we can't wait another week to stop a COLA reduction in pensions, but a reform that will lead to more rapists and predators behind bars waits indefinitely. We have been waiting for 20 years now—all the way back to 1992, when Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney stated zero tolerance in the wake of Tailhook.

As many of my colleagues likely saw, the Associated Press revealed new evidence last month that took years of freedom of information requests to obtain. After reviewing the documents from Okinawa, Japan, the AP described

the handling of cases as “chaotic,” where commanders overruled recommendations to prosecute or dropped charges altogether.

Among the AP's findings: “Victims increasingly declined to cooperate with investigators or recanted—a sign they may have been losing confidence in the system.”

If that sounds familiar, it is because that is a fact that today's military leaders openly admit themselves. As Commandant of the Marine Corps James Amos put it:

Why wouldn't female victims come forward. Because they don't trust us. They don't trust the chain of command. They don't trust the leadership.

That is what we have a chance to fix right here today, but we are letting it pass us by because some here believe it is not even worthy of debate.

This was never about being a Democratic idea or a Republican idea. It is just about doing what is right. People of good faith from both sides of the aisle, from both parties, can unite to deliver an independent, objective, and nonbiased military justice system that is worthy of the sacrifice the men and women in uniform make every day. It has taken us a long time to get to this point—too long, in fact. Every day we wait is another day the deck remains stacked against sexual assault victims in our military—another day when, statistically, it is estimated that over 70 incidents of unwanted sexual contact occur, and nearly nine out of 10 go unreported.

Nowhere else in America would we allow a boss to decide if an employee was sexually assaulted, except in the U.S. military.

The men and women of our military deserve to have unbiased, trained military prosecutors reviewing their cases and making the ultimate decision about whether to go to trial solely on the merits of the evidence. They deserve a fair shot at justice today, not after another year of a system that is broken under any metric. They deserve a vote that a bipartisan majority of the Senate supports, and they deserve that vote now.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am here very proudly and gratefully to support the nomination of Jeffrey Meyer as a U.S. district court judge for the District of Connecticut. I am proud because of his extraordinary credentials. I am grateful to President Obama

and, hopefully, to this body for giving Connecticut the services of a professor, litigator, prosecutor, and a person of extraordinary integrity and ability. Jeffrey Meyer has all of the qualifications in extraordinary depth and quality to be a great judge. He is truly a lawyers' lawyer. He is a prosecutors' prosecutor. He will be a judges' judge.

Mr. Meyer served as a legal aid lawyer in Vermont for Vermont Legal Aid and as an associate of two Washington, DC, law firms. He really has made his mark as a prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Connecticut, where he served for 10 years, five of them as appeals chief. He also was a law clerk to Judge Oakes for the Second Circuit. He has a grounding in academia, having taught at Quinnipiac Law School and served as Supreme Court advocacy clinic teacher at Yale, where he has also been a visiting professor since 2000.

I am abbreviating and summarizing his credentials because they are well documented and well known in this body. What can't be summarized so easily is the quality of judgment he has and that befits a judge on the Federal court.

Judges on the U.S. district court, as I know from my own experience, having litigated for quite a few years, are often the last point of justice for many people in our country. They are the voice and face of justice for so many people who may not have the means or the persistence to appeal further, and for most litigants he will be the voice and face of justice before his court. That is a very solemn responsibility. It is a responsibility for life.

These decisions about who will serve on the district court are among the most important we make in this body, so we approach it seriously and thoughtfully. Following the high standards we impose, Jeffrey Meyer aptly and abundantly meets the test for serving as a U.S. district court judge: His background in litigation; his experience in actually trying cases; his background as an academic, in thinking through some of the toughest issues of the law and teaching others how to do it, how to actually be a lawyer; and, of course, his judgment and his sense of perspective and, most importantly, his integrity.

I have worked with Jeff Meyer. I know of his dedication to his clients. I have worked with him in very tough personal situations where his advice to a client would make a critical difference in that person's life. I know he has the human quality of compassion and insight that is really necessary to make judgments about credibility when he has to judge the credibility of a witness on the stand or when he has to sentence an individual who may have broken the law but has mitigating factors to present. Anybody who spends time in a trial court knows that judges

have to make split-second decisions based on their knowledge of the law but also on their instincts, on what they sense is right. Jeff Meyer has that quality of judgment that makes all the difference in the world. Some people have it, even if they haven't graduated, as Jeff Meyer did, from some of the best schools in the country, and some people don't, even when they have all the degrees in the world. Maybe it is common sense or horse sense or good instincts or character. It is very hard for anyone to say who has it without meeting them, as we did on the Judiciary Committee, and knowing them.

I thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, my great friend and colleague Senator LEAHY, for championing people of this great ability. Senator LEAHY has devoted his lifetime to the quality of our Federal judiciary, and it has been immensely beneficial to our judiciary and to all who appear before our Federal judges to have a champion such as Senator LEAHY of Vermont.

There are now 96 vacancies in our Federal court. Thirty-nine of those vacancies have been classified as judicial emergencies. Let us get on with our task and our responsibility to make sure justice is not delayed in the greatest country in the history of the world, because we know so often justice delayed is, in fact, justice denied. That may be true of the least seemingly important case that matters so greatly to the person whose life is at stake or it may be an issue of great moment to the Nation's future. But one way or the other, the American people rely on us to make sure justice is done, that judges are nominated and confirmed, and that we enable every American to have access to judges who will decide fairly and wisely the merits of their case. Whether it is through a trial or in a motion, justice is what makes our Nation one of the greatest—the greatest, in fact—in the history of the world.

I am very proud and grateful for the opportunity to support Jeff Meyer to be a U.S. district court judge for Connecticut.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished senior Senator from Connecticut for his kind words. Having served as attorney general of his State and in various other roles in our courts, he understands very much when he says justice delayed is justice denied. Whether you are a plaintiff or a defendant, that is true.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for 5 minutes and Senator MURPHY of Connecticut be recognized for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I began the year expressing my hope that we

would set aside our differences and do what is best for this country by confirming qualified nominees to fill these critical vacancies facing our Federal judiciary. I have been here with both Republican and Democratic leadership, Republican and Democratic Presidents. Never in my 40 years in the Senate have I seen such an effort to exploit every means of delay for every judicial nomination, even when a nominee is supported by both Republicans and Democrats and supported by their home State Senators. This did not happen with President Ford, with President Carter, with President Reagan, with President George H.W. Bush, with President Clinton, with President George W. Bush. This President is treated differently.

Now, I have heard some Senate Republicans claim the majority leader can simply bring up these nominations for a vote whenever he chooses to do so. I think that is done with the hope that some in the press or some people watching may not understand they are hiding from the American people the fact that they are not letting the majority leader bring them up for a vote. In fact, if their claims were true, we would be voting to confirm four district court judges tonight. Instead, the Senate Republicans are deliberately obstructing and placing roadblocks so that each and every confirmation takes longer. It is very similar to what they did when they caused the needless and costly partial shutdown of the government. They shut down the government. Here, they are trying to shut down the judiciary.

This pointless obstruction is why Congress is so unpopular with the American people. They make it as difficult as possible to respond to the needs of our Federal judiciary. This has been going on since President Obama first took office in 2009. In fact, within a short time after the President was sworn in, Republicans filibustered his very first judicial nominee. That has never been done for any President of either party. Incidentally, that judicial nominee, who had the highest possible rating from the American Bar Association, had the strong support of the senior Senator from his State, who was also the senior Republican then serving in the Senate. The most senior Republican Senator supported the nomination, but the Republican leadership said: No. We have to filibuster and block the nomination because, after all, it was President Obama's nomination, not President Bush's nomination.

It was around this time that the Republican leader said his primary goal was for President Obama to fail. Now, if a Democrat had said that about a Republican President, we would have heard about it ad infinitum.

We were forced to change the Senate Rules. This was something I was very

reluctant to see done, but we did it because we have to get past this obstruction. Otherwise, our Federal judiciary would grind to a halt in many parts of the country. The worst part about it is when there are judicial nominees with the support of both Republican and Democratic Senators, but a tiny group in their leadership says: Oh, no, we cannot possibly vote on these. It might give President Obama a victory. This ignores the fact that he was elected twice by pretty significant margins. It also ignores the fact that the Federal judiciary has always been kept out of partisan politics. Instead, they do it to politicize the Federal judiciary more than I have seen in my 40 years here. It is a shame. It should stop.

Let's start acting like grownups in the Senate, not like children fighting in a sandbox. And then they wonder why the American people are so turned off. First they close down the Federal Government; now they are, by increments, closing down the Federal courts.

Tonight I hope we will vote to end the filibusters of four judicial nominees to Federal district courts in Connecticut, Arkansas, and California. Each of these nominees—Jeffrey Meyer to fill a vacancy to the District of Connecticut; James Maxwell Moody, Jr., to fill a vacancy to the Eastern District of Arkansas; and James Donato and Beth Labson Freeman to fill judicial emergency vacancies to the Northern District of California—were voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee with the unanimous support of Republicans and Democrats. Yet, they have languished on the Senate floor for months. Because of Republican obstruction we are again wasting precious time to overcome procedural hurdles just to have an up-or-down vote on these worthy nominees.

I began the year expressing my hope that we would set aside our differences and do what is best for this country by confirming qualified nominees to fill critical vacancies facing our Federal Judiciary. Instead, it appears that Senate Republicans have decided to double down and to further exhaust every means of delay at their disposal, even when a nominee is supported by those on both sides of the aisle and supported by both home State Senators.

A few weeks ago, prior to recessing, Senator PRYOR asked for unanimous consent to vote on the nominations of Timothy Brooks and James Moody to fill judicial vacancies in the Western and Eastern Districts of Arkansas. Both of these nominees had the bipartisan support of their home State senators, as well as the bipartisan support of every single member of the Judiciary Committee. Both these nominees could and should have been confirmed last year, as they were originally voted out of committee by voice vote last October and November, respectively. Nev-

ertheless, Senate Republicans refused to consent to a vote on their nominations as the year ended. This meant that these nominees had to be re-nominated and re-processed through committee. Having jumped through all of these additional hurdles, these nominees still cannot get a vote on their nominations as Senate Republicans continue to object. Senate Republicans claim that the majority leader himself can bring up these nominations for a vote whenever he chooses to do so. But what the Republicans are hiding from the American people is that they are deliberately obstructing and placing roadblocks so that each and every confirmation takes as long as humanly possible.

This illustrates why Congress is so unpopular with the American people. Here, you have lawmakers deliberately making it as difficult as possible to do something to address the needs of our Federal Judiciary. Republicans may see this as retribution for the rules change that occurred last year, but their steadfast obstruction only hurts the American people.

More than a month into the new year, we have confirmed just one judicial nominee. This is the case even though there are currently 96 judicial vacancies, 39 of which have been deemed emergency vacancies by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. In stark contrast, there were only 56 judicial vacancies at the same point in President Bush's tenure. The comparison is even more troubling when you consider the 32 judicial nominees currently pending on the Executive Calendar. We could lower the number of judicial vacancies today to 64 if Senate Republicans would consent to voting on the pending nominees. We have not had fewer than 70 vacancies since May 2009, more than 4 years ago. And for most of President Obama's tenure in office, judicial vacancies have continued to hover around 80 and 90 because of Senate Republican obstruction. Nevertheless, Senate Republicans continue to object to votes on these nominations.

There are no excuses for the delays except sheer partisanship. All but 3 of the 32 judicial nominees currently pending on the Executive Calendar had hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee last year. Despite the self-imposed delays by Republicans, who demanded these nominees be sent back to the President to be re-nominated and re-processed through committee, the Judiciary Committee has worked hard to again report them out of committee. The only delay that is holding them up is the Republicans who have continuously objected to a vote on their nominations.

Almost all of the judicial nominees pending before the full Senate are uncontroversial. In fact, of the 32 judicial nominees currently pending, 30

were voted out of committee with bipartisan support. It is clear that Senate Republicans have decided to use the rules change as another excuse to further accomplish their partial government shut down. Before the rules change, Senate Republicans used anonymous holds to delay confirming qualified judicial nominees, and dragged their feet every step of the way to slow down the confirmation process. Senate Democrats changed the rules precisely because of these delay tactics, which were causing great harm to the judicial system and negatively impacting those Americans who were seeking justice in our Federal courts. The American people who have sought to obtain justice in our Federal courts deserve speedy and prompt justice. The petty partisan tactics on display tonight are not even worthy of the playgrounds of our children and grandchildren, let alone the United States Senate.

It used to be that nominees for U.S. attorney and U.S. marshal were confirmed by unanimous consent without taking up any floor time. However, Republicans have now decided that they will delay the confirmation of these nominees as well. Once again, the only individuals who are hurt by these tit-for-tat political games are the American people. When a State lacks the necessary law enforcement officers they need to keep its streets safe from criminals, it is the American people that are hurt. I hope that Senate Republicans will re-think this misguided strategy of obstruction and do-nothingness.

Shortly, I hope we can overcome the filibusters on the following qualified judicial nominees:

Jeffrey Meyer is nominated to fill a judicial vacancy in the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut. He has served since 2006 as a professor of law at Quinnipiac University School of Law, and since 2010 as a visiting professor of law at Yale Law School. He served as senior counsel to the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Program in Iraq from 2004 to 2005. He served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the District of Connecticut from 1995 to 2004, and as appeals chief from 2000 to 2004. Prior to his work as a Federal prosecutor, he worked as an associate at Kellogg, Huber, Hansen, Todd, Evans & Figel PLLC from 1993 to 1995, and at Shearman & Sterling LLP in 1993, and from 1990 to 1991. He worked as a staff attorney for Vermont Legal Aid from 1992 to 1993. Following law school, he served as a law clerk to three distinguished Federal judges, including Justice Harry Blackmun of the U.S. Supreme Court, Judge Donald Ross of the Eighth Circuit, and Judge James Oakes of the second Circuit. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Mr. Meyer well qualified to serve on the U.S. District

Court for the District of Connecticut, its highest rating. He has the strong support of both his home State Senators, Senator BLUMENTHAL and Senator MURPHY. He was approved by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote last September, and once again, last month.

Judge James Moody is nominated to fill a judicial vacancy in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Since 2003, he has served as a circuit court judge in Arkansas's Sixth Judicial Circuit. He has presided over 1,000 cases in the Arkansas State Court Systems. He previously worked in private practice at Wright, Lindsey & Jennings LLP as a partner from 1994 to 2003, and as an associate from 1989 to 1994. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Judge Moody well qualified to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas, its highest rating. He has the strong bipartisan support of both his home State Senators, Senator PRYOR and Senator BOOZMAN. He was approved by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote last November, and once again, last month.

James Donato is nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. Since 2009, he has worked in private practice as a partner at Sherman & Sterling LLP. He has served pro bono as a court appointed mediator in the Northern District of California since 2002, handling civil rights actions against state and local law enforcement departments. He previously worked as a Partner at Cooley LLP from 1998 to 2009, and as a special counsel from 1996 to 1998. He served as a deputy city attorney in the Trial Division of the San Francisco City Attorney's Office from 1993 to 1996, and as an Associate at Morrison & Foerster LLP from 1990 to 1993. Following his graduation from Stanford Law School, he clerked for Judge Proctor Hug, Jr., of the United States Courts of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Mr. Donato earned his B.A. in 1983 from the University of California, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He earned his M.A. in history in 1984 at Harvard University, and his J.D. in 1988 from Stanford Law School, where he served as senior editor of the Stanford Law Review. He has the strong support of both his home State Senators, Senator BOXER and Senator FEINSTEIN. He was approved by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote last October, and once again, last month.

Judge Beth Freeman is nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. Since 2001, she has served as a California State judge in San Mateo County Superior Court. She served as the presiding judge from 2011 to 2012. During her 12 years on the bench, she has presided over approximately 150 jury trials and

over a thousand bench trials. She previously served as a deputy county counsel to the San Mateo County Counsel's Office from 1983 to 2001. She worked in private practice at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver, and Jacobson in Washington, DC as an associate attorney from 1979 to 1981. Judge Freeman earned her B.A. with distinction from the University of California, Berkeley in 1976. She earned her J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1979. She has the strong support of both her home State Senators, Senator BOXER and Senator FEINSTEIN. She was approved by the Judiciary Committee by voice vote last October, and once again, last month.

I thank the majority leader for filing cloture petitions to end the filibusters of these much needed trial court judges. I hope my fellow Senators will join me today to end these filibusters so that these nominees can get working on behalf of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in support of the nomination of Jeffrey Meyer of Connecticut to be a U.S. judge for the District of Connecticut. I thank the chairman of the Judiciary Committee for his hard work in shepherding Mr. Meyer's nomination through the process and thank my colleagues and leadership for bringing it to the floor today.

Before I make brief remarks in support specifically of Meyer's nomination, I want to associate myself with the remarks of Senator LEAHY and Senator BLUMENTHAL.

There are essentially two ways to try to shut down the government from within. You can try to defund it—and we have seen that effort play out in real terms at great cost to the American people over the last year and a half—and you can also try to depopulate it. You can try to very slowly and methodically take people out of positions by either denying them confirmation into the administration—as we have seen, as a long list of nominees to agencies throughout the Federal Government are being delayed by Republicans—or you can try to keep the judiciary understaffed so it cannot do its work as well.

So I, unfortunately, believe this is part of a pretty methodical policy and strategy on behalf of those who feel as though they have been elected to destroy government from within, to both try to defund the organs of government and then also to depopulate its ranks. That is part of the reason I think we are laboring under delay tactic after delay tactic when it comes to our Federal judiciary. Today, though, hopefully we can unite around a nominee who is singularly qualified to serve on the district court.

I am proud to support Jeff Meyer's nomination—someone who comes from

a family with deep roots in public service. Mr. Meyer has worked in the legal system but also has a history of helping the poor and the voiceless in Connecticut throughout his career. Both Senator BLUMENTHAL and I know his father well, Ed Meyer, who served with me in the Connecticut State Senate.

Jeff Meyer comes from a world-class educational background, in part because he got a lot of it in Connecticut. He is a graduate of both the college and the law school at Yale. He has an extensive academic and teaching background. After he graduated law school, Mr. Meyer clerked at the Supreme Court for Justice Blackmun, and then for Judge James Oakes, the former chief judge of the Second Circuit. Currently, he teaches the Supreme Court Advocacy Clinic at Yale Law School, where he provides pro bono legal services. Before that, he taught at Quinnipiac Law School, where he was honored with their Excellence in Teaching Award.

But even more impressive than his academic background and training is Jeff Meyer's long history of working for a fair and just legal system in Connecticut and, frankly, throughout the Northeast. Even as a law student Jeff Meyer showed a commitment to helping disadvantaged groups by giving legal assistance to homeless clients through the Yale Law School clinic. He actually received an award for his work there from the City of New Haven. Later, he worked as a staff attorney in Senator LEAHY's home State of Vermont at Vermont Legal Aid. In Connecticut, he helped keep our State safe by serving as an assistant U.S. attorney for 9 years. Since 2008 he has served on the Connecticut Judicial Ethics Committee—a fairly thankless task, I might add—and he has served on a range of other important State and local committees, including the Advisory Committee for the Selection of the Connecticut Federal Public Defender, the Independent Accountability Panel for New Haven's police department, and the U.S. Attorney's Police and Urban Youth Task Force.

Aside from his academic and community work, Jeff Meyer has also managed to find time in between to litigate complex commercial issues and investigate foreign aid issues. He served as an editor and counselor of the Independent Panel Review of the World Bank Department of Institutional Integrity. And he did an incredibly important tour of duty as the senior counsel of the Independent Inquiry Committee into the United Nations Oil for Food Program. He also wrote a book on the U.N. oil for food scandal. Along with his book, Mr. Meyer has an impressive body of legal scholarship that includes a wide range of law review articles and opinion pieces on topics ranging from criminal justice issues, to foreign aid, to workplace safety.

I will point out that Jeff Meyer is exceptional in the sense that he has sought work that others in the legal community might avoid. The work he has done on Connecticut's Judicial Ethics Committee or in the independent review process of the New Haven Police Department or even in his work investigating the Oil for Food Program was tough stuff—issues that were controversial that some other lawyers may have avoided. But Jeff Meyer sought places in which his talents were needed and in areas in which others may have looked the other way.

The District of Connecticut is currently about 13 percent understaffed, and this confirmation would fill a vacancy that has existed now for almost 2 years. Because Jeff Meyer has such stellar qualifications, I cannot think of any reason why people in this body would oppose his nomination. I urge all my colleagues to support him.

I yield the floor.

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to invoke cloture on the nomination of Jeffrey Meyer to fill a judicial vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut. Though I was not able to be present to cast my vote this afternoon, I fully support the nomination of this qualified individual to fill the vacancy in Connecticut. If I had been here I would have voted to confirm this highly qualified nominee. It would not have changed the outcome of the vote. I want to congratulate Senator LEAHY and Senator GRASSLEY on their leadership and hope that we can all continue to work together to address the backlog of judicial nominations.●

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut.

Harry Reid, Sherrod Brown, Richard J. Durbin, Christopher Murphy, Robert Menendez, Christopher A. Coons, Angus S. King, Jr., Martin Heinrich, Amy Klobuchar, Dianne Feinstein, Tom Udall, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Bernard Sanders, Barbara Boxer, Brian Schatz, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Benjamin L. Cardin, Michael F. Bennet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. HATCH (when his name was called). Present.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 36 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Alexander	Hagan	Pryor
Baldwin	Harkin	Reed
Begich	Heinrich	Reid
Bennet	Heitkamp	Rockefeller
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Boxer	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	King	Shaheen
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cardin	Leahy	Tester
Carper	Levin	Udall (CO)
Casey	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Collins	Markey	Walsh
Coons	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wyden
Franken	Murphy	
Gillibrand	Murray	

NAYS—37

Ayotte	Enzi	Moran
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Flake	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Corker	Kirk	Vitter
Cornyn	Lee	Wicker
Crapo	McCain	
Cruz	McConnell	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Hatch

NOT VOTING—7

Graham	Murkowski	Toomey
Isakson	Nelson	
Landrieu	Risch	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 55, the nays are 37, and 1 Senator voting "present."

The motion is agreed to.

Pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 15 of the 113th Congress, there will be up to 2 hours of postcloture consideration of the nomination, equally divided, in the usual form.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. On behalf of the majority, I yield back 58 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is so yielded.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Either tonight or tomorrow the Senate will consider several district court nominees. These nominees will be brought up, considered by the Senate, and in all likelihood confirmed in very short order. As I mentioned several times, this is a procedure the Democrats voted to pursue in November when they voted for the so-called nuclear option. The majority voted to eliminate the filibuster on nominations and to cut the minority, us Republicans, out of the process.

While the Senate is debating these district court nominees, it gives me a good opportunity to continue the discussion about how the Senate ought to be functioning in the constitutional way determined by our Constitution writers. There is no debate that the Senate isn't functioning properly, and we have been treated to relentless finger-pointing from the other side regarding who is to blame.

Unless we can establish a non-partisan account of how the Senate ought to function, this debate will amount to nothing more than a kindergarten shouting match.

I wish to return to the Federalist Papers, which are the most detailed account, from the time the Constitution was being ratified, about how our institution, this Senate, was intended to operate. Although these Federalist Papers were written over 200 years ago, the principles those papers articulate are timeless, and the problems they highlight are strikingly relevant to this very day.

The last time I addressed the Senate on this subject I quoted at length from a passage in Federalist No. 62. Although the Federalist Papers were published under the pseudonym of "Publius," we know they were written by three of our Founding Fathers: James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay.

Federalist No. 62 has been attributed to the father of the Constitution James Madison. In it he lists several problems that can be encountered by a republic the Senate was specifically, under the Constitution, designed to counteract.

The first point Madison makes is that having a second chamber—meaning the Senate—composed differently than the House makes it less likely one faction will be able to take over and enact an agenda out of step with the American people.

The second point deals with the tendency of a unicameral legislature to yield to sudden and popular impulses and pass what he called "intemperate and pernicious resolutions."

The third point is that based on the experience of the early unicameral State legislatures, a second chamber, with longer terms, such as the Senate, and a more deliberative process, such as the Senate is supposed to have, will make sure any laws passed are well thought out. The Framers of our Constitution determined it was better to

get it right the first time than to subject the American people to the upheavals caused by the need to fix poorly conceived laws.

Madison talks about the early American experience with “all the repealing, explaining and amending laws,” which he calls “monuments of deficient wisdom; so many impeachments exhibited by each succeeding against each preceding session; so many admonitions to the people, of the value of those aids which may be expected from a well-constituted Senate.”

In my last speech I did not get to Madison’s fourth and final point in Federalist Paper 62, which is quite long and deserves to be examined in detail, and that is my main purpose today. Madison concludes Federal No. 62 with an extensive discussion of the importance of stability to good government and the danger to rule of law from constant change. So here he is talking about the purpose intended for the Senate. This section starts:

Fourthly, the mutability in the public councils arising from a rapid succession of new members, however qualified they may be, points out, in the strongest manner, the necessity of some stable institution in the government. Every new election in the States is found to change one-half of the representatives. From this change of men must proceed a change of opinions; and from a change of opinions, a change of measures. But a continual change even of good measures is inconsistent with every rule of prudence and every prospect of success. The remark is verified in private life, and becomes more just, as well as more important, in national transactions.

Here Madison is making a case for stable government instead of constant change. He says that constant change, even with good ideas, will not produce positive results. Madison then elaborates on the various problems caused by an unstable government. This is what he first says about a country that is constantly changing its laws:

... she is held in no respect by her friends; that she is the derision of her enemies; and that she is prey to every nation which has an interest in speculating on her fluctuating councils and embarrassed affairs.

Madison then makes the case that the domestic ramifications of constantly enacting and changing laws “poisons the blessing of liberty itself.”

But he goes on to explain:

It will be of little avail to the people, that the laws are made by men of their own choice, if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read, or so incoherent that they cannot be understood; if they be repealed or revised before they are promulgated, or undergo such incessant changes that no man, who knows what the law is today, can guess what it will be tomorrow.

This sounds a little bit like what we are finding with the health care law today, which is being rewritten daily and on the fly by the Obama administration. The Law has been changed by the President 29 times so far. But it is part of a bigger problem we face with

new laws and regulations from agencies which have the force of law being churned out in such volume that no American can possibly know what all those regulations are.

Just based upon probability, Americans are likely to violate some regulation or some other law without knowing it at the time. Madison is making a case not just for more thoughtful laws but fewer laws.

When the majority leader and many in the media complain the Senate should be passing laws at a higher rate, those people miss the point entirely. To listen to some Members of the majority, and even more so in the media of America, one would think the success of a session of Congress was measured solely on the sheer number of laws passed and not on the quality of those laws that it passes.

Common sense tells all of us the Senate was specifically designed to slow down the process and to make sure that Congress passes fewer but better laws. Madison elaborates further on why fewer laws are better in this passage, which is extremely relevant today:

Another effect of public instability is the unreasonable advantage it gives to the sagacious, the enterprising, and the moneyed few over the industrious and uninformed mass of the people.

Every new regulation concerning commerce or revenue, or in any way affecting the value of the different species of property, presents a new harvest to those who watch the change, and can trace its consequences; a harvest, reared not by themselves, but by the toils and cares of the great body of their fellow citizens.

In other words, a situation where Congress is constantly changing the laws gives more influence to those who can hire lawyers to keep on top of the changes and lobbyists who influence them versus the little guy who is out there on his own.

It is sometimes said that big businesses don’t like regulations. But that isn’t my experience in many instances. The bigger and wealthier a business or a union or other special interest group, the better chance they have to shape a new law or regulation and the more people they can hire to help them comply. On the other hand, small businesses and individuals can’t hire a team of lawyers to read the latest laws and regulations and fill out the proper paperwork. Small businesses and individuals are the ones squeezed out of the marketplace by the constant flow of new laws.

An overactive government benefits the big guys at the expense of the little guys. If you think that fact is lost on the big guys and their lobbyists when they come to Congress, you would in fact be very badly mistaken. So as James Madison so wisely noted, an overactive government is an invitation to the rich and the powerful to use government to their benefit and to the detriment of their competitors.

That goes to show there is a great benefit to stability in laws as opposed to constant change—the very purpose Madison sets out for the Senate.

A cornerstone of liberty is the rule of law, meaning the law is transparent and no one is above the law. If you look around the world today, the poorest and least free countries are the ones where there is no rule of law. If someone can take what you have earned through force and you have no legal recourse, that is an example where there is no rule of law. If the rich and the powerful get special privileges, that is an example of where the rule of law has broken down.

The rule of law is one of the principles our country was founded upon. But when there are so many rules and they are changing so quickly the average citizen cannot keep up, that undermines the rule of law.

Of course, the situation is only made worse when the rules already on the books are waived for the politically connected. Of course, that is another problem, but one that has become all too common under this administration, particularly with the health care reform law, where 29 changes have already been made by the President on his own volition, and some of us believe even contrary to law. As an example, I have even heard some Democratic Senators comment: How can the President make the change on employer mandates?

Of course, going back to the Senate’s role, I am not making a case for doing nothing or that we should be happy with the failure of the Senate to debate legislation. The Senate is supposed to be slow and deliberative, not stopped. That is why we are called the greatest deliberative body in the world. Still, it is important to get away from this notion that somehow the failure to ram legislation through the Senate with no debate and no amendments is a problem.

The reason the Senate doesn’t function when the majority leader tries to run it that way is very simple. The Senate was not designed to do business that way. The Senate was intended to be the deliberative body we always praise and has been for most of its history. But it has now become routine for the leadership to file cloture to end consideration of a matter immediately upon moving to it. By contrast, the regular order is for the Senate to consider a matter for some period of time—how long would vary—but allowing Senators from all parties to weigh in before cloture is even contemplated.

Cloture was invented to allow the Senate to end consideration of a matter after the vast majority of Senators had concluded it has received sufficient consideration. Prior to that, there was no way to end debate so long as at least one Senator wished to keep deliberating. Cloture was a compromise between the desire to move things along

and the principle that each Senator, as a representative of his or her respective State, has the right to participate fully in the legislative process.

The compromise was originally that two-thirds of Senators voting had to be satisfied a matter had received sufficient consideration. That was reduced to three-fifths of all Senators. Each time this matter is renegotiated, the compromise leans more in favor of speeding up the process at the expense of allowing Senators to fully represent the people of their respective States.

The majority leadership routinely files cloture immediately upon proceeding to a matter. Again, cloture is a tool to cut off further consideration of a matter when it appears it is dragging on too long. One can hardly claim the Senate has taken too much time to deliberate over something when it hasn't even begun consideration and debate of the specific matter.

According to data from the Congressional Research Service, there were only seven times during the first session of this current Congress the Senate started to consider a bill for a day or more before cloture was filed. That is out of 34 cloture motions related to legislative business. The number of same-day cloture filings has more than doubled compared to when Republicans last controlled the Senate.

Moreover, the total number of cloture motions filed each session of Congress under this majority leadership has roughly doubled compared to the period from 1991 to 2006, under majority leaders of both political parties. Before 1991, cloture was even more rare. This is a sign that cloture is being overused, even abused, by the majority.

Still, if this alarming rise in cloture motions was a legitimate response to a minority of Senators insisting on extended debate to delay proceedings beyond what is necessary for reasonable deliberation, otherwise known as a filibuster, then of course it would be justified. That is clearly not the case when the overwhelming number of motions to cut off debate are made before debate has even started.

What amount of time is necessary for deliberations and what is purely dilatory in any particular case is, of course, a subjective determination. However, the practice of routinely moving to cut off consideration of virtually every measure when there has not even yet been any deliberation cannot be justified in a body termed "the most deliberative body in the world"—that being the U.S. Senate.

So we are in a situation where this is very much an abuse of the cloture motion. Along with the routine blocking of amendments, cloture abuse is preventing Senators from doing what we are paid to do; that is, to represent the people of our States.

Shutting Senators out of the deliberative process isn't just an argument

about dry Senate procedure, as the majority leader has tried to suggest in response to criticisms. When Senators are blocked from participating in the legislative process, the people they represent are effectively disenfranchised.

When I say people are disenfranchised when the majority leadership shuts Senators out of the process, I don't just mean citizens of the 45 States that elected Republican Senators. The citizens of States that elected Democratic Senators also expect those Senators to offer amendments and engage with their colleagues from different parties. Shutting down consideration of a bill before it has been considered prevents even Members of the majority party from offering amendments which may be important to the people of their respective States. Voters have a right to expect the people they elect to actually do the hard work of representing them, not just be a rubberstamp for their leadership's legislative agenda.

Senators who go along with tactics which disenfranchise their own constituents should have to answer to those who voted them into office as to why they aren't willing to do the job they were elected to do. That job includes not just offering amendments when appropriate but taking tough votes which reveal to their constituents where that Senator stands. The majority leader has gone out of his way to shield members of his caucus from taking votes that may hurt them back home. Senators don't have any right to avoid tough votes. That is not the deliberative process James Madison envisioned and expressed in the writings of the Federalist Papers.

If we are going to have good laws which can stand the test of time, the Senate must be allowed to function as it was intended to function. One aspect of what is needed to return the Senate to its proper function as a deliberative body is to end cloture abuse.

I would ask my colleagues to reflect on all the changes to the Senate recently, including those negotiated between the two leaders a year ago in return for a promise—which was not kept—not to use the nuclear option, as well as the subsequent use of the nuclear option yet 10 months later, last November.

Those reforms, if you can call them reforms, have been in the direction of reducing the ability of individual Senators to represent the people of their States and at the same time concentrating power with the majority leadership. It is time we had some reforms to get the Senate back functioning as a deliberative body as was intended under the Constitution. The Senate is supposed to be a place where all voices are heard and reason can rise above partisanship.

I urge all my colleagues to reflect on these thoughts and think about our re-

sponsibility to the people of our States. If we do, I am sure we can come up with some sensible reforms to end the abuse of cloture and restore the Senate to the deliberative body the Framers of the Constitution intended it to be and, most importantly, as expressed by James Madison. I will be thinking about that, and I would encourage all my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

OBAMACARE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, the distinguished Senator from Iowa talks convincingly and persuasively about so many times when Members are shut out of the process. Certainly chief among those would have been in 2009, when we could have used the expertise of Senator GRASSLEY, had our colleagues across the aisle been willing to work with him in a bipartisan fashion to write a bipartisan health care bill which employed market principles and competition. Instead, just as he mentioned in his remarks, he was shut out of the process, as were all Republicans. So we have an ObamaCare law on the books now supported by every Democrat in the Senate and supported by no Republicans, some 18 percent of our gross domestic product turned on its head by this legislation, and it was not done in a bipartisan fashion as anything this big should be done. The Senator is correct, and I appreciate him mentioning the larger sense in which Members feel they are being shut out of the process.

I rise tonight particularly to call Members' attention to an op-ed in today's Wall Street Journal, Monday, February 24, page A-15, entitled "ObamaCare and My Mother's Cancer Medicine," by Stephen Blackwood.

I have no idea about Stephen Blackwood's politics. The article at the end says Mr. Blackwood is president of Ralston College, a planned liberal arts institution in Savannah, GA. So I know he comes from academia, and I know he loves his mother and is concerned with what ObamaCare has done to his mother's cancer coverage.

The story Mr. Blackwood tells about his mother Catherine reflects the very real life-or-death consequences of the President's health care law. Many of us who oppose the law often point to the financial costs, the delays, and the flawed implementation. But the human aspect is much more tragic.

In relaying his family's current situation in this op-ed in the Wall Street Journal today, Mr. Blackwood depicts the law's devastating effects on individual Americans. He begins by saying:

When my mother was diagnosed with carcinoma cancer in 2005, when she was 49, it came as a lightning shock.

I know it would to any family. He goes on to say later:

Anyone who's been there knows that a cancer diagnosis is terrifying.

He explains later on in the op-ed that:

Carcinoid, a form of neuroendocrine cancer, is a terminal disease but generally responds well to treatment by Sandostatin, a drug that slows tumor growth and reduces (but does not eliminate) the symptoms of fatigue, nausea, and gastrointestinal dysfunction. My mother received a painful shot twice a month and often couldn't sit comfortably for days afterwards.

As with most cancers, one thing led to another. There have been several more surgeries, metastases, bone deterioration, a terrible bout of thyroiditis (an inflammation of the thyroid gland) and much more. But my mother kept fighting, determined to make the most of life, no matter what it brings. She has indomitable will and is by far the toughest person I've ever met. But she wouldn't be here without the semimonthly Sandostatin shot that slows the onslaught of her disease.

And then in November, along with millions of other Americans, she lost her health insurance. She'd had a Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan for nearly 20 years. It was expensive, but given that it covered her very expensive treatment, it was a terrific plan. It gave her access to any specialist or surgeon, and to the Sandostatin and other medications that were keeping her alive.

And then, because our lawmakers and the president thought they could do better, she had nothing. Her old plan, now considered illegal under the new health law, had been canceled.

Because the exchange website in her state (Virginia) was not working, she went directly to insurers' websites and telephoned them, one by one—

This is a woman with carcinoid cancer whose policy has been cancelled because of ObamaCare

—over dozens of hours. As a medical office manager, she had decades of experience navigating the enormous problems of even our pre-ObamaCare system.

Even with her experience, she had trouble with the repeated and prolonged phone waits, which Mr. Blackwood described as Sisyphean. In the end, she was told she could purchase a Humana policy.

The enrollment agent said that after she met her deductible for all her treatments and medications, including those for cancer, she would be covered 100 percent. However, the enrollment agents did not have access to the coverage formularies for the plans they were selling. They said the only way to find out what was in the plan in detail was to buy the plan.

Does that sound familiar? It sounds like what the former Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, famously told us in 2009. We have to hurry up and pass the bill so we can find out what is in it.

In this case, Mrs. Blackwood needed to hurry up and buy the insurance plan—pay the premiums—so she could then find out whether she was covered, and it turns out she was not covered. The cost of the Sandostatin alone, since January 1 of this year, was \$14,000, and the company was refusing pay.

To quote Mr. Blackwood further:

The news was dumbfounding. This was a woman who had an affordable health plan that covered her condition. Our lawmakers weren't happy with that because . . . they wanted plans that were affordable and covered her condition. So they gave her a new one. It doesn't cover her condition and it's completely unaffordable.

Though I'm no expert on ObamaCare (at 10,000 pages, who could be?), I understand that the intention—or at least the rhetorical justification—of this legislation was to provide coverage for those who didn't have it. But there is something deeply and incontestably perverse about a law that so distorts and undermines the free activity of individuals that they can no longer buy and sell the goods and services that keep them alive. ObamaCare made my mother's old plan illegal, and it forced her to buy a new plan that would accelerate her disease and death. She awaits an appeal from her insurer.

Will this injustice be remedied, for her or millions of others? Or is my mother to die because she can no longer afford the treatment that keeps her alive?

Like every American, I want affordable health care, and I'm open to innovative solutions of all kinds—individual, corporate, for-profit, nonprofit and public. It will take all of these, and all the intelligence, creativity and self-discipline we have, as well as everything we can offer one another as families, neighbors, friends and citizens—and it still won't be perfect. But it is precisely because health care for 300 million people is so complicated that it cannot be centrally managed.

Mr. Blackwood concludes:

The "Affordable" Care Act is a brutal, Procrustean disaster. In principle, it violates the irreducible particularity of human life, and in practice it will cause many individuals to suffer and die. We can do better, and we must.

At this point, I ask unanimous consent that this opinion piece by Stephen Blackwood be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Feb. 24, 2014]

OBAMA CARE AND MY MOTHER'S CANCER MEDICINE

(By Stephen Blackwood)

When my mother was diagnosed with carcinoid cancer in 2005, when she was 49, it came as a lightning shock. Her mother, at 76, had yet to go gray, and her mother's mother, at 95, was still playing bingo in her nursing home. My mother had always been, despite her diminutive frame, a titanic and irrepressible force of vitality and love. She had given birth to me and my nine younger siblings, and juggled kids, home and my father's medical practice with humor and grace for three decades. She swam three times a week in the early mornings, ate healthily and never smoked.

And now, cancer? Anyone who's been there knows that a cancer diagnosis is terrifying. A lot goes through your mind and heart: the deep pang of possible loss (what would my father and all of us do without her?), and the anguish and anger at what feels like injustice (after decades of mothering and managing dad's practice, she was just then going back to school).

We, as a family, were scared and angry, but from the beginning we knew we would do all

we could to fight this disease. We became involved with fundraising for research, through the Caring for Carcinoid Foundation in Boston; we blogged; we did triathlons (my mother's idea) and cherished our time together as never before.

Carcinoid, a form of neuroendocrine cancer, is a terminal disease but generally responds well to treatment by Sandostatin, a drug that slows tumor growth and reduces (but does not eliminate) the symptoms of fatigue, nausea and gastrointestinal dysfunction. My mother received a painful shot twice a month and often couldn't sit comfortably for days afterward.

As with most cancers, one thing led to another. There have been several more surgeries, metastases, bone deterioration, a terrible bout of thyroiditis (an inflammation of the thyroid gland), and much more. But my mother has kept fighting, determined to make the most of life, no matter what it brings. She has an indomitable will and is by far the toughest person I've ever met. But she wouldn't still be here without that semimonthly Sandostatin shot that slows the onslaught of her disease.

And then in November, along with millions of other Americans, she lost her health insurance. She'd had a Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan for nearly 20 years. It was expensive, but given that it covered her very expensive treatment, it was a terrific plan. It gave her access to any specialist or surgeon, and to the Sandostatin and other medications that were keeping her alive.

And then, because our lawmakers and president thought they could do better, she had nothing. Her old plan, now considered illegal under the new health law, had been canceled.

Because the exchange website in her state (Virginia) was not working, she went directly to insurers' websites and telephoned them, one by one, over dozens of hours. As a medical-office manager, she had decades of experience navigating the enormous problems of even our pre-ObamaCare system. But nothing could have prepared her for the bureaucratic morass she now had to traverse.

The repeated and prolonged phone waits were Sisyphean, the competence and customer service abysmal. When finally she found a plan that looked like it would cover her Sandostatin and other cancer treatments, she called the insurer, Humana, to confirm that it would do so. The enrollment agent said that after she met her deductible, all treatments and medications—including those for her cancer—would be covered at 100%. Because, however, the enrollment agents did not—unbelievable though this may seem—have access to the "coverage formularies" for the plans they were selling, they said the only way to find out in detail what was in the plan was to buy the plan. (Does that remind you of anyone?)

With no other options, she bought the plan and was approved on Nov. 22. Because by January the plan was still not showing up on her online Humana account, however, she repeatedly called to confirm that it was active. The agents told her not to worry, she was definitely covered.

Then on Feb. 12, just before going into (yet another) surgery, she was informed by Humana that it would not, in fact, cover her Sandostatin, or other cancer-related medications. The cost of the Sandostatin alone, since Jan. 1, was \$14,000, and the company was refusing to pay.

The news was dumbfounding. This is a woman who had an affordable health plan that covered her condition. Our lawmakers

weren't happy with that because . . . they wanted plans that were affordable and covered her condition. So they gave her a new one. It doesn't cover her condition and it's completely unaffordable.

Though I'm no expert on ObamaCare (at 10,000 pages, who could be?), I understand that the intention—or at least the rhetorical justification—of this legislation was to provide coverage for those who didn't have it. But there is something deeply and incontestably perverse about a law that so distorts and undermines the free activity of individuals that they can no longer buy and sell the goods and services that keep them alive. ObamaCare made my mother's old plan illegal, and it forced her to buy a new plan that would accelerate her disease and death. She awaits an appeal with her insurer.

Will this injustice be remedied, for her and for millions of others? Or is my mother to die because she can no longer afford the treatment that keeps her alive?

Like every American, I want affordable health care, and I'm open to innovative solutions of all kinds—individual, corporate, for-profit, nonprofit and public. It will take all of these, and all the intelligence, creativity and self-discipline we have, as well as everything we can offer one another as families, neighbors, friends and citizens—and it still won't be perfect. But it is precisely because health care for 300 million people is so complicated that it cannot be centrally managed.

The "Affordable" Care Act is a brutal, Pr crustean disaster. In principle, it violates the irreducible particularity of human life, and in practice it will cause many individuals to suffer and die. We can do better, and we must.

Mr. WICKER. We talk a lot about the failures of the Affordable Care Act. Because of ObamaCare, 7 million people are expected to lose their employer-sponsored health insurance by 2024. Another 5 million Americans have seen their health care plans canceled, and one of them is Mrs. Blackwood.

I say again to my colleagues and everyone within the sound of my voice, I don't know the politics of the Blackwood family. They had an insurance policy that worked for Mrs. Blackwood. It covered a vital drug—Sandostatin—that kept her alive from the disease of carcinoid cancer, and she has lost that coverage because of the very act that was supposed to help people.

Mr. Blackwood says, "We can do better," and I suggest we can do better. We need to repeal this ill-considered law which has caused so much pain for millions and millions of Americans and still left 31 million people uninsured.

We need to work together across the aisle in a bipartisan way to fix this system and have a system that doesn't throw innocent and sick people out of their insurance coverage and threaten their health and their very lives.

I yield the floor.

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to confirm the nomination of Jeffrey Meyer to fill a judicial vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut. Although I was not able to be present to cast my vote this afternoon, I fully

support the nomination of this qualified individual to fill the vacancy in Connecticut. If I had been here I would have voted to confirm this highly qualified nominee. It would not have changed the outcome of the vote. I congratulate Senator LEAHY and Senator GRASSLEY on their leadership and hope that we can all continue to work together to address the backlog of judicial nominations. •

Mr. LEAHY. I see the majority leader is on the floor. Obviously, he is seeking recognition.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if the President pro tempore could wait for just a minute, I wish to tell everyone what we are going to do this evening. We will have two more votes tonight.

I ask unanimous consent that if cloture is invoked on Executive Calendar No. 570, at 11:15 tomorrow, Tuesday, February 25, the Senate proceed to Executive Session and that all postcloture time with respect to Calendar No. 570 be dispensed with and the Senate proceed to vote on the confirmation; further, that following disposition of Calendar No. 570, the Senate proceed to vote on cloture on Calendar No. 566, and that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be dispensed with and the Senate proceed to vote on Calendar No. 566; further, that following disposition of Calendar No. 566, the Senate proceed to vote on cloture of Calendar No. 567, and that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be dispensed with and the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of Calendar No. 567; that all after the first vote on Tuesday be 10 minutes in length; that with respect to the above nominations the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

I express appreciation to my friend for yielding to me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form prior to the second rollcall vote tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, when I was in third grade, I read all of Dickens and all of Robert Louis Stevenson. I remember two words that really struck me during that time. The words "pettifoggery" and "balderdash." I have heard more pettifoggery and balderdash on the other side this evening than I could imagine.

The fact of the matter is this. The Republican Party—and many of them

are dear friends of mine—orchestrated a partial shutdown of the government last year. It cost the taxpayers tens of billions of dollars and it accomplished nothing. Well, I shouldn't say it accomplished nothing. It stopped cancer research and a number of other things. Now they are trying the same thing with the Federal judiciary by taking judges who had passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously and doing what the Republicans did with the very first nominee of President Obama who came up. They filibustered it—something that had not been done ever in my 40 years here with either Republican or Democratic presidents—ever. This was a judge supported by the most senior Republican in the Senate.

Shortly after that, the Republican leader said his primary goal was for President Obama to fail. Unfortunately for them, he didn't. He was reelected resoundingly. But they have now achieved a partial shutdown of the Federal judiciary by blocking these judges. It is balderdash and pettifoggery.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jeffrey Alker Meyer, of Connecticut, to be United States District Judge for the District of Connecticut?

Mr. BOOZMAN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 37 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	Bennet	Brown
Ayotte	Blumenthal	Burr
Baldwin	Booker	Cantwell
Barrasso	Boozman	Cardin
Begich	Boxer	Carper

Casey	Isakson	Reid
Chambliss	Johanns	Reid
Coats	Johnson (SD)	Roberts
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Rockefeller
Collins	Kaine	Rubio
Coons	King	Sanders
Corker	Kirk	Schatz
Cruz	Klobuchar	Schumer
Donnelly	Landrieu	Scott
Durbin	Leahy	Sessions
Enzi	Lee	Shaheen
Feinstein	Levin	Shelby
Fischer	Manchin	Stabenow
Flake	Markey	Tester
Franken	McCain	Thune
Gillibrand	McCaskill	Udall (CO)
Grassley	McConnell	Udall (NM)
Hagan	Menendez	Vitter
Harkin	Merkley	Walsh
Hatch	Mikulski	Walsh
Heinrich	Moran	Warner
Heitkamp	Murphy	Warren
Heller	Murray	Whitehouse
Hirono	Paul	Wicker
Hoeven	Portman	Wyden
Inhofe	Pryor	

NAYS—2

Coburn Crapo

NOT VOTING—7

Blunt	Murkowski	Toomey
Cornyn	Nelson	
Graham	Risch	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF JAMES M. MOODY, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to the next vote.

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to invoke cloture on the nomination of James Moody to fill a judicial vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas. Though I was not able to be present to cast my vote this afternoon, I fully support the nomination of this qualified individual to fill the vacancy in Arkansas. If I had been here I would have voted to confirm this highly qualified nominee. It would not have changed the outcome of the vote. I want to congratulate Senator LEAHY and Senator GRASSLEY on their leadership and hope that we can all continue to work together to address the backlog of judicial nominations. •

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise to encourage my colleagues to support the nomination of James M. Moody to be a Federal judge in the Eastern District of Arkansas. He is highly qualified, completely noncontroversial, stellar across the board, and meets every criteria anyone could ever have.

So when the times comes, I would appreciate a great vote for Judge Moody.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, this is just one more of those judges who passed unanimously from the Senate Judiciary Committee. Every Republican, every Democrat voted for him. He has been held up and delayed by Republicans who, I am afraid, are trying to do the same to the Federal judiciary they did to the Federal Government by closing it down.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield back our time.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. HATCH (when his name was called). "Present."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alaska (Mrs. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 58, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 38 Ex.]

YEAS—58

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murray
Ayotte	Hagan	Pryor
Baldwin	Harkin	Reed
Begich	Heinrich	Reid
Bennet	Heitkamp	Rockefeller
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Boozman	Kaine	Schumer
Boxer	King	Shaheen
Brown	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cantwell	Landrieu	Tester
Cardin	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Carper	Levin	Udall (NM)
Casey	Manchin	Walsh
Collins	Markey	Warner
Coons	McCaskill	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Mikulski	
Franken	Murphy	

NAYS—34

Barrasso	Grassley	Paul
Burr	Heller	Portman
Chambliss	Hoeven	Roberts
Coats	Inhofe	Rubio
Coburn	Isakson	Scott
Cochran	Johanns	Sessions
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Crapo	Kirk	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Vitter
Enzi	McCain	Wicker
Fischer	McConnell	
Flake	Moran	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Hatch

NOT VOTING—7

Blunt	Murkowski	Toomey
Cornyn	Nelson	
Graham	Risch	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 58, the nays are 34, and one Senator voted "present."

The motion is agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I wish to discuss the Agricultural Act of 2014, otherwise known as the farm bill.

I sincerely appreciate the Agriculture Committee chairwoman's and ranking member's work in moving the process forward.

I have made it a priority to keep Pennsylvania's agricultural industry and our rural economies strong to support Pennsylvanian families.

Agriculture is the Commonwealth's largest industry. Pennsylvania's farm gate value—that is cash receipts to growers—is about \$5.8 billion. Agribusiness in Pennsylvania is a \$46.4 billion industry. Seventeen and one-half percent of Pennsylvanians are employed in the food and fiber system. What does this mean?

It means that we must have a five-year farm bill.

The farm bill creates economic opportunities in our rural areas and sustains the consumers and businesses that rely on our rural economy.

This farm bill would reduce the deficit by approximately \$23 billion through the elimination of some subsidies, the consolidation of programs and producing greater efficiencies in program delivery.

Furthermore, dairy farmers deserve the best dairy program possible. The Senate bill contains many improvements that I support. Dairy is Pennsylvania's No. 1 agricultural sector. The dairy industry annually generates more than \$1.8 billion in on-farm cash receipts, which represent about 32 percent of Pennsylvania's total agricultural receipts.

There are so many other important items that come out of having a five-year farm bill.

I am especially thankful to the chairwoman and ranking member for inclusion of a provision to establish cooperative lending pilot projects to aid administration of microloans. These projects will help provide business planning support and financial management expertise to farmers to ensure their success in order to foster economic development in agriculture and sustain farm profitability.

Making risk management and crop insurance products work better for Pennsylvanians, especially small farmers, specialty crop farmers and organic farmers, is very important. Providing funding through risk management, conservation and agricultural marketing agencies to underserved states, the Agricultural Management Assistance, AMA, program helps to make the farm bill more equitable among regions. I genuinely appreciate the chairwoman's and ranking member's work to enhance the Agricultural Management Assistance program, including support for organic transition assistance. The improvements in this bill to crop insurance delivery are important.

We have worked to address the unique concerns of specialty crop farmers and beginning farmers, and we have done so in a bipartisan way. Specialty crops are very important to Pennsylvania agriculture. The Specialty Crops Research Initiative, SCRI, Specialty Crops Block Grant program and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program all advance the specialty crops industry, playing a key role in ensuring that this important agricultural sector receives

continued acknowledgement in the farm bill. These programs remain strong under this bill.

In addition, the Nation's organic industry has grown exponentially from \$3.6 billion in 1997 to \$29 billion in 2010, with an annual growth rate of 19 percent from 1997-2008. In 2008, Pennsylvania was ranked 6th in number of organic farms with 586 and 3rd in sales at \$212.7 million.

I also support the improvements in promotion programs within the farm bill.

Through research, we develop more efficient and effective farming methods. Research also helps producers maintain a competitive edge in the global market by fighting threatening diseases and pests.

I am pleased that the farm bill invests in relevant and targeted research and maintains the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service programs that work to eradicate the invasive species that threaten our nation's forests and farms.

The farm bill's forestry programs are essential for assisting forest landowners in managing threats and enhancing stewardship. I am pleased that the farm bill continues important forestry programs so that forest owners can continue to create new economic opportunities. I am also grateful to the chairwoman and ranking member for working with me to fix USDA's Biopreferred program to even the playing field for Pennsylvania forestry products. Revenues from Pennsylvania's forest products industry exceed \$5.5 billion annually. Over 10 percent of the State's manufacturing workforce is involved in the forest products industry.

I am appreciative to the committee for the inclusion of my provision directing USDA to work with the Food and Drug Administration toward the development of a standard of identity for honey, a tool which will promote honesty and fair dealing and serve the interest of consumers and Pennsylvania's honey industry. The majority of our honey is imported, but because there is no standard, contaminated, low-quality honey continues to pass through customs and undercut our domestic product. Pennsylvania is a major player in the honey industry. Honey bee pollination can be directly attributed to the production of about \$60 million of agricultural produce in Pennsylvania annually.

I am committed to keeping Pennsylvania's rural communities strong and support rural development programs that provide access to capital for rural businesses to provide economic opportunities and create jobs. A rural community's viability in attracting and keeping businesses is often directly related to the condition of its infrastructure and facilities. USDA's Rural Development programs empower rural communities, transform local

economies and preserve the quality of life in small towns across the Commonwealth. A rural economic development program that saves and creates jobs in rural economies and improves rural life is extremely important for Pennsylvanian families.

Farmers are the original stewards of the land and continue to lead the charge in protecting our natural resources. I believe the voluntary conservation programs in the farm bill provide important tools to help farmers comply with Federal and State regulations while keeping farmers in business. I am committed to making conservation programs more efficient, effective and relevant to farmers.

Conservation programs are an extremely important resource for many Pennsylvanian farmers. I worked with my Senate colleagues to support enhancements to conservation programs through this process in an effort to ensure that these remodeled programs would better serve the needs of Pennsylvanians.

Pennsylvania's watersheds contribute more than half of the fresh water flowing to the Chesapeake Bay. While Pennsylvania does not border the bay, activities in the Commonwealth profoundly affect the bay's health. The bay's tributaries, such as Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers, are important to the region's economy, culture and outdoor recreation.

Under the 2008 farm bill, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative, CBWI, provided essential support to farmers facing Federal and State regulations concerning water quality and helped to meet demand for conservation programs. In advance of the Agriculture Committee's consideration of the 2012 farm bill, I introduced the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Fairness Act, which among other things reauthorized the CBWI, because I know Pennsylvania farmers used this program very well.

I am grateful that the 2014 farm bill contains portions of this legislation which are aimed at equipping farmers with the tools necessary to better meet water quality goals. To reduce the number of conservation programs, the farm bill consolidates four different programs into one that will provide competitive funds to regional partnerships and will also provide conservation funding directly to producers. CBWI was one of the programs that got folded into this new program.

I worked very closely with other Senators from the watershed to strengthen the conservation title to better benefit our region. Together we secured significant policy improvements. The current bill focuses on the most critical conservation areas and will help farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed participate in conservation programs so that they can help the region meet water quality standards.

Pennsylvania's agricultural producers and forest land owners use the

Environmental Quality Incentives Program, EQIP, to implement conservation practices, which might otherwise be cost prohibitive, to protect valuable natural resources.

Further, the Farmland Protection Program, FPP, protects prime farmland from development. FPP is rolled into a new Agriculture Lands Easement, ALE, Program to help keep working lands preserved as farm land. I support USDA in its efforts to craft the rules of this program to allow flexibility so that States are allowed to use their own easement terms and conditions as long as they are consistent with the program purposes, in order to certify successful entities like the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Farmland Protection and improve the efficiency of this program.

While I do not mention all of the farm bill conservation programs, I do believe that each serves an important purpose.

My constituents, and all Americans, deserve some certainty and having a farm bill will put us in that direction. A comprehensive farm bill is something that I fought for years to enact and I certainly support the goal of a comprehensive Farm bill to provide long-term certainty for our farmers.

Chairwoman STABENOW deserves a lot of credit for her tireless work to get this bill across the goal line. She managed the very difficult task of negotiating a bill that advanced without some of the most egregious and draconian proposals, including \$39 billion in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, cuts that the House had passed.

However, this farm bill contains cuts to SNAP that will be devastating for many of my constituents. There are 1.7 million SNAP recipients in Pennsylvania. I support changes in SNAP to increase accountability like stopping lottery winners from continuing to receive assistance and cracking down on retailers and recipients engaged in benefit trafficking.

But this farm bill will adversely impact many children, seniors, people with disabilities and working families in Pennsylvania.

According to the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, the SNAP cut in this farm bill will cause 175,000 Pennsylvanian households to lose, on average, \$65 for food each month. These same households already saw a cut to their monthly benefits just 3 months ago when the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA, increase in benefits expired.

My guest for the 2014 State of the Union was Tianna Gaines-Turner, a Philadelphia woman who knows all too well the challenges working families face. Tianna lost her job in December and is the mother of a nine-year-old and twin six-year-olds. Her husband

works in a minimum wage job. Tianna participates in a research and advocacy project founded by the Center for Hunger-Free Communities at Drexel University: "Witnesses to Hunger."

In 2008, Dr. Mariana Chilton provided cameras to 42 single mothers in Philadelphia, simply asking that they use them to take pictures to tell us about their lives and their children. These Witnesses to Hunger, seeing the opportunity to spread awareness and create change, accepted Dr. Chilton's challenge and started documenting the poverty and hunger that they face on a daily basis. Living it each day, these remarkable mothers understand the trials of hunger and raising a family more than anyone else. The Witnesses to Hunger inspire me and challenge me to do more in the Senate. I am incredibly grateful for the guidance they provide.

Tianna wrote me a letter that said:

Our voices and pictures show our pain, struggles. When you're voting, close your eyes and think of the picture of my children. Their hunger pains rest in your hands.

Another Witness to Hunger, Angela Sutton's son Jahzaire wrote me a letter that said:

I was told that you were cutting food stamps and I want to know why? I need food stamps so I can eat to be big and strong. So I can become Senator one day.

Every child deserves adequate food so that the light inside them can continue to burn brightly. It is an impossible situation to raise a family and have to make the choice between heating a home or putting food on the table. Recent research from Children's HealthWatch demonstrated that improved SNAP benefit levels also have a positive impact on children's health. Children in families receiving SNAP were significantly more likely to be classified as "well" than were young children whose families were eligible but did not receive SNAP.

Hunger and food insecurity is an unfortunate and preventable reality for many Pennsylvanians. Hunger affects working families, children, and older Americans across the Nation and not one community across this country is Hunger Free. Nearly half of all SNAP participants are children and 76 percent of families receiving SNAP have at least one employed member. Cutting SNAP is not a way to address the deficit.

Moody's Analytics estimates that in a weak economy, every \$1 increase in SNAP benefits generates \$1.72 in economic activity. In fact, economic importance is demonstrated in part by Walmart, which on January 31, 2014 put out updated expectations for its fourth quarter. Its report stated:

Despite a holiday season that delivered positive comps, two factors contributed to lower comp sales performance for the 14-week period for Walmart U.S. First, the sales impact from the reduction in SNAP (the U.S.

government Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits that went into effect Nov. 1 is greater than we expected . . .

CBO rated an increase in SNAP benefits as one of the two most cost-effective of all spending and tax options it examined for boosting growth and jobs in a weak economy.

About 94.6 percent of Federal spending goes directly for food; administrative costs are low. SNAP's error rates stand at record lows; fewer than 2 percent of SNAP benefits are issued to households that do not meet all of the program's eligibility requirements.

I am thankful that The Emergency Food Assistance Program will receive increased funding under this bill, but there is no way for our already-strained food banks to make up for the increased demand they will see due to the SNAP cuts in Pennsylvania.

Therefore, I could not in good conscience vote for this bill.

I want this Senate to think about the children of the Witnesses to Hunger and all others who face hunger in this Nation—and what more we can do to help them succeed in the face of low wages, unemployment or underemployment.

TRIBUTE TO 2014 OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST DAVID WISE

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to extend well-deserved congratulations to Nevada's own David Wise, a Sochi Olympic athlete who won gold in this year's debut sport of halfpipe skiing. Motivated by support from his family and the Nevada community, David triumphed this year in Russia to bring home one of the United States' nine gold medals.

Despite difficult conditions in Sochi that proved challenging for these experienced athletes, David outperformed his skilled opponents by scoring a 92 on his first run in the halfpipe. As an American and Nevadan, I am honored that David represented our Nation proudly and brought home the gold.

During his free time, David enjoys spending time with his wife Alexandra and their 2-year-old daughter Nayeli. David's accolades reach far beyond his athleticism and victories on the slopes. As a believer in service, David frequently supports a number of charities, including several water projects in the Dominican Republic. This community service extends to his local community, where he runs a youth group at his family's local church.

Driven by his purpose founded in sport, service, and family, David embodies the spirit of an exemplary athlete that the Nevada Family is proud to call our own. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this remarkable individual as we show our pride and support for all of his accomplishments.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JAMES LAROSA

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I wish to honor the life of a remarkable West Virginian who was taken from us on February 15, 2014. James Dominick LaRosa, known to his friends and family as Jim, was a true pioneer developer who never forgot his roots as he helped enrich North Central West Virginia into a thriving, vibrant and beautiful region of the Mountain State. As we mourn the loss of a truly special person, I join all West Virginians in keeping in our thoughts and prayers Jim's only son, Jimmy Joe, his daughter-in-law, Leigh Ann, and his three grandchildren, Lauren Louise, Natalie Nicole and James Lee.

A native of Harrison County, which neighbored my local area in Marion County, Jim was driven and motivated at an early age. Anyone who met him immediately recognized that there was a bright future ahead for Jim. In 1944, he graduated from Washington Irving High School in Clarksburg, WV and then attended West Virginia University. After graduating in 1948 with a degree in business administration, he learned the fundamentals of business in his father's small surface mining company. At the ripe age of 35, James assumed the position of president of his father's company.

During this time, his entrepreneurial temperament took flight. Jim's unwavering dedication to the area's communities, accompanied with his innovative visions and inspirational spirit, helped improve the region's quality of life, enhanced medical accessibility, built multiple businesses and recreational facilities, created jobs, increased local revenue, boosted visitor access, and most of all, created a positive image of the North Central region.

Many of Harrison County's most well-known areas and attractions can be attributed to the vision and discipline of Jim LaRosa, including the Pete Dye Golf Course, Bridgeport Hill and the Eastpointe and Newporte Shopping Centers. He also focused on projects that underscored his many interests, especially his Italian heritage, quality food access, the performing arts and theater, interior decorating and animals.

Time and again, Jim showed how greatly an individual can contribute to his community through passion, commitment and hard work.

He not only played the role of pioneer developer, but he also served on several boards of directors, such as the Clarksburg Chamber of Commerce, Lowndes Bank and the West Virginia Coal and Advisory Commission. In addition, he served on the original board of the West Virginia Surface Mining and Reclamation Association and the Director's 100 Club for WVU Athletics.

During his life, Jim received countless awards to honor his accomplishments and his commitments to West Virginia's North Central region. He received the Distinguished West Virginian from two Governors. He also received an honorary doctorate degree of humane letters from Salem College in 1984. In 1985, our dear Senator Robert C. Byrd recommended to President Reagan that Jim should be a member of the Christopher Columbus 500th Jubilee Commission, which consisted of 35 Americans of Italian descent, in celebration of the 500th year of the discovery of America.

Jim's remarkable foresight, coupled with his leadership skills and his well-deserved accomplishments, has consistently enriched the communities of North Central West Virginia and across the Mountain State.

Jim's imprint will always be marked in the countless businesses, facilities, centers and improvements that he established over years of hard work and dedication. He will be greatly missed by the people whose lives he touched.

West Virginians cannot thank Jim enough for the steadfast commitment and positive influence he's had on our great State. Jim LaRosa will always be remembered as a truly gifted and exceptional West Virginian. And though he will be greatly missed, his legacy will always live on.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. KISHORE CHALLA

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I wish to congratulate one of West Virginia's most dedicated and talented cardiologists, Dr. Kishore Challa, on receiving the 2014 Heart of Gold Award, which was presented by the West Virginia American Heart Association. There is no one more qualified, more compassionate or more devoted than Dr. Challa, who has been practicing in West Virginia for more than 20 years.

A native of India, Dr. Challa has called the Mountain State his home since 1989, and his unwavering commitment to the cardiology field at South Charleston Cardiology, where he continues to practice today, has consistently saved West Virginian lives across our State. We cannot thank him enough for continuing to deepen his roots in the Mountain State. His significant contributions, positive influence and medical expertise have helped boost the quality of our medical community as well as improved the health and well-being of many, many West Virginians.

Dr. Challa's integrity and work ethic know no bounds in a field where long hours and often times emotional, demanding and traumatic experiences become routine. Most cannot imagine the pressure and stress physicians endure on a daily basis, and Dr. Challa's calm, compassionate and enjoyable personality should inspire us all to always

focus on the good and the positive. Regardless of the day, Dr. Challa treats all of his patients, staff and friends with kindness and respect, and that is why I am truly proud to call him my friend.

Dr. Challa is also no stranger to prestigious awards, including the Distinguished West Virginian award, which was created to honor those who have contributed significantly to West Virginia and those who have brought positive attention to our great State. His dedication to his patients, his commitment to the West Virginia community, and his passion of cardiology have made West Virginia a better place.

It is fitting that Dr. Challa was presented with the Heart of Gold Award, for he once stated that in his field, "helping people is instant gratitude and it's all worth it." So today, I congratulate a friend—and a remarkably intelligent and gifted cardiologist—on receiving such an esteemed honor. I know he will continue to save lives in the great State of West Virginia for years to come.●

BOGUE FALAYA BAPTIST CHURCH

• Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I wish to recognize Bogue Falaya Baptist Church.

Beginning with 15 charter members in 1858, Bogue Falaya Baptist Church has been ministering to the community for more than 155 years. On February 23 they celebrated a milestone, as the congregation commemorated the completion of the relocation and expansion of their church. Tireless work was undertaken to ensure this project happened.

The staff and members of Bogue Falaya have served others with compassion and care, without hesitation, and they prioritize teaching children about Jesus, the Scriptures, and helping others.

Many are told today that sharing one's religious beliefs are taboo. However, as the oldest church in St. Tammany Parish, Bogue Falaya has continued to share its beliefs. The congregation has grown, a testament to the efforts of Pastor Jake Roudkovski and those who work with him. Bogue Falaya has been a cornerstone for spiritual guidance in St. Tammany, and I recognize the efforts of all members of the church community as the congregation continues in Christ's footsteps.●

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

• Mr. VITTER. Madam President, today I wish to recognize New Hope Baptist Church.

On Sunday, February 23, New Hope Baptist Church observed its 145th anniversary of its Christian ministry to the citizens of Gretna, LA. Founded in 1863 by 14 freed slaves, New Hope was first

known as the Congregational Church, later changing to the Freewill Baptist Church before finally adopting its current name.

Under the leadership and guidance of Rev. Warren Johnson, New Hope has remained true to the core values and beliefs that serve as the spiritual foundation of its mission. The church is part of the historical tour of Gresham and is located next to the site of the first school for African-American children in the city. New Hope has served as beacon of light and a place where people in the community can come to rejuvenate their faith.

It is my honor to recognize New Hope Baptist Church on this anniversary, and I offer my best wishes for many more years of faithful service.●

REMEMBERING TIM LILLEBO

● Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, earlier this month, Oregonians—and indeed all those who cherish America's natural treasures—lost one of their most ardent champions, Tim Lillebo. Today, I wish to join his wife Karen, his father Tom and a multitude of friends and colleagues in mourning the passing of this true son of Oregon.

Tim will be remembered as someone with a deep-felt love of Oregon's magnificent wild places. Those of us in Congress who had the honor to meet Tim and get to know him were impressed by his vast knowledge of Oregon, his personal history as a timber faller and an unmatched passion for Oregon's mountains and rivers.

He was not your stereotypical lobbyist. More comfortable in hiking boots than wing-tips, Tim would have much rather been out hunting elk in the Strawberry Mountains than tracking down Members of Congress. He was, in many ways, like former President Teddy Roosevelt—someone who liked to test himself against the elements, whether it was rowing down the John Day or Owyhee rivers or hiking into the Oregon's backcountry to camp among his beloved Ponderosa Pines.

Tim Lillebo was uniquely suited to help heal the differences between rural and urban residents. As a product of both Prairie City in Eastern Oregon and Salem in Western Oregon, he was at home on either side of the mountains, simultaneously maintaining a local's knowledge of the backcountry and an insider's perspective of the legislative process.

Tim and I did not always see eye-to-eye on forest management policies. But our differences were never personal, never acrimonious. He could disagree but was never disagreeable. As issues relating to Federal forests management changed, Tim adapted. He helped plan thoughtful restoration projects that improved forest health and protected rural communities, and did it with an air of collaboration. Without

sacrificing his convictions and wilderness advocacy, he led by example in proving there were sometimes agreements in this often divisive issue. When he testified for my original Eastside Oregon forestry bill, he made it very clear that he strongly supported legislation to increase thinning restoration projects and at the same time it was necessary to protect old growth. One of those projects, the Glaze Meadow restoration project outside Sisters, OR, would not have gotten off the ground if Tim had not done the heavy lifting.

I will miss Tim Lillebo, both his wise counsel and his ready smile, along with his love of our State and his ability to bring people together to solve difficult problems. Our country could use more citizens like Tim.

On behalf of his family and friends, and his fellow Oregonians, I want to express my profound appreciation for the life and labors of Tim Lillebo.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the Secretary of the Senate, on February 14, 2014, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bills and joint resolutions:

S. 25. An act to ensure that the reduced annual cost-of-living adjustment to the retired pay of members and former members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62 required by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 will not apply to members or former members who first became members prior to January 1, 2014, and for other purposes.

S. 540. An act to temporarily extend the public debt limit, and for other purposes.

S.J. Res. 28. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of John Fahey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 29. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2013, the enrolled bills and joint resolutions were signed on February 14, 2014, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2024. A bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on February 14, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills and joint resolutions:

S. 25. An act to ensure that the reduced annual cost-of-living adjustment to the retired pay of members and former members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62 required by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 will not apply to members or former members who first became members prior to January 1, 2014, and for other purposes.

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S.J. Res. 29. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of Risa Lavizzo-Mourey as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SCHATZ:

S. 2034. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to facilitate the transfer to non-Federal ownership of appropriate reclamation projects or facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2035. A bill to provide funding to the National Institute of Mental Health to support suicide prevention and brain research, including funding for the Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2036. A bill to protect all school children against harmful and life-threatening seclusion and restraint practices; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. COLLINS,

Mr. JOHANNIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2037. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 360. A resolution to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Onstad; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. CORKER):

S. Res. 361. A resolution recognizing the threats to freedom of the press and expression in the People's Republic of China and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 15

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 15, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 116

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 116, a bill to revise and extend provisions under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act.

S. 204

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 204, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 315

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to reauthorize and extend the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments of 2008.

S. 361

At the request of Ms. WARREN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 361, a bill to require the lender or servicer of a home mortgage, upon a request by the homeowner for a short sale, to make a prompt decision whether to allow the sale.

S. 462

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut

(Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S. 506

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 506, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide recruitment and retention incentives for volunteer emergency service workers.

S. 562

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 562, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 635

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 644

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 644, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prevent the abuse of dextromethorphan, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

S. 917

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 917, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a reduced rate of excise tax on beer produced domestically by certain qualifying producers.

S. 942

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 942, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 968

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a co-

sponsor of S. 968, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act, to advance the ability of credit unions to promote small business growth and economic development opportunities, and for other purposes.

S. 987

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 987, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1053

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1053, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to strengthen and protect Medicare hospice programs.

S. 1066

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1066, a bill to allow certain student loan borrowers to refinance Federal student loans.

S. 1069

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1069, a bill to prohibit discrimination in adoption or foster care placements based on the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of any prospective adoptive or foster parent, or the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child involved.

S. 1135

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1135, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to repeal a certain exemption for hydraulic fracturing, and for other purposes.

S. 1163

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1163, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include automated fire sprinkler system retrofits as section 179 property and classify certain automated fire sprinkler system retrofits as 15-year property for purposes of depreciation.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1204

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1204, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1208

At the request of Mr. REID, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1208, a bill to require meaningful disclosures of the terms of rental-purchase agreements, including disclosures of all costs to consumers under such agreements, to provide certain substantive rights to consumers under such agreements, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1208, *supra*.

S. 1332

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1332, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1349, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strength-

en penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1495

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1495, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 1596

At the request of Mr. MCCONNELL, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1596, a bill to require State educational agencies that receive funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to have in effect policies and procedures on background checks for school employees.

S. 1597

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1597, a bill to provide for the use of savings promotion raffle products by financial institutions to encourage savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1599

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1599, a bill to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

S. 1648

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1648, a bill to amend title 36, United States Code, to encourage the nationwide observance of two minutes of silence each Memorial Day.

S. 1704

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1704, a bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students.

S. 1760

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1760, a bill to amend the statutory authorities of the Coast Guard to improve the quality of life for current and former Coast Guard personnel and their families, and for other purposes.

S. 1792

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1792, a bill to close out expired, empty grant accounts.

S. 1802

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1802, a bill to provide equal treatment for utility special entities using utility operations-related swaps, and for other purposes.

S. 1817

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to require the Secretary to implement standards for short-term custody of individuals held in facilities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and for other purposes.

S. 1821

At the request of Mr. REID, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1821, a bill to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

S. 1823

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1823, a bill to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to better enable State child welfare agencies to prevent human trafficking of children and serve the needs of children who are victims of human trafficking, and for other purposes.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from New Mexico

(Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 1923

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, *supra*.

S. 1946

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1946, a bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1957

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1957, a bill to establish the American Infrastructure Fund, to provide bond guarantees and make loans to States, local governments, and infrastructure providers for investments in certain infrastructure projects, and to provide equity investments in such projects, and for other purposes.

S. 1977

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1977, a bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 2021

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to amend the

Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the incentives for the production of biodiesel.

S. 2024

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2024, a bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

S. 2026

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2026, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games.

S. CON. RES. 13

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 13, a concurrent resolution commending the Boys & Girls Clubs of America for its role in improving outcomes for millions of young people and thousands of communities.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2036. A bill to protect all school children against harmful and life-threatening seclusion and restraint practices; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to introduce a bill to support teachers, paraprofessionals and especially students, students with challenging behaviors.

Last week I released a report titled "Dangerous Use of Seclusion and Restraints in Schools Remains Widespread and Difficult To Remedy: Ten Case Studies." This report is the product of a 6-month investigation by my HELP Committee staff.

The report highlights the continued use of seclusion and restraints in schools, the lack of information families have about these practices, and the inability, in many cases, of families to stop the use of them on their children.

We found that in many cases, families may not know their children are being secluded and restrained. In some cases children are being secluded and

restrained for months at a time, multiple times a day, sometimes for many hours, all without the knowledge of their families.

We also found that families do not have the tools to stop these practices. Provisions of some of our education laws, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, prohibit families from seeking redress and relief from the use of seclusion and restraints with their children unless they exhaust their due process options, which can take months or even years. This often leaves families with no choice but to remove their children from school in order to protect them.

Finally, the report found it is almost impossible for families to gather the information they need to prove harm and to stop the use of seclusion and restraints. The lack of access to information causes families to give up on their schools and there are many cases where families move to a new city or even out of state.

These events are not isolated incidents, as some claim. In March 2011, the U.S. Department of Education published the "Civil Rights Data Collection Report" that showed there were over 66,000 occurrences of seclusion and restraints during the 2009-2010 school year. In other words, there were 66,000 times when children were put at risk of injury, psychological trauma and death.

These incidents occur everywhere, even in my own state of Iowa. Last year, in a public residential school, at least three young women were secluded for up to 23 hours a day—in one case, for as long as nine months. If it were not for the good work of my state's Protection and Advocacy agency, Disability Rights Iowa, that practice might have continued indefinitely.

These practices aren't just ineffective, they can cause harm. Take for example 8-year-old Isabel Loeffler, who was subjected to restraint and seclusion when she was living in Iowa. Isabel was locked in a seclusion room for up to three hours at a time on over 100 different occasions. She was held from behind and forced to draw with crayons, sometimes with four staff members holding her. When Isabel failed a task, she was secluded or restrained. The use of these practices made her behaviors worse, not better, so her parents withdrew her from school.

Injuries, both physical and psychological, are horrible enough, but at times the use of seclusion and restraints results in death. Jonathan King was secluded in an 8 by 8 foot concrete room in his Georgia school from the time he was a kindergartener. During one school year Jonathan was placed in a seclusion room, unobserved, 19 times over the course of 29 days for over an hour and a half.

His parents did not know this was happening to him.

On the day he died, his teacher had given him a rope to hold up his pants before she secluded him. Jonathan, who hated wearing a belt, had threatened to kill himself before. While he was in seclusion that day he hung himself with that rope. Jonathan was just 13 years old.

It is time to put a stop to these abuses. We need to make sure schools have access to the practices to serve our children well. The data show that too many teachers do not have the tools they need to help children with challenging behaviors. Too many parents do not know how their children are being treated at school. And too many children are being mentally and physically scarred because of the use of these harmful practices and the lack of knowledge about positive alternatives.

So I have come to the floor, today, to urge my colleagues to join with me in stopping these unconscionable practices. I come to ask that we work to provide teachers and administrators with the knowledge and skills they need to teach children in safe, supportive environments and to stop these violations of basic human rights. It is time to stop the systematic use of restraint and seclusion in our schools.

In the United States, we have regulations to protect people in hospitals, in nursing homes, and in psychological facilities from restraint and seclusion. But not in our schools. The last frontier for prohibiting seclusion and allowing restraint only in emergency situations is our classrooms.

This is why, today, I am introducing the Keeping All Students Safe Act. This bill prohibits the use of seclusion as well as mechanical and chemical restraints in schools. Period. Complete prohibition of these practices that have no educational or therapeutic benefits for children.

My bill also places strict limits on when, how, and by whom physical restraints may be used. Physical restraints could only be used in emergency situations. Not for so-called treatment. Not as discipline. Not as negative reinforcement. For emergencies only.

My bill would also create greater transparency so parents will know when an emergency situation happens and when a restraint has been used. It requires that schools meet with parents to explain the emergency and to plan for how to avoid emergencies in the future.

In addition, the bill allows families to file a civil action even if they have not exhausted their due process rights under IDEA. This will give families more power to stop the use of seclusion and restraints with their children.

There has been a lot of debate on whether it is right to implement a complete ban on seclusion in schools. I answer with an unequivocal yes. Putting a child in a locked room without

supervision is absolutely wrong. Because when children are locked up, they frequently hurt themselves in frustration. Sometimes they hit their bodies against the wall until they are bruised and bloodied. Sometimes they vomit. Sometimes, as in the case of Jonathan King, they die.

Something is seriously wrong when a child suffers post-traumatic stress disorder after attending school. To lock a child up with no supervision is dangerous and, in many instances, can amount to acute psychological torture.

Proponents of the use of seclusion and restraints call them “effective practices” or “useful techniques.” But they are not. A child does not learn how to hold herself still, to listen more attentively, or to do her work by having her teacher lock her up, strap her down, or sit on her. Using euphemisms and politically correct terms to describe these practices does not disguise their barbarity and harmfulness. By no stretch of the imagination can sitting on a child be about educating.

There are alternatives. We know that school-wide, preventive practices can reduce and eliminate the use of seclusion and restraints. Ten years ago, at the Centennial School in Lehigh, PA, a school that serves children with the most challenging behaviors, the use of restraints was pervasive; over 1,000 occurrences per school year. Now, through the leadership of Dr. Michael George and the systematic use of preventive strategies, restraints are used less than 5 times a year and only in the most severe of emergency situations, only by trained personnel, and never as punishment or behavior management.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act will make positive behavioral interventions more widely available for educators. It will provide supports to schools to improve the school climate and culture through evidence-based practices and data-driven decision-making. The bill calls for better data collection on the use of seclusion and restraints in order to document their occurrence and efforts to eliminate them. The bill calls for mandatory reporting so that parents will know why, when, and how physical restraints are used on their children.

We know that teachers want to teach and to keep all their students safe. Let us give them the skills and knowledge to prevent challenging behaviors, and when they occur, to respond to them in the most effective ways possible.

If Isabel’s teachers had the support, knowledge and training that the Keeping All Students Safe Act will make available, they could have identified the interventions she needed to be successful. They could have known what reinforcements worked for her. And they could have known what triggers would make her behavior worse. Instead of locking her in a closet, where she wet herself and hit herself in the

head, Isabel’s teachers could have fundamentally improved her educational experience, helping her to reach her potential.

All children have the right to be safe. Parents entrust schools to protect their children and help them to flourish. Let us make good on that trust by prohibiting seclusion and making the use of restraint so uncommon that it is only used in emergency situations. I urge my colleagues to join with me to protect all students, and to ensure that all educators have the tools they need to keep all of students safe.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2036

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Keeping All Students Safe Act”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPLICABLE PROGRAM.**—The term “applicable program” has the meaning given the term in section 400(c)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1221(c)(1)).

(2) **CHEMICAL RESTRAINT.**—The term “chemical restraint” means a drug or medication used on a student to control behavior or restrict freedom of movement that is not—

(A) prescribed by a licensed physician, or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional’s authority under State law, for the standard treatment of a student’s medical or psychiatric condition; and

(B) administered as prescribed by the licensed physician or other qualified health professional acting under the scope of the professional’s authority under State law.

(3) **ESEA DEFINITIONS.**—The terms—

(A) “Department”, “educational service agency”, “elementary school”, “local educational agency”, “parent”, “secondary school”, “State”, and “State educational agency” have the meanings given such terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801); and

(B) “school resource officer” and “school personnel” have the meanings given such terms in section 4151 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 7161).

(4) **FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**—The term “Federal financial assistance” means any grant, loan, contract (other than a procurement contract or a contract of insurance or guaranty), or any other arrangement by which the Department provides or otherwise makes available assistance in the form of—

(A) funds;

(B) services of Federal personnel; or

(C) real and personal property or any interest in or use of such property, including—

(i) transfers or leases of such property for less than fair market value or for reduced consideration; and

(ii) proceeds from a subsequent transfer or lease of such property if the Federal share of its fair market value is not returned to the Federal Government.

(5) **FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION.**—For those students eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), the term “free appropriate public education” has the meaning given the term in section 602 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1401).

(6) **MECHANICAL RESTRAINT.**—The term “mechanical restraint”—

(A) has the meaning given the term in section 595(d)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290jj(d)(1)), except that the meaning shall be applied by substituting “student’s” for “resident’s”; and

(B) does not mean devices used by trained school personnel, or used by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed, including—

(i) restraints for medical immobilization;

(ii) adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; or

(iii) vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle.

(7) **PHYSICAL ESCORT.**—The term “physical escort” means the temporary touching or holding of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, waist, hip, or back for the purpose of inducing a student to move to a safe location.

(8) **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT.**—The term “physical restraint” means a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of an individual to move the individual’s arms, legs, body, or head freely. Such term does not include a physical escort, mechanical restraint, or chemical restraint.

(9) **POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS.**—The term “positive behavioral interventions and supports”

(A) means a school-wide systematic approach to embed evidence-based practices and data-driven decisionmaking to improve school climate and culture in order to achieve improved academic and social outcomes, and increase learning for all students, including those with the most complex and intensive behavioral needs; and

(B) encompasses a range of systemic and individualized positive strategies to reinforce desired behaviors, diminish reoccurrence of challenging behaviors, and teach appropriate behaviors to students.

(10) **PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SYSTEM.**—The term “protection and advocacy system” means a protection and advocacy system established under subtitle C of title I of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15041 et seq.).

(11) **SECLUSION.**—The term “seclusion”—

(A) means the isolation of a student in a room, enclosure, or space that is—

(i) locked; or

(ii) unlocked and the student is prevented from leaving; and

(B) does not include a time out.

(12) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Education, and, where appropriate, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Defense.

(13) **STATE-APPROVED CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING PROGRAM.**—The term “State-approved crisis intervention training program” means a training program proposed by a local educational agency and approved by a State that, at a minimum, provides training in evidence-based practices shown to be effective—

(A) in the prevention of the use of physical restraint;

(B) in keeping both school personnel and students safe in imposing physical restraint in a manner consistent with this Act;

(C) in the use of data-based decision-making and evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports, safe physical escort, conflict prevention, behavioral antecedents, functional behavioral assessments, de-escalation of challenging behaviors, and conflict management;

(D) in first aid, including the signs of medical distress, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

(E) certification for school personnel in the practices and skills described in subparagraphs (A) through (D), which shall be required to be renewed on a periodic basis.

(14) **STUDENT.**—The term “student” means a student who—

(A) is enrolled in a public school;

(B) is enrolled in a private school and is receiving a free appropriate public education at the school under subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 612(a)(10) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(10)(B), (C));

(C) is enrolled in a Head Start or Early Head Start program supported under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831); or

(D) receives services under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.).

(15) **TIME OUT.**—The term “time out” means a behavior management technique that may involve the separation of the student from the group, in a non-locked setting, for the purpose of calming. Time out is not seclusion.

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to promote the development of effective intervention and prevention practices that do not use restraints and seclusion;

(2) to protect all students from physical or mental abuse, aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety, and any restraint imposed for purposes of coercion, discipline or convenience, or as a substitute for appropriate educational or positive behavioral interventions and supports;

(3) to ensure that staff are safe from the harm that can occur from inexpertly using restraints; and

(4) to ensure the safety of all students and school personnel and promote positive school culture and climate.

SEC. 4. MINIMUM STANDARDS; RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Each State and local educational agency receiving Federal financial assistance shall have in place policies that are consistent with the following:

(1) **PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN ACTION.**—School personnel, contractors, and resource officers are prohibited from imposing on any student—

(A) seclusion;

(B) mechanical restraint;

(C) chemical restraint;

(D) aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety;

(E) physical restraint that is life-threatening, including physical restraint that restricts breathing; and

(F) physical restraint if contraindicated based on the student’s disability, health care needs, or medical or psychiatric condition, as documented in a health care directive or medical management plan, a behavior intervention plan, an individualized education program or an individualized family service plan (as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401)), or plan developed pursuant to

section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), or other relevant record made available to the State or local educational agency.

(2) **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Physical restraint may only be implemented if—

(i) the student’s behavior poses immediate danger of serious physical harm to self or others;

(ii) the physical restraint does not interfere with the student’s ability to communicate in the student’s primary language or mode of communication; and

(iii) less restrictive interventions have been ineffective in stopping the immediate danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, except in a case of a rare and clearly unavoidable emergency circumstance posing immediate danger of serious physical harm.

(B) **LEAST AMOUNT OF FORCE NECESSARY.**—When implementing a physical restraint, staff shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from the threatened injury.

(C) **END OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT.**—The use of physical restraint shall end when—

(i) a medical condition occurs putting the student at risk of harm;

(ii) the student’s behavior no longer poses immediate danger of serious physical harm to the student or others; or

(iii) less restrictive interventions would be effective in stopping such immediate danger of serious physical harm.

(D) **QUALIFICATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS ENGAGING IN PHYSICAL RESTRAINT.**—School personnel imposing physical restraint in accordance with this subsection shall—

(i) be trained and certified by a State-approved crisis intervention training program, except in the case of rare and clearly unavoidable emergency circumstances when school personnel trained and certified are not immediately available due to the unforeseeable nature of the emergency circumstance;

(ii) engage in continuous face-to-face monitoring of the student; and

(iii) be trained in State and school policies and procedures regarding restraint and seclusion.

(E) **PROHIBITION ON USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AS PLANNED INTERVENTION.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in clause (ii), the use of physical restraints as a planned intervention shall not be written into a student’s education plan, individual safety plan, plan developed pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), individualized education program or individualized family service plan (as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401)), or any other planning document for an individual student.

(ii) **EXCEPTION.**—The use of physical restraints as a planned intervention may be written into a student’s individualized education program, individual safety plan, or plan developed pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) if State law allows for the use of physical restraint as part of such program or plan, as agreed upon by school personnel, the family of the student, and the individualized education program committee if such individuals—

(I) have considered less restrictive means to address behavioral concerns that would meet the emergency standard described in subparagraph (A) and, when using such physical restraints in an emergency, meet the

conditions described in subparagraphs (B), (C), and (D); and

(II) have conducted a researched based, individualized functional behavioral analysis and implemented a corresponding positive intervention plan based on such functional behavioral analysis that—

(aa) addresses preventative measures used to reduce or prevent emergencies; and

(bb) is written into the student's individualized education program, individual safety plan, or plan developed pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794).

(3) OTHER POLICIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The State or local educational agency, and each school and educational program served by the State or local educational agency shall—

(i) establish policies and procedures that ensure school personnel and parents, including private school personnel and parents, are aware of the State, local educational agency, and school's policies and procedures regarding seclusion and restraint;

(ii) establish policies and procedures to keep all students, including students with the most complex and intensive behavioral needs, and school personnel safe;

(iii) establish policies and procedures for planning for the appropriate use of restraint in crisis situations in accordance with this Act by a team of professionals trained in accordance with a State-approved crisis intervention training program; and

(iv) establish policies and procedures to be followed after each incident involving the imposition of physical restraint upon a student, including—

(I) procedures to provide to the parent of the student, with respect to each such incident—

(aa) a verbal or electronic communication on the same day as each such incident; and

(bb) within 24 hours of each such incident, written notification; and

(II) after the imposition of physical restraint upon a student, procedures to ensure that—

(aa) the person who imposed the restraint, the immediate adult witnesses, a representative of the administration, a school mental health profession, and at least 1 family member of the student participate in a debriefing session; and

(bb) the student who was restrained is given the opportunity to discuss the student's perspective about the event with a trusted adult who will communicate to the debriefing session group.

(B) DEBRIEFING SESSION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—

(I) TIMING.—The debriefing session described in subparagraph (A)(iv)(II) shall occur as soon as practicable, but not later than 5 school days following the imposition of physical restraint unless it is delayed by written mutual agreement of the parent and school.

(II) OBSERVATIONS BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL.—Each adult witness in the proximity of the student immediately before and during the time of the of the physical restraint but not directly involved shall submit the witness's observations in writing for the debriefing session.

(III) PARENTAL LEGAL RIGHTS.—Parents shall retain their full legal rights for children under the age of majority concerning participation in the debriefing or other matters.

(ii) CONTENT OF SESSION.—The debriefing session described in subparagraph (A)(iv)(II) shall include—

(I) identification of antecedents to the physical restraint;

(II) consideration of relevant information in the student's records, and such information from teachers, other professionals, the parent, and student;

(III) planning to prevent and reduce reoccurrence of the use of physical restraint, including consideration of the results of any functional behavioral assessments, whether positive behavior plans were implemented with fidelity, recommendations of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports to assist personnel responsible for the student's educational plan, the individualized education program for the student, if applicable, and plans providing for reasonable accommodations under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794);

(IV) a plan to have a functional behavioral assessment conducted, reviewed, or revised by qualified professionals, the parent, and the student; and

(V) for any student not identified as eligible to receive accommodations under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) or services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), evidence of such a referral or documentation of the basis for declining to refer the student.

(iii) COMMUNICATION BY THE STUDENT.—When a student attends a debriefing session described in subparagraph (A)(iv)(II), information communicated by the student may not be used against the student in any disciplinary, criminal, or civil investigation or proceeding.

(4) NOTIFICATION IN WRITING ON DEATH OR BODILY INJURY.—In a case in which bodily injury or death of a student occurs in conjunction with the use of physical restraint or any intervention used to control behavior, there are procedures to notify, in writing, within 24 hours after such injury or death occurs—

(A) the State educational agency and local educational agency;

(B) local law enforcement; and

(C) a protection and advocacy system, in the case of a student who is eligible for services from the protection and advocacy system.

(5) PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION.—The State or local educational agency, each school and educational program served by the State or local educational agency, and school personnel of such school or program shall not retaliate against any person for having—

(A) reported a violation of this section or Federal or State regulations or policies promulgated to carry out this section; or

(B) provided information regarding a violation of this section or Federal or State regulations or policies promulgated to carry out this section.

SEC. 5. INTERACTIONS; RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

(a) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) RIGHTS AND REMEDIES OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to restrict or limit, or allow the Secretary to restrict or limit, any other rights or remedies otherwise available to students or parents under Federal or State law (including regulations) or to restrict or limit stronger restrictions on the use of restraint, seclusion, or aversives in Federal or State law (including regulations) or in State policies.

(2) RESTRICTIONS ON SECRETARIAL PROHIBITIONS.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorize the Secretary to promulgate regulations prohibiting the use of—

(A) time outs; or

(B) devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student, for the specific and approved therapeutic or safety purposes for which such devices were designed and, if applicable, prescribed, including—

(i) restraints for medical immobilization;

(ii) adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; or

(iii) vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a students in a moving vehicle.

(b) DENIAL OF A FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION.—Failure to meet the minimum standards of this Act as applied to an individual child eligible for accommodations developed pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) or for education or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) shall constitute a denial of a free appropriate public education.

(c) EXHAUSTION OF DUE PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A student may file a civil action under the Constitution, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791 et seq.), or other applicable Federal law in the case of the use of seclusion or restraint in violation of this Act seeking relief from the use of seclusion or restraint with respect of such student.

(2) NONAPPLICABILITY.—Section 615(1) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1415(1)) shall not apply to an action filed pursuant to paragraph (1).

SEC. 6. REPORT REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational agency shall (in compliance with the requirements of section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly known as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974") (20 U.S.C. 1232g)) prepare and submit to the Secretary, and make available to the public, a report with respect to each local educational agency, and each school not under the jurisdiction of a local educational agency, located in the same State as such State educational agency that includes the following information:

(1) The total number of incidents in which physical restraint was imposed upon a student in the preceding full academic year.

(2) The information described in paragraph (1) shall be disaggregated—

(A) by the total number of incidents in which physical restraint was imposed upon a student—

(i) that resulted in injury to students or school personnel, or both;

(ii) that resulted in death; and

(iii) in which the school personnel imposing physical restraint were not trained and certified as described in section 4(2)(D)(i); and

(B) by the demographic characteristics of all students upon whom physical restraint was imposed, including—

(i) the subcategories identified in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(h)(1)(C)(i));

(ii) age; and

(iii) disability category.

(b) UNDUPLICATED COUNT; EXCEPTION.—The disaggregation required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be carried out in a manner to ensure an unduplicated count of the total number of

incidents in the preceding full academic year in which physical restraint was imposed upon a student; and

(2) not be required in a case in which the number of students in a category would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.

SEC. 7. GRANT AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—From the amount appropriated under section 10, the Secretary may award grants to State educational agencies to assist in—

(1) establishing, implementing, and enforcing the policies and procedures to meet the minimum standards described in this Act;

(2) improving State and local capacity to collect and analyze data related to physical restraint; and

(3) improving school climate and culture by implementing school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports.

(b) DURATION OF GRANT.—A grant under this section shall be awarded to a State educational agency for a 3-year period.

(c) APPLICATION.—Each State educational agency desiring a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require, including information on how the State educational agency will target resources to schools and local educational agencies in need of assistance related to preventing and reducing physical restraint.

(d) AUTHORITY TO MAKE SUBGRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State educational agency receiving a grant under this section may use such grant funds to award subgrants, on a competitive basis, to local educational agencies.

(2) APPLICATION.—A local educational agency desiring to receive a subgrant under this section shall submit an application to the applicable State educational agency at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the State educational agency may require.

(e) PRIVATE SCHOOL PARTICIPATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A State educational agency receiving grant funds under this section shall, after timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate private school officials, ensure that private school personnel can participate, on an equitable basis, in activities supported by grant or subgrant funds.

(2) PUBLIC CONTROL OF FUNDS.—The control of funds provided under this section, and title to materials, equipment, and property with such funds, shall be in a public agency and a public agency shall administer such funds, materials, equipment, and property.

(f) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—A State educational agency receiving a grant, or a local educational agency receiving a subgrant, under this section shall use such grant or subgrant funds to carry out the following:

(1) Researching, developing, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based strategies, policies, and procedures to reduce and prevent physical restraint in schools, consistent with the minimum standards described in this Act.

(2) Providing professional development, training, and certification for school personnel to meet such standards.

(g) ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—In addition to the required activities described in subsection (f), a State educational agency receiving a grant, or a local educational agency receiving a subgrant, under this section may use such grant or subgrant funds for 1 or more of the following:

(1) Developing and implementing a high-quality professional development and train-

ing program to implement evidence-based systematic approaches to school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports, including improving coaching, facilitation, and training capacity for administrators, teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, and other staff.

(2) Providing technical assistance to develop and implement evidence-based systematic approaches to school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports, including technical assistance for data-driven decisionmaking related to positive behavioral interventions and supports in the classroom.

(3) Researching, evaluating, and disseminating high-quality evidence-based programs and activities that implement school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports with fidelity.

(4) Supporting other local positive behavioral interventions and supports implementation activities consistent with this subsection.

(h) EVALUATION AND REPORT.—Each State educational agency receiving a grant under this section shall, at the end of the 3-year grant period for such grant—

(1) evaluate the State's progress toward the prevention and reduction of physical restraint in the schools located in the State, consistent with the minimum standards; and

(2) submit to the Secretary a report on such progress.

SEC. 8. ENFORCEMENT.

(a) USE OF REMEDIES.—If a State educational agency fails to comply with the requirements under this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) withhold, in whole or in part, further payments under an applicable program in accordance with section 455 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1234d);

(2) require a State or local educational agency to submit, and implement, within 1 year of such failure to comply, a corrective plan of action, which may include redirection of funds received under an applicable program;

(3) issue a complaint to compel compliance of the State or local educational agency through a cease and desist order, in the same manner the Secretary is authorized to take such action under section 456 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1234e); or

(4) refer the State to the Department of Justice or Department of Education Office of Civil Rights for an investigation.

(b) CESSATION OF WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS.—Whenever the Secretary determines (whether by certification or other appropriate evidence) that a State or local educational agency that is subject to the withholding of payments under subsection (a)(1) has cured the failure providing the basis for the withholding of payments, the Secretary shall cease the withholding of payments with respect to the State educational agency under such subsection.

SEC. 9. APPLICABILITY.

(a) PRIVATE SCHOOLS.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect any private school that does not receive, or does not serve students who receive, support in any form from any program supported, in whole or in part, with funds provided by the Department of Education.

(b) HOME SCHOOLS.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to—

(1) affect a home school, whether or not a home school is treated as a private school or home school under State law; or

(2) consider a parent who is schooling a child at home as school personnel.

SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act for fiscal year 2015 and each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. JOHANNIS, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2037. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I started my public service career fighting for rural health. In a State that has many rural hospitals, the rural health care delivery system is especially important to Kansas. One of my first speeches was to rural hospitals. Since that time, I have been beating the drum, so to speak, for our rural areas about how important it is to focus on rural health.

I have always said that people in rural towns deserve the same access to care and level of treatment as their urban counterparts. I have made it my mission to protect our rural health system and patient access to the best possible care. I am honored to serve as the cochair of the Senate Rural Health Caucus where I work with my colleagues to fight for our rural health care system every day.

Unfortunately, these days it feels as though rural health care, and all of those involved in it, face an uphill battle. Over the past few years, the rural health system has continued to face even more challenges.

Funding for rural health care programs has been targeted again and again. This year the Senate Finance Committee held a markup with regular order where we considered some of the rural extenders that are absolutely vital to our rural communities. Regrettably, we have more work to do. We have to convince and educate our colleagues, this administration, and everyone else about the importance of rural health care. We have been successful in protecting some of the ideas I have championed, especially on the rural extenders side, but we have more work to do. As this process moves forward, we need to ensure we follow regular order on the floor of the Senate and for any pay-fors for the doc fix package. While I was pleased with some of the additions that addressed rural health care in the package passed out of committee, I have concerns that these issues were not included or addressed in the most recent package introduced in the House and in the Senate.

In addition to ensuring rural health is part of any moving legislation, I

wish to ensure it is a package that is offset and paid for, and this has to be done before I can support it. But the bottom line is that we, the Senate, need to return to regular order and ensure that practice does continue.

As will many of my colleagues in the Senate, I will continue to vigorously fight to rein in Federal spending and to reduce the deficit. In order to address this fiscal crisis, I think Congress must enact basic structural changes to entitlement programs that will strengthen and preserve these programs for future generations while protecting current participants. Without real tangible reform and cuts in Federal spending, we will bankrupt the country. At the same time, we need to ensure that any of those policies we put in place do not result in a disproportionate impact on our rural health care system or restrict patients' access to the care they need. As I started saying today, this is going to be an uphill battle. But I, for one, am ready to lead the charge.

As a member of both the Finance and HELP Committees, as well as the co-chair of the Rural Health Caucus, I have tried to be a leader in the discussion about the need to address the entire health system.

I have made it a point that within our health care system discussions, we need to talk about the differences between our rural areas and the care and treatment provided in those rural settings and their urban counterparts. We need to address common misconceptions about funding challenges in rural communities before taking a Lizzie Borden ax to the funding streams.

Throughout my career in public office, I have made it a point to always fight for Kansas and rural health care providers. This has been one of my top priorities in Congress. I understand the important role of rural health in America and continue to advocate for policies that protect and preserve these benefits.

Most recently, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—CMS—have made some changes that will be particularly harmful to rural health. More specifically, their changes will force doctors into a guessing game about their patients. The condition of payment changes CMS is making would require the physician, and no other level provider, to not only predict at the time of admission to the critical access hospital that the patient will require hospital care for more than two midnights, but also that the patient can be cared for and discharged in less than 96 hours. This is an extremely narrow CMS window for the physician to make a determination about that patient's future needs—extremely difficult, if not impossible. A physician may certify that they expect the patient to be treated and discharged within 96 hours, but, unfortunately, the patient's situation may change and

they may need to be kept longer. The physician's concern will be that they have failed to meet the terms of their certification according to CMS. This is likely to lead to premature discharges and readmissions, both of which CMS has taken actions to minimize.

A CEO for one of our critical access hospitals in Council Grove, KS, writes:

This new "condition of payment" rule causes potential conflicts with what is best for the patient, causes issues for the physician in having to predict outcomes at admission in complex cases, and may cause increased expense for medically unnecessary transfers to more costly care centers.

Today I am introducing the Critical Access Hospital Relief Act of 2014. My bipartisan legislation would remove the condition of payment for critical access hospitals that requires a physician to certify that each patient will be discharged or transferred in less than 96 hours. This is another example of having to tell CMS, "If it isn't broken, then there is no need to fix it." We need to focus on ensuring rural patients have access to their health system, not coming up with bureaucratic ways to make it harder for patients in rural areas to get quality care from their doctors.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Critical Access Hospital Relief Act of 2014.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 360—TO AUTHORIZE TESTIMONY AND REPRESENTATION IN UNITED STATES V. ONSTAD

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 360

Whereas, in the case of *United States v. Onstad*, Crim. No. 13-65, pending in the United States District Court for the District of Montana, the prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Tom Lopach, Chief of Staff for United States Senator Jon Tester;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§ 288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent current and former employees of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Tom Lopach, Chief of Staff for United States Senator Jon Tester, and any other current or former employee of the Senator's office from whom relevant testimony may be sought, are authorized to testify in the case of *United States v. Onstad*, except concerning matters for which a privilege should be asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent current and former employees of Senator Tester's office in connection with the production of testimony authorized in section one of this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 361—RECOGNIZING THE THREATS TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND EXPRESSION IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO TAKE MEANINGFUL STEPS TO IMPROVE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AS FITTING OF A RESPONSIBLE INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDER

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. CORKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 361

Whereas, in its 2013 World Press Freedom Index, Reporters Without Borders ranked China 173rd out of 179 countries in terms of press freedoms;

Whereas China's media regulator, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, enforces a system of strict controls, including an extensive licensing system and government supervision by the Chinese Communist Party;

Whereas domestic radio and television broadcast journalists in China must pass a government-sponsored exam that tests their basic knowledge of Marxist views of news and communist party principles;

Whereas this state supervision of the media distorts and blocks free and open coverage of key issues including Tibet, political unrest, and corruption by government officials, as well as Chinese foreign policy;

Whereas China's media regulator officially bans journalists from using foreign media reports without authorization and forbids news editors from reporting information online that has not been verified through official channels;

Whereas the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) has documented several instances of reprisals against and harassment of independent journalists and newspaper staff by the Government of the People's Republic of China, including Chinese journalists working for foreign-based websites and newspapers;

Whereas the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China has noted that foreign journalists continue to face challenging work conditions, visa denials or delays, and various forms of harassment, and 70 percent of journalists surveyed in the FCCC's 2013 annual survey stated that "conditions have worsened or stayed the same as the year before";

Whereas, according to the CECC, authorities in China appeared to maintain or enhance policies to block and filter online content, particularly sensitive information about rights activists, official corruption, or collective organizing;

Whereas China is the world's second largest economy and the United States' second largest trading partner and has been a member of the World Trade Organization since 2001;

Whereas China's growing economic importance increases the need for the Government of the People's Republic of China to act transparently and respect international trading regulations; and

Whereas official government censorship denies the people of China, including nearly 600,000,000 Internet users, their freedom of expression, undermines confidence in China's safety standards, and causes increasingly serious economic harm to private firms that rely on unfettered access to social media as a business model: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms the importance of freedom of the press to efforts by the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world;

(2) expresses concern about the threats to freedom of the press and expression in the People's Republic of China;

(3) condemns actions taken by the Government of the People's Republic of China to suppress freedom of the press, including the increased harassment of Chinese and international journalists through denial of visas, harassment of sources, physical threats, and other methods; and

(4) urges the President to use all appropriate instruments of United States influence to support, promote, and strengthen principles, practices, and values that promote the free flow of information to the people of China without interference or discrimination, including through the Internet and other electronic media.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has scheduled a hearing entitled, "Offshore Tax Evasion: The Effort to Collect Billions in Unpaid Taxes on Hidden Offshore Accounts." The hearing will continue the Subcommittee's examination of tax haven bank facilitation of U.S. tax evasion, focusing on the status of efforts to hold Swiss banks and their U.S. clients accountable for billions of dollars in unpaid U.S. taxes. Witnesses will include representatives from a Swiss bank and the U.S. Department of Justice. A witness list will be available Monday, February 24, 2014.

The Subcommittee hearing has been scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room G-50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. For further information, please contact Elise Bean of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations at (202) 224-9505.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday,

February 26, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct an oversight hearing to receive testimony on "Early Childhood Development and Education in Indian Country: Building a Foundation for Academic Success."

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224-2251.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet in executive session on Wednesday, February 26, 2014, at a time to be determined, in room 216 of the Capitol Building to mark up the nominations of Vivek Hallegere Murthy, of Massachusetts, to serve as Surgeon General of the Public Health Service; Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to serve as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training; Nomination of Christopher P. Lu, of Virginia, to serve as Deputy Secretary of Labor; Heather Lynn MacDougall, of Florida, to serve as a Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission; and Massie Ritsch, of the District of Columbia, to serve as Assistant Secretary for Communications and Outreach, Department of Education; as well as any additional nominations cleared for action.

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the Committee at (202) 224-5375.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on February 27, 2014, at 10 am, in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Promoting College Access and Success For Students With Disabilities."

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Alyssa Mowitz of the committee staff on (202) 228-3453.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

The purpose of this hearing will be to hear testimony on the following measures:

S. 1419, the Marine and Hydrokinetic Renewable Energy Act of 2013;

S. 1771, the Crooked River Collaborative Water Security Act of 2013;

S. 1800, the Bureau of Reclamation Transparency Act;

S. 1946, a bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations;

S. 1965, a bill to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services;

S. 2010 and H.R. 1963, the Bureau of Reclamation Conduit Hydropower Development Equity and Jobs Act;

S. 2019, SECURE Water Amendments Act of 2014; and,

S. 2034, the Reclamation Title Transfer Act of 2014.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by email to John_Assini@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Sara Tucker at (202) 224-6224 or John Assini at (202) 224-9313.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Lauren Sarkesian and Bruno DiMascio, interns with my personal staff, be granted floor privileges for today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORIZING AUTHORITY

Mr. PRYOR. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 360, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 360) to authorize testimony and representation in United States v. Onstad.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this resolution concerns a request for testimony and representation in a Federal criminal action pending in Montana Federal district court. The defendant is charged with, among other offenses, conspiring to defraud the United States by making fraudulent statements in connection with a grant of Federal money for a project serving disadvantaged youth.

The prosecution has requested the production of testimony from Senator TESTER's chief of staff, who has information relevant to the charged offenses, which include the charge that the defendant conspired to represent falsely to Federal authorities that employees of the Senator's office were contributing in-kind services to the youth project at issue. Senator TESTER would like to cooperate with this request by providing relevant employee testimony from his office.

The enclosed resolution would authorize the production of testimony from the Senator's chief of staff and any other current or former employee of the Senator's office from whom relevant testimony may be had, with representation by the Senate legal counsel.

Mr. PRYOR. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 360) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 25, 2014

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 25, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 11:05 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Repub-

licans controlling the final half; that at 11:05 a.m., the Senate resume executive session to consider the nomination of James M. Moody to be U.S. District Judge in Arkansas, with the time until 11:15 a.m. equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that following disposition of the Freeman nomination and the resumption of legislative session, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings; that at 2:15 p.m. there be up to 30 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees prior to the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1982, the veterans' benefits bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, there will be five votes at 11:15 a.m. tomorrow and a sixth vote at 3:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:57 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 25, 2014, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

TODD SUNHWAE KIM, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT OF CO-

LUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE KATHRYN A. OBERLY, RETIRED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ANTHONY J. ROCK

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. ROBERT D. TENHET

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be brigadier general

COL. BERTRAM C. PROVIDENCE

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5046:

To be major general

COL. JOHN R. EWERS, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. BRIAN D. BEAUDREULT
BRIG. GEN. VINCENT A. COGLIANESE
BRIG. GEN. JAMES W. LUKEMAN
BRIG. GEN. CARL E. MUNDY III
BRIG. GEN. DANIEL J. O'DONOHUE
BRIG. GEN. RICHARD L. SIMCOCK II
BRIG. GEN. GARY L. THOMAS

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate February 24, 2014:

THE JUDICIARY

JEFFREY ALKER MEYER, OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

FEBRUARY 26

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations
To hold hearings to examine offshore tax evasion, focusing on the effort to collect unpaid taxes on billions in hidden offshore accounts.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Personnel
To hold hearings to examine the relationships between military sexual assault, posttraumatic stress disorder and suicide, and on Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs medical treatment and management of victims of sexual trauma.

SR-222

Committee on Finance
Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy
To hold hearings to examine retirement savings for low-income workers.

SD-215

Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights
To hold hearings to examine competition in the wireless market.

SD-226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine Protocol Amending the Convention between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington

on October 2, 1996, signed on September 23, 2009, at Washington, as corrected by an exchange of notes effected November 16, 2010 and a related agreement effected by an exchange of notes on September 23, 2009 (Treaty Doc. 112-1), Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed on May 20, 2009, at Luxembourg (the "proposed Protocol") and a related agreement effected by the exchange of notes also signed on May 20, 2009 (Treaty Doc. 111-8), Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Hungary for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed on February 4, 2010, at Budapest (the "proposed Convention") and a related agreement effected by an exchange of notes on February 4, 2010 (Treaty Doc. 111-7), The Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Chile for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed in Washington on February 4, 2010, with a Protocol signed the same day, as corrected by exchanges of notes effected February 25, 2011, and February 10 and 21, 2012, and a related agreement effected by exchange of notes (the "related Agreement") on February 4, 2010 (Treaty Doc. 112-8), and The Protocol Amending the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, done at Paris on May 27, 2010 (the "proposed Protocol"), which was signed by the United States on May 27, 2010 (Treaty Doc. 112-5).

SD-419

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine the rising cost of Alzheimer's in America, focusing on families and the economy.

SD-106

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine prospects for peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Great Lakes region.

SD-419

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine Department of Defense information technology acquisition processes, business transformation, and management practices in review of the Defense Authorization

Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine early childhood development and education in Indian country, focusing on building a foundation for academic success.

SD-628

FEBRUARY 27

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Strategic Command and United States Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the semi-annual Monetary Policy Report to Congress.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine promoting college access and success for students with disabilities.

SH-216

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine recycling electronics, focusing on a common sense solution for enhancing government efficiency and protecting our environment.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 1675, to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, S. 149, to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and the nominations of Steven Paul Logan, John Joseph Tuchi, Diane J. Humetewa, Rosemary Marquez, Douglas L. Rayes, and James Alan Soto, all to be a United States District Judge for the District of Arizona, Robin S. Rosenbaum, of Florida, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Bruce Howe Hendricks, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Mark G. Mastroianni, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, and Leslie Ragon Caldwell, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SD-226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard

To hold hearings to examine North Pacific perspectives on Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization.

SR-253

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

- 11:15 a.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine international parental child abduction.
SD-419
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To resume closed hearings to examine responses to questions from the open session on current and future worldwide threats to the national security of the United States.
SVC-217
- Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water and Power
To hold hearings to examine S. 1419, to promote research, development, and demonstration of marine and hydrokinetic renewable energy technologies, S. 1771, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to adjust the Crooked River boundary, to provide water certainty for the City of Prineville, Oregon, S. 1800, to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets, S. 1946, to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to modify the authorization of appropriations, S. 1965, to amend the East Bench Irrigation District Water Contract Extension Act to permit the Secretary of the Interior to extend the contract for certain water services, S. 2010 and H.R. 1963, bills to amend the Water Conservation and Utilization Act to authorize the development of non-Federal hydropower and issuance of leases of power privileges at projects constructed pursuant to the authority of the Water Conservation and Utilization Act, S. 2019, to reauthorize and update certain provisions of the Secure Water Act, and S. 2034, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to facilitate the transfer to non-Federal ownership of appropriate reclamation projects or facilities.
SD-366
- Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH-219
- MARCH 5
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SH-216
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.
SD-419
- amine the legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars.
SD-G50
- 2:15 p.m.
Special Committee on Aging
To hold hearings to examine income security and the elderly, focusing on securing gains made in the war on poverty.
SD-562
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR-222
- MARCH 6
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command and United States Africa Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.
CHOB-345
- MARCH 11
- 2:15 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.
SR-222
- MARCH 12
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.
SD-G50
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine military space programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR-222
- MARCH 13
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 25
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 26
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.
SD-G50
- MARCH 27
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- APRIL 3
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- APRIL 10
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-106